

The Personal and Professional Life Experiences of Three Lesbian
Middle and High School Instrumental Band Conductors

by

Lisa J. Furman

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Music Education)
in the University of Michigan
2012

Doctoral Committee:

Associate Professor Colleen M. Conway, Chair

Assistant Professor Kate R. Fitzpatrick

Professor Michael L. Haithcock

Professor Patricia M. King

Professor Elizabeth A. Younker, University of Western Ontario

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the patience, guidance, encouragement, and support I received from family, friends, and dissertation committee members. My dissertation chair Dr. Colleen Conway, I thank you for your enthusiasm and thoughtful guidance throughout this process. Your words of encouragement and support helped me to continue to stay focused on the task at hand. I would also like to thank Dr. Kate Fitzpatrick-Harnish, Professor Michael Haithcock, Dr. Patricia King, and Dr. Elizabeth A. Younker for your commitment to this project and to my development.

To my family, it helped tremendously knowing you were in my corner cheering me on throughout this long process, thank you for love and support. To my parents, thank you for your patience, love, and encouragement. To my sister Cindi, regardless of the numerous obstacles that have been laid in your path, you have faced each day and new challenge with courage, hope, and humor. You are truly an inspiration.

A very special thanks to the three brave women who participated in this study. I

thank you for sharing your personal and emotional journeys. I hope you realize what a tremendous difference you have made in the lives of your students.

To my dear friend Sherry, (Mama D), this is certainly been yet another interesting adventure that we have shared. I thank you for your friendship, editing skills, good times, and continued support. And finally to Heather, thank you for believing in me and supporting me through this journey. Your determination and commitment to making a difference in the lives of others has served as a continuous source of inspiration and motivation to me throughout this project. I treasure the time we have shared talking, laughing, working, and relaxing together and thank you for everything you have done to help me achieve this goal.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	viii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION.....	1
Personal Framework.....	1
Rationale.....	7
Purpose Statement and Research Questions.....	9
Clarification of Terms.....	10
Overview of the Design of the Study.....	11
Definitions.....	13
CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	18
Gender Research in Music Education.....	18
Gender Inequity within Band Conducting Leadership Positions.....	18
Lack of Female Role Models.....	22
The Culture of Band Conducting.....	24
The Female Conductor as a Gendered Body.....	25
Experiences of Gay and Lesbian Educators.....	27
Nontraditional Gender Roles.....	28
Marginalization.....	29
Identity Disclosure for Gay and Lesbian Educators.....	34

Lesbian Educators.....	41
Identity Management.....	41
Revealing the Stories of Lesbian Educators.....	43
Teaching Practices	47
Gay and Lesbian Music Educators.....	49
Study of a Lesbian Music Educator.....	53
Connections.....	55
The gendered body.....	56
Marginalization and nontraditional roles.....	58
Teaching practices.....	61
Identity disclosure.....	62
Conclusion.....	65
CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY.....	66
Purpose and Research Questions.....	66
Pilot Study.....	67
Purpose and Research questions	67
Sampling.....	68
Methodology.....	70
Analysis	71
Interpretative Phenomenology	72
Research Participants.....	75
Data Sources.....	76
Open-Ended Survey.....	78
Individual Interviews (Interviews Two and Three).....	79
Ethical Considerations	81
Analysis and Interpretation.....	82
Validity.....	85
Sensitivity to Context.....	85
Commitment and Rigor.....	86
Transparency and Coherence.....	86
Organization of Findings.....	87

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS: Leslie's Story.....	89
Background.....	90
Teaching Positions and Responsibilities.....	91
Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	92
Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	95
Personal and Professional Life Split.....	96
Don't Ask, Don't Teach.....	99
Addressing LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom.....	101
Advice to Future Lesbian Instrumental Music Educators.....	107
Final Thoughts.....	107
 CHAPTER V FINDINGS: NORA'S STORY.....	 110
Background.....	111
Teaching Positions and Responsibilities.....	112
Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	113
Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	117
Don't Ask, Don't Teach.....	118
Personal and Professional Life Split.....	122
Strategies for Concealing A Lesbian Identity.....	124
Addressing LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom.....	125
Community as a Contributing Factor to Classroom Teaching.....	129
Advice to Future Lesbian Instrumental Music Educators.....	130
Final Thoughts.....	131
 CHAPTER VI FINDINGS: KATHRYN'S STORY.....	 134
Background.....	135
Teaching Positions and Responsibilities.....	136
Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	137
Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	140
Don't Ask, Don't Teach.....	144
Personal and Professional Life Split.....	147

Addressing LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom.....	148
Advice to Future Lesbian Instrumental Music Educators.....	154
Final Thoughts.....	155
 CHAPTER VII DISCUSSION/CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS.....	 158
Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	158
Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	160
Identity Disclosure in the School Setting.....	163
Identity Management.....	167
Personal and Professional Life Split.....	169
LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom.....	170
Summary.....	173
 CHAPTER VIII SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....	 175
Purpose and Research Questions.....	175
Overview of Related Literature.....	175
Methodology Overview.....	178
Reflections of the Research.....	180
Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	183
Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching.....	184
Identity Disclosure in the School Setting.....	184
Identity Management.....	186
LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom.....	186
Findings Summary.....	187
Recommendations for Practice.....	187
Instrumental Music Teacher Education Programs.....	188
Current Instrumental Music Educators.....	193
Suggestions for Future Research.....	196
 APPENDICES.....	 201
 REFERENCES.....	 214

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A SAMPLE INITIAL SURVEY.....	201
APPENDIX B CONSENT FORM.....	204
APPENDIX C IRB EXEMPTION LETTER.....	206
APPENDIX D IPA DATA ANALYSIS CODING SAMPLES.....	208
APPENDIX E STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES.....	209

ABSTRACT

Personal and Professional Life Experiences of Three Lesbian Middle and High School Instrumental Band Conductors

by Lisa J. Furman

Music education research highlights the lack of female representation in band conducting positions (Block, 1988; Gould, 2001; Hartley & Jagow, 2007; Sheldon & Hartley, 2010). Gender and sexuality may be contributing factors to the reported gender inequity in band conducting positions (Gould, 2001, 2003; Grant, 2000; Sears, 2010; Sheldon & Hartley, 2010); impact the personal and professional life experiences of female instrumental band conductors (Bartleet, 2002; Furman, 2010, 2011; Sears, 2010); and affect the classroom teaching practices of female band conductors (Furman 2010, 2011; Sears, 2010).

The purpose of this study was to understand the personal and professional life experiences of three lesbian middle and high school instrumental band conductors. The research questions for the study included: (a) How do participants describe their personal

and professional life experiences in relation to their gender and sexuality? (b) How do participants describe their instrumental music teaching practices in relation to their gender and sexuality? (c) How do participants describe the impact of their gender and sexual identity on career decisions in the music-teaching field? and (d) How do participants describe decisions related to identity disclosure and identity management in their personal and professional lives?

This study used the Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA) (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009); the primary data collection technique was phenomenological in-depth interviewing (Seidman, 2006). Data collection included a qualitative open-ended survey, and two individual interviews.

Findings of the study revealed that each participant had distinctive experiences in relation to their gender and sexual identity as lesbian instrumental music educators. Each shared their deeply personal and emotional stories of job loss, harassment, and discrimination and the collective desire to create safe and inclusive classrooms for their students due to their own personal experiences. All reported that their lesbian identity affected their classroom teaching experiences and described personal decisions related to identity disclosure and identity management. All three women explained how gender

affected their experiences as instrumental music educators and expressed their thoughts on the current situation for women in the profession. Participants recognized that despite their efforts to hide their sexual identities due to fears of job loss, harassment, and discrimination, each now understands their lesbian identity positively affected their classroom teaching practices and philosophies.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Imagine living in a world where there is no domination, where females and males are not alike or even always equal, but where a vision of mutuality is the ethos shaping our interaction. Imagine living in a world where we can be who we are, a world of peace and possibility (bell hooks, 2000 p. x).

The purpose of this study was to understand the personal and professional life experiences of three lesbian middle and high school instrumental band conductors. I begin this chapter with a description of the personal experience that brought me to take on this inquiry. I then include a rationale for the study, clarification of terms, a brief overview of the design, and a section including definitions.

Personal Framework

As a former instrumental band conductor at the middle and high school level for a number of years, it was apparent that the position of band conductor in high school settings was largely male- dominated. Although I was aware of a few female instrumental band conductors at the high school and collegiate levels, the male domination of the field

was clearly evident and led to my interest in examining gender inequity within middle and high school instrumental music.

Male domination in the band conducting profession was particularly evident when attending band and orchestra festival events or professional meetings (honors band planning committee, school band and orchestra association meetings, etc.). In addition, it became quite clear that the majority of those males were heterosexual. As a 5'2'' petite lesbian female walking in to a meeting attended by such a population, my difference from the norm was rather apparent. I considered how my gender expression, i.e., how I chose to present myself in terms of clothing, hairstyle, body language, and tone of voice, affected others perceptions of me in this non traditional- gender role. Did I appear feminine enough to pass as a heterosexual female, yet masculine enough to appear capable of leading a high school band? How should I address questions related to my marital status or whether or not I have children? As a thirty something female, never married, no children and electing a position in a male dominated profession; it was inevitable that by simply answering no to these questions, assumptions would be made and I recognized the potential consequences of disclosing my lesbian identity in this school setting. I was keenly aware that how I elected to present myself as a female high school instrumental band conductor (e.g., how I dressed, talked, walked, and conducted

the ensemble and other aspects (of my gender expression)-impacted my personal and professional life experiences and teaching practices.

Interestingly enough, the other band director in the school district was also female, prompting comments such as what a “fascinating team” or “unique pair” we were. I was never quite sure how to interpret those types of comments, wondering if they were in relation to our gender status (two female directors in the same school community), or in reference to her heterosexual identity and my perceived lesbian identity.

Starting my career in band conducting by working in a middle school setting in the community in which I had been raised, it had become apparent early on in my teaching career that a strict separation between my personal and professional life would be a necessity. Comments and questions from colleagues and students in relation to my perceived sexual identity while teaching middle school band led to consideration of how to conceal my lesbian identity in the school setting and community and to question my interest in pursuing a position as a high school band conductor. If middle school students were questioning my undisclosed sexual identity, what would my experiences be at the high school level with students, colleagues, and administrators? Being a female high school band director in this community would be quite novel; being a lesbian female high school band director could represent another challenge as this position is highly visible

within a community. High school bands are expected to participate in school events such as pep rallies, football and basketball games, concerts, festival events, etc.

The community is located in the mid-west and is a small, blue-collar community, with a district-wide student population of approximately 1400 students in grades K-12 its public schools consist of four buildings (two elementary, one middle, and one high school). The middle school building (grades 6-8), the site of my first teaching position, included approximately 350 students, with about 65% of the population qualifying for free and reduced services. The high school building (grades 9-12) included approximately 500 students, with approximately similar populations qualifying for free and reduced services.

As this was my hometown community, I generally knew it to be rather conservative and judgmental toward LGBTQ¹ community members. Many of my friends, including my partner, elected to not disclose a gay or lesbian identity in various professional settings due to fears related to job loss and discrimination in relation to their sexual identities.

As a middle school band director beginning her career, I found one level of support from a colleague with whom I worked; a very successful, male high school band

¹ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (Chung & Courville, 2008).

² This approach (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) is completely outlined in Chapter III.

director. Prior to our working together, we had a personal relationship and he was aware and accepting of my lesbian identity, which made for a comfortable working relationship. Although I had elected to not disclose my identity to the school community, I was at least able to share my personal life with my immediate colleague.

Based upon the rapid growth of the program and consistent superior festival ratings, I had established a reputation and developed student and parent acceptance in the middle school setting. Upon the departure of my male colleague to pursue other career interests, I agreed to accept the high school band conducting position in this same district. Given the support I had been receiving in the district and my professional interest in a high school band conducting position, this appeared to be the time and place to move forward. Under my tutelage, the program continued to grow in numbers and quality, with students excelling in group and solo performances and festivals.

Although I continued to have tremendous support from the band students and parents in the district, the management of my lesbian identity and need for separation between my personal and professional life in the community became a greater concern in the high school setting. I heard more frequent derogatory slurs from students in the hallway, hushed comments from colleagues, was shunned by colleagues, and excluded from staff social events. This led to an uncomfortable working environment in relation to

my gender and sexual identity. I had constant fear of job loss, harassment and loss of student and community support.

In spite of this constant fear of job loss, and the possible result of students exiting the band program, and my concern about fielding potential questions from band students and parents regarding my gender and lesbian identity, (which I suspected was known), I thoroughly enjoyed my experiences as a high school band director. I was however challenged by my inability to support lesbian, gay, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) students in the school setting due to fears of job loss and harassment. The decision to not disclose my lesbian identity in the school setting meant that I was not able to provide a positive lesbian role model for these students and could not offer them my support.

The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network's executive summary of the *2011 National School Climate Survey* reports that:

- 81.9 % of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed, 38.3% reported being physically harassed and 18.3% reported being physically assaulted at school in the past year because of their sexual orientation.
- 63.9% of LGBT students reported being verbally harassed, 27.7 % reported being physically harassed and 12.4 % reported being physically assaulted at school in the past year because of their gender expression.

- 84.9% heard the term gay used in a negative way.
- 56.9 % reported hearing homophobic remarks from their teachers or other school staff.
- 36.7% of students who reported an incident said school staff did nothing in response to the report (GLSEN, 2012, p. 5).

While these statistics offer an examination of the experiences of LGBTQ students, the survey doesn't include the experiences of LGBTQ educators. The majority of heterosexual individuals across professions are not required to reflect upon their sexuality, as it has not caused tension or concern in their lives in this way. For gays or lesbians though, including those in educational settings, it is necessary to be aware of how one's tendencies, predispositions, and desires (sexual orientation) impact one's sense of self (identity) and interactions with others (behavior) (Blumenfeld, 1994). As a lesbian instrumental band conductor, others perceptions of me and of my undisclosed lesbian identity affected my personal and professional life experiences, teaching practices and career decisions.

Rationale

Past literature (Block, 1988; Gould, 2001; Hartley & Jagow, 2007; Sheldon & Hartley, 2010) that will be discussed in Chapter II highlights the lack of female

representation in band conducting leadership positions. Reasons offered for the apparent absence of women in these band conducting positions included: sexual diversity (Furman, 2010), discrimination (Jackson, 1996; Sears, 2010; Sheldon & Hartley, 2010), lack of female role models (Gould, 2001; Grant, 2000; Hartley & Jagow, 2007; Pucciani, 1984), historical tradition (Gould, 2001, 2003; Hinely, 1984; Jackson, 1996; Wieland-Howe, 1998), and the stereotypical belief of the podium as a male domain (Bartleet, 2002; Gould; 2001, 2003; Jackson, 1996; Sheldon & Hartley, 2010).

When examining the literature about the experiences of female instrumental band conductors at the middle school, high school, and collegiate levels, it became apparent that recognition of gender inequity exists, although only a small number of scholars have examined gender inequity among band conducting leadership positions (Hartley & Jagow, 2007). Gould (2001) cites multiple investigations reporting that at the postsecondary level in the United States, women constitute less than 10% of all band director positions including: Block, 1988; McElroy, 1996; and McClain, 2000.

Noticeably absent from past research examining the experiences of female instrumental band conductors at the middle school, high school, and collegiate levels, is consideration of sexual diversity, how a perceived or identified sexual identity may affect the personal and professional life experiences, classroom teaching practices, and career

decisions of women teaching instrumental music education. For the purposes of this study the term teaching practices refers to instructional methods, strategies, and approaches utilized by band conductors in the instrumental music classroom including: decisions related to curricular choices, program organization, repertoire selections, instructional methods, strategies, and approaches. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) studies have been actively investigated in the fields of education, sociology, musicology and women and gender studies; however research, theory and practice in this area are noticeably deficient in the field of music education. This study sought to address this neglected field of inquiry by offering an examination of the personal and professional life experiences of lesbian band conductors in relation to their gender and sexual identity.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand the personal and professional life experiences of three lesbian middle and high school instrumental band conductors. The research questions for the study included: (a) How do participants describe their personal and professional life experiences in relation to their gender and sexuality? (b) How do participants describe their instrumental music teaching practices in relation to their gender and sexuality? (c) How do participants describe the impact of their gender and

sexual identity on career decisions in the music-teaching field? and (d) How do participants describe decisions related to identity disclosure and identity management in their personal and professional lives?

Clarification of Terms

The purpose statement and research questions for this study were framed using the term gender and sexual diversity. This section clarifies the use of these terms in this research study.

The terms gender and sex are commonly used interchangeably, as they describe closely related concepts that characterize aspects of our bodies and identities and how they act and interact with the identities and bodies of others in society (Meyer, 2010). According to Meyer (2010), gender is defined as “those characteristics of women and men that are socially constructed, in contrast to those that are legally and biologically determined” (p. 142). Individuals are assigned a sex at birth, but learn to act like boys or girls; they quickly learn what are the appropriate behaviors, attitudes, roles and activities for boys and girls, and how they should relate to others (Meyer, 2010). These learned attributes are what make up gender identity and gender expression and determine gender roles.

The term gender identity refers to an individuals' innate sense of self as a man or a woman or other identifiers. Gender identity is shaped by one's sex assigned at birth, the gender in which one is raised, and may or may not change over time (Meyer, 2010). The term gender expression refers to how one elects to dress, talk, walk, and accessorize to express one's gender identity.

Sexuality refers to a person's tendencies, preferences, and desires with respect to romantic partners and intimate relationships; sexual orientation describes to whom one is sexually attracted; sexual behavior describes the type of sexual activities in which an individual engages; and sexual identity refers to a person's description of him or herself (Meyer, 2010). The term sexual diversity encompasses the full range of an individual's sexuality, which includes: tendencies, preferences, desires, orientation, behavior, elected identity, and expression.

Overview of the Design of the Study

The Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA)²(Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) was used as the design for the study. The Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA) to research involves a committed examination of how individuals make sense of their major life experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). IPA research is

² This approach (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) is completely outlined in Chapter III.

informed by phenomenology, (how individuals make sense of experience) hermeneutics (the theory of interpretation), and ideology (a focus on the particular), (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). IPA studies involve data collection typically in the form of semi-structured, one-to-one interviews, verbatim record or transcriptions of verbal data, and in-depth analysis procedures. Phenomenological in-depth interviewing (Seidman, 2006) was the primary data collection technique for this study. Data collection for each participant included a qualitative open-ended survey and two individual interviews.

Participants for the study were selected using purposeful sampling methods. The sample consisted of: three lesbian female band conductors who have worked in middle school or high school band settings in a Midwest state, for at least the past eight years. Purposeful sampling requires that participants have certain experiences in common with one another (experiences as lesbian middle or high school band conductors) and can offer meaningful insight into this phenomenon (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The eight plus years of experience by each participant allowed rich insight and an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of being a female instrumental band conductor at this point in time, the turn of the 21st century. Further explanation of sampling methods is included in Chapter III.

Definitions

Gay: A person who engages in same-sex relationships and identifies as a member of the gay community, it is often used as a derogatory slur to describe behavior, or anyone not meeting the approval of an individual or group (Chung & Courville, 2008; Meyer, 2010).

Gender: Those characteristics of men and women that are socially constructed, in contrast to those that are biologically or legally determined, i.e., one's sex (Meyer, 2010).

Gender expression: How one elects to dress, talk, walk, and accessorize to express one's gender identity (Meyer, 2010).

Gender identity: An individual's internal sense of self as a man, women, transgender, or other self- identification. The identity may or may not match the biological sex of the individual (Chung & Courville, 2008).

Gender non-conforming: A person who has or is perceived to have gender characteristics and/or behaviors that varies from traditional or societal expectations for a person of that sex (Chung & Courville, 2008; Meyer, 2010).

Harassment: Biased behaviors that negatively impact the intended target or environment. Harassment can be physical, verbal, social, emotional, intentional or unintentional in nature (Chung & Courville, 2008; Meyer, 2010).

Homophobia: Fear, discomfort, disapproval, or hatred of individuals or groups perceived to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer and of aspects related to their culture. Homophobia can be biased behaviors or attitudes ranging from verbal abusive or physical violence, to mild discomfort (Chung & Courville, 2008; Meyer, 2010).

Heteronormativity: A system of behaviors and social expectations built around the belief everyone should be or is heterosexual and that all relationships and families should follow this model (Meyer, 2010; Warner, 1991).

Identity Disclosure: Electing to disclose a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer identity (Griffin, 1992).

Identity Management: Strategies used to manage a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer identity. Strategies may include: (a) passing, (b) covering, (c) implicitly out, or (d) explicitly out (Griffin, 1992).

Lesbian: The term for a women who engages in same-sex relationships and/or identifies as a member of the lesbian community (Meyer, 2010).

Sex: A medical-legal category assigned at birth based on biological characteristics (Meyer, 2010).

Sexuality: Refers to a person's tendencies, preferences, and desires with respect to romantic partners and intimate relationships (Meyer, 2010).

Sexual behavior: The type of sexual activities in which an individual elects to engage (Meyer, 2010).

Sexual diversity: Refers to the full range of an individual's sexuality, including one's tendencies, preferences, desires, orientation, behavior, elected identity, and expression (Meyer, 2010).

Sexual identity: How a person elects to describe him or herself. This can include cultural and political labels as well as other identifiers that may connect a person with a community and a commonality to others who share their selected identity (Meyer, 2010).

Sexual orientation: An identity based on an individual's attraction to a person of the same sex, different sex, or both sexes (homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual) (Chung & Courville, 2008).

Transgender: An umbrella term used to describe individuals whose gender identity and/or expression are different from cultural expectations based on the sex an individual was assigned at birth. The term can include individuals who identify as transsexuals, cross-dressers, masculine-identified women, feminine-identified men, MTF's (male to female), FTM's (female to males), or intersex individuals (Chung & Courville, 2008; Meyer, 2010).

Queer: Historically considered a negative term for gay, lesbian, transgender and queer people this has changed as the LGBTQ community has reclaimed the term. Also considered as an umbrella term to reference a more flexible view of gender and/or sexuality (Chung & Courville, 2008).

For the purposes of this study the term teaching practices refers to instructional methods, strategies, and approaches utilized by band conductors in the instrumental music classroom including: decisions related to curricular choices, program organization, repertoire selections, instructional methods, strategies, and approaches. The term band conductor refers to middle and high school instrumental (band) educators working in middle and high school settings.

Chapter II outlines prior research and scholarship that informed the background for this study. This review of the literature in relation to gender and sexual diversity as influences on the experiences of female middle and high school band conductors includes: (1) gender inequity in instrumental music education, (2) the lack of female role models, (3) the culture of band conducting, (4) the female as a gendered body on the podium, and (5) the teaching experiences of gay and lesbian educators and gay and lesbian music educators.

Chapter III includes discussion of the method in which the study was conducted. It includes the, purpose statement and research questions, pilot study, description of the research design, description of the participants, data collection methods, ethical considerations, analysis and interpretation procedures, validity, and the expected contribution of the study. The findings of the study are presented as individual chapters (IV, V and VI), for each of the three participants. Chapter VII provides a cross-case analysis within the context of the related literature. Finally, Chapter VIII provides a summary, conclusion, and suggestions for teaching practice and future research.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter II includes the research and scholarship that provides a background for this study. The chapter includes an examination of the literature in relation to gender in music education, the experiences of gay and lesbian educators, and gay and lesbian music educators.

Gender Research in Music Education

To gain insight into the gender inequity of female band conductors, this chapter includes studies in which gender inequity within band conducting leadership positions, the lack of female role models, the culture of band conducting, and the female as a gendered body were examined.

Gender Inequity within Band Conducting Leadership Positions

Jackson (1996) examined the relationship between the imbalance of women and men in college band conducting positions and reported a continuing lack of female

college band conductors. Using qualitative analysis of interview data, the purpose of the study was to examine the career experiences of women college band conductors as interpreted by participants (Jackson, 1996). Data was collected via semi-structured phone interviews with 12 female college band conductors. Random sampling methods were used to obtain participants that represented an evenly distributed sample among geographic locations and types of colleges (i.e., those awarding doctoral, comprehensive and baccalaureate degree-based programs).

Findings of the study revealed participants belief of existing discrimination in band conducting leadership positions and that resilience toward sex role stereotyping and discrimination are required of females in such band conducting positions. Reasons cited for the gender imbalance included the military tradition (traditionally male-domination) of the college band program, the unwillingness or inability of female conductors to obtain a terminal degree, the lack of previous marching band experience, and the unwillingness or inability to relocate geographically (Jackson, 1996). The participants suggested that the key to success for female college band conductors is competency in musical skills and knowledge, a willingness to acquire a terminal degree, diverse strengths, awareness of the attitudes that exist in the band conducting profession, and a plan for how to cope with those attitudes toward women.

A recent report by Sheldon and Hartley (2010) examining past and current research on gender issues in music education reveals that a significant gender imbalance remains within music education particularly among instrumental music education leadership positions (band conducting). They suggest that although women are active and visible members of the music education profession, they typically hold positions teaching elementary general music or junior high/middle school music, with band-conducting positions still significantly male dominated, especially at the secondary and collegiate levels (Sheldon & Hartley, 2010).

This study involved an examination of the trends in instrumental music education leadership among women and minorities from 1996 until 2008. Gender data of primary band conductors at the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic were examined by year and ensemble level. Also included was an investigation of the distribution of gender and ethnicity among graduate students studying wind band conducting from 1999 until 2008, and participants in conducting workshops or symposiums from 1996 until 2008.

Findings of the study revealed that men overwhelmingly outnumbered women as primary conductors throughout the history of the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic. Similar distributions were found among graduate wind band conducting student populations and among conducting symposium/workshop attendees. Results of the study

underscore the importance of revisiting reasons for the dearth of females in band conducting leadership positions and to engage in discussion and actions toward improving gender inequity.

The complexities of working in the male dominated profession of secondary instrumental band conducting were examined in a study by Sears (2010). The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the ways that female high school instrumental band conductors perceive and engage with issues of isolation, discrimination, and stereotyping in high school band conducting positions (Sears, 2010). The participants included 11 female high school band conductors with varying years of teaching experience. Data was collected via two semi-structured interviews focused on gender in relation to isolation, discrimination, stereotyping, and teacher identity in high school band conducting positions.

Participants of the study suggested that gender inequity continues among high school instrumental band conducting positions due to the male tradition of the profession, the struggle for women to balance a personal and professional life, and administrators questioning the ability of women to perform the job responsibilities. Some participants of the study believed that gendered stereotypes in the band conducting profession have led to discriminatory hiring practices, professional isolation, and sexually inappropriate

treatment of women in the profession. In order to achieve success as a female high school instrumental band conductor, participants suggested that confidence, and a tough, assertive, powerful, and competitive persona were required (Sears, 2010).

The Lack of Female Role Models

A study by Grant (2000) that included a survey of 12 female band conductors at various career stages and teaching levels, investigated the impact that mentors and gender-specific role models have on women pursuing careers in the band conducting profession. Findings of the study revealed that all 12 participants described mentors and role models as a catalyst toward their decision to pursue a career in band conducting and believed mentoring is important to the growth and development of female band conductors at all stages of their careers (Grant, 2000). The participant interview responses consistently included the words “essential” and “critical” when asked to describe the influence of a mentor or role model to one’s personal and professional growth.

Results regarding gender-specific role modeling were not clearly defined in the study, though all participants suggested that it is important to see successful female band conductors, especially as they serve as models for the younger females in the conducting profession (Grant, 2000). Only a few of the participants reported a female role model or mentor in their careers. She suggests that with the low number of female conductors

currently in band conducting leadership positions it is difficult to assess the potential impact of gender-specific role models. She contends, however, that role models and mentors could potentially influence issues of gender inequity in band conducting leadership positions by making these positions appear “attainable and not gender specific” to women interested in the profession (p. 29).

Gould (2001) similarly reported that women as role models in band conducting positions make the profession appear possible and attainable to young female band conductors. The purpose of her study was to examine the presence of role models in the lives of women during their initial involvement and career as collegiate band conductors. Data were collected via a mailed survey, 13 individual telephone interviews, and a small group interview with four of the 13 participants. Participants who collectively hailed from the Midwest, South, Northeast, and West, individually had anywhere from 1-24 years of teaching experiences as a college band conductor.

Each participant in the study identified an individual who was influential in her decision to pursue a career in college band conducting. Although several of the participants with fewer than 10 years of experience mentioned that they had been aware of other female college band conductors as they entered the profession, only one identified a female college band conductor as influential to her career decisions.

Gould (2001) notes that females are often reluctant to assume a role model position and suggests that an awareness of the inequalities for women in these positions is essential to women's potential as effective role models for college band directing positions. Gender-specific role modeling, she argues, "represents a viable means to change and improve the profession, as well as the personal lives of individual band directors and students" (p.14). Likewise, making women aware of the gender inequity in middle school and high school band conducting leadership positions might lead to current female conductors at the middle and high school teaching levels accepting the position of mentor and role model to young female music students.

The lack of female role models may be contributing to continued gender segregation in band conducting positions at the middle school, high school, and collegiate level. The almost exclusive focus on the oppressed status of women in band conducting positions though, fails to account for other forms of oppression that must also be recognized, acknowledged, and considered when attempting to instill interventions to address gender inequity within the profession.

The Culture of Band Conducting

Gould (2003) critically examined the literature on the lack of women college band directors in terms of the cultural contexts in which they inhabit. The specific goal of the

study was to analyze the lack of female college instrumental band conductors in terms of the cultural contexts in which they reside, the cultures of music, performance, and college bands. Within this goal, Gould's (2003) focus was on the cultural and historical contexts in which the female conductors are embodied, not on the individual women themselves.

The traditional explanations for gender inequity (including a lack of visible role models) were inadequate for determining and affecting the marginalization of women according to Gould (2003), because they failed to examine the culture of conducting in college bands in the U.S. The cultural systems of music, performance, and college bands, "not the actions of individual college band directors, women or men" explains the gender segregation among college band conductors (p.8) and therefore, efforts to improve the situation must be focused on changing the culture.

Gould (2003) recommends the development of critical teaching strategies in music education programs "that involve conductors and students in their total education, focusing on the margins in terms of both people and the profession" (p. 8). Examining the perspective of other marginalized groups (marginalized due to race, gender, or sexuality) may provide valuable insights about efforts to change the situation (Gould, 2003).

The Female Conductor as a Gendered Body

Bartleet (2002) examined the gendered body of the female conductor through the use of narrative descriptions, the theoretical concepts of corporeal feminism, and ideas from Foucault's (1978) poststructuralist theory. The study involved an exploration of how the female conductor's body is perceived as "other" on the podium and how this "otherness" has affected female conductor's experiences in this male dominated profession. The study involved in-depth interviewing of two well-known female professional orchestral conductors, Simone Young and Marin Alsop. Although Bartleet's exploration of the gendered body is focused on the female orchestra conductor, given the potential similarities between the experiences of female band and orchestra conductors it is a valuable contribution to future research examining the lack of female representation in band conducting leadership positions.

The masculine gendered body and its associated behaviors are perceived as the norm on the podium, therefore a female standing on the podium is often defined by her differences to the masculine norm (Bartleet, 2002). She suggests that female conductors are expected to dress in a manner that deemphasizes their female sexuality and to suppress it in a masculine gendered appearance regardless of what they decide to wear.

She further suggests that females are scrutinized for their physical conducting gestures in comparison to the masculine norm. In the interview, conductor Marin Alsop

states, “when a woman makes a physical gesture...it’s interpreted very differently societally than the same gesture from a man” suggesting that “ if women take on a surrogate masculinity in their gestures they are criticized; if they use a feminine manner or gesture they are criticized” (Bartleet, 2002, p. 52). The female conductor as a gendered body thus presents a paradox: “the dominant social discourses encourage women to pursue femininity through their bodies, while dominant conducting discourses state that they need to renounce their femininity and adopt a surrogate masculinity” (Bartleet, 2002, p. 51).

The leadership style of a female conductor is also measured against the masculine norm and this can be quite challenging for female conductors. During the interviews, Alsop suggested that women have a different approach to life and interpersonal relationships thus must retrain themselves in order to be the figure of authority on the podium. This perception of the female conductor as “other” has made it difficult for women to fit into the role of conductor as it is presently defined, she suggests.

Experiences of Gay and Lesbian Educators

In order to gain further insight into the marginalization of female band conductors, a review of the literature in relation to the experiences of gay and lesbian educators was examined. As the stated purpose of this study was an examination of the personal and

professional life experiences of female middle and high school band conductors in relation to gender and sexual diversity, it was important to understand how the sexually diverse experiences of educators impact the personal and professional life and teaching practices of those individuals who are perceived as being gay or lesbian or that have elected to disclose a gay or lesbian identity in school settings. This section includes examination of selected education literature related to nontraditional gender roles, the marginalization of gay and lesbian educators, and identity disclosure issues for gay and lesbian educators.

Nontraditional Gender Roles

A study by Woods and Harbeck (1992) revealed that gay and lesbian teachers whose subjects are not consistent with traditional gender roles (such as male elementary school educators or female woodshop teachers), called gender nonconforming teachers, are vulnerable to homophobic attitudes and hostility. The study involved an in-depth examination of the work experiences of 12 lesbian physical education teachers.

The participants for the study ranged in age from 22 to 50 years, and included 11 white and one black participant working in elementary and secondary physical education settings. The Siedman, Sullivan and Schatzkamer (1983) three-stage interview process was used for data collection. A focus question guided each of the three 90 minute

interviews for the study. Details regarding sampling procedures, data analysis and the use of member checks were not included.

The paper offered an in-depth examination of reported identity management strategies used by research participants in the school setting including: concealing one's lesbian identity (attempting to pass as heterosexual), self-distancing from others at school, and self-distancing from issues pertaining to homosexuality in the school environment (electing to ignore homophobic comments in the school setting) (Woods & Harbeck, 1992).

Findings of the study revealed two assumptions held by all research participants: that they would lose their jobs if their identity were to become public knowledge, and that female physical education teachers are stereotyped as being lesbian (Woods & Harbeck, 1992). Also reported was that participants routinely engaged in these management techniques in order to maintain their teaching positions. It is fair to suggest that female middle and high school band conductors, or gender non-conforming teachers, may likewise be vulnerable to homophobic attitudes and hostility due to a perceived or disclosed lesbian identity.

Marginalization

Blount (2006) examined the experiences of gay and lesbian educators and

administrators “who have sexually and or emotionally desired persons of the same sex” and, or, who have “transgressed gender norms” (p. 3). Obtained through visits to the Library of Congress, and several LGBT archives, Blount’s (2006) historical study includes a thoroughly researched and detailed analysis of archives and other original sources documenting the experiences of gay and lesbian school workers in the last century.

Blount (2006) explored how the experiences of gay and lesbian educators have varied and how public views on acceptable sexual orientation and gender have shifted over the decades. Through an examination of changing social views and political campaigns, she demonstrates how concerns related to gender and sexuality of gay and lesbian educators has deeply affected policymaking practices, personnel practices, curriculum, and school related activities, and subsequently the experiences of gay and lesbian educators over the past 100 years. The study included an exploration of how school educators today, as in past years, have been summoned to provide models of normative sexuality and gender in the schools.

Similar to the Woods and Harbeck study (1992), Blount (2006) states that men and women seeking unconventional gendered positions (male elementary school teachers, female high school principal), often contend with internal resistance, heightened scrutiny,

employment discrimination and unfair hiring practices in relation to a perceived homosexual status, since gender nonconforming positions are often presumed to indicate a gay or lesbian identity. She argues that the school profession has been and remains “highly sex-stratified, gender polarized and hostile to those who desire persons of the same sex or manifest unconventional gender” (p. 18).

The exploration and analysis of gender nonconformity in education (men pursuing traditionally female-associated teaching positions, or females pursuing traditionally male-associated teaching positions) examined in the Blount (2006) study, further supports the need for this study. And the suggestion that fears of a presumed homosexual status related to nontraditional music teaching positions may be affecting the personal and professional life experiences of the participants of this study and efforts toward encouraging females to pursue this non-traditional gender position. Such an investigation may also reveal how stereotypes related to these positions (such as the view that male elementary music teachers are perceived as homosexuals) may affect the lack of progress in recruiting for *all* non-traditional positions, including music-teaching.

Further examination of issues of marginalization also led to the examination of a contextual case study presented by Graves (2009), who provided an in-depth investigation of the political campaign used to purge gay and lesbian educators from the

public schools in the state of Florida between the years 1957 and 1963. This study includes an exploration and analysis of the campaign led by the Johns Committee of the Florida Legislature that included the active pursuit of gay and lesbian school teachers subjecting them to interrogation, firing them from teaching positions, and revoking their professional teaching credentials based solely on their gay or lesbian identity. The study included thick description and detailed excerpts from interviews conducted by the committee, and explicit comments from multiple individuals connected with the campaign.

Graves (2009) revealed in detail the stories of gay and lesbian educators pulled from their classrooms during class periods and interrogated without legal counsel by the members of the Johns Committee, with law enforcement and school administrative officials often present during the proceedings. Teachers were asked graphic questions about their sexual identities and activities and forced to divulge the names of other gay and lesbian teachers working within their schools. The educators were questioned behind closed doors with threats of public exposure used to pry the information from them. Fearing public exposure, physical harm, dismissal from teaching, and loss of teaching credentials, many of the gay and lesbian educators interrogated by the Johns Committee opted to resign and move to a new community for employment rather than face the

potential public humiliation, dismissal and/or permanent revocation of their teaching credentials (Graves, 2009).

Graves (2009) contends the successful campaign to purge gay and lesbian educators from public schools differed from other failed desegregation and anti-communist campaigns waged by the Johns Committee. The detailed campaign comparisons and analysis offered in the study expose the unique aspects of the teaching profession that may have significantly contributed to the development of the oppression and marginalization that continues to plague gay and lesbian educators.

Through the investigation and analysis of the actions of the Johns Committee, Graves (2009) offers evidence that the marginalization of gay and lesbian educators stems from the aspects of the teaching profession that differentiate it from other public employment positions, namely the expected role of the teacher as a model or preservationist of normative sexuality and gender in the schools. Graves (2009) argues that, “since many people equated homosexuality with sin, sickness, and criminal activity, the public assumed the right to purge “perverts from professions that served the public” (p. 139).

A music education teaching position differs from that of a core content area teacher. Music education programs often include trips/tours, performances, and student

involvement for multiple years vs. core content area subjects, which may be semester or yearlong courses. Based upon the findings of this study, consideration of the teaching experiences of lesbian music educators regarding the potential differences from other public employment positions and classroom teachers teaching core content subject areas was included. This study included an examination of the teaching practices and personal and professional life experiences of three lesbian middle and high school band conductors.

Identity Disclosure for Gay and Lesbian Educators

A study by Griffin (1992) revealed that multiple factors influence the decisions of gay and lesbian educators in relation to electing to disclose, or not disclose, a gay or lesbian identity in the school setting. The purpose of the study was to empower participants through collective reflection and action. Data collected for the study included individual open-ended interviews and focus group sessions with 13 closeted (electing to not publicly disclose one's sexual identity) gay and lesbian educators teaching a variety of subject matters in multiple grade levels (Griffin, 1992).

Findings of the study revealed that this sample of gay and lesbian educators believe a strict separation of one's personal and professional lives is a requirement for gays and lesbians in the teaching profession. Fearing intolerance, discrimination, and accusations of recruiting students to a homosexual lifestyle or child-molestation, many gay and

lesbian educators expressed the need to remain closeted in the school and/or community in which they work and reside.

Gay and lesbian educators in the study described themselves as constantly vigilant about protecting their secret identities, with the energy required to maintain this false façade taking a tremendous sustained psychological toll on their physical and emotional well being (Griffin, 1992). She suggests these fears affect relationships with students, colleagues, and parents, creating a sense of isolation for the educator. It is important to note that all of the participants of this study had elected to not disclose their gay or lesbian identity in the school setting; therefore, the study includes the lived experiences of closeted teachers exclusively.

Griffin's (1992) study offers an awareness of how the issues and concerns identified by this sample impacts the personal and professional life experiences of gay and lesbian educators. It is possible that this is also found among gay and lesbian instrumental band conductors who elect not to disclose their sexual identity in school settings due to fears of intolerance, discrimination, and accusations of recruiting students to a homosexual lifestyle or child-molestation, or job loss.

Jackson (2007) offers further insight into the experiences and teaching practices of gay and lesbian educators. She examined how contextual factors promote or prohibit

the construction of a gay or lesbian teacher identity. A constructivist grounded theory approach was utilized in the study that examined how closeted (those having elected to not disclose their sexual identity), and out (or those electing to disclose their sexual identity) gay and lesbian educators negotiate the connection of their gay or lesbian identity to their teaching identity.

Data was collected via a semi-structured interview format, stimulated recall, teaching artifacts and focus group interviews. Participants for the study included nine gay and lesbian K-12 public school educators, six openly gay, two completely closeted and one in the process of coming out (Jackson, 2007).

Findings of the study revealed that decisions related to identity disclosure for gay and lesbian educators, such as electing to disclose one's sexual identity to colleagues, students and the school community, or choosing to remain in the closet, are very personal decisions based upon various immeasurable factors according to Jackson (2007). She noted that "individual feelings of comfort with being gay at school were rooted at all levels- individual, family, school, local community, state, and national-which interacted in complicated ways to facilitate or inhibit gay teacher identity development" (p. 49).

Jackson (2007) argued that the integration of a gay or lesbian identity with a teacher identity (realized through public disclosure of the gay or lesbian identity) directly

influenced the classroom teaching practices of gay and lesbian educators; as the more gay and lesbian educators were able to integrate their full selves into their teaching, the more student-centered their teaching became. The integration of a gay or lesbian identity with a teacher identity through disclosure served to free teachers from monitoring their own behavior in the classroom, allowing them the freedom and opportunity to focus more on student needs; the integration of a gay or lesbian identity with a teacher identity, therefore, can function as a gateway to more effective teaching (Jackson, 2007).

Although the development of a gay or lesbian teacher identity is not the primary focus of this study, the methodology, findings and theory as presented in Jackson's (2007) study were used to inform this study. With few studies that specifically examine the experiences of gay and lesbian educators in which to frame research in music education, studies like those of Jackson (2007) provided valuable insight to the current investigation. For example, the student-centered approach to classroom learning in an instrumental or choral music education classroom can be particularly challenging for educators in those settings, as the instructor usually is leading/rehearsing the ensemble from a podium or in front of the group (a teacher centered approach). Replication of the Jackson study in instrumental music should be considered for future research, as it may offer crucial understanding into identity disclosure issues for gay and lesbian music

educators and to student centered approaches to classroom teaching practices for all educators in the music education discipline.

A study by DeJean (2007) designated as an interpretive qualitative design, also included an examination of the experiences of gay and lesbian educators who have elected to disclose their gay or lesbian identity in the school setting. The stated purpose of this study was to identify what it means for gay and lesbian educators to be out in one's classroom. Research questions included: (a) What are the lived experiences of out gay and lesbian P-12 educators? (b) What are the interconnections between being out, pedagogical beliefs, and pedagogical practices? (c) What factors support gay and lesbian educators to remain out within in their classroom environment (DeJean, p. 59)?

An interpretive methodology was selected for this study of 10 gay and lesbian P-12 educators in the state of California, in order to gain an understanding of the "collective lived experiences of the out gay and lesbian educators from their own vantage point" (p. 60). Research participants were described as co-researchers in the study who offered input and perspective to data collection and analysis throughout the process. This is a common practice within an interpretive research approach (DeJean, 2007).

Participants for the study included five men and five women, six of whom were teaching in Southern California and four in Northern California schools. Individual and

focus group interviews were included in the data collection. Two focus groups were formed with respect to the geographic locations (Northern and Southern), of the participants. Data was collected via individual interviews and focus group sessions. Other data that was analyzed included comparisons between focus group findings.

Five main themes emerged from the analysis: (a) being out means a commitment to radical honesty, (b) a commitment to radical honesty impacts the teacher and his or her students and their classroom community, (c) identity shapes literary philosophies and practices by freeing up energy once consumed in hiding, (d) a school's leadership and geographic location impacts gay and lesbian P-12 educator's quest to participate in radical honesty, and (e) a teacher's identity is an important aspect of the creation of a quality teacher (DeJean, 2007).

DeJean (2007) offers the perspective of the out classroom teacher and the impact of identity disclosure on the teaching experiences, philosophies, and pedagogy of gay and lesbian educators. This study implies that the experiences, philosophies, and pedagogy of out gay and lesbian music educators may differ from those electing to maintain a hidden identity in the school setting. Considerations of the unique aspects of the music education profession such as closer relationships with students and parents due to multiple years of student involvement in a music program may dramatically affect the experiences of gay

and lesbian music educators. How those differences may manifest in a music education classroom is clearly unknown and in need of examination.

Unlike the Jackson (2007) study, which included both closeted and out participants, the DeJean (2007) study limits its scope to the experiences of those gay and lesbian educators who purposely elected to disclose their sexual identity in the school setting. An examination of the interconnections between issues related to disclosure and the pedagogical beliefs and practices of gay and lesbian music educators would inform us of the possible impact of identity disclosure to the experiences of gay and lesbian music educators. The degree to which participants have disclosed their identity in their school setting was therefore also a focus of this study.

In a comprehensive literature review, Ferfolja (2009) suggested that despite the fact that lesbian and gay research has been an active field of inquiry in education for the past two decades, few research studies have specifically examined the professional lives of lesbian educators. Thus, this particular review examined the academic literature that addresses the experiences of lesbian teachers working in western schooling systems. The findings of the review suggest that although all individuals have a right to work in a safe and secure context, lesbian teachers face an on-going trend of silencing, marginalization

and discrimination in the workplace. Issues of harassment and the need to negotiate one's sexuality continue to present a problem for lesbian educators.

In order to further inform this study, literature on the experiences of lesbian participants exclusively was reviewed. Specifically, the goal was for the review to guide the inquiry regarding the personal and professional life experiences and teaching practices of the lesbian middle and high school instrumental band conductors.

Lesbian Educators

In order to gain insight into the experiences of the lesbian instrumental band conductors, studies about the experiences of lesbian educators were reviewed. Specifically, the literature includes: lesbian identity management, the stories of lesbian educators and the teaching practices of lesbian educators.

Identity Management

The Khayatt (1992) study reviewed that included lesbian participants exclusively, utilized an ethnographic design identified as an institutional ethnography. The study utilized the “Sociology for Women” methodology developed by Smith (1979). This methodology requires the researcher to begin the research process from the point of view of women, and include the perspectives and experiences of female participants throughout the research investigation.

Examining the lived experiences of lesbian educators, Khayatt (1992)

investigated how they managed their lesbian identity in the school setting. Data were collected via individual open-ended interviews lasting approximately two hours for each of the 18 participants. All of the women involved in the study taught in the Ontario public school system in rural or urban settings. Participants, obtained through snowball sampling methods ranged in age from 24-61 years. Khayatt (1992) also included the demographic information of participants in relation to their religious affiliations, ethnicity, and type of position held within the school, though suggested that this information was not data to be analyzed.

Findings of the study include themes similar to those found among more recent studies reviewed: (1) an expressed need to manage one's lesbian identity in the school environment, and (2) fears related to identity disclosure such as job loss, harassment, and distant relationships with students and faculty (Khayatt, 1992). Further findings of the study reveal that the physical location of the school, the size of the city, and/or size of the school board along with the lesbian teacher's involvement in the politics of the women's movement influenced the participant's lived experiences as a lesbian educator. Khayatt suggested that the degree to which a woman is involved in feminist politics impacts the

teaching pedagogy, others perceptions of the educator within the school setting, and the career trajectory of the lesbian educator.

Revealing the Stories of Lesbian Educators

The purpose of a study by Singer (1997) was similarly designed to address the absence of research in relation to the lived experiences of lesbian educators, and to “disrupt the silence around lesbian sexuality that pervades the Nova Scotia public school system” (p. 12). Interviews from five participants collected through snowball sampling methods were included in the study. Participants ranged in age from 31-54 years, and taught in a variety of school settings and grade levels in the Nova Scotia public schools, with years of teaching experience ranging from 2-30 years. Individual interviews averaging 90 minutes using an open-ended question format provided data for the study. Singer (1997) identified four broad categories to guide the examination: defining a lesbian identity, the dichotomies of being a lesbian teacher, institutionalized heterosexism and homophobia, and participant’s rationale for involvement in the study.

Singer (1997) suggests that as the aim of theoretical research is focused more on the affirmation and verification of issues of power and oppression (Patton, 2002), the findings of the study are presented as such. In her conclusions, Singer reminds the reader that the purpose of the study and its findings serve to “encourage and motivate others to

take whatever steps necessary to ensure that this province's public schools system will more accurately reflect" the lived experiences of all educators, gay, lesbian, transgendered, bisexual, queer, and straight (p. 134).

The theoretical framework and extensive literature review presenting a view of the historical, societal and cultural conditions that have shaped the classroom teaching practices of lesbian educators from a feminist perspective provided a valuable resource to this study. A goal of the Singer (1997) study was to bring voice to the experiences of the lesbian educators in the Nova Scotia public schools; the lack of research examining the lived experience of lesbian music educators such as myself, suggests that a strong need exists to bring awareness and voice to the experiences of lesbian music teachers. Her study provided a useful reminder that bringing awareness to issues facing lesbian music educators and to disrupting the silence surrounding the experiences of these women educators is necessary.

Stapleton (2004) offered her personal experiences as a lesbian educator in the book *Against a White Sky: A Memoir of Closets and Classrooms*. Through the sharing of painful and enlightening personal stories, Stapleton shared her lived experiences as a lesbian educator in a creative manner; attempting to emotionally connect and inform others of the reality of the lived experiences of lesbian teachers.

Stapleton (2004) shares personal experiences such as this one in the teacher's

lounge:

I sat at a table in the lounge, spread out my lunch and sipped my coffee. I sat a part of, and apart from my fellow teachers and teacher's aides. They had no idea that they took for granted simply talking about a husband, a boyfriend, a wife, or girlfriend. They couldn't have imagined what it felt like not to...It felt like being an imposter. Separate and not really equal. It kept part of my voice silent, and I saw the irony in giving so many others voice, because in this moment, I just felt so damn silenced. (p. 143)

Stapleton (2004) presents her very personal story as a lesbian educator from the beginning of her teaching career through her exit from the profession and return to graduate school. The book reveals her journey of self-discovery and self-acceptance as a lesbian educator, along with an examination of the discrimination and prejudice that resides within the school environment in which she and so many others work. She argues that:

The history of marginalization, coupled with a highly sexualized culture, objectifies LGBT people: we're sometimes stared at, sometimes ignored, sometimes the victims of hate crimes or verbal abuse, and too often considered peripheral community members. LGBT people are certainly one of the last groups in America on which to legitimize, socially and legally, discrimination (p. 182).

The sharing of personal stories is also offered as the goal of a study offered by McKay (2006), whose insights into the lived experiences of lesbian educational leaders are presented through an arts-based approach to research. Based on the collective telling of participant's individual stories, McKay developed a fictional reporting of the lived

experiences of lesbian educational leaders. The story chronicles the life of Toni Morgan, a lesbian educational administrator, from the discovery of her lesbian identity as a teenager, her struggles with identity disclosure, finding self-acceptance, the early stages of a teaching career, to her eventual position as a school administrator. The story includes other characters as well, though the primary story revolves around the experiences of Toni. Although not offered in the form of a purpose statement, the major goal of the study according to McKay (2006) is to “touch readers on a personal and emotional level,” with the hope that readers will be “moved to reflect on their assumptions about gay and lesbian people” (p. 1).

For this study, McKay utilized snowball-sampling procedures that involved participants from various educational settings in Canada. Data was collected via semi-structured interviews during which she aimed to gain insight and understanding to the ways lesbian educational leaders find balance between their personal and professional lives, and the identity management (or coping) strategies used to manage the complexities associated with their positions as lesbian educational leaders (McKay, 2006).

As the study takes the form of a work of fiction, the traditional formats used for reporting research: the stating of the research problem, literature review, methods, findings and conclusion were not marked. The findings of the study of all the participants

were combined to develop the fictional story of Toni Morgan. Although all elements of a typical research study appear to be included, the technical vocabulary normally associated with traditional research presentations is noticeably absent, though refreshingly, not missed.

Hearing the stories of the lived experiences of lesbian administrators, of their experiences teaching in a homophobic school environment, and of the emotional and psychological toll that a lesbian identity takes on their personal and professional life through a fictional representation, offered a powerful and moving alternative approach to future research. An arts-based method of research appears to be an intriguing option for consideration of future research examining the lived experiences of lesbian instrumental music educators.

Teaching Practices

Moore (2007) was to explore how lesbian educators interpret and negotiate the effects of homophobia and heterosexism (discrimination against, insensitivity toward, or prejudicial stereotyping of, homosexuals by heterosexuals) in the school environment, how these negotiations and experiences influence classroom teaching practices, and how lesbian educators address issues related to identity disclosure. This phenomenological

study utilized an interpretive qualitative research methodology while queer theory was used as the theoretical frame for the study.

Snowball and criterion sampling (purposely selected, as each teacher self identifies as a lesbian) were used to obtain the 12 research participants for the study. Participants ranging in age from 23-60 years lived in the Midwest and taught in urban, suburban and rural districts. They were placed into three categories determined by age from youngest to oldest for organizational purposes.

Data collection included the use of Seidman's (1998) interviewing as qualitative research three-stage interview process. Data included three in-depth open-ended interviews for each of the 12 participants over a nine-month period. Interviews were taped, transcribed and analyzed in a cyclical process during the data collection process; member checking was used throughout data collection and analysis. Data analysis from the three-stage interview process resulted in the identification of four themes: (a) negotiating professional and personal relationships with colleagues at school, (b) interactions with students perceived to be gay, (c) strategies used for negotiating existence as a teacher who is lesbian, and (d) dealing with homophobia (Moore, 2007).

Results of the study revealed that age affected the experiences of the participants in each area of the four identified themes. The oldest participants in the study were the

most closeted, and least likely to engage in interactions with gay or lesbian students, to confront homophobia in the school environment, or to build meaningful relationships with colleagues.

Moore (2007) suggested that despite the revealed differences in relation to age, and the shared stories and experiences that were unique to each educator, a common thread was identified among the twelve: “Each recognized that being a lesbian requires one to continually consider the consequences of being a lesbian while at school” (p. 130). Negotiating relationships with students and parents, managing a lesbian identity as a teacher, and dealing with homophobia in the school environment were consistent concerns for the lesbian teachers, with closeted and older participants experiencing these concerns to the largest extent.

Although not the original purpose of the study, the reported difference between experiences of the participants in relation to their age became a consideration. Moore (2007) recommended future studies examine whether lesbian teachers suffer more from internal (personal) homophobia or from institutional homophobia and further investigations into the source of age discrepancy found among the participants in her study.

Gay and Lesbian Music Educators

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) studies have been an active line of inquiry in the fields of education, sociology, musicology and women and gender studies, though in the field of music education, research, theory and practice in this area are noticeably lacking. In a recent *Music Educators Journal*, Bergonzi (2009) suggested that in the past few decades, although significant strides have been made in addressing the experiences of special needs (physically and cognitively impaired) students in music education classrooms and in improving the gender imbalance in music, he argues that the music education profession has failed to address the needs of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) students and teachers.

Bergonzi (2009) argued that heterosexual students and teachers in music education classrooms enjoy significant advantages over LGBT students and teachers, in relation to their classroom experiences, professional environment, and visibility in instructional materials. It is reasonable to assume that lesbian instrumental band conductors may be reluctant to pursue high profile conducting positions at the secondary and collegiate levels due to concerns related to their perceived or identified sexual identity.

In response to the deficiency of LGBTQ research in music education, an emerging interest is occurring within the profession to expose the issues operating within

music education in the areas of research, curriculum, teacher preparation and the musical lives and careers of LGBTQ music students and teachers. The *Establishing Identity: LGBTQ Studies and Music Education* symposium occurred in the spring of 2010 with the purpose of addressing this neglected field of inquiry and to encourage, disseminate, and promote discourse regarding the intersection of LGBTQ issues and music education.

A review of the conference proceedings published in the *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* provides insight into the early exploration of LGBTQ issues in music education. Of the 15 conference summaries and abstracts included in the journal, a total of four involved an examination of gay and lesbian public school music educators. This group of studies, which includes the investigation I conducted and presented at the conference, were reviewed. The studies are presented in alphabetical order by author's last name with the exception of the Furman (2010, 2011) study, which is presented last and includes connections with previous literature reviewed in this chapter.

The stated purpose for the *Establishing Identity: LGBTQ Studies and Music Education* conference (to address this neglected field of inquiry and to encourage, disseminate, and promote discourse regarding the intersection of LGBTQ issues and music education) served as the purpose for Haywood's (2011) study that included an

examination of four public school music educators. Participants were individually interviewed for this qualitative phenomenological case study. Findings of the study included three emerged themes: self-awareness as model for students, LGBTQQA (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and allied) mentoring for students, and student empowerment. She suggested that participants do not indicate a need for self-identification as a gay or lesbian music educator, rather a shared desire to be an example for their students: to be music educators who create spaces where “*all* students- are celebrated and empowered to be the best musicians they can be” (p. 36).

Awareness of how a gay identity impacts teaching experiences was also apparent in a study by Natale-Abramo (2011). Natale-Abramo examined of the role of sexuality in the identity construction of a gay instrumental music teacher. The narrative case study involved a teacher in his twentieth year of teaching band in an upper class suburb of a large urban area. The purpose was to identify particular practices and structures that affect identity construction as instrumental music teachers. Data collection occurred through in-depth interviews, field notes, and audio recordings from classroom observations and journal entries. Findings of the study revealed that the participant felt the need to alter his identity in the workplace, to be a chameleon, shifting in and out of his gay identity in his personal and professional life to perform the expected

heteronormative role of teacher. The participant believed it was necessary to suppress his gay identity in the heteronormative music classroom.

Negotiation of a gay or lesbian identity as a public school instrumental music teacher was also examined by Taylor (2011). The purpose of the qualitative study was to discern how participants negotiated their sexual identity within their personal and professional lives. Participants included eight males and two females at varying stages of career development. Data was collected via individual interviews, focus group, and optional journaling. Two broad themes emerged in the findings of the study: (1) Issues related to negotiating disclosure and negotiating success; and (2) fears related to identity disclosure including potential prejudice, and/or unfounded assumptions of child abuse, which led participants to not disclose their sexual identities to students and parents. With reference to the latter, concerns related to potential parental views revealed itself to be a major contributing factor to disclosure decisions. Most of the participants had elected to disclose their sexual identity to colleagues and expressed enriched relationships as a result.

Study of a Lesbian Music Educator

Similarly, my study (Furman, 2010, 2011) involved an examination of the teaching experiences of a lesbian instrumental band conductor. The purpose of the study

was to examine the lived experience of Pamela, (pseudonym) a lesbian instrumental music educator. The Seidman (2006) interviewing as qualitative research process was used as the design for the study. Data was collected via three, semi-structured interviews, and one (two –hour) classroom observation.

Purposeful sampling methods were used to identify the participant for the study, the focus of which is to develop a deep understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Patton, 2002). The participant for the study, Pamela, was a self-identified lesbian, a previously married woman and mother teaching in multiple school environments including public and university settings in Midwest and Southern states while uncovering her sexual identity (Furman, 2010, 2011). As an accomplished instrumental music educator on the national level, Pamela’s ability to negotiate her lesbian identity with her highly visible professional identity in a largely male dominated profession (high school and university band conducting positions), is particularly insightful.

The data for the study is presented using Seidman’s (2006) participant profile format. The participant profile format allows for Pamela to describe in her words, her professional life in past and current school environments, her identity as a lesbian instrumental music educator in relation to her personal life, and the meanings that

emerged as she described and reflected upon her experiences. A discussion related to Pamela's experiences and the connections to the previously reviewed related research will be presented.

Findings of the study revealed that multiple factors affected the high school and college instrumental band conducting experiences of Pamela as she integrated her discovered lesbian identity with her music teacher identity. She reported (a) feelings of isolation in her personal and professional life, (b) the felt need to maintain a strict separation between her personal and professional life, (c) issues related to identity disclosure and identity management (d) strained relations with colleagues, students and parents, and (e) job loss in relation to her perceived lesbian identity.

Connections

This chapter presented literature in the categories of: gender inequity in band conducting leadership positions and the lack of female role models, an examination of the culture of band conducting, the female conductor as a gendered body and the notion of nontraditional gender roles, the marginalization of gay and lesbian educators, identity disclosure and identity management concerns for gay and lesbian educators, the lived experiences of lesbian educators, and studies examining the experiences of gay and

lesbian music educators This section of the chapter will examine the findings from my study in relation to the past literature.

For example, findings of this study includes statements by Pamela suggesting that gender and identity may have been contributing factors to her expressed feelings of disconnection from others and feelings of loneliness in the instrumental band conducting profession:

So I asked my former high school principal would you ever hire a female band director... because I had always had trouble with this identity thing...I always had trouble and I'd never known any female band directors...I didn't know any...even when I decided I wanted to do it (Furman, 2010, p. 10).

Pamela's career selection in a field largely dominated by males may have contributed to reported feelings of separation and isolation. She noted that upon electing to pursue a career in instrumental music education, she was not aware of any other female instrumental music educators in the profession.

The next section of this chapter examines the findings of the Pamela study in relation to the literature in this chapter including: the gendered body, marginalization, non-traditional gender roles, and teaching practices.

The gendered body.

Pamela can be described as an assertive, confident, and successful instrumental band conductor at the high school and college level, yet despite her national success she struggled with feelings of “otherness” in the male dominated world of band conducting. Statements by Pamela in relation to this period in her life reveal that issues of sexual diversity; others perceptions of her unrealized sexual identity, and to stereotypes and discrimination related to the role and perception of a female instrumental band conductor, may have contributed to her expressed feelings of disconnection from others and feelings of loneliness.

When receiving a photo of her ensemble’s performance at the Midwest Music Conference, Pamela expressed feeling as though she did not quite fit into the picture laid out before her. Standing next to a male guest conductor and male soloist in front of the ensemble in the photo, Pamela stated:

We played at the [state music conference] and I looked at the picture of me standing in front of the band... and I thought...that shouldn’t be me...I don’t look right in front of that band. I was having a crisis of sexuality...of I don’t fit here...I don’t fit in my body...Somehow there is something wrong with me and I’m not fitting...and of course I couldn’t share that with anyone. But somehow I didn’t feel right...I didn’t feel right as a

woman, but I wasn't a man...and I didn't want to be a man...you know...I didn't want that (Furman, 2010, p. 12).

Bartleet (2002) suggestion that the masculine gendered body and its associated behaviors are perceived as the norm on the podium is supported by the findings of the Furman (2010, 2011) study. Pamela's statements suggest that she struggled with her differences from the masculine norm in the instrumental band conducting profession. Dressed in a suit and necktie in the photo taken at the state music conference, Pamela had elected to dress in a manner that deemphasized her female sexuality as Bartleet (2002) suggests is required, and instead decided to represent herself in a masculine gendered appearance. Pamela perceived herself as "other" on the podium, as "not fitting in," and this feeling of "otherness," it can be suggested, is related to issues of gender and sexual diversity and expected norms in instrumental band conducting positions.

Marginalization and non-traditional gender roles.

During her career pursuits, Pamela gained state recognition for her accomplishments through a variety of public performances including the band's performance at the state music conference. Her eventual 'landing' of a college level conducting position solidified the recognition she was experiencing. Yet despite her

career success, her statements reveal that issues related to gender and sexual diversity also affected Pamela's professional relationships with students and colleagues:

I always really cared about my students. I always really enjoyed my students, but I always felt like I had to keep a certain distance...because I was always afraid...that they would get too close and find out...that I was vulnerable, and that I was afraid of some things...and it scared me (Furman, 2010, p.11).

As Pamela described her professional life in past school environments, the expressed need to maintain strict boundaries between herself and her students and the comments related to concerns regarding relationships with colleagues and in her personal life, suggest that despite her unacknowledged lesbian identity for a number of years, Pamela's relationships with others were affected by issues of gender and sexual diversity. Although she could not identify the source of her inner turmoil and isolation from students and colleagues initially, statements made regarding the need to remain distant from her students and colleagues are consistent with the research examining the experiences of gay and lesbian educators.

Research suggests that a strict separation between one's personal and professional life is common among closeted gay and lesbian educators inhibiting their ability to develop relationships with students, colleagues, and parents (Griffin, 1992; Jackson, 2006,

2007; Woods & Harbeck, 1992) and the findings of the Furman (2010, 2011) study would suggest that similar experiences occur within the instrumental band conducting profession.

The Woods and Harbeck (1992) study revealed that gay and lesbian teachers whose subjects are not consistent with traditional gender roles (such as male elementary school educators, or female woodshop teachers), or gender nonconforming teachers, are often vulnerable to homophobic attitudes and hostility. Blount (2006) and Graves (2009) studies suggest that historically and currently, gay and lesbian educators are subjected to marginalization, harassment, discrimination and job loss due to a perceived or disclosed gay or lesbian identity. Pamela quickly and dramatically experienced issues of marginalization, harassment, discrimination and job loss in relation to her perceived lesbian identity in her non-traditional gendered position as a female instrumental band conductor at the college level:

So the rumors are out that I'm a lesbian... I got called in by my department chair who tells me that my contract will not be renewed. I had gotten the highest merit pay raise four years in a row and I took the department from three instrumental music majors to 130 in four years... and I said why...and he wouldn't give me an answer...and I pushed him and finally he said because of the rumors you're a lesbian...we can't have that [here].

So I got fired... for something I struggled to come to terms with myself and something that caused so much pain...you know (Furman, 2010, p. 14-15).

Pamela's undisclosed, though perceived lesbian identity led to her dismissal from her college level band conducting position. It is reasonable to assume that in addition to Pamela, lesbian middle and high school band conductors are probably vulnerable to homophobic attitudes and hostility due to the traditional gendered role of school band conductor positions as male. This study will involve an examination of the experiences of both heterosexual and lesbian participants, as they are collectively impacted by their perceived, disclosed or undisclosed sexual identities and to stereotypes and discrimination related to the role of a female band conductor.

Teaching practices.

The study by Jackson (2007) that examined the experiences of gay and lesbian educators and focused on how they connect their gay identity to their teaching identity revealed that the integration of a gay or lesbian identity with a teacher identity directly influences the classroom teaching practices of gay and lesbian educators. Jackson argued that the more gay and lesbian teachers are able to integrate their full selves into their teaching, the more student-centered their teaching will become. She suggested that an integration of a gay or lesbian identity into a teacher identity serves to free teachers from

monitoring their own behavior in the classroom allowing them the freedom and opportunity to focus on student needs. Therefore, the integration of these two identities (lesbian and teacher) serves as a gateway to more effective teaching.

As Pamela negotiated the integration of her lesbian identity with her teaching identity in a public school setting in her most recent teaching position, she found noticeably different results from past teaching experiences and developed a renewed perspective on instrumental music teaching (Furman, 2010, 2011).

Identity disclosure.

Findings of the study by DeJean (2007) in relation to a gay or lesbian teacher identity suggests that (a) being out means a commitment to radical honesty, (b) a commitment to radical honesty impacts the teacher and his or her students and their classroom community, (c) identity shapes literary philosophies and practices by freeing up energy once consumed in hiding, (d) a school's leadership and geographic location impacts gay and lesbian P-12 educator's quest to participate in radical honesty, and (e) a teacher's identity is an important aspect of the creation of a quality teacher. The Moore (2007) study explored how lesbian educators interpret and negotiate the effects of homophobia and heterosexism (discrimination against, insensitivity toward, or prejudicial stereotyping of, homosexuals by heterosexuals) in the school environment, how these

negotiations and experiences influence classroom teaching practices, and how lesbian educators address issues related to identity disclosure (Moore, 2007).

As a result of the collective lived personal and professional life experiences of Pamela (Furman, 2010, 2011), including discrimination and job loss in relation to her perceived lesbian identity, she eventually expressed a strong desire to live her life openly as a lesbian high school instrumental band conductor, to disclose her sexual orientation and integrate her lesbian identity with her teacher identity:

So I interviewed for the job [a public school in the Midwest] and they offered me the job and I said ok...but I'm not going through this again...you need to know something. I said I'm a lesbian...my partner is also a band director...she'll be coming with me. I said I'm not going to blatantly go around telling everybody I'm gay, but I'm also not going to hide it. She is my partner, she is going to be living with me and I need to know if that's a problem because if it is, I'm not going to take the job (Furman, 2010, p. 17).

In addition, Pamela suggested that the acceptance of her lesbian identity impacted her relationships with students stating: "It has changed the way I feel about my students...it has allowed me to feel closer to my students...and I'm more likely if I see a student struggling to take them aside and say, are you okay? I could have never done that before, because I wasn't doing okay!" (Furman, 2010, p.18).

As a result of disclosure, and the acceptance and integration of her lesbian identity in relation to her personal and professional life, Pamela was able to develop positive relationships with colleagues and students, a balanced personal and professional life, and a renewed perspective on instrumental music education. The disclosure, acceptance, and integration of her lesbian and teacher identities also impacted her approach to classroom teaching, as she suggests that she is now less concerned with her own teaching career and pursuit of musical excellence and more concerned with offering students: important experiences that that are going to last them a lifetime...that they can take with them... that are meaningful, and not superficial and short-lived... more about the big picture and less about the little minutiae things...that there are bigger life lessons and less about little rules and regulations...more about how we look at life... I do more with my kids about whatever you end up being and doing (Furman, 2010, p.19).

The findings of the Furman (2010, 2011) study, suggest that the disclosure, acceptance, and integration of a lesbian identity with a teacher identity likely impact the teaching practices of lesbian instrumental band conductors. This study included an exploration of the experiences of three lesbian instrumental band conductors in order to gain further insight into the affects of a disclosed lesbian identity on the classroom teaching practices of instrumental band conductors.

Examining the gendered and sexually diverse experiences of lesbian instrumental band conductors will provide insight regarding how this group of women was impacted by their perceived, disclosed or undisclosed sexual identities and to stereotypes and discrimination related to the role of a female band conductor. It also served to bring voice to the experiences of these women.

Conclusion

The review of the literature has outlined the research and scholarship that provided the background for this study. Based upon the findings of previous studies this study suggests: gender and sexual diversity may be a contributing factor to the reported gender inequity in band conducting leadership positions; gender and sexual diversity impacts the teaching experiences of female instrumental band conductors; and gender and sexual diversity affects the classroom teaching practices of female instrumental band conductors.

Chapter III includes discussion of the method in which the study was conducted. It includes the, purpose statement and research questions, pilot study, description of the research design, description of the participants, data collection methods, ethical considerations, analysis and interpretation procedures, validity, and the expected contribution of the study.

CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the methods in which this study was conducted. The chapter includes the purpose statement and research questions, pilot study, description of the research design, description of the participants, data collection methods, ethical considerations, analysis and interpretation procedures, and steps taken to enhance the validity of the study.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand the personal and professional life experiences of three lesbian middle and high school instrumental band conductors. The research questions for the study included: (a) How do participants describe their personal and professional life experiences in relation to their gender and sexuality? (b) How do participants describe their instrumental music teaching practices in relation to their gender and sexuality? (c) How do participants describe the impact of their gender and

sexual identity on career decisions in the music education field? and (d) How do participants describe decisions related to identity disclosure and identity management in their personal and professional lives?

Pilot Study

The Furman (2010, 2011) study, as discussed in Chapter II, served to inform the purpose, research questions, and methodology of this study. The pilot study involved an examination of the lived experiences of Pamela, (a self-identified lesbian instrumental band conductor) in an effort to gain an understanding of the phenomenon of being a lesbian instrumental band conductor. This section of Chapter III describes how the pilot study influenced the purpose, research questions and method of this study.

Purpose and Research Questions.

Based on the findings of the pilot study, the current study was expanded to include an examination of the personal and professional life experiences of additional lesbian middle and high school band conductors. Informed by the pilot study, the current study includes lesbian identified participants teaching in middle school and high school settings. Based on the findings of the Furman (2010, 2011) study that suggests that instrumental band teaching practices and career decisions may be affected by gender and sexual identity, the current study included an examination of the teaching practices and

career decisions of participants in relation to their gender (gender identity and gender expression) and sexual identity.

Based on the findings of the pilot study, the research questions for the current study included an examination of the identity disclosure and identity management strategies utilized by the participants to provide insight into the personal and professional life experiences and teaching practices of these instrumental band conductors in relation to identity disclosure and identity management decisions. These pilot study considerations will provide awareness into the personal and professional life experiences of lesbian middle and high school instrumental band conductors and provided insight regarding how gender and sexual diversity may be contributing to gender and sexual identity inequity within instrumental band conducting.

Sampling.

It is important to note that one of three participants for this study was also the participant of the pilot study. The pilot study was conducted with the purpose of gaining an understanding of the phenomenon of being a lesbian instrumental band conductor and included only one participant. Based upon the findings of the pilot study, it became clear that the phenomenon of being a lesbian band conductor was worthy of further investigation. Many questions remained regarding the impact of sexual identity and

gender on the teaching practices of lesbian instrumental music educators, including for the pilot study participant. I realized that Pamela's sexual identity affected her classroom teaching practices and career decisions, though the extent to which her experiences were impacted was still largely unknown. The pilot study, for example didn't include an examination of identity disclosure and identity management strategies and the effects on classroom teaching practices.

In addition, during discussion with Pamela regarding the proposal for the current study she expressed an interest in participating due to her strong desire to bring awareness to others of the challenges faced by LGBTQ educators. Based upon her experiences in the pilot study she felt compelled to further contribute to the research by sharing additional details of her experiences. After much consideration and numerous failed attempts at obtaining participants for the current study, the decision was made to include Pamela in the study. Further details regarding the challenges of securing participants will be included later in this chapter.

During the pilot study, I was introduced to Pamela's partner and learned they work in the same school district and co-teach an instrumental music program. Pamela's partner expressed an interest in participating in the current study. I realized that this added a unique dimension to their experiences. In addition to negotiating a lesbian

identity as instrumental music educators, these two women maintain a personal relationship with one another, both in and out of the classroom. Both women graciously agreed to share their individual and collective stories for the current study.

Methodology.

Patton (2002) suggests that the quality of the information obtained during an interview is largely dependent on the skills of the interviewer (Patton, 2002). Prior experience with the Seidman (2006) interview process during the pilot study, reflection and review of the process from the pilot study, and the continued use of the Seidman three- stage interview process in this study, provided experiences that guided the preparation for the interviews in this study.

The Seidman (2006) three-stage interview process was used due to the structure it provided to the data collection process and the researcher's past experience with this approach. The hermeneutic approach and ideological examination provided participants with the opportunity to reflect and share. This methodology allowed for examination of the shared experience of the phenomenon (being a lesbian instrumental middle or high school band conductor), while also maintaining an idiographic focus (the particular experience for each participant). Further explanation of the IPA methodology and three-stage interview process is included later in this chapter.

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) suggest that researchers interested in the IPA methodology should include consideration of the extent to which they are able to relate to or imagine the experiences of participants. My experiences as a self-identified lesbian instrumental band conductor in middle and high school band settings and my role as the researcher in the pilot study which examined the lived experience of a lesbian instrumental music educator support my belief that I am especially sensitive to the experiences of participants in the socio-cultural context in which the current study was situated. I also understood the sensitizing concepts that my experiences may have brought to the data collection and data analysis. I was attentive to all aspects of the research process, to prior experiences with the phenomenon through personal experiences and through the findings of the pilot study, and how this might/could affect the interview and interpretative processes.

Analysis.

The interviews for the pilot study were transcribed, coded, and categorized by the researcher to determine emergent themes. This study utilized the IPA six-step process (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009), which will be described in the analysis and interpretation section later in this chapter. This data analysis process included a focus on the lived experience of participants and the meaning participants made of their

experiences, and of my interpretation of participant's reflection of their experiences. This process provides an in-depth exploration and analysis of the phenomenon of being a lesbian middle or high school instrumental band conductor. The limitations inherent in the pilot study such as the small sample size, and paucity of previous studies also contributed to design considerations for this study.

Interpretative Phenomenology

Merriam (2009) suggests that all qualitative research includes an emphasis on experience and interpretation and therefore draws from the philosophy of phenomenology.

Phenomenology she suggests is both a philosophy and a type of qualitative research.

"From the philosophy of phenomenology comes a focus on the experience itself and how experiencing something is transformed into consciousness" (Merriam, 2009, p. 24).

Patton (2002) suggests that the term phenomenology can refer to a philosophy (Husserl 1967), an inquiry model (Lincoln, 1990), a major qualitative tradition (Creswell, 1998), and a research method framework (Moustakas, 1994). Variations in form also exist, for example, hermeneutic, heuristic, and transcendental phenomenological frameworks (Moustakas, 1994). The common thread among the variations associated with the term phenomenology is a focus on examining how individuals make sense of experience and

convert experience into consciousness, both individually and as shared meaning (Patton, 2002).

This study used an Interpretative Phenomenological Approach to research as its conceptual framework (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA) to research involves a committed examination of how individuals make sense of their major life experiences (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). IPA research involves phenomenology (how individuals make sense of experience) hermeneutics (the theory of interpretation), and ideology (a focus on the particular), (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The key feature of Interpretative Phenomenological Approach is a focus on the personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context, for individuals who share a particular experience. IPA is concerned with trying to understand what the experience is like from participant's point of view.

This methodology assumes a link between participant's spoken words and their thinking and emotional state (Smith & Osborn 2008). IPA researchers must understand that this link is complicated as individuals may struggle or be reluctant to share what they are thinking and feeling. It is the researcher's task in IPA therefore, to interpret participants mental and emotional state from what they express (Smith & Osborn, 2008).

Being able to relate to or imagine the experiences of participants is therefore, a requirement for researcher's using this approach.

This study adhered to IPA data collection and analysis methods, while utilizing the Seidman's (2006) phenomenological in-depth interview technique for data collection. Multiple approaches to interviewing are acceptable for IPA research as long as the method elicits detailed stories, thoughts and feelings from participants (Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009). IPA studies involve data collection typically in the form of semi-structured, one-on-one interviews: verbatim record or transcription of the data collected, and in-depth analysis procedures.

The purpose of interviewing is “ to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective...to find out what is in and on someone else's mind, to gather their stories” (Patton, 2002, p. 341). Seidman's (2006) phenomenological in-depth interview was the selected data collection technique for this study as this design can be particularly compelling and informative when examining the lives of gay and lesbian educators. Phenomenological interviewing according to Seidman “is a powerful way to gain insight into educational and other important social issues through understanding the experience of the individuals whose lives reflect those issues” (2006, 14). A modified version of Seidman's (2006) interviewing method was used for the study. An open-ended written

survey was used as a replacement for the first interview. The written survey and an explanation of its inclusion are included later in this chapter.

Meyer (2008) attempted to understand teachers' (non) interventions (why teachers failed to intervene) through the use of Seidman's (2006) interviewing method by examining gendered harassment in secondary schools. Avery (2009) included this interview practice in a mixed-methods study aimed at revealing Ohio secondary art teachers' attitudes about sexism and heterosexism to gain an understanding of how these constructs impact education. These studies, among others, provided evidence of the informative potential of this interviewing method for this study.

Research Participants

IPA requires sampling methods that are consistent with the IPA theoretical framework and with qualitative methods in general (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Samples for IPA studies are selected using purposeful sampling methods rather than probability methods. Participants are selected because they can provide a unique insight into a particular phenomenon. IPA studies involve an idiographic approach focused on understanding specific phenomenon in specific contexts, and are conducted with small samples. The focus is on the quality rather than quantity of data. IPA methodology demands a detailed account and concentrated focus on individuals' experiences.

The sample for this study was selected via purposeful sampling methods.

Participants were selected utilizing the researcher's own contacts. Conversation with the pilot study participant, and other colleagues at music education conferences and professional development events led to the identification of the participants for the study.

The decision was made to include the pilot participant and her partner as previously discussed. The participants were selected on the basis that they provided access to the personal and professional life experiences of a lesbian middle or high school band conductor and included women who have worked in middle school or high school band settings in a state in the Midwest for at least the past eight years. The eight plus years of experience was a consideration for participation, as the accumulated years in the music education field would offer insight and in-depth understanding to the phenomenon of being a lesbian middle or high school instrumental band conductor. Participants include: three lesbian female band conductors, all of whom have worked in middle school or high school band settings in a state in the Midwest for at least the past eight years. Participant profiles appear within the findings in Chapters IV-VI.

Data Sources

A modified form of Seidman's (2006) three- stage interview process was utilized for the study. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) suggest that IPA research should include

an interview schedule in order to facilitate comfortable interactions with participants, which in turn, enables them to provide detailed accounts of the experience under examination. Data were collected via a qualitative open-ended survey sent in the month of November for each participant. Individual interviews occurred in the months of December, February, and March. The second interviews for all participants included one-on-one interviews in the participant's homes. The final interview for two of the three participants occurred via Skype due to scheduling limitations. The final interview for the third participant occurred in her home, as with the second interview.

The time between the initial survey and the one-on-one interviews allowed for a preliminary analysis of the data (coding and preliminary identification of themes). Transcriptions, coding and review of identified themes after the second interview informed questions for third interviews. Member checking (review of survey data and transcripts from interview number two) were used to effect participant stimulated recall and reflection for interviews two and three, and to allow the participants to offer input into data analysis and interpretation. Individual interviews were audio-taped at a location selected by participants, with individual tapes stored in the researcher's home for the duration of the study (these will be destroyed upon completion of the study). The researcher has exclusive access to interview audiotapes.

Open-ended Survey

The first interview of the Seidman (2006) three-stage interview process included asking participants to reconstruct their early personal and professional life experiences. The task of the researcher was to place participant's experiences into context by asking them to tell about themselves in the phenomenon up to the present time; this is referred to as the "focused life history" of the participant (p. 17).

Recognizing that researchers may have reasons for exploring alternatives to the structure and process of the phenomenological interviewing methodology, Seidman suggests that "as long as a structure is maintained that allows participants to reconstruct and reflect upon their experience within the context of their lives, alterations to the three-interview structure and the duration and spacing of interviews" can be explored (p. 21).

An open-ended survey was used in place of a one-on-one interview (see Appendix A for the open-ended survey). The survey was used to provide a comfortable introduction to the study for participants given the sensitive nature of this topic, and to gain basic background information (such as race, age, years of teaching experience and a description of the current school setting). The survey was also used to initiate the reflection process for participants, and to inform and guide the interview questions for both the second and third interviews.

The survey consisted of 23 questions. Participants were notified that the open-ended survey would take approximately one hour to complete. The participant responses varied in length. Answers to some questions included a short yes or no, while answers to other questions included lengthy responses. For participant number one, the first interview included a 1071 word response. Participant number two offered more short answer responses with only 696 words included. The third participant provided the longest interview with a total of 1169 words. Every participant answered each question.

Individual Interviews (Interviews Two and Three)

In addition to the initial survey, two individual interviews were administered for each participant. Each of the second interviews took place in the homes of participants in the month of December. The interviews were recorded on an Olympus VN-7000 Digital Voice Recorder. The interviews lasted approximately one hour each.

The goal of the second interview was to examine the phenomenon within the context of the present lived experience of the participant. This interview focused on the reconstruction of details of participants' experiences in the area under investigation. Guided by the responses received in the initial survey, the second interview asked participants to further discuss how gender and sexual diversity impacted if at all, their current relationships with students, faculty, and administration if at all. Participants were

prompted to recount stories from their experiences with others in their personal and professional lives as a means of eliciting details. Questions for the second interview included prompts from their initial survey. For example, here I would ask:

Noting that you wrote in the survey that your gender contributed to your classroom instructional methods, strategies, and approaches, would you share an example of a lesson plan or classroom moment in which considerations of gender were included in your teaching practices?

The final interview for one of the participants was held in her home in the month of February. The interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. Due to scheduling limitations, the final interview for the other two participants, occurred via Skype in the month of March. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes.

In the third and final interview, the participants were asked to reflect on the meanings of their experiences by examining how various factors in their lives have interacted to bring them to their present situation (Seidman, 2006). In addition to facilitating the reflection process, the role of the researcher in IPA studies is to interpret the account provided by participants in order to understand their experience. The researcher “is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them” (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p. 3). To initiate reflection and the meaning making process, and guide the researcher’s interpretation of the experience, questions were developed from responses to the first two interviews such as,

Given what you stated about your early gendered or sexual identity related experiences as a female band conductor and about your teaching experiences currently, how do you understand the ways in which gender and sexual diversity impact your teaching practices?

Ethical Considerations

Data collection was conducted exclusively by the researcher and included: the open-ended survey, individual interviews, and transcripts of all interviews. The researcher's personal computer, a digital voice recorder, and a portable hard drive (to protect against any potential computer glitches), and the audiotapes of individual interviews were used and stored in the researcher's home for the duration of the study. The study materials, including the survey, audio tapes of individual interviews, transcripts of all interviews, and any documents related to data analysis were accessible only to the researcher for the duration of the study, though transcripts of interviews were provided to the individual participants for review upon request.

In accordance with the suggested practices of the University of Michigan Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board (IRB-BehavSci), data will be destroyed at the completion of the study to protect the identity of the participants. To further protect confidentiality, pseudonyms were used for the participants throughout the data collection and analysis process, and the location of the state from which participants reside were not included in any written documentation. Consent forms were distributed to each

participant and data collection from participants did not begin until signed consent was obtained (see Appendix B for the consent form). The proposal has been reviewed by the University of Michigan Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board (IRB-BehavSci) and has been approved and granted exempt status (see Appendix C for the exemption letter) I have completed all training deemed necessary by the University of Michigan to conduct this research study.

Analysis and Interpretation

Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) suggest that IPA data analysis involves:

a set of common processes (e.g. moving from the particular to the shared, and from the descriptive to the interpretative) and principles (e.g., a commitment to an understanding of the participant's point of view, and a psychological focus on personal meaning-making in particular contexts) which are applied flexibly, according to the analytic task (p. 79).

Drawing from a heuristic framework for analysis, IPA follows a six-step process designed to encourage a reflective engagement with participant's stories. The six step process includes: (a) reading and rereading written transcripts; (b) writing initial notes (examination of semantic content and language); (c) developing emergent themes; (d) searching for connections across emergent themes; (e) moving to the next case (repeating the process for each individual participant); and (f) looking for patterns across cases (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

The six-step process for this study included the initial reading of the written

transcripts after all initial interviews had been completed. The initial survey was reviewed to inform the second interview and led to the identification of initial emergent themes. The use of member checks (participant review), provided participants with the opportunity to suggest if they believed the information initially gleaned was considered important, accurate, and of interest to the participants. Participants were offered the transcripts of the previous interview for review and reference to address any concerns or discrepancies. As the researcher, my perspective gained from the data collection process, review of the literature and training in the research process also informed interview content inclusion.

After the transcriptions were completed for the second and third interviews, I read each individual transcript and bracketed the passages that were interesting. Passages were deemed and bracketed interesting based upon participants shared experiences in their personal and professional life in relation to their gender and sexual identities. I reviewed the bracketed passages for each individual participant to glean emergent themes. While reviewing each transcript, I would journal my thoughts in the margins in relation to my interpretation of participant's meaning making process.

Given my personal experiences as a lesbian instrumental band conductor I needed to take into account how my past would impact my bias or prejudice with this

topic and the need to try and approach the transcripts with an open attitude. I also recognized that my experiences provided me with an insider's perspective of the personal and professional life experiences of a lesbian instrumental music educator. The coding process was expansive and included identification of any data that appeared relevant to the study. I understood that at the initial stage of bracketing that I needed to exercise my judgment regarding what was important and recognize that although initial themes had emerged, this was the early stage of interpretation and analysis.

Once this process was complete, the third step in the process occurred. This step included a review of the transcript excerpts to search for connecting threads and patterns for each individual participant (Seidman, 2006). The fourth step in the process involved searching for connections across emergent themes. The themes emerging from this process were considered tentative until the cross-case analysis occurred. See Appendix D for coding samples.

As with the interview process, data analysis in IPA involves a double-hermeneutic approach, a focus on the lived experience of participants and the meaning participants make of their experiences, and the researchers account of what she believes the participants are thinking. Each individual participant was examined according to the first five-steps of the IPA analysis process prior to the final stage, examination and

interpretation of the emergent themes and patterns across cases.

Validity

Following the IPA paradigm for assessing validity, this study utilized Yardley's (2000) criteria for assessing the quality and validity of a study. This process includes four broad principles: sensitivity to context, commitment and rigor, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance (or significance of the study).

Sensitivity to Context

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) suggest that the researcher in an IPA study should consider the extent to which she/he is able to relate to or imagine the experiences. Having experienced the phenomenon of being a lesbian instrumental music educator in middle and high school band settings, as the researcher, I am especially sensitive to the experiences of participants in the socio-cultural context in which this study was situated.

The use of the initial survey helped to establish rapport between the participant and researcher and guided the reflection process in a respectful and reassuring manner around this sensitive topic. The research participants needed to feel safe while sharing the intimate details of their personal and professional lives and the survey helped provide the trust needed to tell their stories in a space (of their choosing) and in a comfortable manner (i.e., their time frame), as opposed to a scheduled one-on-one interview. The use of

member checks to ensure the accuracy of participant's responses and interpretation of their experiences also supported the claim of sensitivity to context.

Commitment and Rigor

Commitment and rigor are determined by the researcher's attentiveness to the IPA approach to data collection, transcription, and analysis. The researcher was attentive to all aspects of the research process and to prior personal experiences with the phenomenon and how this affected the interview and interpretative processes. The study followed the IPA data collection process and utilized the Seidman (2006) three-stage interview design. All interviews were transcribed and coded exclusively by the researcher. These materials, along with the data from the initial survey were then categorized to determine emergent themes. Data collection from the initial contact and maintained correspondence throughout the study extended over a four-month period, also supporting the claims of commitment and rigor to the study.

Transparency and Coherency

The researcher's acknowledgement, and inclusion of previous personal experience with the phenomenon throughout the study supports the claim of transparency. Also, a detailed description of, and adherence to, the IPA research process as evidenced in the written-report further supports transparency. Coherence is provided in the analysis

section of the written-report. The study provides evidence to support claims and arguments and detailed explanations of contradictions or ambiguities.

Organization of Findings

Findings of the study are presented using identified common themes according to the IPA analysis process. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) suggest that IPA data analysis involves moving from the particular to the shared, and from the descriptive to the interpretative. The findings are presented as three individual Chapters (IV-V-VI) as each of these three women were uniquely affected by their gender and sexual identity (the particular) using the identified common themes to demonstrate the shared experience; the phenomenon of being a lesbian instrumental music educator. The descriptive and interpretative aspects of the IPA data analysis process are included within the individual chapters and also in the cross-case analysis in Chapter VII.

The findings are presented based on the years of experience of each participant from least to most. As the data analysis process occurred it became apparent that the amount of data collected from each participant seemed to increase in relation to their years of teaching. The year's of teaching experience for each of the participants is included in the findings chapters.

The research questions for the study are addressed within the findings chapters and in the cross-case analysis in Chapter VII

During the telling of each participants story they share their personal and professional life experiences as lesbian instrumental music educators, describe their teaching practices in relation to their gender and sexuality, explain the impact of their gender and sexual identity on career decisions in the music-teaching field, and discuss identity disclosure and identity management decisions in their personal and professional lives. Several of the common themes identified in the findings chapters correlate directly to the research questions. Chapter VII will include further examination of the findings of the study using cross-case analysis within the context of the related literature. Chapter VIII includes the summary, conclusion, and suggestions for teaching practice and future research.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS: LESLIE'S STORY

The findings of the study will be presented as individual Chapters (IV-VI) for each of the three participants, and a chapter (VII), that will provide a summary of the findings as they relate to the literature. This chapter provides a detailed portrait of participant number one (Leslie). It includes the following themes: background information, teaching positions and responsibilities, gender and instrumental music teaching, sexual identity and instrumental music teaching, don't ask, don't teach, personal and professional life split, strategies used for concealing a lesbian identity, addressing LGBTQ topics and negative comments in the music classroom, and advice to future lesbian music educators. Pseudonyms are used for participants, school districts, colleagues, and geographic locations. Pseudonyms were utilized to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive material offered by participants.

What follows in this chapter are Leslie's experiences as a lesbian instrumental

music educator. The findings are presented using the IPA double-hermeneutic approach which includes the reported lived experience of the participant and the meanings she attached to her experiences along with the researcher's interpretation of the participant's experiences.

Background

I had limited previous contact with Leslie prior to meeting with her for the first one-on one interview. We had met through a mutual friend who had suggested her a potential participant for the study. Our correspondence included a brief introductory phone call explaining the purpose of the study, establishment of Leslie's interest and acceptance of participation in the study, and a few email exchanges, including the initial survey.

Meeting Leslie for the first time in her home, I quickly noticed her quiet demeanor and friendly manner. Our visit occurred during the week on a school day, as Leslie is currently unemployed after having been laid-off from two teaching positions, the position in which she had been teaching for eight years, and an interim teaching position that recently ended. As we settled in to chat for our first one-on-one visit, she shared that her interest in teaching instrumental music stemmed from a family connection "My Dad and brother were both music teachers." Leslie spoke of her love of music and

of playing her instrument, the trombone, and her interest as a music teacher in leading younger people toward a love of music and music making. In describing her interest in becoming an instrumental music educator, it was apparent that Leslie particularly enjoyed the interactions with students and sharing in their musical development. “I love it when the younger student finally gets it and you can see the light bulb going off” (Interview #2).

Teaching Positions and Responsibilities

Working in a small rural district in her first teaching position, Leslie worked with both middle and high school students and said she thoroughly enjoyed teaching both. In addition to teaching middle school instrumental music and assisting with the high school instrumental music program, Leslie was also asked to revive the middle school choral program. She later designed curricula for and taught, sixth grade general music courses, a fine arts course for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders, and a seventh grade computer education/music appreciation course.

Leslie explained how she was devastated to learn she was losing her position in the district after eight years of teaching due to budget cuts. She had enjoyed her time working in the school community and was now forced to seek employment elsewhere. Leslie expressed her appreciation for the support of parents and students who spoke on her behalf at school board meetings in efforts to retain her teaching position in the district

but unfortunately the position was eliminated.

Leslie felt fortunate to quickly obtain an interim high school band position in a larger neighboring suburban school district. The position was close to her current home, so she didn't need to move to a new location and she found that she was excited about the opportunity to work in a larger school and in a more diverse community setting. It was in this second teaching position that Leslie would experience issues of gender inequity and marginalization in relation to her sexual identity as an instrumental music educator.

Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching

When initially asked on the survey how, if at all, gender contributed to Leslie's classroom teaching experiences, she stated that she had never given it much thought and wasn't sure that it had. Later in the survey though, Leslie's responses to questions suggested that gender inequity had affected her experiences as an instrumental music educator.

Leslie revealed how she became aware of unanticipated gender differences in the instrumental music education profession during her first few years of teaching. When asked in the survey to recall any events or experiences (positive or negative), in her music teaching that might have been affected by her gender she offered the following response:

I truly believe that if I were a man I would have received many more 1's, (superior ratings) at Band and Orchestra festival. I experienced several years where my

male colleague took his seventh grade band, played okay, and they received ones (first division/superior ratings). I took the eighth grade band; they played better than the seventh graders and received twos (a lesser rating). I also had a female colleague that received a rating sheet from a festival adjudicator that said if you want a one (first division rating) wear a shorter dress [Interview # 1].

Leslie's comments clearly suggested that gender had affected her instrumental music teaching experiences. The degree to which this was the case was still unknown, though as we continued to interact throughout the study I learned the degree of her gendered experiences. As I was still getting to know Leslie and learning about her as an individual and as an educator, her stories offered insight into her teaching philosophy and approach to the classroom. During the interviews, I came to see that she was a very caring teacher and was committed to educating her students about more than just music and music making.

Leslie shared stories of individual students and her efforts to make connections and offer support. She told a particularly emotional story of a student who would visit her office every morning and silently stand near a wall and repeatedly hit his head against it in an effort to dispel his tics for the day. The student struggled with Tourette's syndrome or Obsessive Compulsive Disorder and found her office to be a safe place in which to prepare himself mentally and physically to face the challenges of the day. She shared how each day he would depart and quietly state, "Have a good day, Ms. T." It was clear after hearing these stories why the parents and students in her first teaching position

attempted to sway the school board and administrators toward finding a way to keep this special teacher employed in the district. She was a teacher who truly cared about her students on a deep and personal level.

In her second instrumental teaching position, an interim position that she hoped would result in a permanent placement Leslie was shocked and confused when facing resistance from members of the community. She explained that despite her previous eight years of successful instrumental music teaching experience, in this new position she was confronted by parents and students who stated directly that “A women can’t be a high school band director” [Interview #2]. She shared that a group of parents and students spoke with school administrators and at school board meetings and verbalized their concerns regarding the hiring of a female to replace the male director.

She had anticipated things being quite different in the new school as the community was larger and more diverse than her previous school community. “I thought Western would be more embracing, more open. I never had anybody question my teaching or character in Middleville but I did right off the bat at Western. So that was very eye opening...I don’t know...confusing” [Interview # 2]. She explained that she was supported by the administration but was laid off from the position after the first year. She stated that despite her success that school year with the bands, she didn’t believe the

situation with the parents would have been any better the second year had she been retained.

During this first one-on-one interview, I questioned Leslie as to why she had initially suggested that she hadn't given much thought as to how gender inequity had affected her teaching experiences. Leslie responded stating:

Maybe at first I looked at it as a negative-that why because of our identities as women and our sexual identity would we teach different? I think I perceived the question at first as a negative and not a positive [Interview # 2].

Further explanation from Leslie and my interpretation of what seemed to be contradictory statements will be included later in this chapter.

I found myself wondering during that interview if Leslie's sexual identity, though not discussed at that point in the interview process, might have also been a contributing factor to the parental and student opposition faced. As she had not shared this painful story during the open-ended survey and was only now electing to reveal it, I was somewhat reluctant to question the role that sexual identity had played in this particular situation at this point and time.

Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching

It wasn't necessary for me to initiate a line of questioning surrounding the possible role that her sexual identity played in the parent and student resistance faced in her most recent position. In the final interview, Leslie shared that in addition to gender,

she believed her sexual identity also contributed to the resistance faced in her latest teaching position. When discussing the role, if any, that sexual identity had on her experiences as an instrumental music educator, Leslie explained that although she had not disclosed her sexual identity in either of the two teaching positions held, she had been affected by her perceived lesbian identity.

I had those parents who didn't like me, and I didn't know why, and then two reasons came out: because of my sexual identity because they jumped to conclusions, and the second, because I was a woman. It was the mothers who were adamant about hating me and I didn't understand that. It was hurtful and confusing to me. They were attacking my character, and they didn't know me, and that was rough [Interview #3].

I appreciated and recognized that the sharing of this story at this stage in the interview process suggested that I had earned Leslie's trust. Discussing these painful and emotional events was not easy for Leslie. The statement regarding the hatred she felt from the mothers revealed how hurtful this experience had been for her. It was clear that this experience had left deep emotional scars. I am grateful for her openness and willingness to share this story with others as a part of this study.

Personal and Professional Life Split

Although she opted not to share her particular experience until the final interview, we did discuss Leslie's sexual identity and how it impacted her teaching experiences in the first one-on-one (second) interview. When asked if she had previously considered

how her sexual identity might impact her teaching career prior to entering the profession, she explained that she had anticipated that her lesbian identity would affect her teaching. She proceeded to share the efforts used to conceal her lesbian identity.

Leslie stated that she knew at the earliest stages of her career that being a lesbian would impact her professional life and continuously struggled to decide how much of her personal life to reveal to students. Although consistently aiming to provide a professional role model to her students, she recognized that students were curious about her as a person, who she was outside of school, her hobbies and interests other than music teaching and making.

Teachers have such differing opinions about how much of your personal life you should share with your students. I had one teacher tell me, "Don't tell them anything," and I'm not comfortable with that. I would say in the past we did this over the weekend; I would say we, not I. And some kids would feel comfortable enough to ask who, and I would say my roommate or my housemate and I. In (Middleville), I was lucky enough to say, I was taught at a young age that you don't live with a boy if you're not married and they were a small homophobic religious community so they were okay with that [Interview #3].

Leslie said that her partner is also a teacher and shared how they opted to live in a neighboring community due to concerns over job loss and discrimination in relation to their sexual identities. She further explained that they decided to maintain separate bedrooms in the home they shared for appearances sake. "We live in a house and have our own bedrooms because we have not come out to very many people because of our

profession. One is just to keep clothes in, but others don't know that" [Interview #2].

In addition to the separate bedrooms kept in the home she shares with her partner, she explained that she also took additional efforts toward remaining closeted. Her choice of attire when teaching, for example, was also a consideration. "I have short hair and feel more comfortable in men's clothes but when I was hired in my last job I tried to dress more feminine. I hated it" [Interview # 2].

Feeling the need to keep her sexual identity hidden from others in her professional life appeared to have taken its toll on Leslie over the nine years she had been teaching. She expressed that the felt need to remain closeted and the constant fear of job loss due to her gender and sexual identity have led to feelings of extreme frustration.

I think I'm feeling it more now. Feeling marginalized, or minimized I guess is the better word. Being laid off and not being able to be on my partner's insurance, if we were a heterosexual couple that wouldn't be a worry. So now as I'm getting older I'm getting more angry, before it was, don't say anything, just keep quiet and we'll be fine, we'll be happy [Interview #3].

It was during the third interview that Leslie revealed that she had felt supported by the administration when her gender and sexual identity were called into question by parents and students. It seemed though that despite the support received, she remained fearful of losing future positions and of harassment should disclosure of her lesbian identity occur. Asked if she had any plans to apply for another instrumental music teaching position she said:

I don't know, I know of one that will be opening and I thought about applying there but I don't know. The parents. I'm not sure I want to go through that again. The character and the yeah...all because of my sexuality and gender, two things that I couldn't help, that I had no choice over. Being a jerk, that I have a choice over. But men are allowed to do that all the time [interview # 3].

The experiences with parents and students in her last position and the struggle to maintain a separate personal and professional persona has led her to the point where she is reconsidering her future career in the profession. I was saddened to hear that this teacher who has such a passion for teaching and for her students is considering permanently leaving the profession due to fear over job discrimination and harassment.

Don't Ask, Don't Teach

Leslie stated that she resented needing to hide her lesbian identity, though never felt comfortable revealing it. "I knew it was something I would need to hide if I wanted a job" [Interview #2]. She expressed that she was constantly concerned about negative repercussions that could result from unelected or elected disclosure of her sexual identity.

Especially with the new tenure laws and how it's getting easier to get rid of teachers. It's becoming easier for administrators to document something you did that could result in a termination. I fear that if someone found out they could easily fabricate something. Schools have discrimination policies but it very rarely says sexual orientation" [Interview #2].

I wondered if she'd ever considered seeking a position where she could disclose her lesbian identity thereby eliminating the need to maintain a separate personal and professional life and asked her about this. She suggested:

I'm not sure I would be open, only because I myself am not comfortable. I worry about hate crimes and that kind of stuff. You hear about that stuff on the news, that's very frightening to me, and you don't know what people will do. I feel like I have a little more control if I keep it undisclosed [Interview # 3].

She also mentioned that she made the difficult decision to disclose her sexual identity to a former parent when her son came out to her, a step she took in an effort to offer support to the parent. She explained that she expressed to the parent a need to keep her identity undisclosed to school and community members and said that the parent understood and respected her position and request to remain closeted.

I asked Leslie if she felt that her lesbian identity had affected her relationships with faculty, students, and community members. She suggested that the only problems she experienced developing and maintaining relationships with parents and students was in her last teaching position where her gender and sexual identity were reportedly an issue for some parents and students. She once again expressed her frustration about being judged in this new community not on her teaching abilities, but on her lesbian identity and gender.

I think it only impacts my relationship with parents and students who assume I am and have a problem with it. I had parents go to the superintendent and complain about me and that was one of the things mentioned. I also had many parents support me and say if I was, it shouldn't make a difference. Once people know you are, they judge you by that identity and that identity only. I want people to judge me by my personality and teaching ability not something I had no control over. I have never experienced any difficulties with colleagues one-on-one [Interview #3].

Leslie said her administrator suggested that her sexual identity was not of concern, but she didn't feel comfortable revealing her identity at that time. It seemed the painful experiences with the challenging parents and students left her fearful despite the efforts of her administrator and other parents to offer their support.

Addressing LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom

Given her strong views on remaining closeted as an instrumental music educator, it was interesting to hear Leslie's responses regarding her decisions on whether or not to discuss LGBTQ topics and/or to address homophobic comments in the classroom. It was clear that she was conflicted in her thoughts regarding the level of appropriateness in discussing the topic with students. She expressed concerns related to addressing the subject along with feelings of personal frustration if electing to not broach the subject.

I don't know, because you don't pull out a composer and say he's a heterosexual but we pull out Scott Joplin and say he was one of the first African Americans to make it on the scene. And they fought civil rights just like the gay people are fighting civil rights, right now. And when you pull out Scott Joplin and say this African American composer, and Michael Jackson, and Ray Charles, and all those others that made it at that time, perhaps it may give some African Americans hope. So when you pull out some gay composers and say...maybe it will give some person who doesn't know, some hope [Interview # 3].

Leslie explained that in the early years of her teaching career, she had not considered speaking about LGBTQ topics in her classroom, nor would she have felt comfortable addressing negative LGBTQ student comments in the classroom (such as a

student saying, that's so gay). Eventually though, she felt the need to address these type of comments and found the courage to speak out against inappropriate remarks.

I don't think it was conscious. I think at some point I just heard a student say it and I thought, "No, that's not okay." And last year was easy because I had a lot of African American students and I could say, "What if you heard a white student say 'that's so black' "That's not okay." If somebody were in my class and were to say the "N" word or something like that, most teachers would jump on that, but most, if they hear a student say, "That's so gay," they would let it slide or pretend they didn't hear it. I think I just became more comfortable with me being the teacher, with me being the point of authority where I could say something. In the beginning I was more reluctant but the longer I taught the more I recognized it doesn't matter.

When you stand up in front of a band and a student says, I thought we couldn't play *Away in a Manger*, and I would say, no, we can play this music, I just can't tell you that you have to believe in this God and this Jesus, but we can play this music. Going through that process and getting more comfortable made me think, okay maybe I can stand up for what I feel is right and not have a backlash [Interview # 3].

Being curious as to what led her to change her views on the appropriateness of addressing LGBTQ topics and addressing homophobic remarks, I asked Leslie to explain her current position.

Because of who I am, and what you see on TV in regards to homosexuals, I didn't want any of my students to feel like they didn't belong in my classroom. I worked hard to make sure no one made fun of others because of their musical ability, their choice of dress, or by the way they looked [Interview #2].

The ability to speak out against anti-gay comments came later in her teaching career and appears to have been directly related to Leslie's years of experience and emerging confidence as a teacher, personal encounters with marginalization and

discrimination, and her self-confidence as a teacher. Leslie noted how she also eventually came to recognize that in addition to feeling personally attacked when such comments were made, that others were likely being offended as well. “I would tell students that you could be offending someone in this classroom. They could have a gay uncle, or aunt, or family member and you may not know it” [Interview #3]. Leslie chose to deflect the attention away from her own sexual identity with her response, yet felt the need to address the student comments, which obviously affected her personally as well.

Given her initial reluctance to consider speaking about LGBTQ topics and/or negative comments in the classroom and current approach of addressing them, I asked Leslie if she felt that the age of the students was a consideration. Having taught in middle school and high school settings, she offered the following response:

I think it’s a little more appropriate at the high school level but I don’t think you should shy away from it at the middle school level because I think that’s where they are trying to find themselves. That’s where they are discovering, and when the hormones kick in and they are seeing the norm and recognizing they don’t fit in, and feeling that something must be wrong with me. So at the middle school level I think it’s important to touch on it for that purpose. At the high school level, I think they are starting to figure it out and starting to break away from that. I had several kids who I had figured out and a close family friend who I had figured out from a young age. He was kind of offended by that, and I said don’t be. I told him that you care in a different way, and you love in a different way [Interview #3].

I found the last statement regarding caring and loving “in a different way” intriguing, and I was curious about what Leslie was implying with this suggestion. When asked to elaborate on her statement, she had this to say:

As a fifth grade boy and comparing him to other fifth grade boys teasing girls and teasing each other and kind of being relentless sometimes. He never did that. He always was compassionate about things, he always cared about other people and cared about his family and never shied away from giving his Mom a hug or any of that stuff. And you hate to say it, but the little feminine quality in a man that he wasn't afraid to show [Interview # 3].

It seemed as though Leslie was suggesting that she believes that gays and lesbians are more compassionate and caring than others, and I wondered if she truly considered this to be true. When asked if she felt those same qualities were present in most gay and lesbian teachers, the different level of caring or compassion, Leslie suggested she did. “Because though it may not just be categorized to just the lesbian and gay, but I think anybody who goes through being demoralized in some kind of a way is more compassionate toward other people” [Interview # 3].

Having experienced marginalization and discrimination in relation to her lesbian identity appears to have affected Leslie on multiple levels: the felt need to maintain a separation between her personal and professional life, decisions related to identity disclosure in her personal and professional life, classroom teaching practices, and awareness of others who may be experiencing similar issues. She clearly found the

strength and courage to speak out against homophobic comments in her classroom and also engaged in conversation about sexual orientation with individuals in her personal life.

Curious as to the degree to which Leslie was willing to speak out against homophobia in the school setting, I asked her whether or not she ever addressed homophobic comments that may have been made by school faculty members or students in the hallway or in the teacher's lounge.

I'm not sure if I remember hearing it in the teacher's lounge or in the hallway and I'm not sure if I would have said anything in the hallway, in a large group of people, or to an adult in the teacher's lounge. I don't know. With adults there is a different level of comfort. I was always taught to respect my elders and the teaching staff was mostly older so...I'm not sure I would have said "Hey, that's not acceptable." I might have though, depending on who it was but I never hung out in the teacher's lounge much [Interview # 3].

When asked why she elected not to be in the teacher's lounge, Leslie explained:

Because I think teachers sometimes are very unprofessional and I've always said teachers make the worst students. And when you get in the teacher's lounge and start talking bad about students and talking bad about parents, it's like... There's a certain level of professionalism. And I get venting, I totally get that, sometimes I come home and vent to someone who doesn't know those people. So I stayed away from the teacher's lounge [Interview # 3].

Leslie had worked in both middle school and high school settings and I wondered if the strained relationships described existed in both settings. When asked to discuss the similarities and differences between working with colleagues in the middle school and high school settings, Leslie suggested:

The middle school staff and the high school staff were totally different and I think that's true in most districts. The high school staff was just like the high school students, the cliques, the popular teachers here, the pretty teachers here, you know. And I never became a part of one of those cliques. They were always nice to me when I would go to professional development and all that.

In the middle school, it was totally different. Everybody liked everybody. One of the high school staff asked why it's different at the middle school and the high school counselor said it's because they accept each other at the middle school for their faults. And I thought, that's true. If I was on the same lunch schedule as teachers in the middle school I might have eaten in the teacher's lounge, but not at the high school [Interview # 3].

Clearly, Leslie felt more accepted by the teachers in the middle school setting.

When asked to discuss what she believed attributed to the differing cultures between the two buildings, she stated:

I think middle school teachers have a pride in teaching middle school students. Middle school students are different and you have to embrace that difference. I think when teachers recognize that they have to embrace the differences in their students they also realize they have to embrace their differences with the adults around them too. And I think that helps with the dynamic of the teaching staff [Interview # 3].

Given her strong statements on this topic, it was evident that Leslie had reflected on the differing experiences she had in the two settings. She seemed to feel more comfortable in the middle school setting with younger students and more like-minded colleagues. She didn't comment on other contextual factors that might have affected her perspective. I wonder if she had considered how other factors such as the leadership style of the administration, the age of the students, her personal comfort level working with middle school students vs. high school students, etc., affected her perspective.

Advice to Future Lesbian Instrumental Music Educators

Although she has only been teaching for nine years, Leslie's experiences offer tremendous insight into the lived experiences of lesbian instrumental music educators.

Based upon her professional experiences, she offered the following words of advice to future lesbian instrumental music educators:

Be confident in who you are and be ready to fight for your program your whole career. You have to be strong to be a woman in this profession. You have to be able to take criticism whether it's warranted or not and be strong enough to overcome it. I think with the students, what might help is saying you need to know how you're going to handle these situations. To say, if you're going to be open, you have to prepare yourself for this and if you're going to try and go into the classroom and try to hide it, you have to be prepared for this. If you're going to try and hide it, what are you going to do to handle the negativity? [Interview # 3].

Leslie's stories and offered words of wisdom are reflective of her nine years of teaching experience in a Midwest state. Although not generalizable to all lesbian instrumental music educators, the underlying message that she learned from her experiences was the understanding that her gender and lesbian identity did make a difference in the lives of her students. Leslie demonstrates why embracing one's individuality can and does make a difference in the lives of students.

Final Thoughts

In the final interview, I asked Leslie to reflect on her responses to some of the questions on the first and second interviews. In particular, I was interested in discussing

her initial responses to the questions asking how, if at all, her gender and lesbian identity contributes to her classroom teaching decisions (such as curricular choices, program organization and repertoire selections). On the initial survey, Leslie stated that she didn't recognize or feel as though her gender or sexual identity had affected her teaching philosophy and classroom teaching practices in instrumental music education. Her responses seemed to tell a different story, especially given her experiences in her latest teaching position. In the final interview of the study, she offered the following reflective statement:

I think I figured out that it was okay. That it was okay that I was a woman and it was okay that because of my sexual identity that I stood up for those things, and that it did in a positive way affect my teaching and affect my classroom management. Because like I said, and I don't think it was the way you worded the question it was just the way I perceived the question, that it was a negative, and it wasn't, it was a positive and it did affect my teaching. Even though I tried so hard personally to keep my sexual identity hidden and not saying anything about it, I probably didn't. Because it affected the way I taught some things and handled some situations. And I thank you for opening my eyes that it made a difference in my teaching. And that it's okay, that it makes a difference. Even though I tried to hide it, that it made a difference [Interview #3].

It became apparent in the final moments of the third interview that this had truly been an emotional reflective process for Leslie. As we shared time together during the one-on-one interviews she came to recognize and accept how her gender and lesbian identity had affected her instrumental teaching practices and philosophies in both positive and negative ways. Although the personal conclusions she reached were not necessarily

the goal of this study, it was certainly touching to recognize the impact the reflective research process and the sharing of her deeply personal stories had on Leslie.

The following chapter shares the story of the second research participant and provides further insight into the lives of lesbian instrumental music educators. The chapter will include the same themes found in Chapter IV with an additional category (community as a contributing factor to classroom teaching) due to the unique experiences of the second participant.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS: NORA'S STORY

This chapter provides a detailed portrait of participant number two (Nora). It includes the following themes: background information, teaching positions and responsibilities, gender and instrumental music teaching, sexual identity and instrumental music teaching, don't ask, don't teach, personal and professional life split, strategies used for concealing a lesbian identity, addressing LGBTQ topics and negative comments in the music classroom, community as a contributing factor to classroom teaching practices, and advice to future lesbian music educators. Pseudonyms were used for the participant, school districts, colleagues, and geographic locations. The pseudonyms were utilized to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive material offered by the participant.

What follows in this chapter are Nora's experiences as a lesbian instrumental music educator. The findings are presented using the IPA double-hermeneutic approach which includes the reported lived experience of the participant and the meanings she

attached to her experiences along with the researcher's interpretation of the participant's experiences.

Background

Given the sensitive nature of the research topic, it was important to develop a comfort level and trust with the participants in order to elicit candid and personal responses to the interview questions. The initial survey was used to begin developing a relationship with participants and to start the reflective process. With participants' two and three, a previously established relationship also proved helpful in establishing a rapport and level of trust prior to the actual one-on-one interviews for the study.

I met Nora through her partner, Kathryn, when we had worked on the pilot study together a year prior to this study. I shared my anticipated research topic for this study with the two of them at that time and they both expressed their interest in the topic and in participating in the study. I was elated to hear that they were both interested in the study. Nora and Kathryn work in the same school district and co-teach the instrumental music program offering a rare and fascinating perspective to the phenomenon addressed in this study. In addition to negotiating a lesbian identity as instrumental music educators and the personal and professional life split often required of gay and lesbian teachers, Nora and Kathryn also have managed to maintain their relationship, both in and out of the

classroom.

I met Nora in her home, the home that she shares with her partner. I was eager to speak with her about her experiences based upon her responses to the initial survey. It was apparent from her answers to the survey that Nora's experiences teaching in the South for over half of her 24 years of teaching could offer possible regional differences of the experiences of a lesbian instrumental music educators. In addition to her teaching experiences being affected by her gender and sexual identity, Nora also shared how existing stereotypes of Southern females also seemed to impact her teaching experiences. She explained that she felt being a Southerner affected her experiences as an instrumental music educator more so than her gender.

Teaching Positions and Responsibilities

Nora has held three different instrumental music-teaching positions, in two Southern states prior to moving to the Midwest where she has been teaching for the past 11 years. Her current position is director of bands at a rural middle school, one of two middle schools in the district. Nora revealed her preference for working with younger students saying: "I enjoy the middle school age group and mentality, they're still teachable and funny, most days," [Interview # 1]. She described the school population at around 1400 students in a community of approximately 20,000 and said that tourism and

agriculture are considered the major industries in the county.

Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching

When initially asked on the initial survey if gender had contributed to Nora's experiences as an instrumental music educator, she simply stated no. However, her responses to the gender related questions on the initial survey described instances where Nora experienced gender inequity as an instrumental music educator. The discrepancy between her initial response to the first gender question and other contradictory comments in the survey were noted and revisited in the one-on-one interviews.

Starting her teaching career in the South, Nora explained that she never felt particularly out of place as a female band director, though did report that there were few other women in the profession at the time (the late 80's to early 90's). When asked if she felt that females experiences as instrumental music educators were different than for males in the profession, she commented:

Sometimes, yea, because you're still talking about the South, and you're still talking about good ol' boys. And among band directors, every once in awhile you would come up against one of the old guys that you probably had to prove yourself to a little bit more. And I was denied a job in the South for being a female. I don't think a straight male would have had the same experiences that I had. I don't know; I'm not a male.

I think it's like most professions, it started out as a male dominated profession and so we've kind of had to break through the glass ceiling and in some situations I think we make men's jobs harder in band directing because I think a lot of us are better at it than men, for the same reason that they [male band directors] are glad

to have female percussionists, because they're more methodical, more meticulous, more caring [Interview # 2].

Nora suggested that gender had not affected her instrumental teaching career in the initial survey, yet stated that she had been denied a teaching position in the South due to her gender. Curious as to how she didn't hear the same discrepancy I heard, I asked Nora to elaborate on being "passed over" for a teaching position due to her gender. I asked her if it was verbalized to her, that her gender was the reason she didn't receive the teaching position. She offered the following response:

No...no, but he just asked as a woman how are you going to handle some big buck who plays the tuba who comes up and says he's not coming to the concert? And I said, "What does that have to do with me being a female?" There were a few scenarios given to me and prefaced with "As a woman how are you going to handle this?" But I got that in the Midwest, too. I didn't get that job because I was a woman and the principal was a male chauvinist pig [Interview # 2].

When asked what led her to that assumption that she didn't receive that particular position due to the prejudiced view of that specific administrator, Nora suggested:

Because it was just the way he handled me. It was just... he kind of never took me seriously and then turned around and hired a male and has subsequently been through four or five bad male band directors. They haven't been able to get a good teacher over there [Interview # 2].

Despite being denied an employment opportunity in the South due to her gender and enduring a similar line of questioning from administrators in the Midwest, Nora remained steadfast in her belief that gender had not affected her career. She did acknowledge that she recognized that males would have likely not been subjected to the

same line of questioning in interview situations, though felt being a Southerner affected her experiences as an instrumental music educator more than her gender. The stories she shared from her early career experiences would suggest her Southern roots did play a role along with gender.

The first time around, I was an assistant band director and I don't think the superintendent was ready for a female band director. I don't think he thought that I was ready for the job, or that he was ready to have kind of a strong female who didn't wear a dress everyday or didn't go to church every Sunday. I don't think he was ready for that.

When I started my career I looked so young, and then I was a woman. So I think I had to prove myself, that I'm the real deal, that I can handle this. (In my current position), the band director left after 23 years and took a position in the same building as a principal, and I felt a lot of watchful eyes. I think they wanted to see if I was going to measure up. But again, I followed another female, so they were used to having a female band director. So I didn't have to fight that. But I did have to fight being a southerner in this position.

My first position up here was working for (a music company), and giving change to an elderly couple one day, the man leaned to the wife and said, "That's a Southerner, so you'll need to count that to make sure it's correct." So there's still that stigma of Southerners don't know anything and they're ignorant. But up here, quite a few parents thought my accent was kind of quaint, they liked hearing it and stuff like that...until I was delivering bad news to them like your kid is a jerk in my class and they are not practicing. And then it kind of spun; they kind of turned it on me, and kind of started treating me like I was a dumb southerner. Kind of like, well you don't know. I'm not going to take you seriously because you're from the South. And we had a trumpet teacher here in the area that would tell his students that they didn't need to listen to me because I was a Southerner and didn't know anything. And then Kathryn, (her partner that also works in the same district) had a long conversation with him about it. I thought more being a Southerner more so than a female or a lesbian [Interview # 2].

Nora provided several examples of the ways in which gender and her Southern roots impacted her teaching experiences despite her initial suggestion otherwise. It also seemed that she had given quite a bit of consideration to the status of women in the instrumental music profession. Her experience over the years appears to have led to a strong position regarding the differences between male and female instrumental music educators. She expressed her candid and strong beliefs stating:

In my view, women have become much more of a strong hold in this profession. And I think that the women who can persevere for ten or twelve years make better band directors than men because we are more detail oriented and that's what it takes to have a good band, you have to take care of the details. I think women are more sensitive; we make better musicians, and make better band directors [Interview # 3].

Nora's strong view on women in the profession provided potential insight into the perceived discrepancies regarding her experiences with gender inequity. When she suggests that women who can persevere for a number of years become better directors than males in the profession, I couldn't help but wonder if she felt that proving oneself as a woman is a normal or standard requirement for female instrumental music educators as opposed to males. Although every young teacher is required to demonstrate his or her ability to perform the job requirements, I would agree with Nora that most young males entering the profession are not asked how they intend to "handle some big buck on the tuba." Obviously Nora has been able to prove that she could manage the requirements of

the position and has reached a point in her career that she no longer feels as though her gender affects her teaching experiences based upon her description of her current teaching position.

Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching

As with the gender related questions, in the initial survey, Nora stated that she didn't feel as though her sexual identity had impacted her classroom teaching decisions. And similar to her responses to the gender questions, the stories she shared revealed the ways in which her sexual identity did appear to affect her experiences as an instrumental music educator. Curious as to what stage in her career Nora acknowledged her lesbian identity, she explained that although she was aware of her sexual identity when entering the profession, she had not reached a point of personal acceptance of her lesbian identity.

I wasn't ready to admit it to the world. I didn't think about it in advance because I had just gotten married. So I was dealing with, "My god, what have I gotten myself into?" You know, with being married to a man. Because you don't want to be, you don't want to be a lesbian. Until you're ready to accept it and live that way, so you know, you try and deny it the whole time [Interview # 2].

Eventually Nora did accept her lesbian identity. She shared that when she considered how it would impact her teaching career she recalled thinking "there are a lot of gays in music so I'll be able to hide under that, under my subject matter, and that can be an excuse too" [Interview # 2]. She quickly realized that hiding her lesbian identity would be a challenge.

That was right on the verge of when I met Kathryn and was coming out. And the administrators were calling me into the office and saying "We know you had a known lesbian move into your home with you," and I remember going- "Really." I said that to my superintendent, and said, "You know if we're going to continue to have this conversation I'm going to have to get a lawyer." I said, "Who lives in my house is none of your business" [Interview # 2].

It seemed rather apparent given this particular story that her sexual identity affected her experiences as a lesbian instrumental music educator. This appears to be a defining moment for Nora as she came to recognize that she despite her decision to not disclose her lesbian identity her sexual identity would affect her teaching career.

Don't Ask, Don't Teach

The decision to disclose one's sexual identity in the school setting is a difficult one. Fears of job loss, discrimination, and strained relationships with colleagues, students, and community members are all considerations when making that decision. In her current position in the Midwest, Nora elected to disclose her lesbian identity to administrators and colleagues in her current school setting. She offered the following explanation regarding the degree of her disclosure status currently:

To colleagues, yes, because I'm proud of who I am and don't want to live a closeted life style; also, I trust my colleagues. Students, no, they're not ready to handle that information. Parents no, but most figure it out and are extremely accepting and ok with it [Interview # 1].

I was curious as to how Nora perceived the affect of her identity disclosure on her relationships with colleagues, students and parents. Noting that she had elected to not

disclose her identity to students and parents yet opted to share her identity with colleagues, I asked her to discuss how she believed her elected out status impacted relationships with colleagues.

I think it has brought them closer to me. It's almost like they are kind of like, "Hey, we want to prove to you that we have nothing against gays and lesbians. So we want to be friends with you and we want to get to know you." I am much more affirming, open, and tolerant as an out lesbian to my colleagues. And in return they are more comfortable around me and are more likely to ask my opinion on gay and lesbian issues [Interview # 2].

The decision to disclose her lesbian identity to colleagues certainly could have led to the termination of her position, given that the state in which she currently teaches doesn't have a discrimination law that protects the rights of gays and lesbians. Nora explained that the community had recently passed an ordinance that stated gays and lesbians can't be denied or fired from employment or denied or kicked out of housing based on their sexual orientation. Despite the ordinance, Nora still remains closeted to the students and parents in the community. When asked if she had considered how the disclosure of her lesbian identity might affect her relationships with students and parents she offered the following statement:

I worry about when they figure it out how it will affect our relationship in the classroom? So far I don't think it has. For some of them I worry that if they find out and because of their up bringing that they may start to act differently toward us. All it takes is one disgruntled parent who wants to make my lesbianism an issue because their child didn't make first chair or lost a challenge, or just got a

bad grade. People will turn on a dime. I'm afraid of losing my job, but I wouldn't change who I am or what I believe to keep it either [Interview # 2].

During the course of the three interviews, it seemed that Nora was still considering the ways in which in her lesbian identity affected her classroom teaching practices. At times she would make statements that seemed somewhat contradictory from one another, though it seemed as though it was not so much that she was denying how her sexual identity impacted her career as much as it was processing the information and considering the role her sexual identity played in her teaching decisions. When asked whether she had/would ever consider disclosing her sexual identity to students, or if she felt it was appropriate to discuss her identity with students, initially she suggested:

I don't know that they're quite ready. I think some of them would be ready developmentally, but for some I think it would be uncomfortable. I don't even know that a lot of them would know what a real lesbian is. They have probably heard the word, or the word gay with a negative connotation to it. So they might just be afraid of it because they just don't know exactly what it means. I think with high school students it would be a positive thing overall, eighth graders I think it would be majority positive thing and seventh graders it would be a 50/50 positive thing and sixth graders I mentioned before. I think they would think I'm not sure what that is, but I'm pretty sure would be afraid of it [Interview # 2].

Later in the same interview as we continued to discuss identity disclosure and students, Nora appeared to reconsider her earlier statement and suggested that eventually she may elect to disclose her identity to students and offered an explanation as to why:

I think I could and I think before I retire, I think it will be part of my role. Possibly. I think we have a pretty forward thinking administration and they have embraced us. I think I feel safe here and that at some point that with the amount of

suicides that take place across our country at the middle school level, that at some point we are going to need to start having a lot more sobering conversations [Interview # 2].

The decision for Nora to disclose her sexual identity is complex. She states that she thinks she will “possibly” elect to disclose her lesbian identity before she retires. It was clear from her statement that her reason for considering disclosure of her sexual identity is not for personal gain but rather a felt need to educate students and to provide a role model for struggling gay and lesbian students. Her response led me to question whether Nora considered herself as role model to lesbian and gay students. Although somewhat reluctant to admit that she is, she said:

Yes (begrudgingly replies and laughs). But I am less comfortable with someone knowing than others are- when forced into that position. I think that at the high school you have more of the opportunity, I think that I’m a role model for my middle school students in being, helping them become good people, good citizens, good musicians, good students. I think I’m a hypocrite sometimes too, when I preach at them so much and I know that when I was their age I wasn’t doing anything that I’m preaching about to them to do now [Interview # 2].

Given her current choice to not disclose her lesbian identity to students, I asked Nora if she believed her nondisclosure affected her classroom teaching practices. Based upon her previous suggestion in the second interview that she felt students were not quite ready at the middle school to handle this information, her response to this particular question in the third interview offered another example of how the interviews seemed to be guiding her thought process on this topic. She offered the following response:

It's not a subject that comes up very much at the middle school so therefore I don't think it impacts my teaching. And to be honest with you, I don't know that if the kids knew that I was gay that it would make a big difference. I think if I were to come right out and declare it and make a big announcement that it would put some in an awkward situation. If I made a big deal out of it, I think it would. But if they just found out and maybe asked me and I just affirmed it, yes, I think that wouldn't be a big deal [Interview # 3].

Personal and Professional Life Split

Given the responses to the questions regarding decisions related to identity disclosure, I asked Nora to share what events and experiences she feels have impacted her teaching in relation to her lesbian identity (positive and negative).

Fortunately, I've grown up teaching during a time when being gay has enjoyed a much more accepted place in society and education. Being out in education has brought a lot of positive, talented, open-minded people into my life. Unfortunately, I have experienced several encounters with administrators at schools in the South who were not as open-minded and accepting as my administrators here in (Orchard City). Comments like, "Did you know you've had a known lesbian move into your home?" And "(Ms. Withers), you need to remember that there is a moral turpitude clause in your contract," and last but not least, "You had too many cars parked in your driveway over the weekend, you must be up to no good" [Interview # 2].

Nora's teaching experiences it appears have been affected both negatively and positively by her lesbian identity. The experiences in the South seem dramatically different in some respects from those in the Midwest. In her current position in the Midwest she has been able to disclose her lesbian identity to her colleagues. Yet she describes the felt need to continue to maintain a strict separation between her personal and professional life with students and parents. She explained that when teaching in the

South she was constantly fearful of any repercussions that could result from her sexual identity becoming known.

I could have been fired on the spot at any minute. I signed a contract, but it's a year-to-year contract and it has a moral turpitude clause in it where if they don't like your morals and your behavior, boom, you could be fired on the spot [Interview # 2].

Knowing that she could be terminated immediately for revealing her personal relationship with Kathryn, Nora explained that she still doesn't feel comfortable having a photo of her partner on her desk and is reluctant to share aspects of her personal life with students. She noted that if students ask questions about her personal life, such as "Are you married," and "What did you do this weekend"? etc., that she will offer a quick and simple response and redirect the question to the student. "Thank you for asking, a friend and I went to the beach then canoeing this weekend; what did you do?" [Interview # 2].

Nora said that through the years she has become practiced at hiding her personal life from students.

I think I'm conditioned to the point where I say... I don't mention Kathryn's name unless I can tie it into a platonic description to what we've done. I never discuss specifics about my personal life, i.e.: I don't mention Kathryn's name casually in my after school activities. I refer to my partner as (Ms. Smith), the high school director. If a student has a request or question for Kathryn about high school stuff, I have the student contact her; I don't get in the middle. When Kathryn and I are together at a school event, we never touch, we keep a professional proximity to each other. I usually stand with my hands behind my back [Interview # 1].

Although some might suggest that it is inappropriate for a teacher to discuss any aspect of their personal lives with students, it is not uncommon for students to ask their teachers if they are married, if they have any children, etc. Careful as to how much she can reveal without raising suspicion about her sexual identity, Nora explained how she handles this type of questioning from students:

I tell them that I am divorced and that I don't have any children because I have 250 children that I see all year long every day, and that I don't have time for children of my own because I'm busy raising all of you. Every now and then, even now I get, again when I'm telling a parent- your child is misbehaving; well, you don't know, you don't have children of your own, you don't know what it's like to raise them. And I don't have children of my own, but I've been working with kids for 23 years and I'm pretty good at this. Actually I'm probably more skilled at it than you are. Don't you wish you could say something like that?
(Laughs) [Interview # 2].

Strategies for Concealing A Lesbian Identity

Given her suggestion that she has become adept at hiding her sexual identity from students and parents, I asked Nora what other specific strategies she used to conceal her sexual identity from students and parents in her current position and/or in the South. She explained that particularly in the early stages of her career in the South, she would intentionally alter her appearance in order to appear more feminine so as to not bring attention to her identity.

Well, I wore a lot of dresses. One of my colleagues just asked me the other day, "When did you start wearing a tuxedo to conduct in?" and I said, "Well when I

moved up here, because it would not have been accepted in the South." And so I dressed the role. I dressed as I was expected to dress [Interview # 2].

Addressing LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom

In the second interview, Nora suggested that she felt it would be inappropriate to discuss her sexual identity with students. It is not uncommon to hear homophobic slurs or comments in middle school classrooms and I wondered how she negotiated these types of comments with her students given her strict views on separation between her personal and professional life so I asked her how whether or not she ever discussed LGBTQ topics in her classroom or if she addressed negative LGBTQ comments. It was interesting to hear Nora's responses regarding decisions whether or not to discuss LGBTQ topics and/or addressing negative LGBTQ comments in the classroom. She explained that it was a difficult decision and one she tried to avoid.

I try not to address them (laughs). It very rarely ever does come up. If it does come up then you certainly don't shuffle it under the rug. I try to address it in a professional manner and in a manner I know the school district would want me to address it in like; "Hey, there's nothing wrong with being gay." If it's a situation where a kid has outed himself to say, "There is nothing wrong with it and let's continue that conversation outside of class."

Very early on I would have run from the room if it had come up. I probably would have ignored it and then went to a counselor and said "There are some issues with this child and they need someone to talk with." I think early on I would have been afraid to address it and thought if I did that it would have gotten me into trouble. I think definitely 99% of the places in the South when I first started teaching that you would have gotten into trouble for talking about that one-on-one with a student. And I think there are pockets in the Midwest where you would have gotten into trouble. I've been surprised how kind of conservative

that there are conservative areas in (the Midwest). And I would have thought that this was the big land of progressive forward thinking people [Interview # 3].

I was curious as to why she had changed her view; why in the early stages of her career she would have avoided the topic and felt it was inappropriate to discuss sexual identity with students, yet has now elected to address comments when they arise. Nora offered the following explanation regarding the change from early in her career to now in terms of comfort level and her views on the appropriateness of addressing LGBTQ topics or negative comments.

It bothered me that I didn't feel comfortable enough going there, using the word sexual orientation in talking with the kids. We just recently passed an equality ordinance in our city. A lesbian or gay can't be denied employment, you can't be fired from your job if they find out you're a lesbian and you can't be denied housing for that. So your school is a direct representation of your school's morays and values. So if our community has that on the books as a value and a moray, then our school has to embrace it [Interview # 2].

Nora's response suggested that multiple factors contributed to her decision: self-acceptance of her sexual identity, school policy and expectations, and the community ordinance. When asked how and when she addresses LGBTQ topics and or negative comments in the classroom, Nora stated:

I talk about it, we talk about it especially on the days that I know they've been to some kind of a program or they've been to a teaching session about it. And I just talk to the kids about it and tell them it is wrong at all levels. That "It is wrong to say anything hurtful to anyone else whether it is religion, or whether it's skin color, or whether it's sexual orientation, or whether it's you live in a nice house and somebody else doesn't." I talk to them real frank about it. I just tell them it's

wrong, "You're wrong and if you're growing up in a family and in a household that promotes that kind of behavior it's wrong" [Interview # 2].

In the final interview, Nora remembered that she had initially stated that she thought it was inappropriate to talk with younger students (6th grade) about sexual orientation, yet had later revealed that the topic was discussed periodically. I assumed it was due to the perceived need to not disclose her identity vs. addressing comments as they come up in class. As she had suggested that she has considered possibly disclosing her identity in the future I was curious about her statement.

Well, if it comes up, I'll talk about it. I'll address whatever context they're using the word in. I've had some real passionate conversations with them about the South and how slaves were oppressed and brought up; and I said, "Being a homosexual, there is no difference." I talked about the Holocaust and being Jewish and talked about how people were oppressed and where it took them. We have had some conversations with those kids and stopped them from using the word gay and told them there is nothing wrong with someone being gay. I have even said to a kid that "If you have a problem with me saying that, you are welcome to bring your parents in and we can discuss it, but in this classroom we are not going to use that word in that context because gay is not a derogatory term."

Having our (student teacher) around has helped. She is so socially conscious. Her ears are so socially tuned to it. Sometimes I would have been more apt to ignore it if I heard it and she's like a magnet. She's drawn to it, she could hear it go on among a group of 17 kids in the next room and be like a piranha. "Did I just hear you say gay, did I just hear them say gay," and why, and what's wrong with that. So she has taken it on a lot more and she has taught us a lot. She has kind of tuned us in more to that. Some of them were a little prickly for me but she's very good about it. She makes the point and then saves the kid's feelings. Kind of softens the conversation at the very end, so she's very good about correcting them, pointing out why it's wrong [Interview # 3].

I found it interesting that a young student teacher appeared to feel more comfortable addressing homophobic comments in the instrumental music classroom than a veteran lesbian educator. Nora revealed that the student teacher was also a lesbian and seemed committed from the first days of her student teaching experience to address negative LGBTQ comments in and out of the classroom. It was apparent that the openness from the student teacher had affected Nora's own classroom approach. After witnessing the student teacher engage in conversation with students surrounding LGBTQ topics and comments, she appears to have found the courage to address them as well. I asked Nora what had prevented her from addressing comments early on and she said "My own upbringing and experiences from the South and not being sure it was okay. Not knowing that other teachers were saying the same things" [Interview # 3].

The courage to speak out against inappropriate remarks came later in her career. The community ordinance and modeling offered by the student teacher appears to have provided the impetus to address negative comments. In the final interview, I asked Nora to share her thoughts on how her teaching has changed over the years as she has integrated her lesbian identity into her teaching.

I think we all sort of start out teaching who we think we're supposed to be and how we think we're supposed to teach; but then once you start to develop your own style and start to get comfortable in your own classroom, I think more and more the real you starts to come out in that classroom. And I think you're a better

teacher because of it, because your students know when you're trying to fake something and be something you're not. So I think you're a better teacher when you can bring down all of those barriers and all those walls and say this is who I am, and this is the subject I have to teach, and this is how I teach it, and let's go [Interview # 3].

Community as Contributing Factor to Classroom Teaching

It appears that the culmination of her years in the instrumental music classroom and the acceptance of her gender and sexual identity have contributed to Nora's classroom teaching practices and beliefs. Recognizing how she also frequently mentioned the differences between teaching in the South and in the Midwest and how it impacted her teaching, I asked Nora to share her views on how the community in which you teach affects your classroom-teaching experiences.

I think that's something you definitely need to be sensitive to and aware of; the community in which you live and in which you teach. I don't think it needs to dictate every move you make. It meant a lot when the Orchard City community passed the ordinance in town that stated gays and lesbians can't be denied or fired from employment or denied or kicked out of housing based on their sexual orientation. So because our community voted that ordinance in, that says a lot about our community and their willingness to welcome gays and lesbians. In that respect, our community gave us a nod and gave us their respect [Interview #3].

Nora currently works in a school setting that offers bullying and harassment programs to students and support to lesbian and gay teachers and students. Nora shared that her principal has spoken at faculty meetings and parent programs and stated that the school has a discrimination policy that says harassment won't be tolerated in relation to religion or sexual orientation. Nora explained that this level of support and acceptance

had affected her views on her role as a teacher and member of the community. Knowing she has the support of the administration and acceptance from the community appears to have encouraged Nora to speak about these topics in her classroom. It seems to have provided her with the needed support and freedom to address these topics and comments without fear of job loss, harassment, and discrimination.

Advice to Future Lesbian Music Educators

Nora experienced the profession in Midwest and Southern states under varying circumstances, both personally and professionally. I asked her thoughts on advice to future lesbian instrumental educators. Given her 24 years of instrumental music teaching experience, she provided the following suggestions:

The same advice I would give to a straight woman or man pursuing a career in instrumental music: Know your kids' names, be kind and respectful to secretaries and custodians, know your craft, practice, practice, practice, chop wood/carry water (work your ass off on the fundamentals), march in more parades, smile more, come up for air, don't stay at the band room past 5pm, love what you do and do what you love, life is too short to spend one second with someone you don't enjoy, and be true to yourself [Interview # 1].

Initially, Nora suggested that her advice to lesbian instrumental music educators would be the same as for a heterosexual. In the second interview I explained to Nora that I was interested in discussing her initial response to this question and wondered if she had additional thoughts at this stage of the interview process. Nora reviewed her previous response and in contrast to her initial answer, offered advice that seemed specifically

aimed at future lesbian music educators.

Our student teacher came out to our students the other day and I told her she did the right thing, if you felt comfortable with it. You know, I guess I have taught long enough to know that it could backfire on her, on all of us. All it takes is one parent to shake the box, but I think our school district would be what is the problem, there is no problem here so pick another subject to pick on this teacher about.

Um, the last one, be true to yourself. That one says it all. I would say do your research on the school district you are getting yourself into also. You don't want to go into the backwoods of Mississippi or Arkansas and expect to be a lesbian in the open and have an easy way of it. Do your research on it and if you choose to go to the backwoods of Arkansas then know what you're getting yourself into.

I think this is the new generation of gay and lesbian teachers and that they need to not be afraid in their interviews and be prepared to lose some jobs because of it. But they need to not be afraid to say I'm gay or I am a lesbian, this is who I am and hire me because of it or don't hire me because of it [Interview # 2].

Nora's response included consideration for the geographic location of the school, and the recommendation of disclosing one's sexual identity prior to accepting a position.

The updated version of her advice seemed to include a direct link to the stories and events shared during the course of the interview. Nora appears to have decided that given her past experiences, she understood that she was able to offer guidance to future lesbian instrumental music educators, guidance based upon her own personal experiences. Nora explained how she had just recently offered her support to her student teacher's decision to disclose her lesbian identity to students.

Final Thoughts

In the final interview Nora was asked to share her thoughts on her participation in the study. She had previously mentioned that her participation had been a positive experience for her, and I wondered in what ways she had found it to be beneficial. She quickly suggested that she recognized the required need to reflect on her past teaching experiences in order to answer the questions during the study and found this to be a valuable exercise.

Well, I think it has certainly made me think about things, about why I do things, why and how I do a lot of the things that I do, the evolution of me coming from the South, and going through having a known lesbian move in with me, having been through all of that [Interview #3].

Noting that reflection was a requirement of her participation in the study, I wondered if Nora had come to any conclusions when considering her past teaching experiences. I wondered if she was now able to recognize how her gender and sexual identity had affected her classroom teaching practices. I asked what meanings she was taking away from this experience and she offered the following:

How do I make sense of it? I don't know there is sense to be made of all of it because you know, we just kind of go through our day trying to do the best job we can and trying to be the best people that we can. I don't know that we are any different from anyone else who is going through a career that would be considered the underdog or have obstacles to overcome.

I don't know that I've spent a lot of time trying to make sense out of it, it's just something that sense comes out of it because I know that at the end of everyday I've worked as hard as I can to do the best job that I can and be the best person I can be. So that's the sense of it. I just do the best I can everyday and let everything else happen because it's going to happen anyway [Interview # 3].

I would suggest that Nora had given this more thought than what she suggested. Her experiences as a Southern lesbian instrumental music educator clearly affected her classroom teaching experiences, her stories and sound advice reflective of her 24 years of instrumental music teaching in Southern and Midwestern states provided insight into the issues facing lesbian instrumental music educators. Nora shared her very personal journey of lesbian self-acceptance and its affect on her personal and professional life experiences. Her story reveals how an educator's self-awareness and personal growth impact not only the individual, but others as well. She has learned to accept her position as a role model for gay and lesbian students, colleagues and future lesbian music educators. In addition, Nora has expressed her commitment to being an outstanding instrumental music educator and appears to be recognizing that she is making meaningful contributions to the profession in other ways as well.

The following chapter will offer the final story from the third research participant and offers additional insight into the lives of lesbian instrumental music educators. The chapter will include the similar themes to those found in Chapters IV and V. The chapter will also include additional categories based upon the unique experiences of the third participant.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS: KATHRYN'S STORY

This chapter provides a detailed portrait of participant number three (Kathryn). It includes the following themes: background information, teaching positions and responsibilities, gender and instrumental music teaching, sexual identity and instrumental music teaching, don't ask, don't teach, personal and professional life split, strategies used for concealing a lesbian identity, addressing LGBTQ topics and negative comments in the music classroom, and advice to future lesbian music educators. A pseudonym was used for the participant, school districts, colleagues, and geographic locations. The pseudonyms were utilized to maintain the confidentiality of sensitive material offered by the participant.

What follows in this chapter are Kathryn's experiences as a lesbian instrumental music educator. The findings are presented using the IPA double-hermeneutic approach which includes the reported lived experience of the participant and the meanings she

attached to her experiences along with the researcher's interpretation of the participant's experiences.

Background

Having known Kathryn years ago and recently re-establishing a relationship with her while working on the pilot study, I was welcomed into her home with a warm smile and a hug when I arrived for the first one-on-one interview. We had lost contact for about 15 years prior to working on the pilot study together and it was great to reconnect with her again. I appreciated that she was interested in also participating in this study. I knew her 36 years of teaching experience and relationship with Nora (participant # 2) would provide an interesting story and rich data for the study.

Findings of the pilot study with Kathryn revealed that multiple factors affected her high school and college instrumental band conducting experiences as she integrated her discovered lesbian identity with her music teacher identity: (a) feelings of isolation in her personal and professional life, (b) the felt need to maintain a strict separation between her personal and professional life, (c) issues related to identity disclosure and identity management (d) strained relations with colleagues, students and parents, and (e) job loss in relation to her perceived lesbian identity.

The findings of the pilot study offered a view of the lived experience of a lesbian instrumental music educator but failed to include consideration of how Pamela's instrumental music teaching practices may be affected by her gender and sexual identity. Although Pamela discussed identity disclosure and identity management in the pilot study, she was not asked to describe the decisions made in relation to identity disclosure and identity management in her current teaching position. I was aware that some of what was shared in the pilot study may resurface in this study and made a concerted effort to create a new line of questioning to invoke responses specifically related to the purpose of this study.

Teaching Positions and Responsibilities

Kathryn started her instrumental music teaching career in the Midwest, moved to the South for a number of years, and eventually returned to the Midwest and her current teaching position. She has held several different positions in her years of teaching music including: middle school and high school choir (3 years), middle school and high school band (23 years), and university band and orchestra (12 years). Her current position is a director of bands in a rural Midwest high school. The school has approximately 1800 students in grades 9-12 and is one of three high schools with tourism and agriculture the major industries in the county.

Kathryn stated that she recognized from an early age that she was interested in a career in instrumental music education despite the fact that few women were in the profession at the time. She said she wasn't aware of any female band directors when she initially became interested in teaching music (in the late 1960's), and she remembers wondering at the time if anyone would hire her once she completed her degree. Kathryn said that she expressed her interest in the profession to her high school principal at the time and asked if he would ever consider hiring a female instrumental music teacher. She explained that the principal responded, "I'd hire you, and eight years later he did!"

[Interview # 1].

Kathryn suggested that she recognized at some point in her career that she preferred working with older students over middle school age students.

My personality is much more suited to working with high school students. I'm not the most patient person, so middle school students are a bit of a challenge for me. I enjoy working and making music with older students. I wanted to work on more mature literature as well [Interview #1].

Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching

Knowing that few women were in the instrumental music education profession when she first started her career, it was somewhat surprising to read Kathryn's answers on the initial survey. In response to the question asking what events and experiences in

her instrumental music career were positively or negatively affected by her gender she offered the following statement:

The only issue that I had (negative) with my gender was my own insecurity. I was raised with a clear message that women are inferior to men and that the only option for women was to become a secretary or a stay at home mother. Women didn't go to college; it was a waste of time. Even though I was a pretty stubborn, feisty, confident kid/person on the outside, I don't think anyone realized how insecure I was about my gender and where I fit in until I realized that I was a lesbian [Interview # 1].

Kathryn's response suggests that she internalized feelings of inequality or inferiority in the early stages of her teaching career. In the second interview, I asked Kathryn if she felt that males in the profession had similar experiences to hers during the early years of her career. She explained that over the years she has had others complain to her that men and women are treated differently in the profession and that women are at a disadvantage compared to men. She now recognizes that this was likely true and admits that: "I never wanted to believe that to be true because I fought my way through all that" [Interview # 2]. She explained that the success and recognition she experienced in the early stages of her career led her to believe other women weren't as accomplished in the profession, which led to the differential treatment, not gender inequity.

In the third interview, I asked Kathryn to share her views on the how the profession has changed for women over the years, if at all. She offered the following

response, which appeared to suggest that she had given the topic further consideration since the initial survey.

I think there are more women, and women are being accepted more. You find many more women junior high and high school band directors. I go to festival and I see it all the time. What hasn't changed is that university glass ceiling and it's hard to know what that's about because you'd think the universities would be more progressive, leading the way in hiring women. I also think there are some built in walls for women-family. I think there are more women in the profession and they are more accepted in the profession. Now there are still little country schools with less enlightened principals that are still doubtful. Around here we still have a few places that have some backward ideas. In general I would say it has improved, although I would also say that it's geographical. I think there are parts of the country where yes, it has opened up, but it's still a little tougher [Interview # 3].

Kathryn suggested in the initial survey that her own gender insecurity affected her early teaching experiences. I wondered in what ways she felt that gender impacted her teaching and asked during the second interview about gender and its affect on her interactions with students.

In one of my early positions I started to realize that I wasn't treating people very well. I remember one of my students coming to me and asking, "Are we not doing very well?" I said, "You are doing great," and he said, "So you know, you never smile and you never tell us that." That was a huge moment. I realized that I felt that I wasn't good enough, that I wasn't cutting it as a female. I was dealing with that within myself. I felt so much compassion for my students but I couldn't reach out, I didn't know how. I'm a much better teacher now, but it was in my early career that I learned from my students that I needed to be more compassionate [Interview # 2].

Kathryn's views on gender and the instrumental teaching profession suggest that she didn't want to acknowledge that her female status might have affected her teaching

experiences. Perhaps some will suggest that it didn't, but what is apparent is that strained relationships with students and personal feelings of inadequacy were present in the early stages of her career and were caused by feelings of self-doubt or self-worth in relation to her gender. Given her statement regarding how she was raised to believe that women were inferior to men, one can certainly understand why, when entering a profession largely dominated by men, she felt as she did.

Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching

Kathryn shared that she wasn't aware of her lesbian identity when entering the teaching profession so she hadn't considered how her sexual identity would affect her career until she recognized and accepted that she was a lesbian. When asked to share what events and experiences in her teaching career were affected by her lesbian identity, she explained that she had been fired from a university level director of bands position in the South. She held the position for four years and was fired due to her perceived lesbian identity. Kathryn expressed her devastation at being released from the position when confronted about her sexual identity, and explained that at the time she considered quitting instrumental music teaching all together. Kathryn accepted and embraced her lesbian identity after the painful termination from her university position and decided to continue teaching in the profession and to return to public school teaching.

It was apparent after learning about her job loss that Kathryn's teaching career had been affected negatively by her lesbian identity. It was also clear from the initial survey, she had considered how the acceptance of her lesbian identity affected her classroom teaching practices at this later stage of her career. She initially responded stating "NO," that her lesbian identity doesn't contribute to classroom instructional methods, strategies and approaches, then added the following statement:

My life experiences directly influence the way that I talk to my students in class. I think that it's important to speak to life values, i.e. the way we treat each other; that the words we choose, the attitudes that we embrace, and the goals that we have for our individual lives are extremely important. The way that I was treated has definitely influenced my approach to teaching. I want to have a positive impact on my student's attitudes toward others, especially gays and lesbians. So I guess my answer should really be YES! [Interview # 1].

Clearly, Kathryn considered how the integration of her lesbian identity affected her classroom instructional methods, strategies, and approaches. She had reported that her insecurities in relation to her gender had affected her ability to relate to and focus on student needs in the early stages of her career. In contrast, the job loss, discrimination, and acceptance of her lesbian identity appears to have led Kathryn to consider how her lesbian identity contributes to classroom instructional methods, strategies and approaches, and impacts classroom-teaching decisions. She seems to have turned the negative experience of job loss into a positive change to her approach to teaching and awareness of student needs. She reveals how her life-experiences as a lesbian instrumental educator

affect her classroom teaching decisions and shares how she also considers potential problems with parents when making classroom teaching decisions:

If I want to talk about composers like Leonard Bernstein or Aaron Copland I don't necessarily say that they were gay but there have been times that I have and times that I haven't with different years and different groups. Because I think a parent could come back and say you're promoting gay musicians, you're promoting the gay agenda. Out of fear.

And you never know regardless of how well you know the parents, if they're going to turn on you. And I had it happen just about a month ago... If a parent were to question me and say why is it important to know that those composers were gay I would say that it is important for those students who might be gay to know that there is a future and that there are people out there who are important to our society and culture that have been gay and have succeeded [Interview # 2].

In her early teaching career Kathryn didn't want to consider how gender might be affecting her classroom teaching and relationships with students. When speaking about her sexual identity, the years of teaching experience, job loss, discrimination, and acceptance of her lesbian identity, Kathryn acknowledged and embraced the relationship between her sexual identity and classroom teaching experiences.

When asked to describe the differences between her early teaching career and her current approach to teaching instrumental music, she explained that early in her career she addressed racial comments when they were made in the classroom, especially when teaching in the South. She said that at that time she wasn't aware of her sexual identity and didn't recall hearing anti-gay or lesbian comments from students or colleagues and

wasn't sure if she would have addressed them if she heard them spoken. She explained that she currently addresses homophobic comments in addition to racial comments made by students and/or colleagues. When asked what led her to her current position as compared to the early stages of her career, she said:

Fear of losing my job and not knowing what I should do, it was a different time. As times have changed, the hate groups have gotten louder; they are out there more. But it was almost worse 20 years ago when it was almost never talked about. When there were never any shows on television; that you didn't know what to do or who to trust.

A former teacher and coach of mine, in a conversation just before she died, we talked about it, and she lived her life in such fear that she wouldn't eat lunch with the rest of the teachers. She ate with the custodians. Her life was so secretive and miserable in my eyes, and then the minute she retired and has plans to live with her partner, who was a lawyer, she gets colon cancer and dies. And I said to myself, "I'm not going to live that way." It was a big lesson for me. It was "Oh my God," the implications of this in other people's minds. And it was a combination of that and complete elation that I finally found where I fit [Interview # 2].

Witnessing a friend's death and recognizing how living a closeted existence had impacted that friend over the years seemed to upset Kathryn to the point that she wanted a different life for herself and her students. The job loss she experienced due to her acknowledged lesbian identity likely also contributed to her present views. She explained that she has recognized how the focus of her teaching has changed since she became aware of and accepted her lesbian identity. "I wanted to help kids more. I became

more compassionate” [Interview # 2]. She said she didn’t consciously change the focus of her teaching, yet acknowledged:

I think I could feel it in the way I looked at my students. And that I have no idea where they’re coming from or what’s going on with them; if he’s gay and being rejected by his family, and what can I do to help him [Interview # 2].

Don’t Ask, Don’t Teach

Recognizing the degree to which she was aware of how her sexual identity affected her experiences as a lesbian instrumental music educator, I wondered how Kathryn handled decisions related to identity disclosure in her current public school teaching position. The decision to disclose one’s sexual identity in the school setting is often a difficult one with multiple considerations. She explained how the job loss due to her undisclosed lesbian identity while teaching in the South contributed to her decision to disclose her lesbian identity to administrators and colleagues in her current position. She revealed how in the interview process for her current position she disclosed her lesbian identity:

I said, I am a lesbian and I will be bringing my partner with me and I need to know if that’s okay, because if it’s not okay then I want to know now, and I’m not going to take the job [Interview # 2]

This was clearly a bold and courageous decision. Kathryn shared that the interview committee responded by suggesting that this would not be a problem and she was hired for the position. Kathryn said she wanted to avoid additional potential job loss

as a result of her perceived lesbian identity and felt the need to be transparent in the interview. It seems the devastating job loss in relation to her lesbian identity led Kathryn to seek out a position in which she would be able to integrate her accepted lesbian identity into her teaching.

Kathryn said she told the interview committee that she would not announce her lesbian identity to students. When I asked Kathryn to explain her decision regarding identity disclosure with students she said

There have been a few parents of students, and students who have graduated that I've had conversations with, but I've never really come out to them. They usually come out to me first. I think by the way they refer to my partner that most of them know but I don't discuss it outright with them. It's still a little too dangerous. It only takes one obnoxious parent or community member to try to make things miserable for me [Interview # 1].

When asked if she felt as though her sexual identity had impacted her relationships with students and community members, she suggested she feels as though she has always had great relationships with her students, though recognizes a need to be careful. With a smile, she commented that her lesbian identity affects relationships “Only because I am a bit cautious around students and parents.....but not as cautious as my partner would like me to be!!!” [Interview # 1]. Kathryn appears to be suggesting her relationship with Nora affects identity disclosure decisions with students and parents.

Given that Nora also works in the same school district, it is understandable that this is a

decision they would discuss and make together as the decision to disclose a lesbian identity could affect them both. Kathryn said some students and parents are aware they live together although they don't announce it out of fear.

She said that she believes that negative repercussions could result from unelected or elected disclosure of her lesbian identity with parents and students, though Kathryn wishes that she were able to. When asked if she felt that electing to disclose her identity would affect her connections with students, Kathryn suggested she believed it would have a positive impact and would be well received by students.

They would probably be very open and friendly and I think accepting and I think they would share stories about people they know, relatives in their families. I think it would be the greatest thing in the world and I wish that would happen all over the country. Because I think that when you're well established and you were to make that statement; I think it's freeing to everybody. When the silence is broken people can breathe. I think the students would feel, "she trusts us enough to share. "I'm thinking about my last day of class telling my students and having that discussion [Interview # 3].

Kathryn has obviously given considerable thought to her lesbian identity in relation to her instrumental music teaching. She explained that despite her own personal comfort level with her lesbian identity and the support and encouragement she receives from colleagues, she recognizes how the disclosure of her identity to students could have a negative impact on her career. She noted how she is considering speaking to students on her last day of teaching when she retires. Given her suggestion that she hopes to

eventually disclose her identity to students, I asked what effect not being able to disclose her sexual identity has on Kathryn at this stage of her career and why she would prefer to disclose her identity rather than stay closeted and protected.

Well, I have to be careful about everything I say. It's constantly on my mind when I'm talking to students. I constantly filter everything before I say it, and that affects your teaching in a negative way, not in terms of your teaching in a negative way, but negative on me, negative on additional stress; always having to be aware and on guard against everything you say. You kind of fall into, I live a secret life kind of thing. I do live a secret life, but I'm not incredibly uptight about it the way I think some people would be. Because I'm at the end of my career, close to retirement, and it's a little like go to hell insurance. I'm this close to retirement and I have the respect of the community and the administrators that I've kind of become, what are you going to do? [Interview # 3].

Personal and Professional Life Split

Having to constantly monitor your words and actions such as Kathryn suggested she is required to do, is a common issue for gay and lesbian educators. Efforts to conceal one's identity from colleagues, students and parents due to fears of job loss, discrimination, and marginalization, can be stressful and consuming. Kathryn stated that although colleagues and administrators are aware of her lesbian identity, she is still reluctant to share that information with students and parents. She explained that she is not able to have a picture of Nora in her office and is extremely cautious in front of students and parents when speaking to her partner.

I don't mention Nora, except in professional ways. If I were straight I could say, I rolled over and told my husband last night that...you know. My guard is never

down entirely, not ever, because of that. I make no reference to living with my partner. With teaching there is a guard up. I have my guard up [Interview # 2].

Given her suggestion that she feels compelled to monitor her words and actions in the school setting, I asked Kathryn if there were other strategies she used to conceal her lesbian identity. She explained that she has always struggled with her appearance, in particular, her wardrobe.

What I should wear has been the biggest issue of teaching of my life. I struggle with that everyday. The way I am built, I don't fit well into women's slacks but for years I would wear them and struggle and be uncomfortable because of fear that I would be viewed as very manly. So gender was contributing to my experiences. When I taught at (the university) I decided to wear a tux and it became a big deal. A lot of people were talking about the fact that I was wearing a tuxedo when I conducted. And I had women come forward and say, "Good for you" [Interview # 2].

It seems that throughout her career Kathryn has also felt compelled to monitor her wardrobe and appearance in the school setting. Noting that she reported her sexual identity is constantly on her mind when talking to students, it is likely that her wardrobe decisions have also affected her teaching in a negative way. The monitoring of words and actions and fear of being "viewed as manly" has obviously been difficult for Kathryn over the years.

Addressing LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom

Kathryn acknowledged and revealed throughout the interviews the multiple ways in which her sexual identity has impacted her experiences as a lesbian instrumental music

educator: job loss, decisions related to identity disclosure with administrators, colleagues, students, and parents, classroom teaching decisions, the monitoring of words and actions with students and parents and wardrobe choices. Kathryn also suggested a noticeable difference in her teaching in relation to her lesbian identity when considering whether or not to discuss LGBTQ topics and/or addressing negative LGBTQ comments in the classroom.

It's been a huge change, a huge change. I never even thought about it before and actually I don't remember hearing about it before. I think the more the LGBT movement has come to the fore, with the movement and the television shows, then there have been more comments on the part of kids. Because it becomes more in their minds, it's there they see it more. So they use it and become more abusive with it.

I don't remember hearing it as much when I was younger. Hearing "You fag," "You're so gay." So the longer I taught the more I heard it. And now, I don't know that I would have done anything then because I don't remember hearing or having the instance, but now, I immediately stop it. Immediately will stop a kid in the hall and explain it to them, how hurtful that is and do they not understand. The difference now is huge, absolutely huge. As a matter of fact, I confronted a teacher in the staff dining room in my first year here about it [Interview # 3].

Noting that she suggested that in previous years of teaching, she didn't recall hearing anti-gay slurs or comments, I asked her to what she attributes the changes in the school climate over the years. She shared that she feels the anti-bullying campaigns and media attention currently occurring is contributing to the heightened level of the anti-gay sentiment.

I think it makes it worse before it gets better. I think when you bring something like that to the attention, you're always going to have people attacking it. I would relate it in some ways to the civil rights movement, that before it was quiet, it was horrible, it was abusive, but it was quiet. It was under the radar, it was just natural for people, particularly in the South, but everywhere, to be racist. But the minute it started becoming more in the news, in people's minds, and in their eyes, and the African Americans and the whites began fighting more for civil rights, that's when more of the hate came out. And it got worse before it got better. [Interview # 3].

Kathryn also shared that she learned during her time teaching in the South the importance and necessity of speaking out against racial comments and slurs in the classroom.

I always addressed the racial issues that have come up numerous times over the years. There were racial comments made early on, in my first few months of teaching in (the south). And I said, "Don't you ever say anything like that in this class. This classroom is a race free neutral zone, and you will never speak to others that way in this classroom." And I had several African-American students thank me after, and who opened up to me and would tell me things. They would share with me that people would say things; and the white kids think it's a joke. And I addressed an African-American student and said, "Did you think that comment was funny?" and he said "No, and where I come from on the east coast, you would have been stabbed for saying something like that." It was really intense for a while. But at that time I didn't know that I was gay [Interview # 2].

Given the last statement, it seemed that these early racial experiences contributed to her comfort level addressing homophobic comments in her present school setting. I asked Kathryn to share how and when she discusses LGBTQ topics and/ or addresses homophobic comments in her classroom.

At the high school level, I don't deny it, I don't bring it up; it's not an appropriate discussion in band class. But there are individual kids, one in particular right now,

who, well they all know, and I think most of the parents do too. I don't freely talk about it to the kids [Interview # 2].

It was interesting to hear Kathryn suggest that she didn't feel it was appropriate to discuss LGBTQ topics in her instrumental music classroom. There were several instances during the interviews that she shared examples of situations in which she addressed bullying, harassment and anti-gay slurs when they arose. She shared the following examples of when she elected to address LGBTQ comments with students.

I have to march my band down the street past the house of this guy who holds up "God hates fags," and anti-gay messages in town. And you know my drum major looked at me and I said, "It's okay, it's okay." They know.

Another example is my advisory class, these are not necessarily band kids, it is a random group of kids, and you have them for four years, and you have the opportunity to bond with them, kind of provide the adult role model for them. Well, the other day we were talking about the groups in the school and about bullying because we saw some short videos on bullying. And I said, "What groups in this school do you feel are picked on?" I said "This is one of the greatest schools I've ever taught at because there are no fights, I know there is bullying, but people get along, the artists and musicians are very well-respected." The first thing out of their mouths was the theatre kids, then the sluts; the next group would be those who are not in sports. What were not included were gay students. So I said "You know guys, there is an elephant in the room that we're all avoiding. Do you know what it is?" And one student said, he didn't know how to say it but he said "Gays, uh, homosexuals." I said, "You know, you're right, gays and homosexuals." And I said "Which group gets the most abuse and is most picked on?" and they said "The theater students because everyone assumes they are gay."

I'm not afraid to bring that up. Absolutely, and I do, and in band we've had discussions. Because I heard that one student had called another student a fag or I have heard students say, oh, that is so gay. So when I hear that, I address those things [Interview # 2].

Kathryn shared that she was accustomed to addressing negative racial comments in her classroom and also provided examples of times that she spoke out against homophobia and bullying. I wondered if she ever experienced concern about addressing these types of comments. She stated that she doesn't feel LGBTQ topics are an appropriate discussion for band class yet provided examples of when she addressed homophobic comments and discussed bullying and harassment. She explained her previous statements suggesting:

It's a little scary depending on who it is. I've had lots of graduates come out to me and I have no reservations with that. I have one current student whose parents are big music supporters that I liked a lot, who I thought were very liberal, who told this girl that if she comes out to her brother or anybody else that she's cut-off. Car is taken away, no college education. So I talk to her a lot and try to support her and I want to talk to her mother and say "Look at me, let's talk."

I think kids don't come to me necessarily and I think that's mostly out of respect for me and the situation. Whenever the conversation comes up and the use of the gay word or fag, the group gets very silent, very respectful, and very attentive [Interview # 2].

I asked Kathryn to share what led her to the point where she feels comfortable addressing these issues with students. She explained that it had occurred over time as her comfort level with her own sexual identity had developed.

You learn and you change and you grow, hopefully. And you become more sensitive and aware of the way you address your students. So hopefully you grow as you go through life. And I strongly believe that all of my experiences have been so different from your typical high school band director who stays in the same job for 36 years. They are different because I taught in so many different places under so many different circumstances, different levels of racism

and homophobia. That you learn and you grow. How I would have responded 30 years ago? I just don't know [Interview # 3].

Having experienced the profession in various situations and under such vastly different circumstances, societal and personal, Kathryn shared her views regarding preparing future music teachers. She expressed her philosophy of teaching and why she feels it is important to discuss LGBTQ topics with current undergraduate music education students to prepare them to meet the varying needs of students today.

Our reason for teaching is that we want to guide young kids. Everybody's not white and straight. And how do you deal with the African-American students who come from totally different backgrounds, where is your compassion? When these kids are coming into your classrooms, these sixty kids from sixty different homes, with sixty different things going on in their minds, I think, I'm gay, he's African-American, she moved here from Singapore. You have to take a different approach to that. And this whole issue of fairness is total bullshit; fairness in that you have to treat everyone the same. If you treat everyone the same you are doing a huge injustice to kids. You have to treat everyone as though they're an individual whose coming to you with a whole laundry basket full of baggage, and the way you approach those kids in class [Interview # 2].

The thoughts shared provided insight into the way that her lesbian identity has impacted her instrumental music teaching in both positive and negative ways. Kathryn endured job loss, discrimination, insecurity regarding her wardrobe choices, and stress due to the felt need to monitor her words and actions in relation to her sexual identity. She has also recognized and acknowledged that she provides a positive role model to students who may be struggling with an LGBTQ identity and can offer support to LGBTQ students and faculty members by addressing LGBTQ topics and negative

comments in the school setting. It was clear from her comments that the culmination of her years of experience coupled with her accepted lesbian identity had shaped her current philosophy and approach to the classroom.

Advice to Future Lesbian Music Educators

Given her 36 years of teaching experience and the life lessons learned along the way, Kathryn offered the following words of advice:

Go for it!!!! Just don't be stupid...Consider where you live and be smart about what you say in public. But if you are comfortable doing it, be honest with the interview committee before you agree to take the job. They need to know, and you need to know that they will support you if someone in the community tries to attack you and get you fired. Administrators don't like to be blindsided by unexpected controversy. I have lots of things that I would like to say, but there isn't enough time to write it all [Interview # 1].

In the final interview, I asked Kathryn to elaborate if possible on her previous response to the question. She said that gay and lesbian educators should be prepared to lose a few jobs when interviewing if the school isn't willing to support a gay or lesbian teacher. She stated that she feels it is important that future lesbian educators recognize the positive affect they can have on the profession by approaching it with honesty and integrity. In her view, understanding the community and being honest and open about your sexual identity is the way to ensure the safety of the teacher. Having been fired from a position due to her sexual identity, Kathryn suggested that an open conversation at the

conclusion of the interview would offer the best protection from negative actions occurring in relation to sexual identity for future lesbian music educators.

Final Thoughts

In the final interview, I also asked Kathryn to share her thoughts on her participation in the study and of her reflection of her teaching experiences as a lesbian instrumental music educator. She explained how she recognized that despite her earlier statements (interview one) suggesting that gender and sexual identity were not contributing factors to her classroom teaching, and that despite the concerns and difficulties faced due to her gender and sexual identity, she has come to recognize how her identity has positively impacted her teaching and has contributed to her current views.

The meanings I take away is that it's more important for me to be involved than I realized before. I have no interest in being a famous activist but I do want to help. I want to help students, I want to help teachers, I want to help people who are going into this process and becoming new teachers, whether it's speaking at universities or speaking to groups. I want to become more active in this. And I've also become, as I get closer to retirement maybe, and by talking to you about this, I've become more and more, you know, something needs to be done with this. And I've always believed that if everyone did a national coming out day and no one was afraid, in the ideal world it would change the world. I don't want to be known as "the lesbian band director" I want to be known as a really good band director period. I don't want to be singled out that she's a woman band director or as the finest lesbian band director, I don't want that label. People don't say that's the finest male band director. I just want all of us to be accepted as normal. I don't want to be labeled as such because I don't believe in labels [Interview # 3].

Kathryn has clearly found her voice in speaking out against homophobia and is suggesting that she feels compelled to be actively involved in fighting for LGBTQ rights. She spoke with passion and conviction about the need to support and guide students who are being subjected to racial and homophobic bullying and harassment. I asked Kathryn to share the message she wanted others in the profession to hear through this study.

That we are all people; let's not divide each other into gay, lesbian, straight, black, white, as utopian as that sounds. We are all band directors, and all the kids we teach are all as different as the number of people out there. And gay kids deserve to have a gay band director, or a teacher, or a role model because our job as teachers is to be a role model and not just to the white straight kids. The African American gay kid needs a model, the white gay kid needs a model, the girls need a model.

So I think it's really important that we all ...I don't know that I want us all to identify as different kinds of creatures, I want us to be accepted as human beings who happen to be gay. I'm having a hard time saying what I think about this, because I'm not sure I know what I think about this, except that I know kids need role models and I think we need to give it to them, and people shouldn't be afraid to hire people who are gay or straight. I think I'm interested to see how this whole movement goes in this country because we make a couple of steps forward and then we take a couple of steps back. It's still a growing process and I will continue to grow, and that's all I can do. If you're not growing, and thinking, and learning, to me you're dead [Interview # 3].

Kathryn shared her painful story of job loss and discrimination and personal journey of self-acceptance in relation to her gender and sexual identity and the affect on her personal life and classroom teaching experiences. She has embraced her position as a role model for LGBTQ students, colleagues and future lesbian music educators. Kathryn stated that as a result of her experiences as a participant of this, and the previous study

she recognizes the need to be more involved and is seeing the ways in which she can make a difference in addition to the ways, she already has.

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION/CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

This chapter will include further examination of the findings of the study using cross-case analysis with connections to past literature where appropriate. The connections between participants' experiences as lesbian instrumental music educators will be discussed and reported and will include the following themes: gender and instrumental music teaching; sexual identity and instrumental music teaching; identity disclosure decisions; identity management; LGBTQ topics and comments in the music classroom. The organizing principle for the themes of the study were the research questions, participant responses to the survey and one-on-one interviews, and my interpretation of participants' experiences as lesbian instrumental music educators (collectively as a shared phenomenon, being a lesbian instrumental music educator, and individually).

Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching

A recent study revealed that a significant gender imbalance remains within music education, particularly among instrumental music education conducting positions

(Sheldon & Hartley, 2010). Sears (2009) also reported that gender inequity continues among high school band conducting professions due to the male traditions of the profession. All three participants of this study reported that women experience differential treatment from males in instrumental band conducting positions. The findings of the current study appear to support the results of these previous studies, which suggest that gender inequity continues in instrumental music education.

Sears (2009) reported that gender inequity issues in the profession include administrators questioning the ability of women to perform the job responsibilities of an instrumental band conductor. Two of the participants of this study experienced similar encounters. Nora revealed how she was denied a teaching position while working in the South due to her gender and was subjected to discriminatory hiring practices, “ There were a few scenarios given to me and prefaced with, as a woman how are you going to handle this?” Likewise, although not questioned by administrators, Leslie was faced with students and parents questioning her ability level to perform the job of a high school band director and expressed how it was hurtful and confusing to her given her eight years of prior successful teaching.

While participants suggested that they did not consider gender to be a contributing factor to their classroom teaching practices, they all identified ways that gender had

affected their experiences as instrumental music educators. Nora and Kathryn suggested that the profession has improved for women over the years. Both of these women have over 20 years of teaching experience, which likely contributed to their perspective as they mutually stated that they knew of few women within the profession when they first started their careers. All three participants suggested that women are becoming more accepted and more visible within the profession, though admit there are places where things are still difficult for women.

Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching

All three of the participants revealed that as individuals and as teachers they had been impacted by their perceived, disclosed, or undisclosed sexual identity in their instrumental teaching positions. In the first interview, Leslie and Nora initially suggested that they didn't believe their sexual identity affected their experiences, though during the course of the interview process both came to different understandings of how their lesbian identities shaped their classroom experiences.

In the second interview, both Leslie and Nora stated that their lesbian identity affected classroom-teaching decisions. Leslie explained that at first she perceived the question asking about how her sexual identity may have affected her classroom teaching practices as a negative, "That why because of our identities as women and our sexual

identity would we teach differently?” She said she eventually realized “ that it was okay that I was a woman and it was okay because of my sexual identity that I stood up for things.”

Part of the role of the researcher in an IPA study is to facilitate the reflection process of participants, and to interpret the account provided by participants in order to understand their experience. Initially all three participants suggested that their sexual identity didn't affect their classroom teaching practices. It was interesting to hear the participants suggest their sexual identities didn't affect their classroom teaching practices when they would also share moments in which it seemed clear that their experiences and approach to the classroom *were* impacted by their identities. Within the survey and during the one-on one interviews, each shared several examples of how their sexual identities impacted their classroom teaching experiences. Leslie and Nora shared their concerns regarding students' perception of them as teachers if their sexual identities were to become known, and all three expressed intentional efforts toward teaching tolerance and acceptance of others and toward creating safe and inclusive classrooms due to their personal and professional experiences as lesbians.

Kathryn initially said that she wasn't affected by her sexual identity in the survey, though in the same response quickly retracted the statement once she recognized how her

life experiences directly influence the way she teaches in her classroom. “The way that I was treated has definitely influenced my approach to teaching. I want to have a positive impact on my students' attitudes toward others, especially gays and lesbians. So I guess my answer should really be YES!”

All three participants shared the various ways their sexual identity affected their classroom teaching practices. Each acknowledged that because of their lesbian identities, they recognize that in addition to teaching music, it is important to teach students about how to treat one another and to model that behavior for their students. They suggested that experiencing marginalization and discrimination in relation to their sexual identities brought a different level of awareness to their teaching. Leslie said, “I think anybody who goes through being demoralized in some kind of a way is more compassionate toward other people.” Nora shared that she regularly explains to students that it’s wrong and unacceptable to make hurtful comments “Whether it is religion, or whether it’s skin color, or whether it’s sexual orientation...I just tell them it’s wrong.” The marginalization and discrimination experienced in relation to their sexual identities led participants to create nurturing and supportive instrumental music classroom environments. This finding is supported by Haywood’s (2011) study, which reported that participants (gay and lesbian music educators) shared the desire to be an example for their students and to

create a safe space for *all* students in their classrooms. This finding is further supported by Jackson's (2007) study of gay and lesbian teachers that suggests that the integration of a gay or lesbian identity with a teacher identity directly influences classroom-teaching practices.

Identity Disclosure in the School Setting

Griffin's (1992) study revealed that many gay and lesbian educators express the need to remain closeted in the school and/or community in which they reside, fearing intolerance and discrimination. All three participants in this study expressed the need to keep their sexual identity hidden from students and parents, though Kathryn and Nora elected to disclose their sexual identities with administrators and colleagues. Kathryn and Nora both expressed feeling safe and supported by their colleagues and community, which offers some explanation for their decision to disclose their identities with this select group while electing to not disclose to students and parents. (Further examination of Kathryn and Nora's identity disclosure decisions is included later in the chapter).

Leslie in contrast, has elected to not disclose her sexual identity to administrators, colleagues, students or parents (with one exception). Leslie said that she knew her lesbian identity was something she would need to hide if she wanted to be in the instrumental music profession. "I fear if they found out, they could easily fabricate

something.” Nora explained that she feels the need to keep her identity undisclosed from students and parents in her position in the Midwest. She said she is afraid of losing her job and realizes that it would only take one disgruntled parent to make her lesbianism an issue. Kathryn also reported fears of job loss explaining that she is primarily concerned with the reactions of parents “because in the public schools, the people who have the most power are the parents.”

Jackson (2007) reported that the more gay and lesbian educators are able to integrate their full selves into their teaching, the more student-centered their approach becomes. She suggests that the integration of a lesbian identity with a teacher identity is realized through public disclosure of a gay or lesbian identity. This was a salient issue for all three participants of this study, who were at varying stages of identity disclosure in their school settings. Nora and Kathryn elected to disclose their identities to administrators and colleagues, Leslie and Kathryn elected to share their sexual identity with previous students and parents, and none of the participants elected to disclose their lesbian identities to students in their current or former school settings.

Although none of the participants of the current study elected to disclose their sexual identity to students, Kathryn and Nora's decision to disclose their identities to administrators and colleagues appears to have played a role in classroom teaching

decisions. In the survey and initial one-on-one interview, Nora suggested that she would likely not disclose her lesbian identity to students suggesting she didn't feel as though they were developmentally ready to handle the information. Later in the interview, she stated she feels as though prior to her retirement she will likely disclose her sexual identity. After sharing and reflecting on her experiences she seemed to change her view on her decision to disclose her sexual identity. Nora shared her belief that the administration would support her decision and that " with the amount of suicides that take place across our country at the middle school level that at some point we are going to need to start having a lot more sobering conversations." Nora is clearly considering the needs of her students when debating this difficult decision.

Kathryn also suggested that at some point she will likely elect to disclose her sexual identity to students and offered a similar rationale when considering her decision. She stated that despite her fears of job loss and discrimination that she believes that gay teachers need to provide a role model for gay students. Kathryn suggested that her teaching has changed since becoming aware of and accepting her lesbian identity.

I think I could feel it in the way I looked at my students. And that I have no idea where they're coming from or what's going on with them; if he's gay and being rejected by his family and what can I do to help him.

Nora and Kathryn explained that the decision to disclose their identities in their current setting was due to previous experiences with discrimination, harassment, and job loss. They both spoke of a community ordinance that had recently passed which affords some protection to gays and lesbians living and working in their community. They both also stated that the schools in the community participate in bullying and harassment programs and are safe and accepting environments for students and educators. Nora said that she feels safe and accepted in the community and school setting and credits the forward thinking administration for creating such an inclusive school environment. DeJean (2007) suggests that school's leadership, and the geographic location of the school, affects gay and lesbian educators quest to participate in radical honesty. Both Nora and Kathryn felt supported by their administration and the community and as a result felt comfortable disclosing their lesbian identities to colleagues and administrators.

Nora and Kathryn both recommended that gay and lesbian music educators consider disclosing their identities to administrators during the interview process. Nora said she feels that gay and lesbian teachers "need to not be afraid to say I'm gay or I am a lesbian, this is who I am, and hire me because of it or don't hire me because of it."

Kathryn made similar statements and added she believes it's "the way to start changing things and guaranteeing safety on the part of the person holding the job." They both

suggested that being out to colleagues and administrators has been a positive experience overall. Nora said “It’s almost like they are kind of like hey, we want to prove to you that we have nothing against gays and lesbians.” The Taylor (2011) study reports that participants electing to disclose their sexual identity to colleagues expressed enriched relationships as a result, which is consistent with the findings of this study.

Leslie, who elected to not disclose her lesbian identity to colleagues and administrators said that she is fearful of disclosing her identity, “I feel like I have a little more control if I keep it disclosed.” She said, “Once people know you are, they judge you by that identity and that identity only. She explained that she wanted to be judged on her teaching ability and not her sexual identity. Leslie’s feelings about identity disclosure seem to align more with the participants of the Khayatt (1992) study, who expressed the need to manage their lesbian identity in the school environment due to fears of job loss and harassment and described distant relationships with students and faculty.

Identity Management

Participants also expressed how the perception of a lesbian identity affected their personal and professional lives. Participants experienced marginalization in relation to their perceived lesbian identity. Kathryn was fired from a teaching position due to rumors of her undisclosed lesbian identity. Nora was interrogated: “administrators were calling me into the office and saying, “We know you had a known lesbian move into your home

with you.” They questioned her about her lesbian identity and reminded her of the moral turpitude clause in her contract. Leslie experienced harassment due to her perceived lesbian identity “I had those parents who didn’t like me, and I didn’t know why, and then two reasons came out: because of my sexual identity because they jumped to conclusions, and the second, because I was a woman.”

It seems that regardless of the decision to disclose or not disclose their sexual identities in the school setting, each participant was impacted by others perception of their sexual identities. Findings of the Blount (2006) study which reports that men and women seeking unconventional gendered positions (male elementary school teachers, female high school principals) often contend with internal resistance, heightened scrutiny, employment discrimination and unfair hiring practices in relation to a perceived homosexual status supports the findings of the current study. She explained that gender nonconforming positions are typically presumed to indicate a gay or lesbian identity. With the continued gender imbalance between men and women in the instrumental music education profession, it is reasonable to suggest that the position of instrumental music educator would be considered a nonconforming position.

All three participants of this study experienced negative consequences in their professional career as a result of their undisclosed and/or perceived lesbian identity. As a

result of the marginalization endured in relation to their undisclosed and/or perceived sexual identities, each participant expressed the need to maintain the nondisclosure of their lesbian identity to students and parents. Each of the participants revealed the numerous identity management strategies used to maintain their positions as instrumental music educators. Kathryn said that her lesbian identity is constantly on her mind when speaking with students and shared that she feels the need to filter everything she says. “It affects your teaching in a negative way; not in terms of your teaching in a negative way...negative on additional stress. Nora said that she never discusses her personal life with students and has conditioned herself to not mention her partners name unless speaking about the instrumental music program.

Personal and Professional Life Split

It was apparent when speaking with participants that management of their sexual identities was a felt need for working in the instrumental music profession. These findings are consistent with the Griffin (1992) and Natale-Abramo (2011) studies, which found that gay and lesbian educators believe a strict separation of one’s personal and professional lives is required for gays and lesbians in the teaching profession. All three participants of this study expressed the need to maintain a separate personal and professional life in relation to their lesbian identity. Separation between the personal and

professional life for Leslie included a literal separation of physical space. She revealed that she maintains a separate bedroom in the home she shares with her partner for appearances sake. She also stated that she rarely speaks to students about her personal life, a strategy that is used by Kathryn and Nora as well.

Griffin (1992) reported that gay and lesbian educators describe themselves as constantly vigilant about protecting their secret identities with the energy required to maintain a false façade taking a tremendous sustained psychological toll on their physical and emotional well being. All three participants expressed that their lesbian identity is challenging to manage as an instrumental music educator. Each shared deeply personal and emotional stories of the felt need to maintain the secret of their sexual identities. Losing a close friend who lived a painfully private life as an educator for a number of years was a difficult reminder to Kathryn of how stressful managing a lesbian identity can be for teachers. All three participants consistently monitored and assessed how their lesbian identity could affect their professional life and regularly took steps to ensure a strict separation between the two.

LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom

The executive summary of the *2011 National Climate Survey* conducted by the Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network reports that:

- 84.9 % of students heard gay used in a negative way in the school setting.
- 56.9% of students reported hearing homophobic remarks from their teachers and other school staff, and
- 36.7 % of students who reported an incident of homophobic comments reported that school staff did nothing as a result (GLSEN, 2011, p. 5).

It is not difficult to understand why LGBTQ educators are reluctant to speak up in such homophobic environments. Fearing job loss, discrimination and marginalization if their sexual identities were to become known, some LGBTQ educators elect to ignore such comments. The participants of this study expressed similar fears. Early in their careers, Leslie and Nora also elected to avoid LGBTQ topics and to disregard negative student comments in the classroom. Nora said that when faced with homophobic comments in the early stages of her career, she would have likely tried to ignore them. She explained that she would have been afraid to address a comment such as “that’s so gay” fearing consequences for her words or actions. She said she has only recently (in the past four or five years) started addressing student comments. Leslie shared similar fears, and said that in the beginning she was reluctant to speak out against homophobia but over time started to address student comments. Kathryn said that she didn't recall hearing homophobic comments early in her career but now addresses them.

It was interesting to see hear Leslie and Nora reveal that in the earlier stages of their teaching careers they often elected to ignore homophobic comments. Both of these women also initially suggested in the survey they didn't feel as though sexual identity was a topic appropriate for discussion in middle school settings. During the interviews though, both shared examples of times in which they had addressed homophobic comments overheard in the classroom. It seemed as though they weren't aware that they were talking about these issues in the classroom until they began to reflect on their experiences. Leslie shared that for her it wasn't a conscious decision to start addressing comments but at some point she found herself wanting to support those students in her classroom who may be negatively affected by the words or actions of others. Nora shared that working in a supportive and accepting community made it possible for her to address homophobic comments. Knowing the school would be supportive and expected her to address the comments made it possible for her to do so.

For all three participants their personal experiences with discrimination and marginalization appears to have led to their commitment to creating a nurturing and supportive classroom environment for *all* of their students. They each reported overhearing comments such as “that’s so gay” in the classroom and reported addressing these comments. Leslie said she tries to teach students that everyone is equal and

deserves to be treated the same. Nora explained that she addresses comments in whatever context they appear and has had passionate conversations with students about slavery, the Holocaust, and homophobia. Kathryn said she wants to be a role model for students and feels it's important to talk to them about these issues "to speak to life values and the way we treat each other." Each participant expressed their interest in providing a positive role model for the students in their classrooms and vowed to speak out against homophobic comments. These findings are consistent with the Haywood (2009) study, which found that gay and lesbian music educators desire to be an example for their students, to mentor students, and model self-awareness.

Summary

Each individual participant's experiences were impacted by their gender and sexual identity as lesbian instrumental music educators. They each acknowledged how gender had affected their experiences as instrumental music educators and shared their thoughts on the current situation for women in the profession. Participants provided examples of how their lesbian identity affected their classroom teaching experiences and described decisions related to identity disclosure and identity management. They each shared their personal and emotional stories of job loss, discrimination and harassment, and collective desire to create safe and inclusive classrooms for their students due to their

own personal experiences with job loss, discrimination and harassment in relation to their sexual identities. Each participant recognized that despite their efforts to hide their sexual identities that their lesbian identities positively affected their classroom teaching practices.

CHAPTER VIII SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand the personal and professional life experiences of lesbian middle and high school instrumental band conductors. The research questions that framed the inquiry of the study were: (a) How do participants describe their personal and professional life experiences in relation to their gender and sexuality? (b) How do participants describe their instrumental music teaching practices in relation to their gender and sexuality? (c) How do participants describe the impact of their gender and sexual identity on career decisions in the music-teaching field? and (d) How do participants describe decisions related to identity disclosure and identity management in their personal and professional lives?

Overview of Related Literature

The lived experiences of gay and lesbian educators have been the focus of numerous studies over the past few decades. Findings of these studies reveal that many gay and lesbian educators express the need to remain closeted in the school and/or community they reside fearing intolerance and discrimination (Griffin, 1992); gay and lesbian educators often contend with internal resistance, heightened scrutiny, employment discrimination and unfair hiring practices in relation to a perceived homosexual status (Blount, 2006); and believe a strict separation of one's personal and professional lives is required (Griffin, 1992; Natale-Abramo, 2011). Griffin (1992) reported that gay and lesbian educators describe themselves as constantly vigilant about protecting their secret identities with the energy required to maintain a false façade taking a tremendous sustained psychological toll on their physical and emotional well being.

Although the lived experiences of gay and lesbian educators have been an active line of inquiry for a number of years in the field of education, a focused examination of the lived experiences of gay and lesbian music educators has only recently begun. The *Establishing Identity: LGBTQ Studies and Music Education Symposium* held in the spring of 2010 was established to address the lack of LGBTQ research in music education and to bring awareness to the issues facing LGBTQ music students and teachers.

Emerging studies from the conference revealed that gay and lesbian music educators fear discrimination, job loss, express concerns related to disclosure of a gay or lesbian identity to parents and students, and feel the need to maintain a strict separation between their personal and professional life (Furman, 2010; Natale-Abramo, 2011; Taylor, 2011). This study involved an examination of the lived experiences of lesbian instrumental music educators in efforts to address the lack of research involving lesbian music educators.

Given the continued reported gender imbalance within the instrumental music education profession, this study also included consideration of how gender may also be contributing to the experience of participants. Recent music education research suggests that a significant gender imbalance remains within instrumental music education (Sears, 2010; Sheldon & Hartley, 2010). Seeking current explanations for the continued gender imbalance among secondary instrumental music educators led Sears (2010) to examine how women negotiate the complexities of working in the reported male dominated secondary instrumental music education profession. The study focused on the perceptions of females regarding issues of isolation, discrimination and stereotyping in middle and high school instrumental music education and also sought to understand the perceived affect of gender roles on the identity of participants. Findings of the study revealed that

participants believe secondary instrumental music educators are subjected to differential treatment in the profession; believe a tough and assertive persona is required in order to achieve success; and struggle to maintain a balanced personal (family life) and professional life (Sears 2010).

Methodology Overview

Participants for this study include three lesbian female band conductors who worked in middle and high school band settings in a Midwest state. Participants represented a range of teaching experience from nine to thirty-six years. Seidman's (2006) three-stage phenomenological in-depth interviewing process was the primary method of data collection. The Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) was the selected methodology.

The IPA methodology involves a committed examination of how individuals make sense of their major life experiences. IPA was selected for this study due to its inclusion of ideology (a focus on the particular) and hermeneutics (the theory of interpretation). This methodology allowed for examination of the particular experience for each participant, the shared experience (being a lesbian instrumental music educator), and the researcher's interpretation of participant's experiences.

Each participant completed a qualitative open-ended survey and individual interviews (two for each participants) as part of the three-stage interview process. The initial survey was used to gain basic background information from participants, to initiate the reflection process, and to inform and guide the interview questions for both the second and third interviews. The second and third interviews focused on participant's classroom teaching practices and experiences, and reflection on the meaning of participant's experiences through examination of how various factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their current understandings.

The data analysis followed the IPA six-step process which included: reading and rereading written transcripts, initial noting, developing emergent themes, searching for connections across emergent themes, moving to the next case, and looking for patterns across cases (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). The process involved a focus on the lived experience of participants, the meaning participants made of their experiences, and of the researcher's interpretation of participant's experiences. Data was presented as individual cases to preserve the unique aspects of each participant's experiences. Common themes found among participants were used in the presentation of the data to highlight the shared experiences among participants.

The six-step process for this study included the initial reading of the written

transcripts after all initial interviews had been completed; I read each individual transcript and bracketed the passages that were interesting. The bracketed passages were reviewed for each individual participant to glean emergent themes. The coding process was expansive and included identification of any data that appeared relevant and useful. Once this process was complete, the third step in the process occurred. This step included a review of the transcript excerpts to search for connecting threads and patterns for each individual participant (Seidman, 2006). The fifth step in the process involved searching for connections across emergent themes. The themes emerging from this process were considered tentative until the cross-case analysis occurred. Each individual participant was examined according to the first five-steps of the IPA analysis process prior to the final stage, examination and interpretation of the emergent themes and patterns across cases.

Reflections on the Research

Finding participants for the study proved to be a difficult challenge. A friend and colleague suggested Leslie as a potential participant and offered to contact her knowing that she had not publicly disclosed her lesbian identity and would likely not return an email or phone call if I were to attempt to contact her regarding participation. Having already experienced several failed attempts to connect with other potential participants

who didn't respond to phone messages or emails I appreciated the assistance. Fortunately, Leslie agreed to participate in the study.

The pilot participant and her partner were known acquaintances and expressed interest in participation. Although I knew that the pilot participant wasn't the ideal choice, I also found it difficult to secure others and knew that the pilot study had led to a new set of questions that had not been examined with the pilot participant previously. Including the pilot participant in the study also provided the unique opportunity to examine the experiences of a lesbian high school instrumental music educator who happens to work in the same profession and in the same district with her partner. In addition to the challenges faced by lesbian instrumental music educators in relation to their sexual identities, these two women have managed to maintain a relationship together while living and working in the same school community.

I discussed my frustration of securing participants with the three women selected for the study hoping they could offer names of other potential candidates. Names were discussed though the suggested participants either didn't meet the qualifications established for the study or the individuals had not elected to disclose their identity. I chose to not pursue the women identified as undisclosed out of respect knowing that job loss, marginalization, and discrimination are of concern for LGBTQ educators who elect

to disclose, or who are perceived as LGBTQ. I also didn't want to negatively impact the relationships between the participants and the women they suggested might be interested in participation. Although I would have preferred to have a larger sample size for the study, based upon my past personal experiences as a lesbian instrumental educator and hearing the similar stories from the women selected for the study, I understood why others would prefer to not participate.

Due to the sensitive nature of the subject matter of the study it was important to establish rapport and trust with each participant. I understood that the degree to which participants would feel comfortable sharing would vary based upon their personal and professional experiences. The degree to which the women elected to share their personal stories during the survey and interview also appeared to be related to our previously established relationship. I encouraged participants to openly discuss how gender and sexual identity affected their personal and professional lives as lesbian instrumental music educators and realized that previous contact with Kathryn seemed to elicit longer and more revealing responses as compared to Leslie and Nora.

Although I recognized that Leslie and Nora's experiences and comfort level discussing their personal and professional lives also likely played a role in the length of their responses, I recalled the initial emotional and challenging interviews with Kathryn

during the pilot study. Kathryn struggled to share her personal and emotional stories during each of the three interviews for the pilot study. The amount of material she shared in the initial survey and one-on-one interviews for the current study was dramatically different from the pilot study and from the other two participants for the current study. She noted that her previous participation in the pilot study had led her to recognize that she needed to speak out more on this topic in an effort to make a difference. Rapport and comfort level with the researcher, and self-awareness and self-acceptance on the part of the participant regarding their sexual identity appears to directly impact the depth and breadth of information shared by participants.

Gender and Instrumental Music Teaching

The cross-case analysis revealed several shared themes among participant's experiences as lesbian instrumental music educators:

All three participants of this study reported that women experience different treatment than males in instrumental band conducting positions and that gender affected their experiences as instrumental music educators. Participants suggested that the profession has improved for women over the years and that women are becoming more accepted and more visible within the profession, though admit there are places where things are still difficult for women. Leslie and Nora reported that gender inequity issues

in the profession include administrators questioning the ability of women to perform the job responsibilities of an instrumental band conductor. While participants suggested that they did not consider gender to be a contributing factor to their classroom teaching practices, all three spoke of their efforts teaching students how to treat one another with kindness, respect, and equality and modeling those behaviors for students.

Sexual Identity and Instrumental Music Teaching

All three participants determined their sexual identity affected their classroom teaching practices. They explained that they recognize that in addition to teaching music it is important to teach students about how to treat one another and to model that behavior for their students. Each suggested that because of their lesbian identities they make a conscious effort to create a safe and inclusive classroom environment for their students. Experiencing marginalization and discrimination in relation to their sexual identities brought a depth of awareness to their teaching, leading them to create nurturing and supportive instrumental music classroom environments. Each participant was impacted by their perceived, disclosed, or undisclosed sexual identity in their instrumental teaching positions.

Identity Disclosure in the School Setting

The three participants of this study are at varying stages of identity disclosure in

the school setting. Each experienced marginalization in relation to their perceived lesbian identity and experienced negative consequences in their professional career as a result of their undisclosed or perceived lesbian identity. Nora and Kathryn elected to disclose their identities to administrators and colleagues and none of the participants elected to disclose their lesbian identities to students in their current or former school settings.

Leslie elected to not disclose her lesbian identity to colleagues and administrators explaining that she was fearful of disclosing her sexual identity. She said she felt the need to manage her lesbian identity in the school environment due to fears of job loss and harassment and described distant relationships with students and faculty.

Nora and Kathryn elected to disclose their lesbian identities to colleagues and administrators though have not disclosed to students and parents. They explained that the decision to disclose their identities in their current setting was due to previous experiences with discrimination, harassment, and job loss. They both discussed a community ordinance that had recently passed which affords some protection to gays and lesbians living and working in their community and said the schools participate in bullying and harassment programs and are safe and accepting environments for students and educators. They said they felt supported by their administration and the community and as a result felt comfortable disclosing their lesbian identities to colleagues and

administrators. They also recommended that gay and lesbian music educators consider disclosing their identities to administrators during an interview process.

Identity Management

All three participants expressed that their lesbian identity is challenging to manage as an instrumental music educator and explained how they constantly monitored and assessed how their lesbian identity could affect their professional life. Participants expressed the need to maintain a separate personal and professional life in relation to their lesbian identity.

LGBTQ Topics and Comments in the Music Classroom

Early in their careers, Leslie and Nora elected to avoid LGBTQ topics and to disregard negative student comments in the classroom. They suggested that when faced with homophobic comments in the early stages of her career they would have likely tried to ignore them. Kathryn said that she didn't recall hearing homophobic comments early in her career but now addresses them. All three participants reported overhearing comments such as "that's so gay" in the classroom and reported addressing these comments. They each expressed a commitment to creating a nurturing and supportive classroom environment for *all* of their students and an interest in providing a positive role model for the students in their classrooms.

Findings Summary

Each participant had unique experiences in relation to their gender and sexual identity as lesbian instrumental music educators. They shared their deeply personal and emotional stories of job loss, harassment, and discrimination and the collective desire to create safe and inclusive classrooms for their students due to their own personal experiences. They all discussed how their lesbian identity affected their classroom teaching experiences and described personal decisions related to identity disclosure and identity management. All three discussed how gender affected their experiences as instrumental music educators and shared their thoughts on the current situation for women in the profession. Participants recognized that despite their efforts to hide their sexual identities due to fears of job loss, harassment, and discrimination, each now recognizes their lesbian identity positively affected their classroom teaching practices and philosophies.

Recommendations for Practice

This study focused on the lives of three lesbian instrumental music educators whose personal and professional lives were impacted by their gender and perceived lesbian identity. Participants suggested that their instrumental music teacher education program did little to prepare them for the challenges they would face as lesbian

instrumental music educators. Each spoke of the need to better prepare future instrumental music educators in meeting the needs of all students in the music classroom. Recognizing there is little room for augmentation in an already full undergraduate music education curriculum, the strategies that follow are intended as suggestions for embedding better practice into existing pre-service music education programs and in-service music education programs. Appendix E includes sample lesson plans and resources.

Instrumental Music Teacher Education Programs

Ryan (2003) reports that ‘those who are the objects of oppression are often better able to gain insight into the manner in which they are oppressed than those who are not, or those who, however unwittingly, are part of that system of oppression’ (p.155). The participants of the study each experienced marginalization and discrimination in relation to their perceived lesbian identity, and although the focus of the study was on the personal and professional life experiences of these courageous women, each spoke of a personal commitment to students and to addressing and challenging bullying, harassment, and discrimination in their classrooms.

To better prepare pre-service instrumental music educators, music teacher education programs must work to provide a deeper understanding of the issues facing

LGBTQ students and teachers through coursework and fieldwork experiences that offer a deeper level of understanding of diversity and inequity. It is not uncommon to require students in freshman or sophomore level music education courses, such as an introduction to music education course, to review a music education journal to familiarize students with these source materials and to develop awareness of the issues currently being examined and discussed in the profession. This type of activity often includes a written review of an article from a journal with consideration of how the information gleaned may inform future classroom teaching practices.

The June 2012 edition of the *Music Educators Journal* is devoted to topics related to equity and justice in music education and provides an excellent source for assigned student reading and article review. The issue includes an examination of multiple forms of inequity within music education and would provide a useful starting point for student self-reflections and consideration of the similarity and differences between the reported inequities and past personal experiences. Class discussion on assigned readings would provide additional insight and student awareness. Numerous books, articles and videos are also available that address social and cultural inequities in education and would provide additional source materials. See Appendix E for a list of additional resource materials.

Classroom management is a topic that is frequently discussed in undergraduate instrumental music education courses. Methods courses provide an excellent opportunity for discussing the challenges of classroom management with undergraduate students. Emphasize to the undergraduate students that building classroom communities of respect is key to effective classroom management. Establishing a set of classroom rules and holding all students accountable for their words and actions will be essential to constructing safe and inclusive classrooms. Consider devoting a bulletin board in the undergraduate methods course classroom that can be used to create a list of classroom management strategies. Add a new strategy to the bulletin board each week related to a potential classroom disruption (e.g., How should you respond when you hear a student say “that’s so gay”?). The compiled list at the end of the term will provide an excellent resource for students. Suggested strategies for addressing student comments are included in Appendix E.

All three participants of this study suggested that over time they developed confidence in their classroom teaching abilities and a deeper understanding of their role as an instrumental music educator; as a result, they each worked to create inclusive classrooms for students and a more holistic approach to instrumental music education.

Classroom observations and early fieldwork experiences in a variety of school settings

therefore, is critical for developing early awareness of the types of inequities that future educators will encounter in their classroom teaching. Deliberate efforts to expose students to diverse classroom settings must be a priority. Guided observations and self-reflection of early fieldwork experiences that focus student's attention to the experiences of students in the instrumental music classroom, the classroom environment, teaching pedagogy demonstrated by classroom teachers and peers, and the classroom management techniques employed by classroom teachers and peers are suggested in the early stages of an undergraduate music education program.

Classroom discussion that includes critical reflection and analysis of observed classroom interactions between teachers, peers, and students in these settings would offer future instrumental music educators insight into the challenges they will face in the music classroom. Strategies for addressing discrimination, bullying and harassment should be included in these discussions. Suggested resources for focused classroom observations and strategies for addressing discrimination, bullying and harassment are included in Appendix E.

In addition to preparing future instrumental music educators to offer instruction of music, these programs must also encourage future educators to think critically and reflect on their own identities and past experiences to better understand how to meet the needs of

all students in their classrooms. Future instrumental music educators need to reflect on their past experiences as a student in the music classroom and must consider how their identity (gender, race, sexual identity, religion) affects their perceptions and/or biases.

Self-reflection and assessment are the necessary first steps toward developing the required awareness needed to create future inclusive instrumental music classrooms. Meyer (2010) suggests “ before anyone can begin working collectively to improve school climates, all individuals must take responsibility for confronting their own biases and blind spots by actively educating themselves around issues that they may be under-informed or uncomfortable with” (p. 125). Activities that focus on self-assessment and personal reflection will help guide undergraduate music education students toward a deeper understanding of held beliefs and perceptions of others. Bullying and harassment surveys, small group discussions, and written reflections focused on students personal past experiences can guide the reflection process.

Focused small group discussions provide an opportunity for students to develop awareness of the challenges they may face as instrumental music educators, to reflect on past experiences as a student in a music classroom, and to consider how their identity (gender, race, sexual identity, religion) affects their perceptions and/or biases. Two sample cases studies are included in Appendix E that can be used to guide these small

group discussions.

Instrumental music teacher education programs should also include guidance in finding and using classroom curricular materials and programs that involve consideration and inclusion of cultural and social differences. Pre-service instrumental music educators should be encouraged to select and perform music literature that reflects multiple cultural musical traditions (ethnic and/or religious, etc.) and social identities (female composers, Latino/Latina composers, gay or lesbian composers, etc.). Future instrumental music educators must then learn how to facilitate discussion with students to develop cultural and social acceptance and awareness of the selected materials.

Current Instrumental Music Educators

Each participant of this study shared how their instrumental music teaching practices and philosophies reflected their personal commitment to creating classrooms that value and teaches social responsibility through participation in instrumental music ensembles. Having experienced marginalization and discrimination in relation to an undisclosed or perceived lesbian identity as instrumental music educators, participants recognized that in addition to teaching music they are also responsible for teaching students how to treat one another as members of a diverse society.

Meyer (2010) suggests that “if teachers do not have educational biographies or

teaching philosophies that help them gain awareness of racism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, and other forms of bias, they may have fewer internal motivators to induce them to intervene” (p. 124). Hearing the stories of colleagues who have experienced job loss and harassment as a result of their gender, race, sexual identity, or religion, such as those reported in this study, can be a valuable resource to the school community looking to increase their awareness of, and interventions to, address bullying, discrimination, and harassment. The opportunity to engage in open and direct dialogue with colleagues, who have experienced marginalization and discrimination, can also provide valuable insight to those who haven’t been subjected to such treatment.

The disclosure of sexual identity to administrators and colleagues can lead to conversations regarding experienced marginalization and discrimination and the development of strategies and interventions aimed at challenging bullying, harassment and discrimination. Nora and Kathryn elected to disclose their lesbian identities and share their experiences with administrators and colleagues. They suggest that administrators, teachers, students, and community members work collectively to develop a caring and inclusive school system and community.

The school community appears to have had a meaningful impact on the disclosure decision for Nora and Kathryn as they currently live and work in a school and

community actively engaged in addressing issues of bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Although they have elected to not disclose their sexual identities to students and community members, participants experienced enhanced relationships with administrators and colleagues as a result of their elected disclosure. They suggested they felt as though they were able to provide valuable insight based upon their personal experiences as lesbian educators and felt comfortable discussing LGBTQ topics and intervention strategies for addressing bullying and harassment in their classrooms with administrators and colleagues.

Leslie described her school and community setting in opposite terms and expressed fears of job loss and harassment if her lesbian identity were to become known. She said she is not willing to engage in conversation with her colleagues about her personal experiences as a lesbian instrumental music educator.

It is our responsibility as educators to support and teach the next generation, and our responsibility to create schools and classrooms that value and teach about the diversity that is already present in our communities. Inviting gay and lesbian educators to share their personal experiences in school settings with administrators and colleagues provides the opportunity for dialogue to occur that will offer insight toward building safe and inclusive school communities. In order to create inclusive school environments,

administrators and faculty members must work together to create and implement school policies on bullying and harassment, share intervention strategies for addressing negative comments and actions in classrooms, design curricular programs and materials that are inclusive of all marginalized groups (race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability), develop relationships and include community members in the development of school bullying programs.

Suggestions for Future Research

Examination of the lived experiences of gay and lesbian music educators is a recent addition to the field of music education research. This study has revealed the level at which lesbian instrumental music educators are subject to stereotypes and discrimination in relation to their gender (gender identity and gender expression), and impacted by their perceived, disclosed, or undisclosed sexual identity.

Findings of the study revealed that all three participants of the study have been impacted by their perceived, disclosed, or undisclosed sexual identity. This study included a small sample size, and the findings suggest that further investigation of this group of women with a larger sample size may offer further insight into the challenges facing lesbian instrumental music educators.

The study also revealed that the teaching practices of lesbian instrumental music educators are affected by their sexual identity. Jackson (2007) suggests that the integration of a gay or lesbian identity with a teacher identity (realized through public disclosure of the gay or lesbian identity) directly influences the classroom teaching practices of gay and lesbian educators. She suggests that the integration of a gay or lesbian identity with a teacher identity through disclosure, leads to a more student-centered approach to classroom teaching. Although each participant of this study elected to not disclose their lesbian identity to students, they each expressed the desire to create safe and inclusive classrooms for their students due to their own personal experiences with marginalization and discrimination. A study that includes participants at various stages of identity disclosure would offer insight into the similarities and differences between the teaching practices of closeted and out lesbian instrumental music educators to discern the affects of identity disclosure.

Although Nora and Kathryn elected to disclose their sexual identities to administrators and colleagues, none of the participants of the study have disclosed their lesbian identities to students and parents. Findings of the Jackson (2007) study also revealed that decisions related to identity disclosure for gay and lesbian educators, such as electing to disclose one's sexual identity to colleagues, students and the school

community, or choosing to remain in the closet, are very personal decisions based upon various unquantifiable factors. She suggested that the decision to disclose a gay or lesbian identity in a school setting are directly impacted by state, local, family, and individual feelings of comfort. Future studies examining identity disclosure decisions for lesbian instrumental music educators should include a focus on the factors that contribute to identity disclosure decisions. Studies should also include an examination of school settings in which gay and lesbian educators feel comfortable disclosing their sexual identities to administrators and colleagues to gain insight into how such school settings are created and maintained.

Originally, this study was to include both heterosexual and lesbian participants to determine if they are collectively impacted by perceived, disclosed, or undisclosed sexual diversity (sexuality, sexual orientation, sexual behavior, and sexual identity), and to stereotypes and discrimination in relation to their gender, (gender identity and gender expression), as female middle and high school band conductors. The challenge in that approach would have been in determining the similarities and differences between the experiences of the heterosexual and lesbian participants and establishing the degree to which participants were impacted by other's perceptions of their identity. After careful

consideration, the focus of the study was narrowed to include the lesbian participants only.

Leslie and Nora reported their experiences were impacted by their gender. Both were questioned by administrators and/or parents suggesting they may not be capable of performing the responsibilities of an instrumental band conductor due to their gender. It is unclear the degree to which these participants were affected by their perceived lesbian identity and/or their gender in these situations. In other words, was the questioning of their ability to assume the role of instrumental music educator due to others perceptions of their lesbian identity, gender, or both? A question to be considered in future studies.

It was clear throughout the study that each participant experienced the affects of marginalization and discrimination in relation to their perceived, disclosed, or undisclosed lesbian identity as instrumental music educators in unique and personal ways. Each participant of the study recognized that despite their efforts to hide their sexual identities that their lesbian identities positively affected their classroom teaching practices

The study provided the opportunity for these women to bring awareness to their personal struggles as lesbian educators; and while each participant did share their emotional and intimate stories, they also each viewed the study as a platform for bringing awareness to others about the inequities that exist within school classrooms for students

and future educators. Each participant expressed their commitment to speak out against all forms of bullying and harassment in their classrooms and shared their hope that this study would help bring awareness to the struggles that LGBTQ students and teachers face. In the final moments of the third interview, an emotional Leslie stated that she wanted to thank me for opening her eyes that her sexual identity made a difference in her teaching. To Leslie, Nora, and Kathryn, I would like to say thank you for making a difference in the lives of your students and for your efforts toward opening our eyes and helping the instrumental music education profession learn how we can make a difference too.

Appendix A

SAMPLE INITIAL SURVEY

Personal experience, coupled with a review of past literature led to my interest in the study. The purpose of this study is to examine the personal and professional life experiences of lesbian middle and high school band conductors to discern the level at which they are subject to stereotypes and discrimination in relation to their gender (gender identity and gender expression), and impacted by their perceived, disclosed, or undisclosed sexual identity.

The purpose of this survey is to gather some background information from you as a starting point for future interviews. It should take about an hour to complete. The first one-to-one interview will start with a discussion of the material from this survey and will also include a discussion of your present experiences. The final interview will be used to further discuss any experiences brought forth from the previous exchanges and will provide the opportunity for reflection on your personal and professional life experiences as a lesbian middle or high school band conductor. In addition to the answers you provide for the survey, please feel free to share your thoughts regarding additional questions or personal experiences that are related to this topic and that may help inform the one-to-one interview questions.

Thank you for agreeing to be a part of this study; please remember that you do not have to answer any question that you do not want to and that pseudonyms, not your actual name will be used for any documentation related to this study.

Career Related Questions

1. How many years have you been in your current band conducting position and what other teaching positions (if any) have you held in the past?

2. If you are currently teaching, please describe the school setting in which you currently teach (i.e., rural, suburban, urban,) and the size of the school.
3. Why did you choose to become a middle or high school band conductor and why did you elect to teach either middle or high school band?

Gender Related Questions:

4. Do you feel that your gender contributes to your classroom teaching decisions (such as curricular choices, program organization and repertoire selections), if so, in what ways?
5. Do you feel that your gender contributes to your classroom instructional methods, strategies and approaches, if so, in what ways?
6. Did you consider how your gender would impact your music teaching experiences prior to entering the profession, if so, what did you anticipate?
7. Do you feel that your gender affected to your interactions with colleagues, students, and parents, if so, in what ways?
8. As you look back over your teaching career, what events and experiences in your music teaching were affected by your gender (positive or negative)?
9. Have you encountered any difficulties with colleagues, students, and parents due to your gender, if so, in what ways?
10. How do you negotiate questions in your school setting in relation to your personal life (i.e., are you married, do you have a partner, do you have children, what did you do this weekend, etc.)?

Lesbian Identity Related Questions:

11. Were you aware of your lesbian identity when you decided to become an instrumental music educator?

12. Have you disclosed your lesbian identity with colleagues' and/ or students and parents? Why or why not?
13. Describe the strategies that you have used or currently use to conceal your lesbian identity from others (attire, gestures, language etc.).
14. Does your lesbian identity impact your relationships with colleagues, students and parents, if so, in what ways?
15. Are you concerned about any negative repercussions that could result from unelected or elected disclosure of your lesbian identity, if so, in what are your concerns?
16. Do you feel that your lesbian identity contributes to your classroom teaching decisions (such as curricular choices, program organization and repertoire selections), if so, in what ways?
17. Do you feel that your lesbian identity contributes to your classroom instructional methods, strategies and approaches, if so, in what ways?
18. Did you consider how your lesbian identity would affect your music teaching experiences prior to entering the profession?
19. Did your lesbian identity affect your teaching philosophy when you entered into the profession, if so, in what ways?
20. As you look back over your teaching career, what events and experiences in your music teaching were affected by your lesbian identity (positive or negative)?
21. Do you believe that your instrumental music teaching experiences might be different if you were a male or identified as straight, if so, in what ways?
22. Do you feel that your lesbian identity affected your relationships with colleagues, students, and parents, if so, in what ways?
23. What advice would you give to young lesbian women interested in pursuing a career in instrumental music education?

Appendix B

CONSENT FORM

Lisa J. Furman
Ph. D. Candidate, Music Education
furmanlj@umich.edu
517-945-6959

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

September 2011

Dear Music Teacher:

I am writing to ask permission to interview you for a research project entitled Perceptions of Female Middle and High School Band Conductors Regarding Gender and Sexual Diversity in Band Conducting Positions. The purpose of this study is to examine the personal and professional life experiences of female middle and high school band conductors in relation to gender and sexual diversity. If you are willing to participate, the study will be conducted during October and November of 2011. Participation in this study will include three interviews, an e-mail survey, and two individual one-to-one interviews. The one-to-one interviews will be audio taped and will last approximately sixty 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 and interviews will be held in strict confidence. There will be six 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 Lisa J. Furman (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 audiotape interviews. Any other party except for you or me as the primary researcher will not hear these audiotapes.

Signed: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Sincerely,

Lisa J. Furman

Appendix C

IRB EXEMPTION LETTER



Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board • 540 East Liberty Street, Suite 202, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2210 • phone (734) 936-0933 • fax (734) 998-9171 • irbhsbs@umich.edu

To: Lisa Furman

From:

Richard Redman

Cc:

Colleen Conway
Lisa Furman

Subject: Notice of Exemption for [HUM00053431]

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

Title: Perceptions of Female Middle and High School Band Conductors Regarding Gender and Sexual Diversity in Band Conducting Positions

Full Study Title (if applicable): Perceptions of Female Middle and High School Band Conductors Regarding Gender and Sexual Diversity in Band Conducting Positions

Study eResearch ID: [HUM00053431](#)

Date of this Notification from IRB: 8/8/2011

Date of IRB Exempt Determination: 8/8/2011

UM Federalwide Assurance: FWA00004969 expiring on 11/17/2011

OHRP IRB Registration Number(s): IRB00000246

IRB EXEMPTION STATUS:

The IRB HSBS has reviewed the study referenced above and determined that, as currently described, it is exempt from ongoing IRB review, per the following federal exemption category:

EXEMPTION #2 of the 45 CFR 46.101.(b):

Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Note that the study is considered exempt as long as any changes to the use of human subjects (including their data) remain within the scope of the exemption category above. Any proposed changes that may exceed the scope of this category, or the approval conditions of any other non-IRB reviewing committees, must be submitted as an amendment through eResearch.

Although an exemption determination eliminates the need for ongoing IRB review and approval, you still have an obligation to understand and abide by generally accepted principles of responsible and ethical conduct of research. Examples of these principles can be found in the Belmont Report as well as in guidance from professional societies and scientific organizations.

SUBMITTING AMENDMENTS VIA eRESEARCH:

You can access the online forms for amendments in the eResearch workspace for this exempt study, referenced above.

ACCESSING EXEMPT STUDIES IN eRESEARCH:

Click the "Exempt and Not Regulated" tab in your eResearch home workspace to access this exempt study.



Richard Redman
Chair, IRB HSBS

Appendix D

Coding Sample	Gender	Sexual identity	Interactions with others	Addressing LGBTQ comments	Identity disclosure	Personal and Professional Split	Hermeneutic view
Leslie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Woman can't be a band director -Aware of differences during first few years -Parents said woman can't be a band director -If I were a man -Because I was a woman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Because of my sexuality identity -Hurtful and confusing -Want all students to important -Did affect my teaching -Who assume I am -Not sure I want to go through that again 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Only impacts with those who assume -Never experienced difficulties with colleagues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reluctant in the beginning -Would call a student out if they made a comment -You could be offending someone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have to keep secret -Not sure I would be open -More control if keep it disclosed -Fear they could fabricate something -Tried to dress more feminine -Partner is also a teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Getting older getting more angry -Would say "we" not "I" -Live in a house and have own bedrooms -First job in religious, homophobic community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Figured out it did affect teaching in a positive way -Even though tried to hide sexual identity, I probably didn't -Thank you for opening my eyes that it's okay it made a difference
Nora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Had to prove myself -Passed over for a job because I was female -Never felt out of place as a female band director -Few scenarios prefaced with "as a women" -Way he handled me -Women have become a strong hold in profession 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Worry if they find out will act differently -Afraid of losing my job -Proud of who I am -Don't think it impacts my teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mainly positive -Encounters with admin. who were not open-minded -Has brought colleagues closer to me 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Try not to address them -Early on would have ignored -Will talk about it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Out to admin., faculty/staff -Proud of who I am -Only takes one disgruntled parent -Think I can before I retire -Wore a lot of dresses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Never discuss specifics of personal life -Need to be sensitive -Known lesbian moving into your home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Helping me to be okay -Made me think about things -It's okay to be gay and be a teacher
Kathryn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -I never let it -Gender was contributing to my experiences -Didn't know any female directors -Only issue was own insecurity -Profession is male dominated -Women being more accepted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Way I was treated influenced my approach -Guard is never down -Affects your teaching in a negative way; negative on additional stress -Fired from job 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cautious around parents -Fear of the parents -Great relationship with students to that point -More compassionate toward students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Immediately stop it -Confronted a teacher in lounge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Out to admin., faculty/staff -Careful about everything I say -Thinking about telling students -What to wear a huge issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Make no reference to partner -Fall into a secret life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More important to be involved than realized before -Want to help people -Want to be accepted as human beings who happen to be gay

Appendix E
STRATEGIES AND RESOURCES

Strategies for Addressing Negative Classroom Comments

1) Stop It:

Use a quick and simple response such as; it's not okay to use that phrase in this classroom.

2) Educate:

Explain to students they are being disrespectful and hurtful and use the opportunity to discuss negative comments and slurs as a class

3) Be Proactive:

Establish behavior expectations and consequences for inappropriate behavior.

4) Don't Ignore It

Ignoring comments sends the message to students that this behavior is acceptable.

5) Don't Be Afraid of Making The Situation Worse

Although you may not know exactly what to say initially, with experience you will develop appropriate responses.

6) Don't Excuse The Behavior:

Never suggest that a student wasn't aware of how hurtful their words or actions were.

7) Don't Try to Judge How Upset The Victim Was:

It isn't possible to know what the victim is feeling and suggesting that you do trivializes the victim's feelings.

8) Don't Be Immobilized By Fear:

Be courageous and be an ally for students in your classroom.

(Chung, & Courville, 2008).

Suggested Readings and Reference Materials

Allsup, R. E. & Shieh, E. (2012). Social justice and music education: The call for a public pedagogy. *Music Educators Journal*, 98(4), 47-51.

Bates, V.C. (2012). Social class and school music. *Music Educators Journal*, 98(4), 33-37.

Bergonzi, L. (2009). Sexual orientation and music education: Continuing a tradition. *Music Educators Journal*, 96(2), 21-25.

Chung, C. & Courville, M. (2008). *It's elementary: Talking about gay issues in schools*. The Respect for All Project, San Francisco: CA.

Conway, C.M. & Hodgman, T.M. (2006). *Handbook for the beginning music teacher*. Chicago: Ill. GIA publications.

Fitzpatrick, K.R. (2012). Cultural diversity and the formation of identity: Our role as music teachers. *Music Educators Journal*, 98(4), 53-59.

- Hoffman, A.R. (2012). Performing our world: Affirming cultural diversity through music education. *Music Educators Journal*, 98(4),61-65.
- Hourigan, R. (2009). The invisible student: Understanding social identity construction within performing ensembles. *Music Educators Journal*, 95(4), 34-38.
- Meyer, E. J. (2008). Gendered harassment in secondary schools: Understanding teachers' (non) interventions. *Gender and Education*, 20(6), 555-570.
- Meyer, E.J. (2010). *Gender and sexual diversity in schools: An introduction*. New York: Springer.
- Taylor, D.M. (2011). Bullying: What can music teachers do? *Music Educators Journal*, 98(1), 41-44.

CASE STUDIES

RACIAL TENSION

Mr. Monroe has successfully taught orchestra at Westview High School for the past eight years. Last week, students (two white and two black) auditioned for the solos for the spring concert. All are seniors, take private lessons, and have been high achievers in the orchestra at Westview High School. After much consideration and deliberation, Mr. Monroe awarded the solo to one of the white students. The parents of one of the black students called Mr. Monroe yesterday to set up an appointment to discuss his choice with him, indicating their concern that race may have played a part in the decision.

Mr. Monroe is anxious about this conversation. He doesn't know what to say to the parents. All of the students were strong players. Reflecting on the last eight years, he realizes that the other solo players he has chosen have all been white. Mr. Monroe is wondering if it's possible that he is making decisions based on race, even if they are subconscious. Are these parents seeing something in him that he doesn't see in himself? He feels misunderstood and nervous about the up-coming parent meeting.

Please discuss the following questions:

If you were Mr. Monroe, how would you handle the conversation with the parent?

What advice would you give Mr. Monroe regarding how to address his concerns regarding potential racial bias?

In what ways could the situation be addressed? What steps would you take?

How do you handle the issue of race in your classroom and in the hallways?

How would this experience make you handle the assignment solos in the future?

NOT IN MY CLASS

Ms. Perry was in her second year as band director at Maple Valley High School. She had taken over a program that was in good shape with some very nice students. Over the first year she had really grown to like the students and care about them. While out to eat after church last night with her family, she saw one of her students, Tyler. She thought Tyler was out to eat with a friend, but realized quickly that the young man with Tyler was his boyfriend. Ms. Perry was shocked-she hoped she had covered her surprise when Tyler introduced his boyfriend.

This morning, before classes began, Ms. Perry had been thinking about Tyler. She had never suspected that Tyler was gay. She'd always thought that a person's sexuality was of no issue to her, but this was one of her students. Ms. Perry found herself uncomfortable around Tyler now and felt sure that in rehearsal today she had treated him differently. She could even see it in Tyler's eyes during class, a sense of confusion about the way she had acted. Ms. Perry was confused and upset by her behavior. She wondered how she could make sure that she treated Tyler the same as she always had, and why she was finding that difficult to do. When Tyler approached Ms. Perry after class asking to set up a time to meet, she found himself feeling anxious about the requested meeting.

How should you/ Ms. Perry prepare for such a conversation with this student?

If you were Ms. Perry, how would you handle the conversation with Tyler?

What advice would you give Ms. Tyler regarding her inner-conflict with this issue?

How would you address the issue of sexual identity in your classroom without "outing" anyone?

References

- Allsup, R. E. & Shieh, E. (2012). Social justice and music education: The call for a public pedagogy. *Music Educators Journal*, 98(4), 47-51.
- Avery, A.A. (2009) *Ohio secondary art teachers' attitudes concerning sexism and heterosexism within their written and hidden curriculums: A mixed methods study*. (master's thesis) Retrieved from Ohio Link Electronic Theses and Dissertation Center.
- Bartleet, B. (2002). Re-embodiment of the "gendered podium. *Context*, 23, 49-57.
- Bates, V.C. (2012). Social class and school music. *Music Educators Journal*, 98(4), 33-37.
- Bergonzi, L. (2009). Sexual orientation and music education: Continuing a tradition. *Music Educators Journal*, 96(2), 21-25.
- Block, A.F. (1988). The status of women in college music, 1986-1987: A statistical report. In N.B Reich (Ed.), *Women's studies/Women's status* (p 79-158). Boulder, CO: College Music Society.
- Blount, K.M. (2006). *Fit to teach: Same-sex desire, gender, and school work in the twentieth-century*. New York: State University Press.

- Blumenfeld, W. (1994). *Science, sexual orientation, and identity: An overview*.
Unpublished research paper. Retrieved from <http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/home/index.html>.
- Chung, C. & Courville, M. (2008). *It's elementary: Talking about gay issues in schools*.
The Respect for All Project, San Francisco: CA.
- Conway, C.M. & Hodgman, T.M. (2006). *Handbook for the beginning music teacher*.
Chicago: Ill. GIA publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- DeJean, W. (2007). Out lesbian and gay K-12 educators: A study in radical honesty.
Journal of Gay and Lesbian Issues in Education, 4(4), 59-72.
- Ferfolja, T. (2009). State of the field review: Stories so far: An overview of the research on lesbian teachers. *Sexualities, 12(3), 378-396*.
- Fitzpatrick, K.R. (2012). Cultural diversity and the formation of identity: Our role as music teachers. *Music Educators Journal, 98(4), 53-59*.
- Foucault, M (1978). *The history of sexuality, an introduction: Volume 1*. New York: Random House.
- Furman, L.J. (2011). *The lived experiences of a lesbian instrumental music educator*.

Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education, 188, 27-30.

Furman, L.J. (2010). *The lived experiences of a lesbian instrumental music educator.*

Paper presented at the Establishing Identities Conference, University of Illinois:
Urbana-Champaign.

Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (2012, October, 21). [2011 National
school climate survey]. Retrieved from [http://www.glsen.org/cgi-
bin/iowa/all/home/index.html](http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/home/index.html).

Gould, E. (2001). Identification and application of the concept of role model: Perceptions
of women college band directors. *Update: Applications of Research in Music
Education, 20(1), 14-18.*

Gould, E. (2003). Cultural contexts of exclusion: Women college band directors.
Research and Issues in Music education, 1(1), 1-17.

Grant, D. E. (2000). *The impact of mentoring and gender-specific role models on women
college band directors at four different career stages.* (Unpublished doctoral
dissertation). University of Minnesota, 2000.

Graves, K. (2009). *And they were wonderful teachers: Florida's purge of gay and lesbian
teachers.* Champaign, Ill: University of Illinois Press.

Griffin, P. (1992). Identity management strategies among lesbian and gay educators.

Qualitative Studies in Education, 4(3), 167-195.

Hartley, L.A., & Jagow, S. (2007). *Past, current, and future trends of the participation of gender and racial/ethnic minorities in band conducting*. Paper presented at the Biennial Colloquium for Teachers of Instrumental Music Methods, Mt. Sterling, Ohio.

Haywood, J. (2011). LGBT self-identity and implications in the emerging music education dialogue. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 188, 33-38.

Hinely, M.B. (1984). The uphill climb of women in American music: Performers and teachers. *Music Educators Journal*, 70(8), 31-35.

Hoffman, A.R. (2012). Performing our world: Affirming cultural diversity through music education. *Music Educators Journal*, 98(4), 61-65.

Hooks, B. (2000). *Feminism is for everybody: Passionate politics*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

Hourigan, R. (2009). The invisible student: Understanding social identity construction within performing ensembles. *Music Educators Journal*, 95(4), 34-38.

Husserl, E. (1967). The thesis of the national standpoint and its suspension. In Kockelmans, J.J. (ed.) *Phenomenology*, Garden City, NJ: Doubleday.

Jackson, C. A. (1996). *The relationship between the imbalance of numbers of women and men college band conductors and the various issues that influence the career aspirations of women instrumental musicians*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Michigan State University: East Lansing.

Jackson, J.M. (2007). *Unmasking identities: An exploration of the lives of gay and lesbian teachers*. Lanham, MD: Routledge Press.

Khayatt, D. (1992). *Lesbian teachers. An invisible presence*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Lincoln, Y.S. (1990). Toward a categorical imperative for qualitative research. In Eisner, E.E., & Peshkin, A. (ed.) *Qualitative inquiry in education: The continuing debate*. New York: Teachers College Press.

McClain, B.P. (2000). *Teaching music in the American university: A gender analysis*. Poster session presented at the national biennial in-service conference of MENC: The National Association for Music Education, Washington, DC.

McElroy, C.J. (1996). *The status of women orchestra and band conductors in North American colleges and universities: 1984-1996*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Missouri, Kansas City.

McKay, S. (2006). *Truth be told: The effects of sexual orientation on the lives of*

- lesbian educators*. (master's thesis). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 1432807621).
- Merriam, S.B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Meyer, E. J. (2008). Gendered harassment in secondary schools: Understanding teachers' (non) interventions. *Gender and Education*, 20(6), 555-570.
- Meyer, E.J. (2010). *Gender and sexual diversity in schools: An introduction*. New York: Springer.
- Moore, R.J. (2007). *Do I still have to be silent at school? A phenomenological study into the lives of twelve women*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3302027).
- Moustakas, C. (1997). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Natale-Abramo, M. (2011). Sexuality and the construction of instrumental music teacher identity. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 188, 38-42.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Pucciani, D, (1983). Sexism in music education: Survey of the literature, 1972-1982.

Music Educators Journal, 69(6), 49-51, 68-71.

Ryan, J. (2003). Educational administrators' perceptions of racism in diverse school contexts. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 6(2), 145-164.

Sears, C.A. (2010). Paving their own way: Experiences of female high school band directors. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 2154368801).

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences (3rd ed.)*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Seidman, E., Sullivan, P., & Schatzkamer, M. (1983). *The work of community college faculty: a study through in-depth interviews* (Final Report to the National Institute of Education) Washington D.C. (secondary source).

Sheldon, D., & Hartley, L.A. (2010). *What color's your baton, girl? Gender and ethnicity in band conducting*. Poster session presented at the biennial meeting of MENC: The National Association for Music Education, Anaheim, CA.

Singer, S.E. (1997). *Voices from the margins: Lesbian teachers in Nova Scotia's schools*. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 73465717).

Smith, D. (1979). A sociology for women. *In the prism of Sex: Essays in the sociology of*

- knowledge*. Julia Sherman and Evelyn Orton Beck (ed.). Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 135-187.
- Smith, J.A. & Osborn, M. (2008). *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research Methods*. Jonathon A. Smith (ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Smith, J.A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Stapleton, L. (2004). *Against a white sky: A memoir of closets and classrooms*. San Francisco: Artemis Press.
- Taylor, D.M. (2011). Bullying: What can music teachers do? *Music Educators Journal*, 98(1), 41-44.
- Taylor, D.M. (2011). Identity negotiation: An intergenerational examination of lesbian and gay band directors. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 188, 58.
- Warner, M. (1991). Introduction: Fear of a queer planet. *Social Text*, 29, 3-17.
- Wieland-Howe, S. (1998). Reconstructing the history of music education from a feminist perspective. *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 6(2), 96-106.
- Woods, S, E., & Harbeck, K. M. (1992). Living in two worlds: The identity management strategies used by lesbian physical educators. In K. M. Harbeck (Ed.), *Coming out*

of the classroom closet: Gay and lesbian students, teachers, and curricula (pp. 141-166). Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press.

Yardley, L. (2000) Dilemmas in qualitative health research. *Psychology and Health*, 15, 215-228.