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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of three music

teachers who teach in urban settings and are in the second stage of their teaching careers.

Two participants had seven years of teaching experience while the third participant had

nine years. In this descriptive case study, data were collected using a background survey,

journals, interviews, and a focus group discussion. Data were analyzed using Merriam's

constant-comparative model.

Research questions included: 1) What themes emerge as meaningful to

participants when they describe their teaching experiences as second-stage music

teachers?, 2) What do participants identify as major issues in urban music education and

how do they discuss them?, and 3) How do participants perceive their career development

from the first into the second stage and how do they discuss their anticipated career

trajectory?

Analysis of data for the first two research questions focused on three areas: 1)

Participants created individual meanings of urban teaching and were strongly committed

to urban music education, 2) Participants' teaching priorities focused on their students'

personal needs, including physical and emotional needs, self-esteem, and preparation for

future success in developing positive dispositions, facing cultural barriers, and going to

college, and 3) Participants identified major challenges in urban music education as the

unequal distribution of resources, the impact of a large bureaucracy, and a stigma that

affected urban students from a personal and performance standpoint.

Analysis of data for research question three revealed that: 1) Participants perceived a development over the course of their careers, including transition to a new stage, changes in confidence, and different professional development needs than earlier in their careers, 2) Participants had different perceptions of themselves as second-stage teachers, 3) Participants were unsure of their futures in education, and 4) Participants had concerns about withdrawal from teaching.

This study adds to the growing body of research on the second stage of the teacher career cycle. The findings have implications for urban music education, teacher education and induction, professional development, and second-stage music teacher retention. Further research into the career cycle and the second stage is recommended.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is no longer enough to place music teachers into two categories: preservice and
inservice. The music education profession is showing an increasing interest in analyzing
teacher careers in terms of developmental stages, in particular exploring the idea along a
continuum from novice to retired teachers. While a large body of research exists on
preservice and beginning music teachers (e.g. Conkling, 2003; Conway 2002;
DeLorenzo, 1992; Krueger, 2000; Stegman, 2007), there is a noticeable lack of research
on teachers who have passed the beginning stage of their careers and entered the second
stage.

Teachers gain valuable teaching experience as they progress from the beginning to
the second stage of teaching. This experience can in turn be of great benefit to their
students. It follows that teachers who are newer to the profession will not have the benefit
of this experience and may as a result have less to offer their students. Consequently,
there is a need to retain experienced music teachers in the profession. While there are
many excellent beginning teachers, and placing beginning teachers in challenging
teaching situations is not an automatic recipe for disaster, a paucity of experienced
teachers in the profession may affect students adversely. Scholars have argued that
teacher attrition affects schools and student achievement adversely in a number of ways.
Berg et al. (2005) argue that, "Students pay the highest price for teacher turnover when

they are repeatedly taught by beginning teachers, who are, on average, less effective than

more experienced teachers" (p. 2). Shen (1997) suggests that attrition "can cause

disruption in program planning and continuity, impede student learning, and lead to

higher recruiting and hiring expenditures by school districts" (p. 81). Moon Merchant

(2006) suggests that culturally diverse students might be negatively affected when they

are taught by less experienced teachers:

> teachers filling vacancies in urban schools are often inexperienced or uncertified.
> These teachers lack the skills and knowledge of culturally responsive pedagogy
> needed to address the needs of students representing diverse populations that attend
> urban schools. … Novice teachers often lacked the necessary expertise to modify
> curriculum to meet the learning styles of individual students that represented
> diverse cultures or those who were English language learners (Bartell, 2005). (pp.
> 37-38)

Retention of experienced music teachers is also a serious problem in music

education. Research has shown that as many as 30% of new teachers leave teaching

within three years and 50% of teachers leave within five years (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003;

Moon Merchant, 2005; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). While research has suggested the rate is

somewhat lower in music education, with 34% of music teachers leaving in the first six

years (Madsen & Hancock, 2002), the number of music teachers who leave the

profession remains a concern. Furthermore, there is a lack of research on music teachers

who do not quit teaching and who continue to teach past the five-year mark. Lynn

Brinkmeyer, president of The National Association for Music Education (MENC)

discusses the music teacher attrition problem: "Many music teachers are leaving the

profession within the first five years of teaching, regardless of their chosen genre of

music or grade level. In addition, some veteran teachers are also pursuing other career

paths outside of music education" (2007, p. 7). Brinckmeyer has identified the fact that

many music teachers leave the profession before they reach the second stage and that, furthermore, those who remain into the second stage are still at risk of leaving the teaching profession.

Personal Background

I was brought to this study by my own experience teaching music in an inner-city school in the Chicago Public Schools (CPS). I observed many teachers enter and leave the profession in quick succession. Conversely, I also observed a number of teachers enter and stay. I also worked with several teachers who had entered the teaching profession within the previous few years and showed no signs of leaving teaching or leaving CPS. I became curious about the perspective that each teacher developed toward teaching in the city, as reflected in the amount of time they stayed in CPS.

More recently, as I read literature on the idea of the career or life cycle of a teacher, I compared theories of teacher development and career cycles with people I had encountered as a teacher and considered what their connections might be to career cycle theories. More specifically, I considered my own interactions with teachers of various levels of teaching experience and how they reflected different stages of the teaching career. Again I considered attrition: teachers leaving the system, and leaving within the first few years. It was not a secret that many teachers left after the first year, and certainly many by the fifth year. However, many stayed into their sixth year and beyond. What happened in those initial five years? Were these years representative of a first stage in the career cycle of a teacher? I concluded that the first few years did in fact represent the first stage described in teacher career cycle literature, and that those who remained in teaching

past that five-year mark had reached the second stage. They had "survived." They had passed the barrier.

Given these observations, I became interested in teachers in the second stage of their careers. Now that they had reached and passed beyond the five-year mark represented by the research literature as a significant milestone, how did these teachers reflect on and discuss their experiences? In what direction did they see their careers moving? What could they suggest to new or preservice teachers regarding the challenges of the first stage?

Purpose of this Study

The initial period of a teacher's career is extremely difficult. It has been characterized as a time when teachers are concerned only with "survival" (Letven, 1992). Teaching in urban settings may compound these difficulties further, where the settings themselves bring substantial difficulties over which the teacher has little or no control or minimal resources to respond. There is a growing body of research that examines teaching not as a series of isolated events but as a cycle - a career cycle lasting from preservice through retirement (and beyond in some cases). These cycles are constructed as a pattern of stages or phases, with new teachers entering the field placed at the first stage. The combination of all three factors discussed here - new teachers, urban teaching, and the career cycle - creates scholarship and knowledge of new urban teachers placed at the beginning of the career cycle. This scholarship exists and has been disseminated. While research has been conducted on first-stage teachers, urban teaching, and the career cycle, there is a lack of research on urban teachers who have passed beyond the initial stage of the career cycle, specifically to the next level. Baker (2005a) notes:

Research on educational life stages has concentrated on pre-service and beginning educators, and on the early portion of a teaching career. … Nonetheless, life history research that considers established teachers, their life trajectories and career phases, is far more scant. (p. 141)

The purpose of this study is to investigate the experiences of music teachers working in urban schools who have recently moved beyond the first stage of teaching. This will extend the growing body of research on the career cycle past the initial stage and into the second stage as well as add to the research literature on urban music teachers and urban music education. Examining the self-described music teaching experiences of second-stage urban music teachers will make these objectives possible.

Research Questions

The participants in this study are three second-stage music teachers who teach in urban schools. The study is focused primarily on music teaching experiences although I also believe that in urban music education a substantial part of the music educator's experiences are likely brought about through experiences not explicitly related to classroom teaching, such as interactions with students and families outside of school settings. The three research questions are intended to isolate more specific aspects of the phenomenon of second-stage music teachers in urban settings. By combining these three questions, I was able to construct a more effective representation of the meaning of the phenomenon.

1. *What themes emerge as meaningful to participants when they describe their teaching experiences as second-stage urban music teachers?*

2. *What do the participants identify as major issues in urban music education and how do they discuss them?*

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3. *How do participants perceive their career development from the first into the second stage and how do they discuss their anticipated career trajectory?*

Teacher Career Cycle

Several scholars have proposed that teachers' careers may be considered in terms of phases or stages based on a number of factors, including personal factors (family, moving) as well as educational factors (change of level or subject area, amount of time teaching, pursuit of further education). These models are generally referred to as "life cycles" (Huberman, 1993; Steffy, Wolfe, Pasch, & Enz., 2000) or "career cycles" (Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Leithwood, 1992; Steffy, 1989). The initial stage of a teacher's career is considered to consist of preservice teacher preparation and the first few years of a teacher's career. Models differ as to the criteria for describing each phase, with some researchers assigning years of teaching and others describing each phase in more qualitative terms. Steffy et al. (2000) propose a six-stage model of the life cycle of the career teacher: novice teacher, apprentice teacher, professional teacher, expert teacher, distinguished teacher, and emeritus teacher. Fessler and Christensen (1992) describe a teacher career cycle in which there are eight phases: pre-service, induction, competency building, enthusiastic/growing, career frustration, career stability, career wind down, and career exit (p. 36).

Music education research has discussed career stages to a limited degree. Brand (1983) examined teachers' careers in terms of adult developmental stages based on teachers' ages and common corresponding life events. Calling on psychological research literature, he described various developmental stages and argues that music teachers' careers reflect teachers' passages through these various stages. For example, Brand

proposes that between the age of twenty-eight to thirty-three, music teachers commonly assess their current job situations to determine if they want to stay in those situations for a substantial period of time. An ensemble director entering this developmental stage may have just finished solidifying a program after several years and, therefore, consider whether or not to remain with in the position. Brand's work, combined with other career cycle research (Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Steffy et al., 2000), indicates scholarly interest by both music education and general education researchers in considering teaching careers in terms of career stages. Interest in career development was also demonstrated by the November 2000 issue of the *Music Educators Journal* included a special focus section entitled, "The Life Cycle of a Music Teacher." However, the articles focused either on beginning (generally first year) teachers, student teachers, or veterans in the latter stages of their teaching careers. Intermediate stages are not represented. Finally, the Fall 2007 issue of the *Journal of Music Teacher Education* contained a specific focus on experienced music teachers, indicating an increasing interest in considering music teachers as changing over time.

More recently, MENC President Lynn Brinckmeyer (2007) identified career stages as an area of needed focus for music education:

> Issues such as stage of career, collaboration and collegiality, longer and more in-depth experiences, teacher research, and the self-examination required to prepare for certification such as the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards are all important considerations for meaningful professional growth. (p. 7)

Brinckmeyer's comments indicate a need on the part of the music education profession to Examine the importance of career stages when researching professional growth. The use of the term "growth" rather than development is significant, as it intimates an expanded view of teachers' careers.

Second-Stage Teachers

This study focuses on the stage of the teaching career after the initial stage, the

second stage. Teachers in this group are experienced and have recently passed the initial

teacher mark, no small accomplishment as demonstrated by the research on teacher

attrition (Smith & Ingersoll, 2003). Although these teachers may be in different phases of

professional development, for purposes of this study, in-service teachers (defined as those

who have completed their preservice program) who have taught from one to five years

are considered to be in their first stage of the teaching career. This designation is based

on research literature addressing teacher attrition and the fact that a great deal of this

literature emphasizes the number of teachers who leave in the first five years (Ingersoll &

Smith, 2003).

Educational researchers are clearly interested in experienced teachers who are still

in the early part of their career, identified consistently in the research literature as

"second-stage teachers." Although the topic of second-stage teachers is being discussed

with increasing frequency, there is a lack of consensus on a definition for or criteria used

to describe these teachers. Certain writers define the second stage solely by the number of

years of teaching experience while others' definitions are more anecdotal and descriptive,

using characteristics and actions to illustrate the second stage of teaching. For the

purposes of this study, then, the second stage of teaching begins in year six. From a

personal standpoint, I had just finished my sixth year of teaching when I left to pursue my

doctorate, placing me at the beginning of the second stage.

A great deal of scholarship on second-stage teachers has been produced through

The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers from the Harvard Graduate School of

Education (Berg et al., 2005; Charner-Laird, 2007; Donaldson et al., 2005; Fiarman, 2007; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Szczesiul, 2007). Second-stage teacher research has also been performed internationally, as in a project funded through the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (Cameron, Baker, & Lovett, 2006). In fact, a number of papers focus on second-stage teachers by specific discipline (i.e., mathematics, science), indicating that there is a place for researching music teachers as well. The increase in scholarly activity suggests that this is an important topic and, as such, merits scrutiny in music education.

<div align="center">Urban Education</div>

While the primary inquiry of this study is focused on second-stage teachers, I have chosen teachers in urban settings, a criterion which will further focus data collection. As new teacher attrition is higher in urban settings (Blanson, 2005; Dolton & Newson, 2003; Hanushek, 2004; Haycock, 1998; Imazeki, 2002; Moon Merchant, 2005; Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Rinke, 2007; Stanford, 2001), there are even fewer second-stage teachers in urban settings than in non-urban settings.

Urban education is not one singular topic but many intertwined topics. Discussions of urban education invariably cross paths with at least one of the following: culturally relevant pedagogy, social justice, diversity, multicultural education, at-risk students, language issues, immigration, teacher recruitment/retention, and socio-economic status. The reasons for the intersection of these topics are simple. Urban areas are frequently characterized by large concentrations of minorities, meaning that urban issues at some point will often affect literature that addresses those populations during, if not throughout, a study. The same holds true for the other topics, such as studies of

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immigrants. For example, issues arising from teaching English language learners are likely to occur in urban settings amidst clusters of immigrants who have settled in large cities (just as has occurred throughout the history of American immigration, particularly at the turn of the twentieth century). Yet, it is insufficient to use English language learners as the sole criterion for labeling a study as urban, as many modern rural communities with populations composed substantially of migrant worker families clearly satisfy this condition as well.

In her review of research literature on urban teacher preparation, Weiner (2000) provided a list of criteria that distinguishes urban schools. Although these criteria may occur in other settings, she notes, the existence of a substantial centralized bureaucracy truly sets urban schools apart from other schools with high numbers of minority students, problems with underfunding, or those with a strong emphasis on standardized measures of learning: "the structural characteristics of urban school systems, their size and bureaucracy, are the most salient factors because they frame the interaction of the other elements" (p. 370). Many rural schools have these characteristics as well. The difference is that rural districts consist of a small number of schools, in some cases only one. This is in striking contrast to urban districts, which may oversee hundreds of schools.

Researchers in both general education and music education must take care when describing schools, situations, or teachers as "urban." I will use Weiner's list as a framework throughout this study, paying particular attention to her emphasis on centralized bureaucracy, when describing schools as urban.

Urban Music Education

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The Tanglewood Symposium in 1967 brought urban music education into the mainstream of dialogue in music education. Although urban music education did receive attention in the period after Tanglewood (Fowler, 1970; Simmons, 1975), it has also become the subject of a growing body of recent research (Fiese & DeCarbo, 1995; Fitzpatrick, 2008; Frierson-Campbell, 2006a, 2006b; Hinckley, 1995; Kindall-Smith, 2004; Schmidt, 2007). Additionally, an organization specifically focused on urban music education, The National Urban Music Leadership Conference (UMLC) was founded in 1995 by Judy Svengalis, music supervisor of the Des Moines, Iowa public schools. The group began meeting annually in 1996 in Chicago, IL ("National Urban," 2008). The UMLC addresses issues of significant concern to urban music education, such as policy, standardized assessment, and teacher recruitment and retention. The UMLC describes its membership as "music administrators, supervisors, curriculum managers, music specialists and others who are interested in improving the teaching, learning, and management of music and arts programs in urban areas" ("National Urban," 2008). It is noteworthy that teachers are absent from the membership description, as "music specialists" does not necessarily refer to classroom music teachers or ensemble directors. This suggests that music education reflects the same strong administrative influence in urban settings as general education.

The most prominent recent statement on the part of the music education profession is the 2006 publication of the two-volume set of *Teaching Music in the Urban Classroom* by MENC: The National Organization for Music Education (Frierson-Campbell, Ed., 2006a, 2006b). These books are collections of essays, scholarly studies, narratives, program descriptions, and practitioner-based strategies. In the introduction to volume I,

Frierson-Campbell (2006a) reviews the history of dialogue on urban education in the

profession

> While "urban issues" have been at the forefront of the music education
> conversation for almost 40 years, they have not yet reached the "tipping point"
> needed to make MENC's mission "to advance music education by encouraging the
> study and making of music by all" a reality in all urban schools. It is diverse voices,
> distinct and yet united, that will tip the equation in the direction of change. The
> purpose of this book is to bring new voices to this conversation. (p. xiii)

By pointing out that urban issues in music education have been topics of discussion for

40 years, Frierson-Campbell identified the fact that urban music education is not a new

topic. "Diverse voices" is a reference not only to teachers but administrators, teacher

educators, researchers, and policy makers, as well as preservice teachers and urban

students themselves. These two volumes are both sources of information (practical and

scholarly) and food for discussion and debate. They are not a definitive statement on the

part of the music education profession regarding urban music education, but they do

represent an emphatic move towards extended focus on the topic.

<div align="center">Teacher Attrition</div>

Although teacher attrition is not the focus of this study, the reality of high levels

of beginning teacher attrition is directly related to the comparatively lower numbers of

experienced teachers, more specifically second-stage teachers. The shortage of second-

stage teachers is due in large part to the fact that 40-50% of new teachers leave teaching

entirely within the first five years of teaching (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, p. 32). These

teachers have left the profession before building the requisite number of years of teaching

to enter the second stage, meaning that the profession must wait even longer for the

newest group of teachers to build years of experience. Simpson and Rosenholtz (1986)

argue that, "teachers tend to be more effective when they have more experience" (in

Blanson, 2005, p. 2). Second-stage teachers are therefore a desirable population to have in the workforce, as they represent experienced teachers.

<center>Urban Teacher Attrition</center>

Teacher attrition from urban schools is higher than that from non-urban schools (Blanson, 2005; Hanushek, 2004; Imazeki, 2002; Ingersoll, 2001; Moon Merchant, 2005; Rinke, 2007; Stanford, 2001). Olsen and Anderson (2007) report "teachers in high-poverty urban schools are as much as 50% more likely to migrate or leave than those in low-poverty schools (Ingersoll, 2003)" (p. 6). While high poverty might exist in other settings (i.e. rural districts), high poverty is a common characteristic of urban schools, and Olsen and Anderson are speaking within an urban context.

Ng (2004) concludes that lasting improvement in teacher attrition will require concentrated activity at the policy and organizational levels. This is a further illustration of the central role played by large administrative bodies in urban issues. Although urban systems face numerous other obstacles (crowded schools, children in poverty, cultural responsiveness), the bureaucracies that characterize urban schools, Ng argues, are where reform efforts should be directed.

Urban teacher attrition is relevant here because it ties directly into teacher experience. Newer teachers will have less teaching experience and, due to the high rates of attrition, a large percentage of the urban teaching force possesses a limited amount of experience. Second-stage teachers, as they possess more teaching experience than first-stage teachers, are therefore a particularly desirable population in urban schools. Imazeki (2002) found that newly-hired teachers in urban districts were less likely to already possess teaching experience than those in suburban and rural districts. She argued that,

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The catch-22 for urban districts is that when they have openings to fill, the teachers they hire are more likely to be new, inexperienced teachers, who are the most likely to leave within only a few years, only to be replaced by more new, inexperienced teachers who are again more likely to leave. (p. 6)

Statement of the Problem

Career stages and urban education intersect in the fact that there are even fewer second-stage teachers in urban school settings than in non-urban settings. An alarming number of teachers cease teaching in urban schools within a short time, that is to say early in their careers. Drawing on Ingersoll (2003), Olsen and Anderson (2007) report "teachers in high-poverty urban schools are as much as 50% more likely to migrate or leave than those in low-poverty schools" (p. 6).

Despite the obstacles, many urban music teachers complete these first years and continue to teach in urban settings. There is a lack of research, however, on the population of teachers who have passed the initial period of teaching in urban schools. They have taught for several years and have a good deal of teaching experience, although they are not career-long urban music teachers. The specific amount of time teaching (several years versus a long career) is important due to the second-stage teachers' proximity in length of career to the first-stage teachers. In the not-too-distant past, second-stage teachers were in the same situation as first-stage teachers, allowing second-stage teachers to relate more easily to first-stage teachers' concerns and experiences. Second-stage teachers, therefore, represent a particularly valuable component of the teaching force.

Theoretical Framework

After considering numerous models of the teacher career cycle, I have selected the model of the life cycle of the career teacher presented by Steffy et al. (2000), *Life*

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Cycle of the Career Teacher, as the theoretical framework for this study. This model

details both the career stages themselves and a second underlying cycle of reflection,

renewal, and growth that clearly illustrates the process of teacher growth and

development or, conversely, the process of gradual withdrawal from teaching. I believe

that this two-level cycle provides an effective framework from which to locate the second

stage of teaching and to explore the placement of the participants within the second stage

of their teaching careers. Steffy et al. (2000) state that their model is:

> both descriptive and prescriptive. It describes a progression of developmental
> phases and the positive growth that results when teachers strive for, achieve, and
> maintain a standard of excellence that provides all children with competent,
> caring, and qualified teachers. It also prescribes for each phase the enrichment of
> the profession that results from providing teachers with the support they
> deserve…. Our model recommends appropriate strategies and approaches to
> ensure sufficient support occurs at each phase and in a manner that encourages
> continued development. (p. 2)

The life cycle of the career teacher is represented in the following diagram (Steffy et al.,

2000):

FIGURE 1.1 LIFE CYCLE OF THE CAREER TEACHER
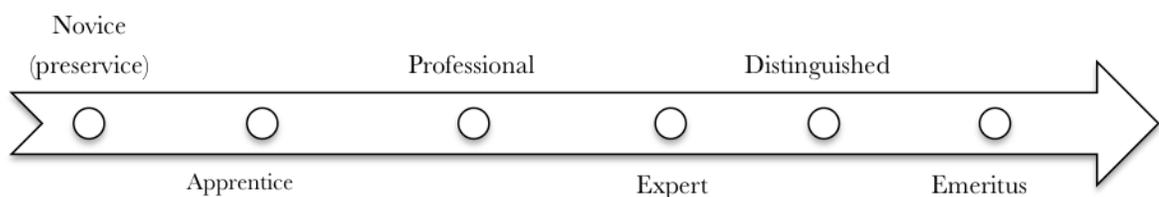
Steffy et al.'s (2000) model is of a six-stage "life cycle" of the career teacher:

novice teacher, apprentice teacher, professional teacher, expert teacher, distinguished

teacher, and emeritus teacher. The first step on this model (novice) corresponds to a

preservice teacher, namely a teacher who has not yet joined the teaching force, either

before, during, or after a teaching internship (student teaching). Therefore the third step (professional) actually corresponds to the second stage of teaching as presented in the research literature, as "professional" here refers to a teacher in the second part of his inservice career.

Inherent in the model is that not all teachers will progress to the higher levels. Professional teachers, the counterpart to the second stage, "form the backbone of the profession" (p. 7), which indicates that many teachers will reach and maintain this stage throughout their career. The following stage, expert teachers, are those professional teachers who have achieved a strong sense of non-academic communication with their students, allowing them to create environments that go beyond those fostering academic growth.

Furthermore, as opposed to other career cycle models, this model does not give a specific number of years of teaching experience for each level. Hence, a teacher does not automatically "become" a professional teacher after five years as an apprentice teacher, or become an expert teacher after five more years as a professional teacher. Inherent in the model is the notion that a teacher may remain in the same stage while still continuing to grow positively. There is no "automatic movement" along the cycle.

The mechanism that allows this within-stage growth or stage-to-stage growth is the three-part cycle of reflection-renewal-growth (Steffy et al., 2000). Steffy et al. state, "The process of reflection and renewal is the central, critical aspect of our model" (p. 11). If this cycle-within-a-cycle is maintained, then a teacher will continue to grow in a positive direction, either within a stage or from stage to stage. The reflection-renewal-growth cycle is presented below:

FIGURE 1.2 RENEWAL-REFLECTION-GROWTH CYCLE

Growth   Reflection

Renewal
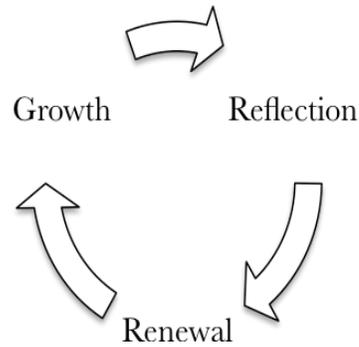
Furthermore, although there are no stages explicitly labeled with terms such as withdrawal or stagnation, the potential for those conditions is inherent in the teacher life cycle. Steffy et al. indicate that, if teachers fail to maintain the reflection-renewal-growth cycle, they may experience withdrawal. Withdrawal is described as a three-level phenomenon: initial, persistent, and deep (Steffy et al., 2000, p. 15):

FIGURE 1.3 LEVELS OF WITHDRAWAL

INITIAL

PERSISTENT

DEEP
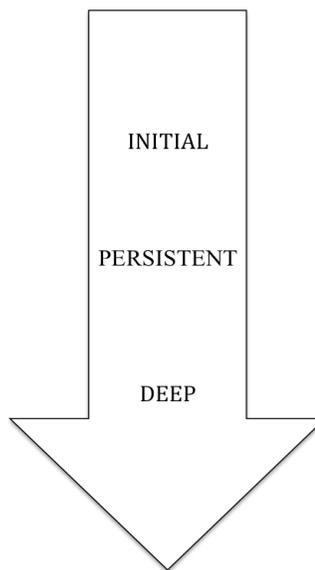
As mentioned above, the second in-service stage of Steffy et al. (2000)'s model is called, "The Professional Teacher," which is described in depth in the book by Wolfe,

Murphy, Phelps, and McGrath. To summarize briefly, "The Professional Teacher" (Wolfe et al., 2000) portrays a teacher who has developed a sense of confidence in his teaching and whose primary focus has turned from himself (as the teacher) to his students. An example is presented in which an apprentice (or first stage) teacher discusses how he changes his practice when he feels that he has done something wrong, while a professional (or second-stage) teacher makes a change when he feels that his students are having problems. The professional teacher also seeks to become active in the school as a whole, takes on leadership roles in and outside of his school, and becomes more instinctively reflective about his classroom practice. Professional teachers are, however, still in need of growth, even though they have passed the apprentice stage, and must pursue their own professional growth or face the danger of withdrawal. As their needs become more varied in this stage, as opposed to the more uniform needs of apprentice teachers such as help with classroom management or parent communication, it becomes crucial for the professional teacher to determine and concentrate on his individual needs. If this is done, the professional teacher will continue to grow positively, using the cycle of reflection-renewal-growth (see Figure 1.2). Otherwise, the professional teacher is at risk of entering withdrawal (see Figure 1.3)

<div align="center">Research Methodology</div>

This study employed a qualitative research methodology that used a multiple descriptive case study design (Merriam, 1998). Data were collected using a background survey, email journals, interviews, and a focus group discussion. The interviews followed Seidman's three-interview design (2006). Trustworthiness was addressed through data collection triangulation, member checks, the researcher as the instrument of inquiry, and

a focus interview group. Interviews and the focus group were audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher. Data was analyzed using Merriam's constant-comparative model (1998) and three-level analysis plan.

Definitions

The following terms appear frequently in the study and, as an aid to the reader, definitions are presented below.

Beginning Teacher: For purposes of this study, a beginning teacher is a teacher who has taught between one and five years. Throughout the study, the assumption is made that beginning teachers entered the teaching profession after completion of a traditional four (or five) year undergraduate preservice program and are approximately 21-23 years of age.

Career Cycle: The entire span of time between beginning teaching and retiring from teaching. Cycle refers to the consideration of this period as being broken into several smaller stages.

Experienced Music Teachers: This term is often used in research literature and a variety of interpretations are ascribed to it. Its uses will be examined in chapter II. I am including it here for purposes of alerting the reader to its presence.

First Stage: The portion of a teacher's career consisting of the first five years of teaching after completing the teacher's preservice program.

Inner-City: The American Heritage® *New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* defines inner city as "A general term for impoverished areas of large cities. The inner city is characterized by minimal educational opportunities, high unemployment and

crime rates, broken families, and inadequate housing." I will use this term synonymously with urban.

Life Cycle: This term is synonymous with career cycle as defined above.

Preservice Teacher: For purposes of this study, a preservice teacher is a teacher who is studying to become a teacher and has not completed a preparation program.

Second Stage: A second-stage teacher is a teacher who has taught between six and ten years. These parameters have been chosen based on the volume of literature that identifies teacher attrition related to the first five years.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the rationale for the study and outlined the purpose and research questions. Chapter II will present a review of literature related to the career cycle, the second stage, and urban education as they have been represented in both general education and music education literature. Chapter III will describe and outline the methodology for the study. Chapter IV will present profiles of the three participants in the study. Chapters V and VI will present the within-case findings of the study. Chapter VII will present the cross-case analysis and final discussion of themes. Chapter VIII will give suggestions both for current practice and for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature relevant to the key issues in this study, namely the teacher career cycle, second-stage teachers, and urban music education. I will begin with a discussion of literature related to the teacher career cycle in general education, presenting several prominent models of teacher career cycles in education, including a detailed description of the model that I have chosen as the theoretical framework for this study. Subsequently, I will consider the career cycle as it has been discussed in music education literature, in the form of scholarly research, discussion, and practitioner-directed writing. Having prepared a context through discussing the career cycle, I will next analyze literature related to the focus of this study: the second stage of a teaching career in general education, music education, and urban education.

With few exceptions (Baker, 2005a, 2005b), music education scholarship does not use stage or phase-based terminology, such as "career phase" or "second stage." The closest term in use is "experienced," as it is used in a manner that delineates teachers who are not new to the profession and acknowledges that there is more than one part to a teacher's career rather than designating all teachers with the blanket term "in-service." Therefore, I examine two studies that specifically use the term "phase" and that outline a succession of career phases. Next, I examine music education literature on experienced

teachers, acknowledging that, although "experienced" is not equivalent to "second-stage," it represents the closest body of research in music education.

Next I briefly examine the relationship of music education literature to urban settings, including important events, practitioner-focused articles, and scholarly work. Although urban education is a secondary focus of this study, it is the common ground shared by the participants and will likely be reflected in their cases. As such, a review of urban music education literature is appropriate.

Teacher Career Cycle

A word on the term "career" is appropriate at this point. I am considering "career" in terms broader than the progression of a teacher from job to job, in which an analysis of career goes no further than observations about each job or position held during the time between entering and leaving the teaching force (through retirement or otherwise). Becker (1952) provides just such an analysis of the career of the Chicago public schoolteacher. His analysis examines the career of many teachers as they potentially move from school to school in search of working at "better" schools.

Typically, teachers' careers are depicted as falling into two stages: preservice and inservice. Recent scholarship has challenged this notion by arguing for a teacher's career to be considered as a succession of stages or phases that can be distinguished from one another. Research has proposed distinct "models" for teachers as they progress through their careers. These models are generally referred to as "life cycles" (Huberman, 1993; Steffy et al., 2000) or "career cycles" (Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Leithwood, 1992; Steffy, 1989), alluding to the idea that as teachers progress through their careers they experience different stages as teachers. Steffy (1989) called her model "the career stages

model." Throughout this paper I will use whichever term the author being considered has used. When neither term has been specified, I will use the term career cycle.

Steffy (1989) proposed a five-stage career model for teachers. She argues that most teacher career cycle models outline their stages solely based on age. Steffy's model provides a great deal of flexibility to place individual teachers who may have a variety of different characteristics. As an example of an age-based teacher career cycle model, Sikes (1985) designates her five phases as age 21-28, 28-33, 30-40, 40-50/55, and 50-55 plus. Hers, however, is based on "attitude, although there is an overlay of the age component" (p. 19). According to Steffy, the stages are: anticipatory, expert/master teacher, renewal, withdrawal, and exit. Entry and exit from the profession are indicated by the first and last stages, while the others are determined based on the teacher's attitudes and competence.

Leithwood (1992) proposed a five-stage model of the career cycle. His cycle is one of three components (the others are psychological development and professional expertise). The audience for his model is the school principal, in an effort to make principals aware of the ways in which they can affect teacher development. Leithwood's career stages are launching the career, stabilizing (a common theme in other second-stage models, e.g. Huberman, 1993), new challenges and concerns, reaching a professional plateau, and preparing for retirement focusing (p. 88).

Leithwood's model is significant for its focus on the principal. Leithwood argues that principals have the responsibility to provide solid educational leadership and that one of their duties is to foster constant teacher development. Numerous models of the career cycle (e.g. Steffy et al., 2000) discus the importance of teachers collaborating with principals to develop appropriate teacher development agendas. Leithwood's model

speaks to principals, accomplishing an important component of career-cycle based development: not only must teachers be aware of the career cycle – principals must be aware as well.

Fessler and Christensen (1992) outline an eight-stage Teacher Career Cycle model. The stages are, in order: preservice, induction, competency building, enthusiastic/growing, career frustration, career stability, career wind down, and career exit. In describing the progression through these stages, the authors observe, "The career cycle itself progresses through stages not in a lock-step, linear fashion, but rather in a dynamic manner reflecting responses to the personal and organizational environment factors" (p. 35). Their model is depicted not only as a cycle but as a cycle directly impacted by these two environments, each with its own separate components. Personal environment consists of life stages, family, positive critical incidents, crises, individual dispositions, and avocational outlets. Organizational environment consists of union, regulations, management style, public trust, societal expectations, and professional organizations. Furthermore, in describing the non-linear nature of the career cycle, Fessler and Christensen observe that "a dynamic ebb and flow is postulated, with teachers moving in and out of stages in response to environmental influences from both the personal and organizational dimensions" (p. 42). The recognition of this variety of factors, as well as the non-linear progression, makes sense through the unpredictable nature of life and teaching.

Additionally, Fessler and Christensen (1992) provided a substantial review of literature related to teacher development, including numerous models and proposed theories of teacher career stages (pp. 21-31). Their review goes back to Fuller (1969)

whose work, they argue, forms the earliest roots of research into the career cycle.

Effective teacher education was the motivation for Fuller's scholarship and Fessler and

Christensen note that, "[Fuller] was interested in planning meaningful preservice

programs for education students at the University of Texas" (p. 21). Fessler and

Christensen continue by examining career cycle research from the 1970s and 1980s.

While the research presented takes different approaches, including proposals based on

theory and those based on research with teachers, similarities with current descriptions of

the second stage are noticeable.

Huberman (1993) interviewed 160 teachers and outlined a "professional life

cycle" consisting of the following stages (in order): career entry, stabilization,

experimentation and diversification, reassessment, serenity and relational distance,

conservatism, and disengagement (pp. 5-12). Huberman's model proposed a nonlinear

progression through the stages in-between stabilization and disengagement such that

teachers might move in different directions, possibly even skipping certain stages. This

indicates that all teachers will both stabilize and disengage, but that they might, for

example, move from experimentation to serenity without feeling a need for reassessment.

Similarly, teachers might revisit the experimentation and reassessment stages multiple

times before progressing to the serenity and relational distance stage.

As mentioned in chapter I, the cycle proposed by Steffy et al. (2000), "Life Cycle

of the Career Teacher," will be used as the theoretical framework for this study (see

Figure 1.1). Both the cycle itself and its other underlying cycles were presented and

summarized in chapter I. In describing the construction of their model, Steffy et al. state

that they consider the various points on their cycle to be phases, rather than stages,

suggesting that, "*Phase theories* (italics theirs) tend to focus on content and tasks that flow from one to another along a continuum" (p. 4). Although I have chosen to use this model as my theoretical framework, as discussed in chapters I and VII, I will nonetheless use the term "stage" rather than "phase" throughout this study. This decision is based on the prevalence of the term "stage," as further represented in "second stage," in educational research literature.

In summary, the models vary in terms of the number of stages, the manner in which stages are defined, and whether or not teachers may move between stages in a non-linear fashion. Although the models differ with each other to varying degrees, they all agree on the existence of a first stage and a subsequent second stage. From there the models diverge. However, integral to this study is the notion that there is a new teacher stage and a subsequent (second) stage in which the teacher has passed beyond being an initiate is common to the models. The notion of a second stage is supported repeatedly in teacher career cycle research. A closer look at the various interpretations of the second stage is warranted.

<div align="center">Career Cycle Research in Music Education</div>

The teacher career cycle has been addressed to a small degree in music education. Brand (1983) proposed that music education literature ignored the idea that teachers undergo numerous significant events in their lives that may affect their music teaching practice, and therefore music teachers' careers should be understood as a progression of developmental stages. Brand assembled a group of six music teachers, representing a variety of disciplines, with between four and thirty-five years' teaching experience for individual and group discussions. The group analyzed numerous experiences and

observations about various points in their careers. Although specific stages are not

delineated, the range of 28-33 years of age (effectively the second stage) is mentioned

several times as a period of questioning and reassessment. Several teachers asked

themselves if they indeed wanted to be music teachers for an entire career, would prefer

pursuing administration, or perhaps wanted to leave the field at that point. Others,

however, described this phase as a time of reaffirmation of their commitments to music

teaching. This was the case with the eldest members of the group, who described this

stage of their careers as a time in which they felt "settled" (p. 51).

Brand's study is significant due to its identification of the teaching career as a

multi-stage entity affected by numerous factors rather than a one-dimensional length of

time in which teachers remain effectively unchanged. Brand considered both personal

life-based issues as well as teaching issues, such as the effects of retirement and the

"midlife crisis" on the teacher's career. Brand predicted future research by concluding

with this statement, as well as identifying the value of such research:

> To study music teachers' career patterns acknowledges the importance of the
> career span of teachers. Traditionally, attention is directed toward the student and
> first year teacher, and little directed toward the more experienced music educator.
> Examining a teacher's career in a broader sense shows that meaningful growth
> takes place throughout a teacher's career - not just during the first few years. (p.
> 51)

Brand's comments identify points that are still true today: the majority of research

is directed towards preservice and new teachers, augmented somewhat recently by an

increase in research on teachers in the final stages of their careers (Cutietta & Thompson,

2000; Fiese & DeCarbo, 1995). Furthermore, teachers should not consider themselves in

pedagogical terms only. There is a need for teachers to consider their personal

experiences. Brand concludes by arguing that there is a lack of consideration of music

teachers as people as well as educators, stating, "Emphasis is on what the music teacher does rather than what the teacher is" (p. 51). Brand's writing foreshadows later career cycle literature, in which stages are discussed and the impact of life events on teaching practice is considered along with pedagogical development.

The November 2000 issue of the *Music Educators Journal* featured a special focus section called "The Life Cycle of the Career Teacher." As mentioned above, "life cycle" is often used to describe the division of a career into stages and, as such, I am using the terms synonymously. Furthermore, as mentioned above, the articles in this special section focus on teachers in either the beginning or latter stages of their careers, in other words not considering younger experienced teachers. I am not suggesting that teachers at these places in their careers do not deserve attention from the profession. Rather, my point is to highlight the continuing absence of literature relative to those teachers who do *not* belong in either category, particularly in a publication focused on the life cycle, a term that suggests the *entire* life of the teacher rather than beginning and end. The specific articles in the special focus addressed: student teaching (Fallin & Royse, 2000), mentoring new teachers (Haack & Smith, 2000), lifelong learning (Smith & Haack, 2000), burnout (Hamann & Gordon, 2000), and experiences of teachers who had taught for 15 or more years (Cutietta & Thompson, 2000).

Fallin and Royse (2000) discuss the student teaching experience. They focus on three student teachers, as well as the triad of student teacher/ cooperating teacher/ university supervisor, and this discussion focuses on the transition into the first stage: beginning teacher. Career cycle models differ on including preservice. Fessler and Christensen (1992) and Steffy et al. (2000) do while Huberman (1993) and Steffy (1989)

do not. This study is relevant here as it is an example of the emphasis on the early part of the teacher's career in music education literature on the career cycle.

Haack and Smith (2000) address mentoring and the need for young teachers to pursue mentoring. They give suggestions for how to seek and establish a relationship with a mentor. They also include mention of the need for the new teacher to develop a plan for career growth. This is an important article for new teachers but, again, it indicates the emphasis on new teachers in self-identified career cycle literature.

Smith and Haack (2000) discuss lifelong learning. Essentially, this is an article calling attention to the need for revitalization over the course of a long career and providing strategies to do so. They provide diagrams and models for planning objectives periodically throughout the teacher's career. This is relevant to this discussion as it calls attention to the concept of the teacher moving along a continuum rather than being in stasis.

Smith and Haack emphasize the need for teachers to take an active, personal role in their own development: "The music educator who is committed to lifelong learning is likely to enjoy a richer, more fulfilling professional life" (p. 29). Although this prominent quote's use of "life" suggests classroom-related issues only, Smith and Haack maintain a place for the "personal growth" in their discussion, making this article reminiscent of scholarship that discusses the career cycle in terms of both professional and personal factors (Fessler & Christensen, 1992). Smith and Haack present a form called "The Long View" (p. 31), which is intended to acknowledge that, "both institutional and personal professional goals are important, interwoven, and interdependent" (p. 31). The career cycle is present in the background throughout this article, although it is from the

standpoint of the need for teachers to think in terms of specific increments in their careers in order to maintain a sense of fulfillment.

Hamann and Gordon (2000) discuss burnout, including a burnout cycle. They identify common causes, signs, and strategies for avoiding burnout. This discussion is relevant as it ties into discussions of attrition, which can occur as a result of teacher burnout. Burnout, therefore, may be a factor in the high levels of attrition among first-stage teachers and the resulting comparatively smaller number of second-stage teachers.

In the only career cycle model proposed by a music education researcher, Baker (2005a, 2005b) described a five-phase career model. Baker (2005a) studied 28 peripatetic instrumental and vocal teachers in the United Kingdom and placed his participants into five phases, separated by age: induction (21-25), consolidation (26-35), professional apex (36-42), reassessment/redefinition (43-53), and proximate retirement (54 and above) (p. 266). It is noteworthy that these stages do not represent equal amounts of time. Peripatetic teachers are music specialists who travel from school to school. They are employed by outside organizations as opposed to school systems, although these organizations are frequently part of larger civic entities affiliated with counties or metropolitan areas. His subjects began by writing their own career "time lines," and he subsequently interviewed them with the goal of producing biographical accounts of the teachers' careers.

Baker identifies characteristics of each phase and traces the factors that lead to the development of these characteristics. The progression is generally vertical (i.e. indicating no regression in development) until phase four. Baker's model is similar to the Fessler-Christensen model in that factors outside of school (primarily family and finances) are

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included as major influences. Particular emphasis is given to parenthood-based effects in phases two through four. Baker then systematically provides analysis for each phase including implications for practice.

It should be noted that Baker's studies took place in the United Kingdom, which necessarily implies differences in an educational system relative to that considered in literature from the United States, as well as shades of meaning in subjects' responses and writing. Regardless, the studies illustrate increased interest on the part of the profession with the topic of career stages. Baker's literature review is grounded in American-based research literature, giving his study a place in this discussion. Furthermore, the study of the career cycle and the second stage are not unique to the United States (Elvidge, 2002; Huberman, 1993). Finally, Baker's study is a glimpse into where teacher career cycle research may be headed, namely into investigations of more specific phases of teacher careers.

Tarnowski and Murphy (2003) investigated 281 elementary general music teachers and focused on revitalization. While not discussing the career cycle explicitly, it is significant that the term revitalization enters into the discussion. Revitalization, defined in Webster's *Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (1986, p. 1010) as, "to give new life or vigor," is a concept present in both Huberman's model and as the central driving mechanism of Steffy et al.'s life cycle model with its internal cycle of reflection-renewal-growth (pp. 10-11). Revitalization is proposed as a form of professional development, also compared to life-long learning (Smith & Haack, 2000, p. 30). Revitalization is also used to discuss music educators' need to reconnect to their personal musicality. This

suggests an important component of the music educator's career cycle that would fall outside that of the general educator: the component of the teacher's own musicianship.

<div align="center">Synthesis of Research on the Teacher Career Cycle</div>

The concept of the teacher career cycle is not new. However, there has been a recent increase on scholarship on the career cycle, including detailed theories of how teachers' careers progress along a continuum from career entry to retirement. Music education has only recently begun to examine the idea of teachers reflecting different developmental stages at various points in their careers.

<div align="center">Second-Stage Teachers</div>

The second stage of teaching is defined in several ways. While it is most typically defined using the amount of time that an individual has been teaching, additional criteria (such as tenure) are commonly proposed as part of the definition. Second stage teachers:

> "Hav[e] achieved tenure and a sense of confidence about their classroom teaching, … (the decade after tenure)" (Berg et al., 2005, p. 4)
> "have taught for 4-12 years and are "no longer struggling to survive each day and their practice is becoming more stable" (Donaldson et al., 2005, pp. 2-3)
> "have complet[ed] their first few years of teaching, typically characterized as "survival years" and are "often seeking opportunities for influence and responsibility beyond the context of their own classroom teaching" (Fiarman, 2007, p. 5)
> "have taught for 4-6 years and "have generally surmounted the challenges of classroom management and curricular design experienced by new teachers" (Donaldson, 2005, pp. 3-4)

Some studies define the second stage by the sole criterion of the amount of time teaching, without providing any additional elaboration: "teachers in the second stage of teaching, or teachers with 4-10 years of teaching experience" (Kirkpatrick, 2007, p. 2).

The second stage, when described within a model of an entire cycle, is often given a specific name or attribute such as "professional teacher" (Steffy et al., 2000),

"stabilizing" (Leithwood, 1992), "stabilization" (Huberman, 1993), "competency building" (Fessler & Christensen, 1992), and "expert/master teacher" (Steffy, 1989).

Although many studies (Charner-Laird, 2007; Donaldson, 2005; Donaldson et al., 2005; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Szczesiul, 2007) describe the second stage as beginning at year four, I am using year six as the beginning of the second stage, based on the research literature on attrition that ends at year five. As the attrition literature focuses on teachers who leave teaching up through the fifth year, the key point in my consideration is teachers who have passed this five-year barrier.

There is disagreement as to the validity of using time as a factor in discussing career stage. Huberman (1989) argues that time is an inappropriate criterion for determining teachers' places in the career cycle: "age is a hollow variable, a backdrop on which other, determining influences of a psychological and social nature are played out. There is nothing causal in the nature of time" (p. 357). Moreover, it may be a dangerous assumption to equate length of teaching career with quality of instruction.

Tenure may also be considered as a criterion, generally in the case of having recently received tenure. Tenure-granting processes vary from setting to setting but it is generally the case that teachers can be granted tenure within three to five years of beginning teaching. There are also schools and districts that do not have a tenure process. Particular attitudes and outlooks, such as a growing sense of confidence regarding a teacher's classroom management skills, may also define the second stage of teaching (Huberman, 1993; Steffy, 1989).

Research has investigated these second-stage teachers' attitudes, including their attitudes towards their roles in the school as a whole, theorizing that second-stage

teachers are interested in taking on leadership roles, or at least roles outside of their classrooms, at an earlier time than their predecessors. Having completed the beginning of their teaching career, they do not want to settle into a pattern, remaining in their classroom, for the remainder of their careers.

Fuller (1969) has been credited with laying the foundation for subsequent research into teachers' career stages. Fuller's interest was in teacher education and designing programs for preservice teachers. She identified four areas in which preservice teachers' concerns were concentrated, based on different stages of development during the preservice years. In a finding that foreshadows later career stage research, Fuller found that her preservice teachers' concerns shifted over time from a focus on themselves to a focus on their students.

Unruh and Turner's (1970) second stage is called "the period of building security" and "covers roughly six to fifteen years of service" (p. 23). Their description of this stage is:

> Teachers here find satisfaction in a career and "know what they are doing." They seek ways to improve their background and knowledge and take additional courses and advanced degrees both to qualify for salary increases and to improve their teaching.

This is among the earliest examples of a description of career stages and, although over 30 years older than the recent body of literature, shows remarkable consistency with current thinking about the second stage.

Ryan, Flora, Burden, Newman, and Peterson (1979) studied teachers in four different sections: first year, early and middle experience (4-20+ years of experience), experienced (20-30 years), and retired. In this set of studies, Burden studied 15 teachers

identified as early and middle experience (average of 12 years' experience). Numerous

findings are consistent with current scholarship on the second stage.

Sikes (1985) discussed the second stage, calling it phase two (out of five) and

identifying it as the "28-33 Age Group" (p. 44). She also likened it to the "*Age Thirty*

Transition" (italics hers) (Levinson et al, 1979), an exploratory phase between the ending

of one phase (the 20's) and a time in which people make serious commitments to the

courses of their lives. Sikes's discussion focuses on personal factors more than

pedagogical, discussing such topics as female teachers leaving and returning to teaching

due to having children, the desire for promotion, and dissatisfaction with salary if it is felt

that the teacher is not being compensated properly for her years of experience.

Pedagogically, Sikes describes phase two teachers as having "begun to 'develop,' to

experiment and use their own ideas based on experience rather than relying exclusively

upon what they have been taught and advised" (p. 46). The interest in pedagogy has

grown, as the teachers are not concerned with survival. One art teacher observes that

> I think I started teaching as a subject-based teacher, where the subject always
> came first … as time has gone on I've got more of an (sic), yes, OK, I teach art
> but I think of myself more as a teacher than an artist. (p. 47)

This teacher's comments illustrate a move towards a focus on pedagogy, as

opposed to content, being foremost in the teacher's mind after leaving preservice. It is

important to note that the portion of Sikes's research on phase two is significantly shorter

than the phase one portion. This again demonstrates the paucity of research on the second

stage.

Steffy's (1989) career stage model delineates its second stage implicitly. Steffy

outlines five stages: anticipatory, expert/master, withdrawal, renewal, and exit. As

mentioned above, Steffy's model does not consider age or, in fact, any quantifiable component (such as tenure); rather she discusses teachers' attitudes and pedagogical competencies. As her beginning phase is clear (anticipatory), the following stage (expert/master teacher) may be considered to be the second stage.

Huberman (1993) describes the second stage in terms of teachers' perceptions of their outlook towards teaching, making no mention of the number of years that a teacher has been teaching. Using the term phase as opposed to stage (although the text is a translation from French and the implications of phase and stage may not be equivalent to American English), he discusses the second phase of teaching as part of a longer discussion of the first phase of teaching. Although Huberman specifically uses the term "second phase" (p. 244), the remainder of the discussion uses the term "stabilization" (having also designated the first phase as the "exploration" phase) and discusses the second phase in relation to the concept of career stabilization. Huberman states:

> It is during this period that one makes a durable commitment to teaching, with a corollary sense of liberation from strict supervision. One also enjoys a sense of belonging to a professional peer group, and begins to consolidate a basic repertoire of pedagogical skills and materials at the classroom level. … [T]his phase also includes a greater ease, a feeling of relaxation, and increased psychological comfort. … This, in fact, is the phase described most positively by the teachers in our sample. (pp. 244-245)

Huberman's conclusions paint a picture of a second phase teacher as one who has gained comfort both personally and pedagogically in their role as a teacher, as well as making the individual decision to commit to teaching. This commitment follows easily from the fact that these are the teachers who have passed the five-year mark by which time many teachers have left.

The second stage of the Steffy et al. model (2000) is called "The Professional Teacher." This stage was summarized in chapter I but will be briefly discussed here as well. It is preceded by a first stage entitled "the apprentice teacher." They describe the professional teacher as follows:

> Teachers who have entered the professional phase of the career cycle focus on students and the relationships established with them. Thus the benchmark of the professional teacher is a shift from personal needs to the needs of the students. Student orientation is central to the professional phase. (p. 63)

In differentiating the apprentice teacher (first stage) from the professional teacher (second stage), they state, "The most noticeable difference between apprentice and professional teachers is increased self-confidence, which leads to commitment to the profession" (p. 63). Additional distinguishing characteristics of the professional teacher include constantly seeking growth and becoming more active with colleagues. Finally, Steffy et al. liken their professional teacher to Huberman's "stabilization phase" (1992, 1993), referring to the professional teacher being a time "in which teachers consolidate their pedagogical repertoire" (p. 63).

Berg et al. (2005) interviewed 20 second-stage teachers, defined as teachers with from three to eleven years' experience as well as tenure. Three years is an early beginning to the second stage compared to the bulk of second stage literature, although achievement of tenure is a common theme. Berg et al. were interested in how second-stage teachers responded to taking on roles in their schools outside of their classrooms, such as team leaders, consultants, or coordinators. The authors suggested that second-stage teachers expected to have an opportunity to "make a difference" beyond their own classrooms, challenging the previously-held concept of the "flat teaching career," in which a teacher enters the profession and spends the rest of her career exclusively in her

own classroom. Although the teachers met with mixed results as far as satisfaction taken from their new roles, there was consensus that the desire to "make a difference" was strong. This description of looking beyond the classroom is consistent with other research on second-stage teachers that says that second-stage teachers no longer focus exclusively on their own "survival" but are more interested in the larger picture of education.

Fiarman (2007) interviewed eight second-stage teachers who participated in a program called Consulting Teacher, a program that involved teachers leaving the classroom and rotating through various specialist roles in the district for a period of three years. In describing her choice of participants, Fiarman states:

> I investigated the experiences of those who participated in the role within their first decade of teaching. Known as "second stage teachers," these teachers have made it through the first "survival" years of teaching (Huberman, 1993) and typically bring a higher level of expertise to their work than the does the novice teacher. (p. 5)

The teachers in Fiarman's study had been teaching from five to nine years at the beginning of the program. Fiarman's study is important in that it continues the illustration of the second-stage teacher as clearly different from the new teacher. Furthermore, it shows the wider views of the second-stage teacher – not only are they no longer concerned with survival, they are looking outside of their classrooms and even their areas.

Kirkpatrick (2007) studied second-stage teachers, defined from the perspective of job satisfaction, specifically the degree to which these teachers felt engaged by their jobs. In addition to the length of time, Kirkpatrick provides a characterization of second-stage teachers based on where their concerns lie:

> In contrast to their novice years, the confidence and competence they feel as second-stage teachers provide them with greater flexibility about how to allocate their time and energy and enable them to adjust the amount of time and effort that they invest in their teaching. For some participants their experience in teaching

allows them to invest more time and energy in their classroom practice. For others, it enables them to redistribute their time and energy between their classroom teaching and other demands. (p. 23)

Her thesis was that job engagement led to numerous positive outcomes including retention, effort, and productivity and that conversely a lack of job engagement could lead to attrition, something which second-stage teachers could be in danger of as easily as novice teachers. Second-stage teachers are often ignored, she further argues, due to the high level of attrition among beginning teachers. The result is an overlooked, although vital, segment of the teaching force.

Second-stage teachers have also been studied internationally. Cameron, Baker, and Lovett (2006) studied 57 second-stage teachers as phase one of a larger study affiliated with the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. The researchers define second-stage teachers as those with three to seven years' teaching experience, a time span different from most studies in the United States in which the second stage typically begins in year four at the earliest and continues as far as the early teens. The teachers in the study had been identified as "promising" by administrators at their schools and the study was based partially on the notion that promising educators may be at high risk for leaving teaching. Attrition is a problem in New Zealand, with 37 per-cent of the teaching force leaving teaching within three years (Elvidge, 2002). This is a longitudinal study that will follow the teachers for several years, studying their longer-term career development. This particular study consisted of two interviews, the first to discuss the participants' first two years as teachers (as the study labels years three to seven as the second stage, the first two years are therefore the first stage). Several months later, the teachers were interviewed regarding their present status as second-stage teachers. The

study is presented in two parts, corresponding to the sets of interviews: one section each for stage one and two.

While the teachers discussed a number of topics, relevant to this discussion are their observations regarding researcher questions as to where the teachers placed themselves on "a continuum from novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, to expert" (p. 66), a concept that is clearly quite similar to the career cycle. The teachers did not feel that a linear concept to their careers was accurate, particularly given the number of factors that might affect them. Furthermore, the teachers assessed themselves from different perspectives, assigning themselves different career designations based on particular areas of expertise. For example, the teachers noted now they might be more adept at certain areas of their practice than others and therefore not accurately described by one designation. One teacher observed that:

> I put myself as competent because in some areas I believe I am competent and some areas I believe I am proficient and that's my delivery and that's my subject knowledge and in some areas I would fit myself in between an advanced beginner and competent. (p. 66)

This teacher's statements mingle assessment of perceived abilities with resulting career stage designations. Another teacher proposed that teaching expertise could be significantly affected by single events:

> they just have to introduce a new piece of technology and that could totally change everything, the way we teach, and you're right back to being a novice again because you've got to learn how to deal with all that (p. 66).

Although this portion of the discussion focuses specifically on teachers' perceptions of their expertise, it is through this expertise that the teachers describe themselves in career cycle terminology.

Descriptions of the second stage have both objective and subjective aspects. One

criterion of membership in the second stage is the teacher's number of years of experience. It is also the case that descriptions of the second stage include an account of the teacher's ability as a pedagogue (increased level of comfort, having passed the "survival stage," possessing a greater range of teaching strategies, etc.). It is important to keep both in mind when considering second-stage teachers. Although I have set the beginning of the second stage at the sixth year based on research literature on teacher attrition, I believe that time alone does not tell the entire story. The second stage is also demonstrated by teachers' classroom practice, comfort level, and expertise.

Urban Education

The next section of this chapter will consider second-stage teachers who teach in urban settings. Before beginning a discussion of urban education, however, it is necessary to have an understanding of the parameters and implications of the term "urban." The term "urban" is used frequently and, as such, a definition is needed. Weiner (2000) provides a list of five criteria used for identifying urban schools. They are composed of the following elements (numbers hers):

1. Urban schools serve a large, highly diverse population.
2. Decision-making is centralized and invested in a bureaucracy that is politically isolated from communities.
3. Chronic patterns of underfunding configure decisions about teaching and learning.
4. The schools serve high concentrations of students who are "voluntary minorities" and linguistic minorities. The schools also serve high concentrations of students who are "involuntary minorities," whose cultural model of schooling is often different from and in conflict with that of the dominant cultural model.
5. Urban school systems depend on a unitary, seemingly objective definition of "intelligence" and standardized measures of learning to classify students. Standardization in instruction and curriculum complements the bureaucratic culture and organization that have been hallmarks of urban school systems since their creation. (p. 370)

Weiner additionally makes a case for urban education having a strong relationship to the state and direction of the economy and further identifies public urban education in the 1990s as following a business model such that these large bureaucracies are often led by chief executive officers (CEOs), borrowing nomenclature from business management. This observation is consistent, for example, with the Chicago Public Schools, which in 1995 had a CEO appointed by the mayor of the city to oversee its administration.

Weiner's paper is extremely important as it provides a clear and comprehensive definition of urban schools. Her point that urban schools are part of large bureaucratic entities is the most crucial. Many of the characteristics mentioned above exist outside of large cities. A rural community might just as easily have issues with low funding, outdated resources, language issues, and students at risk of dropping out before graduation. These schools should not be labeled as "urban" according to Weiner. The rural community, whatever its issues may be, will consist of a small number of schools (possibly only one school), creating a vast difference between those rural schools and urban schools displaying similar characteristics. It is also important to realize that many urban districts also contain well-funded, state-of-the-art schools (often magnet schools or schools of choice) that might just as easily appear in affluent suburban districts. The combination of all of Weiner's factors is therefore extremely important to consider before describing a school as urban. The new, well-funded magnet schools are indeed "urban," but a closer examination shows that many of the components of typical urban education discussions do not apply.

Urban Second-Stage Teachers

Second-stage teachers in urban settings have been specifically studied (Donaldson,

2005; Charner-Laird, 2007; Szczesiul, 2007). Donaldson (2005) studied 4th, 5th, and 6th year urban math teachers for the purpose of investigating newly tenured teachers. By studying those who had recently received tenure, Donaldson used a concrete marker (tenure) to distinguish teachers who had completed the first stage of teaching. Although at times he interchanges "newly tenured" with "second-stage," both uses are consistent with the concept of an experienced teacher who has just passed through the beginning phase of a teaching career. In comparing first and second stage teachers, Donaldson states:

> [T]hese "second-stage" teachers have generally surmounted the challenges of classroom management and curricular design experienced by new teachers (Huberman, 1993). They have refined their teaching methods and grown wiser about how to navigate within their schools. And, unlike their novice counterparts who worry about surviving the present, newly tenured teachers often consider the future and wonder whether they can develop a career in teaching. (pp. 3-4).

In this case, Donaldson has added anecdotal descriptions to the single, clearly-defined criterion of the numbers of years a teacher has been teaching. He paints a picture of how the second-stage teacher looks, feels, and functions.

Charner-Laird (2007) studied 10 urban second-stage teachers in kindergarten through eighth grade positions. She investigated their professional learning experiences, particularly experiences that have taken place during the second stage. She observed that it was difficult to find second stage teachers (defined by her as those with 4-10 years of experience), as the majority of teachers were either new teachers (1-3 years) or long-time veterans. Charner-Laird also argues that although opportunities for professional learning experiences that address new teachers' (1-3 years) concerns, the same is not true for second-stage teachers. There are significantly fewer opportunities for professional development that specifically addresses second-stage teachers. She concludes that once

teachers pass the first stage they are perceived as being part of "everybody else" (p. 6).

Szczesiul (2007) studied urban second-stage teachers' perceptions of their autonomy. Her participants were ten urban middle-school teachers. She studied teachers with between four and eight years of teaching experience, reasoning that these teachers had begun their careers at the same time the *No Child Left Behind* Act (NCLB) was taking effect and therefore their perceptions might be different than older teachers who had not begun their careers coincidentally with NCLB. She states that second-stage teachers have passed the trials of being first-stage teachers and now have more "instructional expertise and organizational savvy" (p. 6).

<div align="center">Second-Stage Music Teachers</div>

While the terminology is not precisely the same, Baker's (2005a, 2005b) use of career phases constitutes the closest that music education has come to discussions of the second stage in general education. Most relevant to this investigation, in his discussion of the second phase, Baker identifies "a hunger for occupational diversification, fear of ennui, plus a desire to assist in designing the corporate pedagogical strategy" (p. 270) as the most important factors to consider regarding teachers in this phase. Similarly to other second-stage research studies, Baker also found a growing sense of pedagogical competency although it is important to note the appearance of the fear of developing boredom by second-stage teachers. A sense of boredom could be a contributing factor to second-stage teachers entering withdrawal or leaving the profession, showing that second-stage teachers are also at risk for attrition although for different reasons than first-stage teachers.

Baker (2005b, 2006) published other studies focusing on the first and third phases of his five-phase model (Baker, 2005a), again centering on peripatetic (traveling) music teachers' career life histories, using a biographical approach. His discussion of the third phase goes into even greater feelings of comfort, something he attributes as well to parenthood manifesting itself in teachers' parental views towards students (i.e., feeling like a "father figure"). His discussion of the first phase analyzed new teachers' practice in terms of previous influences, reaching as far back as childhood (i.e. being taught to read music by a parent).

The term "second-stage" has not been adopted in music education research literature. It is therefore appropriate to examine music education literature for the nearest equivalents. The closest term that approximates second-stage is the term "experienced," as in considerations of experienced music teachers. Uses of the term "experienced" are inconsistent in research literature in music education, however. An examination of the uses of "experienced" in relation to music teacher careers is therefore warranted. This portion of the literature review will analyze studies in which the authors study experienced music teachers.

Two studies, Duling (1992) and Baker (1992), examined a small number of experienced music educators (two and three, respectively). These are particularly experienced and veteran teachers, what Steffy et al. (2000) might describe as distinguished teachers in the final stages of their teaching careers. These two studies demonstrate that while research has been carried out on new teachers (preservice and first-year or early) and very experienced teachers, in other words the opposite ends of the career continuum, there is a lack of research on teachers in the in-between stages.

Cutietta and Thompson (2000) interviewed 25 experienced music teachers for purposes of examining these teachers' perceptions of the course of music education. Of the 25 teachers interviewed, the range of years of experience went from a teacher who had begun teaching in 1967 to a teacher who had begun teaching in 1983. Although Cutietta and Thompson do not explicitly define the term experienced, they do give the criterion that all of their teachers had taught for a minimum of 15 years. The teachers in their study discussed major movements that had taken place in music education over the years, such as the effects of the *National Standards for Arts Education*, block scheduling, and so forth, as well as how their daily practices and philosophies have (or have not) changed during their careers. This study is relevant to this discussion because it shows both the ability of experienced music teachers to have a greater vantage point on the music education profession, as well as the fact that it further demonstrates the lack of research on teachers who are neither at the beginning of their careers or in the latter stages (chronologically) of their careers. The second-stage teacher would not be able to speak to as many events from the perspective of one who has directly experienced them, but they would be able to speak to certain more recent events as teachers who have known nothing else *but* the effects of those events (such as the above-mentioned *National Standards* and block scheduling).

In recent research, the Fall 2007 issue of the *Journal of Music Teacher Education* was specifically devoted to "professional development for the experienced music teacher." The focus of the issue was inspired by the work of the Professional Development for the Experienced Music Teacher ASPA (Area for Strategic Planning and

Action), a group within the Society for Music Teacher Education (SMTE). The ASPA was established at the 2005 Symposium on Music Teacher Education.

In the introduction to the issue, Conway (2007) states, "The discussion is restricted to experienced music teachers because there are other sources for information on the professional development of beginning music teachers" (p. 9). In the introduction to the focus section, she also states: "For the purpose of this project, "experienced music teacher" was defined as an in-service teacher who has been in the field beyond the first few years of teaching" (p. 9). Conway not only provides a working definition for experienced teachers (a description that mirrors definitions of the second stage in other educational research) but also highlights both the paucity of and need for research on this underrepresented portion of the music teaching force.

Bauer (2007) defines "experienced teachers" as those who have been teaching for longer than one year. This definition gives a very clear-cut picture: any teacher who has delivered instruction in a P-12 school, having completed a preservice program, for a period of one year is an experienced teacher. The argument that a teacher who has any teaching experience is an "experienced teacher" can logically be accepted although to use the term in such a way devalues the concept of experience. Experience is not achieved simply by attendance. The fact that a teacher has been in a school as a teacher, having left the preservice program completely, does not equate with being an experienced teacher. As mentioned in the definition above, experience requires time, and it requires sustained time.

Conway (2008) studied the professional development of 19 experienced music teachers, focusing on the teachers' perceptions of professional development throughout

their careers. "Experienced" in this case referred to music teachers who had been teaching for five or more years. Specifically, Conway interviewed 13 "mid-career teachers," defined as those who had taught between five and eleven years, and six "veteran teachers," those who had taught for 12 or more years. Using the Steffy et al. (2000) life cycle model as a lens, Conway identified her participants as either "expert" or "distinguished" teachers. Note that the career/life cycle models disagree on the inclusion of age or years of teaching. The inclusion of this information, however, helps gives a clearer picture of the participants. It is also important to note the appearance of five years as the mark beyond which a teacher may be called "experienced."

<div align="center">Synthesis of Research on the Second Stage</div>

Recent research literature from Harvard Graduate School of Education's *Project on the Next Generation of Teachers* (e.g. Berg et al., 2005) allows a picture of second-stage teachers to emerge. In this study I am drawing principally from the Harvard research in using the term "second stage." According to the literature, second-stage teachers have taught for at least four years, moved beyond survival mode, and have become confident and comfortable in their classroom practice. They no longer focus primarily on classroom-specific issues such as classroom management. Rather, their views of education have broadened and they are interested in moving beyond their classrooms into positions of larger-scale leadership or responsibility. Music education has not explicitly adopted the term "second stage" although there has been a recent increase in scholarly discussions of music teachers who have been identified as "experienced."

<div align="center">Urban Music Education</div>

Inner city music and music education are not new topics of discussion. Urban

music education has been the subject of writing in papers, journals, and dissertations

(Albert, 2006; Allsup, 1997; Ausmann, 1991; Bell, 1985; Fiese & DeCarbo, 1995;

Fitzpatrick, 2008; Kindall-Smith, 2004; Mistak, 1969; Mixon, 2005; Neill, 2004; Renfro,

2003; Schmidt, 2007), as well as several books dedicated exclusively to urban music

education (Frierson-Campbell, 2006a, 2006b; Simmons, 1975; Hicks, Standifer, &

Carter, 1983). The 1967 Tanglewood Symposium, a landmark event intended to analyze

the role of music in society, identified music in the inner city as a critical issue. At the

conclusion of the symposium, the Tanglewood Declaration stated that:

> The music education profession must contribute its skills, proficiencies, and
> insights toward assisting in the solution of urgent social problems as in the "inner
> city" or other areas with culturally deprived individuals (Mark, 1996, p. 226).

Following the Tanglewood Symposium, the Goals and Objectives (GO) Project

attempted to refine and focus the broad goals of the Tanglewood Symposium. As part of

the Project, a steering committee and eighteen subcommittees were formed. One of these

subcommittees was focused on inner city music education, although neither urban or

inner city music education is mentioned specifically in the final statement of goals and

objectives.

The discussion of urban music education continued in the January 1970 issue of

the *Music Educators Journal*, which devoted a focus section to the topic urban music

education (Fowler, 1970). The introduction to the teacher education segment of the

special focus section in 1970 began with the statement that "The music educator who

teaches in urban schools faces challenges and problems that require special resources and

ability" ("Introduction," 1970, p. 103). The following topics were discussed in the special

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focus: cultural awareness, administration, and teacher education. Following on the heels of the 1967 Tanglewood Symposium, as well as the Civil Rights Movement and other social movements of the 1960's, this issue reflected a strong commitment to urban music education as a new decade, the 1970s, began. Many of the comments that were true then are still being made, which begs the question of exactly how much has changed.

In November, 1971 the *Music Educators Journal* featured a special focus entitled "Music and Black Culture." Although the primary focus was not specifically on urban issues, numerous articles in the section discuss urban issues in music education to a great degree (Morgan, 1971; Piro, 1971; Simmons, 1971). Typically, the discussions associated black students with living in the ghetto, a term used at the time to indicate particularly decrepit portions of large cities and, by extension, the authors examined black students' music education experiences in urban school systems. As with the 1970 *Music Educators Journal*'s focus on urban education, this issue also demonstrates the influence of the Civil Rights Movement on music education.

Simmons (1975) published *Teaching Music in Urban Schools*, a text dedicated to discussing, analyzing, and planning for teaching music in urban schools. While the text consists primarily of lesson plans (focused on African-American-based music), Simmons also discusses the characteristics of what he identifies as the urban learner and the successful urban teacher, as well as numerous issues such as racial relations, motivation, and testing. Simmons's book, as with texts through the modern times, equates urban education with African-American students exclusively, an inaccurate assumption both then and now. Simmons states:

> musical achievement … can be accomplished best through the inclusion of courses in ethnic music in the curricula of our schools. The teaching of Black

music in the United States provides the teacher with a sound teaching tool for dealing with the making of value judgments relating to such music. (p. 17)

Simmons's book discusses other issues that have, unfortunately, not been solved 34 years later. His analysis of the characteristics of successful urban teachers rings true but he does not identify how they differ for any other music teacher, urban or otherwise. The larger issue, again, is the difficulty of identifying true urban-focused issues, a problem that has yet to be solved.

Neill (2004) described leading preservice music teachers in a program working with "urban Hispanic students," whom she also describes as at-risk. Although the term "urban" appears in the title and in other prominent location, Neill equates urban with at-risk: "Children living in minority urban settings are often referred as at-risk" (p. 3). The paper continues by discussing at-risk students and Hispanic students, but no further connection is made to the use of "urban" in the title. The term "urban" is simply borrowed to denote students who, in this case, are of Hispanic heritage and identified as at-risk. The term "urban" is not necessary in this paper, other than to illustrate how the term "urban" is used with little or no qualification. Neill's paper is about at-risk students and minority students. It is not about urban students necessarily, as both criteria can be found, singularly or in combination, outside of large cities.

This problem of identification of urban issues in music education is also illustrated in a discussion regarding the creation of the Urban Music Leadership Conference, in which the nebulous nature of the usage of "urban" in relation to music education is demonstrated:

Topics range from budgets to scheduling, advocacy efforts to teacher recruitment and retention, benchmarks and assessments to getting more students involved in music programs. Although the challenges in larger cities, like Chicago and New

York, may be greater than in places like Des Moines or Lincoln, Svengalis believes there are a number of similarities and that smaller cities have the same problems on "a smaller scale." Svengalis estimates that more than half of American children attend urban schools. "We named it urban music because that's how it started," Svengalis said of the conference, adding, "If you think you might be urban, you're urban." (Renfro, 2003, p. 40)

This statement is insufficient and misleading. The topics listed as areas of concerns are not solely the province of large cities. Furthermore, as I have argued, urban issues are not as simple as a district's self-identification as urban. The issue here is to clearly state what is at stake. Renfro has identified problems facing music education. They are not, however, problems found only in urban music education. If urban music education is truly to be addressed, then it must be clear that the issues under consideration are, in fact urban issues. Isolation, attrition, and lack of resources are not urban-specific issues. Broad statements of this sort, that connect themselves to urban music education, do not help the schools or programs in question.

More recent literature on urban music education tends to focus on either practitioners (Allsup, 1997; Bell, 1985; Hanshumaker, 1989; Mixon, 2005), with an emphasis on beginning teachers, or teacher education (Fiese & DeCarbo, 1995; Kindall-Smith, 2004; Neill, 2004). It is more common to read literature calling for change or identifying issues than giving clear suggestions, based on research in urban schools or with urban teachers and students, for what educators should actually do with the knowledge that has been collected. Fitzpatrick (2008) points out the need for rigorous scholarly research into urban music education:

If the insights that might lead to the betterment of music education for urban students are complex or difficult to uncover, then a long-term, systematic investigation of the urban context in music education is necessary. If our profession is truly committed to bettering music education within urban settings, then dedication to such an undertaking should be unwavering. A review of the literature

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on urban music education shows a dire need for more research in this area. Although practitioner-focused articles and philosophical statements on the importance of urban music education are valuable, they must be backed up by a solid foundation of research. (p. 21)

Bell (1985) addresses inner-city music with an emphasis on new teachers. His use of this title is significant as his writing is in the same vein as other writing on urban education except that his article is in the minority by using inner-city as its descriptor. Bell's real thrust is a description of the numerous obstacles faced by new (here defined as one to three years) teachers in urban settings with a particular focus on the lack of preparation with which urban teachers generally enter the field. Bell's article illustrates the focus on new urban teachers in music education literature. Bell continues, after his discussion of new teachers, to present a discussion of specific suggestions aimed at inexperienced urban teachers. His discussion and suggestions are insightful and valuable although, as with a great deal of literature, he talks about urban students in broad generalizations as far as home situations and students' musical preferences. It may be the case that difficult home situations are more common in urban settings but it should not be assumed that this is always true, any more than the idea that no urban student is interested in classical music. Bell's article is valuable for new teachers but it runs the risk of suggesting that schools with diverse student bodies can be understood in broad strokes.

Fiese and DeCarbo (1995) administered an open-ended survey to 20 teachers recognized as excellent urban teachers by their state music education associations. While the range is 7-32 years' experience, the average teaching experience is 22 years with 13 of the teachers over 20 years, making the voice of the long-term veteran the most represented. Major trends in the discussion included teacher preparation and the lack of feeling prepared as well as difficulties relating to students (see also Allsup, 1997; Bell,

1985). Recommendations for the improvement of urban music education focused primarily on teacher education and teacher/administrator relationships. Only three (of twenty) teachers unequivocally felt that their education had prepared them for urban teaching. Rather, the trend was towards the teachers feeling musically prepared but otherwise unprepared for the many additional factors of urban schools. This is an informative article but it also illustrates an emphasis on both long-time veterans (the interviewees) and new teachers (often the intended audience), making it another example of considering only the opposite ends of the career cycle.

Hinckley (1995) addresses urban music education as a whole and discusses its particular issues and how they should be addressed, such as pursuing community involvement, networking with other teachers, and using variety to make subject matter more relevant to students. While some of her points are not unique to urban schools (diversity is present in many non-urban settings and teacher networking should always be pursued) she does discuss several urban-specific topics such as the creation of vocational and magnet schools and the frequent incidences of limitations in English proficiency among parents and family. In many cases, the students are more proficient in English than their parents, making communication with school difficult.

Mark (1996) discusses the history of urban music education in the United States, including the observation that music education in urban schools was once at the forefront of innovation. Mark places urban music education within the social context by which it is so closely impacted, considering numerous social movements and events. However, Mark's discussion calls almost exclusively on literature and events from outside of music education, with the exception of allusions to Tanglewood and the January 1970 *Music*

Educators Journal. Mark's report is helpful for contextualizing urban music education but it also indicates a noticeable lack of research and activity related to music education in urban settings. The music education profession has done very little to contribute its own research to the urban education arena.

Allsup (1997) discussed making the transfer from growing up in a rural Illinois to teaching in New York City, including his feelings of being unprepared. Allsup discussed changing his mindset from the teacher-centered "master/apprentice model" to a more student-centered model in which the responsibility shifts to the student to develop internal motivation based on their own life situations. Allsup further gives suggestions for urban teaching and relates his own stories of teaching. The use of story is a common feature in much of the literature on urban music education, scholarly and otherwise.

MENC: The National Association for Music Education made a substantial statement on music education in urban settings in 2006 (Frierson-Campbell, ed., 2006a, 2006b). The two-volume handbook set is a collection of essays discussing the following topics: cultural responsivity, music teacher stories, teaching strategies, alternative teaching models, educational leadership, teacher education, partnerships, and school reform. The essays are a mixture of practitioner-based strategies for classroom practice, essays, accounts of various movements and programs, and scholarly studies, although the latter represent a small percentage of the 31 total chapters. The longest of the sections is the teacher education section with seven chapters.

It is noteworthy that the first volume in this set is subtitled, "A Guide to Survival, Success, and Reform." Survival has a significantly more negative connotation than success and reform. This placement suggests that, due to the particular challenges of

urban music education, our primary focus should be to simply "survive." The implicit message conveyed by the prominence of "survival" only contributes, perhaps subtly, to the negative stereotypes that urban music education already faces (Abril, 2006). Although the books make many positive contributions, music education should keep a careful watch for any pre-conceived assumptions regarding urban music education.

Smith (2006) interviewed six urban teachers that she identifies as novice teachers. They had taught from one to three years although one teacher had taught for seven years, a noticeable difference and an amount of time that would move her past the first stage and into the second stage. The teachers discussed a number of the challenges that they faced, describing both how they met the challenges and what rewards they derived from their work. Similar to other research, administrative issues were one of the biggest challenges, with scheduling specifically identified as the most substantial challenge faced by the teachers. The findings are presented in the form of themes with accompanying quotes illustrating each theme. Interestingly, the seven-year teacher is quoted only once while the other participants are all quoted several times each. This may be a sign that the second-stage teacher encounters, or perceives, fewer challenges than do the novice teachers. It is also significant that administrative issues (rather than funding, language, or management) are identified as the largest challenge, as this is consistent with large bureaucracy as one of the primary identifiers of urban education (Weiner, 2000).

Abril (2006) interviewed and observed three urban music teachers, all of whom had taught for longer than five years (a condition of participation). One teacher was a 27-year veteran, one had been teaching for seven years (placing her in the second stage), one who taught for ten years before beginning urban teaching (although her total urban

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teaching time is not given). Each teacher gave a multi-faceted picture of his or her urban teaching experience both inside and outside the classroom. The teachers expressed strong personal commitments to urban teaching on both a larger scale and on a more specific scale by putting their students as the focus of their practice. Similar to Robinson (2006), Abril's participants identified teachers' relationships with administration as extremely important. Abril's study is important as an illustration of the amount of information that urban teachers in the second stage have to offer the profession.

Fitzpatrick (2008) studied instrumental music education in the Chicago Public Schools. Using a mixed-methods design, she first met with seven urban instrumental music teachers, subsequently surveyed 90 instrumental music teachers, and finally individually interviewed four of the teachers. Fitzpatrick's objective was to investigate the ways in which an urban context affects these teachers' experiences, practices, and outlooks on instrumental music education. Her results included conclusions that the teachers not only consider their urban context in developing their teaching practice but that they also place students' personal and musical improvement among their greatest rewards.

<center>Synthesis of Research on Urban Music Education</center>

Urban music education has been discussed for over forty years, dating back to the 1967 Tanglewood Symposium and earlier. The discussion has focused on calls for action, discussions of issues, and suggestions for practitioners. There is a comparatively small body of research and investigation of music education, and especially music teachers, in urban settings. There is, however, evidence that scholarly research into urban music education is increasing.

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Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed research literature on the teacher career cycle, second-stage teachers, second-stage urban teachers, second-stage music teachers, and urban education. I considered these topics in terms of both music education and general education. I provided a list of criteria for describing urban schools. I will use these criteria throughout the study to determine if a school or issue is in fact based in urban education.

In summary, the past research indicates an interest in the teacher career cycle that has been present for some time, although differing viewpoints as to the nature of the cycle itself have been proposed. In particular, the second stage of the teaching career is currently the subject of a great deal of research. Music education has as of yet given little focus to the teacher career cycle although there has been a recent increase in interest regarding career stages. The opportune moment for investigating the teacher career cycle and, more specifically, the second stage is at hand.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the manner in which this study was conducted. The chapter includes a statement of the research questions followed by a description of the theoretical framework, research design, the participants, ethical considerations, data collection, issues of trustworthiness, and procedures for analysis and interpretation.

Research Questions

The participants in this study are three second-stage music teachers who teach in urban settings. The research questions for this study are

1. *What themes emerge as meaningful to participants when they describe their teaching experiences as second-stage urban music teachers?*

2. *What do the participants identify as major issues in urban music education and how do they discuss them?*

3. *How do participants perceive their career development from the first into the second stage and how do they discuss their anticipated career trajectory?*

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research methodology that uses a multiple descriptive case study design (Merriam, 1998, pp. 29-31 & 40). Case study necessitates a clearly recognizable phenomenon or entity as the focus of the study. Merriam (1998)

states that cases can be distinguished from other forms of qualitative research in that they are "intensive descriptions and analyses of a *single unit* or *bounded system*" [italics hers], also giving as examples "an individual, program, event, group, intervention, or community" (p. 19). The bounded system, or case, in this study is second-stage music educators who teach in urban settings. The music educators are bounded by both the current place in their careers (the second stage) and the setting in which they teach (urban).

Merriam also writes, "*Descriptive* (italics hers) means that the end product of a case study is a "rich "thick" description of the phenomenon under study" (p. 29). The phenomenon in this study is the second stage of teaching and the particular group of people is a group of second-stage music teachers teaching in urban settings. By using a variety of data sources, I pursued a holistic view of the phenomenon as experienced by the particular group of teachers, investigating the meanings that they construct based on their experiences. The case is important for what it might represent regarding the teacher career cycle, the second stage of teachers' careers, urban music educators in the second stage of their careers, urban music education in general, and possible implications for urban music educator attrition.

<div align="center">Participants</div>

The study was conducted with a purposeful (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002) sample of urban second-stage music teachers. Purposeful sampling has been used in numerous other second-stage teacher studies (Berg et al, 2005; Charner-Laird, 2007; Donaldson, 2005; Donaldson et al., 2005; Fiarman, 2007; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Szczesiul, 2007), suggesting that it is a strategy well-suited to investigations of this population. Purposeful

sampling is based on the technique of selecting participants who are "information-rich cases" (Patton, 2002, p. 230). Patton states:

> Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term *purposeful* [italics his] sampling. Studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations. (p. 230)

For purposes of confidentiality, I will identify them by the pseudonyms Samantha, Janis, and Toni. All three are European-American and female. These criteria were not considered in the selection process. Although many second stage studies discuss tenure as a characteristic of second-stage teachers, due to possible differences in tenure systems between districts, I did not consider tenure among my criteria.

At the time of data collection, they were in their seventh, seventh, and ninth years of teaching. As mentioned previously, for purposes of this study, I required six or more years' teaching experience to be considered a second-stage teacher. More specifically, I was interested in teachers who had passed that six-year mark within the last few years, such that their transition to the second stage was relatively recent. That proximity to the first stage would allow them to speak about the transition to the second stage with greater immediacy.

At the time of the study, Samantha was teaching elementary general music, Janis was teaching high school band and music appreciation, and Toni was teaching middle school band and strings. The participants were initially identified based on recommendations from university faculty members familiar with their work.

In selecting participants, I sought teachers who I believed would speak thoughtfully, openly, and at length about their experience, such that I would be able to gain as clear an understanding as possible of their lives as second-stage urban music

teachers. I had knowledge of two of the participants (Samantha and Janis) prior to

beginning the study and in the fall of 2007, I approached them and suggested the idea of

participating in a research study. Both were enthusiastic. A faculty member familiar with

Toni and her work over the course of her career recommended Toni. Based on

discussions with the faculty member regarding the nature of my study and the teacher

dispositions that I believed would lend themselves to the study, I determined that Toni

would be an excellent participant.

The participants all displayed enthusiasm for participating in the study, citing

such reasons as a belief in the importance of studying urban music education. The

participants taught in large urban areas and in schools that satisfy the criteria (Weiner,

2000) described previously The participants had worked with preservice teachers in the

past through coordinating teaching practica, as well as speaking with preservice teachers

about urban music education, and therefore have experience reflecting on their teaching

experiences.

TABLE 3.1

Participant	Years Teaching	Subjects/ Levels Taught	Tenure?
Samantha	7	Elementary general/choral	No tenure system in district
Janis	7	Elementary/middle school band; High school band/music appreciation	No
Toni	9	Middle school band, strings, and drum line	Yes

Janis and Samantha taught in the same city. Janis was teaching in the city's primary

public school district. Samantha had previously taught in the same district as Janis but

was currently teaching in a charter school district within the same city. Toni taught in a different large city in a different part of the state.

Chapter IV will describe the participants in greater detail, for purposes of acquainting the reader with the participants' backgrounds and teaching careers through the present time.

Ethical Considerations

To protect anonymity, I used pseudonyms for both the participants and for the urban areas and schools in which they taught. A consent form was distributed to each participant and data collection with the participants did not begin until signed consent was obtained (see Appendix G for the consent form). The consent form outlined the participants' rights, such as the right to withdraw from the study at any time and the right to refuse to answer any particular questions.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a background survey, email journal, semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 1998; Seidman, 2006), and a focus group discussion (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2006). The objective is to bring forth what Merriam (1998) refers to as the "*emic*, [italics hers] or insider's perspective" (p. 6) regarding the phenomenon.

Background Survey

A background survey was sent to the participants via email (see Appendix A for the background survey). The survey was used to ascertain basic background information (such as ethnic background, level of education, areas taught, and specifics of teaching experience) as well as to ask the participants to identify key components of their experience for use in future data collection. By establishing this information before

beginning interviews, it was not necessary to use precious interview time to obtain simple background information. I was therefore able to format my interviews more specifically to each participant's context and experiences.

Email Journal

After each participant's background survey has been returned, she was sent directions for keeping an email journal and the submission of entries, as well as journal prompts on which to focus her entries (See Appendix B for the directions and journal prompts). These prompts were designed to be ongoing, such that the teachers could respond to the questions at any time during the study. I encouraged them to write at any time. The purpose of the email journal was to allow the participants an opportunity to contribute relevant data as it occurred to them without waiting for interviews and risking the loss of potentially valuable information. I maintained an email file of each participant's entries.

Between the second and third interviews I gave the participants a more specific prompt: I asked them to read and comment on *The Professional Teacher* (Steffy et al., 2000, pp. 60-74). As I had identified Steffy et al.'s book, *Life Cycle of the Career Teacher*, as the theoretical framework for my study, and the chapter "The Professional Teacher" corresponds to the second stage of in-service teaching, I wanted them to read the passage before we met for our final interview.

After completing all three interviews, and before engaging in the focus group discussion, the participants were given a set of different journal prompts (see Appendix D) in order to write one final journal entry in an effort to prepare them for the focus group discussion. This journal entry was intended to allow them to summarize their

individual experiences of the interview process and what it had uncovered. It was also intended to prepare them to discuss the preliminary findings with the other participants, through focusing on their own experience before discussing others' experiences and the topics as a whole. Samantha was the only participant to respond with a final entry before the focus group. Janis never responded before or after the focus group. Toni also did not respond before the focus group. However, she felt that, after reading the transcript of the focus group as a member check, she had nothing further to say that she had not already expressed.

Individual Interviews

Each participant was interviewed three times, using Seidman's (2006) three-interview series approach. In describing his approach, Seidman states: "In this approach interviewers use, primarily, open-ended questions. Their major task is to build upon and explore participants' responses to those questions. The goal is to have the participant reconstruct his or her experience within the topic under study" (p. 15).

In Seidman's design, each interview has a specific purpose, with the interviews building on each other. The purpose of the first interview, referred to as the focused life history interview, is "to put the participant's experience in context by asking him or her to tell as much as possible about him or herself in light of the topic up to the present time" (p. 17). In this study, the first interview was used to follow up on the background survey in order to bring the participant forward to their present place in their career. This interview provided a great deal of the material that allowed subsequent data collection to explore the research questions more in-depth. The second interview has as its purpose "to concentrate on the concrete details of the participants' present lived experience in the

topic area of the study" (p. 18). The third interview, known as "reflection on the meaning," asks participants to reflect on the meaning of their experience" (p. 18). The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher.

I designed a new protocol for each individual interview based on the data that had been collected prior to the interview, in order to target the questions raised by each participant. I did not design the first interview protocols until I read the participants' background surveys. Subsequently, I designed the second and third interview protocols based on the content of the data that had been collected up until that time (see Appendix E). The protocols reflect my impressions of the participants' interviewing style. Samantha and Toni tended to be quite expansive and, therefore, their protocols were not as detailed. It became clear early on that they would need very little prompting to discuss the topics at hand. Janis's style was much more succinct, so her interview protocols were more detailed. Furthermore, as Janis was inconsistent with writing journal entries, I attempted to make up for the intended content of the journal entries at times.

Focus Group Discussion

After each participant had completed three interviews with the researcher, a focus group discussion was held. Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2006) advocate focus group discussions due to their potential for adding data that might not surface in individual interviews: "because of their synergistic potentials, focus groups often produce data that are seldom produced through individual interviewing and observation and that result in especially powerful interpretive insights" (p. 903). By discussing their interview responses in a group discussion format, I felt that the participants might find that they had forgotten elements that were particularly important to them. They might also find that

their thoughts on certain topics had changed after discussing the topics as a group, and that they wanted to add to or modify previous interview question answers. Based on preliminary findings from the interviews and email journals, I developed a guide for the focus group discussion. As the focus group was intended to follow the same open-ended discussion format used in the individual interviews (Seidman, 2006), and the objective was to allow the participants to control the discussion, the guide served as a suggestion for topics rather than as a standardized protocol.

Timeline for the Study

Data collection took place during April, May, and June of 2008. After approval from the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board was received in early April, data collection began. The participants were sent the background survey via email. When the surveys were returned, the email journal prompts and directions were sent to the participants. Subsequently, interviews were scheduled and conducted. With one exception, all interviews were completed at the scheduled times. Janis accidentally forgot her second interview time, requiring us to reschedule the second interview and, consequently, somewhat shortening the time in between her second and third interviews. All interviews and the focus group discussion were recorded. Compact discs of each interview were subsequently created and stored in a secure location.

Trustworthiness

Issues of validity and reliability must be carefully considered in qualitative research. Merriam (1998) argues that validity is a question of the relationship of research findings to reality, and the degree to which the two coincide. More pressing, then, is the concept of reality as it pertains to qualitative research and, by extension, this study.

Merriam (1998) states: "One of the assumptions underlying qualitative research is that reality is holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing; it is not a single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be observed, and measured" (p. 202).

In considering reliability with the qualitative research tradition, Merriam also states that,

> Reliability in a research design is based on the assumption that there is a single reality and that studying it repeatedly will yield the same results. … Qualitative research, however, is not conducted so that the laws of human behavior can be isolated. Rather, researchers seek to describe and explain the world as those in the world experience it. (p. 205)

As the researcher, it was my task to describe and explain the meanings that the individual teachers derive from their experiences as urban second-stage music teachers rather than to search for one unified meaning to represent all the participants. The focus on the individual makes it inappropriate to pursue comprehensive meanings of careers spent in urban music teaching upon which the teachers will agree.

I used the term trustworthiness in discussing data collection and analysis. Trustworthiness, proposed by several qualitative researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002), is an alternative to reliability or validity. Patton states, "Qualitative research in recent years has moved toward preferring such language as *trustworthiness* and *authenticity* [italics his]" (p. 51). Lincoln and Guba (1985) further discuss credibility as a significant component of trustworthiness. I believe that credibility is a particularly powerful component of the overall trustworthiness of this study. The data collected, the methods of analysis, the researcher, and the final presentation of findings must be credible to the reader. I will use the following measures to demonstrate trustworthiness

and credibility in this study: the researcher as instrument of inquiry, data collection triangulation, member checks, and a focus group discussion.

Researcher as the Instrument of Inquiry

Inherent in qualitative research is the notion of the researcher as the primary data collection instrument. The researcher must establish credibility (Patton, 2002): "In qualitative inquiry, **the researcher is the instrument** [bold his]. The credibility of qualitative methods, therefore hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence, and rigor of the person doing fieldwork" (p. 14). The researcher's skill and competence will be addressed throughout the study in the presentation of the research approach, description of the research has been conducted, and discussion of how the researcher has arrived at the findings of the study. It is the responsibility of the researcher to make the research process transparent so that the reader may judge the skill and competence with which the study is carried out.

The degree of relevant expertise brought by the researcher to the study is also a powerful component of establishing the trustworthiness of the study. As a former music educator in an urban setting who was at the same point in my career as the participants (I had taught for six years) before leaving public school for the academy, I believed that I would be able to establish a relationship with the participants conducive to data collection. I believed that my teaching experience would give me credibility with the researchers as someone with sensitivity to and awareness of urban music teaching situations. Consequently I would be able to gather more meaningful data than someone inexperienced in urban music teaching. I believe that I was successful in establishing that relationship.

Finally, in order to demonstrate rigor in the research process, it is necessary for the researcher to acknowledge any possible biases that may influence the research. It is possible that my expertise as an urban music educator would make it difficult to consider the participants' experiences within the larger scale of music education. I would argue, however, that this possible disadvantage is outweighed by the paucity of research conducted by researchers with urban music teaching experience. Furthermore, I have experience teaching in a non-urban setting (an affluent suburb). That diversity of teaching situation might have helped me to explore the data from a wider perspective than if my experience was strictly in urban schools.

Data Collection Triangulation

Triangulation is another method of addressing trustworthiness. Denzin and Lincoln (2006) discuss the importance of triangulation: "the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question" (p. 5). The use of multiple sources of data (background survey, journal entries, three interviews, and focus group discussion) constitutes data collection triangulation.

Focus Group

The focus group itself serves as a trustworthiness check for the researcher. Kamberlis and Dimitriadis (2006) suggest that the nature of focus group dialogue and its resulting shift of power away from the researcher may prevent the researcher from drawing hasty conclusions: "[T]he dialogic possibilities afforded by focus groups help researchers to work against premature consolidation of their understandings and explanations" (p. 903).

Member Checks

The most significant factor in the trustworthiness of this study is the technique of member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba write: "The member check, whereby data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from whom the data were originally collected, is the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314). The participants reviewed their interview and focus group transcripts for accuracy. They were also given emerging findings to review, allowing them to comment on the authenticity of the researcher's representations.

Furthermore, member checking can be both formal and informal (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). During data collection, member checking was sought in between formal interviews through emails, additional conversations, listening to interview tapes, or debriefing sessions immediately after the formal interview was concluded. These member checking techniques have several advantages: the opportunity for the participant to clarify intentions in particular passages, the opportunity to provide further information relative to particular points in the interview, and the opportunity for summaries (p. 314). Lincoln and Guba do state, however, that formal member checking, possibly in the form of providing written transcripts, summaries, and analyses, is also necessary for true research credibility (p. 315).

I also emailed the participants at times to ask for further clarification on items that had come up in interviews that I had not followed up on at the time. Finally, I emailed the participants their individual portions of the findings chapters for comments. In addition to

clarifying various portions of the findings, the member checking emails produced new

comments that have given the study additional support.

I also performed member checking during the interviews themselves, through

periodically repeating words back to the participants or giving my preliminary analyses

(using comments such as "It sounds to me like…"). They would then agree or disagree

and clarify my interpretations.

<center>Data Analysis and Interpretation</center>

In the qualitative research tradition, data analysis is inextricably linked with data

collection. Merriam (1998) states:

> Data collection and analysis is a *simultaneous* [italics hers] activity in qualitative
> research. Analysis begins with the first interview, the first observation, the first
> document read. Emerging insights, hunches, and tentative hypotheses direct the
> next phase of data collection, which in turn leads to the refinement or
> reformulation of questions, and so on. It is an interactive process throughout that
> allows the investigator to produce believable and trustworthy results. (p. 151)

It is inappropriate to attempt to separate data collection and data analysis. While the

project initially began with data collection, according to Merriam data analysis begins

immediately afterwards. Seidman (2006) provides a detailed outline for taping and

transcribing interviews (pp. 114-116). Interviews and the focus group were audiotaped

and transcribed by the researcher, with the transcription process itself a significant

component of data analysis. In between participants' interviews, I listened to their

interview tapes as part of the ongoing data analysis as well as to aid in formulating

interview questions for subsequent interviews. While there might have been a risk of my

analysis of a participant's interview being affected by having listened to the other

participants' interviews, I believe that this risk was outweighed by the benefits of

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maintaining constant engagement with the data and engaging in consequent ongoing analysis.

Particular emphasis is placed on data management within qualitative analysis (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002). I kept individual files for each participant. Throughout the study I kept all hard copies of data in a secure location, including audio recordings, sorted according to participant. After initially recording the interviews, I burned compact disc copies and stored them in a secure location.

Having acknowledged that data analysis occurs both after and during raw data collection, the approach to analysis must be considered. Although it may be tempting to seek hard and fast rules to drive data analysis, this is neither possible nor advisable if the research is to be credible and trustworthy. Patton (2002) proposes that researchers should consider data analysis in terms of guidelines rather than actual rules: "[G]uidelines, procedural suggestions, and exemplars are not rules. Applying guidelines requires judgment and creativity. Because each qualitative study is unique, the analytical approach will be unique" (p. 433).

I used Merriam's (1998) constant-comparative model for data analysis. Merriam remarks, "at the heart of this method is the continuous comparison of incidents, respondents' remarks, and so on" (p. 179). Analysis begins, therefore, during the collection itself (i.e. reading of the surveys, and conducting the interviews and focus group). Within the constant-comparative model, Merriam provides a three-level analysis outline. The three levels are, in sequence, description, categories and themes, and generating theory. However, Merriam also states that: "the constant comparative method of data analysis has been adopted by many researchers who are not seeking to build

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substantive theory" (p. 159). Furthermore, as Merriam's discussion of the second level of analysis uses the term "categories" almost exclusively (pp. 179-187), I am considering the formation of categories to be the second level of analysis and the final level of analysis to be the creation of themes.

Description, as the initial level, refers to simply reading the data and making descriptions of the contents of the raw data. I transcribed the interviews and focus group discussion. After transcribing the interviews, I coded the transcripts for categories and themes. Seidman describes coding as, "The process of noting what is interesting, labeling it, and putting it into appropriate files" (p. 125). While coding the raw data, I used the research questions as a lens to look for patterns, categories, and themes. I also used the research questions to separate raw data that, while potentially interesting from a research standpoint, was not relevant to answering the research questions in this study. I created a coding form (see Appendix H) and completed one for each data set (survey, interviews, journals, and focus group). For the focus group, I completed three coding forms, one focused on each participant's contributions.

Moving to the second level, the development of categories requires more extended analysis. In discussing category construction, Merriam observes that

> Devising categories is largely an intuitive process, but it is also systematic and informed by the study's purpose, the investigator's orientation and knowledge, and the meanings made explicit by the participants themselves. (p. 179)

Merriam subsequently outlines several techniques to use in category construction (pp. 179-187). However, although this process is intuitive, recalling the focus on guidelines rather than actual rules of analysis, to protect the trustworthiness of the study the

researcher must make the manner of analyzing data and drawing conclusions clear to the reader.

Finally, after placing data into categories, I used the research questions as a lens to develop themes that would provide a more complete picture of the experiences of these three second-stage music teachers. I considered this development of themes to constitute a third level of analysis. Merriam discusses how a researcher knows that it is appropriate to extend analysis past the level of categories when:

> "data … seem to beg for continued analysis past the formation of categories. A key here is when the researcher knows that the category scheme does not tell the whole story – that there is more to be understood about the phenomenon" (p. 188).

The researcher must be open to unforeseen findings. Using the above research question as a lens, I looked for relationships between the categories and sought to articulate those as broader themes.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented and outlined the methodology with which this study was conducted, including the selection of participants, the procedures for data collection and analysis, the ways in which trustworthiness is addressed. Chapter IV will present profiles of the three participants: Samantha, Janis, and Toni.

CHAPTER IV

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

This chapter examines the three participants' lives before they entered the teaching profession, discusses their teacher preparation experiences, and briefly summarizes their careers through the present. Although the focus of this study is the second stage of their teaching careers, in order to examine their experiences and views holistically at that stage, it is necessary to frame those experiences within the larger picture of the teachers' earlier lives. While the objective is not to trace their entire careers, it is appropriate to be familiar with their educational and personal experiences up through the present.

Each profile begins with a brief anecdote about the participant. I then describe the participants' backgrounds, focusing on information such as the area in which they grew up, self-identified significant events from their youth, and the role of music and music education in their lives prior to beginning college. Subsequently, I discuss their teacher education experiences, including their student teaching. Finally, I briefly summarize their music teaching careers and conclude by describing their present schools and teaching situations. The participants are identified here and throughout using the pseudonyms Samantha, Janis, and Toni, as confidentiality is of the utmost importance. This chapter will set the stage for the chapters that will follow and will give the reader a clear picture of the person who is speaking.

Samantha

I had met Samantha in numerous settings prior to this research. We had both participated as speakers in a panel discussion held at a meeting of undergraduate music education majors on the topic of music education in large cities. I had met with her at conferences and worked with her on a previous research project. I knew that Samantha was thoughtful and reflective, and that she was committed to music education, particularly music education in large cities. Samantha was enthusiastic to participate in this research, partially due to her belief in the necessity of research being conducted on urban music educators. Given Samantha's own background as a researcher during her master's program, I was confident that she had the potential to provide a great deal of information for the study.

As I worked with Samantha, I discovered that her path to her current teaching situation had included a number of stops on the way, including emigrating to the United States, transferring universities, switching schools as a teacher, and the particularly meaningful experience of regularly travelling through a large Midwestern city in the United States that led to her strong desire to teach in a large city. Her travels had brought her to her current teaching situation to which, it was clear, she was totally committed in terms of the students and staff, as well as the overall charter school district's educational philosophy. Samantha was interesting to talk to not only because of her insightful comments on music education and her career development but also because of the roots of her desire to become a music educator and her particular calling to teach in the inner city.

Upbringing

Emigration

Samantha was born and raised in a small city in eastern Canada close to the United States border. Her mother was American, and her family often crossed the border regularly to get together with her extended family. When she was in eighth grade, her family emigrated from Canada to the United States. As a middle school student in the United States, she was quickly struck by the difference that she perceived between her school experiences in the United States and Canada. In Canada, she attended a small, self-contained K-8 school, whereas upon emigrating she attended a large middle school in a medium-sized city where classes were departmentalized and students had individual schedules. Samantha felt that her earlier educational experiences in Canada represented a small, nurturing environment and fostered a sense of the inherent importance of students taking care of one another. She describes her school experience after moving to a large middle school in the United States as less sympathetic and less personal. These differing experiences in class size and learning environment influenced her later as a teacher, as she tried to emulate her earlier educational experiences in order to foster a nurturing learning environment.

Samantha experienced a tension between being encouraged to maintain her Canadian identity and her desire to conform to her new school setting. Her new classmates were curious to explore cultural differences between Canadians and Americans, differences that she desired to downplay:

> I think it comes from, at that point in time, just this emerging sense of nationalism in Canada. People would say, "Try to hold on to what you have, and don't forget that you're Canadian wherever you go." But I was very anxious to not stand out. Of course at that age, you don't want to, and soon when people found out that I was Canadian …, they would ask me to say "dollar," say "hockey," say this say that, "we want to hear how you talk and whether or not you talk differently." So I

quickly changed the way I spoke to sound more American. And I did it on purpose. … My Canadian words kind of pop out when I hang out with my dad. But I tried very hard and it stuck. (interview #1)

Religious background

Another significant component of Samantha's life was her religious upbringing in a conservative Christian church. Samantha's religion had two lasting effects on her: a great deal of experience in unaccompanied harmony singing and a strong sense of a need to be of service to others.

As a member of her church, Samantha regularly participated in a cappella singing, as instrumental music was never used during services. Samantha also sang in both family and social a cappella groups. She traces her musical interest in singing to these events:

> I grew up singing a cappella in four-part harmony, with my dad singing tenor on one side, my mom singing alto on the other side … Developing that ear for four-part harmony and learning how to sing alto at a young age, I think, really influenced me, more than I even know to this day. (interview #1)

In addition to family and worship settings, Samantha described participating in social singing events:

> [M]ost weekends we would go to someone's home from the church and have a sing-night. You'd all bring your own hymnal, and you would go to the person's house, and everyone would sit around and sing - just pick their favorite songs and sing four-part harmony. I think I developed a lot of my ear for music that way. (interview #1)

In retrospect, as Samantha considers the impact of her religious background on her teaching career, she perceives a definite influence: "I would be *totally* kidding myself if I said it [religion] had nothing to do with it" (interview #1). Additionally, although Samantha also participated in missionary trips both before and during college, she does not connect her missionary experiences in a religious context to her work as a teacher. She does perceive an overlap with her missionary experience in terms of the idea of

performing service, but she does not perceive herself as a missionary in the religious sense. In discussing the role played by religion in the subsequent events of her life, including education, she concludes:

> [R]eligion never motivated me. Religion itself. I think that the person that I am inside was what was motivating. Or your values, the core values that you have. But those were never motivated by religion. Ever. But I think that mentality, or that structure, that I had as a kid and hearing constantly about how you do good in your life and how you're supposed to serve others, became a part of me even though I didn't know it. (interview #1)

Urban curiosity

Another significant element of Samantha's upbringing was her growing interest in large cities. As a child, Samantha's family regularly crossed into the United States and drove through a large city in order to see her family. Samantha became increasingly curious about the city because, although she saw it many times from the car on her family's regular driving trips through the city, her family never actually stopped and spent any time in the city. Samantha also wondered about the history of the city. Her mother had grown up in that city and talked about days when the city was much more vibrant and active than it appeared at the present. The combination of all of these ideas led Samantha to be intrigued by the large city. Samantha recalls seeing the buildings that she works next to today and trying to reconcile what she was seeing at the present with the history that had been related to her by her family:

> We had been traveling through [city] my entire life. Driving. And I remember seeing the buildings that I work next to now, seeing them my entire life. … [It] was just this huge mystery to me, because it was this city that was very obviously crumbling and falling apart, yet my mom had grown up going to [a large department store] downtown and always talked about wearing her white gloves and her hat. (interview #1)

The interest that began during her early years continued to deepen and remained in place when she entered college.

Preservice

Samantha's path through her undergraduate years was a circuitous one. It began at a small liberal arts university affiliated with her church. Samantha attended the school on full music scholarship. During her third year, while participating in a study abroad program in England, Samantha was dismissed from her school due to rule infractions. As a result of this experience, Samantha began to view the church itself negatively, although her sense of the need for service remained untouched:

> [T]hus begins my rocky road with [my church] and, from then on, I had a real cynical view of church people. Because I felt very judged. Even though I knew I broke the rules, I felt that people were judgmental for no reason, and I guess it was part of growing up and realizing, figuring out who I was. But I think that service aspect of the Christianity that was so strict in my life - service and giving yourself to others - I think that definitely played a part. That's what stuck with me. (interview #1)

She spent the remainder of the year first in England and then in the United States, where she took community college classes and considered her future path. During that year, she worked with her former middle school band director, coaching groups and directing pieces on concerts. He encouraged her to continue to pursue music education and to audition at the school from which she would later graduate, telling her that "if you don't do it, you're doing yourself an injustice" (interview #1).

Urban pursuit

Samantha completed a bachelor's degree (and later master's) in music education at a large Midwestern university. The interest in the large city that had begun when she was younger carried over into her preservice program and continued to grow: "I really

wanted to be a part of [the city]. I wanted to be a part of whatever was going on there"

(interview #1). However, Samantha had difficulty pursuing her interest in urban music

education, both in coursework and in student teaching. There was a lack of urban-related

content in her methods classes and she paints a picture of her faculty members as being

reluctant to discuss urban issues:

> None of my professors in music ed[ucation] at the time really ever talked about "What would this lesson look like in an urban setting?" or "what would you do to modify this sort of instruction if you had a class of students who were very ethnically or SES diverse?" (interview #1)

Samantha recalls only one exception to this lack of urban discussion however, when a

student asked an urban-related question of a professor:

> [S]omeone said "well, what about teaching in an urban setting and my ears kind of perked up a little bit because I was already starting to kind of go there in my head and, and [the professor] goes "well, you really want to think about [that]." (interview #1)

> Even though Samantha was frustrated by the lack of answers that she received

from faculty, her intrigue remained: "I was just thoroughly disappointed in that

conversation and I thought "there must be more to this, I mean, there must be a whole

other realm that we should visit," and it was just really never discussed" (interview #1).

Despite her initial disappointment, Samantha also acknowledged that the problem might

have been a larger institutional one: a lack of a relationship between her university and

the city's public school district. She thought that, perhaps, the music education

department simply did not know cooperating teachers or had other administrative

difficulties with the administrative body of the district: "I'm not sure why they

discouraged me. I don't know if it was because the relationship was strained with the

department in (city) or if it was more just "we don't know who to send you to" (interview #1). Nevertheless, Samantha was determined to pursue her interest in urban teaching.

Student teaching

Samantha had difficulty obtaining a student teaching placement in a close-by large city although she was ultimately successful in being placed in an elementary school in that city. She had pushed the department to allow her to student teach in the city and had finally been placed by the administration of the city public school district. In discussing her experience with her cooperating teacher, Samantha painted a picture of a very strict teacher who placed a high priority on his performing show choir and paid little attention to his curriculum and classroom practice. Although her experiences with the teacher's teaching style and curriculum were negative, she described how she began to fall in love with the students. She also became increasingly aware of the influence of the service component of her religious upbringing, and connected it to her thoughts about urban music education:

> [I]t was a way that I knew that I could be doing something good. And I could be, helping to maybe change the course of a child's life **…** I thought that maybe by going into a place where people didn't want to go that that could possibly happen. I don't think I ever had that mentality that I could be this person that came in and saved all the poor black children in [city], but I think that that mentality that you do good for others was definitely a part of it. (interview #1)

In addition to describing her growing care for her students, she reported that she also developed an interest in teaching in an unfamiliar setting: "I grew to know and love the kids there and decided I wanted the challenge of being in a place with which I was unfamiliar but was really needed" (email survey).

Early Career and Current Teaching Situation

After graduating with her bachelor's in music education, Samantha began teaching in the same large city in which she had been a student teacher. She went on to teach elementary general music and elementary choir in the city's public school system for four years. Subsequently, she took a one-year sabbatical to pursue a master's degree in music education (MM). Upon completing her degree, Samantha discovered that her school had failed to submit the necessary sabbatical paperwork to the district, and that she had consequently been fired. She then began teaching at her current school, a kindergarten through fifth grade charter school within the city. Her new school is in its own charter district, consisting of three schools. At the time of data collection, Samantha was finishing her third year of teaching at that school, her seventh year of teaching overall.

Samantha also made a connection between her religious upbringing and her desire to teach in an urban setting:

> But I think that service aspect of the Christianity that was so strict in my life - service and giving yourself to others - I think that definitely played a part. That's what stuck with me. And it would explain why I was drawn toward that type of environment I think. (interview #1)

Samantha currently teaches elementary general music to grades kindergarten through fifth grade, and directs an afterschool choir. As a charter school, her school is publically funded but administered privately. Students must apply to attend and there is a general admission policy of first come-first served. There are approximately 360 students and an average class size is 16. The student body is almost entirely African-American. According to Samantha, the students at her current school are the exact same student population as in her first school. The students come from a mixture of areas in the city and have the same cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Samantha is the only music teacher at her school. In addition to general music, she teaches integration classes with science and social studies and serves as the coordinator for the AMPP (Art, Music, Physical Education, and Performing Arts) team, consisting of a total of eight teachers. In addition to certified teachers (art, music, and physical education), Samantha's school employs several non-certified staff that teach classes in the following areas: Theatre, 3-D Art, Photography, Fitness/Food Art and Sewing.

Samantha's school is located in an old warehouse but, as with many industrial buildings in the city, it is no longer used for that purpose. Its immediate surroundings represent a diverse mixture of stereotypical urban concrete jungle and eclectic neighborhoods:

> It's a strange combination. We're also located just east of the [freeway and interstate]. We're actually on the ramp – really, we're on a ramp – [between the two]. It's a strange dichotomy, trichotomy if it's a word, concrete all around us to the west and dust from the freeway, which is an issue with our kids with asthma … And then this amazing music-rich wild-bird commune garden neighborhood. I'm not exaggerating! We have peacocks in our parking lot everyday. (interview #2)

Before the school opened, the building was converted into its present state according to a plan devised by the first principal. Although security guards or devices are common in many urban schools, Samantha's school has made the conscious decision to forgo security at the front entrance. She describes the interior of the school:

> There's lots of natural light. Each classroom has lots of windows. Kind of a loft-type feeling. High ceilings, large windows, interior brick walls, colors everywhere, very bright colors, purple, orange, yellow, bright colors everywhere. Lots of student work up. Artwork, written work, and all things in between. There's no hallways so each floor – there's three floors – in the middle of each floor is what we call the "village center." Each floor is a "village" from the "it takes a village to raise a child" little saying. The center of each village is the center where the children gather for lunch and gather at the end of the day for

their village meeting. And in the round are the classrooms. So the classrooms don't sit in the hallway. (interview #2)

Summary

Samantha's background and outlook are characterized by travels: between schools, countries, and through the city. They are also characterized by a belief, rooted in her religious upbringing, in the need to serve others. Samantha has been shaped by her experiences with a new culture, her religious background and its focus on both service and music, and her unwavering curiosity about large cities. The combination of these three has led Samantha to her current location. Samantha is a teacher dedicated to serving others, a dedication that she expresses through teaching in a large city.

Janis

One of the first times that I met Janis was when I traveled to her school with undergraduate students as part of an instrumental methods class. The purpose was two-fold: the students were to get field experience working with secondary students in instrumental music education and they were also to see a school in an urban setting and speak with a teacher from that setting. The undergraduate students were struck by the experience and, in conversations that I had with them after their meetings, they discussed the numerous obstacles that she worked with, the commitment that she presented, and likened her to "a soldier."

As I entered Janis's school and walked through the metal detectors in the entry way, I was instantly reminded of my own days as a public school teacher in the Chicago Public Schools and how students in the schools in which I had taught walked through metal detectors every morning. Between the surroundings of a large old building and the security presence, I started to feel much more at home than I do in affluent suburban

schools. This was familiar. I not only had an idea of what I might encounter but I knew that I would be able to speak with Janis as someone with a common background.

Upbringing

Although Janis grew up in a small rural community, her family's roots can be traced to a nearby large city. Janis's parents had lived in the city for their entire lives and had seen the city's more prosperous times, the turmoil of the Civil Rights movement as it affected the city, and the subsequent economic downturn. Consequently, Janis's parents moved out of the city when Janis was very young. She describes them as being "a part of that crew that left the city and set up shop elsewhere" (interview #1).

Whereas her parents had grown up in a large city, Janis grew up in a rural farming community. Although the area was small and the school system had only one school per age group (early elementary, elementary, middle, and high), the band program was strong and the director, an African American, was regarded as an "institution" in the town. As the town was almost exclusively Caucasian, Janis reflected that studying with the band director might have been one of the students' few experiences with cultural diversity, although their only primary perception of him was simply as their band director:

> [H]e was the band director, that was his overarching presence. Most of the kids like me were never exposed to much diversity. So it wasn't something we talked about or even acknowledged as something weird. Or strange. He was just the band director. (interview #1)

Janis's band director was her inspiration for pursuing music education. She decided in seventh grade that she wanted to be a band director. Janis characterized her program as characteristic of "the typical suburban model" and proposed that she saw herself teaching in a similar program, such as the one in which she had seen her band

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director. Janis did not, however, give specific thought to the type of setting in which she might like to teach (urban, suburban, rural). Although she would go on to dedicate herself to music education in a large city, at this point in her life Janis had not given any thought to teaching in a large city and describes her teaching ideas as "I wasn't sure, probably somewhere that looked like where I was" (interview #1).

Janis's upbringing took place in one area (a rural community) and in one relatively small school system. During middle school, she decided that she wanted to be a band director in the same type of program with which she was familiar. She had very little experience with cultural diversity and no desire to pursue urban music education. Despite these limited experiences, however, shortly after leaving home and beginning college, Janis would go to develop a strong interest in the big city and the major issues faced by its children.

Preservice

Sociology double-major

Janis attended a large Midwestern university, where she was accepted as a music major. Although her initial objective was to become a band director, Janis soon added a second substantial component to her studies. During her first year Janis took an Introduction to Sociology course and was strongly influenced by several of the books that she read. Specifically, Janis mentioned *Ain't No Makin' It* by Jay McLeod (1987) and *There Are No Children Here* by Alex Kotlowitz (1992), as well as the authors Kozol, Marx, and Weber as influences. One of her conclusions as she progressed through her undergraduate degree program was, "I guess the thought was "I need to do something"" (interview #1). She began to take more courses in sociology and soon declared a double

major in music education and sociology. Janis then spoke about how the combination of her two majors was a clear lead into her desired career path:

John: Sociology plus music education equals teaching in the inner city?

Janis: Seemed like a basic formula to me at the time. (interview #1)

Despite her expressed strong interest in sociology, her professors in the school of music did not support this interest. She worked independently to craft a proposed program of study. Ultimately, however, although sociology played such an important role in Janis's undergraduate program and had such a lasting impact on her thinking, Janis was 15 credits shy of obtaining a second bachelor's degree in sociology

Her desire to teach music, while still strong, became further focused into a desire to teach music in an urban environment. Janis developed an interest in social justice and expressed her feeling that teaching music in an urban setting was a perfect combination of her dual interests in music education and sociology:

> [W]orking for social justice is an important thing that I wanted to do with my career. I became increasingly interested in that field of study throughout my undergraduate program. But I also had a real central desire to teach music, and an interest in arts education from seeing the disparate opportunities that populations at risk have in terms of access to a quality arts education. I also have the belief that music education and arts education should be basic human rights afforded everyone, and that there are disparate opportunities between the urban poor and middle class to upper class educational models and how this very important part of holistic education is left out for so many unjust reasons. (interview #1)

Janis's passion for teaching music to inner city children was further stoked during her undergraduate program through her involvement in a program at a Housing and Urban Development (HUD) computer center in a large city close to her university. The program was a pilot program developed by a doctoral composition student and involved teaching music theory and composition to students. She describes being interested in

working specifically with inner city kids: "I just knew that that's where I wanted to teach. And I wanted to get experience with not just the adolescent child, the elementary school age child, but also the inner-city child" (interview #1). Janis was considering not only the situation in which she wanted to teach but also the future students with whom she intended to work.

Student teaching

As a continuation of the strong interest in urban teaching that had developed during her coursework, Janis actively pursued a student teaching placement in an inner city school. With the cooperation of one of her music education professors, Janis set up her teaching placement in a large Midwestern city. Although she was the first student teacher to be placed in that particular city in a long time, Janis did not encounter any difficulty in arranging the placement.

As the first part of her student teaching experience, Janis taught in a well-established, well-supported high school program in a large city. She describes her high school placement as a "university conservatory-like model of music education" (interview #1). Although her primary career objective was to teach at the middle school level, she sought placement at a high school and, more importantly, a high school in a large city:

> Janis: Although I had my sights on middle school. I wanted to teach middle school but I also wanted to have the experience working on my conducting chops and my performance and theory teaching skills. I wanted the higher order experience of being able to teach at that level.
> John: But in the city?
> Janis: Yes.
> John: As opposed to just teaching at any school? Specifically in a large city?
> Janis: Yes.

In addition to her high school placement, Janis began volunteering several times a week at an elementary/middle (kindergarten through eighth grade) school in the same city. After completing the high school portion of her student teaching placement, Janis moved to the school at which she had been volunteering. She describes this school as also having a strong, well-established music program: "Everybody knew [name] Middle School. They traveled, superior performance levels, 1's at State every year and a thriving marching band, youth program. An institution in [city]" (interview #1).

Early Career and Current Teaching Situation

Upon graduation, Janis achieved her goal of teaching music in a large city. She was hired to teach elementary general music and middle school band at the elementary/middle school at which she had student taught. The elementary/middle designation indicates that the school services students in grades kindergarten through eight. This particular school had a long-established instrumental music program, which gave 40-60 public performances each year. Janis co-taught for her first year and subsequently taught as the only band director for three more years until being laid off.

She progressed from operating initially in the shadow of the previous director (a 29-year veteran) to feeling as though she had sole ownership program. The hours were long and the required commitment high and, although Janis described being gradually more tired by her work, at no time did she discuss considering leaving the school or leaving teaching. After those four positive years, however, the city public school district laid off Janis.

Determined to keep teaching music in a large city, Janis remained in the district as a long-term substitute teacher for the following year. She taught band and orchestra at a

different school during the first half of the year, while continuing to go back to her first school to do volunteer work with the music program. She was forced to leave her substitute school for a new school mid-way through the year. In this situation, however, Janis was forced to assume the traditional duties of teaching academic classes when the teachers were absent during the day and, as there were typically numerous teachers absent each day, Janis did not have the time during the school day necessary to establish an instrumental music program.

The following year, Janis continued to pursue music education in the city public school district. Eventually, she found a high school that was interested in having her teach instrumental music. She faced a difficult barrier, however: because she was still considered laid off as a music teacher by the district, it was impossible for her to be hired as a band director. A different route was necessary for Janis to join the school's faculty: special education.

At that time in the district, non-certified teachers could be hired as special education teachers provided they were enrolled in a program that would lead to endorsement. Janis was enrolled in a Master of Social Work (MSW) program, and that was sufficient for her to be hired into the school's department of specialized student services. Janis was subsequently hired with the understanding that her assignment, in addition to maintaining a caseload of ten students, would be to teach instrumental music and music appreciation.

> [S]pecial education teachers who are not certified or endorsed but who are going to school in a program or involved in a program where an endorsement is in the works or credits can be applied to the state mandate to be enrolled; which I am in compliance with because I'm in an MSW [Master of Social Work] program and well over what is required, the number of credits for me to submit as they apply to

special education would have made me eligible to stay within the department of specialized student services for next year. (interview #3)

At the time of data collection, Janis had just finished her second year at this school (her seventh overall), and she will complete her MSW in April of 2009.

When Janis describes her high school's neighborhood, she speaks very matter-of-factly although the picture that she paints is grim:

"Very low socio-economic status. Moderately dangerous. … There is gang activity on that side of town, a lot of gang activity. Noted gang activity. It's a high crime area. For instance at the homecoming football game, at the end of the game, there was a shooting in the street, probably about fifteen feet from where I was walking. (interview #1)

Despite those problems, when describing the people who live in the neighborhood, Janis paints a picture reminiscent of a small town, although a small town that can be suspicious of outsiders. Someone unfamiliar with the neighborhood could experience a sense of unease:

As an outsider you would quickly get the sense that you would want to know if it was friendly or not. I don't know that you would get the sense that it wasn't friendly, but you would get the sense that you needed to wonder about that." (interview #2)

Janis does not speak as an outsider, however, and she gives the distinct impression that she feels quite comfortable in her school's neighborhood.

Summary

Although she had essentially no direct contact with large cities prior to her undergraduate work, through her study of sociology Janis quickly became a dedicated advocate for urban children and an aspiring urban music teacher. Janis's seven-year teaching career has been characterized both by rewarding music teaching experiences and by daunting obstacles. While all of her teaching has taken place in a large city public

school district, she has experienced a variety of settings, from long-established programs with many resources to situations in which she has more students than instrument mouthpieces. Throughout, she has maintained a steadfast devotion to urban students and urban music education.

Janis has never stopped fighting to teach music in urban schools. She was not deterred by being laid off and has found a way, through her MSW work, to continue teaching music. Janis is dedicated and resourceful, as well as a person who considers social issues on the large scale, as evidenced by both her double major and her MSW. The question of which of the two is more important is both easy to ask and easy to answer: Janis could very easily have satisfied her goal of teaching in the inner city by becoming a social worker, but she instead chose to find a way to teach music as her primary endeavor.

<div align="center">Toni</div>

I had not met Toni personally prior to our first interview. A university faculty member who had known Toni throughout both her preservice and teaching career recommended her to me. As we discussed her upbringing and career progression, I was struck by what I perceived as an inescapable gravitation to large cities. To me, it seemed that Toni had been drawn to large cities ever since she was a young child and that even when, as a teacher, she tried to shift away from the city, the city would not let go. That is what was powerful to me – Toni cannot escape the city.

Upbringing

Toni's upbringing is a study in contrasts, featuring small towns and large cities, cultural diversity and homogeneity, and both a paucity and a plethora of opportunities to

experience the fine arts. Although the small town in which she first lived was almost

entirely Caucasian, Toni found herself drawn to the small population of Latino students.

She learned to speak Spanish and, Toni suggested, her later interest in diversity had its

roots in those early experiences:

> I lived [in my first home town] probably seven years, so until I was in first or
> second grade. I think I started second grade there and then moved. And so I
> learned to speak pretty fluent Spanish with my friends, which I remember nothing
> of now. Enough to understand but not enough to speak. And then when I moved,
> and I don't know maybe if that's what got me thinking about that kind of
> diversity. (interview #1)

Although she subsequently moved to another small town, Toni was not solely a

small-town child. Due to a joint custody between her parents, Toni's upbringing straddled

two different worlds: a small rural town (her primary hometown, where she attended

school) and a large city. The two settings gave her different sets of experience and, with

the constant back-and-forth, Toni kept a running comparison:

> When I went to stay with my mom in [city], it would be pretty wild. Downtown,
> lower east side. And it wasn't necessarily because that was the way my mom was,
> but that was the neighborhood she lived in. If the light was on at night we had
> instructions that we were to close the curtains and sit on the floor so that whatever
> was going on in the parking lot, they wouldn't see us in there. It was pretty
> seriously scary. But then with the other side of the family it was really small. My
> graduating class had 60 people in it. The nearest mall was 45 miles away.
> (interview #1)

In addition to the day-to-day feel of both locations, Toni also talked about the differences

between the two settings in terms of access to the fine arts. She discussed the difference

in access on both a school and city level:

> There was no opportunity for any outside ensembles. … we didn't have art, we
> didn't have a choir. The closest thing that I could get to art was drafting class.
> There was nothing. And it was really frustrating because I would go from having
> access to [a major art institute and a major symphony orchestra] to having
> absolutely nothing. And there was no way to get it, or get to it, or see it or

anything. So it was frustrating. Knowing what I wanted to do and not being able to do it because there was no opportunity to do it. (interview #1)

Although she did feel this strong attraction to the cultural offerings of the city, Toni had a mixture of strong emotions to the cultural diversity of the city as a whole. At times, she felt intimidated and at others she felt excited:

Toni: I don't feel as threatened by the big picture as I did when I was younger. Because when I was younger it was just so chaotic that I was like "oh this is kind of cool!"
John: Did you feel threatened?
Toni: Yes, because I just didn't know. I didn't know what was going on. Because I was afraid to do something wrong because I came from this weird little community where if you didn't look like everybody else they got on you for it, to a place where there was so many types of diverse people and I just didn't know what to say or how to act or what was appropriate so I just kind of took a step back and I didn't do anything. (interview #1)

Additionally, Toni talked about being confused about how to act while in the city. In her small town, the rules and expectations were clear. Such was not the case in the city.

I just did a lot of watching. Kind of absorbing I guess, because I knew what the protocol was in a smaller town. I didn't know what the protocol was when all of the sudden you're thrown into an area with a bunch of different people and different cultures and different languages. I just kind of absorbed (interview #1)

As a result of spending substantial time in a large city, Toni developed an interest in city life. She observed that she would have preferred to grow up in the city, a statement that is made more powerful by the fact that she had experience growing up in both an urban and a non-urban setting and could compare her experiences simultaneously.

While Toni was accustomed to spending time with minorities and diverse cultures from her life in the city, she discussed encounters with racism when she returned to her small town after having spent time in the city. She attributes this partially to the people of the town simply not having experience interacting with people of other ethnicities and cultures. Feeling that she might encounter sentiments of this sort if she returned to her

small town made her more reluctant to leave the city. She described how she was made to

feel uncomfortable:

> Toni: I don't want to knock it, because they are good people. I just think they're
> not exposed to the things that they should be exposed to, so when I go home for
> the holidays, and when you get together with a lot of people. Sometimes my
> parents and their relatives would have a big cookout for the block, and there are
> people there that I really don't know… You hear comments – very racist
> comments – but they don't… they don't get it.
> John: They don't realize what they're saying?
> Toni: They don't realize what they're saying. They think that what they're saying
> is OK, and they just don't realize what it is that they're saying is not (interview
> #1)

Finally, Toni decided that she wanted to become a band director while she was in

high school. She attributes her interest in pursuing music education to negative

experiences in her own music education. In describing these negative experiences, Toni

focuses on a lack of resources and lack of opportunities in her assessment, not a poor

educator or badly run classes. As Toni equated urban settings with greater opportunities

earlier, the effect of an urban setting is implicitly present in her initial drive to pursue

music education. Although she later does not connect the two, and discusses how she was

not interested in urban music education, there seems to be a strong tacit relationship

between the two. This is consistent with Toni's earlier focus on the importance of

opportunities for experiencing a variety of music and fine arts, both directly and

indirectly.

> I tell my students now that the reason I became a music teacher was because I had
> such a horrible experience. It was awful, it really was. My parents didn't have a
> lot of money so I didn't have the best equipment. I couldn't afford private lessons,
> so I did what I could with what I had. Kind of made me a little crafty. I learned
> how to fix instruments, because I had to fix instruments or else… I learned how to
> play a bunch of different types of instruments just because they were there and
> when I got older in high school the teacher would let me, I had a free hour so I
> would go in there and I would try to fix instruments for her. (interview #1)

Toni attended a large state university in the Midwest. Although in our interviews

she initially separated her preservice experience from her city experience, upon closer

look, her city experience maintained a subtle presence. Toni found her undergraduate

education challenging, feeling that her own musical education had left her unprepared to

be a music major. She felt overwhelmed upon first arriving at college, and found herself

calling on her experience in the city as a way to find strength to address her challenges:

> My parents dropped me off, and I had been all prepared, I had my classes and
> everything and all of the sudden I sat down. My parents left, and I sat down on
> my bed and I'm going… what the heck am I going to do now? I specifically
> remember that, going "I don't know what I'm supposed to do. What am I
> supposed to do?" And it was basically I hit the ground running and I was just like
> "Oh my gosh, what am I supposed to do, where do I go, where do I buy my
> books." I had no idea. No clue. And so that was the whole, all those years that I'd
> spent absorbing, I was just like I've got to go do it. And I just did. And that was it.
> And if I had never had that experience there's no way. (interview #1)

Otherwise, Toni did not discuss an impact from her city experience. She did not express

any interest in teaching in the city and she did not seek out city experiences. The

enthusiasm for the city that she had developed while growing up, especially for its

cultural opportunities and fine and performing arts, did not translate into her plans for her

future career. She discussed wanting to teach in a school that had a powerful and

established program. She was dismayed upon receiving her placement:

> John: You had wanted to be a band director for a really long time. Had you
> thought about the type of school where you wanted to teach?
> Toni: You always have the dream of, when you're in the high school, and when
> we were doing the student teaching or getting ready for the student teaching, I
> wanted to go to this school because they're awesome and they have a great band
> program and I want to student teach there and that's the program I wanted. And
> then I wanted to go to this school. Then of course… it's really all kind of who you
> know. I really honestly believe it's all in who you know. And, of course, I didn't

know anybody and didn't get that position so I was just kind of assigned to [school] where I'm at now… (interview #1)

Student teaching

Toni was the only one in her class assigned to student teach in a large city, a task

that she greeted without enthusiasm. In addition to being disappointed by the notion that

she would not be student teaching in any of what she considered to be the best programs,

she also discussed feeling frustrated at, she perceived, not being rewarded with a better

program for the amount of work that she had done and the progress that she had made.

> I was kind of disappointed. I'd driven by [my placement school] a couple times and saw this giant school and was like, "hey, cool." But the first time I walked in to meet the supervising teacher I was like "Oh my gosh." The band room was not a band room. It was like a giant classroom with nothing. And I was like "I am such a failure. I'm never going to make it." I was kind of frustrated because I'm like, I didn't work my tail off – I think I had a bigger learning curve than anybody – and I thought I had made quite a bit of progress, still there was some things I needed to work on, but I'm like "gosh, I did all this work to be in this junky little school." (interview #1)

Toni went on to describe the school in the following detail:

> The school was 83 years old. The stairs had been capped and recapped four times but yet the divots were so deep you couldn't wear anything else but tennis shoes or you'd fall. The roof leaked. The basement had water in it. The ceiling was asbestos. Our vent system was connected to the pool, which actually lost an inch of water every week, which was draining into the basement. So every day at 5 we got a shock from the pool, because it went right up the air vents and into the band room so we could never do anything past 5:00 or we'd get a shock of chlorine through the room. (interview #1)

Despite these objections, as well as a negative first impression of the condition of the

school, Toni was surprised and highly impressed upon first seeing the teacher and hearing

the band's level of performance:

> And I'm walking up these stairs and I walk into the band room to meet my supervising teacher and I'm like "you have got to be kidding me. You have got to be kidding me." But I stayed and I saw what she did and she was incredible. She was incredible. She totally blew away every single concern, anything, that I had.

Just totally blew it away. Those kids came in, they knew what they were doing, they knew where they had to go, they didn't fool around, they didn't mess around. And I'm hearing a seventh grade band that can play a two-octave chromatic scale at quarter note equals 120 in eighth notes in three different articulations (interview #1)

Additionally, in retrospect, Toni discussed how she should have remembered her experience in urban settings from growing up and should have known better than to make early judgments and assumptions:

I'm almost ashamed to think of that, that I walked into a place that was like that, knowing the experiences I'd had when I was young, having the diversity. I think it was more along the lines of I wasn't expecting to have a good experience there. Because everything I'd heard about [city], was not good. The education was not good, schools were failing. At the time the AYP [adequate yearly progress] hadn't come out, but everybody always told me if you're going to student teach, don't go to [city]. And so I think that I was tempered to not think that that was going to be a good experience. Which is exactly opposite of the way I grew up, which really kind of burns me because, I think, "why in the world…?" (interview #1)

Toni did not expect to find a band program that was performing at a high level or a teacher who managed students so adeptly. The students behaved excellently in the band room and then, upon leaving, students would exhibit substantial behavior problems and become suspended. All of Toni's assumptions of a [city] school and band program had been proven wrong and, additionally, she felt that her urban background should have prevented those assumptions from existing in the first place.

Early Career and Current Teaching Situation

Even with her background and upbringing in a city and her positive experience with city teaching as a student teacher, Toni did not consider applying for a position to teach in the city when she began her first job search. Although she had been very impressed with her cooperating teacher and the band program at the school, that enthusiasm did not carry over into the job search. Toni did not apply to teach in the city

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public school district in which she had student taught. While she had applied to numerous schools, her first job was at the school at which she had student taught. As such, she was acquainted with the students, procedures, and school itself. Regardless of this familiarity, Toni did not feel prepared during her first year:

> John: Talk about the transition from being a student teacher into being a first year full-time teacher.
> Toni: Oh, Lord, totally unprepared. Totally unprepared. Even student teaching at that school, and knowing the kids, and knowing how the budget worked, and knowing the teachers there, totally unprepared. Absolutely unprepared.

Toni threw herself into her program, however, and has not looked back. She discussed the diversity of her school and the number of cultures represented, and it became clear that she had found a school setting that fit her experiences growing up in the city, and a setting that reflected the people with whom she would have preferred to grow up:

> [The school is] 30-40% Caucasian, 30% Hispanic, 30% black, 10% miscellaneous. The 10% is Asian, and many refugees. We have Rwandan and middle eastern students now, which is kind of cool. We have some Hawaiian Americans. We have some Ojibwe students. We're a real Ojibwe hotspot at the moment. I have a few of those students right now. It's diverse. I love it." (interview #1)

Although the students represent diverse cultures, Toni's and their experiences have not been as diverse. While at concert band festivals, the students have all faced comments directed at their racial and ethnic backgrounds and Toni has calmly but ardently fought for them. Her sensitivity to racial issues has also come back in the course of her teaching. She has encountered the same sort of comments as a band director that she heard when she went back to visit her small town.

The school building in which Toni has been teaching was founded in 1924. In 2006, a new school building was opened and the older school is being systematically

dismantled. The new school has a substantial auditorium and fine arts wing. Toni described the neighborhood itself as a very active place, including new homes, and observed, "I would like to live there" (interview #2).

Toni has remained at her school for her entire career and is tenured. She teaches middle school band, strings, and drum line. At the time of data collection she had just finished her ninth year of teaching and is completing a master's degree in curriculum and instruction.

Summary

Toni grew up simultaneously in a small rural town and a large city and discussed how powerful the city was to her. However, when it came time to enter the profession she wanted nothing to do with teaching in a large city. As it happened, she was the only one in her class of student teachers given a placement in a city school. Initially, she was upset and disappointed, even as she entered the school and walked up the stairs to the band room on the very first day. After hearing the band that first day, however, her concerns vanished. In retrospect, she says, "I should have known better." Even still, after a positive city student teaching experience, she did not seek city teaching for her first job. Regardless, her student teaching placement had an open position and once again Toni found herself in urban education. Although she attempted to pull herself away from the city, she found herself teaching in an urban school and, in retrospect, realizing that she is where she wants to be. Toni has not only achieved her goal of becoming a band director but has also found herself in a setting within which she feels at home.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has profiled the three participants and, through examining their backgrounds, provided a context in which to consider their later discussions. Samantha teaches elementary general and choral music in a charter school in a large urban city. She has pursued urban music education throughout her preservice and inservice careers. She feels that in her current school she has found the perfect fit, allowing her to teach city students within a city while allowing her to live out to her ideal educational philosophy. Janis has taught middle school band and elementary general music, and has most recently taught high school band and music appreciation for seven years in the same large city public school district. A combination of lay-offs and district policies forced her to change schools several times and to maintain her current music teaching duties only by simultaneously using her MSW background to serve as a special educator. Toni teaches middle school band, strings, and drum line. After attempting to avoid city teaching, she has nonetheless found the right fit for herself as a music educator in a large city

Chapter V will present findings that address research questions one and two. Each participant's findings will be presented individually.

CHAPTER V

SECOND-STAGE URBAN MUSIC TEACHERS: TEACHING EXPERIENCES AND

VIEWS ON URBAN MUSIC EDUCATION

This chapter addresses the first research question: *What themes emerge as meaningful to participants when they describe their teaching experiences as second-stage urban music teachers?* As the participants discussed, reflected on, and wrote about their teaching experiences through the first and second stages of their teaching careers, significant themes began to emerge. The participants' statements about teaching were often combined with their views on urban music education and, for that reason, this chapter will also answer the second research question: *What do the participants identify as major issues in urban music education and how do they discuss them?* Data from the survey, journals, interviews, and the focus group will be drawn on to elaborate on the themes.

The reader should remember that here, as in chapters VI and VII, the teachers' comments and thoughts are all made through the lens of the second stage of teaching. Regardless of the time period about which they are speaking, we are hearing the voices of the second stage of the career cycle, as experienced by three urban music teachers.

Samantha

Over the course of her career, Samantha has taught at two different elementary schools, both located within the same large city. To preserve confidentiality, those

schools will be identified here with the pseudonyms Crane Elementary School (a school within the city's public school district) and Shore Elementary School (a charter school within its own district). Samantha taught at Crane for the four years prior to completing her master of music degree. Shore is the elementary school at which Samantha is beginning her fourth year. Although the objective of this chapter is not to compare Samantha's experiences at the two different schools, throughout her interviews and journals, Samantha frequently spoke of her teaching experiences through a comparative lens, discussing how her experiences on a particular topic at one school compared to those at the other. According to Samantha, both schools drew from the same population of students and, as such, her Shore students shared many characteristics with her Crane students.

Meaningful Themes

Challenges Faced By Students

Samantha often focused on the non-academic challenges that her students face. She talked about how the students came to school with significant physical and emotional needs and that, in order to deliver instruction productively, it was essential that the teachers address these needs. In cases where the students' needs were not addressed, Samantha observed, negatives consequences resulted. In this section as with others, Samantha discusses her experiences at both Crane Elementary and Shore Elementary.

Physical and emotional needs

Samantha stated that her students had both substantial physical and emotional needs. She worried that her students were in serious danger of dropping out of school if these needs were not met:

We do have some kids with really extreme needs. I don't know how else to put it. Their needs are so far and above what a typical student would need. They're emotionally very needy and we have to make concessions for them, because they are the kind of students that if we don't are going to be the ones to drop out the year that they can legally drop out. (interview #2)

Although Samantha described many of her students as having considerable physical and

emotional needs, she was also very clear that she did not interpret those needs as a license

to lower academic expectations:

I have worked with some students who have faced seemingly insurmountable challenges, but with time and experience, I have learned that I can't use their misfortune as an excuse for 1) them not to learn or 2) me not to teach. (email journal)

Samantha's students might face an inordinate number of physical and emotional

challenges but they are still held to a high academic and musical standard.

In an effort to address students' emotional needs, Samantha often speaks to them

individually and gives them the opportunity to describe their problems. Frequently, this

allows the students to open up and to discuss what is really on their minds. Samantha also

concluded that classroom disruptions are commonly the result of events that have

occurred outside of the classroom, but by giving the students an opportunity to quickly

but individually and privately discuss their issues with her, many further problems can be

avoided.

There are certain kids that you can say "Is there something that you need to tell me?" And sometimes they will look at me like "what?" But just speaking to them at a very personal level… Or for example when a child acts out in class or is blurting out, or doing something unkind to another student, then I'll take them aside for a second and say, "Is there something that you need to tell me?" That's something that I say often to my kids – "Is there something that you want to tell me?" … Often my kids will really just tell me, and say "well she did this, and so-and-so happened," and it's a really great opportunity for me to say "how do you think it would feel if, when you're done in music class, to be able to say to your teacher that you really turned it around?" (interview #3)

Samantha discussed how she believed that her students' needs were being met at her current school and that this is one of the most important things to her: "In the conversations that I've had with John, it keeps coming up that I feel that our kids' needs are being met, and that is why I am staying" (focus group). Clearly, an awareness of students' needs is among Samantha's highest priorities as a teacher.

Anger and distrust

In particular, Samantha identified anger as an issue that impacted her students. She began by discussing her experiences with her students at Crane Elementary. Samantha believed that the problem of student anger was an issue larger than the school setting and that, in fact, the students whom she taught were distrustful of adults in general: "My students at Crane had anger issues. They didn't trust adults across the board" (interview #1). Samantha also attributed the lack of trust of adults to the poor care that her students received from their families: "My students at Crane, many of them were not cared for physically by their parents" (interview #1).

The students' issues with anger often manifested themselves physically. Samantha believes that the anger issues were intensified by the Crane staff's failure to help the students address their anger problems:

> Many of [the students at Crane] had anger issues for a lot of reasons. They didn't know how to deal with anger. Teachers didn't teach them how to deal with anger. They would go off, fights erupted all day every day. (interview #1).

When Samantha first began teaching at Shore (her second school), her students displayed the same lack of trust for adults that she had experienced with her students at Crane. Over time, however, she noticed that the students developed a trust in adults that

her students at Crane had not developed. The reason, Samantha concluded, is a unified

philosophy on the part of her school; a belief that teacher-student trust is paramount:

> Our kids get that now, for the most part. And I think, when I first came there, when we were a brand-new school, kids were… they didn't realize that yet. So there was that atmosphere of, very similar to Crane, of distrust. And that adults are these people who are there to make your life miserable. (interview #1)

Samantha discussed a specific example of a student who brought significant anger

and trust issues to school with him. His anger issues manifested themselves as a

reluctance to participate in classroom activities, including singing. She attributes his

behavior at least partially to the same lack of trust exhibited by other students. The issue

was addressed, however, when she and the other teachers at her school were able to earn

this student's trust and, through perseverance, to uncover a number of positives:

> When I first met him he was in third grade. He's going to middle school next year. He was the child that walked in… so angry. Would not do one thing, would not sing, would not participate, and… he was just an angry child who didn't trust adults. … . I can't imagine where he would be had he not had a group of teachers who said, first of all, "we don't accept that this is who you are. Second of all, we know that inside of you there is this intelligent, bright, funny, fun-to-be-around kid, and we're not going to stop until we find, we chip away at all the icky stuff and find who you really are." And he's an amazing kid to be around now. (interview #2)

Samantha described how this student participates actively now and has a "beautiful treble

voice." By addressing the student's emotional needs, Samantha has made it possible for

him to engage in the musical activities in the classroom.

Belief in Student Potential

Samantha described one of her priorities as maintaining and demonstrating to her

students the belief that they could succeed. While she believed in her students' potential

for success, she described this belief as being far from universal at Crane and that,

additionally, when she talked about her beliefs, she met with an assessment from the

faculty that she was inexperienced and would soon feel differently:

> I genuinely believed that our kids could succeed. I believed it in my heart and I
> treated them like I knew they could succeed. And that was perceived as being
> young and naïve and that I would learn. I kept hearing that from people "oh,
> you'll learn eventually." (interview #1)

Samantha felt that holding this belief in students' potential for success was

important not just for herself, but also for the other adults with whom she worked.

Samantha was keenly aware of the presence or absence among her colleagues of the

belief that students could be successful. In describing her two different teaching

situations, at Crane and Shore elementary schools, Samantha contrasted a general staff-

wide tone of a lack of belief in the students' potential at Crane with the presence of a

whole-school belief in students at Shore. She described the teachers' feelings for students

as "the adults in the building are here for you. We care about you. We absolutely are

committed to your success and we are going to do everything we can for you" (interview

#1).

Samantha expanded from the teachers to the entire school and discussed how

Shore generally shares the belief that the students can succeed both academically and in

life:

> [I]t's a social action type of school, it's a school committed to creating change in
> these kids in the city. … I see it as a grand experiment because it really doesn't
> happen in most urban schools, that the kids are expected to go to college and
> they're expected to move on and be productive members of society and that, our
> kids aren't going to be incarcerated. (interview #1)

Samantha discussed how important it was for her students to know that she firmly

believes in their capability to be successful. Furthermore, her students responded

positively to her expression of beliefs:

I have to *believe* they can be successful before they do—and verbalize it to them. I have to present them with open opportunities to knock my socks off, and they almost always do! (email journal)

Importance of a Common Purpose Within the School

In Samantha's interviews and journals it became clear that a major factor in her teaching experiences was her perception of the school whether, as a whole, that was Shore or Crane. From the very beginning of her career, Samantha described being very much aware of the staff attitude towards the students, and her perception that few teachers at Crane believed that the students had the potential to graduate from high school and to succeed in life. She cited this as one of her main difficulties at Crane Elementary. When asked about her biggest challenge as a new teacher, Samantha responded: "Being part of a school culture that was regimented but not loving; Lack of common purpose in school staff" (email survey).

When Samantha described her current teaching experiences at Shore Elementary, one of her main emphases was, again, the teachers' attitudes towards student potential. More than an attitude, she called the staff approach a commitment. She describes the staff as one of the most rewarding parts of her job: "working with a staff of highly committed and intelligent people who share a common purpose" (email survey). Beyond a commitment, Samantha described the staff as sharing a philosophy that is different from her previous work at Crane. This philosophy goes beyond a belief in students' capabilities to an entire attitude towards public education in a large city. In her experience at Crane, she found this sort of thinking to be, by far, in the minority:

[I]t's a different philosophy. It's the idea that you keep the status quo or you change the status quo. And I think, when I say common purpose, that's what I mean. People who are committed to changing the status quo. … I can name one person that I worked with [at Crane] who I believe, from my observation, was

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there for that reason, to say, "I can make a difference in these students' lives, and I can be someone who is an influence in their lives for good" (interview #2)

Samantha's awareness of and belief in the need for a unified, positive philosophy among a teaching staff demonstrates the fact that she thinks on a larger scale than just her classroom.

In her final email journal entry, Samantha discussed one of her most powerful teaching moments. This past year, a folk singer came to her school to work with her students, and to her surprise, he was treated as a "rock star" and that the students became enamored of his music, to her surprise:

> In short, [his songs] are cute, hippie songs FAR FAR (capitals hers) removed from the music I know my students usually listen to. I expected my students to enjoy the music and enjoy the unique talents [he] could bring to the school. I was so, so wrong. The kids became obsessed with the music; singing at recess and teaching the songs to their parents. (email journal)

Samantha concluded that many of her objectives and beliefs for her students had been illustrated during her students' time working with the singer. She summarized the meaning that she drew from the experience as:

> when kids are treated with love and respect, when their needs are met, when they are given high standards and expected to succeed, they thrive. They are open to new things. They don't act like thugs. They aren't hardened and angry. They are allowed to experience a real childhood and not forced into a dark-colored-glasses view of the world. (email journal)

By making these observations, Samantha related her belief in her students' potential to her previous observations about her students' problems with anger and distrust. She concluded that teacher belief in student potential can be very powerful in defusing those problems.

Issues of Race

Samantha's students at both Crane and Shore schools were almost exclusively

African-American. Samantha is Caucasian. Initially, she found her racial difference with

her students intimidating:

> That was something that I was extremely sensitive about when I first started
> teaching. I felt very uncomfortable being a white teacher in front of black kids. I
> felt uncomfortable teaching them about African American music. I felt
> uncomfortable teaching them about drumming. I knew that it was my place and
> that it was what I was there to do, but I knew that someone was going to call me
> out at some point, like "who are you to say, you little white girl from Canada?"
> (interview #3)

As part of her professional development during the time that she was teaching at

Crane, Samantha traveled to Ghana to study drumming. She had numerous reasons for

making the trip, both personal and musical. Among them was her consideration of her

students' ancestral roots:

> I would say my main motivation for going to Ghana was to learn a real specific
> music in a culturally authentic way, and it's the music that's part of my students'
> ancestry. And I thought that because I taught in a school that was 99.999%
> African-American and that when you trace back the roots of many of the slaves
> that came over a lot of them are from west Africa, so I just really thought that that
> would be a very poignant thing for me to be able to bring to my students. That's
> one of the reasons that I went. (interview #1)

Samantha's consideration of her cultural differences with her students continued

into her master's degree coursework. By the time she began her master's, she had several

years' experience working with a culture different than her own. Where she had initially

stayed away from considering her kids as being affected specifically by their cultural

background, she became more aware of possible influences:

> One of the things that I found fascinating in my master's degree was looking at
> characteristics of certain cultures and reading about characteristics of certain
> cultures within an educational context, because I always thought that was kind of
> a no-no. Kids are kids, you shouldn't stereotype. But that helped me in my
> teaching, realizing that kids are kids but kids from certain cultures carry… their

lives are set up in certain ways that maybe in understanding that context, you can better reach them. (interview #3)

In addition to considering her students from a racial cultural perspective, she also considered the factor of her students' socio-economic status (SES), which is, for the most part, low. She felt that her students' SES actually impacted them more strongly than their ethnicity:

> My kids are mostly low-SES, and I think that that is more significant. The African American part plays a role also, but low SES in combination with the African American can really tell you a lot about the kids that you are teaching. (interview #3)

In concluding her discussion of her culturally-based thoughts and experiences, Samantha discussed how she had come to feel a part of her students' culture, definitely a difference from her sensitivity when she began teaching at Crane. Not only is this helpful for her feelings as a member of their culture but she also believes that it makes her a better educator.

> I definitely feel that I am part of my school culture, and that in turn makes me a part of my students' lives and it makes me a viable educator. I don't think the color of my skin or the culture that I come from is a deterrent for me to be a great teacher. I think that it definitely plays into the kind of teacher that I am. I think that we need to value who we are. We value who we all are. My biggest pet peeve is when teachers say, "Well, I'm color-blind. I don't see color, I just see children." That's a crock of s-h-i-t. We all bring with us, I mean this is what you are trying to get at with working with people who teach in the inner city, well who are we, where do we come from, and why does that make us who we are. If we reject that and say "well I'm a white teacher but that doesn't matter." Yes, it does! But our kids don't think anything of it. I think that they value the differences in their teachers (interview #3).

Samantha told a particularly poignant anecdote that illustrated how some of her students had come to view her as no different racially from themselves:

> My [kindergarten] kids were asking me about my son one day and I was saying to them "you weren't here when he was born." Because all of my other kids were part of the school when I was pregnant. It is just this year that the kindergarteners,

who didn't know me when I was pregnant. So they said "You have a kid! You have a son!" … I got my picture off of my desk and said, "this is [my son]." One of my kids blurted out "your baby white?!" And I said "ummmm, yeah." (interview #3)

Samantha went on to describe how this event, while to a degree humorous, also had a great deal of sincerity, and gave her a powerful feeling of acceptance by her students. She related this event again during the focus group discussion and went on to interpret the significance of the comment:

[T]hey were shocked that he was white. And I'm sure that some of the kids in the class didn't think much of it. A couple rolled their eyes at him. But, he isn't totally clueless. It was hilarious but it was also really heartwarming because it made me feel "I'm part of your community." It's that the same sort of feeling that, there's that line between knowing who you are and also knowing where you've come from, which is a very white community in Ontario. But also knowing that I can hang. I can be a part of the community. … The parents are giving me tips like "If you put this part in your hair it will be a lot less frizzy," you know? My kids are saying "carrot oil, carrot oil." (focus group)

Samantha has not only a good teacher-student-parent relationship, but also a feeling of cultural acceptance.

Summary

Samantha's teaching career included many powerful experiences that have impacted her personal meanings about life and education. When she discusses her teaching experiences she speaks on both the macro level, such as discussing school-wide philosophies of education, and the micro level in discussing her own classroom and individual students. Samantha feels a strong connection with her students, demonstrated by her belief in them, her concern for their physical and emotional wellbeing, and her consideration of her students' cultural heritage in planning her continued musical development. In return, her students have become strongly connected with her and truly view her as a member of their own culture.

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Samantha as an Urban Music Educator

Samantha's entire teaching career had taken place in schools in the inner city. As educators with urban teaching backgrounds, our discussions implicitly included urban influences throughout. More important for this part of the study, however, are the views of an experienced urban teacher, someone who has entered the second stage of her teaching career in the city. As discussed earlier, Samantha's attainment of the second stage places her in relatively select company, as the research literature indicates that first stage attrition for educators in urban settings is higher than that for educators in general (Blanson, 2005; Hanushek, 2004; Imazeki, 2002; Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Rinke, 2007; Stanford, 2001), resulting in lower numbers of second-stage teachers in urban schools.

Samantha's views on urban education focused on two main areas: issues of inequality, and the relationship of higher education to urban education. We also discussed the term "urban" itself, and its meaning to Samantha as it pertains to urban schools. In order to have a productive discussion of urban music education I believe, as I have stated elsewhere, that it is necessary to have an operating understanding of when urban issues are truly being discussed. A working definition of "urban" is therefore desirable in order to effectively discuss urban music education.

Definition of Urban

Samantha initially identified an urban school as: "1) In a large city (about 750,000+ population), 2) Majority of students (50% or more) on free/reduced lunch assistance" (email survey). Later, however, she discussed urban schools in qualitative terms. Specifically, Samantha discussed her own teaching experience, using the same comparative lens for Crane and Shore schools that she used elsewhere. According to

Samantha, even though they share the same city location and the same student populace,

Crane was an urban school, and Shore is not an urban school. The principal difference

that she identified was in the teachers' philosophies in both schools, specifically what she

characterized as the Crane teachers' negative attitude and low expectations of the

students as compared to the positive attitude and belief in student potential demonstrated

by the staff at Shore. Additionally, at times, she spoke of Crane as representative of the

entire city public school district:

> I can name one person that I worked with in my [city] Public School who I
> believe, from my observation, was there for that reason, to say "I can make a
> difference in these students' lives, and I can be someone who is an influence in
> their lives for good" and the kinds of language I heard in the staff lounge in my
> old school, about us being a feeder for the prisons. And the parking lot comment.
> That's, to me, what I think of when I think of [city] Public Schools. And I know
> that there are some amazing teachers there that would definitely fit into the Shore
> philosophy but that, the people, is what I think makes the difference. (interview
> #2)

> Samantha also expressed the belief that challenging students are not to be found

only in large cities:

> I've talked about this with some of my other co-workers who've also taught in
> [city] Public Schools, that if you've never taught in the [city] Public Schools, that
> Shore… it's… it's not like that at all. They see the kids as being challenging, and
> the kids are challenging, but I think any group of kids you get are going to have
> their challenges" (interview #2).

> Samantha rarely talked about the term "urban" by itself. She seemed to have

difficulty articulating a larger meaning and therefore tended to speak about the term

"urban" in specific connection to schools in which she had taught:

> If you classify urban as… I don't know… I think that's also part of the huge…
> urban… is how can you be in an urban, what would normally be an urban
> environment and make the kids… it's what I said before, changing that paradigm.
> Those kids would normally be going to a public school, some sort of public
> school, and how can you change that experience for them because it's not

working. Plain and simple. Look at the numbers and the graduation rates. (interview #2)

Distribution of Resources

According to Samantha, one of the most substantial problems facing schools in large cities is the unequal distribution of and access to resources by schools across the district. More specifically, speaking within the context of her experiences at Crane elementary in the city's public school district, Samantha felt that resources were typically concentrated in certain schools and that, consequently, the others schools constituting the majority of the city received comparatively little resources: "There is very much the mentality of the have's and the have-not's, that the magnet schools are the have's and the rest of the city are the have-not's" (interview #3). The city's public school district had a small number of fine arts magnet schools, and Samantha felt that the magnet schools represented the concentrations of resources:

> They are the jewel in the crown of the [city] Public Schools. But then there is dust on the rest of the crowd. Because the rest of the schools… there's nothing. It's sickening to me how unequally distributed the money is … and the fact that there are these three schools that have *so* much, and then the rest of the district is crumbling. (interview #3)

Again, Samantha was clear that the problem was not that these magnet schools had excellent resources for their students, but that the remainder of the schools in the large public school district had comparatively few resources. As a teacher at a non-magnet, or neighborhood, school Samantha was directly aware of her lack of resources while, at the same time, observing the other schools and their bountiful resources:

> these are great things, these big schools with all of these resources for kids, but when you look at the big picture, what are we really doing here? Magnet schools are such a huge issue. (interview #3)

District Administration

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Samantha holds the city public school district's administration accountable for the problems caused by unequal distribution of resources. This is significant as one of the primary indicators of an urban school or district is its association with a large, central, bureaucracy or administrative body (Weiner, 2000). Samantha divided experiences into those attributable to her school only and those attributable to the district as a large governing body. Her relationship with her school was clearly more personal whereas there was almost no relationship with the district as a whole. As a former teacher in the third-largest public school district in the United State, I was sensitive to her characterization of the divide between school and district:

> There's your building and there's the larger school district. I know you know this. Your building is really what matters. And your principal knows you and knows what you do and there's this, like, hulking monster … of a district that overlooks you and does all these things that are terrible for your school that you just have to roll with. (interview #1)

As the interview was not videotaped, I was not able to capture Samantha's body language as she discussed the separation between school and district. Nevertheless, as I believed her body language to be significant, I discussed its implications with her. Several times, when discussing the school itself, Samantha pointed her finger at herself. Conversely, when she changed to speaking about the district, she would point up into the air, away from herself. I questioned the possible significance of her gestures and she agreed that they demonstrated her feeling of separation between school/teacher and district, as well as the personal connection she felt with her school and the contrasting impersonal relationship with the district administration.

Samantha went on to use the topic of administration as an argument for why she does not believe that her current school is part of an inner-city district:

> I think the support we have sets us apart, the administration sets us apart. You gave me the list of criteria. We don't have that big hulking administration. The CEO of Shore, his office is under my room." (interview #2)

Although she teaches students with the same characteristics as those at Crane, the administration of Shore's district makes a crucial difference.

Samantha also took the city's public school district administration to task for what she felt was misrepresentation of the district at a conference for urban music education. During her fifth year, Samantha attended a conference dedicated to urban music education that was held in her city and hosted by the city school district administration. Although she had initially been excited at the prospect of meeting other urban music educators and discussing important issues, Samantha described how upset she felt when she attended the conference. She painted the picture of a series of performances held at the city's primary magnet schools rather than a forum for presentations or discussions.

> The whole conference consisted of the [city] administration leading everyone around and giving them tours of their brand new buildings, because these schools had just opened. And we heard amazing performances by the top choir and the harp ensemble and all the people around me from these other big cities are saying "Wow! This is amazing!" (interview #3)

In addition to feeling that the state of music education in the city was being misrepresented, Samantha also pointed out that she felt that the conference proceedings were indicative of her own experiences with the unequal distribution of resources. She described the experience of hearing, at the conference, many positive comments about the city's music education program and thinking, "This is the administration that didn't have money to give me a single instrument in my nobody elementary school on the northwest side" (interview #3).

Samantha's account portrays a large divide between school and district within her large urban public school district is compelling. In practice, she argues, not only does she receive very few resources in her non-magnet school but as far as the greater perception is concerned, music education in her city is flourishing, including resources and support.

Urban Music Education in Academia

Samantha also discussed the relationship between urban music education and university departments of music education. She perceived three specific issues: a need for an increase in research into urban music education, a perceived lack of attention to urban music education in teacher preparation programs, and a lack of familiarity by music education faculty members with music education in large cities.

Need for research on urban music education

Samantha is familiar with research in music education, as both a researcher herself and as a user of research. She has co-authored an article in a peer-reviewed journal. As such, she considers herself to be very aware of research in music education and perceives a lack of scholarly attention to urban music education in both scholarly publications and practitioner-based resources: "[It is] an area that is deficient. We don't talk about it in higher education settings. No one knows what to do about it" (interview #3). As she considers her future and the possibility of returning to graduate school, she discusses the perceived lack of research as being an opportunity: "This is the first thing that comes to mind. I perceive it now as an open field, from the perspective of someone who is interested in research" (interview #3).

Teacher education

As a master's student Samantha worked with preservice music teachers in the role of a graduate student instructor. After completing her program, Samantha hosted elementary general music methods classes at her school, allowing preservice music teachers to teach mini-lessons to her students. Samantha's interest in teacher education had been piqued during her own undergraduate program and in her observations of preservice music teachers, she was considering urban music education from the perspective of a future teacher still enrolled in a preservice program. She was concerned that, in her view, there was a lack of preservice music teachers who were considering teaching in large cities:

> I think that in the larger academic world … this is just my perception, I see a lack of interest in teaching in the city by really talented kids who could do great in an inner city school. (interview #3).

A possible reason for preservice teachers' hesitation to pursue urban music education, in Samantha's opinion, is a lack of experience on their part and a consequent trepidation:

> I think the reason that urban teaching is not in the forefront is unfamiliarity, and a little bit of fear possibly. I see that with the [university] methods students when they come to my class. (interview #3)

As part of her own mission, Samantha described her efforts to encourage preservice music teachers to consider teaching in a large city. She wanted them to know that they could be successful and enjoy their teaching as much in a large city as in any other setting. She felt that it was important for preservice music teachers to hear this message as she herself had received little encouragement to pursue her path towards urban music education.

> From the beginning, I've been out to say 'OK, you can do this.' You can teach music in an inner city and be happy and have a great career and enjoy yourself

and make a difference. Whereas, I never got that in undergrad. It was almost always assumed in undergrad that you go where you had money and you had kids who would do things for you. You could just go in the classroom and start teaching and they would listen. We didn't talk about what if your kid throws something at you, or gets in a fight." (interview #3)

Samantha also discussed urban music education in preservice from the perspective of a teacher educator. She suggested that the lack of attention to large cities in music methods classes is due in part to a lack of faculty experience with music teaching in large cities, rather than a lack of interest or other reasons: "It's unfamiliar territory. If you haven't taught in an inner city situation" (interview #3). Even for herself, as an experienced urban teacher, she expressed difficulty in deciding the best way to handle large city music education in music teacher preparation. As Samantha was considering pursuing academia and teacher education later in her career, she had clearly given this a good bit of thought:

> [I] found it hard to think about what I would want to bring out in a potential methods course, say in teaching a methods course in elementary ed. What would I talk about, regarding teaching in an urban setting? What would we talk about? Or would it be that you are constantly bringing that on and constantly talking about, based on who your students are you are going to make adjustments. I even find it difficult to find how to address it, and that is the only place that I have ever taught. (interview #1)

Samantha clearly feels very strongly about the treatment of issues of urban music education within the university setting, from both a research and teacher education standpoint.

Summary

Samantha's dedication to urban music education extends past her own world of teaching in one single school. She had considered the district, the issue as a whole, and even urban music education as it exists in the academy. Samantha highlighted the city

public school district's large bureaucracy as the source of numerous problems, including its unequal distribution of resources and its emphasis on a select few schools, as well as its presentation of itself to outsiders while, in her opinion, failing to address the needs of the vast majority of its schools. Despite the large number of parallels between Crane and Shore (the schools in which she taught), such as characteristics of the student population and location within the inner city, Samantha does not feel that Shore is an urban school. Her primary reasons are the outlook of the staff and the size and approach of the district's administration. Finally, Samantha has considered the treatment of urban music education issues by the academy. She recommends a more sustained involvement, particularly in programs that prepare music teachers, as well as an increased research emphasis on urban music education.

<div align="center">Janis</div>

Janis has taught at two different schools within her city's public school district. Her first school was an elementary/middle school (grades kindergarten through eight), and her second school is a high school. To preserve confidentiality, I will refer to the schools as Kestrel Elementary/Middle and Schmidt High School. Janis discussed both schools although she tended to talk slightly more about her experiences at Schmidt.

<div align="center">*Meaningful Themes*</div>

As with Samantha, Janis had also taught in multiple urban schools. Her first school, Kestrel Elementary/Middle School, was a kindergarten through eighth grade school. In addition to teaching for four years at a middle school and two years at a high school, Janis had also taught for half of a year at two different schools as a full-time substitute teacher (constituting her fifth year as a teacher). Unlike Samantha, Janis did not

typically compare her experiences in different schools. As she talked little about her two substitute-teaching assignments, Janis's discussion can be considered within the boundaries of her initial four years in middle school and her most recent two years in high school.

Curriculum Objectives

Performance-based curriculum

Throughout her career, Janis has struggled with the role of performance in her music programs. The emphasis at both Kestrel and Schmidt has been on public performance, more specifically marching band, even at the elementary level. At Kestrel, although there were many performances, both on and off-campus, there was still an emphasis on a more expanded study of music without the objective of performing. At Schmidt, however, there was a substantial expectation for performance-based, marching band-based music education with little attention paid to other aspects of music education. While Janis was not anti-performance, nor was she anti-marching band, she felt that there was a need for a broader music curriculum at her schools. She favored an emphasis on literacy, aural skills through the medium of a concert band and, particularly at the high school level, music appreciation. At Schmidt, she described encountering a great deal of resistance from both students and administration:

> The kids would have been all about marching band all day, and doing performances and trips out of town, when I first got there. But I was unwilling to sell out my idea of what I was going to provide for them in terms of quality music education. So when I introduced that idea it turned a lot of kids off because all they heard was, "concert band! All she wants to do is concert band!" But what they didn't include was that, "we're going to include concert band into this big thing that you guys are already doing." So throughout that first year, the administration got that same idea – "Where's the marching band? Where's all the fanfare?" (interview #3)

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Janis had a similar experience at Kestrel. As a recent graduate of a music teacher education program, Janis found the emphasis on performance to be frustrating, as she had other models of music education that she wanted to use:

> John: How did you want to teach music when you came in?
> Janis: The right way.
> John: What was the right way?
> Janis: Using Gordon Theory. And with that model at the time I was teaching K-5, K-4 general music and then 5-8 instrumental so I kind of got to try all these great ideas out. But just … to have a cohesive experience for the students at any level. And to get the right things happening with their aural awareness and develop, sense of pitch, modal/rhythmic competencies, all that stuff. (interview #1)

As she spent time at her schools, she worked on slowly phasing out the priority on public performance and phasing in a greater emphasis on comprehensive musicianship, without the final objective of a public performance. At Schmidt in particular, Janis described a performance culture that had virtually no interest in any non-performance-based approaches to music education.

High School Beginners

Given the paucity of middle or elementary school instrumental music programs in the city, the vast majority of her students do not begin to learn an instrument until they reach high school, meaning that as a high school band director Janis teaches beginning instrumentalists. Janis described numerous difficulties that she believed to be specific to the high school beginner as opposed to the elementary school beginner (a population that she also had experience with):

> [I]t's not easy to approach high school beginners. … In my experience they become less willing to learn new things, especially something as sophisticated as learning a wind instrument for the first time. (interview #2)

Janis identified the motivation to learn an instrument at that stage of their development (high school) as a big factor:

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You really have to sell the idea that this is a great thing to participate in and once kids catch on to that, then it's not a problem. But getting that motivation going, especially at the late stage in the game – ninth grade. Kids have already got their interests developed pretty much, or have some feelers out about where their interest is going to go. To be introduced to this entirely different thing that they don't have any experience in, they're going to sound terrible on for the first two months guaranteed, it's not satisfying to be a beginner. It's frustrating. And to be a ninth grader, new in high school, and to be doing this "baby stuff." There are more reasons why not to do it than to do it, I have found, is part of the mentality of the ninth grade beginner. (interview #2)

Despite these obstacles, which Janis traced not only to the age of the student but to the district administration, Janis also discussed how high school students could take great satisfaction from learning an instrument and how the performance of a simple song could be a very meaningful event to a high school student. Moreover, it was extremely meaningful for her as a teacher to experience those performances with them.

> Janis: I guess that I would parley working with high school beginners and intermediate kids and seeing how surprisingly interested many of them are. If provided the resources and the support and the education, that the kids still want it. And what has happened to this district. These are decisions made by politicians, administrators, and adults. But the kids, they still want to do it, and can be excited about it.
> John: They still want to…
> Janis: Play music. Regardless of what age. As difficult as it is to see some ninth graders be just really excited about "Lightly Row" and that they've figured it out on the trumpet.
> John: That's difficult?
> Janis: Difficult for the kids, to be frustrated and feeling like they should be able to do more than they are, but then being excited at the same time that they are able to do this, and knowing at that point that they are looking toward graduation and what they are going to do, and getting jobs. How does playing an instrument really fit into the rest of my life? Well, it may not, but it still is exciting for them and something that they like to work on, and a skill that they'd like to develop. (interview #3)

Regardless of the level of music that they studied, according to Janis, these older beginners still had powerful musical experiences.

Janis went on to discuss how meaningful it was to her to experience the performance of elementary songs by high school students. Not only was it an exciting experience for her, but Janis also discussed how playing these simple songs, such as "Lightly Row" impacted the students in the larger picture:

> John: What is it like experiencing that with them?
> Janis: It's exciting. That part of it. It's frustrating too. But that's exciting.
> John: Talk a little more about what impact that has in their lives. A high schooler playing "Lightly Row" and being really into it … What sort of role do you think that that has in their lives at that point?
> Janis: That they *can*.
> John: Is it a big deal?
> Janis: *Yes*.
> John: How can you tell?
> Janis: You can just see it on their face. How excited they are. (interview #3)

Students Going to College

Janis discussed the importance of feeling that something that she has done has had a lasting effect on a student: "If I can see a difference, I can see an impact that what I've done or how I've done it has made an impact" (interview #1). As an example of lasting impact, Janis talked at length about the role that her program could play in students' pursuit of going to college. According to Janis, her emphasis on developing literacy and performance technique had lasting dividends for her students. As an educator, she considered their lives after high school and how her students' work in her music program could affect them after they graduated:

> I've got three seniors going to southern black colleges, and [they] are going to be participating in their music programs. I imagined that they would be at college anyway but it's, I mean they're ready for that level. And that's a good feeling. One of them didn't know how to read music when they got there. The others, many of them, seniors and others, just have a different, more sophisticated appreciation for music than they did before I got there. (interview #1)

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Janis also discussed how, although she did not favor the emphasis on performance, even specifically marching band, if her students worked hard and she was able to give them a good music education then that would also benefit them after high school:

> I guess now it's more about how many kids can I affect on an individual basis. At the high school level, how many of my kids want to go into music at the college level, or at least participate in a marching band program that's going to give them a scholarship to get to college. So focusing on, yes, just supporting the, supporting the endeavor, going on to higher learning and how can music be a part of that. (interview #1)

Janis also discussed how, regardless of this post-high school success enjoyed by her students, her administration remained focused on performance and wanted marching band to be the focus of music education at Schmidt:

> My administration even still was asking, "Where's the marching band? That's all fine and good but we have parades and things like that." Yeah but my kids can read now. Some of them have scholarships to colleges for music ed. (focus group)

Despite these successes with her students, Janis remained frustrated by her administration's lack of recognition of the numerous ways in which her students were experiencing success, from performing basic songs to majoring in music in college.

Students' Needs

With regard to her students at Schmidt, Janis discussed how she took responsibility for many of her students' non-musical needs, also arguing that her students' out-of-school circumstances affected her instrumental program more directly than they might in academic classes:

> Often [their needs are] such a fixed part of what they are doing in class. Maybe it doesn't show up as much in math and science, but they bring all of that into band and music and whatever we are doing. (interview #3)

Janis gave examples related to the students' home lives. As many of her students lived in apartments, her students were not always able to practice as much as students who have their own homes. Consequently, students' home situations have a direct impact on their musical performance from the standpoint of their opportunities to practice. As a solution, Janis would often remain at school to allow her students to practice their instruments. Students also had transportation issues and Janis took it upon herself to arrange for transportation where necessary. Janis discussed how she had to expand her thinking from music instruction in the classroom to her students' needs outside of school:

> Whether or not they can practice, whether or not they can make it to an event or performance, what they need to get there, what they need to stay after school. In the first couple of years, I had to rearrange my thinking into, "OK, the school day ends, but *our day* together goes into their life in the evening." (interview #3)

Janis gave specific examples of the sorts of the needs that she took care of. To her students, she often provided for basic needs that otherwise might not be taken care of would have resulted in her students' inability to continue studying music:

> So, thinking about who's going to pick them up, are they going to get picked up, what arrangements need to be made for them to stay after school, how are they going to get to this performance? My second year, I started doing a lot of driving around. What are they going to eat for dinner? Making arrangements for food. (interview #3)

Janis concluded by saying that her role as the provider for her students' needs had simply become part of her identity as a teacher. She was much more than a music educator. Her awareness of her students extended far beyond their musical progress. She could no longer separate the students in the classroom from the students outside of the classroom and all of the issues associated with the students' lives: "By that second year, their lives and thinking about their personal lives became just as much a part of what we do during the day" (interview #3).

Summary

As a music educator, Janis's music program has become her life. She pursued for her students a deeper, more comprehensive level of music education than that afforded by concert preparation, while at the same time she also considers them as people with complicated lives outside of school. She views the larger benefits of music education in both the present, through fostering musical experiences for her students, and the future, through guiding her students towards pursuing a college education. The fact that a high school student begins an instrument with her is much more than the simple act of a student trying something out. It is a way for her to guide a student towards the realization that, in her words, "they can." Over the course of her career, she has endeavored, as she stresses, to "educate the whole child." Although she does still consider herself a music educator, she perceives her role as a music educator to be one in which she addresses students' needs. She cannot separate Janis the band director from Janis the teacher who cares deeply about her students' wellbeing.

<div align="center">

Janis as an Urban Music Educator

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Definition

We discussed the prevalence of the term "urban" in discussion and I asked Janis to talk about her interpretation of the meaning of the term. Janis focused on its typical usage in discussions and the consequent implications:

> John: What is you reaction when you hear people use the term "urban" in discussions?
> Janis: Depends on what the discussion is about. Urban. Busy. Problems. At-risk. Metropolitan. Difficult. That's just free association. More often than not, when I hear the term urban, it seems lately that there is more of a discussion about challenges that you find in an urban environment.
> John: How do you feel about the way the term is used?

Janis: Unfortunately it seems to be a more pejorative term than just a description of where people live. (interview #3)

As we continued to discuss her definition of the word urban, Janis argued the point that whether or not a teacher teaches in a large city is superfluous and should not even come up in conversation. When others mention the term urban in reference to teaching music, Janis observed:

> I think about why they introduce the word urban rather than just saying, "Oh, you're a teacher." There are these preconceptions about what it's like to teach city children. More often than not it's… when I've met with the comment, it has been with, "Oh, thank you!" or "good for you" or "Wow." … I don't say, "You're welcome!" Usually, my stock response is to say something about the students that I work with. (interview #3)

District Administration

Janis discussed how a large issue in her experience as a teacher had been the impact of the administration of the city public school district on her teaching circumstances, both inside the classroom and in terms of her opportunities to teach music in the city. Janis likened the city's public school district 's administrative body to a business, with a corporate-style structure, something that interferes with the quality of the education that the students receive:

> Janis: You go into it for the kids. Your targeted concentration, your interest, your genuity towards the kids and it's the adults and the systemic aggravation that constantly you're battling.
> John: That's a really good point. Can you talk a little bit more about that? The system?
> Janis: Well, it's run like a corporation. It's impersonal. It's punitive. Cold. And completely illogical. Anti-education. (interview #1)

Janis gave the specific example of the district's recent elimination of a large number of teaching jobs and its projected impact on music education:

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The district is laying off 1800 more teachers. That is hopefully not, but very likely to affect music education. … Although the arts are first to go. It's an even more grim look into what's happening in [city] Public Schools (interview # 3)

Janis also pointed out that many of the problems that she had experienced were not only found in large cities. For example, all schools are accountable to the same testing standards. However, she believed that being in a large city exacerbated the problems and were a further impediment to, she stated, "educating the whole child" through the inclusion of music education in the curriculum. Janis listed a number of the problems potentially faced by all schools and argued that big cities are particularly susceptible to their effects:

Resources. Lack of fiscal support. Lack of administrative support. Big cities especially are so… Not that everybody isn't plagued with the hypertensive focus on test scores and state funding. But in big cities where the drop-out rates and failure rates are so significant, the pressure to get them to read, write, pass the tests, keep enrollment up… its an even bigger deterrent from educating the whole child. (interview #3)

In Janis's opinion, it is not the fact that cities experience difficulties, but the fact that cities experience these difficulties to such a high degree that the providing a well-rounded education for the students becomes particularly challenging. Moreover, the district's particular focus on testing results in a consequent lack of attention to music education

Urban Stereotypes

Janis talked about the pre-conceived notions that she and her students faced among outsiders, based on based on the fact that they came from a large city public school district. She talked about her students having "under expectations," such that they were not expected to perform at a high level, nor that that they would even be able to behave. Janis felt that her students were impacted by negative stereotypes and that,

somehow, her students were supposed to be trouble-makers or lawbreakers, as well as incapable of performing at a high musical level:

> I've gotten comments like "your kids are so well-behaved!" Well, what did you expect? "Your kids sound so good!"… "You really got the classical style on that!" What were you expecting? My kids were well behaved! … They were so polite! Nobody stole your purse? … Is your car out there? (focus group)

Janis continued by discussing how she had been warned about this stigma by other teachers from her city's public school district, one specific older teacher in particular. He expanded the scope of the stigma by including the students' ethnicity among the factors that caused these stereotypes. He intimated that African American students, regardless of setting, were simply not expected to perform well. Furthermore, the stereotyping extended to the teacher, such that the combination of a white teacher and black students achieving success was considered a particularly high accomplishment:

> Or the perception, which I was warned about, by a friend at [another city school] who clued me in when I was hired. He's taken his group all over. He said "Wherever I go, there's always some hint, someone, with these perceptions: look what that white guy's done with those black kids. Isn't that amazing?" (focus group)

Janis talked about how she herself had experienced conclusions being formed based on immediate reactions to her race (Caucasian). She felt that, over the course of working in exclusively African-American schools that she had stopped noticing that she looked different than everyone else. She had found herself being stared at and being confused at first until she realized a potential reason:

> I have to remind myself "Oh, that person doesn't know me so that person is looking at me and they have these preconceptions of me. And I forget to take into account other peoples' perceptions because mine is just "what are you looking at? Oh, right. I'm white. So what am I doing here? OK, I've got you." (interview #3)

Janis also talked about urban myths and associations, such as illegal drugs and violence, and what her experience had been in relation to them. She related how her parents, even though they had both grown up in this city and not moved out until Janis was two years old, were surprised and incredulous about her decision to teach in the city. Although she acknowledged that there are stereotypical problems in big cities, Janis did not communicate the idea that these problems affected her life as a teacher to any great degree:

> Janis: the things that are stereotypically horrifying or scary about the urban experience or the mythology of the urban experience, I mean, those things didn't bother me. Those things didn't make it harder or more challenging for me to be there. It was your run-of-the-mill how do I fit, how do I do this, how do I find myself here, how does this fit with me.
> John: What are the urban myths that you'd heard or that people had talked about?
> Janis: Drugs, guns, gangs, being safe.
> John: Did you run into any of that?
> Janis: Not too much my first year. Not too much. Really. Some fights and things like that (interview #1)

Janis also talked about a time when she experienced violence at a close range, and its resulting impact on her reputation with her students:

> At homecoming game this year, towards the end of the game, the band performed we did the whole dance routine, marching band rigmarole for homecoming. Towards the end, I was walking out with a few of my kids and about four or five gunshots went off about 15 feet from where I was walking. And everybody went down, and everyone ran out and was running down the street. And I just walked back to the building and just walked to my car, and didn't really think anything of it. Just that "oh, there's gunfire. Right there." On Monday, the kids were talking about it, and the kids who didn't know were asking what had happened. One of my kids said, "you should have seen Ms. []! We were running, and she was just walking down the street. Walking down the street." It's what they all were talking about. (interview #3)

These statements are powerful in light of what are often portrayed as the principal challenges in urban music education. In particular, urban discussions at times focus on the element of danger that might be present. In Janis's case, danger was simply not a

major concern. As an experienced urban teacher, Janis indicates that these typical urban

associations played almost no part in her teaching experience. Violence has a potential

presence in all schools in the United States, as the events at Columbine High School in

1997 demonstrated. As an issue in urban music education, however, Janis's statements

indicate that violence is not high on her priority list of issues to address.

Long-Term Retrospective

Finally, Janis spoke about her experience over her seven-year career in the city

public schools. She painted a picture of a district that, in her initial experience, was

functioning well. She had witnessed a dramatic downturn over her career, however. In

particular, Janis was affected by a large wave of lay-offs implemented in the district

several years ago.

> When I began, there were almost twice as many programs in [city]. Thriving. Up-and-coming. And while I have been in the district, not only was I a part of this huge sweeping lay-off and elimination of so many programs, but two years later, trying to hang on to some chance, some kind of opportunity to keep that going somewhere, I've seen how difficult even that is, and looked around and seen the effects of the lay-offs two years ago and how grim the reality is as far as music education is concerned. So it's been heart breaking, really. (interview #3)

It is interesting that throughout this and other discussions of the problems of her district

and large cities in general, Janis spoke with a tone of disappointment rather than anger,

jadedness, or bitterness. She was disappointed in the system and, to a degree she was

certainly unhappy, but she was not by any means turning her back on the city. Her

determination to support and be involved in large city music education had not wavered.

Here, Janis compares her feelings towards teaching in the city from both the

beginning and current stages in her career.

> John*:* What about before then, at the beginning of your career? What were your thoughts or views about urban music education then?

Janis: Hopeful. Optimistic. Exciting.
John: And at this point…
Janis: Disappointed.
John: Can you talk about the progression from point A to point B, maybe some steps in-between?
Janis: Still feeling very hopeful and encouraged when I was at Kestrel and then feeling, when I was a long-term sub – I still managed to hang onto that with the things that I was able to do [as a substitute]. That was great, that was very exciting. A lot of fun. And then the uncertainty of being called back, and then the opportunity to teach music through these very stringent auspices at Schmidt. (interview #3)

Janis's commitment to teaching music has never wavered. The challenges have come from outside of music education, in the form of having to find creative ways to continue teaching music in the city and defending her commitment to comprehensive music education.

Summary

Janis is a reflective urban music educator, a quality that was perhaps fostered by her extensive background in sociology. She considers the large picture of urban education, based on her own experiences within her district. Janis likened her district's administration to that of a corporation making its decisions with no consideration for their effects on the teachers or on the students' education. When she spoke about her teaching experiences at Schmidt and Kestrel, she spoke in analytical terms, as though from a distance. Although Janis was immersed in a challenging school in a dangerous area, and is herself a resident of the city in which she teaches, she was still able to discuss urban music education as a larger set of issues.

In addition to the reflective side, Janis is a passionate advocate for her students. She is sensitive to outsiders' perceptions of the city, and the stigma that she and her students encounter. Although she has faced many challenges as an urban music educator,

Janis does not describe herself as angry, frustrated, or burned out, but "disappointed." Even though she may feel disappointed, her vehement support of her students comes clearly across when she talks about the stereotypes that her students experience. Janis acknowledges the challenges and dangers that she personally faces at times, but indicates that she is simply not concerned by them: her priority is her students.

<div align="center">Toni</div>

Toni teaches in a different large city than Samantha and Janis. At the time of data collection, Toni was just completing her ninth year as the band director at Sparrow (a pseudonym) Middle School. Her entire career, including her student teaching, has taken place at Sparrow. Compared to the lay-offs and other bureaucratic obstacles that Janis and Samantha had encountered, Toni's career seemed at first glance to have been much smoother. As the discussion proceeded, it became clear that Toni had confronted issues that were just as challenging as the other teachers, if not more so.

<div align="center">*Meaningful Themes*</div>

Issues of Race and Culture

Toni has been strongly influenced by her interactions with people of different races and cultures. Although she had grown up with cultural diversity during her years going back and forth to a large city, when she first began teaching she was surprised to find that the cultural diversity of her school was a bit of a shock to her. Quickly, however, she adjusted:

> I used to think a lot about [cultural diversity] when I first started, how I was the only white person in the hallway! I used to think about that a lot. But now that is not even the first thing that comes into my mind. Before, you notice these things, because they are visual. It looked visual. Now I don't even think about the diversity. And I love it. (focus group)

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Toni also talked about how, over time, she has stopped noticing the race of her students. Toni discussed how, recently, she saw a group of black students and reflected on her thoughts about being in the minority both earlier in her career and currently:

> [W]e have a 4:30 bus that picks up the kids from the afterschool programs and takes them home. … And because the band room is right next to the bus drop-off, I usually stay and keep an eye on the kids. And they hang out, they know me. And I was sitting in my truck, because it was raining, and they were standing under the rain awning, and I'm looking at then and thinking that I would have been the only white person standing amongst 20 black students. And I never thought that when I was… then… that this would feel absolutely totally comfortable, and not look at them and say, "oh, there's a bunch of black students" and not look at them and think that. That it would be totally, completely normal for me to be standing next to them and it not be… That wasn't even the first thing that came to mind. (interview #1)

Toni went on to discuss how this realization indicated to her that she had gone from living in an area where race was the sole determinant of community membership to experiencing an almost complete lack of awareness of different races:

> And so it kind of was this full circle. It was this… being in a community where that's the only thing that identified the student to being in a community where, when one of my favorite students walks up to me, the first thing I see is him and not what color he is. (interview #1)

The "Uniform Incident"

During our third interview Toni told a powerful story that, I believe, had impacted her over the course of her entire career, manifesting itself both in her teaching actions and in her outlook towards music education:

> My first year, we went to band festival. 2002. [Name] High School had just gotten new uniforms, and their colors are the same as ours. Their old uniforms were nice but they had too many kids at the time. I asked the director if we could have them and she said yes. We picked them up, cleaned them, and spent time fixing them up. They're beautiful. The kids loved them. We had to bring down the sizes because our kids are shorter. At the time, only two schools had uniforms, and they were both affluent old-money suburbs. And we showed up – a [city] school – with beautiful uniforms. And my students behaved amazingly. Which is what I expect all the time. But something about the uniforms changed them. They were

wonderful. I couldn't have asked for better-behaved kids. One of my percussionists was unpacking the cabinet in the percussion loading area and I was standing about ten feet from him. The rest of the group was in the warm-up room tuning. And these three kids from another school district in the [other city] suburb area walked up to him and, as he was unpacking the snare drum, he had his sleeves rolled up. He was putting it all together. The kids come up to him and say, "How are you doing?" And [my student] stood up. He thought it was one of the students. He said, "Hey, how's it going" and went back to his stuff. And the uniforms are black and red. They're really nice. They look like the Marine Corps. And one of the kids says, "That uniform really fits your face." And he was totally bewildered. Here is the most polite kid I've ever met in my entire life. … And he didn't know what to say. And I saw it coming before I could get there to correct it. And one of the kids said, "Yeah and you can take it and your black ass back to [city]." And I had a conniption. I just… My head… I couldn't say anything as a director. I think the whole mother thing kicks in. There were three of them. I reprimanded the kids and sent them back to their director. I talked to [my student]. He was OK with it. I told him, "Afterwards, when we are done performing, we need to sit down and write this out." (interview #3)

I will hereafter refer to this event as the "Uniform Incident." Between witnessing this incident and addressing it with both her students and the district administration, Toni was deeply affected. It changed her as an educator and as a person. While this episode is not the single defining event of her career many of Toni's thoughts and outlooks, especially as regards race and equal treatment, reflect its impact.

Immediately after the Uniform Incident, Toni talked to her student and told him that they would take care of the matter and that for now they would just focus on their performance. When she spoke with her students both immediately after the event and after they returned to school, she discovered that other students had had similar negative experiences:

There were more things said to other students than him. I found out about that on the bus back. The kids did exactly what I told them to, "be polite, etc." I taught them that years before and I still teach it. If there is a problem bring it to me. I'm the adult and I will be able to take care of it. Afterwards, we spent about 15-20 minutes discussing what happened, and the kids filled out their progress reports. And I collected them and read through them. And it was horrendous. Horrendous! The things the kids had said to them. (interview #3)

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In the wake of the Uniform Incident, Toni also pursued follow-up conversations

and action with the district administration. Much to her dismay, she met with the attitude

that, undoubtedly, her students were also to blame:

> And I said, "I also want to bring something else up. This is what's going on. I'm going to fax this information to you and I want you to see that correct reprimands are brought for these schools." And do you know what he said to me? Every time I think about this it just ticks me off. He said, "Well I'm sure your kids did something to reciprocate that." I said, "What?! What!?" I said, "Wait a minute. You are telling me that my kids deserved comments like that because they are black?" And he said, "Well, no. I'm sure your kids acted that way in return. So if we were to penalize their kids we would have to penalize you." I said, "No, my kids didn't say anything because I was standing *right* there." That's what he said to me. That phone call was it for me. And I think that's, when I emailed you here. I said, "I've been burned so many times that I don't even put my foot forward." (interview #3)

While she has come to believe that the negative effects of race are intractable, she has

also taken it upon herself to give her students the tools to address them. That is one of her

primary motivations:

> At that moment it really solidified it for me that that's the way the world works. I have made it my personal mission in my classroom that these kids, whether they're white, black, Hispanic, it doesn't matter. I will give them the same footing that everybody else has because with certain areas they get certain privileges. If you come from [affluent suburb], you are granted certain privileges because you go to [affluent suburb]. … Giving them the education that I give them I think gives them the same footing as everybody else. Gives them the same skill level. (interview #3)

As a result of the Uniform Incident, Toni has had serious discussions with her

students about the potential impact of their race on their experiences when they go to

band festivals:

> I told them "You guys are going to walk in at a disadvantage because as soon as they see your face they are going to say "stop misbehaving,"" and it doesn't matter about any black kid, and it didn't matter that they were from [city], I was going to get the phone call that they were misbehaving because only black kids go to [school in] [city]. (focus group)

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Toni continued to reflect on the Uniform Incident and discussed how her feelings were affected. She suggested that, as a Caucasian person, she would never be able to experience what her student had experienced as the recipient of racially based derogatory comments:

> Toni: I look back at that and that just burns me up because I remember the look on that kid's face. I remember the look on that kid's face. And I couldn't do anything to change it. And because I look the way that I look I will never feel it. I know how I felt but I will never know how he felt. So it became this mission to make sure that regardless of what we do, that he knows that that is not true. That he knows that the way that those kids made him feel, that that's not true. Giving him the skills to be able to step beyond that. If nothing ever happens to that band or that director. Nothing happened. And that is frustrating for me, because I know that justice was not served and that really got me.
> John: That affected you as a person, you as an educator, and the way you deliver instruction and think about your kids.
> Toni: Even my whole philosophy. Everything changed that day. (interview #3)

As part of her follow-up to the Uniform Incident, Toni talked to other directors from her city district to ask if they had ever had similar experiences. The answer was yes:

> And I called [another director], who has been in the district for a long time. He has been my mentor for a long time. He has an answer for everything and is a calm guy. I said, "[H]as this ever happened to you?" And he said, "Yes. We stopped going to [band festival] because of something like that." "Why?" [I asked] "Because we were in the sight reading room and we had just sight read. A lady got up on the podium and the judge started working with the group and the first thing out of her mouth was "Well, it's good to see a lot of nice, young, tall black men not playing basketball today."" He put his head in his hands and shook his head and told me that he has never gone back to band festival since then. (interview #3)

I pursued the Uniform Incident to a greater degree because I wanted to know how many factors were in play. I believed that there were two factors involved in those other students' comments to Toni's student: both race and city. Toni agreed and then went on to say how, as a result of the Uniform Incident and its aftermath, she began to consider festivals from a personal, as well as a performance, standpoint:

John: So there was an element of something that is racially derogatory but there was also an element of the fact that it was the city of [city] involved as well. Not just a racial comment.

Toni: Yes. It's always… That's the thing. It's always been like that. … At that point it got personal. I'd always known that these kids were performing above where they were supposed to be. But at that moment is got personal.

John: What makes it "supposed to be?"

Toni: … They are playing above the average middle school band. And that made it personal. How dare *anybody, especially* colleagues – and one of them went on to become [band organization] Teacher of the Year. That ticked me off. How dare *anybody* look at my students and say, "You are not worthy of education. You are not worthy of the uniform you wear. You are not worthy of doing well. If you do well, we have to question you because you are not supposed to do that well." At that moment it got personal. … And it's almost become a personal mission. Maybe that's burning me out! (interview #3)

Aftermath: Returning to festival

Toni was clear on her feelings towards band festival: she was adamant that she would not allow her band to stop going to festival and, thereby, acknowledge the automatic negative assumptions of others:

And that is why we have to continue to do it. … Continue to go. Continue to participate in every single thing that that organization has because if we back off, then we are just becoming what they think they are. And it's not necessarily about proving anybody wrong. It's about changing the perceptions of what my students do and what [city] can do. (interview #3)

She referred back to her conversation with the director who had related the comment about young black men playing instruments instead of basketball, and discussed why it was crucial to her that she continue to take her bands to festival:

And I listened to what he had to say and I hung up the phone. And people have asked me that. He asked me that: "Why do you go back?" "Because we need to step on people's toes. Because *the moment* we don't go back is the moment that they have beaten us. We have to continue to go back because we have to continue to prove to ourselves that we can play at that level." (interview #3)

"Stand and Deliver"

Toni also described a parallel that she perceived between her thoughts and experiences and the motion picture *Stand and Deliver*, the story of a Hispanic math teacher in inner city Los Angeles played by Edward James Olmos. Toni had been struck by the sentiment in a particular scene:

> A lot of it is very stereotypical because they have to Hollywood it up. [Olmos] said something that really… This was his real quote: "You are already at a disadvantage because of your complexion and your name. And you have to find something that is going to put you on the same level." (interview #3)

Toni then related this excerpt from the film to the Uniform Incident and its implications for her students:

> So when my students walked in the door that day in 2002, they were already put in their place because of what their faces looked like. And because they did something different than what somebody expected them to do, it made them a target. Whatever we said that day was irrelevant. It was the job that we did that put us in a completely different ballpark. (interview #3)

Taking the film quote to heart, Toni has also resolved to herself that she will give her students whatever is necessary to "put [them] on the same level." As is consistent with a great deal of Toni's discussion, she is extremely aware of her students' lives when they leave middle school and her program. She has dedicated herself to making sure that she has an influence on them beyond middle school band:

> And so however they walk around, I don't care if they are poor. I don't care if they're black. I don't care if they're illiterate. I don't care if they're Hispanic. I don't care if they're white. I don't care. What they learn in my room is going to put them in another ballpark. The work ethic, the ability to sit down and say, "I can't do this but I will do this." That got me, and that has stuck with me. (interview #3)

Teacher Responsibility

As a music educator, Toni feels a strong sense of responsibility to her students. It is her responsibility to make sure that they learn and, if they do not achieve what she feels that they should, then she is to blame:

> [I]t has been my driving philosophy: that if I don't, who else will? And if they can't, whose responsibility is it? If they're not practicing, it's because I'm not giving them interesting enough information. If they can't practice, then I haven't found a way to make it so that they can. If they don't have an instrument, then I haven't found a way to get one for them. And it takes away the excuses on my part, because it's way too easy to say, "it's their parents." (interview #3)

Her sense of responsibility extends not only to pedagogy but even to instructional materials, and obtaining what her students need:

> [I]f the kids don't have the stand they need then I'm going to go to [the music store] and buy it and be damned with the electric bill that week. They need it, and no one else is going to get it to them but me. (interview #1)

This sense of responsibility, however, also extends to her students. If she has lived up to her part of the deal, then it becomes their responsibility to make sure that they keep up their part. In this segment, as with many of her statements, Toni made her statement in the form of a conversation. In this case, she recreated a hypothetical conversation with a student:

> But it also takes the excuses away on their part as well, because if I give them every opportunity to do everything that they are supposed to be doing, then they can't turn around and say, "I couldn't." "Well, why couldn't you?" So, for me, it has always been student-focused, and what can I do to make sure that they have no excuses whatsoever. (interview #3)

Toni's sense of responsibility extends to her feelings about being able to give her students the care that they need. When she either feels that she cannot provide the care that they need, or entertains thoughts of leaving her situation, she discusses feeling as though she has let them down or betrayed them, regardless of the circumstances:

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I almost felt guilty when I had to go in and have shoulder surgery. I told the kids, sometimes, "No, you can't stay afterschool today because I have to go home. You can't stay after and practice; we can't have a rehearsal, because I have to go home. You can't stay here and hang out until five o'clock, because I have to go home and rest. It's what my doctor told me to do." I almost felt guilty that I was putting myself in front of them. (interview #3)

The same feeling exists when she entertains thoughts of leaving music education or going to another school. Toni has feelings that she might be putting herself ahead of her students, and she reacts strongly to that notion:

Sometimes when I've thought about applying for another position, I feel like a traitor. I fight so hard for disadvantaged kids to get the education and recognition that they need, that if I even consider going to a school where these issues aren't present, I feel like I'm leaving them behind to make it easier for myself, even though colleagues say I deserve to be in a "better" place. (interview #3)

Toni would much rather maintain her advocacy for her students with all of its difficulties, than seek to make thing easier by moving to a program in which she would not encounter these same difficulties.

"Emotional Provider"

Toni talked to a great degree about the emotional needs that her students bring to class and school. She feels that her students, given their location in a largely at-risk school, have even more needs than other students. Providing for those needs, however, can take a substantial toll on the teacher:

But with educating, especially educating in a very high-risk situation, where the kids are unstable and the environments are unstable and there is so much other drama going on, and you are the sole emotional provider for so many kids, and you have to be the stable one, and you have to be the one that tells them that "everything is going to be all right," regardless of what's going on at home, that can really start to wear on you. Because you are burning the candle one hundred per-cent of the time. It never shuts off. (interview #3)

Toni described herself as being the "emotional provider" for many of her students, a concept that I considered important to pursue. Toni stated that many of her students have no one as a source of emotional support other than herself:

> John: Tell me about the term "emotional provider."
> Toni: You have to give them what they don't get anywhere else. Especially being in a district where they may not necessarily get that at home, you have to be that person. I've been called a lot of times a "second mom." I had a kid that made a speech at a spring concert – they have a tendency to commandeer the microphone – that said, "When my mom stepped out, you stepped in, because you cared about how I did and you saw me going in another direction and you grabbed me by the back of the neck and pushed me in the other direction." You have to be the emotional provider. (interview #3)

One of the hardest parts of her job, Toni said, was seeing students with disadvantages have the disadvantages win out:

> It's also hard to see students that have so much potential be swayed by severe behavioral circumstances, abuse from family circumstances, and misdiagnosed with learning disabilities from overloaded staff. My students play at a high school level, but yet over half of them drop out from personal circumstances, suspension, being sent to student services, etc. It's disheartening. (email survey)

Here, as in other statements, Toni demonstrated the high degree to which she took her students' needs to heart.

"When They Leave My Program"

Toni not only wants to give her students positive experience as middle school band members; she wants them to leave her program as young people ready to achieve great things in the world. Part of the reason for that focus is her reflecting on her own experiences in middle school and her consequent belief in the experiences that she wants her students to have: "I know how powerful my middle school experience was for me, even though it was a terrible experience. How good could it be for someone that had a good experience?" (interview #3).

Previously, while discussing her emphasis on the students developing a sense of responsibility, Toni related that sense to an experience with hard work that will remain with them for their lifetimes:

> But gosh darn it when they leave my program they are going to know what hard work is and they are going to know how to get it done. And they are going to know that if no one else does it... No one else does it for them that they have to do it. (interview #3)

Toni also described how, by giving her students experiences that would serve them throughout their lives, she also experienced some of her greatest rewards from teaching:

> Seeing kids come back years and years and years after they've been with me. I have a student right now that is [in college] studying to be a music education candidate. I started him in 6th grade. Now he's back teaching my drum line! That's the coolest thing ever. And giving them sort of experience that they remember and that they can use. (interview #3)

Summary

Although she is a committed music educator, Toni's emphases fell outside of specifically teaching music. She discussed her students' level of performance and her priority on their maintaining high standards, but the more important issue involved was one of lasting influence. Toni considers music education as it impacts the whole child, expressed poignantly in her statements about how her students need to leave her program being able to face challenges. She also discussed how she set the goal of her students' experiences in her program giving them the tools necessary to confront challenges later in life, racially-based and otherwise. She is also driven by a strong sense of equality, a sense that has its roots in her own upbringing in which she witnessed students treated differently based on their backgrounds. She has encountered a similar phenomenon as a

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band director through her students' experiences being viewed with suspicion and even facing racially-based comments. Toni's passionate commitment to her students is evident.

Toni as an Urban Music Educator

Definition

Toni was reluctant, if not resistant, to define the term "urban." Her thoughts on its typical usage are primarily student-based, referring to the characteristics of the students themselves. In essence, she feels that it is a way of discussing a topic obliquely, in a more "politically correct" (PC) form than an explicit discussion. To illustrate her point, Toni goes item-by-item with what she believes are the most commonly perceived meanings of the term "urban." Toni then argues that these perceptions are not specific to students in large cities:

> John: How would you define the term "urban?"
> Toni: It's hard to define. I don't like it. I think it's a PC way to say something very not-PC. I think it's a word to describe a very specific group of people. Very specific racial group of people without actually coming out and saying something. (interview #1)

Toni continued by, as she often did during interviews, simulating a conversation with her first and last few sentences. Her hypothetical conversation suggested a person who was trying to define "urban" by using commonly-held stereotypes:

> "It's poor students." "Well, OK, there are a lot of poor students out there." "It's poor at-risk students." "Well, yes, there are a lot of at-risk students out there." If you're going to say "urban" then you have to be more specific because urban can mean lots of things. My kids would be classified as urban. I wouldn't classify them as urban, but they would be if you were to look at a state-level bound to [city]. "Well, those are your urban middle kids." "Well, please define it because I don't know what that means." (interview #3)

Toni actually feels that the term "urban" has nothing to do with a city; rather, "urban" is used to denote the presence of minority students, most commonly African-

American students. Weiner (2006) discusses how the use of "urban" to refer to the students themselves can be misleading: "by using *urban* (italics hers) and *inner-city* (italics hers) to describe poor, minority students educators have inadvertently encouraged confusion about what makes urban schools" (p. 15). To Toni's perception, urban is frequently used in the manner to which Weiner alludes and, consequently, "urban students" is another way of referring to low-SES, typically African-American, students:

> Urban is… I think it's such a slippery term. Because when you think urban, you think minority, and you think, "urban schools are in trouble." And I'm like "define urban." "Well, poor." And I said "yes, well there's a lot of cities around the country where they're poor and they're 99.9% white. Are they urban too?" "Oh, no, they're poor working class." "What!?" (interview #1)

Toni continued to argue that urban is implicitly understood to not include Caucasian students, regardless of socio-economic status or any other characteristics:

> Because these poor kids, these poor Caucasian kids from somewhere else, they fit if they're in a socio-economic level or a high-density population, they would definitely fit the urban term. But yet it's not, because they're white and Caucasian students. So it's kind of one of those "not dirty words" – does that make sense? You want to refer to a community as being a black community or a Latino community or an Asian community but it's more politically correct to say "urban." (interview #1)

Consequently, Toni called for an explicit acknowledgement of the meaning of the term "urban:" "If it's a specific socio-economic level, let's say that. If it's a specific, culture, say that. If it's a specific nationality, say that. Urban is such a… huge term (interview #1). Toni provided her own definition of the term: "I tend to think it's basically, urban is going to be, if we're not thinking about it stereotypically, urban is a place where the needs exceed the resources" (interview #1). Toni believes the urban stereotypes to be: "high population density, high minority enrollment, poverty, low school achievement, high permeation of at-risk factors" (email survey).

Toni was also careful to add that, although she teaches students that she considers to be disadvantaged, students in similar situations are to be found just as easily outside of cities:

> To me, I teach environmentally disadvantaged students who are further disadvantaged by an overwhelmed school system; typically, these students tend to have the characteristics listed above. However, they are most certainly not confined to a larger city school. (email survey)

> I found Toni's use of "environmentally challenged" intriguing and asked her to

expand:

> [S]tudents who do not have the appropriate resources (parents, food, clothing, etc.) to be able to focus on school. It's not simply poverty. A student can be well clothed, etc. but have parents who are not mentally healthy, a neighborhood which prevents them from being safe, brothers and sisters who pull them into violence or drugs, etc. (member check email)

She went on to give an example of an environmentally challenged child with whom she works, illustrating that the disadvantages that these children face have nothing to do with going to school in a large city. The manifestation of the large city takes place, however, such that, in a large city school, Toni does not have the resources to address this student's needs:

> I have a specific student who has a wonderful home, is well fed, well clothed, etc., but her mom is a schizophrenic drug addict, her caregiver who takes care of her is mentally unstable with significant health problems. Mom comes in constantly to check on her because she thinks that something will happen to her and disrupts class and embarrasses her to no end. Then caregiver comes in to pull her out because she doesn't want mom wandering into the school to see her. She still manages to get straight A's. Her problems have nothing to do with the fact that she's black and lives in a high-density population city. That is an environmentally challenged student. (member check email)

In additions to connotations of race, Toni also connected the use of "urban" to discussions of the achievement gap:

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If 50% of black students in the U.S. cannot read above a certain level then say that. Don't just say "urban," because you cannot say that. Because you are lumping everybody into this giant blob and saying "these kids are not capable." Because there is such a negative stigma that goes with that urban word. (interview #3)

Inner City vs. Urban

Our discussion of the definition of urban led to the suggestion of another commonly heard term: inner city. I asked Toni how "inner city" compared to "urban." "Inner city," she stated, was not only clearer but was more appropriate to discussions of education in large cities. As she examined the points at issue, Toni identified a lack of sufficient resources as the primary problem with education in large cities:

> Inner city is a little different because I think that there definitely is culture in a larger school district or a larger city. Inner city is easier to define than urban because urban has such a weird stigma attached to it. Inner city is a city school, and city schools have distinct issues, and it's mostly because the needs of the amount of students exceeds the resources available for specific things, as far as languages, etc. It speaks to me more of population density vs. ability level. When you are in an inner city, I can almost guarantee you that you would have a higher diversity level than you would in a non-inner city school. And with the higher diversity level, your resources are going to be tapped out because you have multiple languages that you have to cover with services but you also have to deal with that in the math, English, and social studies departments, etc. So "inner city" definitely does have a definition for me. (interview #3)

After discussing the shades of meaning and the connotations present in both "urban" and "inner city," I asked Toni which term (if either) was a better fit for her teaching situation. It had become clear that she was not only distrustful of the term "urban" but that she did not consider that it was sufficiently clear to be used to describe a teaching situation:

> John: Perhaps [your district] is not an urban district, but would you say that it is an inner city district?
> Toni: Yes. If you are speaking in terms of high population density, yes. There is a difference between [a nearby affluent suburb] and [my city]. I think that it is the

amount of resources available for the amount of students that they have to manage. I think that that is the main defining factor.

Effects of Teacher Attrition

Toni felt that a large problem with education in her city was teacher attrition and the consequent problem of maintaining a sense of continuity among a constant influx of new teachers in programs and schools:

> Consistency. I think that large city schools tend to have a high teacher turnover, and the consistency of teachers is very poor. That makes it difficult to develop and maintain a program. I think that that is the biggest problem. (interview #3)

It is significant that Toni discussed the problem as inconsistency (the manifestation) rather than turnover itself. Turnover is what happens, but inconsistency is what the students are actually affected by. We continued our discussion of the presence and effect of turnover in Toni's school district:

> John: Is there a lot of turnover?
> Toni: Yes.
> John: So a lot of new teachers come in on a regular basis?
> Toni: Yes. I would say that in four years most of them are out. One orchestra teacher just left two years ago and he had only been there for a year. ...
> John: So you are in a different career stage than most of the district.
> Toni: Yes. (interview #3)

Toni went on to discuss several other examples of music teachers who had left after two or three years of teaching. Her description of the average amount of time that a music teacher remains in an urban district is consistent with the research literature on urban attrition (Blanson, 2005; Dolton & Newson, 2003; Hanushek, 2004; Haycock, 1998; Imazeki, 2002; Moon Merchant, 2005; Olsen & Anderson, 2007; Rinke, 2007; Stanford, 2001). As a nine-year veteran, Toni stated that she was now fourth-highest on the seniority list among music teachers in the district. I continued the discussion by asking her thoughts on the reasons for the high turnover:

John: Why do you think the turnover is so high?

Toni: I think that people are more willing to move than to stick with it and fix the problem.

John: Do they stay in music education, stay in education, or…

Toni: I think that they are just staying because they are tenured. In some cases, not all cases.

John: Do the people who leave get out of music education entirely or are they going somewhere else?

Toni: They go somewhere else. (interview #3)

Unequal Distribution of Resources

From Toni's earlier discussion of the defining characteristics of urban settings, it is clear that resources, in their various forms, are inextricably linked to urban identification and problems. Toni places resources high on her list of urban problems, such that it is one of her main criteria for demonstrating an urban situation: "urban is a place where the needs exceed the resources" (interview #1). Toni reiterated this point by stating that, "[C]ity schools have distinct issues, and it's mostly because the needs of the amount of students exceeds the resources available for specific things, as far as languages, etc." (interview #3). This problem of insufficient resources is exacerbated, in Toni's view, by the unequal distribution of the resources that are available.

According to Toni, a prominent illustration of the unequal distribution of resources was the creation of magnet schools. Toni described magnet schools as a way to concentrate resources: "I think that it's a money thing. Let's dump all of our money here and then we don't have to provide band at all of the other high schools" (focus group).

Toni continued by arguing that a magnet school that had been created in her district was having a consequent negative effect on other schools in the district. She questioned whether or not there was any research that suggested a substantial benefit to

magnet schools. Rather, she suggested that the primary benefit to magnet schools was

desegregation:

> Because they're crushing all of the other programs to reconstruct one. I haven't
> seen any research that tells me that they work for anything else other than
> desegregation. They're this big hot button right now. Our superintendent came up
> from Indiana and brought all this stuff with her, reconstituted a ton of our schools,
> some of which failed, and were a big waste of money. But I haven't seen any
> results. Our middle school for math and science and technology, failed AYP on
> their math scores. It's almost like a brand new façade on a restaurant that doesn't
> have very good food. At the sake of other music programs, because what will
> happen is that those other music programs will die, and when that magnet school
> disappears, there will be no music programs in the district. Other than
> desegregation, I'm not sure what they're for. (focus group)

Urban Stigma

Toni discussed how being perceived as "urban" was often a mark against her

program. She related her school's perception as an urban school back to the Uniform

Incident, and described how other urban schools have had similar experiences and

consequently stopped going to festivals:

> The perception. That was my big deal back five or six years ago. Perception. That
> can be a huge strike against you. When we did go out to perform… A lot of
> teachers that had that situation happen to them in my district never went back to
> perform because they didn't want it to happen again. (focus group)

Toni is therefore convinced that she and her students are affected by a stigma

based on being from a city. Although race is a factor, as she discussed earlier, the

association with her city is also a factor in the perception of her school and students:

> I KNOW (capitals hers) we get treated differently in performances and judged
> events because of where we come from, so everything constantly feels like an
> uphill battle. Things get very personal then when we do or do not do well. We
> always have to overcome who we are before we can be taken for what we can do.
> (email journal)

Toni talked about how the negative stigma of her city manifested itself directly when she

took her students to the district band festival. She reported difficulties in several areas

and attributes those difficulties to being from her city, describing one year's experiences

in particular:

> But for some reason that year we had problems with the judges. We had issues with the other kids. It was almost like we were not supposed to play that well. And we were not supposed to look that good. And we were not supposed to behave that well. Why? Because we were from [city]. (interview #3)

Toni talked about how this stigma was not only widespread but was something that wore

on her year after year:

> But every year it seems like I have to prove to the rest of the staff and the community that I have a right to be there. And it really bothers me. And I've considered getting out of the profession altogether, because you walk in on a daily basis, and the stigma that's held over your head is "nothing you do is right. Everything you do today is wrong, because you teach in [city] and you're a failing school." And I know that's not true. But it's really hard to walk in knowing no matter what I do, the view of what I do is not going to change. It will change for the kids, it will change for the program, but when the community looks in all they see is a failing school, and kids that don't deserve to have that beautiful school, and that's… granted that's not how everybody feels, but that's how we're made to feel by the media, the news, everything. If there's something that goes great, it's never on the news. But as soon as something goes wrong *clap* [city] school – bam! (interview #1)

> Finally, Toni argued that the city stigma was inextricably linked to race, such that

the students' race would typically lead others to associate them with a city, therefore

invoking the negative stigma and its consequences.

> I told them "You guys are going to walk in at a disadvantage because as soon as they see your face they are going to say "stop misbehaving,"" and it doesn't matter about any black kid, and it didn't matter that they were from [city], I was going to get the phone call that they were misbehaving because only black kids go to [city]. (focus group)

The Experiment

Toni had conducted her own research as to the presence or absence of the stigma

of her city. She believed that the perception of her school began as soon as judges or

other officials saw the city name affiliated with Toni's school. She began an experiment:

in alternating years, she submitted her materials under the name of her school only

(Sparrow Middle School), with no mention of the city. For example, she would submit

materials for "Sparrow Middle School, [city]" and the following year she would submit

materials labeled only with the "Sparrow Middle School." She found that the presence or

absence of the city's name in association with her school's name appeared to affect their

ratings. She believes, therefore, that her band's performance ratings are affected by

whether or not the city name is present, and therefore the negative association is made:

> I've actually done a bit of an experiment. For a couple of years, I only put "Sparrow Middle School" on the announcements, such as when I would do festival registration. I only wrote "Sparrow Middle School." So I changed it. Every year I changed it. One year I would put "Sparrow Middle School, [city]," the next year I would put "Sparrow Middle School." I'd switch it back and forth. *Every year* that we have not done well, it says "[city]." It's almost like it's this skip thing. It goes, one year we get straight 1's and it says "Sparrow Middle School," the next year we'll get 1's and 2's and it says "Sparrow Middle School, [city]," the next year we get straight 1's and it says "Sparrow Middle School," the next year we get 1's and 2's and it says "[city], Sparrow Middle School."
> John: Do you feel the quality of performance has been the same across those years?
> Toni: Yes, with some of them. But I've listened to some of the performances that I *know* should not have been a 1 and compared it to a performance that was a 2 and should have been a 1, and the only difference is the name that is on the label. (interview #3)

Toni's experiment is both bold and suggestive. Whether or not there truly is a

relationship, Toni makes a strong argument that, based on her results and her

corresponding announced affiliation with her city, her students are truly penalized when

it becomes known that they are from the city.

District Administration

As administration has been identified as a significant issue in urban education, I

asked Toni about her experiences with administration over the course of her career. Her

relationship with her school administration was positive:

I've always had a great relationship [with my administration]. Mostly because I draw a lot of kids in. It's a love-hate relationship. They don't necessarily agree, but when they come in I make them a believer. Put it that way. When they come in they might not be understanding of what is going on, but I tell them to just come to a concert. And it totally makes them a believer. (interview #3)

We then moved beyond Toni's school administration to discussing the administration of her district. She attributed a great deal of the district's actions to its age. Toni pointed out that city schools are typically older than suburban districts and that, consequently, they frequently have structures that have been in place for a long time:

City schools are some of the most structured ones. They're old. The structure with city schools, they're some of the oldest school districts in the state. So there is a huge tradition and political mush that you have to wade through. You have the strongest unions; you have the strongest tenure process. (focus group)

Toni continued her discussion of the structure of the district, arguing that due to the firmly entrenched structure, change in an urban system was very difficult.

I think that it's less and less about the students and more about how the district is structured. With [city], it is one of the oldest [in the state]. It's probably right up there with [another nearby large city]. There are things that will not change. Ever. Ever. And, because of that, I think they're kind of doomed to failure. (interview #3)

Toni went on to describe her specific perception of her district's administration based on her experiences as a teacher:

John: What are the [city] schools like administratively? How big is the governing body?
Toni: Oh it's huge. It just seems like it's an upside down pyramid sometimes is what it feels like at sometimes.
John: Who's at what end?
Toni: Teachers are at the bottom. That's what it feels like sometimes. I know it's not the case but that's what it feels like and it's just, we had a superintendent and a deputy superintendent and then there are assistants and it was just crazy. And here I am the only band director in 180 kids. Wait a minute! It's a little top-heavy here, I don't know what's going on. (interview #1)

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Toni's account of her interactions with her district, and her feelings of its being "top heavy" are consistent with research that characterizes urban schools as having large, centralized bureaucracies (Nieto, 2003; Weiner, 1999, 2006).

Summary

Toni's sensitivity to issues of race is also present in her perception of the term "urban," which she views as a thinly-veiled way of referring to African American students. Choosing instead to use the term "inner city," Toni then identified several issues facing music education in her city and other large cities. Urban students are affected by numerous substantial challenges, two of which being the inconsistency in instruction brought about by high teacher turnover and also insufficient resources to address the needs of the city's students. In addition to these challenges, Toni identified another major problem that her students faced: the negative stigma associated with students who attend city schools, a stigma also commonly automatically extended to minority students. Toni is committed to fighting that stigma, a spirit that she expresses through refusing to be turned away from performing at concert band festivals despite a pattern of negative experiences. She has also conducted her own research into the effect of communicating her school's affiliation with a city and has become even more convinced that her students are penalized due to their association with the city. Finally, Toni pointed out that, as her district is one of the oldest in the state, it has a bureaucracy that is not only large but very firmly entrenched, such that change is extremely unlikely. Regardless, Toni remains committed to her students and their success, despite the numerous obstacles that they face due to being an urban school.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have addressed research questions one and two through presenting relevant findings and themes. All three participants were presented in their own sections, with each section further divided into two parts in order to give each participant's answers to both questions. Chapter VI will present findings related to research question number three: *How do participants perceive their career development from the first into the second stage and how do they discuss their anticipated career trajectory?*

CHAPTER VI

SECOND-STAGE URBAN MUSIC TEACHERS: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the participants' progress through the first stage and into the second stage of their career, and to document their thoughts about the future. The chapter addresses the third research question: *How do participants perceive their career development thus far and how do they discuss their anticipated career trajectory?* Each participant's data analysis is presented in two segments: her description of the progression of her career, and her thoughts about the future of her career.

Samantha

Career Progression

Classroom Management

Samantha often used the lens of classroom management to discuss her career progression. When asked about different points in her career, she would often relate her answers to her impression of her classroom management during the time in question.

It's not easy being mean

Samantha's first teaching experiences were difficult because she encountered resistance that she had not anticipated. She had assumed that her students would simply listen and follow directions, and she was surprised to find otherwise. She discussed

feeling surprised and unprepared, but since then has concluded that all students typically

challenge new teachers in this manner:

> When I first started out I figured that kids would listen to me. I thought that kids would be so interested in the music that I wouldn't have any behavior problems. And I couldn't have been more wrong. I wasn't prepared to deal with children that were going to challenge me, who wanted to know what I was made of, if you will. And I have learned that that is a normal part of the process with my kids. (interview #3)

> Samantha went on to describe her outlook as progressing from positive to

negative, typically manifesting itself through raising her voice at students. She found

herself responding to their challenges more and more forcefully:

> I went from thinking everything would be great, and then being disappointed, and then going "Oh my gosh," and then yelling at kids because I was so excited about what I was going to teach and they weren't on board, and I didn't know what else to do but go "No! What are you doing? Why aren't you listening?" So I went from a rosy "this is going to be great" to the more evil side of discipline and feeling that I had to be mean. (interview #3)

As an example of issues that she faced with classroom management, she described how

students would start fights if she let her attention slip. She was forced to maintain control

of every possible action and to give specific instructions for every movement:

> I felt like if I didn't micro-manage every single situation as far as where they walked, how they walked … I felt like when I would ask the kids to do something simple it was so difficult. Like, for example, getting in a circle on the carpet. I had a big area rug in the middle of my room. And we sat in desks and we'd do some certain, like work in desks for a little while at the beginning of class and then we'd come onto the rug to do movement or to do some instrument work, and it was like, you just couldn't have kids come to the carpet. It would be chaotic. I mean they would literally want to fight each other constantly. There was always some sort of fighting going on with kids, or they would just be mean to one another, you know you get out a desk and push somebody. So I would literally have to lay out the rules of how we go to the carpet. And if I didn't watch, heaven forbid that I turn my back and get an instrument. (interview #1)

As an example of micro-managing, Samantha described how, when preparing lessons, she would need to plan her lessons out to the degree of choreographing specific movements in order to manage students' behavior:

> I actually opened up one of my old lesson plan books today, cause I was looking for a song for choir, I was just like "oh, what did I do that year" let me look up some stuff. And literally, I mean, I would write, "stand in front of class." I mean it was every single procedure had to be written down, in my lesson planning. (interview #1)

Different teaching personalities

Samantha described how at Crane Elementary, teachers were expected to project a certain image to their students: teachers needed to be "mean" or "crazy:"

> [I]n that environment you had to be perceived as having some sort of mean streak for the kids to respect you. And teachers even said, "You have to scare them. They have to know that you're…" This is what my fellow teachers would say often is that, "they have to think you're a little bit crazy." Literally. I heard that a lot from teachers. "They think I'm crazy." And that was perceived as being a really good thing. (interview #1)

As such, she found that it became necessary to assume a different persona while teaching. The students' expectation at the school was that if a teacher was seen as "nice," then the students would simply ignore the teacher: "[B]asically, if you were perceived as "nice"… it would be license to walk all over you and to just talk constantly in class and not listen" (interview #1).

Not only did she have to modify her management techniques, Samantha described feeling like she herself had to change her persona in order to teach at Crane. It was not only a matter of presenting a stern presence to the students. Samantha felt as though she had to become a different person in order to manage her classroom and deliver instruction. She used the metaphor of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Furthermore, during this part of our discussion as in other parts, Samantha's body language further reinforced her

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points. As she described her change in temperament, her facial expression underwent a noticeable change:

> Samantha: "If you fall on the floor, if you talk, if you touch someone, you are out." Everything was elimination. Every movement thing we did, because you, you had to. I felt like I was essentially a Jekyll and Hyde character. Cause I had, I knew who I was inside, I'm not a mean person, but I had to turn on that… absolute authoritative…
> John: I can see a change in your expression – you're looking more stern.
> Samantha: Yes. And I felt like I had to be like… I went overboard with it for a while, because kids needed to know that you didn't cross the line. (interview #1)

Samantha maintained the stern demeanor as much as she felt it was necessary, but she also felt that she periodically upset students, something that she felt was against her natural personality. She was conflicted, however, because although she did not feel that this severe persona was authentic to herself, she did acknowledge a need for strict discipline. At one point, when she talked about loosening the stern mannerisms and consequences, she used the term "cop-out," which suggests that Samantha was struggling with her feelings towards classroom management

> I crossed the line sometimes. I remember making a couple of kids cry and it's embarrassing for me to say now that I did, because I felt like if I didn't really draw that line for them that they weren't going to be successful, and that if I, if I used an excuse – well, these poor kids, they don't know how to act, and I'm just going to let them, you know, do what they want and be all nicey-nicey. I saw that as a cop-out. (interview #1)

On the one hand, she discussed being stern to the point of being mean, a behavior that she did not believe fit her demeanor but was made necessary by her teaching situation. Conversely, she discussed feeling that there was a necessity for her to be strict or risk the students' success in the larger picture. Furthermore, she felt that if she were to be "too nice" that it would be simply taking the path of least resistance. Clearly, this was a point

of tension between the culture of Crane Elementary and Samantha's beliefs about education and student interaction.

Additionally, although she adopted a more assertive approach to classroom management, Samantha also discussed how her personal approach changed over her years at Crane. Towards the end of her fourth year at Crane, Samantha was feeling that she had found her own system of management that fit: "By that fourth year. I think my third year I was really… too extreme? Too much of the barky-bark stuff and then the fourth year I was starting to find a balance" (interview #1).

Perceived as "naïve"

Samantha's disagreement with the Crane teachers' philosophy of classroom management was accompanied by her disagreement with what she perceived as the teachers' philosophy towards the students' potential. In Samantha's estimation, roughly 75% of the teachers did not believe that the students could succeed in school or in life: "[I] was surrounded by a staff who didn't believe that our kids truly had a chance in life" (background survey). She found it difficult to teach with this philosophy present.

Despite being surrounded by a philosophy with which she did not agree, however, Samantha maintained her belief in the students' potential for success. She discussed how other teachers perceived this as the mark of an inexperienced teacher, and someone who would come to know differently:

> I genuinely believed that our kids could succeed. I believed it in my heart and I treated them like I knew they could succeed. And that was perceived as being young and naïve and that I would learn. I kept hearing that from people "oh, you'll learn eventually." (interview #1)

Despite this perception by the staff, Samantha's belief in her students' potential for success did not waver as she gained more and more teaching experience.

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Stabilization

As Samantha reflected on her classroom management over the course of her entire career, she used the term stabilization: "I feel that the first few years of my teaching were really focused on establishing a practice of stable classroom *management*." [italics hers] (final email journal). Just as she had talked a great deal about classroom management during her years at Crane, Samantha discussed her new experiences in classroom management at Shore and her resulting conclusions and her progression as a teacher. She used the term "stabilized," and described both a presence and absence of stabilization at different times in her career:

> Before my classroom management practice was stabilized, I felt like I was always at the mercy of my students. If they were having a bad day, I was about to have one. If a fight broke out in class (and it did), no one learned that day. If a class was uninterested or unmotivated, I had a difficult time sparking their interest. (email journal)

Samantha also discussed confidence as a factor in her sense of stabilization, as in having the confidence in herself to respond firmly to challenges from students:

> The kids that I've taught, you have to be prepared that they are going to challenge you. You have to be confident enough to say "no," and to be able to redirect and say, "I'm sorry, but we are not going to do that right now," and to be able to do it calmly and move along. (interview #3)

After she began teaching at Shore, she began to notice a different feeling about her classroom management. She was feeling a greater sense of confidence, as mentioned above, and also feeling that her practice and management had stabilized to a greater degree. Samantha described how her feeling of stabilization finally came together during this most recent year (her seventh). Her management might have stabilized even earlier, but with the different phases of her career, it took her longer. Also, in describing her

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approach to classroom management, Samantha equated successful classroom

management with having a feeling of preparedness:

> I think I finally felt stabilized in my classroom management during this past
> school year. It could have been earlier, but due to much change during my short
> career: a year off, change in schools, taking time off to have a baby, going to part
> time for a while, etc., it was a little slower coming. To me, having a stable
> classroom as far as management is concerned means that I am constantly prepared
> for *anything* to happen. I have an established set of classroom expectations (rules,
> if you want to be old school...) and consequences. More importantly, it means I
> have the patience to establish and maintain a positive and engaging environment
> during class regardless of the state of the students that walk in the door. (email
> journal)

Huberman (1993) identifies the term "stabilization" in his discussion of career stages and

cites other scholars in presenting traits of teachers in the stabilization phase:

> In the samples of Watts (1980) and Field (1979), the accounts are nearly identical:
> accrued confidence, the comfort of having found one's personal style of teaching
> in the class-room, longer-term objectives, greater flexibility in day-to-day
> classroom management and the relativization of setbacks (p. 6).

Huberman's picture matches Samantha's developing attitude towards classroom

management: she has gained comfort and confidence in her ability to manage her

classroom and, in being prepared for any possibility, she has achieved the flexibility

described by Huberman.

Samantha's perception of stabilization did not necessarily extend beyond

classroom management, however. She discussed how she did not feel the same sense of

stabilization in terms of her approach to curriculum:

> I do not yet feel stabilized in my classroom curriculum practice--speaking now of
> content in teaching. I am still experimenting with different ways to teach
> everything--from movement to notation reading. I'm not sure if that will come
> anytime soon--or ever for that matter. I feel that I must constantly re-evaluate my
> own methods and lessons to keep what really drives student creativity and
> achievement--and to get rid of what isn't effective. (email journal)

Stabilization, to Samantha, is therefore a concept with multiple components. Samantha feels stabilized in one area but not in another. Still, she presents the image of a teacher who is secure in her classroom practice and, with that security achieved, is able to focus her attention on more specific areas for improvement. The overall feeling of security as a teacher (not infallibility or omniscience) is an indicator of the second stage.

Teaching Interlude: Pursuing a Master of Music Degree

After teaching for four years in the city's public school system, Samantha took a leave of absence from Crane to complete a one-year, full-time master of music (MM) degree. Samantha's master's program was important not only to her personal and academic growth, but in planting the seeds for her future plans to pursue a doctoral program. As part of her program, Samantha assisted with undergraduate teaching methods classes and describes those experiences as quite powerful. She felt that she was being truly valued for her teaching experience, as well as being affirmed that she was no longer a brand-new teacher.

Samantha gave "academic stimulation" as one of the main reasons for pursuing a master's degree. She had not been involved in a mentoring program as a new teacher. She had completed certification in Music Learning Theory after her second year but had otherwise not taken any courses or extended workshops. The only experience that she was using as a point of reflection was her student teaching:

> I was ready for some academic stimulation at that point. I was very isolated in [city]. I never was assigned a mentor. And I didn't really seek out a mentor. I just kind of constantly reflected on my student teaching experience. (interview #1)

Samantha indicated that the MM degree was a significant source of renewal for her:

> John: Was [the MM program] a source of renewal in any way? As a teacher, was it reinvigorating, or renewing in any way?

Samantha: Without a doubt. *The* most invigorating, renewing thing that's ever happened in my career. (interview #1)

Student and teacher

Samantha identified two particularly affecting parts of the experience: her coursework in research and philosophy, and her role as an assistant in teacher education courses. She found her new coursework particularly meaningful as she had four years' teaching experience within which to contextualize her reading and thinking. Samantha was able to relate theory to her practice:

> [R]eading what I thought were some pretty difficult pieces in philosophy and research and being able to really have a context for those things finally. And know what they're talking about, when they talk about different situations in the classroom, different philosophies. I was constantly making connections, and I know I told you this before, writing notes about my personal experience and how it tied into that. (interview #1)

Her second validation was not as a student but as a teacher. As part of her master's program, Samantha assisted several professors in teaching methods courses for undergraduate music education majors. Although her specific duties varied from course to course, Samantha received periodic opportunities to take leadership roles in the classes. She came to view these moments in the spotlight as powerful experiences that influenced not only her experience in the program but her thinking as to her career trajectory:

> I think the second validation of making that bridge from new teacher to "emerging teacher," or whatever you want to call it, was being the [graduate student] for the methods class. All of the sudden I just had this group of kids – students – that were really interested in what I had to say about my experience … I felt like "I can do this. I'm not the totally clueless new teacher." Look at all these people who are sitting where I sat a few years ago and, and I'm able to actually share and be helpful in some way." (interview #3)

Samantha's use of the term "emerging" suggests an acknowledgement to herself that she had passed some sort of mark into new territory as a teacher. By first comparing herself to the preservice teachers and subsequently placing herself at a more advanced stage as a teacher, Samantha had articulated the idea of career stages to herself.

A difficult return to teaching

When Samantha left Crane to begin her MM program, she submitted paperwork to her school and district administration and was approved to take a sabbatical from Crane Elementary. She was told that she could keep her position, room, and materials and that she would be able to simply pick up where she had left off when she returned. After completing her degree, she returned to find that her paperwork had been misplaced and that, consequently, the district had fired her. Additionally, at that point, the city public school district instituted a wave of lay-offs that resulted in many teachers, including Samantha being laid off. Samantha was distraught: "I was laid off, laid off after I finished my year of master's work here. I was devastated. I mean I, I thought I was done teaching in the city because I was done with [city] Public Schools" (interview #1). Her turmoil was due not only to losing her job, but to the fear that she would no longer be able to teach in the city. Earlier in her career she had decided that if she did not teach in the city then she was not interested in teaching elsewhere: "I was extremely upset because I saw that my place was really in [the city]" (interview #1). Samantha fought to get her job back:

> [A]s much as I went and called, and called, and called and went to the union, officially I was fired in April. For abandoning my job. Because they hadn't processed my paperwork. Or they hadn't, they lost my paperwork and said that I hadn't filed it even though I had my copies stamped and everything. Huge mess. It still says on my records … that I abandoned my job. (interview #1)

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Moving to a New Stage

As we talked, it became evident that Samantha's transition to a new stage as a teacher resulted from the intersection of several events. Three specific events led her to feel that she had truly entered a new stage as a teacher: the completion of her MM degree, a teaching job at a new school, and events in her personal life (a divorce).

In her interviews, she discussed the impact of her divorce on her transition to a different stage of her life:

> It really sometimes plays a role in this transformation between that new teaching time, being a new teacher and feeling more, kind of coming into my own. The break up really happened the summer between my last year of teaching at Crane and my master's degree. (interview #1)

More specifically it served as a concrete marker between parts of her life: "[It] was a *clear* separation in the time that, you know that I taught at Crane then my master's started this new period in my life" (interview #1). Additionally, Samantha came away from the divorce experience with a feeling of self-affirmation, and that she had taken control of her life on a new, stronger level:

> And I think it was definitely one of those points in my life where I really felt like I was taking control over what was happening in my life, and it wasn't just… not that I've ever been one to just sit back and let things happen. There was a real sense of this is who I am, this is what my life is going to look like, and I'm going to make these decisions for myself at this point. I think it was a real growing up time for me, too. (interview #1)

Samantha also felt that she had reached a point in her teaching career where she needed a break from teaching and a source of renewal. Pursuing an MM degree was her way of pursuing that renewal, and it became a substantial part of marking the end of the first stage of her career. After beginning the MM, she no long considered herself a "new teacher:"

And it's funny you ask the question "do you feel like a new teacher still and when did you stop?" And that was the point that I feel like I made the bridge to being… not a seasoned teacher by any means. I'm still not there. But not being a "newbie" anymore. (interview #1)

In addition to assisting with her transition out of the first stage of teaching and serving as a source of renewal, the MM planted the seeds of ideas that Samantha would later consider as she contemplated the future of her career.

The sequence of the three events was the divorce, followed by beginning and completing the MM, followed by beginning her new teaching position. Samantha completed her move to the second stage by beginning at Shore Elementary: "I think I stopped feeling like a new teacher when I finished my master's degree and began teaching at Shore" (email survey). Although she had experienced numerous challenges, both at school and in her personal life, Samantha emerged from her experiences with a feeling of readiness to begin a new part of her career.

Career Trajectory

Plans for Further Study

Although Samantha expressed an uncertainty about the specific course of her career in the near future, she had several clearly formed possible scenarios. Based on her master's program and on subsequent experiences in working with a nearby university's teacher education program, Samantha was seriously considering pursuing a doctorate, specifically a PhD, in music education. At first, she gave a definite timeline for beginning a program. As she talked longer, however, she allowed that she would also be content to continue as a teacher, or to take classes part time:

But in five years, I hope to either have started my PhD or be taking a couple of classes at a time, one at a time, and be still teaching. Or be totally immersed in a

PhD. I struggle with do I want to just, not just want to be a teacher, but I think that I could have a great career and teach for the next 20 years. (interview #3)

Teacher education

As discussed before, the principal reason for Samantha's interest in teacher education was her experience as an assistant during her master's program. She had projected herself into the role of college professor and teacher educator, although she had also considered that, as a professor, she would be required to perform research:

> I was taking great mental notes when I was [an assistant] because I wanted to know what it was like to teach a college course, to be in the shoes of someone doing that. Even though academia is not about just that, it's part of it. (interview #3)

In fact, even considering the sizable amount of positive comments that she made about her teaching experiences at Crane and Shore elementary schools, Samantha gave the title of best teaching experience to her work as an assistant, a time when she was not even the principal instructor: "It was pretty much the most rewarding teaching experience I've ever had" (interview #3). The evidence overwhelmingly indicates that Samantha wants to be involved with teacher education: "I definitely see myself wanting to go into teaching music teachers some day" (interview #3).

Concerns about pursuing a doctorate

As a result of her university teaching experience, Samantha's mind was made up: she would get her PhD and become a college professor. And yet, questions remained…

> [T]he teaching that I got to do [as an assistant] and the sharing, and making things relevant. Helping to pull in stories and ask questions that made the information relevant for the students was absolutely…. I loved it. At that point I decided, "I'm going to go back to school again because I want to teach college. I want to do this and I want to teach general music. That's what I want to do." I still have that desire but I think there's always that question in my mind: Is it right for me? (interview #3)

Additionally, while Samantha was certain that she wanted to pursue a PhD, she observed that she was drawn to the teacher education more than the research component of higher education. Although she had previously co-authored an article in a journal, and discussed topics that she was interested in researching, she also maintained that the prospect of doing research was daunting and perhaps even an impediment to pursuing a PhD. The doubt that began with concerns about performing research led Samantha back to her conclusion that she could just as well remain a classroom teacher:

> I don't consider myself an academic and a thinker. I always saw that my strength lay more with people, and less with the bookwork and the writing. So there is a certain amount of doubt in my mind and I think, "I could stay in teaching elementary school." (interview #3)

Samantha's perception of the role of research might be due to the research emphasis at the schools from which she had graduated. Samantha had obtained her degrees from a university with a strong research emphasis and, as such, equated higher education with a substantial research expectation for professors. It is quite possible that if she had had additional experience at a college or university with less of an emphasis on research, she might not have felt the sense of trepidation that she conveyed here. An awareness of the variety of emphases in schools might have strengthened her desire to pursue higher education, perhaps to the point of removing any hesitation at all.

Another possible obstacle to Samantha's pursuing a doctorate was her perception of her family background. She discussed the lack of higher education in her family as a possible source of self-doubt and of questioning her identity:

> I think that is more the self-doubt and thinking about… The fact that my parents didn't go to college. I feel like a fish out of water as far as becoming a professor one day or teaching college." I think because my parents are who they are. They are very smart people, but I just do not come from the academic institution. So it is a bunch of self doubt and saying "that's not who I am." (interview #3).

Samantha continued by comparing herself to faculty members with whom she studied

and expressing her feeling that she does not belong in the same group:

> And thinking about [professors that I have known] and all these people that I respect so greatly and that I just don't see myself being in the same league with, truly. I wouldn't admit that to many people, but I just don't. And that's where the doubt comes up. Probably, at least a couple of times a month, I'll think, "who am I trying to fool?" (interview #3)

In a member-check email, in which I verified Samantha's permission to use the above

quote, she elaborated on this sentiment: "I think it has less to do with fooling the

professors, but more society in general. I don't generally have the feeling that I fit into

the "professor" category" (member check email). The larger issue is Samantha's struggle

with self-perception. Despite her desire to pursue teacher education, she simply has a

hard time seeing herself as a professor.

Concerns about Withdrawal and Motivation

Steffy et al. (2000) describe withdrawal as "a form of disengagement. It

represents the negative forces that cause educators to remove themselves psychologically

from the reflection-renewal-growth process" (p. 15). Although Samantha discussed a

strong desire to pursue a doctorate in music education, as well as excitement at the

prospect of continuing to teacher in her present district and school, she also expressed

concerns about withdrawal:

> I get excited at the possibility of having more and more and more years to change things and to refine things but there is that piece that I have been wondering about in my head for a long time "why am I not motivated to do more? Why am I not motivated to plan another performance?" (interview #3)

Samantha also related her concerns about finding sources of motivation and, additionally, making a connection between her administration and her lack of opportunity for growth:

> I've experienced a lack of motivation here and there in the last few years and I think I have been experiencing withdrawal on a certain level. I think mine has been due lack of administrative support. Don't get me wrong. My administrators are extremely supportive and appreciative. I don't feel that I receive support for renewal, however, especially for reflection and professional development. I am not observed often--after all, the music room is a place of enthusiasm and Ms. [] is organized, manages well and is enthusiastic with the kids! :) From my administrators(sic) perspective, I have it all together. (email journal)

Part of Samantha's concerns, then, came from her administration. Ironically, the problem is that there are no problems. To her administration's perception, everything is running smoothly in the music classroom and, therefore, she is doing fine and does not need any particular extra attention. Samantha discussed how this lack of feedback from her administration was a concern:

> It's like "OK, I've been teaching enough that my classroom management is down, my kids don't kill each other in class, I don't send kids to the office, ever." … So it is just constant "great job, this is great," and I am thinking "how do I ever improve my teaching practice if I don't ever get any sort of constructive feedback?" (focus group)

Steffy et al. (2000) discuss this type of occurrence in their outline of their career cycle model. They argue that professional teachers are prone to be treated differently by their administrators, due to professional teachers' reliance on their students, rather than their administrations, for support: "Because professional teachers look to their students to provide them with motivation, administrators often treat them differently, give them less attention, and take them for granted" (p. 8). As a result of her success with her students, her administration simply takes for granted that everything is fine and that she does not need any particular support or attention. Samantha's sentiments clearly indicate that she

does need support, but a different type of support than a younger teacher with a clear-cut

issue such as classroom management.

Samantha was also concerned about maintaining energy and enthusiasm over a

lengthy career:

> But then I think, will I have the energy for it? I don't know. Because I don't want
> to be a 50 year old teacher and be like "ugh, I can't do this anymore." I want to
> have the same enthusiasm for it that I do now. (interview #3)

Samantha continued her discussion of her concerns about becoming a

disinterested, burned-out teacher. However, these same concerns were not discussed

when she described pursuing a PhD, perhaps suggesting that she equated pursuing a PhD

and academia with a constant source of growth, something that might not be counted on

if she remained in her same situation.

> John: You were just saying that you don't want to be someone who is just totally
> burned out, punching in at 8:30, punching out at 2:30. What would you do to keep
> from becoming that person, over 20 years?
> Samantha: I think that that's why I see that the PhD is next. (interview #3)

Although Samantha did discuss these concerns, she also discussed several current

sources of motivation:

> I continue to grow as a teacher by seeking out knowledge (publications,
> workshops), taking breaks, and fostering relationships with my students and other
> educators (music, general ed.). I think my students give me the most constant
> source of motivation (seeing the amazing things they discover or where they need
> me to use another approach), but going to a workshop or having a meaningful
> discussion with another teacher will often give me the shot in the arm that I really
> need. (email journal)

Samantha has identified a variety of sources for motivation, although her strongest

motivation remains her students.

Summary

Samantha perceives a clear progression from stage to stage over the course of her career. She paints a picture of a teacher who has experienced reversal over the course of her career: in the early part of her career, she faced difficult classroom situations with force and aggression, while in the latter part of her career she finds herself relaxing and concentrating on individual class pedagogy while at the same time retaining classroom control. There are, however, notable differences between her two schools, such as smaller class size at Shore, although the student body is essentially the same.

Samantha's career progression is characterized by concrete markers: switching schools, completing a degree, being laid off, and changing her marital status. She can clearly delineate the transition to the second stage, made possible by the intersection of the master's degree, her divorce, and her taking up a new position.

Samantha is clear about her future: she wants to pursue a PhD. Her desire to pursue a PhD is motivated by two factors: involvement in teacher education and seeking professional renewal. Despite her many positive discussions about her elementary school teaching, Samantha described her master's degree as her biggest source of renewal. This testimony strongly indicates that Samantha feels a pull towards academia. As our talk continued, however, Samantha discussed a number of issues that take away from that certainty, such as family circumstances and her uncertainty regarding research. In fact, she allows, she would be perfectly happy continuing in her present situation as an elementary music teacher.

<div align="center">Janis</div>

<div align="center">*Career Progression*</div>

Different Forms of Confidence

Janis discussed both a presence and an absence of confidence when she first

began teaching: She felt confident that she had been prepared as a music educator and

that she was knowledgeable and capable enough to perform her duties. However, she felt

less confident about the program in which she would be teaching. She wondered about

her reception by the students and adults affiliated with the music program:

> John: Talk about the level of comfort, or the level of self-confidence that you felt when you started teaching.
> Janis: Unsure. I was excited and felt comfortable. As a teacher, I felt confident. But I wasn't necessarily confident about the relationships that I had, or would have, or how those would go, or how I would be received.
> John: Relationships with…
> Janis: Students. Parents.
> John: Talk about that a little more.
> Janis: Just to have a bag of tricks, and ways to get them from where they are to where we need to be next and, "Would our rapport hold? Would our rapport make that happen? Or would something about our rapport deter that?"
> John: Deter what exactly?
> Janis: Moving forward.
> John: Their musical progress?
> Janis: Yes.
> John: You felt slightly unsure, but it doesn't sound like you felt intimidated.
> Janis: No, I wasn't intimidated.
> John: … What were you not confident and comfortable with?
> Janis: I felt like I had a ready command of my craft. But… How to make this thing work? (interview #3)

Janis's lack of confidence in how she would be accepted had to do with the nature

of the program itself, which she likened to being "a family model," something with which

she was unfamiliar. She felt that a family already existed and that she was attempting to

not only join the family but to assume leadership. In her previous school experience, all

band programs were basically similar: everyone knew their role and the band functioned

as a traditional school band. Here, it would not be so straightforward, and that was a

concern. Janis felt confident that she could do the job. The question was whether or not

she could she do the job *there*:

Janis: Because the program that I was walking into was so much like a family model. How to do this thing under this umbrella? How was I going to be received as a family member? Not only a family member but also a leader of this family?
John: The family model. Meaning that there was a lot of personal investment in the program?
Janis: Personal. Your life as the leader of this program was not really your own. This came first. In terms of doing performances on the weekend and after school. That was just what was expected. Having a thought or a consideration about, "I have plans" or "Janis has plans on Saturday," or "Janis has something and can't stay tonight," was so foreign. Knowing that that was the expectation. I was confident that I would be committed to that and I would do that, and I would make those personal accommodations. That I would be available on Saturdays and I would stay after school and give all of this personal time to the program in order to do this thing, but unsure as to how I would be received and whether or not I would have the endurance to do it. (interview #3)

Program ownership

During her first year of teaching, Janis worked with another band director (the 29-year veteran director who had built the program). During Janis's second year, the other director's position was cut and, after debate between themselves as to who should stay, the other director decided to leave Janis in charge: "She got a really powerful feeling that it was time for her to move on, and she really wanted to move on, and that she felt like she picked the right person to keep that program going" (interview #1). Consequently, during Janis's second year she took over the program as the only band director, an experience which she likened to being a first year teacher again, with one difference: "[M]y second year was kind of my first year incarnate, without support" (interiew #1).

Additionally, Janis wanted to shift the program's concentration away from its major emphasis on performance. Janis focused this part of the discussion on her desire to downplay marching band and to place more emphasis on concert band and comprehensive musicianship:

> [I] also got the chance to focus on things that I thought were more important, use that year to de-emphasize the marching band aspect of things a little bit … and

really working hard on developing the symphonic aspect of where the kids were. (interview #1)

Janis described putting in extremely long hours as the director. I asked her what had kept

her going throughout all of these new responsibilities and adjustments:

> [P]eople were counting on me to keep this machine going, and so I was determined to. And I enjoyed a great deal of it, too. I mean, it became my identity, it's where I spent 60, 80, 60-80 hours sometimes. (interview #1)

> It took several years for it to feel that it was her program. She discussed how, by

the third year:

> It got easier, more formatted, I guess, to being more my program. I guess it was starting to feel like it was my program. I instituted a little jazz band, got together, and incorporated some different kinds of focus. Marching band wasn't nearly, nearly the thing it was, which I was fine with. And the kids just kind of got used to it, so a lot of the old blood out and lots of new blood in and I got to show them what this thing was going to be. (interview #1)

> During the fourth year, however, Janis began to tire and to find herself, in her

words, "coming up short" (interview #1). Although she felt that she was making progress

with her educational goals for her program, she felt an increase in problems with

inventory, parent support, and fundraising.

Stage Transition

By the end of the fourth year, Janis did not feel like a new teacher. She had

moved beyond being a new teacher during her third year and she equated experiencing

the transition with gaining comfort:

> John: At the end of the fourth year were you still feeling like a new teacher?
> Janis: No I was feeling more of the seasoned variety. I would say.
> John: … [D]id it feel like you were in a different stage of your career?
> Janis: Yes. Yes.
> John: When did that change happen, or that transition into the different stage?
> Janis: I'd say probably after my second year. I'd say somewhere during my third year, I was feeling like this is really comfortable and everything fit. (interview #1)

Janis also described how, as she progressed, she found that the distinction between Janis the person and Janis the band director began to blur. She was developing a "teacher personality." Additionally, Janis went on to discuss how, for her, a big indicator of reaching a new stage as a teacher was having "ways:"

> [D]eveloping my personality as a teacher and, "Miss [] does this and this, that's her way." I mean, having "ways" like that as a teacher and how that fit with what… me, Janis. And it had been integrated as such a huge part of my life, I mean it's work really took up a lot of time, and there was a huge marriage between my personal self and my professional self and I guess that's what I mean by clicking.
> John: So before that point what was it like?
> Janis: This is my job, this is how I am here, this is what I need to do here, and having to make, like, a deliberate attempt to detach from it so that I could… my role as a human being and all the facets of that.
> John: But in the new part things were more in line with each other.
> Janis: Yes. (interview #1)

Reflection and Growth

Janis discussed how she felt about the role of reflection in teaching, and its relationship to renewal and growth as a teacher:

> John: How much reflection do you do as a teacher?
> Janis: I think that it is sort of ongoing. It's not as if I schedule time or take time out to think about it, although sometimes – moments – if something has gone really well or really badly. But I think that it is ongoing and part of the flow.
> John: Is it something that you would consider to be part of your practice as a teacher?
> Janis: I would say so. (interview #3)

Reflection has therefore become an integral part of Janis's teaching practice. Although she does not report that she takes time to sit and write about or analyze her teaching, she is still aware of an ongoing sense of reflecting on her classroom practice.

Steffy et al. (2000) propose that second-stage teachers (known as "professional teachers" in their model) make reflection an automatic part of their practice:

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Professional [second-stage] teachers recognize the importance of reflective practice and find ways to work it into their daily routines. Some use scripts to analyze teaching situations, which Ash (1993) illustrated through questions: How might I make my classroom more inviting? Why do I conduct the lesson in such a way? As teachers enter the professional [second stage] phase, their scripts become more automatic. (p. 67)

After discussing the presence of reflection, I asked Janis about the topic of growth for a teacher. Janis sees growth as being of great importance for teachers. She proceeded to describe the ways in which she pursues growth for herself:

John: My next question has to do with growth as a teacher. How important do you think that that is?
Janis: Very.
John: For yourself as a teacher, what do you pursue for growth?
Janis: Conferences. I go to the conference every year. Staying in close touch with what's going on with some of the thriving programs around. (interview #3)

As we continued to discuss the nature of growth, we began to discuss Janis's own growth as a teacher. She considers herself to still be growing but, at the present, does not feel that she receives the opportunity to realize her growth within her teaching situation:

John: Are you still growing?
Janis: I would say that I am still growing, but I have nowhere to grow to. Well, within the situation that I've been the last couple of years, there has not been room to be innovative.
John: There hasn't been room to be innovative?
Janis: There are certainly opportunities for me to be more innovative and to format what's going on out there with what I have to work with here. That's been interesting and good and has promoted ongoing growth in many directions.
John: For example…
Janis: How to integrate music theory, ear training, listening lessons, and things like that. Reintroducing things that I got in college to format it. Providing a worthy educational experience for the class.
John: So growing as far as what you can do as a classroom teacher in your classroom practice.
Janis: Yes.
John: As far as, "nowhere to grow to," – talk about that a little bit more.
Janis: Within this school, the things that I am able to improve upon would really have no place to be employed, or opportunity to be employed. (interview #3)

Janis painted a picture of someone who believes in the importance of pursuing renewal as a teacher and who pursued renewal to the best that she could. Her answer about "nowhere to grow to" struck me as rather enigmatic. As we continued to talk about Janis's career development, the larger issue present in her statement about "nowhere to grow to" was made clear: she feels that, due to her administration, she does not have the teaching environment in which to implement her growth. While it would be possible for her to undertake additional studies in music education, or pursue other forms of professional development, she does not believe that she would be able to use her new experience in her teaching situation due to her administration's relentless pressure on her to focus on marching band performance.

A Major Turning Point

Mid-way through our final interview, Janis very matter-of-factly told me that she had recently decided to leave her school and to not pursue other employment as a music educator. At the present, then, she does not intend to teach music as a full-time music teacher in the upcoming academic year. She had made this decision between our second and third interviews. While she had been entertaining thoughts of this sort previously and, evidently, during our first two interviews, she had not talked about them in our interviews. Consequently, I had not prepared to address this significant development while planning for the interview. I changed the focus and inquired about her reasons for this decision. I also asked her to discuss the thought process that had led up to it, as well as looking to make connections with prior conversations.

Janis began by talking about how she had planned, until recently, to continue teaching at Schmidt and had already received her teaching schedule, assignments, and

expectations. She discussed how she had given this information serious consideration and come to the conclusion that she would not be able to move the program in the direction that she felt appropriate under the parameters that she had been given.

Janis announced her decision to leave her school while summarizing her views on urban music education over the course of her career. She expressed her outlook on urban education as changing from "hopeful and optimistic" to "disappointed," described how that outlook was reflected during the various major sections of her career:

> John: Can you talk about the progression from [hopeful and optimistic] to [disappointed], maybe some steps in-between?
> Janis: Still feeling very hopeful and encouraged when I was at Kestrel [Elementary], and then feeling, when I was a long-term sub – I still managed to hang onto that with the things that I was able to do [as a substitute teacher]. That was great, that was very exciting. A lot of fun. And then the uncertainty of being called back, and then the opportunity to teach music through these very stringent auspices at Schmidt [High School], and being able to make small changes in that tradition but at the end of the day and at the end of this year, that that is about as far as I'm going to be able to, or I don't know if the position is going to be filled with someone else, but I won't be returning.
> John: Meaning that you're not going back to this school next year?
> Janis: No, I'm not.
> John: When did you decide that?
> Janis: Last week. (interview #3)

The main reasons for Janis deciding to leave were not the same as the more common ones of burnout, too many students, resources, isolation, or other factors that are identified by teachers as major difficulties (Hamman & Gordon, 2000; Krueger, 2000; Scheib, 2004). Janis did not object to teaching music, teaching music in the city, or even teaching music at Schmidt High School. Janis's principal reason for leaving Schmidt was a difference in opinion with the school administration on the purpose and objectives of the program and a consequent absence of opportunity for growth.

> John: So it wasn't kids, or equipment…
> Janis: No. That stuff you just learn to deal with.

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John: Or administration.
Janis: Sadly, yes. The kids are great. You get used to borrowing, stealing, pilfering… Selling water on the street to pay for whatever, you know? That I can deal with. Even get good at *laughter*. But when my first priority is to construct an illiterate marching band so that the press can do a… we can get on Fox and be in a Thanksgiving Day parade… No, thank you. And graduate more kids to White Castle? No. (focus group)

The main issue was what she perceived as irreconcilable differences with her

administration on the objectives and priorities of music education at the school:

But, it's just become increasingly difficult to move the music program forward. We're at a standstill, and the schedule is as good as it's going to get. I would continue to have students take the same classes for the same reasons. And I'd be facing the same challenges if not more challenges next year. And doing less and less music educating and more and more accommodating as an elective teacher in the building. And so I just said "no" to that, although I would have been eligible to be in the specialized student services building. I didn't want to stay in that building under those circumstances. (interview #3)

Another option for Janis would be to continue to teach in the city, but in special

education only (not music education). Although she had some training, she did not feel

that she had enough preparation for the types of jobs that she might have been doing. She

also stated that music education remained her first priority and she refused to give it up:

My other option would be to be transferred to another school and teach anywhere from emotionally-impaired language arts or cognitively-impaired math at any grade level, and that's not why I signed on in the beginning and I'm highly unqualified to do any of that, regardless of what I'm eligible for based on the number of credits, so it just wasn't something that I was going to continue to do. (interview #3)

Janis would gladly continue as a music educator, perhaps even a music educator

at her school: "I still feel the same affinity with music education and myself as a music

educator and I know that I'm going to miss it" (interview #3).

In summary, Janis attributes her decision to leave music education as a

philosophical difference with her administration about the nature of music education:

[A]t this point, I have made the decision to not return to the district for reasons surrounding my philosophies of music education and how unwelcome they are by my administration. Things that I am asked to do that I simply can't do any longer. (focus group)

Although she did not return as a full-time music teacher in the fall of 2008, Janis has remained active over the summer as a district official within her state's band and orchestra association. At the present, although she is no longer holding an office, she is still assisting with the administration of district events, such as planning the district's solo and ensemble festival. As her district includes an entire large city, this is not a small obligation. It is clear that Janis maintains a commitment to urban music education despite the fact that she has elected to not return to her school.

Moment of clarity

As she had only just recently made this decision, we talked about Janis's thought process leading up to her final decision:

I had sort of been thinking about it. Trying to negotiate how this could work. How I could try to make this work for next year. And last week it just became very clear to me that those expectations were not realistic. Getting a sense of where the administration was in terms of scheduling – they had already scheduled my classes for next year. (interview #3)

I asked Janis if, in the course of her evaluating her year and her feelings about where everything was going, she had experienced a point where she "just knew." She began by discussing the very end of the year and how what she felt was a very positive conclusion for herself and her students was, to her surprise, not well-received:

John: Was there a "moment of clarity" type of thing?
Janis: Yes. This has all been, "well, I could do this, this, and this," but it hasn't really come together in a place where I can say, "OK, I'm resolved. This is the decision that I'm making." So this has been up there for a month. Actually, longer. Maybe. I was finalizing my grade book for submission the day after commencement. Which went really well. The kids played wonderfully. We got a great response from most of the administration, parents, and family. "Oh it was

great," and the kids felt like superstars and it was a great end to the year. And then, just all of this snarky, punitive, address from one of my administrators of, "Why isn't this done… This isn't turned in… lesson plans…" blah blah blah. From my department head. And I just thought, "OK, can I stand this relationship for much longer?"
John: The straw that broke the camel's back?
Janis: That was part of it. But I took a step back and said, "OK, I'm personally reacting to her and the situation. It's frustrating but I've been able to tolerate it and I can find a place to be able to tolerate it for next year." (interview #3)

Even at this point, Janis had not completely resolved herself to leaving her school. She

continued to ponder her decision, but her list of reasons for leaving continued to grow.

Among them was the realization that, over the recent few months, she had not been able

to get to know her students, something on which she placed a high priority. She described

the process of making the decision to leave, a decision that she had reached six days prior

to this interview:

But when I was going through my grade book and getting everything finalized for submission. Wednesday night. I was going through and just… mentally took a brief look at the ratio of kids in each of my classes. Some of them had been added as late as three weeks ago, and a month before that, and a month before that. In almost every class. I thought, "I barely know this kid. And I barely know this one, and this one, and this one." There was no way that I could have included them in what we were doing or at least where we were at that time and so I just… racing through my head, thinking "OK, this is not me. This is not me. This is not the teacher that I can continue to live with or be, where I am looking at a roster of kids at the end of the year and I don't know 50% of them. That's not me. That's not my teacher self. And to ask more of me in order to accommodate this, pardon me, fucked up system anyway, would be… not only to be a part of it, but to lose what I love about teaching the most…" Then all of that sort of came together and I got the sheet out, checked the box, put it in the envelope and made plans to walk it on down to administration. And I did. (interview #3)

Janis continued to talk about reaching "the breaking point," when she truly felt that she

would not be able to continue. She felt that these thoughts about continuing with her

school and program had been present for some time, but that as a result of our

interviewing and analyzing, she had been able to clearly articulate what she truly felt:

You don't know the breaking point until you're there, I think. I don't think that I could have imagined where… At what point is that going to make me decide to check this box and say "… You lost me." (focus group)

Janis talked about how her students had been the primary source of wellbeing for her; that that was what she drew on, regardless of the personal challenges that she was experiencing. This reinforces her point that when she discovered that she did not even know a large number of students, that it removed her primary source of wellbeing and, hence, took away the primary reason that she was there. She felt that among the things that allowed her to take the final step was the belief that her students would "be OK" and would succeed:

> and the thing that kept me from seeing the breaking point, the thing that was always going to fog me, was, were my students. Because always, constantly… even if two students are getting something, and they appreciate what I am doing, and they are growing, and they are learning, and they are evolving, that can keep me here. But, when I kind of felt like they would be OK, the ones that are coming back next year, that I'm not sending elsewhere. I told them that I might not be back next year and so… we're going to have conversations over the summer about where they need to go, so I feel like they are taken care of, and like I am just going to continue to be abused, and when those things… That's how it is. I need to move on for myself, my students will be OK. (interview #3)

Among my initial reactions to Janis describing the decision to leave was a feeling that by way of my research I had contributed to the attrition of experienced urban music teachers, the very population that I was most interested in and, I believed, an extremely valuable population in music education. It became increasingly clear, I believe, that Janis had already been headed down this path.

Regardless of her growing conviction that she would be leaving urban music education, at no time had Janis been anything less than enthusiastic about participating in the study. The very fact that, after making this decision, she continued with a third interview as well as the focus group discussion is a testament to the level of commitment

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that Janis felt towards urban music education, as well as her belief in the importance of research into urban music education.

"Not selling out"

Janis frequently referred to remaining true to her convictions as "not selling out," indicating her priority on ideals and her refusal to compromise her philosophy of music education. Towards the end of the focus group discussion, as the participants discussed their intended next steps, Janis stated that her first priority was to remain true to her ideals, or as she phrased it: "I know that my focus right now is, well my first focus is not to sell my soul and I already took care of that by not going back to [city] Public Schools" (focus group). Janis is equating her "soul" with her values regarding music education, and she is equating "selling out" with continuing to teach music according to a set of values with which she does not agree. The expression "sell your soul" is a colorful one, but Janis's use of the phrase indicates her strong personal investment in her values for her students and their music education. Janis went on to propose that the title for my dissertation should be "How Janis got her Soul Back" (focus group), and Samantha pronounced the idea "Perfect". The vehemence expressed by Janis and Samantha must be acknowledged for its assertion of the need for a music educator to maintain their personal ideals regarding music education, regardless of difficulties encountered through interactions with administrators.

Career Trajectory

Enduring Dedication to Music Education

Janis is entering a different phase in her life. She discussed her plans for her future and why she was leaving her teaching job. Janis was very clear on several

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occasions that the problem was not music education, her students, or resources; the problem was her school administration and her perception of her program's consequent potential for growth. Moreover, given the restriction on hiring music teachers enacted by the city's board of education, it would be impossible for Janis to be hired as a music teacher in another city public school. Simply put, Janis was out of options for teaching music in the city. In Janis's mind, then, she was not leaving music education or the city. She was leaving her school:

> John: Do you want to stay in music education?
> Janis: I don't necessarily feel that I want to leave it. I guess, mentally, I'm leaving the situation that I've been in for the last two years, and I'm working to finish up my master's in social work, and once that's complete we'll see where I end up.
> John: Even if you wind up not teaching next year, or for a couple of years, would you like to go back to music education?
> Janis: Maybe eventually.
> John: The fact that you're not going to be back at this school, it sounds like, doesn't have anything to do with teaching music.
> Janis: No. I still feel the same affinity with music education and myself as a music educator and I know that I'm going to miss it.
> John: The problem comes down to administration? Or the school?
> Janis: Yes. [Both.] (interview #3)

Janis's future in urban music education is also affected by the district administration. Due to the lay-offs in place in her district, Janis will not be able to teach music in another school in the [city] Public Schools. She has been teaching during the last three years through a combination of serving as a long-term substitute teacher and as a special education teacher. During those three years she has not been employed as a full-time music teacher; she has had to find alternate ways to teach music in the city. She is clear on the fact that she is still committed to music education: "I still feel the same affinity with music education and myself as a music educator and I know that I'm going to miss it" (interview #3). Janis further summarized the situation as follows:

John: And so if you're not going to teach at that school, then moving to another school in the district is… difficult? Impossible?

Janis: I wouldn't be able to teach music in another school.

John: Why not? You're certified in music.

Janis: Right. But, according to the district, I'm still laid off. I'm essentially terminated from the district as a music teacher. I have been employed as a special education teacher, and the deal worked out within the particular school was that I would get to do my music education thing and maintain this caseload of kids. The problem is that I'm being asked to do things and make things happen that goes against why I'm interested in teaching music anyway. And it's only going to get worse, I feel. (interview #3)

Janis also discussed her personal circumstances, and how she is leaving this particular job without her future plans solidly in place. It is clear that while she feels strongly about teaching music in the city she cannot, in good conscience, continue in her current situation:

I'm not one to leave a job unless I have a job lined up but I just couldn't do it anymore. For the reasons that I mentioned. I can't be that type of music educator. Status quo and below that. I can't do it. … What satisfies the community, my administrators, all of those things go against what music education is supposed to be about. (interview #3)

Master of Social Work Degree

Janis is currently completing a Master of Social Work (MSW) degree. Her degree will be finished during the coming academic year. Janis's reason for pursuing an MSW as opposed to a master's in music education is the nature of duties that she had found herself doing as a music educator. In her particular set of circumstances, she believes that the more appropriate course of professional development is to step outside of music education. Her undergraduate double major with music education and sociology is also certainly re-exerting a presence.

John: What led you to do the MSW as opposed to an MM or something that's more specifically focused on music?

Janis: I found that my role as a music educator entailed so much an abundance of what I anticipated or could… And it even became more of an interest to me as a

social worker. I was doing a lot of social work as a music educator. And I decided to pursue a master's in that to fuel my role as a music educator. To have more of a background knowledge and thorough knowledge about the field.

John: Did you pursue the degree because you want to become a full-time, full-out social worker?

Janis: That's not why I started it. I started it for the knowledge. For the experience.

John: You were thinking in terms of your goals as a music educator, and you were thinking that your goals could be accomplished more effectively through pursuing an MSW as opposed to a master's in music or master's in music education. That's what it sounds like to me.

Janis: In the situation that I was in at the time, yes.

John: If you had been in a different situation, would that have still been the case?

Janis: I think that at some point, I probably would have chosen social work. I don't know that I would have done it for the same reasons or the same things would have fueled me, if I were in [an affluent suburb].

John: Is some of this due to the double major exerting its presence?

Janis: Absolutely. Yes. (interview #3)

Janis's priority for the coming year, then, is to complete her MSW. However, it was difficult for Janis to discuss her MSW without speaking about music education almost simultaneously. Throughout her discussion of the MSW and her interest in social work, Janis reiterated that she had no desire to abandon music education for good. She discussed maintaining an awareness of herself as a music educator, as well as having considered the possibility of teaching music in a charter school in the city:

> I'm very much in touch with my music educator identity. It's very much a part of who I am as a professional. Finishing my master's in social work is a priority. And I don't know what I will be doing while I am making that happen next year. But I am finished next year and I have had a couple of job offers in social work, so I may be doing that, or… If I continue teaching next year, I will be going charter, because I don't want to teach in a suburban or rural school. I want to teach in the city. (focus group)

Lasting Impact of the Study

Janis described how her participation in this study had allowed her to discuss and articulate feelings that she had not, as of then, been able to articulate. The feelings, she

reported, had already been there, but over the course of the interviews and reflections, Janis had arrived at a clear conclusion that expressed her feelings:

> "I think that the interview process, and your questions, and calling up all of these truths that I'm not used to expressing to anybody really, about how I truly feel about my job and what I do, and why I decided to do it, I think, made it easier for me to at least articulate to myself "This is how I am feeling right now, this is what this craft means to me, and this is my breaking point," and I am not going to continue to stay here and do this the wrongest way ever. So, in sum, I would have come to that decision on my own, in my own way, but I think that it was easier for me to go through the articulation process, because… my language was right there for me. (focus group)

My initial reaction to Janis's revelation that she would not return to teaching was one of self-blame. I felt that, somehow, my questions might have pushed Janis towards a decision that she would not have otherwise made. I feared that I had unwittingly cost urban music education an extremely valuable teacher and resource. Janis's discussion, however, indicated that she believed that she was already heading towards the decision.

Summary

Janis began as a confident teacher in a well-established program at Kestrel Elementary/Middle School and over four years maintained a feeling of accomplishment and progress. She pursued her goals for teaching music according to her philosophy of comprehensive musicianship and made great strides towards achieving them. Just as she felt that her energy was flagging due to the non-musical demands of her job, the district's administration stepped in and took away her opportunity to teach music in the city. Rather than looking for teaching jobs in the suburban or rural areas, Janis used her resourcefulness to find alternate ways, first as a long-term substitute and then as a special educator, to teach music in the city. Her initial confidence in her teaching never waned, although her enthusiasm has given way to disappointment.

The fact that Janis participated in this study, let alone remained involved to its conclusion including the final interview and focus group, is a testament to her commitment to music education in general, and urban music education more specifically. It would have been very easy for Janis to simply say, after our second interview, that she had decided not to continue teaching and therefore did not see any reason to continue with the research. Rather than withdrawing from the study, however, Janis demonstrated her enduring commitment to music education and to the students in the city public schools, to whom she had dedicated seven years of her life. In her words, she would rather leave teaching than "sell her soul" and teach music in a manner in which she did not believe.

<div align="center">Toni</div>

<div align="center">*Career Progression*</div>

Comfort vs. Confidence

Although the research literature does not always distinguish between confidence and comfort in relation to classroom teaching (Charner-Laird, 2007), Toni made a clear division between the comfort and confidence as related to teaching, and additionally described them in direct relation to different stages of her career.

> John: What are your levels of comfort and confidence in the classroom right now?
> Toni: High. Comfort yes.
> John: Beginning of the career?
> Toni: I am having a hard time remembering. I think that I am comfortable now, but I think that I was more confident then. Because what I was doing worked, and I had seen it work. I don't know if it was a false confidence, but I would equate more confidence and energy then, and more reflective and comfortable now. (interview #3)

Toni went on to explain that, at the beginning of her career, she could accomplish any possible task that was set before her. Conversely, at this point, she does not make

those same automatic assumptions. She also related the initial confidence to being

familiar with Sparrow [Middle School] and the band's set of procedures (she had student

taught at Sparrow) as well as, perhaps, to naïveté. After making her statement about

experiencing comfort and confidence at different times in her career, she expanded on her

description, starting with her feelings at the beginning of her career:

> Confident and energetic then. Indestructible would be a better way to say it. I remember a couple of pieces that we had done, and I remember thinking that there was *no way* that I could fail. I could not fail. It was not because I was so confident that I wouldn't fail. There was no other alternative. I either had to do it, or that was it. There were pieces that we played that were unbelievable. I don't know if I projected that onto the kids, that you are going to succeed at this and that's the way it is. (interview #3)

> Conversely, Toni does not have that same sense of invincibility and absolute

control now. Instead of assuming that everything will work according to plan, she has

begun considering the possibility that things might not go the way that she expects. She

likens this to being comfortable, as in being comfortable enough to think about those

possibilities:

> Now, I feel that I am more reflective and comfortable. I have a lot more "what if?" floating around in the back of my head. A lot of "we could play this piece, but what if the kids won't learn it? I would like to pull out a tough piece that I did my first year, but what if the kids won't learn it?" That type of thing. (interview #3)

Toni gave a comparison example, describing her thoughts regarding concert attendance

now versus earlier in her career. At the beginning of her career, she controlled

attendance; students simply did not miss concerts and festivals. She no longer feels that

control and, consequently, worries that the program might be adversely affected.

> When I first started, I felt that I could control everything that happened in that sphere. That when they walked into my room I could control how they played, how well they played, etc. etc. In my first couple of years, I never had a kid miss a concert, ever. If they were even breathing the words "I'm not coming to band

festival," then I would call home and their parents would have them there. My spring concert, I had 16 kids not there, out of 160 plus. What happened? (interview #3)

Toni elaborated on her growing feelings that she no longer has the control that she once did. Her lowered sense of control has affected her teaching in the form of music selection:

I don't know if I'm realizing that I can't control these things, and so I am second-guessing myself that "if we pick this great piece, and I put this one tuba player on a part, and that tuba player isn't there, that that could blow the whole performance." When I first started, that was never an option. I would drive to that kid's house and make them come. (interview #3)

Toni's discussion of control is significant as research into the second stage argues that it is characterized by an increase in a teacher's sense of control of their students and classroom environment (Berg et al, 2005; Charner-Laird, 2007), as opposed to lack of control in the early part of a career. Toni's statement reflects the exact opposite: a sense of near-absolute control early in her career and a sense of waning control as a nine-year veteran.

The Meaning of Reflection

Toni began the discussion of reflection by saying that she did no reflection at all, mainly due to time. The longer that we talked, however, it became clear that she was, in fact, a very reflective person. The issue was Toni's interpretation of the term "reflection." She equated "reflection," initially, with planning rehearsals and lessons, and lamented that she felt that she had insufficient time for that sort of reflection:

Toni: I have not had a decent amount of time to sit down and do planning in probably four or five years. To actually sit down and build lesson plans.
John: Let's say that you have advanced band and you teach them articulation one day. Do you get a chance to say, "I think that went really well, and next time I teach articulation I want to do *this*?"

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Toni: No. Not at all. And it is very frustrating. As a band, the kids are fantastic. As individual players, I don't get a lot of time to sit down and say, "This kid is having issues. How do I fix it?" It doesn't happen and it's frustrating. (interview #3)

Second guessing

Later on, she began to talk about how she had grown more reflective as she had

been teaching for longer. Upon further consideration, she likened this sort of reflection to

"second-guessing," meaning that she stopped and thought about things more than earlier

in her career. Earlier in her career, she would not hesitate to take on any project but at this

stage she stops and considers before beginning a project. Frequently, as she described it,

she questions whether or not the project in question is feasible.

> I think it is a different kind of reflection. Second-guessing would be a better way to put it. Not necessarily comfortable and reflective, but comfortable in second-guessing. I don't have time, now, to sit down and reflect on how the day went. I just know that when I go in the next day, that it has to be better than it was the day before. But I second-guess myself a lot now. More so than when I was younger. (interview #3)

Toni gave an example of what she referred to as second-guessing. Her example involved

a project that she would have gladly pursued at the beginning of her career but that now,

later in her career, she is reluctant to pursue:

> The first year that I taught, we were recommended to go to Midwest [Band and Orchestra Clinic]. The three judges recommended us. Then I was like "Yes this would be great. Let's go to Midwest." But, somehow it didn't fit into our schedule, or we had to have three years' worth of videos… it was a long process. So, I thought, OK, let's do it. But now… I have had the same recommendation now and I think "No way. Absolutely no way." Why? Because what if, what if, what if. What if they don't practice? What if they don't play well? And so forth. Second-guessing myself. I am a lot more intimidated now than I was before. (interview #3)

Other than second-guessing, I asked Toni about other possible forms of reflection. She

stated that the simple act of talking with colleagues was a hugely meaningful way of

reflecting. Moreover, participating in this study and, in particular the focus group,

constituted more conversation with colleagues than she felt that she had had over her

nine-year career:

> John: do you have any thoughts about ways of reflecting on teaching or the role of
> reflection in teaching?
> Toni: I think that a big part of it is just talking. This is probably the most that I
> have ever spoken with a colleague, ever. … So just sitting down with people that I
> can converse and they know exactly what I am talking about – that's the best
> thing. It makes a big difference. (focus group)

Renewal

Toni also talked about the role of reflection in fostering renewal in a teacher. She

felt that there was a relationship but that reflection does not automatically have a positive

outcome. The reflection that she is doing now, she feels, is not leading to positive growth.

Rather, her reflection turns towards concerns and, as she phrases it, second-guessing.

Consequently, she finds herself focusing on negative scenarios rather than analyzing

previous events for possible change.

> For me, personally, I think that there is a breakdown in the reflection phase that
> doesn't automatically lead to renewal. Sometimes it goes in the opposite
> direction. And that is the problem that I am having right now. The more that I
> reflect, which I don't get to do as much as I'd like to, or the reflection that's
> completely absent makes me extremely frustrated. So I think that, in this area
> right here, there is a block there for a lot of us. (focus group)

Although she questioned the role of reflection in her current thoughts about

renewal, Toni stated that for her renewal comes in other forms. Specifically, she

described how her students drive her sense of renewal:

> It is almost like their excitement and, sometimes, chaotic lives, renews me
> because they are always full of something. They are always full of energy. They
> always have an opinion, which I really value. If someone is upset with me and
> wants to give me a piece of their mind, I value that because they are telling me
> what they think. When I was in a rural community, the kids didn't tell you what

they thought. They told you what their parents told them to think. So, they'll tell you. (focus group)

This comment was made in the larger context of a discussion of teaching in the inner city suggesting that Toni associates her inner city setting itself with a source of renewal.

Hidden reflection

Finally, what was most striking is that although she was firm about the fact that she does no reflection, we later discovered that she has been using considerable reflection throughout her career without being aware. The issue was her definition of reflection, and the fact that she did not realize that reflection could take numerous forms, including writing. She later told me that she has, for years, written about her thoughts on music education. She described writing substantial amounts on urban music education in particular, and told me that she had a "drawer full" of similar writing that she had done throughout her career. I pointed out to her that what she was describing was a huge amount of reflection on teaching and education.

After our third interview, Toni sent me a nine-page document that she had written for herself during the 2001-2002 school year (her third year as a teacher) entitled: "Set Up To Fail" -A Crisis in "Urban" Music Education. Thoughts and Tips From An "Urban" Music Teacher." Her document is a substantial and thoughtful rumination on issues in urban music education. It covers many topics including testing, discipline, teacher preparation, new teachers, and evaluation. If I had stopped with Toni's initial statement that she did very little reflection, I would not have discovered the true extent of her thinking about urban music education. The implication is that many teachers are unaware of their reflection and, consequentially their potential for positive growth through this hidden reflection.

Professional Development

Seeking opportunities

Toni seeks opportunities to develop as a professional but is impeded and even

discouraged in her efforts. She discussed the teacher review procedure that is in place at

her school, how it is insufficient and not meaningful, and how she has tried to go beyond

the requirement:

> I specifically ask to be reviewed every single year because right now there is a
> rotation. Four years is our tenure, and then three or four years after that is the
> review. And it is a joke. The administrators think that it is a joke. They just go in
> and sit down, and if the kids aren't running around and setting things on fire then
> "Yay, it's a great class." Especially in a specialized class because they have no
> idea. So I ask specifically. I want to be reviewed every single year. Then I get a
> call from the union, who is upset that I am doing that because some people
> complained because they say it sets a bad precedent. So I say, "what kind of
> precedent is it setting?" So, they stopped doing that, and I get reviewed when
> everybody else gets reviewed. (interview #3)

Toni also observed that she rarely meets with other teachers in her district, a

statement reiterated during the focus group discussion that the focus group discussion

itself constituted the most conversation that she has yet had:

> Toni: I haven't met with high school teachers for a year and a half or more. I talk
> to one director frequently. Other than that it seems like there is no interest.
> John: No interest?
> Toni: It seems like outside of that particular school and their bubble, there's
> nothing out there.
> John: Would you be interested in talking to some of these other directors, or
> observing programs?"
> Toni: Absolutely.
> John: Is there resistance from other directors?
> Toni: Yes. A few. … I only know the director of the performing arts school and, I
> don't know how to explain this without sounding conceited, but I know that what
> I am doing at Sparrow is probably the highest caliber of what's happening in the
> district. I can't speak for the high schools because I haven't heard them but I
> know, middle school-wise, that's what's happening. I've asked before to observe
> other teachers in the district. I know that what I'm doing is not perfect, and if
> there's something that you're doing that I think will work for me, then I'd like to
> know because I'd like to use it. (interview #2)

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Toni also discussed how her program is sometimes viewed as a model, and that she is seen as a source for advice and mentoring. She disagrees with that assessment, and maintains that she would prefer to observe at other schools in an effort to improve her own teaching practice: "I feel like people are looking to me to help them be better teachers, but where do I go? I'd like to go to the other schools. I want to see what the other teachers are doing" (interview #2).

Master's degree

Toni is pursuing a master's degree in curriculum. Her choice of degree is characterized by practicality: she is required to get a master's degree for purposes of state certification but for numerous reasons she has not been able to find a master of music degree program that is compatible with her personal situation. She cannot pursue a master's degree during the academic year due to the risk of losing her position: "I would like to get a master's in music education, conducting, that type of thing. But you need to take a sabbatical for that and I am not going to do it" (interview #3). She went on to explain her situation:

> I'm taking my master's because I have to to keep my job. I was disappointed because the master's that I really wanted required me to spend time away from my job. And, in [state] right now, that is very dangerous … I can go to the board and I can petition the board to say "Can I take a sabbatical for a year to do my master's degree?", they will grant it but they don't guarantee… You'll get a job back, but you might not get *your* job back. (interview #3)

I asked why she was not pursuing a master's degree that was offered during the summer and she described finances and scheduling as the main difficulties. Consequently, Toni has not been successful in locating a master's degree program in music education that she can pursue.

Transition to a Second Stage

Initially, Toni felt that she no longer felt like a new teacher after finishing her first year. Upon further discussion, she identified the fourth year as the time when she really felt that she had "hit her stride:"

> John: When did you stop feeling like a new teacher?
> Toni: My second or third year. They say four years. Once you hit four you kind of get into a stride and you know what's coming and anticipate the things that are a problem. (interview #3)

Toni then went through her first four years one by one, describing her progression towards a point of stability. As has been described in the research literature (Charner-Laird, 2007), Toni has only vague recollections of her first year as a teacher: "I don't even remember half of my first year. It was a big blur" (interview #3). The subsequent years were characterized by an increase in confidence as a teacher until the fourth year was where things came together:

> Second year, a little bit more. Third year, a little bit more. Fourth year I kind of got it. I was like "wow, this is the way it's going to be, and I either will adapt to the issues or I won't and decide to go somewhere else." (interview #3)

Toni also connected her transition to her decision regarding whether or not to remain in music education. Huberman (1993) discusses the act of making a decision to commit to teaching and refers to it as "stabilization:"

> What does 'stabilization' signify in teaching? In general terms, it is a matter of affirming a single and subjective choice; that is, the decision to commit oneself to the *order* (italics his) of teaching. At that moment, one 'is' a teacher (p. 6).

Steffy et al. (2000) also liken their "professional teacher" stage (the second stage in their model of the life cycle of the career teacher) to Huberman's "stabilization" phase (p. 63). According to the literature, therefore, Toni's decision to commit to teaching moved her into the second stage.

The Prospect of a Lengthy Career

Toni has begun to have concerns when she considers the possibility of teaching for a long period of time. Among those concerns is curriculum. She worries that her education and consequently her curriculum are no long current: "I'm starting to feel the curricular "boredom" and also feel as if my education has started to become dated" (email survey).

Toni also discussed feeling that, although things are basically going well, she has begun to question the opportunities for her own growth. She relates this to a changing focus: her focus had been completely on her students through the beginning of her career and now she is thinking more of herself. Along with the question about her room for personal growth, however, come additional feelings of guilt about the idea of becoming too self-focused. Still, the question of her own opportunities for growth remained:

> I get kudos from parents, and I consider the last nine years to be pretty successful, so people will say, "What's the problem? Why would you ever consider leaving?" Well, part of it has been… I think that I am starting to ask myself, "Where is the room for *me* in this picture?" It's been all about the students for the last nine years. Where is my space in this picture? Where is my professional growth? What am I getting out of this? And you feel ashamed to think that because you are conditioned as a teacher to put the kids in front of your own needs but… I ask myself, like with the sight-reading problem, where have I grown? What is going to make me grow in this situation? (interview #3)

Toni talked about how she was, for the first time, asking herself what life would be like if she were no longer a band director. Rather than giving an indeterminate idea of teaching for a long time, Toni considered what it would be like to teach for a set number of years. What would it be like if she were to continue as a band director for another 20 years? The act of putting a precise number to her thoughts seemed to make things more

clear and more immediate. Finally, when I asked exactly what her thoughts were on what

else she might do (other than being a band director), she answered without hesitation that

she did not know.

> Toni: I talked with my husband a few weeks ago and said, "For the first time I can
> see myself not doing this." When I first started, I was going to do this forever.
> The next 40 years, never leave, never go anywhere. Now I see a little about… If I
> was to move on and do something else, what would I do. I'm not qualified to do
> anything else. I have a teacher's license. I've spent the last nine years after high
> school, because I've been working on my master's now for four years, educating
> myself to be a teacher. And I'm finally at that master's phase and I am thinking,
> "What next? What do I do now?"
> John: What are your thoughts?
> Toni: I have no clue. (interview #3)

Toni brought the same idea up during the focus group discussion and again

discussed it by using a set number of years. Using an exact number of years made her

statements more definite and also gave her a stronger sense of immediacy when she asked

the question of herself and of the group, "what now?"

> I've been there for ten years and am kind of looking beyond for the first time.
> When I first started I thought "I'm not staying here forever," and by the time I
> retired it would have been 42 years, which is insane! I'm at the point where I'm
> like "OK, what's next?" (focus group)

Toni continued that train of thought by outlining her career progression and how each

event had led to a subsequent event. When she reached her current point, she observed

that things were not as clear as they had been at every previous step. She actually felt a

bit fearful at the idea of being unsure of the direction that her career would take next. She

had already achieved several major goals and was now questioning the future to a greater

degree than previously:

> I don't know where I am going, and that's kind of scary. My husband and I had a
> discussion about this a week ago and he said, "So are you going to stay at
> Sparrow? What are you going to do?" and I said have no idea. I was so driven.
> Because I knew, when I was in middle school, what I wanted to do, and I was so

driven. And then when I got out, I thought, OK I'm going to have a successful program, and a brand new building. I have that now and so it's like "now what?" (focus group)

What if?

As we discussed Toni's thoughts about the future a thread emerged that suggested a fear of the intangible: What if something unforeseen was to happen? Toni described another concern as having the fear that although things have gone well for her during her career, something unforeseen could happen that would threaten her program and her career as a teacher. She related those feelings to the idea of teacher attrition and how she has already lasted longer than the vast majority of music teachers in her district:

> You see what the survival rate is for teachers in my position, and then you see how long you have been there and you wonder, "When will my number come up? When will they eliminate my position? When will I get an administrator that I absolutely can't live with?" That's scary. Because what do you do next? (interview #3)

Toni continued this line of thought by comparing a successful career to a run of luck and, consequently, a question of when that luck might run out:

> I've been lucky so far. When is there going to be something thrown in front of me that I can't handle? As far as keeping my job, or a teacher that oversees my job and that I just can't deal with, or money issues. It's almost like, "When is my luck going to run out?" (interview #3)

She is further concerned at the idea that those are problems over which she herself would have no control: "And those aren't things that happen as a result of what you are doing. They come from the outside" (interview #3).

Finally, if the luck does run out, how does a teacher know? What actually happens? Both during our interviews and during the focus group discussion, Toni wondered if a teacher truly has a "breaking point" and, if so, how that teacher knows when she has reached the breaking point. She wondered if she had reached her breaking

point and just not realized it. During the focus group discussion after Janis, told the group that she would not be returning to teaching the following year, Toni asked the following question:

> How did you *know* that it was your breaking point? That's what scares me a little bit. Have I missed it? Did I leave it back in 2002 somewhere? I don't know. How do you know when that's it. What is that final straw…? (focus group)

Withdrawal from Teaching

Toni has concerns about withdrawal, as evidenced by her musing on whether or not she had entered withdrawal and later on suggesting that perhaps "withdrawal" described feelings that she had recently been experiencing, although she had also heard the term "burn out."

Toni went on to trace her feelings of withdrawal to her questions about problems that she felt that she was having with her teaching:

> John: When I say [withdrawal], what comes to mind?
> Toni: It put a word to what I have been feeling for the last year or so. Another word that I had heard was "burn out." I heard someone mention it and I thought, "I wonder if that's what's going on?" Withdrawal, I think, is better. I think it goes back to the skill level. I recognize some very distinct problems with my teaching. [My comfort with] sight-reading being one of them. Knowing that it is a learning disability is frustrating, because I feel that I should be able to overcome it but I can't seem to do it. Knowing that I should be prepping more and planning more but being frustrated that I can't and can't seem to find that time. (interview #3)

Toni continued by discussing recurring challenges that she faces every year and how their cumulative effect was taxing. She has responded in part, she says, by withdrawing from other educators. She quickly qualified that by observing that she loves what she does which in this case must be interpreted as being the actual teaching itself. She remains committed to directing a band but she does feel possible signs of withdrawal due to other associated factors, such as administrative issues:

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It's like I have to reinvent the wheel every year, with the same financial issues. Even though they claim that nothing has changed, I know that that's not true. You get to the point where… it's almost like you are setting yourself up to have the same issues again and it's almost desensitizing. I don't want to get to that point. So in order to keep myself from going nuts. I have just started to push things back a little bit. Some people have said burnout and I've said, "No, I don't think that that's quite the right word because I love what I do. (interview #3)

Toni later discussed being afraid that she had "lost that spark," meaning that she was not as motivated to do things that she would have previously, even though she felt that she had improved as a musician and a teacher.

Though I know that now I have a much more educated and discerning ear than I did in my first several years, I still think that I may have lost some of that spark to deliver. Other teachers who have been teaching for longer than I have say "it's the kids." I think it's too easy to place the blame there. (email survey)

Despite the concerns that she expressed about experiencing withdrawal, I was struck by the huge amount of passion with which Toni described the Uniform Incident and her feelings about preparing her students to face disadvantages in life. She was not speaking as a fatigued teacher, resigned to the workings of the system; she was speaking as a teacher determined to keep fighting for her students at all costs. In the course of the interview, the Uniform Incident came up after we had discussed feelings of withdrawal. Given the tone of her voice and the fervor with which she was speaking, I pointed out to Toni that she did not sound at all withdrawn at that point. With a laugh, she agreed. Even though the incident in question had taken place in 2002, based on the passion with which she told the story, it might just as easily have happened the previous week. It was clear that her beliefs and her commitment to her students remain strong.

Possibilities for the Future

Other than the possibility of remaining in music education, Toni has no other ideas as far as possible scenarios for her future. She does, however, have thoughts

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regarding things that she does *not* plan to do or want to see happen. She does not mince

words: she is unsure what is going to happen but she is sure that changes are needed:

> John: Considering all of your past and present teaching experiences, where do you
> see your career going?
> Toni: I have no idea. I have no clue. I don't want to continue to go on the path
> that I'm going on because I am not getting any personal growth. So something is
> going to have to change. But I don't know what, where, or how. (interview #3)

Toni also included formal education to the list of issues with deciding on what she

would be doing in the future. She observed that she was getting her master's degree

because she had to, although her earlier comments suggested that she did not resent

getting a master's degree, she was simply not in the program of her choice. Beyond a

master's degree, however, she observed that there were no requirements for additional

formal education. Most tellingly, however, she described an element of fear in her

uncertainty:

> I have been asking myself, "What's next?" And I don't know. That's the scary
> thing. I could continue to do what I am doing for the next thirty years, which is
> fine, but am I stopping where I am and just continuing to maintain? I don't know.
> After I get this master's I don't know what's next, because you are not required to
> get anything beyond that. Then, what is the opportunity for me to do anything
> else? I don't know. (interview #3)

Steffy et al. (2000) claim that, as teachers proceed along the career cycle, they

either assume administrative roles on the school or district level or become more active in

professional organizations, in some cases holding office. Toni was very clear that she was

not interested in expanding into professional organizations. Toni told me that she was

often approached to take on leadership roles but that she simply was not interested and, in

fact, did not consider herself someone to whom others should look as a leader or a model

teacher.

> John: Would you want to do administration or be a coordinator of some sort?

Toni: No.
John: Statewide office or professional organizations? Anything of that sort?
Toni: No. People look to me sometimes, especially in the district, as a go-to person and I don't think that I should be because I don't have all of the answers. Or a mentor or, something in the article said, "As you become a professional teacher, people see you more as a resource." And that's fine, but I don't think that I should be. Not because I don't want to be but I make mistakes just as much as anyone else does. (interview #3)

Summary

In many ways, Toni represents an enigmatic counter-example of a second-stage teacher. Rather than gaining confidence through years of experience as a teacher, Toni questions her effectiveness as a teacher and the success of her program. Moreover, she equates her lowering of self-confidence with a rise in comfort as a teacher and a consequent engagement in "second-guessing." Early in her career she would have gladly applied to perform at the prestigious Midwest Band and Orchestra Directors Clinic while at the present, even with nine years' experience developing her own program, she will not even consider it.

Rather than focusing less on herself and more on her students Toni is, for the first time, turning attention to herself and asking about her own growth as a teacher. During her first years as a teacher, she considered only her students. Rather than becoming more active and visible outside of her classroom and school, Toni chooses to pull back to her own program and avoid venturing out. Her reasoning, she argues, is the culmination of negative experiences with her district and with outside professional organizations, such as the statewide band organization.

In Toni's perception, she is not a reflective teacher because she does not have the time to examine her lesson plans. At the same time, she writes voluminously about her thoughts and experiences related to music education.

Toni is concerned about the future because, for the first time, she is considering life without music education. She feels that she is at risk of withdrawal but, based on the engagement that she has experienced during this study as evidenced by her comments in the focus group, Toni still maintains the "spark" of a dedicated music educator. Between her statements here and her statements related to other topics, Toni's concerns about withdrawal are not reflected in her demeanor when she discusses her students. She may believe that she is simply withdrawn and non-reflective but, over the course of this study, I believe that she has challenged those conclusions.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to trace the participants' progress through the first stage of teaching, their passing of the barrier into the second stage, and their thoughts about their future careers. I presented findings that address the question, *How do participants perceive their career development thus far and how do they discuss their anticipated career trajectory?* The three participants presented different pictures of second-stage urban music teachers, based on reflections of past experiences and future plans. Chapter VII will present a cross-case analysis of the three participants. It will return to the study's theoretical framework (Steffy et al., 2000) in order to discuss the findings from chapters V and VI in terms of larger themes. Subsequently, chapter VIII will give a summary of the methodology of the study as well as discussing implications for practice and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER VII

CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter will present a cross-case analysis of the within-cases analyses presented in chapters V and VI. It will also review the purpose of the study and its methodology.

While a teaching career has traditionally been perceived as having two parts, preservice followed by inservice, there is a growing body of scholarship in general education that argues for teachers' careers to be considered as a cycle of stages (Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Leithwood, 1992; Huberman, 1993; Steffy, 1989; Steffy et al, 2000). Music education has focused research on the first stage (preservice and early years) of a teaching career (for example Conway, 2002; DeLorenzo, 1992; Haack & Smith, 2000; Krueger, 1999, 2000, 2001), and to a lesser degree, the final stage of a teaching career (Cutietta & Thompson, 2000; Fiese & DeCarbo, 1995). There has been limited research on music teachers who are not at either the beginning or in the final years of a teaching career, such as those who have been teaching for more than a few years (Baker, 2005a, 2005b; Brand, 1983). A number of studies identify themselves as investigating "experienced" music teachers (Bauer, 2007; Brittin, 2005; Conway, 2007; Duling, 1992; Robinson, 2005; Teachout, 1997), although definitions of the term "experienced" vary significantly.

Moreover, general education research has recently begun to focus attention on a specific portion of the career cycle: the time immediately following the first few years of teaching, also referred to as the second stage. A great deal of this recent research focused on the second stage is a product of the Harvard Graduate School of Education's *Project on the Next Generation of Teachers* (Berg et al., 2005; Cameron et al., 2006; Charner-Laird, 2007; Donaldson, 2005; Donaldson et al., 2005; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Szczesiul, 2007) where specific topics have included differentiated roles, professional collaboration, support and retention of newly-tenured teachers, job engagement, and career decisions. The second stage of teaching has also been studied in other countries, such as New Zealand. Cameron et al. (2006) studied 57 second-stage teachers as phase one of a larger study affiliated with the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. A small number of studies about the second stage have considered urban teachers specifically (Donaldson, 2005; Charner-Laird, 2007; Szczesiul, 2007). The identifying factors of the second stage vary, but may include length of time teaching, tenure, and the demonstrated presence or absence of certain characteristics (such as self-confidence). The study of the career cycle in music education is limited (Brand, 1983; Conway, 2007).

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of music educators teaching in urban schools who have recently moved beyond the first stage of teaching into the second stage. This study extends the growing body of research in music education on the career cycle as well as adding to the research literature on urban music teachers and urban music education. The research questions for this study are:

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1. *What themes emerge as meaningful to participants when they describe their teaching experiences as second-stage music teachers?*

2. *What do the participants identify as major issues in urban music education and how do they discuss them?*

3. *How do participants perceive their career development from the first into the second stage and how do they discuss their anticipated career trajectory?*

Methodology of Study

This study employed a qualitative research methodology that used a multiple descriptive case study design (Merriam, 1998, pp. 29-31). Merriam (1998) states that cases can be distinguished from other forms of qualitative research in that they are "intensive descriptions and analyses of a *single unit* or *bounded system*" [italics hers], also giving as examples "an individual, program, event, group, intervention, or community" (p. 19). Merriam writes, "*Descriptive* (italics hers) means that the end product of a case study is a rich "thick" description of the phenomenon under study" (p. 29).

Participants

The study was conducted with a purposeful (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002) sample of music teachers who teach in urban settings and are in the second stage of their careers. Purposeful sampling is based on the technique of selecting participants who are "information-rich cases" (Patton, 2002, p. 230). The teachers are Caucasian and female. They are referred to in the study as Samantha, Janis, and Toni (pseudonyms). At the time of data collection, two teachers had been teaching for seven years and one teacher for

nine years. Samantha and Janis taught in the same city while Toni taught in a different city.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a background survey, email journals, three semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 1998; Seidman, 2006), and a focus group discussion (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2006). The objective was to bring forth what Merriam (1998) refers to as the "*emic*, [italics hers] or insider's perspective" (p. 6) regarding the phenomenon. Data for this study were collected between April and June of 2008, and member-check emails continued through December of 2008.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness, a concept proposed by numerous qualitative researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002), is an alternative to reliability or validity in quantitative research. Patton states, "Qualitative research in recent years has moved toward preferring such language as *trustworthiness* and *authenticity* [italics his]" (p. 51). The following measures were used to demonstrate trustworthiness in this study: the researcher as instrument of inquiry, data collection triangulation, member checks, and the focus group discussion.

Analysis

As Merriam (1998) argues, "Data collection and analysis is a *simultaneous* [italics hers] activity in qualitative research" (p. 151). Analysis therefore began when I read the participants' first piece of data: the background survey. Interviews and the focus group were audiotaped and transcribed by the researcher, with the transcription process itself a significant component of data analysis. In between participants' interviews I listened to

their interview tapes as part of the ongoing data analysis as well as to aid in formulating

interview questions for subsequent interviews.

The Second Stage of the Teacher Career Cycle

The second stage of teaching is defined in several ways. While it is most typically

defined using the amount of time that an individual has been teaching, additional criteria

(such as tenure) are commonly proposed as part of the definition. Second-stage teachers:

1. Hav[e] achieved tenure and a sense of confidence about their classroom teaching, … (the decade after tenure) (Berg et al., 2005, p. 4)
2. have taught for 4-12 years and are "no longer struggling to survive each day and their practice is becoming more stable" (Donaldson et al., 2005, pp. 2-3)
3. have taught for 4-6 years and "have generally surmounted the challenges of classroom management and curricular design experienced by new teachers" (Donaldson, 2005, pp. 3-4)
4. have complet[ed] their first few years of teaching, typically characterized as "survival years" and are "often seeking opportunities for influence and responsibility beyond the context of their own classroom teaching (Fiarman, 2007, p. 5)
5. have survived the trials associated with being a novice and they have comparably more instructional expertise and organizational savvy than beginning teachers (Szczesiul, 2007, p. 6)

Other studies define the second stage by the sole criterion of the amount of time teaching,

without providing any additional elaboration: "teachers in the second stage of teaching,

or teachers with 4-10 years of teaching experience" (Kirkpatrick, 2007, p. 2).

The second stage, when described within a model of an entire cycle, is often given

a specific name or characteristic, such as "professional teacher" (Steffy et al., 2000),

"stabilizing" (Leithwood, 1992), "stabilization" (Huberman, 1993), "competency

building" (Fessler & Christensen, 1992), or "expert/master teacher" (Steffy, 1989).

While many studies (Charner-Laird, 2007; Donaldson, 2005; Donaldson et al.,

2005; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Szczesiul, 2007) describe the second stage as beginning during

the fourth year of teaching, I used year six as the beginning of the second stage, based on the research regarding attrition rates over the first five years of teaching. As the attrition literature focuses on teachers who leave teaching up through the fifth year, the key criterion in my consideration of teacher participants was experience beyond this five-year barrier. Therefore, I made it a requirement that the participants in this study had taught for at least six years.

According to some research, teachers enter the second stage upon receiving tenure in their districts. I did not consider tenure among the factors, given the fact that criteria for tenure may vary considerably across districts, as well as within particular teaching scenarios. Toni was the only teacher with tenure. Janis did not have tenure, and Samantha's district had no tenure system.

<center>Discussion</center>

The participants (Samantha, Janis, and Toni) were profiled in chapter IV. Samantha is an elementary general music teacher who teaches in a charter school in a large city. Janis has taught elementary, middle, and high school band in the same city as Samantha. Toni teaches middle school band, strings, and drum line in a different large city. In chapters V and VI, answers to the research questions were considered on an individual basis (within-case analysis). Some of those themes were unique to one teacher, such as Samantha's discussion of the relationship between higher education and urban music education, and others were shared, such as the discussion of the distribution of resources within urban districts. This section will examine the participants' shared themes.

Intersection of Meanings: Resolving the Internal and External Worlds of Urban Second-Stage Music Teachers

This study began with three research questions, the first two of which were examined in chapter V. Those questions formed part of the lens through which the data were coded and analyzed. As the analysis has continued, however, it has become clear that the findings for research questions one and two are themselves entwined and for the purpose of synthesis in this final chapter, they are joined together into one larger question: *What are second stage urban music teachers' principal areas of focus when they describe their teaching experiences and how do those areas relate to their perception of the major issues in urban music education?* Urban second-stage music teachers' most meaningful themes from their personal teaching experiences are deeply connected to their views on the broader landscape of urban music education and are therefore considered together.

When considered together, research questions one and two invoke both the internal and external forces by which teachers' worlds are affected. Music educators make meaning of their teaching experiences based in part on their personal thoughts and values regarding teaching. However, their personal thoughts are not the only source of impact on their teaching experiences. They must negotiate external factors beyond their control, such as issues of funding, the home lives of students, and the decisions of administrators. The meanings made by the second-stage teachers in this study are the result of the intersection of these internal and external factors.

FIGURE 7.1: INTERSECTION OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS
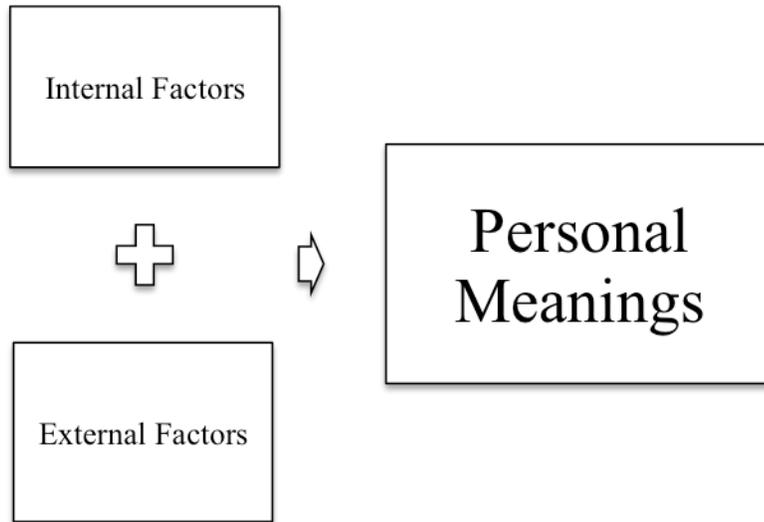
The urban settings in which they teach are created through the intersection of the

teachers' own thoughts on the concept of "urban" with the actual physical settings in

which they teach and interact with their students. Their meanings for themselves and their

students are created through the intersection of the teachers' personal (internal) values

and beliefs with the reality of their students' lives. Through these intersections,

Samantha, Janis, and Toni have constructed the themes that are the most meaningful for

them, as well as developed views regarding the major issues facing urban music

education. Figure 7.2 demonstrates, as an example, how internal and external factors

related to urban music education intersect to create the participants' personal meanings of

their experiences as urban second-stage music teachers:

FIGURE 7.2 EXAMPLE OF AN INTERSECTION
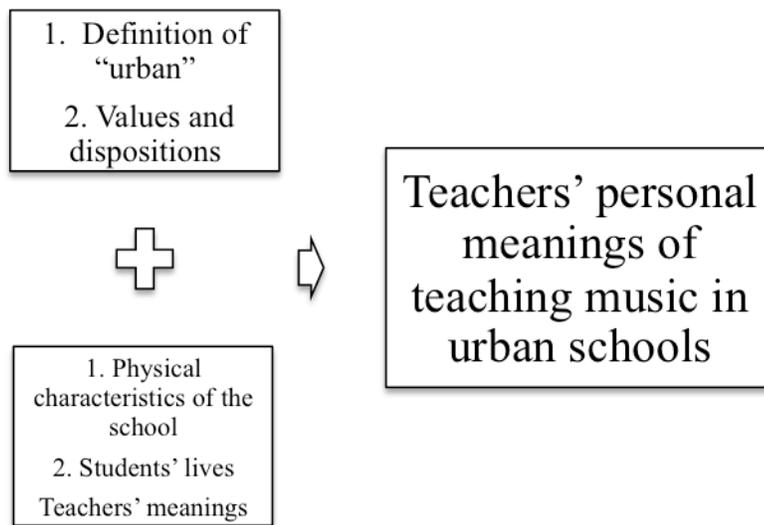
The broad themes for the newly combined research question are organized according to three categories: 1) participants' personal meanings of teaching in an urban school, 2) participants' music teaching experiences, and 3) participants' views on urban music education. Within the first category, two themes are presented: a) urban teaching context and b) commitment to urban music education.

The second category reflects Samantha, Janis, and Toni's teaching experiences. Within the second category, four themes are presented: a) issues of race, b) students' physical and emotional needs, c) building self-esteem through performance, and d) impacting students' futures.

The third category reflects what Samantha, Janis, and Toni believe to be significant issues facing urban music education. Although all educators face challenges from beyond their own schools, as urban music educators, Samantha, Janis, and Toni

identify challenges specific to urban music education: a) unequal distribution of resources, b) district administration, and c) urban stigma.

Figure 7.3 illustrates the widening scope of these meanings. In the innermost, or first level, are the teachers' personal meanings. In the second level are the meanings related to teaching experiences, hence those involving the teachers' specific students and schools. The third level represents meanings pertaining to the larger picture, outside of the teachers' own schools, in the form of the large urban districts and the world beyond.

FIGURE 7.3 THREE LEVELS OF MEANING
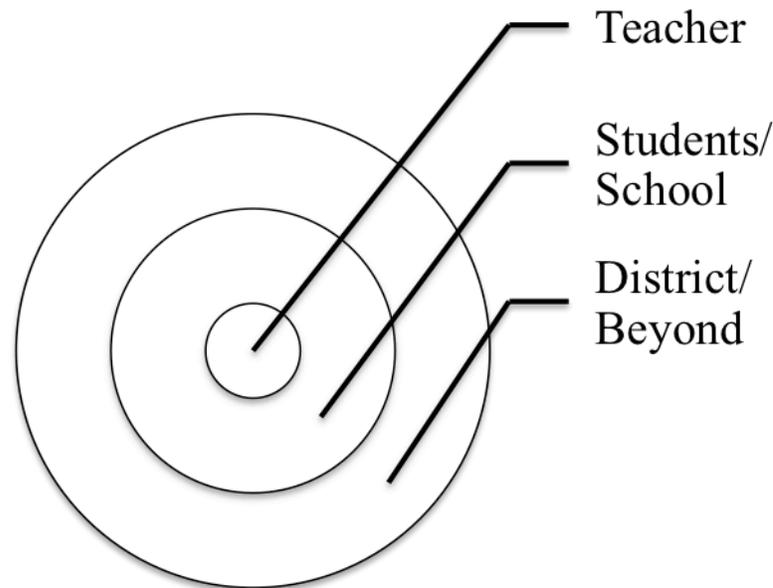
Teaching in an Urban School

   Urban teaching context

Although scholarly research has proposed numerous definitions and criteria for defining urban education (e.g. Weiner, 2000), in an effort to frame the participants' particular experiences, I will instead discuss the meanings that they gave to the concept of urban education. Those meanings are, again, the product of the intersection between

internal factors (teachers' perceptions) and external factors (such as physical characteristics of schools).

The participants' worlds as urban music teachers were impacted by their physical teaching spaces. Discussions of urban music education often set the stage with descriptions of dilapidated schools and substandard equipment, or pictures of crumbling buildings against backdrops reminiscent of third-world countries. The special focus on urban music education in the January 1970 issue of the *Music Educators Journal* contains photographs of darkly-shadowed skyscrapers, boarded-up buildings, and children standing outside of poorly-constructed homes that appear to be falling apart. Abril (2006) summarizes the past portrayal of urban schools, as well as the effect of these portrayals, on both teachers and society as a whole:

> Over the past 30 years, educators, researchers, and the media have focused on the plight of urban public schools. In so doing, they have painted a landscape in urgent need of restoration. … The public's collective consciousness of urban schools has been shaped by reports of dilapidated facilities, abysmal test scores, high dropout rates, low motivation, poor attendance, and high poverty (Kozol, 1991, 2000; Rose, 1995). These images have the capacity to breed apprehension and even fear in potential and practicing teachers, making it difficult to recruit and retain high-quality teachers. (p. 75)

The urban spaces defined and experienced by Samantha, Janis, and Toni are at odds with the images pointed out by Abril. In describing the settings in which they taught, Samantha, Janis, and Toni defied the urban stereotype of a crumbling school in a vice-ridden neighborhood. All three described very pleasant school buildings and facilities ("lovely," according to Janis) with a great deal of space and light, although the buildings themselves were several decades old.

Moreover, both Toni and Samantha stated that they would like to live in their schools' neighborhoods due to the cultural variety in and around the schools. Janis

painted a picture of a somewhat-troubled yet friendly neighborhood, although with the caveat of suspicion of outsiders. Janis herself felt accepted and did not describe a sense of trepidation.

Samantha, Janis, and Toni carried their own beliefs of what it meant to teach in an urban school and, moreover, what constituted a school as "urban." When they discussed the term "urban" itself, they gave a variety of answers. Although their experiences in their schools and neighborhoods were positive, they proposed that the term typically carries negative associations. Toni suggested that the term "urban" is used exclusively as a way to refer to African Americans and that it has nothing to do with cities. In fact, she did not believe that she taught urban students, because she did not believe that the term has a definition. She taught inner-city, environmentally-challenged students (students whose needs cannot be met, due to insufficient resources from the school). Janis felt that "urban" was commonly used in a negative sense. Samantha did not discuss a definition of the term at length, but did communicate that she considered "urban" to denote unsuccessful schools and negative teacher attitudes and that, consequently, she did not currently teach in an urban school even though her school was located within a large city. Samantha defined the term through the lens of her current school (Shore) and stated that her second school was not an urban school due to its positive staff philosophy.

Commitment to urban music education

Samantha, Janis, and Toni are all committed to teaching music in a large city. When Samantha lost her position at Crane (her first school), she was devastated not because of losing her job but because she feared that she would never again teach in a large city. She was committed to teaching in the city even more than teaching music by

itself. In Janis's case, despite being laid off, she continued to volunteer at her previous

school while pursuing music education as a full-time substitute. Both Samantha and Janis

could have interpreted their lay-off as an unassailable barrier to urban music education.

However, both pursued urban music education and found a variety of ways to continue as

urban music teachers. Toni's momentary displeasure at being placed in a large city for

her student teaching has been replaced by a nine-year career in the city and a vehement

feeling of commitment to her students and their particular situations. She has reacted

strongly when told by colleagues that she deserves a "better" school.

Additionally, although the three participants later discussed numerous significant

challenges facing music education in large cities, they were also absolutely clear that they

experienced a plethora of rewards. Ultimately, they derive a great deal of satisfaction

from teaching in the city and are convinced that they would teach nowhere else. In the

focus group, they unanimously affirmed this feeling:

> Toni: I love it. I love it. I wouldn't go anywhere else.
> Samantha: Amen.
> Janis: Amen.
> Toni: I wouldn't go anywhere else. I love the excitement. And it is almost like
> [the students'] excitement and, sometimes, chaotic lives, renews me because they
> are always full of something. They are always full of energy. (focus group)

Toni's statement recalls Smith (2006), who states that, "It may surprise those who view

urban students as difficult to work with that it is the students who motivate these teachers

to keep working in urban schools" (p. 59). It is particularly powerful that this statement

was made during the focus group discussion, a time when they could express and confirm

their beliefs among their urban peers.

Teaching in an Urban School: Experiences of Second-Stage Music Teachers

The principal hallmark of second-stage teachers is that, with their fundamental

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skills as teachers in place, their focus shifts from themselves to their students (Steffy et al., 2000). Samantha, Janis, and Toni did not discuss how they had gotten better at conducting or had learned more songs and dances. Although they still face numerous challenges in their personal and professional lives, their students' needs are of greater importance, as evidenced by Toni's comment that having music stands took precedence over paying her electric bill.

Issues of race

Samantha, Janis, and Toni have different ethnic backgrounds than the overwhelming majority of their students. The phenomenon of teachers having different racial backgrounds than their students has been referred to as "being the other" (Benham, 2003). Benham discussed the experience of "being the other," in which he described his experience as a white teacher teaching in an African American school. Benham described encountering difficulty in communicating with his students when he began his teaching at the school. The experience of being a white teacher in a minority school has become increasingly prevalent as the numbers of minority students have steadily climbed over the past several decades and, as Benham discusses, citing numerous studies (p. 23), "Most teachers are white, female, grew up in a suburban or rural settting, and have had few cross-cultural experiences" (p.23). These criteria effectively describe Samantha and Janis, although Janis had numerous cross-cultural experiences when she entered her preservice program. Toni, however, grew up in an urban as well as a rural area and in fact had many cross-cultural experiences. Benham concludes his discussion by describing how, over time, he developed a close relationship with his culturally-diverse students.

In several places, the participants called attention to the phenomenon of their

perception of their own race. Although they represent the European American majority in society, Samantha, Janis, and Toni represent the minority in their schools themselves. Samantha and Janis have taught in exclusively African American schools. Toni's school has a larger number of diverse cultures including large African American and Latino populations, as well as Rwandan immigrants, Native Americans, and Hawaiians.

Although they are conscious of their students' race and its implications (such as Toni's experience with racially-based reactions and Samantha's consideration of her students' African ancestry when choosing her professional development), they also, at times, lose that awareness of any racial differences with their students. When they began teaching, they noticed their racial differences but, over time, that awareness began to change. Although they are intellectually aware of their cultural differences, at times they cease to perceive racial differences between themselves and their students. This perception has been reciprocated by their students, as illustrated by students' surprise that Samantha's baby was white and Janis's statement upon receiving stares when seen with her students, "What are you looking at? Oh, right. I'm white." The participants interpreted this change in racial perception as an indication that they had become members of their students' communities. It might be the case that an additional impact of reaching the second stage, due to the implicit requirement of several years' teaching experience, is a change in teachers' racial perceptions in situations in which the teachers represent the minority in the actual teaching setting.

Students' physical and emotional needs

The role of the teacher is much more than that of a classroom practitioner, and Samantha, Janis, and Toni seek to give their students things that the students will not

otherwise receive. The teachers' primary concerns are with their students' needs outside of music teaching and learning. They repeatedly discussed students' physical and emotional needs and how addressing them was an integral part of a teachers' job. Samantha emphasized developing students' capacity to trust adults and to view themselves and their abilities in a positive light. Janis took her students' physical needs upon herself, coordinating food and transportation, as well as finding opportunities for students to practice when they were unable to do so at home. Toni discussed using her own money to procure instructional materials that her students needed. These were not official parts of their job duties but, in the teachers' minds, they were just as much a part of their role as teachers.

The teachers' comments suggested that they had always had at least some awareness of their students' physical and emotional needs but that they began to intentionally address them to a substantial degree as their careers progressed. Samantha was aware of her students' needs but, as a new teacher, her principal focus was on curricular planning and classroom management. The participants' shift in thinking as second-stage teachers is not only a matter of turning their attention to their students' educational needs but also to their students' personal needs (physical and emotional).

Building self-esteem through performance

To Toni and Janis (both band directors), performance has a deeper role in music education than just getting ratings or technical achievement: it is a means to a larger end. Toni imparted her goals for her students during the process of rehearsing their music, such as her goal for them to experience hard work. She stated that the performances themselves were her least favorite part, indicating that the process of preparing for a

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performance was her true priority. Although Janis taught in a performance-focused school with high expectations for marching band, the performances that were the most meaningful to her were her beginning instrumentalists' performances of simple songs and the students' consequent feelings of accomplishment. Performance was a way to build self-esteem and other lasting qualities. In Janis's words, the students needed to know that "they can."

Impacting students' futures

Samantha, Janis, and Toni discussed the contributions that they wanted to make to their students' futures and, in practice, what they wanted the students to come away with after leaving their program. During the school year, they focused on classroom instruction as well as outside-of-class needs, but their vision for their students reached even farther. They wanted their students' experiences in their music programs to benefit them into the future.

Toni wants her students to leave her with the ability to address the challenges that life will present them with, specifically the resolve to complete difficult tasks and a belief in their abilities sufficient to face any racially-based disadvantages. Samantha wanted to leave a lasting impact on her students' beliefs in themselves. Speaking in terms of her students' emotional development, she discussed how her students needed skills in managing anger, building trust in adults, and developing a positive outlook on life. Janis discussed facilitating students' opportunities to attend college. She believed that, due to her shifting of focus away from a performance-only curriculum to a broader and more comprehensive one with an emphasis on literacy and ear-training, she had several students who had earned college scholarships and would be going on to major in music.

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The opportunity to shape students' futures has been identified as one of the most meaningful components of urban teachers' lives. In her discussions with veteran urban teachers, Nieto (2003) summarizes the teachers' message regarding their influence on students' future as, "What teachers do and say may stay with students for a lifetime" (p. 108).

Beyond the School

As urban music educators, Samantha, Janis, and Toni are directly affected by a number of challenges directly related to teaching in large urban districts. They spoke from personal experience, relating how their experiences as teachers reflected urban issues, and in terms of the larger picture of urban music education.

Unequal distribution of resources: "My Nobody School on the Northwest Side"

In a recent study, Costa-Giomi (2008) found a clear difference in access to resources based on the SES of students in particular schools within a large urban district in Texas. Samantha, Janis, and Toni are convinced that resources in their large urban districts are not distributed equitably. Toni also related the topic of the availability of resources (not limited to music resources) to the definition of urban schools. Although resources are not a problem for her program specifically, the relationship between resources and demand is another key defining characteristic of urban education. Specifically, according to Toni, urban school districts are those in which the cumulative various needs of students (educational and otherwise) cannot be met by the available resources of the district.

Samantha, Janis, and Toni also discussed the specific example of how resources were typically concentrated in the magnet schools in their districts. They were not stating

that they themselves lacked resources, per se, but that the resources possessed by the urban district were often concentrated in a very small number of schools. Therefore, the vast majority of students in their cities had limited access to instruments and other instructional materials. Samantha had experienced such limitations when she first began teaching at Crane, and discussed how her district could provide a harp ensemble at one magnet school but "didn't have money to give me a single instrument in my nobody elementary school on the northwest side."

In a 1997 position paper by MENC, entitled "Where We Stand," the following position on magnet schools, which were included among the "Current Issues Facing Music Education," was presented:

> Magnet schools can provide an enriched music education for musically talented or program of a school district provided they do not result in a reduction in the quantity or quality of music instruction in other schools within the district. ("Where we stand," 1997, p. 44)

The concerns expressed by these participants have therefore already been articulated and, unfortunately, Samantha, Janis, and Toni have experienced the scenario that this position paper cautioned against.

District administration: The "Hulking Monster"

The participants stated that their biggest challenges as urban music educators, such as the loss of Samantha's paperwork and her subsequent firing, could be traced directly to the fact that their district administrations were large bureaucracies. Due to their size, urban district administrations typically made decisions with little consideration of how specific school situations were affected. This was particularly true for Janis and Samantha, who were affected by a district-wide lay-off. Samantha brings a different perspective than Janis and Toni: although the first half of her career was spent in a city

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public school, she now teaches in a charter school in the same city. She has first-hand experience with what she described as the "hulking monster" of the district administration, but she also has a comparative lens in which to view urban music teaching: small charter district versus large district.

This finding supports the proposal that a large, centralized administration (also commonly referred to as a bureaucracy) is one of the primary identifiers of an urban situation (Weiner, 2000, 2006). Nieto (2003), in her work with veteran urban teachers, also identifies her teachers' experiences with "the system" among their biggest challenges (pp. 63-69): "[teachers are] impatient with the seeming arbitrariness of "the system"; baffled by school policies that are made by people far removed from the daily realities of classroom life" (p. 63).

Urban stigma: "Why Do You Go Back"?

Finally, the participants reported encountering a negative stigma connected to urban schools and students. Outside of the world created by their specific schools in their particular districts, the participants and their students (both personally and from a performance standpoint) were directly affected by their association with large cities. This stigma manifested itself in the form of negative personal comments and perceptions, and lower judgments of their performances. Janis described her students receiving comments such as "you got that classical style," implying incredulity on the part of the judges that her urban minority students were able to play concert music. Toni's accounts of her students' treatment due to their connection to a city, both personally and from a performance standpoint, are provocative. Her "experiment" with omitting the city-origin from her festival registration on alternating years makes for a legitimate argument that

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her students received lower ratings due to their association with her city. However, these negative experiences have only served to strengthen the participants' resolve to continue as urban music teachers. Toni talked at length about how it has become her personal mission to continue taking her bands to perform at festivals regardless of the stigma and its manifestations: "*the moment* we don't go back is the moment that they have beaten us."

Theoretical Framework: Life Cycle of the Career Teacher

Although there are numerous models of teacher career cycles, I selected that of Steffy et al., proposed in their book *Life Cycle of the Career Teacher* (2000), for the theoretical framework of this study. This model is described in detail in chapters I and II. Steffy et al. identify their model's stages by title (novice, professional, expert) rather than number (first, second, third, etc.) and the counterpart to the second stage is called "The Professional Teacher" (discussed at length in its own chapter by Wolfe et al., 2000). "The Professional Teacher" is summarized in chapter I. Before the third interview, I presented the participants with "The Professional Teacher." I asked them to read the chapter and to reflect on how it compared to their experiences as second-stage music teachers.

Participants' responses to "The Professional Teacher"

Toni and Samantha perceived themselves as almost complete opposites after being presented with this study's framework for the second stage (Steffy et al., 2000). Samantha concluded that she was a very close fit to the second-stage teacher outlined in "The Professional Teacher" (Wolfe et al., 2000) while Toni found herself in strong disagreement with a number of the key distinguishing criteria. Prominent elements of difference were increased communication with peers, increase/decrease in confidence,

and a change in focus from self to students. Consistent with her tendency to speak on the macro level, Janis considered the reading as it pertained to teachers in general, rather than to herself.

Samantha stated that the description of a "professional teacher" in the reading was a good match for her experiences: "Most of the hallmark traits that they talked about, I felt, "yes, that's where I am." I've become a leader in my building, I'm taking on more responsibilities, I'm focusing more on students" (email journal).

Samantha felt that her focus in the early part of her career was on herself (her own teaching practice, classroom management, communication with others) and suggested that that may have been a contributing factor to her feelings of exhaustion. Conversely, she currently focuses much more on her students in her classroom practice: "I have taken my "one size fits all" approach of teaching the same lesson to each grade's section to modifying each lesson to suit the needs of each group of children" (email journal). Wolfe et al. (2000) describe how the first stage teachers, "work to develop a broader repertoire of instructional approaches; professional teachers focus on whether these strategies work with their own students (Germinaro & Cram, 1998)" (p. 63). Samantha's "one-size-fits-all" approach matches the notion of the first stage teacher's focus on developing their pedagogical knowledge, and her discussion of modifying her lessons in her current classroom practice is a clear illustration of the development discussed in "The Professional Teacher."

Janis focused on the danger of withdrawal by the professional teacher and suggested that the answer lay in "building <u>stronger alliances with</u> (underlining hers) students/parents" (journal), an idea consistent with the professional teacher's focus on

students rather than self. Janis also identified the need for administrators to build awareness of professional teachers' specific needs and provide appropriate support, something that might be particularly difficult given the impersonal nature of the large district administration which she had described. Janis concluded by drawing a chart that indicated her call for a need to address "vertical alignment" between all involved parties such that students benefit the most. Janis's focus on the administration is, again, consistent with her emphasis on the larger picture in education although also consistent with the professional teacher's focus on students. In her journal, Janis diagrammed this concept:

FIGURE 7.4 CHART FROM JANIS'S JOURNAL

BOARD (DISTRICT)

ADMINISTRATION (SCHOOL)

PARENTS   TEACHERS   COMMUNITY
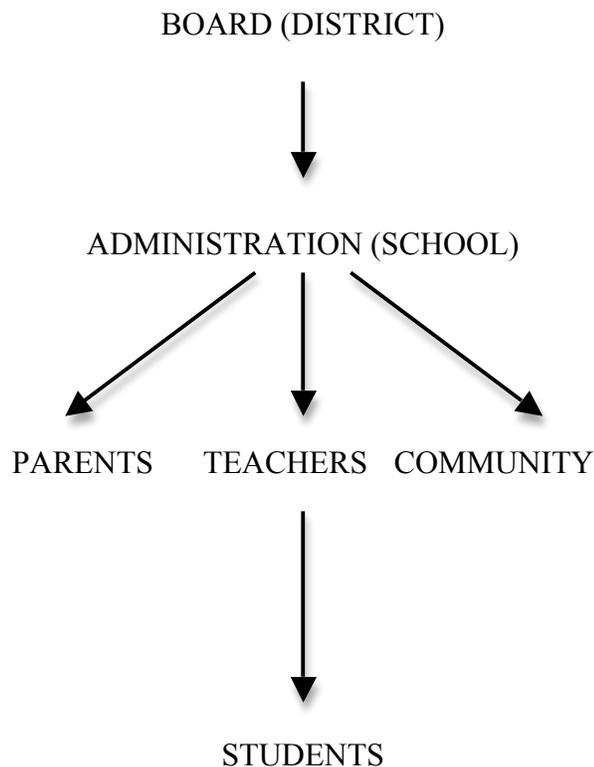
STUDENTS

Toni disagreed with the ideas in "The Professional Teacher" in numerous ways, often describing herself in exact opposition. She began by discussing the shift in focus

from self to students and stated that she has only recently begun to consider herself and her professional and personal needs. That consideration was not present in her early years.

Toni's perception of "self-focus" differs somewhat from that described in the theoretical framework. Toni's self-focus does not come in the form of concerns about classroom practice, such as classroom management or pedagogical content. The self-focus described in Wolfe et al. (2000) refers to teachers focusing on their individual performance as teachers, including their abilities to teach and manage their classrooms, as well as their knowledge of content and pedagogy. Toni did not indicate insecurity in her knowledge of her craft, her ability to teach, or to manage her classroom. The self-focus that she referred to centered on personal growth, in terms of both Toni as a music teacher and Toni as a person, such as her statement, "where is the room for *me* in this picture?" Toni's interpretation of self-focus, therefore, is a reflection of her sensitivity to and feeling of the need for growth. That awareness and feeling of priority for continued growth is actually a hallmark of the professional teacher, as one who must be constantly aware of their need for growth. Furthermore, this awareness might motivate a teacher to pursue growth more persistently than if the teacher had not acknowledged a continued need for growth.

Based on her other statements, Toni's commitment to her students remains extremely strong, indicating that her focus has not made the reverse shift of students to self but has made the change of student focus to student/self focus. Toni was clear: she has begun to consider her personal needs more now than previously, an important point in "The Professional Teacher," which emphasizes that teachers must not lose sight of

their own needs. However, her devotion to her students had not wavered as a result of this growing awareness of a need for self-growth, as indicated in her first interview in which Toni described how, as a result of a recent medical procedure performed on her shoulder, she was unable to stay afterschool to give her students a place to practice. Toni's combined student/self-focus indicates a place where Steffy et al. might consider re-analyzing the nature of self-focus as it is reflected in career development.

Toni also differed with the reading on the topic of peer interaction. A major defining characteristic of the professional teacher is an increase in interaction with peers, as part of the teacher's stepping beyond her own classroom. Toni's issue was not a matter of a lack of desire to interact with peers but of a lack of success in realizing those attempts at peer interaction. Toni discussed how she had made numerous attempts to interact with peers within her school and district but, due to a pattern of being rebuffed, had ceased trying. Toni's case points to an assumption that, when a second-stage teacher pursues a wider circle of interaction (beyond her own classroom), the teacher will necessarily be successful in experiencing those interactions. Toni's case indicates that a lack of peer interaction might not be the fault of the second-stage teacher, but a result of a lack of opportunity for peer interaction despite the efforts of the second-stage teacher.

Toni also raised a question: as a band director, given the small number of band directors in her district, was she at increased risk of withdrawal due to a limited number of peers with whom she could interact? Finally, Toni was concerned by the description in the reading of the potential for withdrawal or stagnation, worrying that given her disagreement with numerous points in the article, she might be experiencing withdrawal herself. Her concerns centered on her lack of peer interaction and her feelings of limited

opportunities for professional growth.

Conclusion

By discussing the participants' responses to "The Professional Teacher" here, I have demonstrated how they differ in opinion with the framework's characterization of a second-stage teacher, as well as how their responses challenge the framework itself. Although Samantha, Janis, and Toni felt that they had progressed through their careers to a different stage than that in which they began, they disagreed substantially on elements of the second stage.

Samantha, Janis, and Toni do not present a unified picture of an urban second-stage music teacher. Their careers have both similarities and differences with the professional teacher framework. The exploratory nature of this study indicates, therefore, that the second stage is a complex time for music teachers.

The Career Cycle and the Second Stage

Samantha, Janis, and Toni discussed the development of their careers, their thoughts regarding the second stage as discussed in research literature, and their thoughts regarding their future in music education. Several broad themes emerged: a) participants perceived a development over the course of their careers, including a transition to a new stage, b) participants had different perceptions of themselves as second-stage teachers, c) participants were unsure of their futures in music education, and d) participants had concerns about withdrawal from teaching.

The theoretical framework for this study (Steffy et al., 2000) gives self-confidence as the primary indicator of transition to the second stage. Rather than an abrupt transition, Steffy et al. state that teachers "emerge" into the second stage of their

model of the career cycle. The second stage, known in their model as the "professional teacher:" "emerges as teachers grow in their self-confidence as educators" (p. 7). Discussions of second-stage teachers and their development must therefore address teacher self-confidence. Samantha, Janis, and Toni painted an uneven picture of self-confidence, relating that they felt confident in some aspects of their teaching careers and not in others. They were clear, however, that their confidence as a whole had changed over the course of their careers. Moreover, they divided the concept of confidence into smaller components.

Samantha described a low level of confidence when she began teaching and a subsequent increase in confidence over time, a trend consistent with ideas in "The Professional Teacher." She further qualified that, however, by stating that she had grown more confident in her classroom management but did not feel as confident in her "classroom curriculum practice." She was still experimenting with her teaching approaches.

Conversely, Janis and Toni described feeling confident at the beginning of their careers although that confidence required qualification. That may partially be affected by the fact that both Janis and Toni began their teaching careers at the same schools at which they had student taught. Therefore, they were already familiar with the students, programs, and management systems at the schools at which they began full-time teaching. In Janis's case, her confidence was partial: she was confident in knowledge and abilities as a music teacher but less confident about her acceptance by the students and parents of the Kestrel band program. Once Janis had established herself in her program, she did not describe any further changes in confidence. Toni described a high level of

confidence, to the point that she took musical success for granted. Samantha entered with a low level of confidence. However, over the course of their careers, Samantha's confidence has grown and Toni's has waned.

Samantha, Janis, and Toni all perceived that they had developed as teachers over the course of their careers building greater expertise as teachers. Gaining expertise has been identified as one of the most valuable components of attaining the second stage, as that increased expertise can directly benefit students. Simpson and Rosenholtz (1986) suggest, "teachers tend to be more effective when they have more experience" (in Blanson, 2005, p. 2).

Additionally, all three discussed having a sense of leaving the beginning stage of teaching and entering a new stage. Samantha described specific life events that coincided with her transition, whereas Janis and Toni described reaching a point where they felt that they had achieved an understanding of their situations and of what was necessary to manage their programs.

Samantha, Janis, and Toni also discussed how they were seriously questioning their future as educators. Janis had already decided that, at the present, she will not continue as a full-time music educator, although she has remained active as a district officer in her state's band and orchestra association. Samantha and Toni described asking themselves whether or not they wanted to continue on their present paths for a substantial period of time.

Samantha and Toni both expressed concerns with their motivation and expressed thoughts about possible withdrawal. Toni felt that she might be experiencing the beginning stage of withdrawal (Steffy et al., 2000) and Samantha questioned her ability

to maintain motivation. Although they spoke very positively about their teaching situations, there was still concern about whether or not they could continue in their current roles for a substantial period of time.

Chapter Summary

The teachers in this study do not present a unified picture of what it means to be a second-stage music teacher. An analysis across all three cases demonstrates that the characteristics of the second stage teacher (such as the focus on students) might all be present, but those characteristics may manifest themselves in very different ways. All three participants described strong commitments to their students and to the music education profession but described differences in levels of self-confidence and in interaction with peers both in and outside of school. They discussed an awareness of focusing on themselves when they thought about their teaching experiences, although that focus might manifest itself in the form of concerns about classroom planning and management (Samantha) or in the form of concern about opportunities for personal growth (Toni).

This chapter has presented the cross-case analysis of Samantha, Janis, and Toni. Chapter VIII will present implications for practice and provide suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER VIII

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER

RESEARCH

This chapter will present this study's implications for practice as well as make

suggestions for future research.

Implications for Practice

By studying the stories of three urban teachers as they progressed through their

careers into the second stage of teaching, this study contributes to the growing body of

research in both general education and music education on the teacher career cycle and

the second stage in particular. The findings also contribute to the field of urban music

education by adding to the body of knowledge on the lives and experiences of urban

music teachers. The findings will also be of value in teacher education, new teacher

induction, professional development, and retention, as well as in the development of

teachers who remain in teaching into the second stage and beyond.

Teacher Education and Induction

Second-stage music teachers represent a potentially ideal resource for teacher

education. They can be an excellent resource during field teaching or as cooperating

teachers during teaching internships. In the not-too-distant past, the second stage teachers

were, themselves, occupying the same place as the current preservice teachers. They

provide the voice of experienced music teachers but also the perspective of someone who

can easily empathize with a preservice teacher due to their own proximity to their teacher education programs.

Similarly, second-stage music teachers can make ideal resources for incoming new music teachers. They represent the voice of experience as well as the capacity to relate to those music teachers who are new to the field. Second-stage music teachers remember how, in the recent past, they too went through survival mode. That is not to say that any teacher, regardless of length of career, can forget such a vivid, life-changing experience as entering the teaching force. But for the second-stage music teacher, who has the additional reinforcement of the experience being recent, the capacity to relate to the new music teacher, and for the new teacher to relate to the second-stage teacher, is higher. The concrete statement of "six years ago, when I started teaching…" might have a greater immediacy to a new music teacher than the more vague "back in my day, we used to…"

The second-stage teacher is a symbol of what a new teacher can aspire to: the one who has passed the barrier, which 50% of new teachers do not pass (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Moon Merchant, 2005; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). New teachers should not be made to feel that if they do not remain in the profession for 25-30 years that they are failures and have not measured up to the standard of a successful music teacher. The second-stage teacher is, and should be, a powerful role model for new teachers of perseverance in the faces of challenges experienced during the difficult beginning of a teaching career. For that to happen, however, they must be recognized and acknowledged as such.

Professional Development

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This study has numerous implications for professional development. By studying and being aware of the career cycle, both administrators and second-stage teachers will be able to identify their specific needs and pursue appropriate forms of professional development. The second-stage teacher must be proactive (Smith & Haack, 2000). This is particularly true in an urban setting where, it has been suggested, teachers must take sole responsibility for their professional development (Weiner, 2006). The administrator, by building awareness of the second-stage teacher, will realize that the second stage teacher requires specific professional development, such as continued observation and feedback provided by the school. "No news" is not necessarily "good news." As Samantha indicated, the fact that she does not have classroom management issues or need to send students to the office does not mean that she no longer has need of dialogue with her administration regarding her needs as a teacher. Indeed, second-stage teachers are at risk of a lack of attention from administrators: "Administrators often treat [second-stage teachers] differently, give them less attention, and take them for granted" (Steffy et al., p. 8). Leithwood (1992) discusses principals' responsibility to address experienced teachers' need to expand their professional knowledge, cautioning that, "failure to provide opportunities for the development of professional expertise may well lead to professional disaffection when teachers are seeking new challenges and have new concerns" (p. 95).

Administrators must also arrange appropriate development for their teachers based on the needs of the teachers' career stages. Steffy et al. (2000) state that one of the principal benefits of their career cycle model is that: "Teachers entering the profession are mentored, and teachers remaining in the profession receive the administrative and collegial support they need to continue to grow through the subsequent phases of

development" (p. 117). The seventh-year teacher does not need the same full-day workshop on classroom management that may be extremely beneficial to the first or second-year teacher. Rather, the principal should consider giving the seventh-year teacher the responsibility of planning and conducting such a workshop within the school. Conversely, the first-year teacher does not need to run for district office, or attend a full-day workshop on developing mentoring skills. If they want to maintain the best and most effective teaching staff possible, administrators need to be aware of what each teacher needs in order to continue to grow, and must subsequently aid second-stage teachers in pursuing their needs.

Seeking Growth and Reflection

Reflection has received significant scholarly attention in music education (e.g., Butke, 2006). Steffy et al. (2000) state, regarding their career cycle model:

> The process of reflection and renewal is the central, critical aspect of our model. It relates thought and action. It connects present knowledge and skills to a vision for a desired future. From this vision, teachers construct strategies that enable them to effectuate their development. Through this process, growth occurs. (p. 10)

Their model of the career cycle is itself driven by a second cycle, based on reflection leading to renewal leading to growth. Placed within the context of the career cycle, reflection takes on an even more central role in a teacher's life. In fact, it is arguably *the* driving aspect of career development and growth. Second-stage music teachers should cultivate the habit of constant reflection, with the conscious goal of seeking renewal and growth.

Second-stage music teachers should also examine their practice for ways in which they might be reflecting and growing without being aware. Toni was convinced that she was not a reflective person whatsoever, yet she had been writing voluminously about her

thoughts and experiences as an urban music teacher for years, an example of reflection. With an awareness of the career cycle and the importance of reflection for growth, coupled with guidance towards the principles behind and different forms of reflection, second stage teachers like Toni will be able to develop their already reflective actions into a way of life for themselves as teachers.

The Second Stage Danger Zone

Although the attrition rate for second-stage teachers is lower than that of first stage teachers, it is still alarmingly high (Donaldson, 2005; Leukens, Lyter, Fox, & Chandler, 2004). Berg et al. (2005) argue that, "During this period, teachers who become frustrated by their attempts to experiment and grow tend to leave. Huberman (1993) has termed part of this period a "danger zone" (p. 4). A similar scenario happened with Janis who, after determining that her administration would not allow her to move her music program in new direction and who had in her words "nowhere to grow to." Janis included the lack of opportunities for growth among her reasons for leaving teaching. Berg et al. (2005) continue by suggesting that by addressing second-stage teachers' needs in this regard, there are multiple benefits: "Meeting teachers' needs for experimentation and growth during the second stage of their teaching careers, therefore, stands to not only support them to remain in teaching beyond the "danger zone" but also to serve schools' improvement needs" (p. 6).

Berg et al. (2005) also suggest that there are multiple benefits to addressing second-stage teachers' needs for growth as educators. One way to retain second-stage teachers and allow them to grow is to allow them to take on differentiated roles in schools. As it has been established that many music teachers feel isolated (Conway & Christensen,

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2006; Lipscomb & Sindberg, 2005; Renfro, 2003), administrators might make conscious efforts to bring second-stage music teachers into expanded roles in the school. Berg et al. (2005) presented a number of different roles assumed by second-stage teachers as a way to foster growth within the school. The general music teacher might lead a faculty drum circle. Ensemble directors might present on classroom management that, for them, entails even larger groups than those faced by classroom teachers. Speaking from personal experience, when I began a faculty African drum ensemble to perform at a school function, the response was extremely positive. It was clear that the experience of playing quarter notes in one hand and eighth notes in the other on a kenkenni drum was a powerful one to the fifth-grade teacher in my ensemble.

<div align="center">Suggestions for Further Research</div>

This study suggests a number of possibilities for further research. An issue to consider in projects related to second-stage teachers, however, is that the research must be very clear about the selection criteria for identifying participants as second-stage teachers. Preservice or beginning teachers are simple to identify and select based on objective criteria. The second-stage is less clear. Researchers must make convincing cases for why their participants can be considered second-stage teachers and, as a result, what the possible effects are on the research.

Continued Research with the Participants

The study of these participants might be extended. Samantha and Toni might be studied for how their careers continue to develop, whether or not their concerns come to pass, exactly how they pursue growth as teachers, whether or not they feel that they are entering new stages, and how they agree or disagree with various models of the career

cycle as proposed in the research literature. Janis might also be studied as a teacher who

has left teaching during the second stage but still maintains both a dedication to urban

students and leaves open the possibility of returning to music education.

Expanding the Scope

The research questions studied here might be investigated again using a larger

number of second-stage music teachers. Other research projects on second-stage teachers,

using a qualitative framework, have studied as many as 8-20 teachers (Berg et al., 2005;

Fiarman, 2007; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Szczesiul, 2007). A quantitative study might also be

undertaken to investigate a still larger number of second-stage music teachers.

The scope of the research might also be extended to music teachers outside of

urban schools who are in the second stage of their teaching careers. The secondary focus

of this study has been urban music education and, therefore, one of the criteria for

participant selection was that the participant needed to teach in a large city. Removal of

that criterion would allow for a larger number of second-stage teachers to be investigated.

Confidence

Steffy et al. (2000) identify self-confidence as one of the cornerstones of the

second stage and, in fact, relate an increase in self-confidence to a teacher's emergence

into the second stage. In addition to discussing their senses of confidence, Samantha,

Janis, and Toni also considered confidence as they experienced it in different aspects of

their teaching. Samantha discussed how her confidence in her classroom management

had increased and stabilized, but her sense of her command of curriculum, even as a

second stage teacher, had not yet stabilized. Janis discussed having confidence in her

"craft," that is in her musical and pedagogical knowledge, but not having confidence in

her ability to join an established program in a leadership role. In this case, her confidence in her classroom practice was not enough to put her into the second stage; confidence was a multi-faceted entity. Toni discussed a strong sense of confidence, perhaps to the point of overconfidence, at the beginning of her career. In a diversion from the research, however, her perception was that her confidence as a music teacher had waned as her teaching career progressed. However, she perceived having a sense of "comfort" and discussed how the two differed. Clearly, the participants are aware of their senses of confidence but they also perceive their confidence as more complicated than a single sense. Given the prominent place given to confidence in the outlining of the career cycle, a more systematic investigation into the concept of confidence is warranted.

Teacher confidence has been studied in music education. It has commonly focused on preservice elementary classroom teachers (Hennessy, 2000; Richards, 1999; Siebenhaler, 2006). However, how do music teachers perceive their levels of confidence? What exactly do they mean when they perceive their confidence as teachers? Do they divide their confidence into distinct areas and, if so, what is the effect of divided confidence on their development as teachers? Most importantly to this discussion, what is the relationship of music teacher confidence to teacher development within the career cycle?

Impact of Teacher's Specific Discipline

To what degree is the career cycle of a music teacher affected by her particular discipline? Given my findings and conclusions regarding Samantha (an elementary general and choral music teacher) and Toni (a middle school band director) based on their differing perceptions of the second-stage, I became curious as to what degree, if any, the

particular discipline of the music teacher might affect their experience in the career cycle. More specifically, given the emphasis on building networks within the school as a hallmark of a second-stage teacher (Steffy et al., 2000), to what degree, if any, is a teacher's second-stage experience affected when the nature of a teacher's discipline does not bring them into regular contact with other staff members? Wolfe et al. (2000) propose, in their description of second-stage teachers, that, "As teachers mature, they develop networks with other teachers both inside and outside of their own buildings" (p. 64). This statement might mean one thing in an elementary school with five third grade teachers or a middle or high school with five science teachers, but what might it mean for schools with one band director?

Although Samantha was the only music teacher in her school, as an elementary general music teacher she still has regular contact with many, if not all, other classroom teachers in her school and might therefore more easily maintain a network within her school. Toni, as the lone band director in her middle school, did not have that same opportunity and a substantial component of the second stage is therefore eliminated.

Furthermore, many elementary school general and instrumental music teachers service multiple schools over the course of the week. With comparatively little time in each school, it follows that it might be quite difficult to build teacher networks in each school visited by the teacher. Although Wolfe et al. (2000) mention that networks can also develop outside of schools, even across districts or other long distances, teachers with regular difficulties in their own schools might be facing a serious obstacle towards maintaining the growth necessary to continue to develop as a teacher.

Steffy's book (1989) is called *Career Stages of Classroom Teachers*, and her discussion begins with a section entitled "Re-Conceptualizing Contemporary Challenges to Classroom Teachers." Might it be the case that a further re-conceptualization is necessary for ensemble directors to obtain the same benefits of the career cycle as classroom teachers?

Narrative Inquiry

Given the emphasis on narrative in research on urban teachers (Nieto, 2003), as well as urban music teachers in general (Abril, 2006; Carlos, 2005; Robinson, 2006), a more rigorous, scholarly approach to narrative might be utilized in future research into the career cycle, as well as into urban music education. Narrative inquiry (Chase, 2006; Clandinin, 2007; Clandinin & Connelly, 1990, 2000, 2006) might be employed in future research. Narrative inquiry, defined by Polkinghorne (1995) as a "subset of qualitative research designs in which stories are used to describe human action," is being used with increasing frequency in music education research. There has been a recent increase in scholarship using narrative inquiry, most notably the 2006 and 2008 Narrative Inquiry in Music Education (NIME) conferences at Arizona State University.

Narrative inquiry has been used in music education to study preservice music teachers (Abril, 2007; Devries, 2000; Dolloff, 1999) and beginning music teachers (Devries, 2000; Conway & Zerman, 2003; Conway et al., 2005; Schmidt & Canser, 2006). Narrative inquiry has also been used recently in the study of urban general music teachers (Carlos, 2005). It follows that narrative inquiry might also be valuable in continuing research past the first stage and into the second stage of teaching in music education.

Distribution of Resources

The issue of the distribution of resources in urban settings has been the subject of recent research by Costa-Giomi (2008) who studied a large urban center in Texas, investigated the relationship of access to music education resources to race and socio-economic status (SES) in the district's elementary schools. Schools with a higher SES and a lower minority enrollment had better access to music instructional materials (including facilities), as well as external funding. Furthermore, 80% of the teachers, regardless of SES, believed that resources were distributed unequally in the district.

The statements made by Janis, Toni, and Samantha regarding the distribution of resources are timely. The distribution of resources remains a concern in urban schools. The reasons for this inequality should be investigated thoroughly and strategies for ensuring equal access to materials across the district should be proposed. There may be a relationship between lower funding and fewer resources in terms of teachers' motivation to pursue certain forms of professional development. When teachers know that their chances of obtaining Orff instruments, music technology, or authentic world instruments (given Samantha's experience with Ghanaian drumming) are slim, they may be less motivated to pursue Orff certification, training in music technology, or the study of world music. As the career cycle depends on continued growth and development, when teachers have fewer options for pursuing development they may be more likely to enter withdrawal.

Social Justice

Social justice has been emerging as a major area of research in music education over the last few years. The journal *Music Education Research* (Hennessy, 2007) devoted

an issue to papers presented at the International Conference on Music Education, Equity, and Social Justice held at Columbia University in 2006 (e.g. Jorgensen, 2007; Reimer, 2007; Younker & Hickey, 2007). Janis, as a sociology major, indicated a strong interest in social justice among her motivations to pursue urban music education. Samantha used the term "social action" when describing her reasons for pursuing urban music education. Toni, in describing the aftermath of the Uniform Incident described one of her greatest frustrations as her notion that, "justice was not served." Given the vehemence with which all three participants discussed the disparity in resources among schools in their districts, it is quite clear that a close relationship between social justice and urban music education exists. Numerous questions relating the two areas might be researched, such as, "What is the role of social justice in urban music teachers' motivation to teach in urban settings?"

Magnet Schools

Music education has not investigated magnet schools to a great degree, a fact pointed out by the participants. The majority of research into magnet schools has been in the form of descriptive or evaluative studies of specific schools (Hornbacher, Lipscomb, & Scripp, 2008; Newbill, 1992; Raivetz, 1980). Von Steggern (1990) discussed magnet programs, using education for gifted and talented students as the point of departure, although magnet schools themselves are only part of the discussion. Janis, Toni, and Samantha all identified magnet schools located in their cities as a major concern, primarily because of these schools' effect on allocation of resources to the remaining schools in the city. The participants believe that the magnet school musical offerings make for wonderful opportunities for their students, but they are also concerned that there is a consequent negative effect on the music education on the remainder of the city

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students. Part of the problem is that, by showcasing magnet schools, there is a risk of interpreting the magnet programs as representative of music education throughout the entire district.

An investigation into magnet schools might be undertaken from several viewpoints. Descriptive studies of individual magnet schools have been performed, but further investigation should be made into the effects of these programs on their districts. Finally, as suggested by the participants in this study, comparative research might be undertaken to investigate both magnet and non-magnet programs within the same district, including the effects, if any, of magnet programs on non-magnet programs.

Charter Schools

Samantha's dual experience of teaching in both a charter school and in her city's public school district presented many comparisons throughout the study, as well as providing a lens through which she could view the different segments of her career. Both of her schools were located in the same city and drew from the same population of students. There were a number of differences however, perhaps the most prominent being that her charter school constituted its own district when it was first created (Samantha's first year teaching there, her fifth overall) resulting in a comparatively much smaller district administration. Samantha had not sought out teaching in a charter school specifically. She desired to continue teaching in the city but was prohibited from doing so due to the administrative policies in place, which had resulted in substantial lay-offs.

Jorgensen (2003) highlights the rise of charter schools as one of the educational developments at the end of the twentieth century, as one of numerous responses to the perception of failing public schools. Research on charter schools within music education

is slim (Ferguson, 2005; Knot, 2007). The music programs in urban charter schools should be investigated. Numerous topics, from descriptive studies to comparative studies with larger city districts, would benefit music education. If an increasing number of urban music teachers move from public schools to charter schools, how will music education in large cities be affected?

Voices of Teachers

Although writing and scholarship on urban music education is increasing, there is a conspicuous shortage of research with and into urban teachers themselves. Exactly who *are* the people that are choosing the path of urban music education? This study has explored the stories of three urban music teachers, but many others remain to be heard. "Music Teacher Stories" is the second-shortest section in MENC's 2006 two-volume, "Teaching Music in the Urban Classroom." Music education might consider following the example of authors such as Sonia Nieto who, through extended time gathering first-person accounts of experienced teachers, presents a compelling picture of the lives of urban teachers (2003). As Smith (2006) says, "The voices of practitioners need to be part of the ongoing conversation about music education in urban schools" (p. 73).

Expanded Roles

Research has suggested that second-stage teachers benefit from diversifying their involvement in their schools (Berg et al., 2005). Donaldson et al. (2005) explored second-stage teachers assuming differentiated roles within school systems. They argue that second-stage teachers, having attained tenure and a sense of confidence within their classrooms, may have an interest in assuming leadership roles as a potential way to prevent second-stage teacher attrition. Donaldson et al. (2008) found that second-stage

teachers best received differentiated roles when the roles were designed to facilitate changes in classroom practice. What other roles might music educators take on in their schools? Research might be conducted to suggest expanded roles for music educators within schools, with an emphasis on making musical contributions rather than simply serving on committees.

<p style="text-align:center">Coda: Constant Vigilance</p>

The true purpose of the career cycle is to care for teachers, and by extension students, by maintaining constant awareness of teachers' individual needs. It is not enough to pursue professional development only when easy opportunities become available: teachers must be ever vigilant. They must develop reflective habits and maintain a constant pursuit of professional growth and development. They must recognize the warning signs of potential withdrawal and take appropriate steps to maintain positive growth.

Teachers must also not be expected to do everything alone. It is the responsibility of the school administration to consciously and actively support its teachers. For the career cycle to realize its maximum potential, administrators must be aware of *all* of the teachers in a school and the varying needs that they have, in order to determine how to facilitate those teachers' professional growth. In urban music education, the teacher must maintain even stronger vigilance. The three second-stage music teachers described in this study demonstrate how urban music educators perceive and approach their own professional needs, and how they pursue growth regardless of obstacles.

This study has been an exploration into an important population of the music teaching force that has not yet had its voice heard: the second-stage music teacher.

Samantha, Janis, and Toni represent a population that is perhaps even more vital: the second-stage music teacher who teaches in an urban school. Given the recent rise in research into the career cycle and second-stage teachers in particular, as well as the growing emphasis on urban issues in music education research, the opportune moment to pursue this discussion is at hand.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND SURVEY

John Eros – Research Study

April, 2008

<u>Email Survey</u>

Thank you for taking time away from your busy schedule! This survey will help us get ready for our interviews by briefly summarizing background information, discussing urban teaching, and discussing your past and current teaching situations. I estimate that it will take no longer than 30 minutes. Please type your answers directly into the document.

1. Please state your name
2. Where did you grow up? Briefly describe the setting or settings.
3. When and where did you receive your bachelor's degree?
4. What is your principal instrument or performance area?
5. Do you have your master's degree? If so, which degree do you have (i.e. master's in music, etc.)? Also, if so, when and where did you receive your master's degree?
6. Please outline your teaching career. Please fill in the district, classes and/or ensembles that you taught or directed, and grade levels for each school year in which you have taught. Include the specific school building. The example below is for a teacher who taught K-5 general music at Beethoven Elementary School and 6-8 band at Bach Middle School during academic 2010-2011. You will be able to type directly into the boxes.

Academic Year	School District	School(s)	Classes/Ensembles and Grades
2010-2011	Example Pubic Schools	Beethoven Elementary School, Bach Middle School	K-5 General Music, 6-8 Band

7. Do you have tenure in your school or district? If so, how many years had you been teaching when you received tenure?

7. What do you consider to be the identifiers of an urban school? Please list as many as you would like and briefly describe two or three.

8. Please briefly describe how you came to teach in urban schools.

9. How prepared did you feel to teach in an urban school?

10. Have you ever considered leaving urban music teaching?

11. If the answer to #10 is yes, what were the reasons that you felt this way?

12. Have you ever considered leaving teaching in general?

13. If the answer to #12 is "yes," what were the reasons that you felt this way?

14. What were your biggest challenges as a new teacher?

15. Do you still feel like a new teacher? If not, when did you stop feeling like a new teacher?

16. What aspects of your teaching situation do you currently find to be the most challenging?

17. What aspects of your current teaching situation do you find the most rewarding?

Thank you very much for completing this survey. Your answers will be extremely valuable as the study progresses. Please email your survey back to me as soon as possible. I will then email you the email journal information.

APPENDIX B

JOURNAL DIRECTIONS AND FIRST PROMPTS

John Eros
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773-301-7642

A Case Study of Three Urban Music Teachers in the Second Stage of Their Teaching Careers

Email Journal Directions and Prompts

For the next part of the study I would like you to begin keeping a journal. Please consider the following questions. At <u>any</u> time during the study, if you have any thoughts related to these questions please, when you have a moment, jot them down and email them to me.

1. Please take a couple of days and reflect on your time as a new teacher. Do you ever notice yourself being reminded of your time as a new teacher? What are your thoughts? What seems different now?

2. Do you notice any situations that you would have handled differently as a new teacher? Please describe the situation, how you dealt with it now, and how you would have dealt with it as a new teacher.

3. Do thoughts ever pop into your head related to teaching in an urban setting? What comes to mind?

These questions are intended to be guidelines to get you started rather than specific questions that you must answer. If you find your thoughts moving in other directions related to either these questions or our discussions, please feel free to continue with them.

Please feel free to email me entries at any point during the study. Please try to write

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at least once a week. This will help us to keep the sense of the inquiry going throughout the study, including between interviews. <u>Your journal writing is extremely important</u>! I look forward to reading your journals!

APPENDIX C

SECOND JOURNAL PROMPTS

John Eros

Research Study

May 2008

New Journal Questions:

Please consider the following three questions, write a bit about each (as much as you'd like), and email them to me. Don't worry about trying to come up with one definitive answer – write whatever comes to you most easily. The questions might also have more than one answer so feel free to write several times (in fact I hope you do just that!).

1.   What about teaching makes you smile?

2.   What prompts you to make a change in your teaching?

3.   In the course of your teaching, what do you find yourself focusing your attention on the most?

APPENDIX D

FINAL JOURNAL PROMPT

John Eros

Research Study

<u>Final Journal Prompt</u>

Please read these questions over, consider them, and send me your thoughts before we meet on Wednesday. They are intended to both summarize some of our key points from the interviews and to focus us for the group discussion.

1. Looking back on all of our discussions, what are one or two meaningful experiences that you have had during your teaching career? What meanings have you made as a result of those experiences?

2.   When did you feel that you were truly "stabilized" in your classroom practice? How did you know? What was it like previous to that?

3. How do you keep growing as a teacher? How important is growth to you?

4.   Are there any topics or questions in particular that you would like to discuss with the other participants? Please describe. Please also bring your list of topics to the focus group.

This has been a great study so far and I am very excited about our work!

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

SAMANTHA: INTERVIEW #1

1. Describe the cities in which you grew up.

2. Discuss the experience of emigrating.

3. What brought you to urban music education?

4. Discuss your preservice experience in terms of urban music education.

5. Describe your student teaching experience.

6. What are some powerful memories from your first school?

7. Describe the teaching staff.

8. What "issues" did the students bring to school with them?

9. What did you mean by going from "exhilaration to survival?"

10. Why did you do the MM at that time?

11. What effect did it have on your career?

12. Discuss your teaching time between your master's program and the present.

13. Is there anything else that will help me understand what your experiences as a

    teacher have been like from your days as a new teacher through the present time?

SAMANTHA: INTERVIEW #2

1. Walk me through a typical day at your school.

2. Describe your school for me.

3. Describe the neighborhood/surrounding area.

4. Describe the students.

5. Describe your classroom.

6. What are your specific teaching duties?

7. How would you describe your teaching approach (i.e. Orff, Kodály, etc.)?

8. Describe the staff at your school?

9. How do they compare to the staff at your first school?

10. What are some specific music teaching moments that have stuck with you?

11. What did you mean by "common vision" at the school?

12. How would you compare the students at your schools to one another?

13. Tell me about your administration.

14. How much of your change as a teacher is due to the MM and how much is due to changing schools?

15. Is there anything else that you can talk about to help me understand what your teaching experience is like now?

SAMANTHA: INTERVIEW #3

1. Consider your teaching experiences, past and present. What has impacted you significantly?

2. How do your current views on urban music education compare to your views before you began teaching?

3. What have been significant events in shaping those views?

4. Why is your school "not an urban school?"

5. We've talked about "social justice" and "social action" during our interviews. You mentioned them as being on your mind before going into urban teaching. What roles have they and do they play in your teaching?

6. Tell me more about the comment: It's been a long road to finding confidence in my own teaching and establishing a system of clear expectations and consequences. Tell me about the road and any particular stops along the way.

7. Let's talk about the reading, "The Professional Teacher."

8. You wondered where the professional teacher would go next – what are your thoughts?

9. Considering your past and present teaching experiences, where do you see your career going?

10. What is the role of being AMPP Coordinator in your career thus far? Tell me about the impact that experience has had on you as a teacher.

11. Where do you plan to be next year? In five years? Ten?

12. What are your goals as a music teacher?

13. In what ways do you want to develop (i.e. running for office, publishing, certification, particular performances, ratings) as a music teacher?

14. What will you need to do to meet these goals? How will you pursue this?

15. What concerns do you have as you continue in your career?

16. When did your focus change from "one size fits all" to the current student focus?

17. What led up to it? Can you see any particular events or think of any times when you noticed the shift?

18. Talk a little more about what your student focus looks like?

19. If it changed, when did it change? How? Why do you think that was the case?

20. Let's talk about your concerns about withdrawal. Describe your feelings again. How do you deal with them?

21. Is there anything that you would like to add?

JANIS: INTERVIEW #1

1. Describe the area where you grew up.

2. Describe your music education.

3. Did you feel an interest or a pull towards urban education before you left for college?

4.   How much did urban education or urban issues come up in undergraduate?

5. Where did you do your student teaching?

6. What did you do after graduating?

7. What brought you to urban education?

8. Walk me through your teaching history (year by year, school by school)

9. Tell me about your first year

10. Tell me about transitioning into your new role

11. Tell me about music teaching during your first year

12. What were some of your most powerful experiences that first year?

13. How did you feel about music teaching and learning after that first year?

14. How much of what we are talking about is due to the fact that it took place in an urban school?

15. Do you still feel like a "new teacher?" If not, when did you feel the change?

16. Is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you'd like to add?

JANIS: INTERVIEW #2

1. Walk me through a typical day at your school

2. *Describe your school.*

3. Describe the surrounding area/neighborhood.

4. Describe the students.

5. Describe your room(s) for me – materials, space, instruments, books

6. Talk about your specific teaching duties?

7. Talk about your curriculum (i.e. pieces, books, sequence, etc.)

8. In the first interview we talked about "working for social justice" as a goal of yours from the sociology classes. Can you see any manifestations of that interest in your current teaching?

9. Talk about performances (where, how many, what)?

10. Talk about high school beginners and your experiences working with high school beginners

    a. How do you approach high school beginners?

    b. What are the main issues that you encounter?

    c. What do you do in the first lessons?

11. What are you doing right now in your classes?

12. Describe the school faculty.

13. Describe your school administration.

14. What else do you do in the school other than teach music (i.e. other duties, committees, etc.)

15. Talk about the counseling component of your job.

16. What is the effect of having the caseload on your role as a music educator?

17. Is there anything else that I need to know to get a picture of what Janis the music teacher looks like now?

JANIS: INTERVIEW #3

1. While teaching or thinking about teaching, do you focus more on your students or on yourself?

2. Has that ever changed over the course of your career? If so, when? Why?

3. How self-confident and comfortable did you feel when you began teaching?

4. How stable do you feel in your classroom practice?

5. What role does reflection play in your life as a teacher?

6. How important is growth as a teacher?

7. What do you do to keep growing as a teacher? Do you feel that you are still growing as a teacher?

8. What prompts you to make a change in your teaching?

9. How do you define the term "urban?"

10. How do you feel about the term "urban?" "Are there any terms similar to urban that you prefer?

11. What are currently the most important issues in music education in large cities?

12. How do your current views on urban music education compare to your views before you began teaching?

13. Let's discuss the reading, "The Professional Teacher."

14. Considering your past and present teaching experiences, where do you see your career going?

15. Do you see yourself staying in the city? Why or why not?

16. What are your goals as a teacher? What are your goals as a music teacher?

17. In what ways do you want to develop beyond your current role as a classroom music teacher (i.e. administration, running for office, publishing, certification)?

18. What will you need to do to meet these goals? How will you pursue this?

19. Where do you plan to be in the next five years? Ten?

20. Tell me again why you chose to pursue the MSW. Tell me a bit about the degree. Why an MSW and not an MM?

21. How do you see the MSW impacting your future as a teacher?

22. What concerns do you have as you continue in your career?

TONI: INTERVIEW #1

1. Describe the settings in which you grew up.

2. Describe the experience of going back and forth between a rural area and a large city.

3. Describe your music education.

4. What would your education have been like if you went to school in the large city?

5. What brought you to music education as a career?

6. Describe your teacher preparation program.

7. What presence did urban education have in undergraduate?

8. Talk about your student teaching experience.

9. What brought you to urban education?

10. What were your early feelings about being an urban teacher?

11. Describe what it was like to be a "new teacher"

12. Talk about the "legacy" issue that you ran into

13. Talk about money and politics as issues

14. Describe subsequent years – what do subsequent years look like and feel like?

15. What changes do you perceive in yourself as you teach for longer periods of time?

16. Is there anything that you would like to add?

TONI: Interview #2

1. Walk me through a typical day at your school.

2. *Describe your school for me.*

3. Describe the surrounding area/neighborhood.

4. Describe your students.

5. Describe your room(s) for me – materials, space, instruments, books.

6. Talk about your specific teaching duties and what you do in each one

7. How would you describe your teaching approach?

8. Talk about your curriculum (i.e. pieces, books, sequence, etc.)

9. Talk about performances (where, how many, what).

10. Tell me about some specific music teaching moments that have stuck with you.

11. In what ways do you interact with the faculty/staff?

12. What else do you do in the school other than teach music (i.e. other duties, committees, etc.)

13. Is there anything that you would like to add?

TONI: INTERVIEW #3

1. While teaching or thinking about teaching, do you focus more on your students or on yourself?

2. Has that ever changed over the course of your career? If so, when? Why?

3. What role does reflection play in your life as a teacher?

4. What do you do to keep growing as a teacher? Do you feel that you are still growing as a teacher?

5. How self-confident and comfortable did you feel when you began teaching? How has that changed?

6. What prompts you to make a change in your teaching?

7. To what degree do you work with colleagues at your school?

8. We already talked about your relationship with your peers across the district. Talk about your relationships with peers at your school.

9. Briefly describe your relationship with the administration.

10. What does "withdrawal" from teaching mean to you?

11. Have you ever felt this? Describe.

12. How would you characterize your current level of engagement with your teaching? What has led to it recently?

13. How do you define the term "urban?"

14. What are currently the most important issues in music education in large cities?

15. Let's discuss the reading, "The Professional Teacher."

16. Considering your past and present teaching experiences, where do you see your career going?

17. Where do you plan to be in the next five years? Ten?

18. Do you plan to pursue other roles beyond your current role as a classroom music teacher (i.e. administration, running for office, publishing, certification)?

19. What concerns do you have as you continue in your career?

20. Consider your teaching experiences, past and present. Putting it all together, what has been most meaningful to you as a teacher?

21. Is there anything that you would like to add?

APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

1. Describe the schools in which you teach for the rest of the group.

2. What are your thoughts about where you are in your careers now?

3. Do you have any thoughts about ways of reflecting on teaching or the role of reflection in teaching?

4. This diagram [the reflection-renewal-growth cycle from Steffy et al.] shows a cycle of reflection leading to renewal leading to growth. What are your thoughts?

5. What else keeps you growing and keeps you going?

6. What were your views on teaching in a large city when you began your teaching careers?

7. Considering your views at the beginning of your career, how do you think about teaching in a large city now?

8. How significant of an issue are magnet schools in urban education?

9. What are the characteristics of urban schools?

10. Talk a little about interacting with colleagues.

11. Where are things going next?

12. Has there been anything over the course of all of our talking that has come up that you've been surprised by, or you didn't think that you would find yourself thinking about?

CONSENT FORM

John Eros
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INFORMED CONSENT FORM

March, 2008

Dear Music Teacher:

   I am writing to ask permission to interview you for a research project entitled A Case Study of Three Urban Music Teachers in the Second Stage of Their Teaching Careers. The purpose of this study is to examine urban music teachers who are in the second stage of their teaching careers. If you are willing to participate, the study will be conducted during April, May, and June of 2008. Participation in this study will include three interviews, an e-mail survey, an email journal, and a focus group discussion. All interviews and the focus group discussion will be audio-taped and will last approximately ninety minutes. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts that may result from your participation. Should you wish to withdraw from participating once the study begins, you may withdraw at any time. You may decline to answer any question at any time. Results from the study will be available to you upon your request.
   All information that is gathered from the survey, journals, interviews, and focus group discussion will be held in strict confidence. There will be few participants in this study. If you choose to participate in this study, please keep your responses and comments about this study anonymous. Your name and the name of anyone mentioned in the interview including other teachers, university professors and schools that you have attended or are currently employed by will not be used in this study. Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. If you have any questions about this study please contact **Error! Contact not defined.** (primary investigator listed above). Should you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research at The University of Michigan, please contact the Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board, 540 East Liberty, Suite 202, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2210, 734-936-0933, email: irbhsbs@umich.edu."

Your signature below indicates your consent to participate in this study:

Your name (printed)_____

 Your signature_____ Date:____/_____/_____

Your signature on the next line indicates consent to audio tape interviews and a focus group discussion. These audio tapes will not be heard by any other party except for yourself or me as the primary researcher.

Signed:_____ Date:_____/_____/_____

Sincerely,

John Eros

APPENDIX H

CODING FORM

Data Set Coding Form (Dissertation – John Eros)

Participant:

Data Set:

Research Question	
What themes emerge as meaningful to participants when they describe their teaching experiences?	
How have these meanings impacted the participants' views on urban music education over the course of their careers?	
How do participants perceive their career development thus far and how do they discuss their anticipated career trajectory?	

Notes/Important Points:

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