She Conducts

Undergraduate Thesis

By

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But First... Abstract and Preface

She Conducts has been a work in progress since its inception during the summer of 2001. Now, nearly summer 2003, the finishing touches are receiving their long overdue (and well-deserved) debut.

In the beginning, the idea to celebrate the existence, accomplishments, and wisdom of living women conductors was a simple plan. But, as many plans do, it transformed into something much less tangible than its former self. There were realizations, emotional roadblocks, and creative impulses along the way that left no moment static in its creation.

First, the purpose remains: to collect data that may help young women, including myself, understand the hype that surrounds gender bias as it relates to women in music, specifically conducting, and to provide practical, social, and emotional encouragement for those who wish to pursue conducting careers.

The process was simple as well: I sent interview questions via e-mail to approximately 30 women conductors, 15 of which responded, in four different instrumental conducting careers (Orchestral, College Band, High School Band, and Middle School Band)*, and I combined their responses to create the appendix of this document. The appendix, a compilation and analysis of responses from the 15 women conductors who participated, provides concrete evidence on which to build insight, confidence, and vision.

Aside from the extensive collection of feedback from the interviews, there is a healthy portion of written work as well. In researching the topic, I found it nearly

* An additional category, Retired/Out of Field, was added later to include a woman high school band director of nine years who is now a school counselor.
impossible to set myself aside and ingest information for what it was. *Music and Gender,*
a gem in the world of ethnomusicological research, helped me to deal with this peculiar
phenomenon of egocentrism. Its text “…openly addresses the assumptions of authors
and their contexts…” (Koskoff xii). The authors of individual essays in the book
classified fieldwork on themselves to examine their own assumptions. The
extraordinary result is that it left no sole way of thinking or doing, which allows the
reader to experience the scholarly process of non-conclusive end. The approach taken
inspired me to write my thesis with an honest representation of my beliefs and
assumptions alongside my research, and it helped me to understand that the research I
conduct – no matter how extensive – will never *arrive,* only contribute.

So, the text, with its abstract titles and concrete subtitles, reveals bits of me as it
unfolds. I do hope that this document is everything you hoped it would be and more.
Enjoy!
Here's To You

In a life full of overwhelming detail and indescribable emotions, it is nothing less than miraculous how another human being can lighten the path and make the road a little less overwhelming. Having that said, I must take a moment to recognize those without whom my life or work would cease to be as it is. There are those whose inspiration filtered through the very early stages of my life in which I discovered my worth as a unique individual: My big brother Jim who coached my clumsy conducting in high school; Marc and Chris who never stopped believing that their sister was destined for grandeur; Mom and Dad with their boundless encouragement for anything that struck my fancy; and Grandma Woten who would never hear of putting a boy before school! Then there are those in whom I found the strength and courage to study women in the field: Alan Goodwin whose friendship provided irresistible stimulus; Lonny Foster, Jason Rinehart, and Barry Tagg whose suggestions helped me get started; Barb Stedman who energetically approved of the work; and all the women conductors providing encouragement, delight, guidance, and caution. Along with Luke Lassiter, Deborah Bradley, Marin Alsop, and countless others who directed me toward research and scholarly literature, my advisor, Christian Zembower deserves all the thanks that my feeble vocabulary can muster. Finally, my heart goes out to Joey Boyer whose support and understanding I have found in no other.
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Professional:
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Areas of Employment
Positions Held
Primary Instruments
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Personal:
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So there is sex and there is gender. What are they? How are they different? Who will I offend if I get it wrong? What a mess I was, wondering whether to address the subjects of my research as female conductors or women conductors! As part of my growth as a student brushing elbows with bias and offense in women studies, I discovered that some care a lot, some care a little, and some care not at all.

Sex is constructed biologically, and gender is a social construction (Kottak 142-144). Specifically, *sexual dimorphism* is a term that social anthropologists (people who study people) use to describe the “marked differences in male and female biology besides the contrasts in breasts and genitals” (Kottak 142). There are primary differences, like the reproductive attributes we each possess, and the secondary differences, like hair production, muscle mass, and fat content. Behavior and attitude are not contained in the catalogue of sexual dimorphic results, but within that of gender. While sex differences are biological, gender differences are a result of culture (Ward 2). Everything from passive to aggressive, domestic to public, emotional acidity to apathy, and recognition to ignorance can be found in the gender construction within a culture.

In the English language, not ironically the primary language recently responsible for the conceptualization of gender, there are a few descriptive terms that help us communicate about the phenomenon (Moisala 15). Among them: *gender roles, gender stereotypes* (also referred to as *gender ideologies*), and *gender stratification* (Kottak 144, Ward 3). Literally, gender roles are “...the tasks and activities...” a culture deems appropriate for the sexes (Kottak 144). They are what determine the extent of the sexual division of labor in a culture (Moisala 362). Gender stereotypes go a little further to
generalize those expectations that most people hold for males and females within their culture, and unfortunately, are mistaken by their native followers as natural and matter of fact (Kottak 144, Moisala 5). Stratification then, is the inequity between the sexes created from the culturally constructed gender roles and stereotypes. It is, in Conrad Kottak's words (anthropologist and author on gender issues), “…an unequal distribution of rewards (socially valued resources, power, prestige, and personal freedom) between men and women, reflecting their different positions in a social hierarchy” (144).

Why is there such a stink about female versus woman? The terms clarify the fine line between biology – what is – and culture – what becomes. A female is female if she possesses, from birth, the sexual characteristics that define femaleness, whereas, a woman is a woman if her personal traits and decided activities fit the ideal gender roles and stereotypes that her culture has laid out for her. One must know though, that since “…gender roles are self-organizing dynamic systems,” they are changeable through space and time (Marcia Herndon qtd in Moisala 352).

Thus arises an intriguing prospect: In America, can a female be considered a man for her masculinity, or a male be considered a woman for his femininity? Anthropologists of all ages have been intrigued by the dichotomy between the stable sex and the flexible gender that runs around it. I can vividly remember wondering why I was all of the sudden a boy named Tom when I jumped off the tree house to roughhouse with my brothers and the neighbor-boys. The “tomboy” (American slang for a female youngster who takes on a boy’s expected behavior) is a prime example of the categorical power of gender. Young boys who can’t climb the rope in gym class or who can’t toss a
ball as far as their male peers are reciprocally affected when they are called “sissies” or told that they “throw like a girl”.

American mainstream adults too, are categorized: You can tell whom “wears the pants in the family” by the measure of how much public gain an individual achieves. Conrad Kottak describes Manhood as “…a social achievement measured chiefly by the capacity to gain wealth and power…(where) masculinity is measured by social, emotional, and intellectual vitality”(139). Subsequently, a male who wants to prove himself a man – often, ironically, to the opposite sex as well as culture at large – is bound by overwhelming expectations to be what Kottak calls the “breadwinner” (140). A female, then, who demonstrates those masculine ideals, whether in her education, her career, or her domestic life, faces the prospect of being deemed only worthy of social recognition usually reserved for males (i.e. wealth and power) if she becomes like a man – one of the boys (Moisala 14).

In a more extreme sense, there are the transgendered individuals who “…consciously challenge…” the gender roles they are assigned (Kottak 140). Transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens, the bigendered, masculine females, and effeminate males are among those described in American culture. For both the gender challengers and the gender challenged, Americans have created yet another label: those possessing gender identity disorders (GIDs) for whom therapy is available. It is safe to surmise that a sex identity disorder has yet to hit the American scene.

So the question remains: Who will be offended by reference to sex as opposed to gender, or vise versa? To be honest and quite candid: I don’t know. Who does really? There are some who see that “female” is the only unprejudiced approach to labeling;
others view their cultural construction as crucial to their makeup and important regardless of their chosen endeavors, behaviors, or attitudes; and some that admit there are bigger fish to fry than whether they are called female (identified biologically) or woman (identified culturally).

For most, the mere existence of a label is the "bigger fish". Why should a woman who conducts be any different than a man who conducts? As it seems to some, it is unfair that women who conduct must be women conductors, but men who conduct are simply conductors, not reduced to a sub-category. After all, America prides itself in androgyny (Kottak 141). In his carefully stated opinion of the gender situation, Conrad Kottak describes that, "Contemporary North America, a market society that runs on talent, temperament, and technology, nourishes gender symmetry" (141). Notice that Kottak tells of the lack of division between the sexes, where males and females behave and participate the same in society. By its very nature, the study of women feeds the division rather than diminishing it, and to some, it is a heinous offense.

Only when the division becomes weighted such that one is worth more than the other socially, economically, professionally, or even personally does the division become a hazardous and destructive cultural tool. For instance, in the arena that this thesis was conceived and carried out, the labeling of conductors as women or men (gender defined) became a necessary tool for clearly communicating the impetus of my work. However, the realization that women had been excluded from socially recognized musical achievement in all areas of music, finally resting in the world of conducting, has brought considerable attention to gender in the field. The frustration with inequality begins when women start to see themselves not as recovering from social injustice, but as suffering as
captives in a glass cage of recovery. Many women who forge territory against the grain of tradition feel like they are on display: “Look! It is one of those. Look what she can do. Neat.” ... as if women conductors are a novelty.

As extensive as I would like to think my work, it has not the firepower to solve the issues inherent in communicating about a field in regards to sex and gender. Since I could not crack the case – whether to address my subjects (or to think of myself) as females or women – I decided to enclose it within a bigger one. A Celebration of Women Conductors, as this thesis was once entitled, carefully morphed into A Celebration of Female Conductors, which suffered a tragic existence having never quite overcome its predecessor. Finally, I settled with simply: She Conducts. She, of course, being even more involved in the cultural/sexual dichotomy that has come of the English language and the Western culture that it supports. The deeper well is just what I needed.

In the following essays, I will draw attention to various opinions (including my own) about gender and bias, and reveal some intriguing findings from previously conducted research that will hopefully help young women explore their feelings and communicate about gender with greater understanding.

The Goggles Must Go – If Only They Could
(Analysis and Interpretation)

Marcia Herndon, a pioneer in gender studies within ethnomusicology, contributed to the Moisala collection with her level insight into analysis and her devotion to an ever changing and situational truth (Moisala 361). Her contribution helped me to see that I am not a completely objective researcher/writer. As Marcia put it, I have my own “background, gender, biases, and personality” that impact my work (qtd in Moisala 351).
Of her three levels of analysis from which theory can emerge – primary, secondary, and tertiary – most of my work is primary and secondary. Where the survey work that I have done (see appendix) is reminiscent of primary analysis that “...attempts to be rigorous about the data it collects” (Moisala 351). The connections I have drawn from researching and analyzing relevant literature, is attributed to secondary analysis:

Secondary analysis operates from a distance on collected and recorded data, using one or more models or styles of analysis. (It)...provides local generalizations, which may be taken as common sense, rejected as contrary to it, or obscured by jargon. Model construction, which often proceeds from the collection of data, suggests casual connections or attempts to identify other patterns and links. (qtd in Moisala 351)

Marcia Herndon in Moisala’s text says that “Given that there are fads and fallacies in the pursuit of theory, we do well to remind ourselves that ideally we should let theory emerge from data rather than collect data only to support hypotheses and theories” (qtd in Moisala 350-351). In my case, I am not neither proposing a hypothesis, nor supporting a theory, but Marcia’s statement encourages the reader to keep an open mind. As I have had to learn, let this work broaden your understanding of gender and bias as it relates to women conductors rather than tailoring its content to your personal agenda.

Who? Prominent Women Conductors
(Historic Account)

The women I interviewed are only a few of the many women conductors who have made a significant impact in the field. Throughout my study, women who I had not
heard of before came to my attention bearing the same credentials and records as some of the great men conductors, of whom I am familiar. Below is a list of those women and a glimpse of their legacies.

**Doris Lang Kosloff**, Connecticut Opera; Judith Somogi, NYC Opera, first American women to make a successful transition from pianist to podium; **Eve Queler**, Opera-Orchestra of New York, successfully juggled motherhood and her career; **Sarah Caldwell**, violinist turned stage director/orchestra conductor, wouldn’t change her appearance for fame; **Margaret Hillis** (mentioned later too), Chicago Symphony Choir, 3-time grammy award winner; **JoAnn Falletta**, Stokowski award winner, hopes the impression that a man conductor is different than a woman conductor will fade;


**Frederique “Riki” Petrides** (1903-1983) was one of the most influential women conductors because of her devotion to educating the public about women in music (Groh 3). She found and published “Women in Music” in July of 1935 until its discontinuance in 1940 (6). The newsletter was started “…for the purpose of acquainting its readers with little known historical facts pertaining to women conductors, instrumentalists and orchestras, and, with current developments in this special field” (Frederique Petrides qtd in Groh 5). Ms. Petrides was just as concerned in 1935 about women receiving the caged
circus animal rap from audiences and colleagues. There were many women participating in musical activities, and she was tired of feeling like a novelty to those who didn’t know any better.

Riki, as Ms. Petrides is affectionately known, started the newsletter after she began her all-female chamber orchestra called “Orchestrette” in New York City, which published the monthly installments (Groh 11). The ensemble outlasted the newsletter by just a few years, its twelve-year existence covering most of the 1930s and into the early 1940s. She and her colleagues were devoted to informing New York that although there were fewer women on the scene than men, women conducting is a “...tradition that...(goes) back to Ancient Egypt and Greek times” (qtd in Groh 11). After her time with the Orchestrette, Ms. Petrides taught at a women’s Masters School at Dobbs Ferry on the Hudson (21). There she founded the Hudson Valley Symphony Orchestra.

Starting her own orchestras was only one way that Frederique Petrides overcame some of the gender bias she faced as a woman conductor. Her attitude is very similar to many women today: “A woman must be better than a man if she is to conduct prestigious groups, and I made it my career always to be one hundred percent prepared and know all the scores tremendously well” (qtd in Groh 72). Along with her cutting will, she maintained connections with other women in music and allowed herself to laugh at the adversity that she and her colleagues felt. In the fifth edition of “Women in Music” (appropriately the December holiday issue) she printed musician anecdotes and ludicrous stories of gender bias because, “…the public should be invited to smile occasionally over the human and humorous side of musicians...” and, according to Henry T. Fink,
musicians would be better off if they didn’t “...take themselves and their art altogether too seriously” (qtd in Groh 43).

**Two Think Pieces Hit Home**
(Previous Research)

Late in my research, two documents opened my eyes to the fact that I am not alone in my search for answers about the lack of women conductors: (1) an article referred by Dawn Schloesser, and (2) Carol Ann Feather’s 1980 Ph.D. dissertation.

I recently became a member of Women Band Directors International (an organization comprised of and devoted to women band directors), and after telling Deborah Bradley (vice president) of my undergraduate thesis she sent me an e-mail referring me to an electronic journal article written by Dawn Schloesser. The article spoke to me personally, because I am “in the boat” Bradley (quoted in the text) described with many women on the brink of the field.

The background information is clear: (1) The ratio of men to women in high school band directing is 3:1 and seemingly greater though the gap is slowly shifting; (2) just as many women as men graduate college with degrees in music education; and (3) WBDI is growing in numbers, which means that young women music education majors are receiving greater opportunities to learn from professional women in their chosen careers (Schloesser np). A few of those role models identified are Deborah Bradley, who has been teaching band for 26 years; Gladys Stone Wright, whose induction into the National Band Association Hall of Fame of Distinguished Band Conductors is a historical signpost; and Kathryn Scott, who directs the University of Alabama’s Million Dollar Band.
Deborah Bradley surmises some of the possible causes of the lack of women in the field. She insists that it is important for young women to have role models in the field, just as the young men do, because “it helps to build a student’s confidence, if a young woman music major is directly connected with a successful lady in the field, (because if she)... can see (herself)... being the way those mentors are, (she)... can see (herself)... in those positions, (she)... can stress the positive and achieve a lot more,” and she then goes on to describe that mentoring for young women band directors/music education majors is part of the mission of WBDI (qtd in Schloesser np).

Interestingly, Bradley also draws direct attention to the sociological factors that keep young women from carrying out their original plans to teach high school band. Women, “…particularly ones that are family-minded…” may be hesitant to devote time to the extent that it takes to run a high school band program (Deborah Bradley qtd in Schloesser np). She describes, “If you’re a really active band director, you’re gone something like 23 weekends during the school year,” and points out that “women on the high school marching level are usually either single, or have a very understanding husband who has a very busy career also” (qtd in Schloesser np). The article also directs the reader to some statistics pertaining to motherhood in America, where:

In a given year, two thirds of all mothers are not employed full time for the full year; 25 percent of mothers have left the workforce entirely and nearly half of employed mothers are working fewer than 40 hours per week. Of the remaining one-third of mothers employed full time, 26 percent are working flexible hours. Ninety-three percent do not work any substantial overtime. Of course, ‘flexible hours’ and little-to-no overtime
are concepts that any high school band director would say do not apply to the job. (Schloesser np)

Although it is difficult for a young woman to avoid discouragement by these statistics, Deborah’s work in WBDI is geared toward helping young women see that there is a way to have it all, that “...they can balance their family, household duties, service to church or community, with their band career” (qtd in Schloesser np). Her wisdom rings through saying that women who want a family and a band directing career must “have a strong commitment to time management, and strong people behind them” (qtd in Schloesser np).

Carol Ann Feather finished her doctoral dissertation in 1980 at the University of Mississippi: Women Band Directors in Higher Education (Zaimont 388-410). She is a Morehead State University graduate, having majored in Instrumental Music and Theory. Ms. Feather wrote an article for Zaimont’s The Musical Woman that summarized her work. Aside from the wealth of statistical information she gathered form previous professional research in the 1970s, her own research involved interviewing 53 supposed American female Band Directors in Higher Education, only 21 of whom actually were such, active in 1979-1980.

Carol Feather’s areas of focus were (1) preparation and experience, (2) job circumstances, and (3) personal characteristics and dealing with unique problems (Zaimont 388-410). In comparing my study to hers, my focus areas were similar: (1) biographical info, (2) obstacles, and (3) advice. While my interviewing was conducted through written correspondence via email, Feather expanded on her 21 questionnaires by conducting several telephone interviews. Also, I interviewed 15 from my initial list of 30
that grew as the project continued, and Carol interviewed 21 of her 53 potential respondents. Her respondents were all women band directors in higher education, and my subjects were all instrumental conductors, but not all band directors.

When I began my search for possible respondents, I decided to ask people that I knew in the field for suggestions. First, in the summer of 2002, I learned of several women conductors through Lonny Foster, Jason Rinehart, and Barry Tagg (instructors in the drum corps for which I was a drum major). Others who contributed to my list were my advisor, Christian Zembower, and some of the women conductors who I had contacted. Carol Ann Feather’s approach to locating respondents was more organized than my own. She found her subjects by probing first names of members in the Women Band Directors National Association (WBDNA), the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA), and a list of College Band Directors distributed by the College Music Society (Zaimont 388-410).

Feather’s dissertation is also more geared toward the statistics of women in the field compared to that of males, whereas my undergraduate thesis takes an anthropological approach and draws no specific conclusions about the number or treatment of women in the field. Of course, Carol was encouraged to take up research in women’s studies at the end of her doctoral career and pursued this topic because of feelings of isolation, and I, in the summer following my sophomore year as an undergraduate discovered angst in my realization that I would not be on the same playing field as nearly all of the male conductors whom I revered (Zaimont 388-410). The differences in the stimuli between our studies ironically produced similar objectives.

Hers: “...to gather data that could be used to generate greater visibility for the women
who have succeeded as band directors, and by spotlighting successful professionals to provide the potential for encouraging newcomers into the field”, and mine, to collect data that may help young women, including myself, understand the hype that surrounds gender bias for women in music, specifically conducting, and to provide practical as well as emotional encouragement to pursue conducting careers.

Dr. Feather’s work has been a key tool in my own research. Her opening statement is piercing:

Every year several thousand music education majors graduate from American colleges and universities; large numbers of these are women whose applied major was instrumental music. A significant number of these women later earn graduate degrees in music education, applied music, or education. Yet, comparatively few of them become band directors at the post secondary school level. Those few who have obtained such positions seldom are recognized nationally, nor do they otherwise gain appreciable visibility and thus do not serve as role models for young women who might aspire to careers as college band directors. (qtd in Zaimont 388)

Alongside attention drawn to college band directing, Carol Ann Feather hints at the bias surrounding women in other conducting fields (Zaimont 388). She states that as early as the 1870s, "…orchestras demonstrated clearly that women instrumentalists were able to perform standard symphonic repertory and that women were fully capable of conducting that repertory” (qtd in Zaimont 389). Furthermore, a quote from a critic for Time Magazine in 1976 wrote that “Women’s slighter stature and personal attractiveness
can tell against them when they attempt to establish themselves in positions of command and authority” (Robert Jones qtd in Zaimont 389).

Women who contributed to the dissertation include Margaret Hillis who was told that women could not succeed as orchestral conductors as she graduated Indiana University; Antonia Brico who thinks it is “tragic” that women are treated differently; Joyce Johnson who hates that men are competent until proven incompetent, and vise versa for women; and Elaine Brown who has felt the need to compete at a higher level being a woman (Zaimont 389). Sarah Caldwell deserves mention for her recognition as “…one of the most powerful women in the U.S.” by Harper’s Bazaar in 1977 (qtd in Zaimont 390). Finally, Gladys Wright also served as an early model for young women entering the field of band directing, specifically through her article for The School Musician, Director and Teacher in 1975 entitled “Career Opportunities for the Young Woman Graduate” (392).

While the statistical analysis of Carol’s work is interesting, it will serve this thesis better to highlight the results of the survey responses.

The three most frequently reported problems were:

(1) attitudes of skepticism from others concerning the ability of women to handle the position of band director (31%);

(2) their beliefs that men directors considered them a threat to their power or position (31%); and

(3) reluctance on the part of administrators to hire women band directors (23%). (qtd in Zaimont 400-401)

Other concerns:
Perceived isolation as women band directors...dealing with sexual advances from male colleagues...negative attitudes from conservative towns...problems in coping with colleagues' jealous wives...the struggle to gain students' acceptance as the person who would be conducting the band...obtaining assistance from a biased administration...coping with discipline problems...(and) lack of experience with marching bands. (qtd in Zaimont 400)

Advice:

Prove yourself – first and foremost, and, to the greatest extent individually possible, be strong. Also important is to work within the system and function effectively by being firm with discipline, asserting your program needs, and being supportive of other band directors. (qtd in Zaimont 402)

My Glass is Half Full on Good Days
(Acceptance, Understanding, and Change)

When I first took on the task of studying women conductors, I was torn as to how I should feel about the division between sexes. If I could only figure that out, I would know how to address the subjects of my work and be able to think of myself and my lot in life on clear terms. This challenge was particularly acidic as there are no right or wrong answers, just opinions. Once I allowed myself to dismiss the shoulds, I was able to know how I really felt, and discovered my own, ever-evolving opinion.

Culture is very important to me, and to thrive within it, I must see myself as an integral part of the picture. Therefore, I am not only a female: I am a woman. Considering too, that categorization is a valuable learning tool to guide greater
understanding, I don’t mind using the English language to divide women and men conductors. With my opinion in working condition, my values, beliefs, and attitudes about gender, bias, and how they apply to women in the field of conducting, as stated before, inevitably (and purposefully) are allowed to influence the tone of my writing.

I admit, that my own gender-awareness is so young that I still feel the rage of being slighted for a femininity that I cannot (and want not) change. I have read of those who have grown past the naïve idea that gender constructions equal discrimination, so I am optimistic. It is my hope that this section will provide the reader with insight into the wisdom of scholars whose perspectives have evolved out of understanding, just as it continues to do for me.

One way that women vary in their approaches to gender bias and beliefs about their roles is how they identify themselves – If I am first and foremost a woman, I will take negative occurrences, comments, or inferences as a direct result of my woman-ness (Moisala 8). If I am ultimately a musician, I will take adversity as a challenge to improve my musicianship. This little-acknowledged role that describes one’s self-proclaimed identity is the root of much of the friction that occurs when a “woman” is offended by the “musician’s” lack of support for her gender. If a musician (who happens to be a woman) is discriminated against, she can improve her musicianship. If a woman (who also happens to be a musician) faces the same, she tries to improve her woman-ness, which in traditional America, connotes a weaker musician and leader. The musician obviously gets the better, fairer deal, but she aborts her gender roles and ideals to achieve it (9). She cannot partake of those attributes of woman-ness in America without jeopardizing her set identity and acceptance.
In the Moisala collection, Linda Dusman tells of her initial experience with realizing that women are different – either through one's culture or biological makeup – from men (Moisala 11). She called it “female-awareness” (11). She recalled that her experience with electronics made her doubt her abilities every time there was a problem. When men have problems with technology it is nothing more than a problem with technology – they fix it and go on, but when women have problems with technology, it is perceivably because they are women – a result of social construct. She feels that the same is true for conductors – men try to solve problems with the band or orchestra, while many women try to solve problems with themselves.

Karen Pegley, in the same collection, makes a very interesting point when contrasting her trumpet performance career and her career as a music educator (Moisala 12). In her words, she “...had the “right” gender, but the “wrong” sex” in performance, but she was “...the “right” sex, ...(and) the “wrong” gender” in music education (qtd in Moisala 12). In other words, she faced adversity because she was a woman who was playing a traditionally masculine role as a trumpeter, but as a teacher, she fit the bill being female yet had trouble gaining acceptance because of her masculine traits that were not congruent with the social expectations for women.

Here is where it gets squirrely. When a woman dismisses the social construct for her gender, and she becomes more masculine to her culture’s standards, she can freely participate and communicate in the masculine roles, one of which is conducting. The popular social construction in America was at one time restrictive in its treatment of women who wished to break the gender barrier. Now, contemporary North American culture would rather have a woman assume feminine traits (babies, food on the table,
skirt, high heals, make-up, and the lot) at the same time as she tries her hand in a masculine field. Regardless of whether the popular consensus is to applaud the breach of norm, women are still expected to adhere to the gendered constructs that make her an anomaly. Once that woman dismisses her femininity, she is no longer an extraordinary figure.

It is important to interject here an anthropological perspective of gender and the workforce. Conrad Kottak contests that while “mainstream American society...requires hybrid gender consciousness, (where) men and women, by choice or by necessity, routinely assume domestic and public roles and tasks that are capacity-dependent rather than gender-specific,” no one is trapped into a mold (Kottak 140-141). He insists that most people who participate in mainstream America (especially in the professional world) are, or eventually become, transgendered – “...bending and blending the standards of gender...” (Kottak 140-141).

There is only so far though, that a woman can go in dismissing her femininity. First, there are the outward biological differences that become gendered. Once John forgets Jane is a woman and treats her as an equal, Joe will recognize her womanhood and she’ll be at square one with him. Secondly, a woman who believes she must dismiss what she has become growing up in a gendered society, experiences an emotional setback and she will have to essentially come of age (and come to terms with herself) in the new set of gender rules she wants to adopt. She virtually goes through a second adolescence and grows a new identity with new priorities.

In many cases, the guise under which women are accepted is innocent. The inflictor doesn’t know that she/he is inflicting, but it is harmful regardless (Moisala 14).
A woman is accepted wholly as either 'one of the guys', as the mascot, or as the pretty little thing who needs fathering. In the long run, this is not a resolve, but an abatement—a continuation of the bias constructed in America.

What of change? Marcia Herndon looks to three theories of evolutionary biology to explain the impetus for change in gender stratification (Moisala 354). Careful examination of the theories will reveal three possible sources for the evolution whether for an individual or for society as a whole: Competition for social interaction, forced cooperation, or best-fit.

The first theory, the Red Queen Hypothesis, implies that a woman must be in the "social running" to win favorable social perception (Moisala 354). The theory inherited its title from the red queen in *Alice in Wonderland* who says: "'It takes all the running you can do to stay in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that'"', implying, those who stay in the running are in a better position than those who reach the end (Marcia Herndon qtd in Moisala 354). As it describes gender roles, change is stimulated by social interaction. Where there is no negotiation, competition arises on the grounds that genders are ranked by the way that society perceives them to be related.

The second theory, the Punctuated Equilibrium Model, uses historical evidence to show how forced cooperation initiated to ease physical or social conflict often evens a discriminatory playing field (Moisala 355). It finds the stimulus for change in the disequilibria in the physical or social environment: Change arises from natural disaster or social/cultural conflict (356). Two physical examples: (1) gender roles shifted as slaves were brought to America, and (2) roles changed drastically when WWII brought a
need for personnel. A social example: the shift in gender roles out of the women's rights movement in the twentieth century, where women gained more political and professional influence (355).

Finally, the "Nice" Theory states that whoever fits the bill, fills it (Moisala 356). Neither competition for social interaction nor conflict-induced cooperation, the Nice Theory sees that some "nice" factor – an objective need – will fill the position at hand. If a certain individual is better suited for the job than another, she/he will fulfill that role, just as a flower that is equally as beautiful as the other won't survive if the sunlight and water conditions aren't tailored to its needs.

Now, just as there are several angles on gender, bias, and change, so there are specifically in relation to women in a music profession. For instance, some women feel that speaking out about gender bias is necessary to maintain the status that women have achieved in music today. In 1849, Louise Otto-Peters foreshadowed such sentiment when he wrote, "The history of all times, and of today especially, teaches that...women will be forgotten if they forget to think about themselves" (qtd in Groh np). Then there are those that feel that women are still fighting the equality battle: "I cannot ask for the right to succeed; I can ask only for the right to try on equal terms" (Edith Borroff qtd in Groh np).

Others who don't know what to think today know that tomorrow is filled with promise. Even before the 1940s, sixty years ago, women were encouraged by writers like Mr. Deems Taylor, author of The Well-Tempered Listener, who insisted, that "...prejudice is rapidly crumbling and is likely to disappear entirely in a few years (1940, mind you). For this," he asserts, "we have to thank our high school bands and orchestras,
which offer instruction and experience in playing all orchestral instruments to boys and girls alike” (qtd in Groh 115). One has to wonder though, if (as Frederique Petrides suggested in 1940) women are “freed from the shackles and tatters of the old tradition and prejudice…”, why are there still issues today with the number of women in the field of conducting and their acceptance (qtd in Groh 126)? Her glass was definitely half full.
Appendix I
The Women

Marin Alsop
Carolyn Barber
Tanya Best
Susan Creasap
Leslie Eckstein
Apo Hsu
Sue Jehl
Linda Moorhouse
Michelle Oyler
Debbie Shelton
Andrea Strauss
Barbara Day Turner
Nan Washburn
Diane Wittry
Melanie Wright
Appendix II
The Questions

Biographical Information – Personal and Professional:
Where and when were you born?
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what?
What is your family heritage?
What is/was your father’s primary occupation?
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation?
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age?
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban?
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)?
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution?
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class?
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how?
What is your primary instrument?
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career?
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend?
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers?
What and where, now, is your primary occupation?
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation?
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages?

Personal and Professional Obstacles:
Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you
overcome it?
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession?
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender?
If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity
leave? Did you face adversity from yourself?
Do you enjoy your job?
Have you ever felt burnt out?
If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything?

Advice/Words of Wisdom:
Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female?
When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models?
What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers?
Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate
career that you know now?
Appendix III
Feedback for Insight, Confidence, and Vision

Conducting Professions Represented

- Orchestral (O)
  - Alsop
  - Eckstein
  - Hsu
  - Turner
  - Washburn
  - Wittry

- College (C)
  - Barber
  - Creasap
  - Moorhouse
  - Strauss

- Jr./Sr. High (J)
  - Wright

- Middle (M)
  - Jehl
  - Oyler
  - Shelton

- Retired/Out of Field (R)
  - Best

* Capital letters are herein used to abbreviate the positions represented.
Areas of Employment

Markers indicate state or country, not exact location. Objects are not drawn to scale.

- California – 2
- Connecticut – 1
- England – 1
- Georgia – 1
- Indiana – 3
- Kentucky – 2
- Louisiana – 1
- Michigan – 1
- Missouri – 1
- Nebraska – 1
- New York – 1
- Ohio – 1
- Pennsylvania – 1
Positions Held*

Orchestral:

(UK) Alsop – Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra – Principal Conductor
    Eckstein – Unemployed
(MO) Hsu – Springfield Symphony Orchestra – Symphony Music Director
(CA) Turner – San Jose Chamber Orchestra – conductor
(MI) Washburn – Plymouth Symphony Orchestra – Music Director and Conductor
(CA) Washburn – West Hollywood Orchestra – Artistic Director and Conductor
(PA) Wittry – Allentown Symphony Orchestra – Music Director and Conductor
(CT) Wittry – Norwalk Symphony Orchestra – Music Director and Conductor

College:

(NE) Barber – University of Nebraska – Director of Bands
(KY) Creasap – Morehead State University – Assistant Director of Bands
(LA) Moorhouse – Louisiana State University – Associate Director of Bands
(GA) Strauss – Georgia Institute of Technology – Director of Bands

Jr./Sr. High School:

(IN) Wright – Daleville Jr./Sr. High School – Director of Music and Dance

Middle School:

(IN) Jehl – Summit Middle School – Band Director
(IN) Oyler – Hamilton Southeastern Junior High School – Director of Bands
(KY) Shelton – Morton Middle School – Band Director

Other:

(IN) Jehl – Fort Wayne Area Community Band – Assistant Conductor

Retired/Out of Field:

(OH) Best – Retired/Out of Field

---

* Some conductors are listed twice, indicating more than one position held.
Primary Instruments*

- Clarinet: Jehl (M), Moorhouse (C), Shelton (M), Strauss (C), Wright (J)
- Piano: Eckstein (O), Hsu (O), Turner (O)
- Horn: Barber (C), Creasap (C), Oyler (M)
- Percussion: Eckstein (O), Best (R)
- Violin: Alsop (O), Wittry (O)
- String Bass: Hsu (O)
- Flute: Washburn (O)
- Harpsichord: Turner (O)
- Organ: Turner (O)

* Some conductors have indicated more than one primary instrument.
Undergraduate Education  
(Approximately 1960-1990)

Alsop (O)  
Barber (C)  
Best (R)  
Creasap (C)  
Eckstein (O)  
Hsu (O)  
Jehl (M)  
Moorhouse (C)  
Oyler (M)  
Shelton (M)  
Strauss (C)  
Turner (O)  
Washburn (O)  
Wittry (O)  
Wright (J)

Yale University  
Northern University  
Bowling Green State University  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
State University of New York at Stony Brook  
Taipei  
Ball State University  
University of Florida  
Ball State University  
University of Kentucky  
University of Southern California  
San Jose State University  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
University of Southern California  
Ball State University

Graduate Education  
(Approximately 1970-present)

Alsop (O)  
Barber (C)  
Best (R)  
Creasap (C)  
Eckstein (O)  
Hsu (O)  
Jehl (M)  
Moorhouse (C)  
Oyler (M)  
Shelton (M)  
Strauss (C)  
Turner (O)  
Washburn (O)  
Wittry (O)  
Wright (J)

Juilliard  
Yale University  
Northwestern University  
University of Dayton  
University of Findlay  
University of Minnesota  
Ball State University  
State University of New York at Stony Brook  
Hartt School of Music  
Ball State University  
Louisiana State University  
University of Washington  
Ball State University  
Georgetown College  
University of South Carolina  
University of Southern Mississippi  
San Jose State University  
New England Conservatory of Music  
University of Southern California  
Ball State University

* Both degrees earned in field other than music – Master of Science in Education, School Counseling and Administration
### Year of Birth

![Bar chart showing the distribution of years of birth for conductors. The years range from 1951 to 1968.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Year of birth</th>
<th>Approximate Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creasap (C)</td>
<td>Marion, OH</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washburn (O)</td>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner (O)</td>
<td>Framingham, MA</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsu (O)</td>
<td>Keelung, Taiwan</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eckstein (O)</td>
<td>New York City, NY</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehl (M)</td>
<td>East Lansing, MI</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelton (M)</td>
<td>Agana Hts, Guam</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alsop (O)</td>
<td>New York City, NY</td>
<td></td>
<td>mid-40s*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strauss (C)</td>
<td>Buffalo, NY</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorhouse (C)</td>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best (R)</td>
<td>Dayton, OH</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright (J)</td>
<td>Anderson, IN</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyler (M)</td>
<td>Noblesville, IN</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber (C)</td>
<td>Elgin, IL</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wittry (O)</td>
<td>Pasadena, CA</td>
<td></td>
<td>never tells</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Statistics**: Range: 17  
Mean: 1959.5  
Median: 1958  
Mode: 1958

---


**Calculated for the 13 conductors for which concrete information was available.
Birthplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Birthplace</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alsop (O)</td>
<td>New York City, NY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barber (C)</td>
<td>Elgin, IL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best (R)</td>
<td>Dayton, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creasap (C)</td>
<td>Marion, OH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eckstein (O)</td>
<td>New York City, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsu (O)</td>
<td>Keelung, Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehl (M)</td>
<td>East Lansing, MI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorhouse (C)</td>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyler (M)</td>
<td>Noblesville, IN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelton (M)</td>
<td>Agana Hts, Guam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strauss (C)</td>
<td>Buffalo, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner (O)</td>
<td>Framingham, MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washburn (O)</td>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wittry (O)</td>
<td>Pasadena, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright (J)</td>
<td>Anderson, IN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Markers indicate state, country, or region, not exact location. Objects are not drawn to scale.
Family Heritage

French
Canadian
Chinese
Italian
Lithuanian
Polish
Native
American
American
French
Irish

Ethnicity*

Alsop (O) American
Barber (C) English/Polish/Lithuanian
Best (R) Polish/Irish
Creasap (C) Welsh/English/German
Eckstein (O) German/Irish
Hsu (O) Chinese
Jehl (M) French Canadian
Moorhouse (C) British
Oyler (M) American/German/French
Shelton (M) Irish
Strauss (C) Italian/English
Turner (O) French/English/Penobscot Indian
Washburn (O) Hispanic/English
Wittry (O) French/German/American Indian
Wright (J) German

*Caucasian includes the following: White/White – Anglo/Eastern European/Basic White American.
Size of High School Attended

To get the ranges of the categories – small, medium, and large:
I took the difference of the 'All Positions' range (662), and divided by 3 (220.6). I rounded to the nearest one and added 221 to 30 (251), 221 to 251 (472), and 221 to 472 (693) to get the upper limits of the categories. Notice, I cut the upper limit of the 'Large' category by 1 so that it would not exceed the upper limit of the 'All Positions' range. This did not affect the results. Refer to table.

**One conductor was unsure of her high school graduating class size.**
Type of High School Attended

- Public
  - Barber
  - Best
  - Creasap
  - Jehl
  - Oyler
  - Shelton
- Private
  - Strauss
  - Turner
  - Washburn
  - Wittry
  - Wright

Hometown Settings

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

Urban
- (O) Alsop
- (C) Creasap
- (O) Eckstein
- (O) Hsu

Suburban
- (C) Barber
- (R) Best
- (M) Jehl
- (C) Moorhouse
- (M) Oyler

Rural
- (M) Shelton
- (C) Strauss
- (O) Turner
- (O) Washburn
- (O) Wittry
- (C) Creasap

* One conductor did not indicate the type of school she attended.
** Several conductors indicate multiple settings.
Some conductors grew up in more than one area. Markers indicate state or country, not exact location. Objects are not drawn to scale.
Position Among Siblings

- Only Child
- Youngest
- Somewhere in the Middle
- Oldest

### Only Child
- (O) Alsop
- (R) Best

### Oldest Child
- (C) Creasap
- (C) Moorhouse
- (M) Shelton
- (O) Turner
- (J) Wright

### Youngest Child
- (C) Barber
- (O) Eckstein
- (O) Hsu
- (M) Oyler

### Somewhere in the Middle
- (M) Jehl
- (C) Strauss
- (O) Washburn
- (O) Wittry

---

Conductors' Moms who are Moms*

- Housewife
- Housewife and Other
- Other

---

* See following page for primary occupations.
Mother’s Primary Occupation

Strauss (C)  Housewife
Turner (O)  Housewife
Wittry (O)  Housewife
Barber (C)  Housewife and Bookkeeper
Creasap (C)  Housewife and Worked in a Jewelry Store
Hsu (O)  Housewife
Jehl (M)  Housewife and Bookkeeper
Moorhouse (C)  Housewife, Singer, and works in Contracts and Grants
Wright (J)  Housewife and Entrepreneur
Washburn (O)  Housewife and Commercial Artist

Alsop (O)  Cellist
Best (R)  Waitress and Gift Wrap/Shipping Specialist
Eckstein (O)  Promotions/Advertising Director for Fashion Magazines
Oyler (M)  Accredited Records Technician
Shelton (M)  Works in Tourism

Father’s Primary Occupation

Strauss (C)  Supervisor of an Electric Company
Turner (O)  Technical Writer
Wittry (O)  Professor
Barber (C)  Telecommunications Consultant
Creasap (C)  Division Storekeeper for Several Major Railroads
Hsu (O)  Physician
Jehl (M)  Professor
Moorhouse (C)  Mechanical Engineer
Wright (J)  Farmer and Worked for a Manufacturing Plant
Washburn (O)  Certified Public Accountant

Alsop (O)  Concertmaster
Best (R)  Bartender
Eckstein (O)  Independent Advertising Director
Oyler (M)  Worked for a Newspaper
Shelton (M)  Worked in Hardware
**Children**

![Pie chart showing the distribution of biological and step children among conductors.]

- **None**
  - (O) Alsop
  - (C) Barber
  - (R) Best
  - (C) Creasap
  - (O) Eckstein
  - (O) Hsu

- **Step**
  - (O) Moorhouse
  - (M) Oyler
  - (M) Shelton
  - (O) Turner
  - (O) Washburn
  - (J) Wright

- **Biological**
  - (O) Wittry
  - (M) Jehl

- **Biological & Step**
  - (C) Strauss

Conductors who are Mothers

![Bar graph showing the distribution of mothers in various positions among conductors.]

- **Conductors**
  - Total

- **Positions**
  - Orchestral
  - College
  - Jr./Sr. High
  - Middle
  - Out of Field

- **Total Mothers**
  - 6
  - 5
  - 4
  - 3
  - 2
  - 1
  - 0
Spouses

- Spouse in Other Field
- No Spouse
- Spouse in Music

No Spouse
- Spouse Currently in Music Field (spouse's career listed)
  - (O) Alsop - Hsu - Music administration
  - (C) Barber - Shelton - Band director
  - (O) Eckstein - Turner - Opera director
  - (C) Moorhouse
  - (M) Oyler - Spouse Currently in Field other than Music (spouse's career listed)
  - (J) Wright - Best - Ex-band director, now real estate attorney
  - (C) Creasap - History professor
  - (M) Jehl - High School history teacher
  - (C) Strauss - Attorney and active trumpet player
  - (O) Washburn - Photographer and works for a non-profit organization
  - (O) Wittry - Graphic designer and watercolor artist

Conductors who are Wives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current married</th>
<th>Conductors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orchestral</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jr./Sr. High</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of the Field</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Married</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Obstacles

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it?

Orchestral

Alsop

Eckstein Health obstacles are a daily struggle. A teacher once told me I would never have a career.

Hsu No, all people I encountered were extremely encouraging & supportive.

Turner Early on, I had a tendency to cry when things went wrong. I had to force myself to not do that!

Washburn

Wittry Every day life is full of obstacles... the first is probably the problems you face when you graduate from college in conducting, and you don’t have any experience so no one will hire you. How do you stay in the field and still make enough money to live on? All conductors find their own way through this time period.

College

Barber Embouchure Dystonia at Yale – couldn’t play my horn (muscle spasms, etc.) Worked around it by going back to square one and starting over as a player. Very frustrating, but I learned a lot and it pointed me in the direction of conducting which was a great bonus.

Creasap Many obstacles but all have been overcome because I just made up my mind to achieve what I wanted!

Moorhouse Sure, mostly prejudice...just ignored it and tried to do my best.

Strauss Any obstacle in life is overcome by perseverance.

Jr./Sr. High

Wright I face the obstacle of self-confidence every day. Although this issue has matured through age, it is still a struggle.

Middle

Jehl It seems there are always obstacles to face (budget cuts, scheduling changes etc.) You have keep yourself well informed, you have to educate
the people who are making the decisions and you have to advocate for your students and your program.

Oyler

I have faced obstacles in teaching almost every year of the twelve years that I have been teaching. They were mostly battles with administrative decisions. Decisions that could have detrimentally affected the band program. I overcame them by fighting and not giving-up!!!! I wrote proposals, scheduled meetings with my administrators, and asked for parent support.

Shelton

There were many obstacles when I first started teaching. In my first interview, I was told they were looking for a man for the High School position. Boy...I could sue now!

Retired/Out of Field

Best

A big obstacle for me was when I failed to make the top concert band at BGSU my junior year, after having already been a member. Unfortunately, the percussionists did not audition, they were hand-picked. I overcame my disappointment by joining the orchestra instead, which was a good experience for me (though none of my friends were in it, and I did miss them : )
Scarcity of Females

Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession?

**Orchestral**

Alsop

Eckstein No, that never bothered me.

Hsu No

Turner Not because of the scarcity, but because of the lack of access to better and higher-paying jobs. (though it is a lot better than it was 20 years ago!)

**Washburn**

Wittry Not really – I keep my focus on the music and doing what I love. Bringing people together to make and hear great music.

**College**

Barber Nope

Creasap Not by the scarcity but by the assumption by others that a woman could not possibly be the band director of a high school band and then later in my life a college band. Most of my male colleagues however are wonderful and I feel little discrimination at this point in my life.

Moorhouse Rarely

Strauss No

**Jr./Sr. High**

Wright I feel discouraged a great deal of the time because there are few women in our profession. The high school level in particular does not seem to attract women for a number of years. Often, I believe that women feel they must make a choice between the long hours of being a high school band director and getting married and having children. I had to come to terms with that decision myself. It is very difficult. Extreme sacrifices are made with either decision.

**Middle School**

Jehl There are quite a few females that teach at the middle school level.
Oyler: Sometimes I feel like we women have to be ten times as good as the guys in order to gain the same credit.

Shelton: I don’t think I was ever discouraged. It just made me work that much harder.

Retired/Out of the Field

Best: No, I never felt discouraged because I like the challenge of working with men!
Gender Discrimination

Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender?

Orchestral

Alsop

Eckstein Yes, but only by other women.

Hsu Not personally

Turner Yes, but not very often.

Washburn

Wittry I don't feel that that is my battle. The world is where it is... once again... my focus is on always doing the best job that I can do and bringing my unique skills and personality to everything that I do.

College

Barber Nope

Creasap In high school I was told at an audition for district band that girls did not have the stamina to play principal horn... I played principal horn throughout my college years! ...and professionally beyond that! I was told that "little girls don't teach band in Memphis, TN" but I did for 11 years!

Moorhouse Yes

Strauss Sure

Jr./Sr. High

Wright I have been discriminated against in my profession. One particular incident occurred in North Carolina. The representative from a local music company would constantly comment on my appearance while mentioning the musicality of the other middle school band, directed by a male. During those five years, the playing ability of my group surpassed the other middle school. I always felt that I had to work twice as hard to gain the attention that a man receives for mediocrity.

Middle

Jehl No, not discriminated against. When I first started teaching, I taught high school in Fort Wayne. I felt out of the band director loop. I attributed this
Oyler

I have been in situations where I was the only female band director with a group of male directors and I felt like they didn't give me the same amount of respect. I have had male directors make comments to me such as "you are a great conductor for a woman."

Shelton

Guess I answered that already. (There were many obstacles when I first started teaching. In my first interview, I was told they were looking for a man for the High School position. Boy...I could sue now!)

Retired/Out of the Field

Best

Not really feelings of "discrimination"- but I do think that women have to "prove" themselves.
Maternity

If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself?

**Orchestral**

Alsop  
Eckstein  
Hsu  
Turner  
Washburn  
Wittry

**College**

Barber  
Creasap  
Moorhouse

Strauss  No

**Jr./Sr. High**

Wright

**Middle**

Jehl  No adversity from others. It was a struggle that I had to work through. It was hard to take a break from school. You have so much ownership of your program that it is hard to turn it over to someone else. It is hard to find a qualified replacement. It was also hard to leave my son with a sitter when I went back to work.

Oyler  Shelton

**Retired/Out of Field**

Best  I do not have children, only dogs. But I don't think it would be easy to be a mother AND a band director (or any other occupation really, that takes up a great amount of time, i.e. nights/weekends)
Job Satisfaction

Do you enjoy your job?

Orchestral

Alsop  It is fantastic!

Eckstein  Conducting? Absolutely.

Hsu  Yes

Turner  Love it.

Washburn  Most of the time

Wittry  I love what I do and I would never do anything else.

College

Barber  Absolutely

Creasap  Yes and no....we are seeing students who are not well prepared to be music majors and I find myself teaching things that my junior high players did with ease. It is frustrating and could lead to burn out but I am smart about how I handle these things now.

Moorhouse  Yes

Strauss  Yes

Jr./Sr. High

Wright  I love my job. I realize that my particular job would not be appealing to most directors with my level of experience; however, I have always liked to place myself in a situation where I could help the underdog. When I was an undergraduate, I wanted to be a head director at a “Class A” school. I began my career as the Assistant Director of Bands at Snider High School in Fort Wayne. After three years, I wanted my own program, but I was never attracted to the bigger schools again. The intimate setting of a small school holds special appeal for me. I may not be recognized for a State Marching Band Championship (anymore!) or a top-level Concert Band, but I do know that I make a difference in the lives of children. When I taught at Waccamaw High School in South Carolina, we won the IA State Marching Band Championship and our Concert Band consistently scored superior ratings in grades four and five. Personally, I wanted a more human approach to music education. Sure, Daleville Jr./Sr. High School may not be a place to showcase my talents, but once I moved beyond the “need to please” I have seen the value in daily contact with
students that have the same desire for learning about music. Their talents have just not been tapped yet in this situation.

_Middle_

**Jehl**
I absolutely love it!

**Oyler**
Yes!!

**Shelton**
I love my job.

_Retired/Out of Field_

**Best**
Yes, I do now (as a guidance counselor for 10 years) and I did then (as a band director for 9 years).
Burn Out

Have you ever felt burnt out?

Orchestral

Alsop  No
Eckstein  Yes, from organizational politics.
Hsu  No
Turner  Only once in a while.
Washburn  Yes! Mostly because I’m still having to work for small organizations without a lot of staffing. It means I have to do lots more administrative work than I’d like.
Wittry  Sure, everyone gets burnt out and tired... then you relax your schedule, regroup and keep going.

College

Barber  Nope – but it’s not always sunny.
Creasap  Yes, when I taught band in innercity Memphis...it was difficult and stressful. A change of jobs helped a great deal!
Moorhouse  Yes...much of the time during marching season (I write drill for our group)
Strauss  No

Jr./Sr. High

Wright  Sometimes I have questioned myself about my career-not in any serious manner. When I taught five years in North Carolina at Morehead Middle School, I really wanted to open a dance studio in addition to teaching band. While teaching at Waccamaw High School in South Carolina, I was the only director. The community was fairly affluent and had high expectations. I worked several hours per day. The sacrifice paid off in the long run, but I was exhausted most of the time. This can prove to be a lonely time as well. Since I was far away from family, I established a support system of friends. But in the end, I still went home by myself. That emptiness was not one that I expected. Ironically, it would manifest itself at my greatest career moments because I had no one that could share these highlights.
**Middle**

**Jehl**

Sure! That's what summers are for, to recharge your batteries.

**Oyler**

There are those days!

**Shelton**

Sure.

---

**Retired/Out of Field**

**Best**

Oh yes, many times- I think it is unavoidable if you work hard at your job.
Retrospect

If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything?

Orchestral

Alsop        Not a thing. It would have been great to be able to start conducting earlier, when I was in my teens and my serious interest began.

Eckstein     I’d study harder.

Hsu           Yes. Study harder. Travel more.

Turner       I would be more aggressive at a younger age.

Washburn     Maybe starting conducting earlier. I am glad I was a professional flutist but there are also age-related issues having started conducting so late.

Wittry       I would have taken a second conducting degree somewhere before just starting to work. I had to learn too much on the job. A two-year degree in conducting is not enough time to master the art. It takes a lifetime. I am still studying and attending master class and coaching situations. I want to keep learning the rest of my life.

College

Barber       I’d prefer not to have had my playing go to heck in grad school, but other than that, no.

Creasap      No I don’t think so...life is a journey and you learn from every experience. Each obstacle, each triumph has made me appreciate my life and the gift of music. So I have to say it has all been important to my development as a musician and person.

Moorhouse    Probably not

Strauss      Nothing

Jr./Sr. High

Wright       I would never trade being a teacher. I only wish that I were as comfortable with myself in my twenties as I am now at age thirty-six. My self-confidence is still a daily struggle, but it is much better than a decade ago.

Middle

Jehl          No
Oyler  I would have studied all of the instruments more in college. The rest would stay much the same.

Shelton  Yes. I would hang with high school a while longer. I've always felt there were a few more things I could have done with my high school band. (Now Primary Director at Morton Middle School)

*Retired/Out of Field*

Best  Possibly I would have chosen to get my college music education on the west coast or east coast, rather than staying in Ohio. Money was definitely a factor in my decision, though.
**Mentors**

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female?

**Orchestral**

**Alsop**

Eckstein Regrettably, no.

**Hsu**

Yes. Several, both male and female.

**Turner**

Many mentors along the way, mostly male.

**Washburn**

A wonderful teacher, Harold Farberman at the Conductors Institute.

**Wittry**

I had lots of part time mentors... but never felt that really close relationship with someone who was really going to help you with your career.

**College**

**Barber**

Yes, several. All male.

**Creasap**

Several mentors----Mr. Paul McCandless was my high school band director; Dr. Ralph Hale and his brother Jack Hale took me under their wings in Memphis; Dr. Joseph Scagnoli at Ball State believed in me and taught me to be a college director; and Gladys Wright has surely been a real guide for me!

**Moorhouse**

Yes. Female band director at the high school I graduated from...I went to two different high schools. She was inducted posthumously into the Florida Bandmasters Hall of Fame this past November. She died of ovarian cancer in 1995.

After I graduated, she allowed me to teach and work at the high school while I was getting my BMEd. She had me chart for the marching band, doing administrative things, and found outside teaching opportunities for me in the guard area. She was the one who said, "you're going to be a band director" when I was a senior in high school. She was very influential and a wonderful musician and teacher. I saw a lot of jealousy and prejudice toward her as a female band director. Seeing those things made me mad, but made me a stronger individual in the end.

**Strauss**

I did - male. A passion for teaching and a love of music is not gender bias
Jr./Sr. High

Wright
I have had three outstanding mentors. Susan Finger was my middle school band director. She had a powerful influence on me through her structure and consistency. She was only a second and third year teacher at the time!! Barry Ashton, Director of Bands at Fort Wayne Northrop High School, was my student teaching supervisor. He had charisma, fortitude, and guts that I wanted to emulate. Harry Stanfield, Principal of Morehead City Middle School, was a gift from God. He was a catalyst to my teaching abilities. Mr. Stanfield challenged me to become a better teacher by learning more about my craft and then sharing it with my older colleagues. He often tapped into the younger teachers because of our enthusiasm.

Middle

Jehl
No mentor- I wish I had! I have good band directors in my school corporation. We work together on a daily basis. It is very helpful for me to be able to bounce ideas off of them.

Oyler
She is still to this day my mentor. Her name is Susan Finger. She teaches music at Eastside Middle School in Anderson, IN.

Shelton
I think every music teacher that came into my life was my mentor. You learn from everyone.

Retired/Out of Field

Best
In H.S.- my mentor was my jr. high band director; In College- my mentor was my H.S. Choir director (who doubled as my boyfriend, seriously). In my 1st job- my mentor was my husband (who was not my husband or my boyfriend then) and my 2 co-workers- 1 male brass player, 1 female woodwind player.
### Role Models

When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models?

#### Orchestral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alsop</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eckstein</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsu</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner</td>
<td>Not really.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washburn</td>
<td>JoAnn Falletta was a early role model of mine not connected to my studying, however. We worked together for 5 years with the Women’s Philharmonic. I actually recruited her to be the Music Director &amp; Conductor while I was the Artistic Director in charge of programming, historical research and commissioning new works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wittry</td>
<td>No</td>
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#### College

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barber</td>
<td>Nope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creasap</td>
<td>None except Elizabeth Green as a teacher...I read her book and do her conducting exercises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moorhouse</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strauss</td>
<td>No</td>
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#### Jr./Sr. High

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wright</td>
<td>Although Paula Crider was my All-State Band Director during my sophomore year in high school, I remember little about her conducting. I mostly remember the impact of a woman attaining such a position. Years later, in 1997 I saw Eugene Corporon conduct the South Carolina All-State Band. He was amazing!!! He pulled the musicality out of the ensemble, but did not raise his voice to achieve the objective. I felt as though we were on the same philosophical level. I completed his conducting collegium the following year. It was an incredible experience!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jehl</td>
<td>Not when I was studying conducting, but in middle school I had a female student teacher. It was the first female band director that I ever met. She</td>
</tr>
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inspired me to pursue my dream.

Oyler  My role models in conducting have been men.

Shelton  No

Retired/Out of Field

Best  No, I really did not- all of my role models in that area were male- something I never thought about before :) I guess maybe the only female director I came in contact with came during my student teaching stint here at CGHS. She was the asst. director here at that time.
Advice

What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers?

Orchestral

Alsop  Never give up and never interpret any rejections as gender based – use every opportunity to better yourself and every rejection as an opportunity to reassess how you can improve.

Eckstein  Nothing should stop you.

Hsu  Work hard, be prepared, enjoy the results, there are no substitute to real knowledge, hard work and experiences

Turner  Go for it, and learn not to be too modest.

Washburn

Wittry  Study your music. Know your stuff. Work very hard on your organizational skills and your people skills. Take a speech class. Learn how to read a budget. Know how to adapt to working with people with a variety of working styles. Get involved with the “net-work”.

College

Barber  Go for it – if it’s what you want to do and you have the talent, then don’t worry about whether there are other people like you doing it. Find the best person out there and emulate him/her – don’t waste your time trying to find a role model that looks/acts/sounds like you.

Creasap  You can be anything you want to be if you are willing to work toward that goal! Trust your instincts and believe that all things are possible.

Go to workshops, ask lots of questions, observe rehearsals, listen to everything you can and then listen more with a score in front of you. Find a great mentor. Choose a conducting program where you feel comfortable and where you have a mentor!

Moorhouse  Be the best you can in all that you do academically; be involved in every aspect of the program from library work to how the office runs; volunteer for as much as you can; don’t be afraid to get your hands dirty; and dress professionally while on the podium.

Strauss  Go for it!
Wright

I have two pieces of advice for women who want to study conducting careers. First of all, study dance. Movement is an extension of the music. Students that have been active in music and dance have excelled at both as a result. Subtle gestures become natural and not forced. The other advice is to gain a few years of teaching experience as an assistant director and then go to graduate school full time. Gene Corporon told me that he was looking at graduate assistants that had ten to twelve years of teaching experience. On the flip side, if one waits too long, it is difficult to leave students to go back full time. I could not bring myself to do it. I felt the need to attain higher education, but part-time has worked for me in order to stay in the classroom.

Jehl

Two things – Be flexible! It is a key to survival. Keep music FUN! It is the key to the perpetuation of your program. Also, be well prepared! People will respect you for what you can do.

Oyler

Be prepared to be ten times better than the guys in order to gain the credit.

Shelton

Be a good listener, never be satisfied, and work with master teachers. Don't give up. You have to be a little better than everyone else.

Retired/Out of Field

Best

Get involved – volunteer to serve on music committees and take charge of events, in order to network with your male counterparts.
Wisdom

Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now?

Orchestral

Alsop  That you are your own best benefactor and should always invest in yourself and pursue your passion above all else.

Eckstein  It’s a very hard business.

Hsu  Study hard, enjoy life, explore and experience all art forms, travel, create.

Turner  More than anything, that perseverance and stubbornness are a great asset!

Washburn

Wittry  One of the most important phrases I learned at a master class seminar with Jorge Mester was: “Tell them what you want – don’t criticize what they did”. I apply this to all my rehearsal comments – and my comments at meetings. The other most important thing is “Perseverance”

College

Barber  Can’t think of anything off hand. My mentors were pretty thorough.

Creasap  I wish they had let me be in the marching band----they told me I wouldn’t need that experience because I was a girl! The marching band was all males until 1972. Guess what I do here? However, I had a wonderful experience at IUP and felt totally prepared to teach because of the excellence of the faculty and my own desire to be successful.

Moorhouse  Politics are everywhere...you have to learn how to deal with the system.

Strauss  Follow your aspirations.

Jr./Sr. High

Wright  I wish that I would have been taught about dealing with parent-teacher conferences when I was an undergraduate. It is intimidating as a young career woman to support a case conference with people old enough to be the teacher’s parents!! I also wish that I would have known what Jim Croft told me at a conducting clinic: You must be okay spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically in order for your career to excel. I mistakenly thought that if I worked longer hours this would happen.
**Middle**

**Jehl**
There is so much more to the job than just being a conductor. I felt well prepared to be a conductor. I had to learn through trial and error how to be a good motivator, listener, organizer, communicator and advisor.

**Oyler**
The kids don't read the education books we studied in our undergraduate classes. Experience is the best teacher.

**Shelton**

**Retired/Out of Field**

**Best**
Because the performance of music takes on such a personal nature (interpretation, expression, genre preference, etc.), you can't be a "crybaby" in this business. You need to stand up for your musical convictions and be ready to defend them, but there is no room for hurt feelings or sour grapes, especially if you choose to go the competition route with your performing groups.
Marin Alsop

Comments: Firstly, I would highly recommend reviewing my website which contains most of the answers to your questions in either the timeline section or the FAQ section – OK? I will skip all that you can get from the site.

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? New York City, NY
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? American
What is your family heritage? American
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? Concertmaster for the New York City Ballet Orchestra
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? Cellist for the New York City Ballet Orchestra
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? none
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? urban
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? NYC and the suburbs
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? @ 100
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? Juilliard pre college
What is your primary instrument? Violin
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? Yale University
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? Juilliard
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? Started an all female string jazz group called String Fever
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? Is this question serious? Principal Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in Britain
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation?
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? none

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? Not getting into Juilliard conducting school and then studying conducting on her own – still pursuing her career.
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? No, encouraged by it.
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? Yes, by the audition board at Juilliard, by her mentor, and by board-run American orchestras, but she does not care to talk about or acknowledge it.
If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? N/A

* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
** Information that has been added to Ms. Alsop’s original response is italicized, and was accessed through: Official Website of Marin Alsop. Internet: http://www.marinalsop.com (February 2, 2003).
Do you enjoy your job? It is fantastic!
Have you ever felt burnt out? No
If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? Not a thing. It would have been great to be able to start conducting earlier, when I was in my teens and my serious interest began.

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? Website Male mentor: Leonard Bernstein
When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? No but (aside from Bernstein) she was heavily influenced by her parents
What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? Never give up and never interpret any rejections as gender based – use every opportunity to better yourself and every rejection as an opportunity to reassess how you can improve.
Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? That you are your own best benefactor and should always invest in yourself and pursue your passion above all else.
Leslie Eckstein

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? **Doctors Hospital, New York City, January 24, 1958**
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? **Caucasian.**
What is your family heritage? **My father was born in Munich, Germany in 1925. His family emigrated in 1937 to escape the Nazis. My mother was born and raised in Astoria, Queens. She is of Irish and German descent.**
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? **My father worked in advertising. He was once Advertising Director of ABC television. He started his own firm in the 1970s.**
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? **My mother worked as promotions/advertising director in the fashion magazine industry. She worked for Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, L'Officiel, Beauty Digest, and others.**
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? **Sister: 2 ½ years older. Half-brother: 14 years younger.**
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? **Urban**
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? **Manhattan, in New York City**
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? **Private**
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? **30-something**
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? **Chorus, operettas, orchestra, handbells.**
What is your primary instrument? **Piano, percussion**
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? **State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1975-1980, B.A. music, cum laude**
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? **Same, Master of Music, orchestral conducting, 1980-1982**
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? **Thoroughly and completely. Classes, orchestra, band, chorus, ensembles, recitals.**
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? **Conductor, perpetually looking for work.**
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? **Not currently.**
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? **I do not have children.**

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? **Health obstacles are a daily struggle. A teacher once told me I would never have a career.**
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? **No, that never bothered me.**
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? **Yes, but only by other women.**

* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? Do you enjoy your job? **Conducting? Absolutely.**
Have you ever felt burnt out? **Yes, from organizational politics.**
If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? **I'd study harder.**

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? **Regrettably, no.** When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? **No.**
What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? **Nothing should stop you.**
Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? **It's a very hard business.**
Apo Hsu*

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? Keelung, Taiwan. October, 7, 1956
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? Chinese
What is your family heritage? Chinese
What is/was your father's primary occupation? Physician
What is/was your mother's primary occupation? Home Maker
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? Yes. Four. Sister, 7 year older. Three brothers 5, 4, & 3 years older.
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? Urban
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? Keelung & Taipei, Taiwan
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? Public elementary, private Junior & High School.
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? Elementary, 50; Junior, 25; High, 50
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? Yes. Piano lessons, school orchestra & choir, music classes in theory, ear training, etc.
What is your primary instrument? Piano & String Bass
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? Taipei, 1975-80
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? Hartt School of Music, 1981-85
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? Major in performance on piano, string bass and orchestral conducting
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? Symphony music director, Springfield Symphony, Missouri
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? Yes. Music administration
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? No

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? No, all people I encountered were extremely encouraging & supportive
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? No
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? Not personally
If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? N/A
Do you enjoy your job? Yes
Have you ever felt burnt out? No
If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? Yes. Study harder. Travel more.

* Conductor's responses are presented in bold type.
Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? Yes. Several, both male and female
When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? Yes.
What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? Work hard, be prepared, enjoy the results, there are no substitutes to real knowledge, hard work and experiences
Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? Study hard, enjoy life, explore and experience all art forms, travel, create.
Barbara Day Turner

Comments: Good luck with your thesis!

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? 7/6/56 Framingham, MA
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? No
What is your family heritage? French, English, Penobscot Indian
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? Technical writer
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? Homemaker
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? 2 brothers and a sister. 18 months younger. 3 years younger. 7 years younger.
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? Suburban
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? Santa Barbara, CA
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? Public school.
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? 600
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? Sang in choir, accompanist for 2 choirs and musical theatre productions.
What is your primary instrument? Harpsichord (piano/organ)
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? San Jose State University, grad. 1980
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? San Jose State University, grad. 1984 MA in music/harpsichord performance
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? I was performing as an accompanist (for pay) throughout my years in college.
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? My primary occ. is as a conductor, with some keyboard appearances. Home base is San Jose CA, with the SJChamber Orchestra.
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? My husband is an opera director.
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? No children

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? Early on, I had a tendency to cry when things went wrong. I had to force myself not to do that!
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? Not because of the scarcity, but because of the lack of access to better and higher-paying jobs. (though it is a lot better than it was 20 years ago!)
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? Yes, but not very often.
If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself?

* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
Do you enjoy your job? **Love it.**  
Have you ever felt burnt out? **Only once in a while.**  
If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? **I would be more aggressive at a younger age.**

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? **Many mentors along the way, mostly male.**  
When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? **Not really.**  
What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? **Go for it, and learn not to be too modest.**  
Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? **More than anything, that perseverance and stubbornness are a great asset!**
Nan Washburn*

Comments: Sorry, I had finished most of this months ago and forgot about it. Not everything is answered but with 2 concerts back to back in the next two weeks, I've run out of time. Hopefully it will be of use. good luck!

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? Denver, CO 1954
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? 1/4 Hispanic 3/4 English
What is your family heritage? 1/4 Hispanic 3/4 English
What is/was your father's primary occupation? Certified Public Accountant
What is/was your mother's primary occupation? Homemaker but was trained as a commercial artist
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? I have 2 sisters (one 2 years older & one 5 years younger) and two brothers (one 10 years younger and one 12 years younger)
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? Suburban
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? I mostly grew up in Ventura, CA which is a town 75 miles north of Los Angeles
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution?
Public
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? I actually don't remember. It was fairly good sized—Buena High School in Ventura, CA
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? Yes. I was a member of the school orchestra which was a requirement for being in the local youth orchestra, the Ventura County Youth Orchestra
What is your primary instrument? Flute
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? University of California, Santa Barbara 1972-1976. BM in flute performance. Also attended the Music Academy of the West summers 1974 & 1975
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? New England Conservatory of Music, Boston 1977-1979 MM in Flute Performance
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers?
Undergrad: member of university orchestra, contemporary ensemble, flute choir, chamber music at school. Concurrently played professionally as the 2nd flute/piccolo player in both Santa Barbara and Ventura County Symphony Orchestras. Also took private flute lessons
Grad: member of the conservatory symphony, chamber music etc.
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? Music Director & Conductor, Plymouth Symphony (MI); Artistic Director & Conductor, West Hollywood Orchestra (CA)
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? Yes: works for a non profit organization and is also a photographer

* Conductor's responses are presented in bold type.
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? No

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it?
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession?
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender?
This is an on-going issue. I would suggest that you listen to the interview some of us were involved in on National Public Radio. I think you can still access it via the website at: http://music.mpr.org/features/0202_women/
If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? N/A
Do you enjoy your job? Most of the time
Have you ever felt burnt out? Yes! Mostly because I'm still having to work for small organizations without a lot of staffing. It means I have to do lots more administrative work than I'd like.
If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? Maybe starting conducting earlier. I am glad I was a professional flutist but there are also age-related issues having started conducting so late.

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? A wonderful teacher, Harold Farberman at the Conductors Institute
When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models?
JoAnn Falletta was a early role model of mine not connected to my studying, however. We worked together for 5 years with the Women's Philharmonic. I actually recruited her to be the Music Director & Conductor while I was the Artistic Director in charge of programming, historical research and commissioning new works.
What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers?
Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now?

* Unable to access the suggested website as of April 1, 2003.
Diane Wittry

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? **Pasadena, California – never tell my age**
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? **Basic White American**
What is your family heritage? **French, German, and American Indian**
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? **Professor at the University of Southern California in the Sciences. Material Science and Electrical Engineering.**
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? **Housewife**
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? **3 brothers, 1 sister. Each of us are about 2 years apart. I am the second to the youngest – I have 3 older brothers and 1 younger sister.**
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? **Pasadena is a suburb of Los Angeles**
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? **Pasadena, California – also lived for 1 year in England and for 6 months in Japan**
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? **Public School**
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? **400 students in graduating class. I was the validictorian.**
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? **Played in the orchestra at school, sang in the choir, helped out with the band. Played in the local youth orchestra (was concertmaster) went to summer music camp, sang in church choir.**
What is your primary instrument? **Violin**
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? **University of Southern California**
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? **University of Southern California – because Daniel Lewis was teaching conducting there.**
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? **Majored in violin. Undergrad. Majored in conducting. Graduate.**
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? **I am a professional conductor.**
Music Director and Conductor of the Allentown Symphony, PA, and Music Director and Conductor of the Norwalk Symphony, CT.
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? **My husband is a graphic designer and a water-color artist.**
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? **He has two children from his first marriage – they are grown and do not live with us.**

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? **Every day life is full of obstacles... the first is probably the problems you face when you graduate from college in conducting, and you don't have any experience so no one will hire you. How do you stay in the field and still make**

*Conductor's responses are presented in bold type.*
enough money to live on? All conductors find their own way through this time period.

Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? Not really – I keep my focus on the music and doing what I love. Bringing people together to make and hear great music.

Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? I don’t feel that that is my battle. The world is where it is... once again... my focus is on always doing the best job that I can do and bringing my unique skills and personality to everything that I do.

If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? No children

Do you enjoy your job? I love what I do and I would never do anything else.

Have you ever felt burnt out? Sure, everyone gets burnt out and tired... then you relax your schedule, regroup and keep going.

If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? I would have taken a second conducting degree somewhere before just starting to work. I had to learn too much on the job. A two-year degree in conducting is not enough time to master the art. It takes a lifetime. I am still studying and attending master class and coaching situations. I want to keep learning the rest of my life.

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? I had lots of part-time mentors... but never felt that really close relationship with someone who was really going to help you with your career.

When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? No

What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? Study your music. Know your stuff. Work very hard on your organizational skills and your people skills. Take a speech class, learn how to read a budget. Know how to adapt to working with people with a variety of working styles. Get involved with the “net-work”

Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? One of the most important phrases I learned at a master class seminar with Jorge Master was: “Tell them what you want – Don’t criticize what they did”. I apply this to all my rehearsal comments – and my comments at meetings. The other most important thing is “perseverance”
Carolyn Barber*

Comments: Hope this is helpful!

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? Elgin, Illinois (USA) December 10, 1968
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? White – Anglo/Eastern European
What is your family heritage? Dad’s side: Came over on the Mayflower, British ancestry. Mom’s side: Polish/Lithuanian immigrants early 20th century.
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? Telecommunications Consultant
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? Mom (Did some bookkeeping work for Dad’s business)
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? 2 brothers, 1 sister, 1 stepsister. All older (50, 41, 39, 36)
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? Suburban
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? Fairfield, CT (Between Boston & New York City)
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? Public High School
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? Approx. 400
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? Yes – Band, Choir, Orchestra, Chamber Music
What is your primary instrument? Horn
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 1986-1990
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? Yale University, New Haven, CT 1990-1992 (Masters); Northwestern University, Evanston, IL 1993-1995 (Doctorate)
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? Music Performance Major (Bachelors & Masters), Conducting Major (Doctorate)
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? Director of Bands, University of Nebraska (Lincoln, NE)
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? No
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? No

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? Embouchure Dystonia at Yale – Couldn’t play my horn (muscle spasms, etc.). Worked around it by going back to square one and starting over as a player. Very frustrating, but I learned a lot and it pointed me in the direction of conducting, which was a great bonus.
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? No

* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? **Nope**

If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? **(No kids)**

Do you enjoy your job? **Absolutely**

Have you ever felt burnt out? **Nope** – **but it’s not always sunny.**

If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? I’d **prefer not to have had my playing go to heck in grad school, but other than that, no.**

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Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? **Yes, several. All are male.**

When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? **Nope**

What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? **Go for it – if it’s what you want to do and you have the talent, then don’t worry about whether there are other people like you doing it. Find the best person out there and emulate him/her – don’t waste your time trying to find a role model that looks/acts/sounds like you.**

Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? **Can’t think of anything off hand. My mentors were pretty thorough.**
Comments: Sorry for the delay but this marching season was pretty intense. Hope you can still use this.

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? Marion, Ohio - February 19, 1951
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? No
What is your family heritage? Welsh/English/German
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? Erie/Erie Lackawanna/Conrail Railroads - Division Storekeeper
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? Housewife and later worked in a jewelry store
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? 3 sisters/1 brother - all younger I am 51, Sandra is 50, Mark is 46, Sharon is 42, Shelley is 40
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? All of the above - Cleveland, Ohio (elem. school) to Susquehanna, PA (junior high) to Meadville, PA (high school)
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? See above
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? Public
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? 427
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? Yes, Concert band, marching band, orchestra, jazz band, musicals, student conductor
What is your primary instrument? Horn
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? Indiana University of PA 1969-73
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN Master of Arts in Music Ed with a concentration in Music History 1975-76, summer 78, thesis completed in 1982 Ball State University, Doctor of Arts 1992-96
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? I played in every ensemble possible at the undergraduate level and the orchestra at the graduate level at Minnesota. Played with Muncie Symphony and other area orchestra while I completed my doctorate.
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? Morehead State University, Associate Professor of Music, Assistant Director of Bands
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? John C. Hennen, Jr, husband; history professor
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? No

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? Many obstacles but all have been overcome because I just made up my

* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
mind to achieve what I wanted!
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession?
Not by the scarcity but by the assumption by others that a woman could not possibly be the band director of a high school band and then later in my life a college band. Most of my male colleagues however are wonderful and I feel little discrimination at this point in my life.
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? In high school I was told at an audition for district band that girls did not have the stamina to play principal horn....I played principal horn throughout my college years! and professionally beyond that! I was told that "little girls don't teach band in Memphis, TN" but I did for 11 years!
If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself?
Do you enjoy your job? Yes and no....we are seeing students who are not well prepared to be music majors and I find myself teaching things that my junior high players did with ease. It is frustrating and could lead to burn out but I am smart about how I handle these things now.
Have you ever felt burnt out? Yes, when I taught band in innercity Memphis...it was difficult and stressful. A change of jobs helped a great deal!
If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? No I don't think so...life is a journey and you learn from every experience. Each obstacle, each triumph has made me appreciate my life and the gift of music. So I have to say it has all been important to my development as a musician and person.

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? Several mentors-- --Mr. Paul Mccandless was my high school band director; Dr. Ralph Hale and his brother Jack Hale took me under their wings in Memphis; Dr. Joseph Scagnoli at Ball State believed in me and taught me to be a college director; and Gladys Wright has surely been a real guide for me!
When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? None except Elizabeth Green as a teacher...I read her book and do her conducting exercises.
What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? Go to workshops, ask lots of questions, observe rehearsals, listen to everything you can and then listen more with a score in front of you. Find a great mentor. Choose a conducting program where you feel comfortable and where you have a mentor! You can be anything you want to be if you are willing to work toward that goal! Trust your instincts and believe that all things are possible.
Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? I wish they had let me be in the marching band----they told me I wouldn't need that experience because I was a girl! The marching band was all males until 1972. Guess what I do here? However, I had a wonderful experience at IUP and felt totally prepared to teach because of the excellence of the faculty and my own desire to be successful.
Linda Moorhouse*

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? Minneapolis, Minnesota / November 19, 1960
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? Caucasian
What is your family heritage? English
What is/was your father's primary occupation? Mechanical Engineer (no music background)
What is/was your mother's primary occupation? Housewife / Now works in a Contracts and Grants dept in an Engineering School for a major university (mother was a singer -- Gilbert and Sullivan Society in Seattle)
Do you have any siblings? yes If so, how many? One brother-2 yrs younger / One sister-5 yrs younger (brother took band in middle school; sister took band in middle school and high school. Both don't play anymore)
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? Rural and suburban -- we moved every 4 years
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? Seattle, Washington; Merritt Island, Florida; Kissimmee, Florida; Sebring, Florida; Gainesville, Florida
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? Private school for 2 years (grades 1-2), public school the rest of the time
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? Public high schools...300 in my graduating class...I was around 10th in the class
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? Began band in 8th grade, took marching band and concert band all throughout high school. Started rifle line and indoor guard my junior year. Band President in high school
What is your primary instrument? Clarinet
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? University of Florida: 1979-1984
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? Louisiana State University (MMEd): 1984-1985 / University of Washington (DMA in Wind Conducting): 1993-1994; 1998 - ABD
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? Played in top concert band ensembles and orchestra as an undergraduate; also served as Colorguard Captain of the UF marching band from freshman to senior year; at LSU I served as a graduate assistant and worked with all parts of the program from concert to marching band. At UW I served as a teaching assistant where I had a concert ensemble and taught undergraduate conducting. I had no athletic band responsibilities at UW (on purpose).
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? Associate Director of Bands at Louisiana State University (resume attached)
Do you have a spouse/life partner? No
Do you have children? No

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? sure What was it and how did you

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* Conductor's responses are presented in bold type.
overcome it? **Mostly prejudice ...just ignore it and try to do my best.**

Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? **Rarely**

Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? **Yes**

If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? **N/a**

Do you enjoy your job? **Yes**

Have you ever felt burnt out? **Yes...much of the time during marching season**

(I write drill for our group)

If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? **Probably not**

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? **Yes** If so, was your mentor male or female? **Female**

band director at the high school I graduated from...I went to two different high schools. She was inducted posthumously into the Florida Bandmasters Hall of Fame this past November. She died of ovarian cancer in 1995.

After I graduated, she allowed me to teach and work at the high school while I was getting my BMEd. She had me chart for the marching band, doing administrative things, and found outside teaching opportunities for me in the guard area. She was the one who said, "you're going to be a band director" when I was a senior in high school. She was very influential and a wonderful musician and teacher. I saw a lot of jealousy and prejudice toward her as a female band director. Seeing those things made me mad, but made me a stronger individual in the end.

When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? **No**

What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? **Be the best you can in all that you do academically; be involved in every aspect of the program from library work to how the office runs; volunteer for as much as you can; don't be afraid to get your hands dirty; and dress professionally while on the podium.**

Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? **Politics are everywhere...you have to learn how to deal with the system.**
Andrea Strauss*

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? **Buffalo, NY 1960**
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? 1/2 Italian 1/2 English and other
What is your family heritage? **Supervisor at Western Electric Co.**
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? **Housewife**
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? **I have 2 sisters both three years apart I am in the middle**
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? **Suburban**
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? **Clarence, NY, and after age 14 Lawrenceville, GA**
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? **Public**
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? **350**
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? **Symphonic Band member at the High School, also played in the Emory Wind Ensemble and DeKalb College Orchestra and Wind Ensemble, played in County, District and All-State Bands/Orchestra**
What is your primary instrument? **Clarinet**
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? **Univ of South Carolina**
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? **Masters in Music Ed from the Univ of South Carolina, and a Ph.D. from the Univ of Southern Mississippi with a Minor in Conducting**
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? **(ambiguous question) I was involved in Symphonic Band, Marching Band, Woodwind Quintet, Graduate Assistant in Clarinet and Marching Band**
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? **Director of Bands at the Georgia Institute of Technology**
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? **Yes my husband is an Attorney but an active trumpet player**
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? **1 biological child - girl age 14 and two step children boy- J.P. age 22 and girl – Caley age 19**

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? **Any obstacle in life is overcome by perseverance**
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? **No**
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? **Sure**
If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? **Did you face adversity from yourself? No**

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* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
Do you enjoy your job? Yes
Have you ever felt burnt out? No
If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? Nothing

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? I did - male. A passion for teaching and a love of music is not gender bias
When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? No
What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? Go for it!
Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? Follow your aspirations.
Melanie Wright*

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? I was born in Anderson, Indiana on April 23, 1966.
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? I claim no ethnic group.
What is your family heritage? My mother has a German maiden name and I’m not sure where “Wright” derives!
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? My father is a farmer and is retired from General Motors.
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? My mother was a housewife and the owner of a bridal boutique. Currently she is working at Life Touch Studios.
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? I have two sisters: Melissa is one year younger and Jennifer is eight years younger.
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? I grew up in a rural area.
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? I grew up on a farm in Alexandria, Indiana.
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? I attended Anderson Highland, a public high school.
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? There were 386 in my graduating class.
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? Yes I was involved in the music program.
What is your primary instrument? My primary instrument is the clarinet.
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? I am currently working toward my Master’s Degree in Music Education at Ball State University.
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? I was involved in Marching Band, Symphony Band, Wind Ensemble, Orchestra, and various chamber groups during my undergraduate work. I also presented three full recitals and graduated in the Honors College. I am currently working on my Master’s Degree by taking one class per semester.
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? I am currently the Director of Music and Dance at Daleville Jr./Sr. High School in Daleville, Indiana.
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? I have no spouse.
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? I have no children.

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? I face the obstacle of self-confidence every day. Although this issue has matured through age, it is still a struggle.
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? I feel discouraged a great deal of the time because there are few women in our

* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
profession. The high school level in particular does not seem to attract women for a number of years. Often, I believe that women feel they must make a choice between the long hours of being a high school band director and getting married and having children. I had to come to terms with that decision myself. It is very difficult.

Extreme sacrifices are made with either decision.

Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? I have been discriminated against in my profession. One particular incident occurred in North Carolina. The representative from a local music company would constantly comment on my appearance while mentioning the musicality of the other middle school band, directed by a male. During those five years, the playing ability of my group surpassed the other middle school. I always felt that I had to work twice as hard to gain the attention that a man receives for mediocrity.

If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? I have no children.

Do you enjoy your job? I love my job. I realize that my particular job would not be appealing to most directors with my level of experience; however, I have always liked to place myself in a situation where I could help the underdog. When I was an undergraduate, I wanted to be a head director a “Class A” school. I began my career as the Assistant Director of Bands at Snider High School in Fort Wayne. After three years, I wanted my own program, but I was never attracted to the bigger schools again. The intimate setting of a small school holds special appeal for me. I may not be recognized for a State Marching Band Championship (anymore!) or a top-level Concert Band, but I do know that I make a difference in the lives of children. When I taught at Waccamaw High School in South Carolina, we won the 1A State Marching Band Championship and our Concert Band consistently scored superior ratings in grades four and five. Personally, I wanted a more human approach to music education. Sure, Daleville Jr./Sr. High School may not be a place to showcase my talents, but once I moved beyond the “need to please” I have seen the value in daily contact with students that have the same desire for learning about music. Their talents have just not been tapped yet in this situation.

Have you ever felt burnt out? Sometimes I have questioned myself about my career— not in any serious manner. When I taught five years in North Carolina at Morehead Middle School, I really wanted to open a dance studio in addition to teaching band. While teaching at Waccamaw High School in South Carolina, I was the only director. The community was fairly affluent and had high expectations. I worked several hours per day. The sacrifice paid off in the long run, but I was exhausted most of the time. This can prove to be a lonely time as well. Since I was far away from family, I established a support system of friends. But in the end, I still went home by myself. That emptiness was not one that I expected. Ironically, it would manifest itself at my greatest career moments because I had no one that could share these highlights.

If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? I would never trade being a teacher. I only wish that I were as comfortable with myself in my twenties as I am now at age thirty-six. My self-confidence is still a daily struggle, but it is much better than a decade ago.
Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? I have had three outstanding mentors. Susan Finger was my middle school band director. She had a powerful influence on me through her structure and consistency. She was only a second and third year teacher at the time!! Barry Ashton, Director of Bands at Fort Wayne Northrop High School, was my student teaching supervisor. He had charisma, fortitude, and guts that I wanted to emulate. Harry Stanfield, Principal of Morehead City Middle School, was a gift from God. He was a catalyst to my teaching abilities. Mr. Stanfield challenged me to become a better teacher by learning more about my craft and then sharing it with my older colleagues. He often tapped into the younger teachers because of our enthusiasm.

When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? Although Paula Crider was my All-State Band Director during my sophomore year in high school, I remember little about her conducting. I mostly remember the impact of a woman attaining such a position. Years later, in 1997 I saw Eugene Corporon conduct the South Carolina All-State Band. He was amazing!!! He pulled the musicality out of the ensemble, but did not raise his voice to achieve the objective. I felt as though we were on the same philosophical level. I completed his conducting collegium the following year. It was an incredible experience!

What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? I have two pieces of advice for women who want to study conducting careers. First of all, study dance. Movement is an extension of the music. Students that have been active in music and dance have excelled at both as a result. Subtle gestures become natural and not forced. The other advice is to gain a few years of teaching experience as an assistant director and then go to graduate school full time. Gene Corporon told me that he was looking at graduate assistants that had ten to twelve years of teaching experience. On the flip side, if one waits too long, it is difficult to leave students to go back full time. I could not bring myself to do it. I felt the need to attain higher education, but part-time has worked for me in order to stay in the classroom.

Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? I wish that I would have been taught about dealing with parent-teacher conferences when I was an undergraduate. It is intimidating as a young career woman to support a case conference with people old enough to be the teacher’s parents!! I also wish that I would have known what Jim Croft told me at a conducting clinic: You must be okay spiritually, emotionally, mentally, and physically in order for your career to excel. I mistakenly thought that if I worked longer hours this would happen.
Susan Jehl

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? **East Lansing Michigan, 1958**
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? **Caucasian**
What is your family heritage? **French Canadian**
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? **Professor - Notre Dame**
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? **Bookkeeper, housewife**
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? **Sister 40, Brother 47**
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? **Suburban**
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? **South Bend, Indiana**
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? **Public**
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? **350**
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? **Band, orchestra, All-state band**
What is your primary instrument? **Clarinet**
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? **Ball State 1976-80**
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? **M.A., BSU 1988**
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? **As an undergraduate I played in concert band, wind ensemble, and marching band. I served as president of the Music Sorority. I worked as the secretary for the Ball State Bands and I gave lessons at Gas City High School. I commuted to Ball State for my graduate degree, so I was not active in extra activities outside of class.**
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? **Middle School Band Director, Summit Middle School, Assistant Conductor for the Fort Wayne Area Community Band.**
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? **My husband is a high school history teacher**
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? **13, 20**

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? **It seems there are always obstacles to face (budget cuts, scheduling changes etc.) You have keep yourself well-informed, you have to educate the people who are making the decisions and you have to advocate for your students and your program.**
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? **There are quite a few females that teach at the middle school level.**
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? **No, not discriminated against. When I first started teaching, I taught high school in Fort Wayne. I felt out of the band**

* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
director loop. I attributed this to being a new teacher to the area, rather than being female.

If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? No adversity from others. It was a struggle that I had to work through. It was hard to take a break from school. You have so much ownership of your program that it is hard to turn it over to someone else. It is hard to find a qualified replacement. It was also hard to leave my son with a sitter when I went back to work.

Do you enjoy your job? I absolutely love it!

Do you ever feel burnt out? Sure! That's what summers are for, to recharge your batteries.

If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? No

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? No mentor- I wish I had! I have good band directors in my school corporation. We work together on a daily basis. It is very helpful for me to be able to bounce ideas off of them.

When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? Not when I was studying conducting, but in middle school I had a female student teacher. It was the first female band director that I ever met. She inspired me to pursue my dream.

What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? Two things - (1) Be flexible! It is a key to survival, (2) Keep music FUN! It is the key to the perpetuation of your program. Also, be well prepared! People will respect you for what you can do.

Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? There is so much more to the job than just being a conductor. I felt well prepared to be a conductor. I had to learn through trial and error how to be a good motivator, listener, organizer, communicator and advisor.
Michelle Oyler

Comments: Hope this helps! Let me know if you need more info!

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? I was born on March 25, 1967 in Noblesville, Indiana.
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? No.
What is your family heritage? American! Mostly German and French background.
What is/was your father's primary occupation? He passed away 8 years ago. He worked for the Noblesville Newspaper.
What is/was your mother's primary occupation? She was an accredited records technician. She supervised the records unit in a hospital.
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? I have two older sisters and one older brother. My brother is 11 years older than I and my two sisters are 9 and 7 years older than I am.
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? I was raised in a suburban setting until I was 9 years old, then my family moved to a rural setting. I stayed there until I went to college.
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? Noblesville, Indiana.
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? I attended a public school. I attended the Hamilton Southeastern Schools.
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? About 140 graduating seniors.
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? I played French horn in the band.
What is your primary instrument? French Horn.
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? Ball State University!!
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? I earned my Masters degree from Ball State University.
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? I played in many of the university ensembles as well as local orchestras.
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? I am the director of bands at Hamilton Southeastern Junior High.
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? I am single.
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? No.

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? I have faced obstacles in teaching almost every year of the twelve years that I have been teaching. They were mostly battles with administrative decisions. Decisions that could have detrimentally affected the band program. I overcame

* Conductor's responses are presented in bold type.
them by fighting and not giving-up!!!! I wrote proposals, scheduled meetings with my administrators, and asked for parent support.

Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? Sometimes I feel like we women have to be ten times as good as the guys in order to gain the same credit.

Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? I have been in situations where I was the only female band director with a group of male directors and I felt like they didn't give me the same amount of respect. I have had male directors make comments to me such as "you are a great conductor for a woman."

If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? Do you enjoy your job? Yes!!

Have you ever felt burnt out? There are those days!

If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? I would have studied all of the instruments more in college. The rest would stay much the same.

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? She is still to this day my mentor. Her name is Susan Finger. She teaches music at Eastside Middle School in Anderson, IN.

When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? My role models in conducting have been men.

What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? Be prepared to be ten times better than the guys in order to gain the credit.

Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? The kids don't read the education books we studied in our undergraduate classes. Experience is the best teacher.
Debbie Shelton

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? Agana Hts, Guam in October 1958
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? White
What is your family heritage? Irish
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? Worked in a hardware store
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? Works in tourism
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? I have one sister and two brothers. I am the oldest. There are about 3 ½ years between all of us.
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? Sort of suburban. We lived 5 miles out of town in a small neighborhood. Our town population is only 5000.
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? Carrollton, Ky
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? Public
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? 120
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? I was involved in band and chorus
What is your primary instrument? Clarinet
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? University of Kentucky - 1980
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? Georgetown College - 1990
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? My undergrad degree was a BME and just an education degree for my masters. I had a couple of graduate music classes for my masters.
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? Band Director at Morton Middle School
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? Yes. Band Director
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? No

Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? There were many obstacles when I first started teaching. In my first interview, I was told they were looking for a man for the High School position. Boy...I could sue now!
Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? I don’t think I was ever discouraged. It just made me work that much harder.
Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? Guess I answered that already.
If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? N/A

* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
Do you enjoy your job? **I love my job.**
Have you ever felt burnt out? **Sure.**
If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? **Yes. I would hang with high school a while longer. I've always felt there were a few more things I could have done with my high school band.**

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? **I think every music teacher that came into my life was my mentor. You learn from everyone.**
When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? **No**
What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? **Don't give up. You have to be a little better than everyone else. Be a good listener, never be satisfied, and work with master teachers.**
Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now?
Tanya Best

Comments: Hope this was all helpful for you Ellie.

Biographical Information:

Where and when were you born? Dayton, Ohio 1962
Do you claim an ethnic group? If so, what? White, Caucasian
What is your family heritage? Polish/Irish/(Hillbilly)
What is/was your father’s primary occupation? Bartender for 28 years at a military base (Wright Patterson Air Force Base)
What is/was your mother’s primary occupation? Waitress for 25 years, then a gift wrap/shipping specialist for 28 years (at Elder-Beerman)
Do you have any siblings? If so, how many? How close are they to your age? 1 half-brother, 18 years older than I- I was raised an only child since he never lived with us in our house
Was your childhood setting more rural, urban, or suburban? Suburban
Where did you grow up (city, state, area)? Huber Heights, Ohio (a suburb of Dayton)
Was your secondary education through a public, private, home, or other institution? Public
If you attended a public or private school, what was the size of your graduating class? There were 692 in my class (I was #50, which was still the top 7% of my class)
Were you involved in music in your secondary education? If so, how? I have been in both band & choir throughout my whole life since 5th grade (although I didn't officially join choir until my senior year in high school)
What is your primary instrument? Percussion
Where and when did you attend college for your undergraduate career? Bowling Green State University
If you pursued one or more graduate degrees, when and where did you attend? I have a master of science in education (school counseling) through the University of Dayton, and recently earned another in school administration through The University of Findlay
How were you involved in music in your undergraduate and graduate careers? During my undergraduate years I was a member of concert band, symphonic band, orchestra, women’s chorus, brass ensemble, percussion ensemble, pit orchestra, etc. (to name just a few things that I remember). During my graduate work, I had no official association with any college-affiliated group. But I still play drums on a regular basis for many different groups, and still conduct church choirs occasionally, high school drum lines, etc.
What and where, now, is your primary occupation? I have been a school counselor for 10 years now at your alma mater, Columbus Grove High School
Do you have a spouse/life partner? If so, what is his/her primary occupation? Yes, my husband WAS a band director himself, and is now a real estate attorney
Do you have children? If so, how many and what are their ages? No children; only dogs- Susie the English Setter (11), Ginger the Golden Retriever (6), and Lashes the Cocker Spaniel (2)

* Conductor’s responses are presented in bold type.
Personal and Professional Obstacles:

Can you recall a time when you faced an obstacle? What was it and how did you overcome it? A big obstacle for me was when I failed to make the top concert band at BGSU my junior year, after having already been a member. Unfortunately, the percussionists did not audition, they were hand-picked. I overcame my disappointment by joining the orchestra instead, which was a good experience for me (though none of my friends were in it, and I did miss them :) Have you ever felt discouraged because of the scarcity of females in your profession? No, I never felt discouraged because I like the challenge of working with men! Have you ever felt like you were being discriminated against because of your gender? Not really feelings of "discrimination"- but I do think that women have to "prove" themselves If you have children, did you face adversity from other professionals for taking maternity leave? Did you face adversity from yourself? I do not have children, only dogs. But I don't think it would be easy to be a mother AND a band director (or any other occupation really, that takes up a great amount of time, i.e. nights/weekends) Do you enjoy your job? Yes, I do now (as a guidance counselor for 10 years) and I did then (as a band director for 9 years) Have you ever felt burnt out? Oh yes, many times- I think it is unavoidable if you work hard at your job If you could go back and do it again, would you change anything? Possibly I would have chosen to get my college music education on the west coast or east coast, rather than staying in Ohio. Money was definitely a factor in my decision, though.

Advice/Words of Wisdom:

Do or did you have a mentor? If so, was your mentor male or female? In H.S.- my mentor was my jr. high band director; In College- my mentor was my H.S. Choir director (who doubled as my boyfriend, seriously), In my 1st job- my mentor was my husband (who was not my husband or my boyfriend then) and my 2 co-workers- 1 male brass player, 1 female woodwind player When you were studying conducting, did you have any prominent female role models? No, I really did not- all of my role models in that area were male-something I never thought about before :) I guess maybe the only female director I came in contact with came during my student teaching stint here at CGHS. She was the asst. director here at that time. What advice do you have for females who wish to pursue conducting careers? Get involved- volunteer to serve on music committees and take charge of events, in order to network with your male counterparts Is there anything that you wish someone would have told you in your undergraduate career that you know now? Because the performance of music takes on such a personal nature (interpretation, expression, genre preference, etc.), you can't be a "crybaby" in this business. You need to stand up for your musical convictions and be ready to defend them, but there is no room for hurt feelings or sour grapes, especially if you choose to go the competition route with your performing groups.
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