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## The role of music-making in the identity construction of members of an adult community concert band

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THE ROLE OF MUSIC-MAKING IN THE IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION OF MEMBERS  
OF AN ADULT COMMUNITY CONCERT BAND

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
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in

The School of Music

by

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to ascertain how music-making and band membership contributed to the identities of members of the New Orleans Concert Band and how their identities influenced their behaviors. The musician role identity of members of the New Orleans Concert Band, an adult community band, was examined through the lens of identity theory using ethnographic methods. Findings were based upon interviews with 37 band members, observations of rehearsals and concerts, and an examination of the organization's documents.

Results indicated that members valued individual and group music-making, literature played by the band, and social aspects of both music-making and group membership, but that the act of music-making had the most value. Members expressed and demonstrated a strong commitment to the activity of music-making and to band membership. Six indicators of commitment emerged from the findings: length of tenure, attendance, priority, leadership, commitment to other members, and frustration with an inability to do more. They identified themselves as music-makers, although some had difficulty calling themselves musicians. Once established, the musician role identity of participants placed high in their identity salience hierarchies. Using Stebbins' theory of serious leisure as a framework, findings suggested that participants were amateurs that engage in a serious leisure activity that for some had become equivalent to a career.

A secondary purpose of this study was to explore the connection between the New Orleans Concert Band and the concept of Community Music as it is described in the literature. The New Orleans Concert Band is an adult community concert band that performs traditional and contemporary band literature in a structured, hierarchical rehearsal setting with members

who must meet prescribed criteria before being admitted. Community Music promotes music-making in settings and within groups that employ an organic approach to organization and music-making, and emphasize equal opportunities for all who choose to participate. Although the structure and goal orientation of the New Orleans Concert Band are not the same as those of Community Music, they appear to share the belief that the act of music-making is the primary purpose of music.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

Each Tuesday evening from Labor Day to the Fourth of July, a group of adults gather at the University of New Orleans to make music as the New Orleans Concert Band (NOCB). Most of the people who gather are not professional musicians but have chosen to include music-making as a part of their lives. They come from a variety of backgrounds: for example, one is a television news anchor person, one is a renowned heart surgeon, one is a retired school principal, and another is a nurse. They have had a variety of past musical experiences. Some played an instrument only through high school while others played in college; some never stopped playing while others had a period of time when they did not play. For some this is their only music-making experience; for others it is one of several regular experiences. Some members have been a part of the group for 35 years while others joined during this study. Although they have disparate backgrounds, they come together every week to rehearse as one group.

I joined the NOCB in November of 2001. It became clear that this group took music-making seriously and it appeared that most members were very devoted to the group. The senior members of the group were quick to tell me the history of the band and that they had been a part of the group since its inception. Unlike other community bands to which I have belonged, this group appeared to place music-making first and socializing second. Members would express concern when breaks took too long or when people arrived late and disrupted the proceedings. Some even complained when a suggestion was made to have an after-concert reception that was not part of the routine. A commitment to music-making was apparent in conversations with members who spoke with me about attending national and international music conferences in order to learn more about their instrument or music in general and when members spoke about other music-making experiences they had, both as occasional events as well as regular group

memberships. Several mentioned that they were involved with music-making several times every week.

The NOCB is but one of several adult community music groups in the greater New Orleans area. It is also one of many community bands, choirs, and orchestras in the United States. The NOCB, however, is the group to which its members choose to belong and includes the people with whom they choose to make music. Why? What draws them to this activity and what makes them return each week? As a member of the group I have interacted with other members and have developed my own ideas about the answers to these questions based upon my perceptions. However, is what I perceive accurate? In her study of music-making in an English town, Finnegan (1989) cautions that the answers to these questions may not be readily apparent:

We should not assume . . . that we already *know* what in fact should still remain as a question for investigation. It is easy to think that we already know or agree on what is most ‘important’ about music, how it should be defined and judged, how people value and experience different aspects of our culture, or how far people’s lives are determined, say, by governmental decisions, the mass media, socio-economic class—or the practice of music. (p. 9)

It may be that the answers are different for each participant. Although each member of the NOCB shares in the same event each week, they have individual experiences within the collective event. Cross (2005) coined the term “floating intentionality” to describe this phenomenon. Originally it referred to the way people applied meaning to music. It described how one piece of music may have different meanings for each person who encounters it, how music acquires a meaning within a context, and in turn, how it contributes meaning to the context. He later expanded the use of the term to describe the experience of musical activity:

Music’s floating intentionality allows participants to interpret a flow of musical behaviors and sounds in individual terms while the temporal regularities of the framework that it provides act to co-ordinate their behaviors and attentional foci. Hence participants in a collective musical act . . . may each experience that musical act as bearing personal and

potentially quite different, though determinate, significances without the integrity of the musical act being undermined. (Cross, 2006, p. 8)

A collective musical act, then, has individual and collective components. According to Bowman (2009), music's floating intentionality allows one to have a personal experience within a collective act, and that "musical action creates a balance of difference and sameness, of singularity and plurality, of individuality and collectivity, of unity and diversity" (p. 124).

Although each participant's experience as a member of the NOCB may be personal, that experience evolves from some common factors. First, all members of the NOCB are engaged in music-making during their weekly rehearsals. It is intended to be a performance activity, and all participants are expected to be active music makers. Second, the music-making that occurs in these rehearsals involves the use of printed music, so members must have some ability to read music notation; they may possess other musical skills and/or knowledge (i.e., improvising or composing), but these are not required in order to participate successfully in this group. Third, each participant has some pre-existing skill on a wind or percussion instrument; no one is a beginner. It is expected that each member can play an instrument at a skill level that is acceptable to the conductor and the other members. Membership is not open to all; acceptance as a member is based upon one's performance skills, not previous experience or musical background. Fourth, participation is voluntary. No one receives monetary compensation. As a matter of fact, all members are expected to pay yearly dues. Fifth, the participants are making music with other people; each person must depend upon others to realize the fullness of the experience.

The problem with trying to answer the questions, Why they choose to do this, What draws them to this activity, and What makes them return each week, is that the answers may not be the same for every member. Although they are taking part in an activity that has certain common expectations for all participants, the only thing that one may ascertain with any



certainty through casual observation is that they do or do not meet the expectations. One can see that the members are actively making music with others by reading music from the printed page, and one can know that if the members had not met the group's expectation of skill, or had expected compensation for their effort, they would not be participating. One cannot know why they chose to participate in this activity and with a group that has these expectations. Furthermore, one cannot know why they chose to develop the skills that allow them to participate in this type of activity; more importantly, one cannot know how the participants view themselves in the roles of music-maker and group member.

As mentioned earlier, I thought that the members of the NOCB appeared to take both music-making and band membership seriously and to have made a commitment to both. The seriousness that I observed led me to ask another question that served as the starting point for this study: How do music-making and band membership fit into the lives of the members of the NOCB? Furthermore, do the members see these things as part of a role they play, and if so, how important is that role? Are these things part of their identity? In an essay addressing the place of music in everyday life, Frith (2002) said that music activities helped people understand who they were; music was not just something that people did (p. 46). It appeared to me that in order to understand why the members of the NOCB behaved the way they did, it would be necessary to ascertain how they understood who they were and how music-making and band membership helped them to understand who they were. How people understand who they are is at the center of the concept of identity.

Identity has been described as "the set of meanings that define who one is when one is an occupant of a particular role in society, a member of a particular group, or claims particular characteristics that identify him or her as a unique person" (Burke and Stets, 2009, p. 17).

Identity is not a single entity; a person may occupy several roles, be a member of several groups, and claim many characteristics that define their uniqueness at the same time. These roles can be placed in a hierarchy based upon the perceived importance of each. Identity Theory addresses the multiple roles assumed by an individual, acknowledges that the roles are constructed by the self, and examines how the roles help an individual construct their personal identity. Burke and Stets (2009) described it this way:

Identity theory seeks to explain the specific meanings that individuals have for the multiple identities they claim; how these identities relate to one another for any one person; how their identities influence their behavior, thoughts, and feelings or emotions; and how their identities tie them in to society at large. (p. 17)

This description also serves as the rationale for the study of identity: Identity studies attempt to explain the meanings that people ascribe to their identities, to explain how one's multiple identities relate to each other, and to ascertain how identities influence behavior in order to develop a clear picture of how people understand who they are and why they behave as they do.

The primary purpose of this study was to ascertain how music-making and band membership fit in the identities of the members of the NOCB, and how their identities influenced their behaviors. I was looking for information about why they thought and behaved as they did and how they constructed their personal identities. This required the application of qualitative methodology: "Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (Merriam, 2009, p. 5). I wanted to understand how the members of the NOCB constructed and interpreted their worlds as music-makers and band members in order to determine why they were so serious. I interviewed several members of the band and observed rehearsals and concerts in order to obtain data that would allow me to construct a description of

how the members viewed the role played by music-making and band membership in their identity formation and how their behavior reflected this understanding.

A secondary purpose of this study was to ascertain how the NOCB did or did not exemplify Community Music as it has been described in the literature. The NOCB considers itself to be a community band and functions as a non-professional ensemble that provides performances for a community and depends upon the community for support. On most levels the NOCB fits into the larger concept of Community Music (CM), which serves as the framework for a line of research that provides an expansive view of this type of music-making. CM is rooted in active music-making and promotes lifelong learning in open-access settings. Considered globally, CM is home to a diverse population whose participation is elective. CM involves one or a combination of the following: music-making for personal satisfaction, enjoyment, self-expression, individual creativity, artistic excellence, self-esteem, joy, and the enhancement of individual and/or group identity. The study of Community Music has presented “community” as both an ideal with attendant expectations and as a matter of fact, a reality (Veblen, 2008).

By acknowledging the role played by music-making in the identity construction of community band members, it may be possible to develop an approach to school music instruction that prepares students to be lifelong participants in music-making activities. The National Association for Music Education acknowledged the importance of the connection between school music experiences and adult participation in music:

. . . The ultimate goal of all standards, all school curriculums, and all school personnel is to help students to gain the broad skills and knowledge that will enable them to function effectively as adults and to contribute to society in today's world and tomorrow's.  
(National Association for Music Education, 1994, p. v)

Jellison (2000) made the same connection but identified the desired outcome as meaningful music participation:

If the musical lives we intend for adults require specific skills and knowledge, and if the meaningful music participation we intend for adults requires their time and in some cases their money, then decisions must be made as to what is meaningful for both students and adults. (p. 115)

By examining the place of music-making and band membership in the identities of the members of the NOCB, we may be able to enhance our understanding of “meaningful music participation” in adulthood and identify characteristics of meaningful music participation that can be applied in school music contexts in order to prepare students for future music experiences.

This study fills two voids in the literature. First, it examines how members of a non-professional community band who are also accomplished musicians include the role of musician in their individual identities, a connection that has not been revealed in a search of the literature. There have been studies that dealt with identity in the context of school music settings (Benham, 2004; Coffman, 2006; Coffman, 2008); Hoffman, 2008; Kastner, 2009; Dagaz, 2010), community music organizations whose membership included either school-aged participants (Mills, 2008) or adult beginners (Kruse, 2007; Dabback, 2008; Tsugawa, 2009), and community settings that included music and musicians from backgrounds different than that of the NOCB members (McIntosh, 2009; Behling, 2010; Roller, 2011). Second, it examines the relationship between an established American community band and the theoretical constructs of Community Music. A search of the literature uncovered studies dealing with the history of community bands in the United States (Carson, 1992; Mast, 2000; Rhoden, 2008; Shamsky, 2009; Paterno, 2010), the organization of community ensembles (Wilhjelm, 1998; Gregory, 2009), and the motivation for joining and remaining in a community ensemble (Patterson, 1985; Spell, 1989; Spencer,

1996; Vincent, 1997; King, 2009): however this search revealed no studies examining the extent to which American community bands reflect the characteristics of Community Music.

As mentioned earlier, the purposes for this study are to ascertain how music-making and band membership fit in the identities of the members of the NOCB and how their identities influenced their behaviors, and to ascertain how the NOCB does or does not exemplify Community Music as it has been described in the literature. The questions that guided this research are as follows:

1. What do members of the New Orleans Concert Band value most about band membership?
2. Where does musician role identity fit in the identity salience hierarchy of members of the New Orleans Concert Band?
3. What label do members of the New Orleans Concert Band apply to their musician role identity?
4. To what extent does this community band reflect the characteristics of Community Music as defined by the literature?

In order to answer these questions, it is first necessary to define terms and concepts that contribute to an understanding of the topics of music-making, group membership, identity, and community music. In Chapter 2, I include these definitions along with a review of the literature related to this study. Chapter 3 presents the methodology and theoretical framework. Chapter 4 includes the findings and related discussion. Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the findings, the conclusions, and implications for further research.

By drawing together aspects of research related to identity theory, the literature that explores the concept of Community Music, and ethnographic investigations of adult community music groups, this study attempts to create a picture of a traditional adult community band by focusing upon the role played by music-making in the identities of its members. My hope is that

this study will contribute to our understanding of why people continue to make music in adulthood and how traditional community music groups fit into the concept of Community Music.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Definition of Terms/Concepts and Related Literature**

#### **Music and Identity**

Identity has been defined in several ways. Stets and Burke (2000) described identities as composed of “self-views that emerge from the reflexive activity of self-categorization or identification in terms of membership in particular *groups* or *roles*” (p. 225). Sford and Prusak (2005) defined identity as “collections of stories about persons or, more specifically, as those narratives about individuals that are *reifying*, *endorsable*, and *significant*” (p. 16). Owens, Robinson, and Smith-Lovin (2010) described four sources of identity characterizations. The first, personal identity, is used to denote a unique individual with self-descriptions extracted from personal autobiography and singular experiences. The second, role-based identity, is defined as a social position one holds in a larger social structure that is self-descriptive and enacted in a relationship with at least one other person. The third, category-based identity, derives from perceived membership in a socially meaningful category, such as “American” or “southerner.” The fourth, group membership-based identity, is based upon actual membership in a bounded, interconnected social group, such as “Girl Scouts” or “New Orleans Concert Band.”

Several theories are thought to explain identity. Owens, Robinson, and Smith-Lovin (2010) placed these theories in three groups. The first group includes theories that emphasize internalized role-identity meanings. The most prominent among these are Identity Theory and Identity Control Theory. The second group includes theories that emphasize cultural and situational contexts. Most prominent among these is Social Identity Theory. The third group includes theories about collective identity. This is the most recent area of identity study and, as a result, is less organized around identifiable theories than the first two. It includes several lines of

research that focus on the consequences of collective identity for mobilizing joint action. This category has little relevance for this study.

Identity Theory was developed by Stryker (1968, 1980). Stryker (1968) described the self as complex and differentiated, constructed from several discrete parts that he called identities. He defined identities as “internalized positional designations” (Stryker, 1980, p. 60) that emerge from one’s societal roles. Individuals may have multiple identities that are defined by the roles they assume. Stryker and Burke (2000) clarified the meaning of role identity; roles are external and related to one’s position in the social structure and identities are internal and related to one’s “meanings and expectations associated with a role” (p. 289). Role identities include “all of the meanings that a person attaches to himself while performing a role” (Stets, 2006) and are developed through a process of self-definition. Stets and Burke (2000) said that having a particular role identity involves “acting to fulfill the expectations of the role, coordinating and negotiating interaction with role partners, and manipulating the environment to control the resources for which the role has responsibility” (p. 226).

In identity theory, one’s role identities are organized into an identity salience hierarchy. According to Stryker (1980) the higher the identity is in one’s salience hierarchy “the more likely that the identity will be invoked in a given situation or in many situations” (p. 61). He provided three additional hypotheses concerning identity salience:

The higher an identity in the salience hierarchy: (a) the greater the probability of role performances being consistent with the role expectations attached to that identity, (b) the greater the probability that a person will perceive a given situation as an opportunity to perform in terms of that identity, and (c) the greater the probability that a person will actively seek out opportunities to perform in terms of that identity. (pp. 83-84)

Hogg, Terry, and White (1995) further explained that identities higher in one’s salience hierarchy are more likely to be reflected in one’s behavior and “should exert more influence . . .



on a person's sense of self-meaning, feeling of self-worth, and level of psychological well-being" (p. 258). Salience may determine which identity will be invoked when two or more identities are in conflict or it may determine how readily an identity may be invoked in situations when no conflict exists. In other words an identity high in the salience hierarchy may be chosen over one that is lower and is more likely to manifest itself in observable behavior.

In identity theory the level of one's commitment to an identity and to the people associated with that identity serves as an indicator of the probability that one may invoke that identity. Stryker (1968) explained that the greater one's commitment to a role, the higher that role is placed in one's salience hierarchy. Stets and Burke (2000) described two aspects of commitment: (a) quantitative, or "the number of persons to whom one is tied through an identity" and (b) qualitative, or "the relative strength or depth of the ties to others" (p. 230). They indicated that the quantitative aspect of commitment determines how likely it is that a person activates an identity and that the qualitative aspect determines the place of that identity in the person's salience hierarchy. Implied in this description of commitment is that the others to whom an identity is tied do not have to be known to the individual; one may make a commitment to a generalized other, such as "musician" or may make a commitment to a particular group of musicians.

Identity Control Theory adds to Identity Theory a process called self-verification. According to Burke (2004) in Identity Control Theory, identities are considered as sets of meanings held by individuals that define who they are as persons, role occupants, and group members. These meanings are called identity standards; identity standards serve as reference points for one to "compare their perceptions of self-relevant meanings in the interactive situation" (p. 5). As long as perceptions match the meanings of the identity standards, no action

is required by the person. However, when a disturbance causes the perception to no longer match the identity standard, then the person will act to restore the match in meanings. This process of self-verification may cause a person to try a variety of means to attain a goal; the goals are the meanings incorporated into the identity standards. As Burke (2004) said, “We know that we have accomplished the goals when we make our perceptions match the standards—in whatever manner we can” (p. 6).

Social identity is described as “those aspects of an individual’s self-image that derive from the social categories to which he perceives himself as belonging” (Tajfel and Turner, 1979, p. 40). In this context, identity is relational and comparative, with individuals defined as similar to or different from members of other groups. This serves as the basis of Social Identity Theory. Social Identity Theory uses social categorizations as cognitive tools as a means of creating and defining a person’s place in society. It defines groups of individuals as “in-groups” and “out-groups,” with in-groups identified as those to which the individual in question belongs. Once individuals categorize themselves as part of a group they emphasize their perceived similarities with others in the group and their perceived differences with those not in the group (Stets and Burke, 2000, p. 225).

In addition to categorizations, Social Identity Theory also employs the concept of self-enhancement. Hogg, Terry, and White (1995) described self-enhancement as a process of ascribing positive characteristics to in-group norms and stereotypes so that the in-group is favored when compared to out-groups. However, self-enhancement may also lead one to choose to move to a different social group if it is perceived to be both of higher status and attainable. If this is the case, then the solidarity one has with an in-group may be weak. In other words one’s perception that mobility is not attainable leads to stronger ties with an in-group.

Hitlin (2003) identifies yet another aspect of identity that he calls “value-identities.” According to Hitlin, value-identities focus on “an individual’s relationship to the wider social and symbolic sphere rather than to one’s self and one’s other values” (p. 122). In this view, values serve to establish one’s core identity which is the basis for constructing one’s self symbolically:

Identities serve as anchors for behavior and understanding in the ongoing flow of interaction. These identities do not develop at random but are a behavioral outgrowth of one’s personal identity. The values at the core of the self that produce our sense of personal identity are distal influences on action, shaping and channeling the choice of situations in which we interact. These situations act, in turn, on our sense of self; perhaps they even cause us to reconfigure and reevaluate our core values. (Hitlin, p. 125)

What role does music-making play in the identity formation of individuals engaged in the activity? In an essay that addressed the relationship between music and identity, Frith (1996) suggested that for those who engage in musical activities, music-making becomes central to understanding who they are. He also suggested that there are two sides to musical identity: (a) identity as an ideal, what we would like to be, not who we are, and (b) identity as real, enacted in musical activities. Frith concluded, “Music constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences it offers the body, time and sociability, experiences which enable us to place ourselves in imaginative cultural narratives” (p. 123).

Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald (2002) addressed identity in the context of music-making by looking at music as a part of one’s identity as well as a means for constructing one’s identity. They suggested that there are two sides to the relationship of music and identity. One is called “identity in music” which is characterized by the socially and culturally defined roles one plays in music, such as performer, composer, improviser, teacher, or listener. Central to this concept is how individuals view themselves with regard to these roles. Within these roles, identity may be more narrowly defined by a specific genre or instrument of interest. For

example, one may define oneself as a musician who plays the clarinet and performs concert band music or as a musician who plays the trumpet and performs traditional jazz. Identity in music is related to Identity Theory; the roles played in music may be roles that one includes in his identity salience hierarchy. These are roles that one self-constructs and applies in personally defined ways.

The other is called “music in identity,” or how people use music to help define their personal identity. For example one may choose to listen to and/or perform music that is indigenous to one’s native culture in order to identify oneself as a member of that culture. Music in identity is related to Social Identity Theory; one may use music as a means of strengthening her ties to a group to which she belong and which helps define an identity. Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald (2002), explain the significance of the concept of musical identity and the importance of it as a field of study:

The concept of identity is important because it enables us to understand individuals’ musical development ‘from the inside’ whilst clearly locating identity as an emergent feature of our fundamentally social worlds. It provides us with a way of conceptualizing the interaction between biological and social influences . . . Studying the ways in which people perceive themselves in relation to music has the potential to explain some phenomena of musical behavior and experience that might otherwise be inaccessible. (p. 18)

In order to address the idea of identity in the context of community music-making, then, it is essential that one examines the group, role, and personal identities of individuals involved in the process. Community band members appear to fill several roles: musician, group member, and person, as well as roles within one’s family, occupation, and other social groups. It would seem that active community band members have a high level of commitment to their identity in music; however, it is more probable that the commitment levels of the members of any community music group form a spectrum. What appears to be unclear is how individuals view commitment,

for it could be based upon one's level of musicianship and attempts to increase that level, one's level and/or consistency of participation, and/or one's satisfaction with the experience. In the same way, it would seem that for community band members, the behavior places high in the identity salience hierarchy. Again, this cannot be assumed to be so. Each individual may have a unique view of the salience of their music-making behavior within their identity.

One particular role that appears to be significant to the study of community music-making is that of amateur. Reimer (2009) described an amateur as "one who loves an activity or enterprise for the sheer sake of the enjoyment it affords. But not mindlessly. Not superficially. Not, in fact, passively but with passion and devotion" (p. 230). Booth (1999) created the term "amachoice" to refer to the act of being an amateur, which he defined as "any vigorous, demanding human pursuit practiced for the love of the pursuit itself rather than for any practical use or payoff" (p. 10). Stebbins (1977) developed a framework for understanding the concept of amateur. By comparing amateurs with professionals, he reached several conclusions, three of which are: (a) it is possible to be an amateur only if there is a corresponding professional role in the activity, (b) amateurs serve publics and are oriented by standards of excellence set by professionals, and (c) amateurs often maintain a broader knowledge of the activity than do professionals because they have more time available.

Stebbins (1982) classified amateurs based upon their level of seriousness, identifying the devotee, who is highly dedicated to his/her pursuit, and the participant, who is mildly interested in the pursuit. He also classified amateurs based upon career aspirations involving the pursuit: the pre-professional who intends to become a professional, the pure amateur who has no professional aspirations, and the post-professional who has left the professional ranks but wants to continue with the activity. By combining these classifications, he determined that six types of

amateurs were possible: (a) pre-professional devotee, (b) pre-professional participant, (c) pure amateur devotee, (d) pure amateur participant, (e) post-professional devotee, (f) post-professional participant. Stebbins also identified five attributes of both amateurs and professionals: (a) confidence, (b) perseverance, (c) continuance commitment, (d) preparedness, (e) self-conception. Amateurs differ from professionals in the degree to which each is in evidence, with professionals tending to exhibit higher degrees of each attribute.

Juniu, Tedrick, and Boyd (1996) addressed the issue of differences between amateur and professional musicians. They examined the perceptions of amateur and professional musicians concerning rehearsal and performance as either leisure or work. Seventy-four participants, 34 professional and 40 amateur musicians, completed a three-part questionnaire that addressed, among other things, the source of their motivation (extrinsic or intrinsic) and how they perceived of rehearsals and performances. The results showed that amateurs viewed rehearsals and performances as leisure and were motivated by intrinsic factors, while professionals considered rehearsals and performances to be work and were motivated by extrinsic factors. However, in performances, the attitudes about motivation were more closely aligned, with professionals showing a tendency to acknowledge a greater sense of intrinsic motivation.

The concept of leisure plays a significant role in community music-making. For many, if not most, community musicians, the pursuit of music is done outside of regular employment. Stebbins (1982) identified two types of leisure pursuits, serious leisure and casual or unserious leisure. The concept of serious leisure seems applicable to the study of community music-making. Stebbins began by identifying three types of serious leisure: amateurism, hobbyist pursuits, and career volunteering. He then identified six characteristics of serious leisure that distinguish it from casual leisure and apply to all three types:

- One must persevere at it.
- One tends to make a career of the pursuit.
- It requires one to exert effort based on special knowledge, training, and/or skill.
- It has eight durable benefits: self-actualization, self-enrichment, recreation or renewal of self, feelings of accomplishment, enhancement of self-image, self-expression, social interaction and belongingness, and lasting physical products of the activity.
- Participants carry on their interests in their own social worlds.
- Participants tend to identify strongly with the pursuit.

Stebbins (2005) described serious leisure as “uncoerced behavior undertaken during free time where such activity is something people want to do and, at a personally satisfying level using their abilities and resources, they succeed in doing (p. 350).” Serious leisure activity, although uncoerced, becomes an obligation. The nature of the obligation, however, is pleasant and desirable for the individual who participates in the activity. Stebbins (2005) called this an “agreeable obligation.” Thus, serious leisure activity is entered into freely but becomes an obligation that becomes a priority in the lives of the participants. Instead of an obligation, Shamir (1988) described serious leisure as a commitment. He provided four explanations for why people engage in serious leisure activity:

- They may gain continuous extrinsic reward from their engagement.
- They may be externally committed, materially or socially, to that activity, role, or relationship.
- They may derive intrinsic rewards from the activity, role, or relationship, in the experiential, limited sense of enjoying the activity, being optimally aroused, having “flow” experience, feeling that they master the situation.
- They may be internally committed to that activity, role, or relationship; that is, derive symbolic rewards from the expression and validation of a salient and valued self-identity. (p. 253)

Stebbins suggested that most leisure commitments are based on internal commitment and reflect the salience of the leisure activity in one's self-identity (p. 254).

By choosing to be involved in music making of some kind, community musicians have made a decision to include music-making as a part of their identity. If music-making is not part of their vocation, then it exists as a leisure activity. What is not self-evident from the act of community music-making is its place in a musician's identity salience hierarchy, the level and type of commitment each musician has made to music-making, and how one's music-making reflects the concept of serious leisure. In addition, when the act of community music-making occurs in a group, it can be assumed that group membership is a part of a community musician's identity (i.e., I am a member of the Lakeview Concert Band), but the salience and commitment levels are not self-evident. Finally, it cannot be assumed that community musicians consider themselves to be amateurs. If they do, each individual may reflect the framework for amateurism as defined above. The concepts of serious leisure and amateurism both may have significance in the identity of a community musician.

Research studies that consider identity in a music context and are fully or partially grounded in identity theory can be categorized according to the type of population that is examined. Four categories emerged that served to organize the literature: (a) music style or type (often utilizing an ethnomusicological framework), (b) music teachers, (c) school ensembles, (d) older adults. The literature included studies that focus on musical identity, social identity in a musical context, or both. However, all of the studies reviewed here examine individual identity rather than collective identity.

Several studies examined identity formation in populations that had a particular type of music as a common bond. McIntosh (2009) found that participants in a particular type of music



making or ensemble may not have a common motivation, although the experience plays an important role in identity construction. He constructed case studies of three members of a gamelan orchestra in Perth, Australia, in order to investigate how the individuals negotiate and construct musical identities. The participants included individuals of either Australian or Indonesian descent who participated together in the ensemble. The author found that the ensemble formed a type of community that allowed people of different backgrounds to come together in order to make music. However, personal backgrounds influenced the way individuals viewed their participation. The Indonesian members viewed it as a way to reconnect with their cultural identity; the Australian members viewed it as a personal interest, friendship, and/or desire to learn more about Indonesian culture.

Behling (2010) found that deeply felt identity formation can be a result of amateur, as well as professional, musical activity by examining music communities in Chicago that consist of little-known or community jazz musicians. The author based this study on the idea that musical meanings are connected at a deep level to specific, local, face-to-face social relationships and that these practices contribute to the construction of individual and community identity. He employed ethnographic methods to help construct detailed narratives about the participants and the settings. Behling found that musical practices and social relations are connected at fundamental levels and that musicians constructed racial, gender, artistic, and professional identities as a result of these practices. He concluded that musicians create deeply felt identities, social bonds, and aesthetic values through both professional and amateur performances.

Roller (2011) examined amateur rock bands (garage bands) in Milwaukee and found that amateur performance can help construct a public identity as a musician. The author employed

oral history interviews from former garage band participants, fieldwork with operating garage bands, and a critical review of the literature to gain an understanding of the development of garage bands over a period of several years in order to determine how individual identities developed over time. He found that the typical garage band participant experienced identity formation through collaborative creative exercises with peers and that mobility of this musical identity occurred as a result of flexible shifting of roles within the band. He also found that they constructed a public identity through performances at local venues given for an audience of peers.

The role of music and music education in identity construction was the subject of another study. Benham (2004) examined the role of music in the identity construction of students in church music schools of the All-Ukrainian Union of Associations of Evangelical Christian-Baptists. An embedded case study approach was used to examine three individual church music schools. The author found that music served as a means of expressing individual identity of members of the church community, as well as the collective identity of the churches and church music schools. He also found that music education plays an important role in identity construction by emphasizing the transmission and presentation of religious, ethno-cultural, and social values and beliefs.

The identity construction of music teachers was examined in several studies. The focus of most studies was on the dual roles inhabited by most music educators, musician and music teacher, and how the various roles affected identity construction. Bernard (2004) interviewed six elementary music educators to determine how they speak about music making and music teaching. The data included four hours of interviews with each participant. The author found that the participants characterized these roles in three ways: (a) as two distinct roles in their

professional lives, (b) as a single approach that they take to the two activities, and (c) as an experience of making music that they hope to recreate for their students. Paise (2010) examined six beginning music teachers prior to, during, and after their student teaching experience in order to determine how they describe themselves in the role of music teacher. The author conducted interviews with each participant and employed participant-observation and email communications as additional data sources. In the findings the author provided four components of music teacher role identities; the participants described musical selves, instructional selves, professional selves, and ideological selves. The author also found that the identities, or at least the emphasis, changed over the time span of the study. One study chose to focus on the role of music-making in the lives of music teachers and how music-making affected their identity construction. Pellegrino (2010) examined the meanings and value of music-making in the lives of string teachers and the intersection of music-making and teaching. Using a phenomenological case study method, the author employed background surveys, multiple individual interviews, videotaped observations, focus group interview that included music making and conversation, a researcher self-interview, and researcher's journals. Results showed that the participants connected music-making with identity and personal well-being. Music-making intersected with teaching in several ways, both inside and outside of the classroom.

A study by Ferm (2008) explored identity development through music teacher education, *musikdidaktik*, in Sweden. Participants included seven *musikdidaktik* professors and three groups of music teacher trainees. The author employed an embedded multiple case design that used in-depth interviews as the data source. The results showed that identity formation processes can be communicated. The identity formation processes of the trainee teachers include awareness of and reflections upon one's own experiences, learning, goals, and identity development. In other

words, identity formation requires the active participation of the individual; it is not a passive process or something outside of one's control.

Some studies explored identity using a population of school music students, either as members of a school-based ensemble or music class. Two studies focused upon the community culture of a school ensemble and the social aspects of identity formation. Hoffman (2008) examined a middle school band classroom as a social context and its influence on the students' identity construction. Participants were six middle school band students. The author employed a collective case study design with classroom observations, individual interviews, and weekly student journals serving as the sources of data. Hoffman found that the students valued the perceived characteristics of their own group while devaluing those of other groups and that the students make choices regarding enrollment based upon the influence of those around them. In addition, students found particular roles in the band classroom and then reevaluated whether or not they belonged based upon the evaluations of others concerning their competencies in those roles. Those who felt rejected quit and found other activities; those who felt successful more strongly identified with the group. Dagaz (2010) explored identity within a high school marching band. The author examined three groups of participants, students, teachers, and parents, using interviews and participant observation as the methods of data collection, and found that the students developed a close-knit community within the school which encouraged greater tolerance and acceptance of all students and promoted friendships that bridged differences in social class. All three groups worked together in a dynamic social structure that contributed to the creation of the community and the development of an identity in marching band.

Two studies focused upon individual identity construction in music. Mills (2008) examined identity formation among members of a children's choir. The author conducted

interviews with six choir members, ages 12-14, their parents, one adult former choir member, and the conductor, observed and compiled field notes during nine hours of rehearsal, and administered a background questionnaire. Three categories of identities affected by choir participation emerged: personal identity, musical identity, and collective identity. Choir participation enhanced self-concept, self-esteem, and self-efficacy, improvements in musical abilities were attributed to choir participation, and the choir formed a family-like collective identity that exerted a strong influence on the participants. Kastner (2009) employed ethnographic methods to explore the role played by various musical experiences in the development of the musical identities of fourth-grade students, specifically through the creation of musical self-concepts, self-esteems, and self-efficacies. Participants included four fourth-grade students, their parents, and their elementary general music teacher. Several emergent themes tied to each category: (a) Self-concept included expressions of being a musician and enjoyment derived from participation, (b) Self-esteem included expressions of personal assessments, awareness of others, and motivation to participate, (c) Self-efficacy included expressions of desire to participate in ensembles and the development of future musical goals.

The role of music in the identity construction of older adults was the focus of several studies. Three studies explored identity construction among members of New Horizons bands. New Horizons music programs provide instruction for adults with no musical experience or no musical experience since school years. In each study, participants were retired from careers in other fields and chose to join this type of program in their own community. Kruse (2007) examined the attitudes and perceptions of non-professional adult musicians who were members of ensembles in Michigan and Alberta by employing ethnographic methods, conducting interviews with members of two adult learning communities. Although the issue of identity

construction was not the focus, results indicated factors that influence participation in music-making. Kruse found that most participants desired pedagogical, teacher-centered instruction. The key factors to sustaining participation were group dynamics; satisfaction with the musical experience depended upon musical difficulty, instructors' teaching styles, the sense of belonging to a larger community, and a strong awareness of reciprocity. Dabback (2008) examined the role played by music-making in the identity formation of adults who were members of the Rochester, New York, New Horizons band program. The author employed qualitative research methods, with five focus group interviews serving as the primary source of data. Additional sources of data were rehearsal observations and dialogue journals recorded following rehearsals. Results indicated that participation signifies the exploration of a new path and a new identity in older adulthood. The members claimed musical identities that were distinguished both by the acquisition of musical skills and by contributions to the ensemble. Musical identities were reinforced by the significant others in the lives of the participants and strengthened by invitations to perform outside of the New Horizons setting.

Coffman (2008) conducted a survey of 1652 members of New Horizons ensembles in the United States in order to understand how older adults experience music-making. His expressed purposes for the study were to determine the musical backgrounds and current level of participation in music-making activities of the respondents, to determine the perceptions among respondents of the benefits they received from music-making, and to establish a baseline for further research into the health benefits of participation in music-making as compared to participation in other types of activities. Although this study was not intended to examine the relationship between music and identity, Coffman found that the respondents enumerated several perceived benefits derived from music-making as members of New Horizons ensembles:

emotional well-being, emotional benefits, physical well-being, cognitive stimulation, and socialization benefits.

Tsugawa (2009) investigated music learning, motivation, and meaning construction among members of two New Horizons ensembles by employing a multiple case study design that included participant interviews, field notes and videotaped recordings of embedded observations. Findings were organized into three themes: (a) members' preferred attributes of conductor-teacher effectiveness, (b) the impact of the sonic qualities of the large ensemble on individual members, and (c) individual members' personal encounters with music-making and the phenomena affecting those experiences. Two motivational factors were established: the camaraderie of group music-making and the perceived benefits of music-making on one's sense of well-being. The members used music-making to facilitate the changes in their roles and identities, often following retirement. Tsugawa also found three themes of meaning construction and sense-making: (a) the members viewed music-making and learning as a means to enhance the remaining years of their lives, (b) the members focused upon music-making as a learning process rather than an objective, and (c) the members used music-making to regain a sense of control over their lives.

### **Community Music**

The concept of community music-making may be as old as civilization; Community Music (CM) as a field of study is a relatively recent phenomenon. The International Society for Music Education established the Commission on Community Music Activity in 1982. The first chairperson of the commission, Einar Solbu, presented four questions that he believed should serve as a point of entry for the work of the commission:

- Are music as part of a common communicative language and music as an art form in opposition to each other, or should they rather interact on each other in a fruitful way?

- Is the influence of Western European Art Music over the last few centuries a threat to our local music traditions, whether we live in Europe, Africa, South America—or wherever it may be?
- To enrich the musical life in a community, is it necessary or important or of any use to try to “divide” music into different categories (music as art, music as a means of communication, music as therapy, etc.)?
- When we try to reach more people with music because we know, or at least feel, that music is valuable, what kind of music should we first of all try to reach them with? (p. 59)

In the proceedings from the 1994 Seminar of the Commission on Community Music Activity, held in Athens, Georgia, Joss (1996a) provided a description of CM, defining two primary characteristics: active participation in music-making and development of community identity through music-making. He stated further that “community music activity is often a process in which the participants themselves change and develop, making new discoveries about themselves, empowering themselves, finding new identity within a community, broadening their perspectives, and gaining new understanding and tolerance” (Joss, 1996b, p. 128).

Acknowledging the precedent set by the Commission on Community Music Activity, MENC: The National Association for Music Education established a special research interest group for Adult and Community Music Education in March, 1998. The mission of this group is:

To encourage and share research contributing to music education that fosters active involvement in the making, creating, and studying of music in the diverse and complex communities in which we live and across the life span through the understanding of the unique learning characteristics of adults. (MENC, 1999, p. 2)

In contrast to the international Commission on Community Music Activity, the national Adult and Community Music Education special research interest group did not attempt to define community music. Instead it focused upon developing music education opportunities for adults



with the “same rigor, quality, and depth that characterize efforts for other age groups” (MENC, 1999, p. 2).

The *International Journal of Community Music* is an academic journal that has its roots in the ISME Community Music Activity Commission (Elliott, Higgins & Veblen, 2008, p. 3). It was first published in September 2004 as a peer-reviewed online journal. In the preface to the first issue, Elliott (2004) explained that the mission of the journal was to “provide a forum for research and dialogue about the many forms and values of ‘Community Music’ and ‘music-in-community’ around the world” and that it would be dedicated to “creating a forum for all voices and views about Community Music.” Higgins (2006) gave the journal credit for playing an important role in the growth of Community Music as a discipline. Four volumes of the online version were issued. In 2008 the journal transitioned to a print format and began publishing three issues per year. In the editorial of the first issue Elliott, Higgins & Veblen (2008) indicated that the change in format was prompted by a desire to increase the frequency of publications and to improve the quality of the contents. They also indicated that the journal fulfilled a “longstanding wish” of all those who had been involved with the discipline of Community Music “to one day have a journal that would disseminate reports of their work and that of other like-minded practitioners/thinkers around the globe” (pp. 3-4).

Leglar and Smith (2010) provided a brief history of community music-making in the United States. From this historical perspective they established three categories of CM: community music schools, community performance organizations, and ethnic/preservation groups. Veblen and Olsson (2002) identified four other categories: religious affiliates, associative organizations with schools, outreach initiatives of universities and colleges, and informal affinity groups. New Orleans Concert Band (NOCB) is a community performance

organization; however, it is loosely affiliated with the University of New Orleans. Its mission statement, which includes the phrase “encourage and foster adult concert community, municipal, and civic bands,” infers a desire to preserve a tradition.

Higgins (2008b) outlined the history of CM in the United Kingdom where it has become more organized and politically defined than it has in the United States. One of the significant moments in this history was the creation of a national association that would represent the interests of community music in the United Kingdom. The origin of this association was a national community music meeting called “Making Connections” at which 130 delegates discussed the principles of CM. At its second meeting in 1991, the association was given the name *Sound Sense*. One of its main goals was to establish the identity of CM. In doing so, seven principles were developed:

- By valuing everyone’s participation, community music asserts music-making as a human right
- Music can be an integral part of social life but it is under pressure to occupy a separate enclosed world
- CM emphasizes participation, planning, organizing, composing as well as singing and playing
- CM creates opportunities for skill exchange and, as a consequence, values group activities
- CM embraces and respects a diverse world of musical styles and contexts
- In CM, the professional worker is a resource offering skills, ideas, and support
- CM needs a new kind of professional, and so training is vital (p. 31)

In 1995 *Sound Sense* issued a three-part declaration that identifies the central characteristics of CM: (a) CM involves musicians from any musical discipline working with groups of people to enable them to develop active and creative participation in music, (b) CM is concerned with

putting equal opportunities into practice, and (c) CM can happen in all types of community, whether based on place, institution, interest, age or gender group, and reflects the context in which it takes place (p. 32).

Higgins (2007b) described Community Music as “a group of practitioners actively committed to encouraging people’s music making and doing” (p. 77). It occurs outside of traditional music institutions and seeks “to redress perceived imbalances between musicians/non-musicians, product/process, individual/community, formal music education/informal music education, and consumption/participation” (p. 76). In other words, CM provides opportunities for all people regardless of musical accomplishment, to take part in the process of music-making in informal as well as formal contexts. The activity of CM encourages participants to take risks. Higgins (2008a) described the structure of CM activities as “safety without safety” (p. 391). The safety that exists is in the framework provided by the facilitator, who establishes minimal parameters for the activity so that the participants have a point at which to begin. The second part of the phrase, “without safety,” indicates that the activity provides opportunities for all to move away from the familiar and comfortable.

Higgins (2008a) described the community of CM as “community without unity” and that CM activity “must resist the homogenous community’s potential to reduce everything to one voice” (p. 394). The CM ideal then is plurality; its intention is to emphasize the equality of all music and be open to all participants. Higgins (2007a) described this as hospitality: “Community Music is a democratic form of hospitality promoting equality and access beyond any preconceived limits” (p. 284). The hospitality of CM begins with a welcome that is extended to all and is “extended in advance without full knowledge of its consequences” (Higgins, 2007b, p.

83). The welcome in CM does not place conditions upon acceptance; one is accepted because they express interest, not because they meet some preconceived criteria.

Veblen (2008) established five issues that should be considered when examining a CM program. First is the type of music and music-making that is found in a program. CM emphasizes active music-making by its participants and can include any genre of music in any type of setting. Second are the intentions of the program. In CM social and personal aspects of participation are often considered equally as important as musical and educational aspects. Third is the type of participant the program serves. For example, CM programs may focus on particular age groups, ability levels, cultures, or socio-economic groups. Fourth are the types of teaching, learning, and interactions employed and encouraged by the program. An important characteristic of CM is that people choose to participate, so teaching and learning activities reflect the needs and desires of the participants and incorporate a variety of relationships between participants. Fifth is the interplay between formal and informal contexts. CM activities may occur in formal contexts, such as concerts, ensemble rehearsals with designated leaders, or religious services, or informal contexts, such as garage bands or family music-making in the home. The basis of CM is that music-making occurs in a variety of contexts within a community and that all are valid types of expression. Veblen also proposed some possible outcomes of community music-making that individuals may experience, including personal satisfaction, enjoyment, self-expression, individual creativity, artistic excellence, self-esteem, joy, and/or the enhancement of individual and/or group identity. The relationship between the individual and the group is at the center of community music and shapes its other characteristics. This relationship can be fluid, but is characterized by shared sense of responsibility. As stated by Veblen, “One’s individual

responsibility to the group is reciprocated by group responsibility to the individual” (Veblen, 2008, p. 7). She explains further that:

In many CM settings the values and aims of music seem to go beyond individualistic flow, self-esteem, and self-knowledge. Instead, or in addition, collective musical impulses, memories, and energies go beyond what one person may feel, conceptualize, or do. There is a complex interplay between and among individuals and the whole of the CM collective. (Veblen, 2005, p. 325)

The reciprocal nature of the relationship between the individual and the group is a primary characteristic of a community, not only of community music. At the heart of community music is the concept of community. Bowman (2009) describes community as “patterns of human interaction grounded in *practices* . . .” that are “formed and sustained by people’s loyalties and affiliations, grounded primarily in social or socio-political interactions” (p. 110). Community membership requires one to give up a portion of one’s autonomy or individuality in order to conform to the norms of the group. In other words community membership affects one’s identity: one asserts independence by choosing to affiliate with a particular community, in this case the NOCB, but by doing so is expected to give up a certain amount of independence in order to function within the context of the community. Bowman (2009) suggests that this is an essential aspect of music-making, asserting that music-making requires a sense of community. “At the centre of all music-making lies a ‘we,’ a collective identity that dialectically and powerfully influences individual identity” (p. 114).

Using findings from a series of case studies of music participation by both music-makers and listeners, Pitts (2005) identified eight “roles” that participation in musical activities plays in the lives of the participants. Although not intended to address CM specifically, they reflect themes found in the literature of CM. According to Pitts, musical participation functions as:

- A potential source of confirmation and confidence,
- An opportunity to demonstrate or acquire skills,
- A way of promoting and preserving repertoire,
- An opportunity to perform with others,
- A forum for social interaction and friendships,
- A way of enhancing everyday life,
- A way of escaping from everyday life,
- A source of spiritual fulfillment and pleasure (pp. 142-144).

Each role is also a type of value that individuals place upon musical participation. Collectively the roles address the issues of individual and collective music participation, musical and nonmusical aspects of music participation, and emotional and intellectual components of music participation.

Throughout the literature concerning community music, there are several themes that appear often. First, the focus of CM is on music-making. The activity of music-making is of primary importance and it is implied that the activity is a primary reason for the attraction of CM for many participants. Second, CM plays a role in the identity formation of its participants. Both individual and group identities are affected by membership in CM groups. Third, the CM experience is a type of social interaction. Collaborative music-making is a central element of CM. Finally, the concept of CM implies that music-making is a universal human phenomenon. In order for CM to be successful, the ability to make music cannot be limited to a few people with “talent.” It is implied by the very nature of CM that all people are capable of making some type of music in some way.

Studies of community music ensembles fall into two categories—those that deal with ensemble history and demographics and those that look beyond historical and demographic data to issues of individual involvement and motivation. The studies described here fall into one of these two categories. Most address history and demographics while those that deal with individual involvement and motivation seem to focus on motivation—why people join and why they continue to participate.

Among those that examined history and demographics were studies that included data from several ensembles. Martin (1983) conducted a survey of United States community band conductors that provided data on conductor qualifications, membership demographics, financial status of the ensemble, rehearsal and performance schedules, and audience demographics. Two significant findings were that 52% of the respondents indicated that their ensembles had been in existence over 35 years and that most members were 25-54 years of age. Hartz (2003) examined the history of community bands in America, while focusing on the question of why there appeared to be a revival at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. The author several factors that influenced the development of community bands throughout the century, among which were the rise of music education programs in the schools providing opportunities for the development of more amateur musicians and the gradual acceptance of the band as an artistic medium.

Bowen (1995) examined community bands in the southeastern region of the United States in order to ascertain the amount of community band activity in the region and to develop a profile of community band participants. Using a questionnaire, the author collected data from 528 individuals who participated in bands in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. From the data, Bowen found several indicators for adult music activity based upon high school music participation, including solo and small ensemble activity, private lessons, keyboard lessons, choir

participation, and honor band experience. Three-fourths of the respondents indicated that they were involved in other instrumental ensembles, while most had participated in the community band for five years or less. Thaller (1999) examined community bands in eastern Massachusetts in order to determine the perceptions of band members as to the contributions made by the bands to the community and to identify members' beliefs about member recruitment and retention practices. Using a mixed method approach, the author collected data from band members, conductors, school music teachers, and community members. Among the results, Thaller concluded most people believe that the most important contribution is serving local band musicians, word of mouth is the most effective means of recruiting, the conductor is the most significant factor in retention, and music selection has much effect on retention.

Several studies focused on specific community bands, examining their history and practices. Some examined the bands as institutions with the expressed purpose of providing models for other bands. Carson (1992) documented the history of the first 30 years of the Northshore Concert Band of Wilmette, Illinois, which the author described as one of the most prominent community bands in the United States. Rhoden (2008) created a profile of the Tara Winds, an adult community band in Jonesboro, Georgia, by exploring historical and demographic data. Shansky (2009) developed profiles of two community bands in New Jersey using historical research methods. The author examined organization documents and other written records of the bands' activities and interviewed some members in order to corroborate the historical records. A study by Mast (2000) of the Mason City, Iowa, Municipal Band and the Mason City High School Band provided data that allowed the author to create a detailed account of each organization. In addition to exploring their histories, he also interviewed the four surviving conductors, the relatives and associates of deceased conductors, and others associated



with each program. The findings provided personal insights concerning the repertoire performed and the contributions made by the bands to the community. Paterno (2010) examined the Hanover Wind Symphony from Whippany, New Jersey, with the purpose of developing a concise historical picture of the band. However, the author also collected data concerning demographic information and attitudes from current and former band members. The results indicated that most members joined for musical reasons and continue to participate because of personal relationships and the atmosphere of community within the membership.

In a case study of the Ridgewood, New Jersey, Concert Band (Wilhjelm, 1998) addressed several aspects of the band using board minutes, financial reports, concert programs, member surveys, and interviews as data sources. One focus of the study was to ascertain the effect of programming of musically and technically challenging repertoire on its members. The results indicated that quality repertoire serves to attract better musicians and that the band can serve as a source of life-long learning and artistic satisfaction for its members. A case study of the Turtle Creek Chorale of Dallas, Texas (Gregory, 2009) used a business study model to ascertain the success and longevity of a chorus that has achieved international acclaim. The author's focus was upon creating a macro analysis of the ensemble that synthesized all of the individual categories of data. The results indicated that the artistic success of the ensemble was based upon artistic vision, quality and diversification of repertoire, and performance venue.

The motivational factors that led people to participate in community bands and choirs have been the subject of several studies. Patterson (1985) examined the motivational factors contributing to participation in community bands in Massachusetts, gathering data from questionnaires completed by band managers, conductors, and members. Four sources of motivation were investigated, including background experiences, concurrence with perceived

philosophical purposes, intrinsic rewards inherent in participation, and organizational principles. The results indicated that the members considered themselves to be “amateur” musicians and had positive opinions of their own playing ability and that of the band, the most common motivations to join were experience playing in high school band and attending concerts by the community band, the members viewed the bands as community services that entertained audiences and provided musical outlets for performers, and members continued to play out of a love of music, personal pleasure, and the need to express themselves musically before an audience. Using a larger sample of community band members, extracted from the membership of the Association of Concert Bands, Spencer (1996) sought to determine the factors that lead adults to participate in band activity. Using a 179-item survey, the author determined six primary factors of participation:

- Intrinsic motivators
- Organizational motivators
- Membership standards
- Repertoire/conductor
- Rehearsals/performances
- Quality

Among the intrinsic motivators were self-growth, musical growth, community pride, social rewards, and conductor. Among the organizational motivators were attendance/practice, community support, and music selection. King (2009) found similar results when he examined community band participants in central Ohio, using a researcher-developed questionnaire. The data collected from 128 respondents indicated that the primary reasons for participating were personal pleasure, love for music, and personal musical expression. In addition he explored the

reasons one has for choosing to join a particular band when faced with choices. The primary reasons were identified as the personality of the conductor, the type and quality of literature, the ability of the group, and the rehearsal schedule.

Spell (1989) collected data from members and directors of community choirs in Georgia in order to identify motivational factors that influenced their participation, the directors' perceptions of these motivations, and selected socio-demographic characteristics of the participants, and to relate the findings to previous research on adult education. The author used three survey instruments to obtain data from 208 singers and eight directors. The results indicated that members were most likely to participate because of cognitive interest and least likely to participate because of external expectations and that the musical reasons for participation were performance, challenge, enjoyment, and skill. Vincent (1997) attempted to determine the music education backgrounds and the motivational factors for participation of adult community choir members in Kentucky. Using a 50-item survey, the author found that most members ranked the love of singing and the beauty of music as the primary motivations for participation.

### **The Universality of Music-Making**

The act of music-making can take many forms in community music. In the wide view of community music, no level of artistry is assumed of its participants; it requires interest and action. Implied is the idea that all humans are capable of making music. The universal nature of music-making has been addressed by many and serves as a significant line of inquiry in the study of music. Blacking (1973) used his anthropological research of the Venda in South Africa to address this issue. He described music as “a synthesis of cognitive processes which are present in culture and in the human body” (p. 89). In his view of music, all humans have the capacity to be

musical and this capacity needs to be unlocked and developed. The process of developing musicality does not proceed in the same way as other skills, but is a part of human nature. According to Blacking, “It seems . . . that what is ultimately of most importance in music cannot be learned like other cultural skills: it is there in the body, waiting to be brought out and developed, like the basic principles of language formation” (p. 100).

In developing his philosophy of “musicking,” Small (1999) concurred with Blacking. In placing the act of music-making in the realm of “the ancient language of gesture,” Small concludes that it must be a characteristic of humanness. He believes that humans are born with the capacity for producing and understanding music in much the same way as they are for the capacity for producing and understanding language. Although he does not believe that the two capacities lead to the same acts, he does believe that the resulting acts are similar in that “everyone is born with the potential not only to understand them [language and music] but also to make their own” (p. 20).

Cross (2008) examined musicality in the context of the human capacity for culture. Although the concept of culture appears to be universal among humans, there is a multiplicity of cultures. He proposes that in the same way, there is a multiplicity of musics, but that there “appear to be no cultures in which something like music does not exist” (p. 150). He then examined the evolutionary nature of music, identifying the inherent capacity for music in all humans as an evolutionary construct. Music functions as a component of the human communication system, complementary to, and co-extensive with language. As Cross (2009) explained, “Music is a foundational component of the human communicative toolkit, having powers in situations where language may be inefficacious” (p. 194). The common thread throughout the discussion about the universality of music is the idea that music is an action or

activity; in other words, the universality of music is expressed in the action of music-making.

The action of music-making, which also is at the center of Community Music, has been given the names “musicking” and/or “musicing” in order to distinguish musical action from musical objects.

### **Music-Making**

One of the characteristics of Community Music (CM) is that participants are engaged in the activity of music-making. It may be that they reflect upon the music that is being performed and/or assess its quality, but the primary focus is upon the process of performing music. Small (1998) proposed the philosophy of “musicking” in order to explain the primacy of the activity or process of making music. According to this philosophy music is an act or process rather than an object or product: “Performance does not exist in order to present musical works, but rather, musical works exist in order to give performers something to perform” (p. 8). The meaning of music lies in the totality of the activity and in the relationships that are observed during the act of “musicking.” In an address presented at the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) Conference in Washington, D.C., Small (1990) defined musicking:

To music is to take part in a musical performance, not just as a performer but also as a listener, or as a provider of material for performance—what we call composing—or in any other way, dancing, for example, should anyone be dancing, or even perhaps taking the tickets at the door or shifting the piano around. (p. 2)

Elliott (1995) provided a related, yet different view of “musicing.” In his view “musicing” is a form of “deliberate doing and making” (p. 49), which can be used interchangeably with “performing.” Musicing is described as a form of intentional human action that is a thoughtful and knowing act. Elliott proposed five knowledge components of musicianship (musicing) procedural, formal, informal, impressionistic, and supervisory. Procedural knowledge is described as thinking-in-action, or knowing-in-action, which is

dynamic and rooted in a particular context. Formal knowledge includes abstract facts, theories, concepts, and other information about music that is not context-specific. Informal knowledge is derived from individual interpretations of formal knowledge and from one's reflecting-in-action that leads one to find solutions to problems in a specific context. Informal knowledge is evident when a performer utilizes situational interpretation, such as performing in a "swing" style when playing big band music from the 1940's. Impressionistic knowledge is based on cognitive emotions that help "music makers evaluate, decide, judge, generate, and select musical options in the actions of music-making" (p. 65). In other words, impressionistic knowledge involves musical decision making that is based upon knowledgeable feelings, "cognitive emotions" (p. 64) that may or may not be able to be verbalized, such as when a performer makes an informed interpretative judgment based what they feel is correct in the musical context. Supervisory knowledge allows one to regulate one's musical thinking both in action and for the long-term development of one's musicianship. For example, a performer may recall past experience with a passage while at the same time have an image of how the passage should sound when executed properly. Both occur while the performance is in progress. Only formal knowledge is abstract; all others occur in specific contexts. According to Elliott, musical understanding is reflected in one's musicianship as demonstrated in performance.

O'Toole (2005) compared Small's musicking with Elliott's musicing and distinguished one from the other by asserting that Small focuses on a wider meaning of musicking that includes all possible interactions with music, while Elliott limited musicing to performers and listeners. However, at the center of both definitions is that music is an action. Bowman (2005), however, cautioned that musicking can be an ineffective approach to musical understanding if it is done casually:

Since performing is not good in and of itself, whether it helps or harms depends upon how we engage in it and upon what we perform. But that is not a sign of deficiency: it is, rather, a natural consequence of its power and import . . . We need to be critically vigilant not only about the musical quality of what we perform, but of everything we are performing musically. (p. 162)

Musicking in the context of Community Music takes place individually and collectively.

As Veblen (2005) suggested, in Community Music there is a “complex interplay between and among individuals” (p. 325). This interplay may take one of many forms, including the act of collective musicking as well as the development of friendships. Whatever form it takes, musicking in the context of CM has an inherent social nature that plays an important role in the life of a community band.

### **The Social Nature of Music-Making**

Community music-making is inherently social. Whether it is thought of as music made in a community or music made by a community, it requires interaction between people.

Sociologists apply the term “social world” to stable organizations in which “people are connected through their joint involvement in a task or event of a repetitive kind” (McCall & Becker, 1990, p. 9). Unruh (1979) identified four types of participants in social worlds: strangers, tourists, regulars, and insiders. Each type differs in orientation, experiences, relationships, and commitment to or within a particular social world. Potential participants determine the nature of their interaction with a social world based upon its relevance to their own life, its accessibility to newcomers, and its receptivity of newcomers. It is possible for roles to change through time and with continued interactions. A stranger can become an insider if they determine that the world is relevant and if the world is both accessible and receptive.

The social world that is home to community music-making may be a naturally occurring phenomenon. Cross (2001) examined the literature that is concerned with the biological and

evolutionary foundations of the universality of music in humans, with particular focus placed upon studies that examined music in the interactions of infants and caregivers. He concluded that while music appeared to be a biological necessity, it cannot be separated from cultural context in the lives of mature humans and that music in human society is the property of communities instead of individuals:

Music, like language, cannot be wholly private; it is the property of communities, not individuals . . . If the roots of human musicality are to be found in infancy . . . its potency might be tied to the support provided by society for those interactions. (p. 39)

In an essay about music in everyday life that reaches conclusions similar to those of Cross, Frith (2002) asserted that a primary purpose of music-making for many people was the enjoyment experienced from being together in groups: “Music-making is less about managing one’s own emotional life than about enjoying being together in groups, real and imagined” (p. 46).

Collective music-making is situated in art worlds, particular types of social worlds that have some type of art as the task or event that brings its members together. Becker (1976) has defined an art world as the people and organizations that produce events and objects that the world defines as art. The activities of the individuals or groups within an art world are coordinated through conventional understandings that have meaning in common practice. Becker suggested that several art worlds can exist simultaneously because the activity surrounding a particular production of art determines the existence of an art world. The type of work must be defined as art by those who are producing it. Each art world has a degree of autonomy, although some participants may be involved in multiple worlds at the same time. The social value given to a work of art is determined by the organized world. According to Becker (1976), “The interaction of all the involved parties produces a shared sense of worth of what they collectively produce” (p. 705).



This “shared sense of worth” may be considered as a part of the “collective identity” that Bowman (2009) suggested as one outcome of Community Music. Whether viewed as individual or collective, music-making is the result of a decision made by a person. It seems reasonable to conclude that through this action, CM participants allow music-making to become a part of their identity, although its nature and degree of significance may not be clear to either the participants or outside observers.

The purposes for the present study were to ascertain how the roles of music-maker and band member fit into the identities of the members of the NOCB and to ascertain how the NOCB does or does not exemplify Community Music as it has been described in the literature. Identity Theory, as defined by Stryker (1968, 1980), and Community Music, as described by Higgins (2008) and Veblen (2008), served as the theoretical frameworks upon which this study was constructed. The studies described in this chapter helped to place this research in a context and provided a focus for the research questions. The questions that guided this research are:

1. What do members of the New Orleans Concert Band value most about band membership?
2. Where does musician role identity fit in the identity salience hierarchy of members of the New Orleans Concert Band?
3. What label do members of the New Orleans Concert Band apply to their musician role identity?
4. To what extent does this community band reflect the characteristics of Community Music as defined by the literature?

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Method**

#### **Participants: The New Orleans Concert Band**

The New Orleans Concert Band (NOCB) is an adult community band whose mission is “to provide free public concerts by volunteer musicians to the public of the greater New Orleans area, to encourage and foster adult concert community, municipal, and civic bands, and to promote the performance of the highest quality traditional and contemporary literature for band.” The band has 73 members from all walks of life, most of whom are not professional musicians. The band rehearses each Tuesday evening from the first week of September through the first week of July except for three or four weeks following the December concert and the week of Mardi Gras. The typical season includes six to eight concerts by the full band and a few additional concerts by smaller ensembles that are affiliated with the band.

The band was founded in 1975 by Peter Dombourian and a group of his former students. Dombourian had a long career as a high school band director in New Orleans, beginning in 1946 at Behrman High School. In 1947 he became band director at Fortier High School, where he built a program that gained a reputation as one of the finest high school bands in the United States. The Fortier High School Band performed at the Midwest Clinic in Chicago, Illinois, in 1961 and at the New York World’s Fair of 1964, the 1967 world exposition in Montreal, Canada, and the 1970 world exposition in Osaka, Japan (Cook, *n.d.*). The band was included in the *Historic Honor Roll of High School Concert Bands 1920-2007*, a project of the John Philip Sousa Foundation (John Philip Sousa Foundation). Dombourian left Fortier High School in 1970 to become band director at John F. Kennedy High School. In 1974 he was named music supervisor of the Orleans Parish Public Schools and also became the band director at Benjamin Franklin High School. He retired in 1991 (Cook, *n.d.*). Dombourian received many honors throughout his

career. In 1970 he became the first high school band director to be elected to membership in the American Bandmasters Association and in 1986 was elected to the Louisiana Music Educators Hall of Fame (Louisiana Music Education Association).

In 1975 alumni of the Fortier High School Band approached Dombourian with a proposal to establish a band that would provide a musical outlet for the band alumni. An organizational meeting was held on October 5, 1975, and the first rehearsal occurred on Tuesday, October 21, 1975. Forty-two musicians attended the first rehearsal, which was held in the band room at the University of New Orleans. The first concert was given on December 16, 1975, in the auditorium of the Eleanor McMain Middle School, the same auditorium in which all of the Fortier High School Band Concerts were given. The band had grown to 52 members by the first concert; among the works on the program were *Bravura* (Duble, 1918), *First Suite in E-flat for Military Band* (Holst, 1921), and *A Christmas Festival* (Anderson, 1950) (New Orleans Concert Band Programs).

The band was incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1977 and became a member of the Association of Concert Bands in 1978. A regular season of concerts was established, first with concerts in December and May, then with additional concerts in March, July, and November. In 1976 the band established a relationship with the Doll and Toy Distribution, sponsored by the local New Orleans newspaper, playing a concert each December for the participating children and families (New Orleans Concert Band).

Under Dombourian's leadership, the NOCB performed for the opening of the King Tutankhamun exhibit in 1977 at the New Orleans Museum of Art, the 1984 World's Fair in New Orleans, the 1986 World's Fair in Vancouver, Canada, and the 1988 Southern Division Conference of the College Band Directors National Association. In 1990 the band premiered

*Songs of Ararat* (Loris Chobanian, 1990), which had been commissioned to honor Dombourian. The commission was paid for by donations from friends and family members (Cook, *n.d.*). This was the first of three works to date that have been commissioned and premiered by the NOCB.

Upon the death of Dombourian in 1992, Milton Bush was named conductor of the NOCB. Bush was the Director of Bands at the University of New Orleans and had served as the assistant conductor of the NOCB from its inception and was a member of the band's trombone section. Like Dombourian, Bush had been a long-time public school band director in New Orleans and was the first band director for the University of New Orleans. Bush has had a long career in New Orleans as a musician and is well known as a trombonist, conductor, arranger, and educator. Under his leadership, the University of New Orleans Wind Ensemble performed at the American Bandmasters Association National Convention in 1975, and in 1987 he was elected to the Louisiana Music Educators Hall of Fame (Louisiana Music Education Association). He is now Conductor Emeritus of the NOCB and Professor Emeritus at the University of New Orleans.

Richard Dugger was appointed conductor in 1998. Dugger was an Associate Professor of Music at the University of New Orleans where he served as Director of Bands and Coordinator of Music Education. Under his direction, the band made its first appearance at the national convention of the Association of Concert Bands in 2001. At this convention, held in Pensacola, Florida, the band premiered a new work, *Louisiana Parish Sketches* (Giroux, 2001), which had been commissioned by the band. Dugger stepped down following the May 2001 concert (New Orleans Concert Band).

Following a search and audition process, Charles Taylor was named conductor in Spring 2002. Taylor is Associate Professor of Music and Director of Bands at the University of New Orleans. He is the current conductor of the NOCB. Under his leadership, in 2007 the band began

a small ensemble program that now includes a clarinet choir, a brass choir, and a saxophone quartet. The small ensembles perform concerts throughout the community that are independent of the full band concerts. Under his direction the band made its second appearance at the national convention of the Association of Concert Bands held in Houston, Texas, in 2009. In 2009, the band also became a member of the National Band Association. In December 2011, the band premiered a new work, *Fantasia on Silent Night* (Syler, 2011), which was commissioned by a consortium of eleven community bands, including the NOCB.

Following its incorporation as a non-profit organization, in 1977, a board of directors was established to lead the band in all non-musical matters. The board includes four officers, president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer, and five at-large members. Elections are held each May at the first rehearsal following the spring concert for all officer and board positions; all officers and board members serve one-year terms. The board meets several times each year and is responsible for all band operations except musical decisions, which are handled solely by the conductor. The conductor attends board meetings as an ex officio member, but does not vote. The band has adopted a set of by-laws that govern its operations. Each band member pays annual dues of \$50.00 to help defray the cost of running the band, which includes monthly storage unit rent, truck rental to move equipment to off-site concerts, sheet music purchases, and other expenses as approved by the board. Arrangements are made on an individual basis for members who are not able to pay dues.

The calendar of events for the band has been developed over the course of its history. The regular calendar includes a concert in late October or early November in honor of Veterans' Day, an outdoor concert in December at one of the large parks in Metairie, a suburb of New Orleans, on the first night that the park's Christmas light display is illuminated, an indoor concert in

December that includes holiday music, a concert in March, an indoor concert in the French Quarter as a part of the annual French Quarter Festival, a concert in May, an outdoor concert on July 3<sup>rd</sup> prior to the fireworks display at the same suburban park as in December, and a concert on July 4<sup>th</sup> at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans. Additional concerts by the small ensembles occur throughout the year. Among these are performances at a large church in New Orleans as part of an annual event to honor the anniversary of the birth of J.S. Bach and performances, often by invitation, at other venues throughout the city. The small ensembles have performed at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art and as part of a regular concert series sponsored by the New Orleans Museum of Art. Except for the annual Bach anniversary event, the schedules for the small ensembles change annually.

The membership of the NOCB is made up of a group of individuals from diverse backgrounds. Seventy-three members were listed on the roster (See Appendix A, Roster of Occupations and First Year of Membership). Of these members, thirteen indicated that they were involved with music as part of their occupation, either as teacher or performer. The others identified a wide range of occupations, including engineer, architect, research scientist, ophthalmologist, physician, bank examiner, teacher, and journalist. Thirteen members identified themselves as retired. Thirty-nine members have joined since 2000. Fifteen members joined between 1990 and 1999, 10 joined during the 1980's, and nine joined during the 1970's. Three were original members who attended the first rehearsal in 1975. Eight were members of the Fortier High School band during Peter Dombourian's tenure, while three others were members of Dombourian's bands at other schools.

## **Methodology**

Qualitative methodology was employed to address the research questions. Qualitative research is grounded in the idea that individuals create meanings for the phenomena they experience (Moustakas, 1994). The purpose of qualitative research is to search for and interpret this meaning. The research is conducted in natural settings that allow the researcher to focus on the wholeness of the experience in context. Data are gathered through interviews, observations, and review of documents (Bresler & Stake, 2006; Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Patton, 2002). From the data gathered, the researcher makes an interpretation through inductive data analysis (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). The picture provided by the data emerges as the parts are examined, establishing patterns or themes (Bresler & Stake, 2006; Creswell, 2007).

Two primary areas of inquiry for which qualitative design is appropriate are to understand what people value and to understand the meanings people attach to experiences, from their own personal or cultural perspectives (Patton, 2002). A qualitative design was deemed most appropriate to examine the problem of this study because it would likely yield rich descriptions of the participants' perceptions and valuations of their experience and set the stage, perhaps, for themes relevant to the research questions to emerge.

A single instrumental case study design was used for this study. Creswell (2007) defined a case study as “a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system or multiple bounded systems over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information, and reports a case description and case-based themes” (p. 73). According to Merriam (2009), “the single most defining characteristic of case study research lies in delimiting the object of the study” (p. 40), and that “the unit of analysis, not the topic of investigation, characterizes a case study” (p. 41). In the study the NOCB served as the single

object of the study and the unit of analysis; it was a bounded system because it had a clearly defined membership. The study examined only those people who were identified as members of this particular community band. The officers and members of the board were given a letter requesting permission to do this study; they all signed the letter granting permission (See Appendix B). The officers and board members were also given a letter requesting permission to use the name of the NOCB in the title and text of this study; signed this letter granting permission (See Appendix C).

Creswell (2007) stressed the need for employing a wide array of data collection procedures in case study research in order to build a detailed, in-depth picture of the case. Yin (2009) identified six sources of data that are appropriate for case study research: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts. I employed three primary types of data collection for this study: participant observations, interviews, and analysis of pertinent documents, including concert programs from the past 35 years, the mission statement and by-laws of the organization, and information found on the organization's website. Observations occurred during weekly rehearsals of the band and the clarinet and brass choirs, small ensembles whose members were drawn from the full band, as well as performances and social gatherings. Observations began on June 7, 2011, and continued through June 28, 2011. Observations resumed September 6, 2011 and continued through December 6, 2011. Additional observations occurred during performances on July 3, July 4, December 2 and December 11, 2011.



As organized in Table 1, I spent 100 hours as a participant-observer.

Table 1.  
Observation Schedule

<u>Rehearsal</u>	<u>Schedule</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Observation</u>
Band	Weekly	7:30-9:30 pm	7:00-10:30 pm
Clarinet choir	Weekly	6:15-7:15 pm	6:00-7:00 pm, alternate weeks
Brass choir	Weekly	6:15-7:15 pm	6:00-7:00 pm, alternate weeks
Concert 1	July 3	7:00 – 9:00 pm	5:00-10:00 pm
Concert 2	July 4	2:00 – 4:00 pm	12:00-5:00 pm
Concert 3	December 2	6:00-7:00 pm	4:30-8:00 pm
Concert 4 and reception	December 11	3:00-5:00 pm	1:00-6:30 pm

All rehearsals occurred on the same evening each week. Clarinet choir and brass choir rehearsals were scheduled to begin prior to band rehearsal at 6:15 PM and end at 7:15 PM; band rehearsals were scheduled to begin at 7:30 PM and end at 9:30 PM. I began observing at 6:00 PM, the time clarinet and brass choir members arrived. I alternated observing clarinet choir and brass choir rehearsals until 7:00 PM, the time other members of the band began to enter the rehearsal space. I observed during the period of time in which members entered the rehearsal space, during the actual rehearsal, and during the period following the rehearsal as people put away equipment and departed, between 10:00 PM and 10:30 PM. I also observed during the break that occurred in the middle of the rehearsal. Additional observations took place before, during, and after four performances and the reception that followed the December 11 concert. As a member of the band, I was seated in the ensemble during rehearsals and concerts, and from my seat in the ensemble I was able to see all of the members, the conductor, and the entrance to the

room. Observations during band rehearsals and concerts were unobtrusive because, as a regular member of the group, my presence was expected. I was positioned in the hallway adjacent to the rehearsal room and in the room alternately during the pre- and post-rehearsal times and the break. I observed both musical and social behaviors. During pre- and post-concert times for the concert on December 11, I was positioned in the hallway outside of the concert hall and in the wing area of the concert hall near the stage entrance. For the concerts on July 3 and 4 and December 2, I was positioned in the vicinity of the performance site; for the July 4 concert I was positioned in the staging area, a room separate from the performance that served as a warm-up and storage room for the band. The reception following the December 11 concert was held in the band's regular rehearsal room at the university; I was positioned in the room so that I could see the entrance door and the table that held the refreshments.

I recorded my observations in the form of field notes. Patton (2002) called field notes "the fundamental database for constructing case studies" (p. 305). He also identified four characteristics of field notes: (a) they are highly descriptive, (b) they contain what people say, (c) they contain the observer's own feelings, (d) they include the insights of the researcher. During the rehearsals I made brief jottings of events, behaviors, or comments that I thought were interesting. Following rehearsals I used the jottings and my memory of the experience to create more detailed field notes. As a participant-observer, I was often engaged in the role of participant during the course of rehearsals. In order to assume a greater role as observer, I spent portions of rehearsals not playing, although I remained in my normal seat so my behavior would not be obvious to the other members of the group.

Using the concept of maximum variation sampling (Merriam, 2009), I selected as participants for interviews individuals who represented a variety of instrumental sections,

seniority levels, apparent levels of musical accomplishment, and apparent levels of involvement in the governance and musical leadership of the organization. Maximum variation sampling allowed for the identification of common patterns that helped to define what was valuable about community music and music-making in this context. This type of sampling enhances the transferability of findings (Merriam, 2009).

Interviews were conducted with 37 members of the band. Participants gave their consent to be interviewed by signing an informed consent form as required by the Louisiana State University Institutional Review Board (See Appendix D). Interviews began June 8, 2011 and were completed September 23, 2011. Interviews were scheduled at the participant's convenience. Participants were informed that the interview would last approximately 30 minutes. The actual range of interview times was from 20 minutes to 2 hours for a total of 32.5 hours of interview data. The average interview was 52 minutes. The location of the interviews was determined by the demands of the schedule and the convenience of the participants. Interviews were conducted at the university, the participant's home or place of business, area coffee shop or my home.

The interviews utilized a standardized open-ended question format with questions fully worded in advance in order to ensure that each participant was treated equally (Patton, 2002, p. 345). A standardized format also assisted in neutralizing possible bias that could result from my role as an active member of the group. However, responses to the standardized questions led to unstructured, conversational moments. These moments were of great importance because they revealed information that provided new and greater insight into the research questions (Patton, p. 343).

I developed the interview questions based upon the theoretical framework of this study. The interview questions were designed as probing questions to allow for maximum

individualization. Since the primary purpose of this study was to ascertain how music-making and band membership fit in the identities of the members of the NOCB, it was necessary to construct questions that provided the participants with the opportunity to examine themselves, possibly in ways that they had never done. Using Patton's question options as a guide, I constructed questions that probed experience and behavior, musical background, values, and knowledge (Patton, 2002, pp. 348-351). For each question I also developed a series of prompts that could be used if the participant had difficulty in responding to the primary question (See Appendix E, Interview Protocol Before Revision).

After conducting the first three interviews it became apparent that the protocol needed to be adjusted. The questions included some redundancies, and the participants were confused by a few of the questions. In order to make the questions more streamlined and clear, I revised the protocol. The revision did not change the purposes of the questions, but appeared to produce more cogent and concise responses. The revised protocol is found in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

## Interview Protocol

### *General Information*

1. Describe your musical background

#### Prompts:

- a. When did you begin playing?
- b. Did you play in middle school? In high school? In college?
- c. After high school, did you play in other groups before joining the NOCB?

### *Role of Music-Making*

2. Describe the role music-making plays in your life.
3. Describe the role played by being a member of the concert band.

### *Musician Role Identity*

4. How would you describe your musical self to others?

Prompts:

- a. Do you consider yourself to be or identify yourself as a musician?
- b. Would you consider yourself to be an amateur or professional?

5. Describe your level of participation in the music-making community.

Prompts:

- a. Do you play in other music-making groups or settings?

### *Commitment*

6. Describe your level of commitment to playing in the NOCB.

7. Has your commitment changed over the years?

Prompts:

- a. Do you attend more rehearsals than before? Fewer?
- b. Do you practice more than before? Less?

### *Salience*

8. Describe other roles in your life.

Prompts:

- a. What other words would you use to identify yourself to others?

9. How does your commitment to playing in the NOCB compare to your commitment to nonmusical activities or roles in which you are involved?

Prompts:

- a. Do you forgo other activities in order to participate in music-making?
- b. What activities would cause you to not attend a regularly scheduled music activity?
- c. If you had to give up one thing, would it be music-making?

### *Music-Making*

10. Describe how important each of the following is to you in deciding to become a member of music-making group: (a) the music, (b) the act of music-making, (c) the social nature of music-making.

Prompts:

- a. Please list the 3 in order of importance.

11. What causes you to continue to play music in a band?

Prompts:

- a. Is it important for you to be a member of a band?
- b. Does this provide musical satisfaction, social satisfaction, or both?

All interviews were recorded using a digital audio voice recorder. The recorded interviews were transcribed. Five hundred sixty eight single spaced typed pages of transcripts were generated from the recorded interviews. Each interview transcript was stored in its own electronic file for ease of use. Each file was uploaded into Atlas.ti, a software program that was designed specifically to assist in managing qualitative research data.

After the transcripts were loaded I read each one multiple times in order to become familiar with the content, became familiar with the content I began the process of open coding and applying labels to segments of the texts based upon their perceived meanings. Merriam (2009) uses the term “open coding” to identify the initial step in this process because at this point the researcher is “open to anything possible” (p. 178). Using Atlas.ti, I highlighted the quotations that had meaning for this study and labeled each one with the appropriate code. Atlas.ti was used to generate lists of quotations grouped together by code. The codes were combined into larger groupings based upon common meanings. The larger groupings became the themes that served as the basis of data organization for this study. According to Merriam (2009), the themes are derived from the data and illuminate patterns that are found in the data.

Throughout this study I was sensitive to possible bias effect so tried at every turn to avoid it. My role as an active member of the group may have had an effect upon the design and results of this study. As a participant-observer, I had already established relationships with the members

that helped me gain their trust. My experience as a member of the band served as a source of additional data that may not be available to an outside researcher (Patton, 2002, p.569). For example I had witnessed the behaviors of the members over the course of several years and had engaged in casual conversations with other members that provided me with details of their lives that were not pertinent to this study, but provided background details to which outside researchers would not have access. I had been able to formulate a conception of the band and its members over a period of time; my access was not limited to the period of the study. The fact that my husband served as conductor of the NOCB also could have produced bias effect. In order to protect anonymity and establish a stance of “empathic neutrality” as an interviewer (Patton, p. 569), prior to each interview I explained that I might include quotes from the interview in the paper, but that participants would not be identified, and that I would not discuss the interview with anyone in the band, including my husband.

Trustworthiness was established through triangulation, member checking, data saturation, and the use of rich, thick descriptions. Merriam (2009) identified several types of triangulation. For this study triangulation was achieved by using three methods of data collection (participant observations, interviews, and documents) and multiple sources of data, including interviews with thirty-seven members and observations over time. Patton (2002) regarded member checking, or participant review, as another means of triangulation (p. 560). Merriam (2009) described the process of member checking as taking “the preliminary analysis back to some of the participants and ask whether your interpretation ‘rings true’” (p. 217). Creswell (2007) cautioned against allowing participants to view raw data. Instead, the participants should review the preliminary analyses in order to determine their views and to identify missing information (p. 209). Twenty interview participants were shown the quotations extracted from their own interviews and asked

to confirm the accuracy of the quotations and to confirm that the context in which I had used them was consistent with their intended meaning. Data saturation was achieved through the extensive time spent observing and interviewing: thirty-seven interviews, totaling 32.5 hours, were conducted and 100 hours of observation were completed. The use of rich, thick descriptions (Merriam, 2009) served to enhance trustworthiness and enable transferability of findings. This involved highly descriptive and detailed presentation of the setting and the findings of the study and was achieved by including evidence in the form of quotations from interviews, field notes, and documents (p. 227).



## **Chapter 4**

### **Results and Discussion**

In this chapter I present the results of the study, which were obtained through interviews with members of the New Orleans Concert Band (NOCB), member checks, and observations of rehearsals and performances. Quotations extracted from the interviews, material taken from field notes, and documentary evidence serve to support the findings. Pseudonyms as a means of identifying speakers are used to protect the anonymity of the participants. Discussion is integrated into the narrative of the chapter.

The findings have been organized into three categories: valuing, commitment and salience hierarchy, and musician role identity. Within each category, themes emerged that served to further organize the findings. The category of valuing includes findings that address what the participants value about music-making and band membership. The category of commitment and salience hierarchy includes findings that address the level of commitment the participants have to music-making and band membership, the ways in which this commitment is expressed, and the place of the NOCB member role identity in identity salience hierarchies. Finally, the category of musician role identity addresses how the participants describe themselves, if they acknowledge the musician role identity within their personal identity, and their expressions of how deeply they hold this identity.

#### **Setting the Stage: A New Orleans Concert Band Rehearsal**

Each Tuesday evening the NOCB rehearses from 7:30 to 9:30 PM in the band room at the University of New Orleans. The clarinet and brass choirs rehearse before the start of the regular rehearsal at 6:15 PM. The members of the clarinet choir arrive first, and move chairs and music stands into the room they use for rehearsal. The brass choir members use the band room for their rehearsal; when they arrive they set up chairs and stands. The conductor works with the two

choirs on alternate weeks. Each group has a member who leads rehearsals on weeks when the conductor is with the other group. The brass choir rehearsal usually ends at 7:15 so that the room can be set for the full band rehearsal; several band members assist with the set-up and it is usually ready to go at 7:25. The clarinet choir rehearsal usually ends at 7:20, at which time the members move the chairs and stands back to the band room.

At 7:30 most members have arrived and are ready to begin. The band president begins the rehearsal with a series of announcements. When she is finished, the conductor begins the rehearsal. The members of each section rotate parts; some do so between concerts and others do so within concerts, rotating at intermission. Before the rehearsal begins members are told which music will be included in the first half; rehearsals are structured so that all rotation occurs at the break. Two to four pieces are played in the first half of the rehearsal. Some are played straight through while others are rehearsed in detail. The structure varies from week to week and is determined by the complexity of each piece and how many rehearsals remain before the concert. Around 8:30 the conductor indicates that it is time to take a short break.

During the break some band members leave the room. Others remain but stand and move away from their seats, while still others remain seated. Some members talk together in small groups while others go outdoors or get something to drink from a vending machine down the hall. The conductor talks with several members, walks around the room, and goes into the hallway. Following a ten minute break, the group returns to their seats and rehearsal begins again. The second half resembles the first half, but with different music. Before the last piece is rehearsed, the conductor acknowledges new members and visitors, and gives announcements about upcoming events that will be occurring around town and that involve the band or its members. At 9:30 the rehearsal concludes.

At the end of the rehearsal, the members take care of their instruments. When this is finished they take care of their music folders, chairs, and music stands. The process takes several minutes because some members are still seated taking care of their instruments and others stand around the room talking to the conductor and each other. When this is finished some members leave while others remain in the room. The conductor and the band president talk with members while several small groups stand at various places in the room or in the hallway. Slowly they begin to leave. The last person to leave the hall is the conductor; this usually occurs at 10:00.

### **Valuing**

The term “value” has multiple meanings. One may have “values” while at the same time placing “value” in something. Edel (1953) identified two distinct meanings: value as “attitudes for-or-against anything,” and values as “assumptions about what is desirable as well as desired, preferable as well as preferred, appropriate standards as well as functioning standards, and so forth” (p. 198). Dewey (2008a) also identified two meanings: (a) to prize or to esteem, (b) to appraise or to estimate. Dewey continued by saying that the second meaning involves evaluation which leads one to establish an “order of preference” based upon comparisons made between or among values (p. 247). He later said that for one to value something, a desire for it and an interest in it must exist, and that value must be considered in a context. The context causes all of the possible values within it to be linked together and provides the framework for establishing an order of preference: “Since interests occur in definite existential contexts and not at large in a void, and since these contexts are situations within the life-activity of a person or group, interests are so linked with one another that the valuation-capacity of any one is a function of the set to which it belongs” (Dewey, 2008b, p. 207). Hitlin (2003) expanded upon this idea, describing how values are linked to situations or contexts: (a) Values operate within situations by affecting

judgments and perceptions, and (b) Values influence decisions about situations which one finds most desirable (p. 124).

In order to ascertain the values that influenced their decisions to make music in the context of a community band, the participants were asked to describe how important each of the following was to them: (a) the music that they played, (b) the act of making music, and (c) the social nature of making music. They were asked to rank these three items in order of importance and describe the roles music-making and band membership played in their lives. From the answers to these questions, several themes emerged: (a) the act of music-making was considered to be most valuable, followed by the music literature and the social nature of music-making, (b) music-making as a member of a group was considered to be valuable, and (c) extramusical benefits were derived from music-making.

### **Music-Making**

It was apparent that members of the NOCB valued the act of music-making. When asked to prioritize the importance of the act of music-making, the literature played, and the social aspects of group membership, every respondent indicated that music-making was most important or was equal in importance to one or both of the others. Several responses were similar to that of Martin H.: “That’s primary (the chance to play music). That’s what I want to do, just have a chance to play music. I’ll play whatever’s put in front of me.” Kay A. concurred, saying, “I’ll play anything. It doesn’t matter what it is, if I can play, just play it.” Benjamin R. spoke about the value of music-making in the context of the concert band:

I really felt the resurgence of interest in music for the first time when I came back to the concert band. It was different than high school because with the way the concert band runs, there’s very little social component to it. It was kind of like being in the military where you concentrated on music and your ability to play the music and issues related to the music and the idea of making music together. I guess because now I was older, it appealed to me.

The value placed upon music-making also was apparent in references participants made to playing in other groups. Participants indicated that they played several nights each week in a wide variety of settings. Some played with an American Legion band on Monday evenings, others in a variety of community and American Legion bands on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Some played in the local university wind ensemble on Thursday evenings, while others were regular members of a community band that rehearses periodically in preparation for a regular concert series. Lizbeth D. spoke about playing in groups on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings, in addition to forming a woodwind quintet and playing in the band that rehearses periodically. This was not uncommon; participants spoke about playing at least three evenings per week.

Music-making was not limited to concert bands. Participants indicated that they played in big bands that function as professional groups, while others said they played in community orchestras. Participants have performed in chamber ensembles, in pit orchestras for local community theater groups, and in a variety of settings at church. Often they have become musical entrepreneurs, organizing groups and performances. For example, Carla E. said, “I play at church quite a bit and that sort of got me into doing solo work. I also organized a flute choir . . ., and we did a lot of performances, including at Trinity Episcopal Church on their concert series.” Harold C. spoke of one of his experiences:

Around Mardi Gras, my wife’s first cousin, a trumpet player, and I will play out on the street a little bit. We’ll watch a parade and look at the next float to see what the theme is and try to play something appropriate; let’s say, if it’s an Irish theme, we’ll play *My Wild Irish Rose* or something.

Fredrick T. provided a summary of the approach taken by participants:

Whether I am in an orchestra, whether I'm in a small ensemble, whether I'm in a band, I'm going to do the best I can as part of that group to perform. I find that at that moment, that's where my focus is and I do what I have to do to make it work.

Megan M. gave an example of the depth of the members desire to make music: "I get upset when I go to church and I'm not asked to play because I want to be up there playing."

The band members who played in the clarinet and brass choirs demonstrated the importance of music-making by attending extra rehearsals every other week for an hour before the regular NOCB rehearsal and performed in concerts that did not include the full concert band. The clarinet choir was more active than the brass choir. They have 16 regular members; most rehearsals are attended by no fewer than 12 people. In addition to the regular rehearsals, they rehearsed at the home of one of the members during the summer when the band was on hiatus. The member whose home was used for the rehearsals spoke about how he designed the living room that he would have a room large enough to accommodate clarinet choir rehearsals. Several clarinet choir members expressed the value derived from playing in that group. They spoke about how it allows them to develop a greater sense of independence and confidence in their ability to make music, and provides them with more opportunities to enjoy playing. As Amber S. said, "I never would see myself playing a solo, but I do like the clarinet choir because I guess it's helping me play out more and get more confidence, especially when you have a part that's not like everyone else's."

The act of music-making was not considered to be a casual pursuit; music-making required effort in order for the members to achieve a desired outcome. Participants acknowledged that they practice outside of rehearsals in order to be better prepared and to become better at making music. Pete O. referred to practice as a fundamental principle of playing

in the group: “Nobody is playing in the band to play with someone who doesn’t practice. They’re playing in the band because there’s a core of people who do practice or have the capability to play it (the music).” Some viewed practice as an expression of commitment to others in the band. Amber S. said: “I practice, and not only for (the conductor), but for the people sitting next to me. I know (she) practices, I know (she) practices, plus I want to learn the music. It’s not fun to sit there and fake it.”

Participants referred to having a practice routine. Martin H. spoke of trying to set aside an hour each day for practice: “I wouldn’t feel right if I didn’t try to do that. I try to work and try to improve myself in various areas. It makes me feel good when I perform well, but I have to work towards that to play well.” Practice time was affected by job requirements. Terence R. said,

I do my practicing or wood-shedding after I come home from work. I have a man cave in my house and sometimes I’ll be up at 2:00 AM just down there playing, or trying to get through a passage. But that’s normally how I work it, and I normally play when nobody’s up. They’re all asleep and I’m downstairs playing.

For others, job commitments interfered with practice, which caused some sense of regret. Dylan W. addressed this issue:

That’s one of the biggest disappointments that I have with my own playing right now. I don’t have enough time to practice. By the time I get home I’m burnt out and it’s frustrating because I know I’m a better player than I’m playing.

Catherine M. provided a summary of many feelings about practice when she said: “I don’t practice as much as I ought to. This is true. I could practice more, and occasionally when I do practice I think, ‘if you would practice you would be so much better.’” Coffman (2006) and Shansky (2010) both found that the participants in their studies of community ensembles also expressed frustration with not being able to practice as much as they should.

Several participants indicated that they considered music-making and playing in the band to be learning experiences. For the members of the NOCB, music-making is not only something

learned in the past that they continue to use; rather it is a continuous process of learning. As Lois H. said, “I just think it’s great to have a hobby like this, to play something you have developed over the years. It doesn’t just happen overnight. It’s something you have to keep practicing and trying to perfect.” Frank M. concurred, “I don’t feel as though you ever stop learning. I feel that if you have the right kind of mix of players and conductor, you continue to learn.”

Some members indicated that they continued to work on certain aspects of playing their instrument or playing music. Matthew G. thought that he had improved in a specific aspect of music-making as a result of playing in the band: “For about the last five or six years, I feel I’ve improved as a musician by learning to play musically. Then [the conductor] had a guest come talk to the [university] band, and I went out there and heard him, and he talked about playing musically.” Harold C. spoke about how he worked develop a greater understanding of music:

I really enjoy playing music, studying music, and thinking about music that I play and listen to. I try to analyze music if I can and figure out where the composer is going; I can do that a little better now since I have been reading a book about music theory.

For some, the conductor also was considered to be a teacher. As Catherine M. said,

I’ve played under every conductor we’ve had and I think being a teacher is really important.” Kay A. added: “I’m very grateful to [the conductor]. For him to give his time and continue to teach us, because that’s what it is; it’s another lesson. It’s just immeasurable. You don’t leave without learning something every week.

For Frank M., learning from the conductor was part of a personal growth process:

With [the conductor] and a couple of others, they explain the music and you learn things you wouldn’t know, and it’s like taking a step forward each time. That’s part of me, too; I like to feel that I’m continuing to grow as a person.

The desire to make music coupled with a desire to improve has led several members to seek out more information about their instrument and about playing music. One member, Pete O., has attended the annual conference of the International Double Reed Society on several occasions. He spoke about the most recent conference and one experience he had there:



I spent probably an hour and a half with a guy who had a book and materials to do a better job of sharpening oboe reed knives. He sharpened all three of my reed knives and I bought some more stones and I bought a new knife and another device. I spent \$300.00 on it, but it makes making reeds easier; there's nothing like having the right equipment.

Harold C. spoke about attending the conventions of the International Clarinet Association:

I've gone to International Clarinet Association meetings, which have been a good influence for me. The most recent one was last July in Austin, Texas, which was good. One of the best ones I went to was in Atlanta, I guess about four years ago, and those two places were close enough for other members of the band to go to. So you get to relate with your own band members and sit with them during a performance and hear what's going on and take back some pearls of wisdom.

A small group of members took part in the National Community Band sponsored by the Sousa Foundation. One year they travelled to Las Vegas and most recently Naperville, Illinois, to rehearse and perform with this group. Lois H. spoke about attending the event in Naperville:

It's the Sousa National Community Band performing up there under the direction of Colonel John Bourgeois. And that music is ultra-challenging. So for the last three weeks or so I've been probably putting in almost an hour a day trying to fine tune some of my parts in that program.

The members of the NOCB spend quite a bit of time making music, both inside and outside of ensembles. While they acknowledged the value of music-making itself, they also expected that the activity would have a successful outcome. They practiced and studied in order to achieve success and expected others to do the same. Other studies of amateur community musicians have found that music-making is the primary reason for participating in a community ensemble. Paterno (2010), King (2009), and Patterson (1985) each found that the members of the bands examined in their studies joined for musical reasons and as outlets for personal musical expression. In contrast to the present study, though, none of these explored the reasons behind these findings; using surveys, they determined that music-making had value for the members, but did not examine why it had value or how much value it had.

The value placed upon music-making by adult musicians seemed to distinguish the NOCB from the school-based ensemble culture at least as it is defined by a scant literature. In studies of the cultures of a middle school band and a high school marching band respectively, Hoffman (2008) and Dagaz (2010) found that the students who participated in their studies viewed band membership as being part of a community that provided an identity for them within their school and the wider school music community. In contrast to the findings of the present study, the students in these studies indicated that decisions to join and remain in band were influenced by others; they also indicated that relationships with other members were influential in determining their own place within the bands. Rohwer and Rohwer (2009) found that the social element of choir was most often identified as the primary outcome of school choir membership; their findings indicated more clearly than did those of Hoffman and Dagaz that the social element of participation was most important to student musicians. The choir members indicated that they considered friendships established as a result of choir participation to be the most important benefit derived from membership. Music-making experiences were considered to be a close second; they often acknowledged that friendships may have been an outcome of the music-making. In an essay about school band culture, Morrison (2001) argued that the school band is a culture rather than simply a class or an ensemble. Students assume the identity of band member and create a hierarchical structure that provides leadership and facilitates the transmission of the culture to new members. Inherent in this argument is that music-making, although the reason for the existence of the culture is but one portion of the identity of the culture. The identity of band member includes the social aspects of membership as well as the musical ones; in the school band, the identity of “band member” is not the same as the identity of “music-maker.”

The members of the NOCB appeared to be “music-makers;” they did not express a need for the other aspects of the “band member” experience identified by Morrison. Although they expressed that the literature they played and the social interactions that occurred through participation were important, the idea that music-making was of primary importance to the members of the NOCB was not surprising. They had widely divergent backgrounds and social and familial circles that were established before they joined the band, so it was reasonable to assume that most were not searching for a social outlet or a culture when they joined. As adults with established non-musical identities, they were looking for musical fulfillment. The behaviors I observed served to support this finding; the members spent little time before, during, or after rehearsals and concerts socializing. If I had not been a member nor had known the other members, I would not have been able to discern where friendships or collegial relationships existed. In a study that examined an adult community orchestra, Shansky (2010) also found that the members participated because they enjoyed making music and that social aspects did not provide motivation for participating. In contrast the students in the studies of school ensembles were still in the process of developing relationships with others and constructing their own social worlds; for them, band and/or choir membership was a source of relationships and helped to define their social worlds.

The value of music-making that was expressed by the members of the NOCB is similar to that expressed by Small. By placing the importance of art on the ritual function of its activity, Small (1999) provided a rationale for valuing the act of music-making:

We notice that the way the arts issue from, and return to, ritual is as action, as performance. In the enactment of ritual it is the making, the wearing, the exhibiting, the dancing, the musicking, in a word, the performing, that is valued, not the objects that are made, or exhibited, or worn, or performed, however carefully and lovingly they have been made. (p. 16)

It was interesting that participants indicated that they performed in other types of settings and ensembles and played other styles of music on a regular basis; participants indicated that they play several nights each week. Bowen (1995) found a similar result in a study of community bands in the southeastern United States. It appeared that the members chose to play in the NOCB not to play band music, but because it was another opportunity to play music. In other words, the NOCB was their Tuesday night music-making experience.

### **Music-Making in a Group**

The value of music-making was tied to the group nature of the music-making experience. Based on the interviews, participants considered it important for them to be a member of a large ensemble and in particular the NOCB. Membership in the NOCB presented opportunity to experience five desired outcomes that fulfilled the expectations of the members:

- To make music as a part of a larger group,
- To respond aesthetically to musical sound,
- To make music with people of similar musical ability,
- To make music with people who shared a similar level of commitment,
- To be involved in a sufficient, yet attainable musical challenge. Central to the value of making music in a large ensemble were the importance of playing with others and of contributing to and being part of the sound that is created by a larger group.

While no one expressed it directly, the sense of security may enter into this preference for playing with others. One member, Meredith S., explained that she enjoyed playing in a group rather than alone:

I don't like to play by myself, but this is an opportunity—whereas I could go and play in a church, and I could do weddings and the things that everybody . . . does; that's not my thing. I like to play with a bigger group, as a part of a whole group.

Another member, Amber S., was more direct: “I never would see myself playing a solo; I like being a part of a larger group.”

For participants, playing in a group had value simply because it was how they choose to make music. They believed that playing in a group allowed them to have experiences that were only possible in this setting. Robert H. believed that the group was “stronger than the sum of its parts.” Referring to the experience of playing in a group, Lindsey K. said, “You can’t get that playing in a room by yourself. It’s the collective effort of every person in that room that brings it together. That’s what I’m in there for.” They chose to play in a group because it was desirable. Carla E. put it succinctly: “I’m there to play the music, to be part of the group.”

Participants spoke about the sound produced by a large group, the value derived from being a part of that sound, and the feeling it evoked. Ann R. said, “When stuff sounds really good, you know that you were in there. You might not be able to say that was me on that note, but you know it’s in the whole, and you’re a part of it.” Another member, Lindsey K., elaborated further on this, placing the sound of the group on a higher level of importance than simple membership: “It’s not just being part of a group, it’s what we do together . . . the finished product. Sitting there and having that sound surround you, it’s just . . . I can’t put words to that.” Coffman (2006) reported that the participants in his study also indicated positive responses to “the enveloping, aggregate sound of the ensemble” (p. 17). Lois H. provided a summary of the importance of group membership that accounts for both reasons: “I just feel like a team member. You have your role to play and you try to do your best in the part you have to contribute. And it’s just nice to sit there and listen to the pretty sounds.”

In a study of four amateur music ensembles, Palmer (2008) applied the term “aesthetic satisfaction” as an explanation of the desire of participants to make music. For participants, the

sound of the ensemble provided aesthetic satisfaction. Although not all participants expressed the nature of the aesthetic satisfaction they experience, their reactions to successful concert performances served as uninhibited indicators of satisfaction. Following a performance of the finale to Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony, which elicited a prolonged ovation from the audience, the members could not contain their enthusiasm for what they had just accomplished. They congratulated each other and the conductor, and received the congratulations from audience members, including friends and family members, with apparent joy. It may be that for NOCB members, aesthetic satisfaction is but one of several desirable outcomes of group membership and that it is experienced periodically. It is possible that the work of rehearsal and the preparations made individually and collectively do not lead to aesthetic satisfaction for some; for those that play several nights per week it may be too much to expect them to be attuned to aesthetic outcomes that often. However, it was apparent that aesthetic satisfaction was achieved by most members as a part of their experience with the NOCB. As Reimer (2003) said: "Nothing is so personal as what we feel, and how we personally feel music at the time we are involved with it. Whatever the music or its purpose or setting, all individuals are likely to experience it emotionally in ways particular to them" (p. 74).

The value derived from making music with people perceived to have similar abilities was made clear by the members. The policies of the band reinforced this idea. The band does not have open membership. New members are admitted only when an opening occurs; they are invited to attend rehearsals, but formally admitted to membership only if they demonstrate a level of musicianship similar to the rest of the band. The final decision belongs to the conductor. Through the years, most people who did not meet the standard self-eliminated after a couple of rehearsals. Rarely did one have to be asked to leave. The members are pleased that there is a

process for joining that protects the band's level of musicianship. Pete O. expressed clearly the rationale for this process:

I'm looking for a certain level of overall dedication and a certain level of desire of the people (members) to perform reasonably well. I certainly don't put a demand that they be anywhere near perfect, but the fact that they want to do well and want to challenge themselves somewhat, that's important to me.

Although participants made it clear that there were people with a wide range of ability in the band, they believed that this group allowed them to make music on a level that was appropriate for their own ability level. Meredith S. expressed this in simple and direct terms: "I want to play well, and I want to play in a group that plays well." Pete O. expressed similar sentiments: "You have to maintain a certain level of playing ability and balance to make it fun for me to be in it . . . I'm often surrounded by people who are trying to do well, and that makes it fun for me." Frank M. echoed this in very direct terms, saying that he would have a hard time playing in a group that "was not a quality group."

The standards for membership in the NOCB and the desire by the band to limit membership based upon performance skill level and instrumental needs are characteristics of the traditional band culture as found in the United States. The history of the professional American wind band that includes the bands of Sousa, Goldman, and others, as well as the history of military and university wind bands provides precedents for invoking limitations on access to these ensembles. Borrowing from the tradition of the professional orchestra, American bands screened potential members through an audition process before allowing them to become members. The audition served to protect performance standards that had been established by the organization. Although the professional wind band no longer exists as it did in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, military bands continue to adhere to a strict audition policy as do university

wind bands. Many high schools also require auditions, if not for membership then at least for chair position.

The traditional band culture stands in contrast to the concept of Community Music for which one of the primary tenets is that access should not be limited. The welcome provided by Community Music is extended to all: “The welcome of the community musician refutes the closure inherent within the notion of the ‘gated’ community, enclaves that contain restrictive perimeters that are tightly controlled and which monitor participants’ entrances and exits” (Higgins, 2008a, p. 392). The members of the NOCB expect admittance to the band to be restricted; they desire to make music at a particular level of quality and expect that other members will have the ability that is needed to maintain that level.

For participants, being in a group with members that play at a higher level of expertise provides them with opportunities for musical growth. Lois H. explained it this way: “You play in a group and you hear other players that are at a higher level than you are, and it makes you strive to do better with your sound and your confidence as far as playing the instrument.” Participants acknowledge that they have been influenced musically by specific individuals. Matthew G. mentioned the influence that a particular member had on his own playing:

When (she) joined the band and sat by me, I noticed that she was playing dynamics that weren’t on the page. She was playing musically, even when it was an eighth note by itself. She was playing it short or long; she was right in the choices she was making and it sounded better. I thought that she’s sitting in the middle of a 20 member section and nobody in the audience would be able to tell she was doing this, but then I realized that for my own expression I needed to do those things, too.

Participants expressed the value derived from having a shared commitment to making music and to the band. As Lois H. explained, “I’m in a group with the same-minded people. They have a common purpose and love of music or they wouldn’t be here too.” Peyton S. spoke about the importance of a shared commitment in the much same way: “It’s a collaborative effort,



a team kind of effort and that's something I enjoy." The policies of the band again reinforced the importance of shared commitment. At rehearsal each week attendance is taken and members who have a pattern of absences are contacted in order to find out why they are missing. Recently, the members were asked to contact their section leader, a board member, or the conductor if they are going to be absent. Additionally there is a policy that says that in order to play a concert, the members must attend the final two rehearsals prior to that concert or receive permission from the conductor if there is an unavoidable conflict.

One idea often expressed by participants was that the music played by this band provides them with a desirable and attainable challenge. The value of this often was expressed in reference to the quality of music played by this band when compared to that played by other groups. Elise L. said: "Being in this particular community band, because the bands I have been playing in before were at a very different level, and the word that goes with the NOCB for me is the challenge." One long-time member, Matthew G., considered this to be an important part of the history of the band: "What we're really interested in is the band continuing its tradition of being challenged and playing challenging music, maybe a little bit harder than we can actually play. We don't want to sit back and play easy stuff or dumb it down." A new member, Martin H., expressed the same thoughts on a personal level: "I enjoy challenging music. I don't like things that are real easy. I would rather play things that are difficult and are going to push us."

The idea of making music as a part of the NOCB providing a desirable and attainable challenge is similar to one of the characteristics of flow. Flow is described as an optimal experience, in which a person has "a sense that one's skills are adequate to cope with the challenges at hand, in a goal-directed, rule-bound action system that provides clear clues as to how well one is performing" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Although the present study did not

explore the concept of flow, it became apparent during the course of the interviews that the members experienced flow. They expressed satisfaction with the challenges provided by the literature and the expectations of the conductor and other members, and in their ability to meet them; in other words, the challenge was attainable.

Participants addressed the satisfaction they felt when they met the challenges provided by the music. Patrick S. said:

Here's a piece of music that is way more complicated than I can play, but if I work at it, maybe I can do a decent job. I enjoy that stress, I guess, trying to work to get something in a playable form. It's fun to be able to just get that part right.

For others the challenges have led to personal musical growth. Kay A. spoke about her progress:

"But the music, the music level is art; it's things I never thought I would be able to play. So I'm surprised. Every week I surprise myself that I feel like I have gotten a lot better." For

participants, the challenge was one that had to be met over a period of time and required much perseverance. Lindsey K. said:

When I played with the NOCB the first time, I didn't play the first concert. (The conductor) told me I could sit on stage and play when I felt I could and that I would know when I couldn't do it appropriately. Every year I get better, so, it's a growth process for me.

Previous research has indicated that members of community music ensembles consider the level of challenge offered by the ensembles to be a factor in their decision to participate. In a study of two New Horizons ensembles, Kruse (2007) found that one of the factors that led to continued participation was satisfaction with the challenge posed by the difficulty of the music. Although the New Horizons ensembles serve as sources of learning for adults who have either never played an instrument or have not played in many years, whereas the NOCB serves as a musical outlet for people who have a skill level that allows them to play difficult band literature, participants shared a common belief; that the challenge posed by the music must meet their

expectations and be appropriate for their perceived skill level in order for the experience to be satisfying. Other studies have addressed this issue only peripherally. Coffin (2004) found that the challenge provided by participating in a women's barbershop chorus was one of several reasons for members to participate. Gregory (2009), King (2009), and Wilhelm (1998) also found that the quality of literature that formed the repertoire of the ensembles was important, but did not specifically address the issue of the challenge it provided and how the members met the challenge.

### **Music Literature**

The band members are proud of the history of the NOCB. They have preserved printed programs from each concert, beginning with the first one held December 16, 1975. Based upon examination of the concert programs and my experience as a member of the band, it was apparent that the band plays a wide variety of literature: marches, medleys, arrangements of folk music and patriotic music, transcriptions of orchestral music, and original music for wind band (New Orleans Concert Band Programs). Each concert included one or two major pieces from the standard wind band repertoire, such as the *West Point* Symphony for Band (Morton Gould, 1952) or *Lincolnshire Posy* (Grainger, 1987), or newer original works, such as *Exhilaration and Cry* (Grantham, 2008) or *Give Us This Day* (Maslanka, 2007). The medleys were usually written by well-respected arrangers like Warren Barker, Robert Russell Bennett, James Barnes, and Sammy Nestico. Some concerts required more specialized literature, including the December concert, titled *A Concert at Christmastime*, which included several pieces appropriate for the season, and the Fourth of July concert, held at the National World War II Museum, which included patriotic and American music. Most concert programs exhibited a variety of musical styles and levels of difficulty.

There appeared to be a contradiction in what participants said concerning the literature played by the band. On one hand they expressed that they would play anything and on the other hand were proud of the quality of literature the band had played throughout its history. Most participants began playing an instrument when they were in elementary or middle school, and their most vivid early band experiences came from high school, with some continuing in college; most chose to not pursue music as a career. During the interviews and informal conversations, it became apparent that participants possessed a limited knowledge of band repertoire, most of which came from personal experiences playing specific pieces and was confined to those few pieces. No one appeared to possess an extensive knowledge of repertoire beyond those works with which they had experience. It was clear that participants did not choose to play in the NOCB because of a desire to perform particular repertoire; they were not concerned about playing specific pieces or even specific genres of music. This supports Small's (1998) statement, "Performance does not exist in order to present musical works, but rather, musical works exist in order to give performers something to perform" (p. 8).

Participants, however, expressed that the quality of the literature they played was important. The quality of the literature was often allied with the challenge it provided, although the value placed upon quality was apparent. Fredrick T. appreciated the quality of the music the band played and found that it kept him focused on improving musically:

The music we're doing is fine; it's excellent and I enjoy it. It keeps me going and I still have to practice. It's not like, 'hey, I don't need to worry about that anymore;' that's not the case at all, because after playing as long as I've played, you'd think, 'well, I don't need this stuff,' but I absolutely find it keeps me going in the right direction.

Bette W. spoke of her preference for classical music and the importance of the literature played by the NOCB: "This is a great band and I like the kind of music that we play in this band. It's very important. I prefer classical music; I'm okay with dance music, which is mainly what the

(other band) plays, but I prefer classical.” Christina K. addressed the issue of quality directly: “The concert band always tries the better quality music. We’re always looking, pushing the edge, and that’s what I like.”

Bowman (2005) argued that performing is not inherently good; it is important to strive for quality when performing, both in what is performed and how it is performed. This idea seemed to be accepted wisdom for members of the band. It is difficult to identify what is meant by “quality” when applied to music literature. The participants appeared to apply the term to music that provides them with an appropriate challenge and has a serious nature. They are quick to reject music that they consider to be poorly constructed or trite, especially arrangements of popular music that fail to sound authentic and medleys that have no cohesiveness, and music that they consider to be too easy or too hard.

Participants emphasized the value derived from being exposed to new literature. Meredith S. said: “As an elementary music teacher, where else am I going to have the opportunity to play new literature, or even hear new literature? I like that aspect, that there’s always something we’re playing that I haven’t heard or I haven’t done.” Harper S. also appreciated exposure to new literature: “Everybody enjoys when a good old warhorse gets passed out, and its like, ‘good, I get another shot at this one.’ But it’s also fun to look at the new things as well.” The band has made a commitment to playing new music and has purchased new music each year that I have been a member. Some of the “new” literature has been new to the group, not newly composed music, but the band’s willingness to look for new pieces has been an important part of its character.

As mentioned earlier, participants have a limited knowledge of band literature that stemmed from previous band experiences. However, the literature they know often is quite difficult and of a high quality. In one of the rehearsals the conductor asked the band members to

suggest pieces that they would like to perform; the conductor also indicated that several members have made unsolicited suggestions concerning literature. The conductor keeps a written record of the requests for future reference. The pieces suggested by the members were large scale works from the standard band repertoire, including *The Red Pony* (Copland, 1969) and *Hammersmith* (Holst, 1956), and orchestral transcriptions, such as *Fingal's Cave Overture* (Mendelssohn, 1946) or *Procession of the Nobles* (Rimsky-Korsakov, 1938). Some requests have been for pieces that demonstrate a deeper knowledge of the literature. One member requested the transcription of *Sinfonia India* (Chavez, 1971) and another requested *Variations and Fugue* (Giannini, 1967). Many times the requests are for pieces that the member played in high school or college band; other requests are for pieces that have been heard at concerts by other groups, on the radio, or on recordings. The band has done concerts comprised completely of works requested by members.

Participants spoke about liking or disliking pieces and how they handled playing pieces they disliked. Participants accepted playing pieces they disliked because they realized that the program will change for the next concert and the amount of time spent on one program is finite. As Patrick S. said, "I know at some point we're going to hit something that I really like. The fun is I don't know when that will be, but I know that it will happen at some point." Amber S. said that she has disliked a few pieces, but often overcomes this feeling: "There have been a few I absolutely can't stand. I can't think of their names right now, but for the most part I do end up appreciating what we have." Participants expressed that the feelings they have toward a piece of music change as the rehearsals proceed. Lizbeth D. explained this process most thoroughly:

When (the conductor) gives out the music, I look at it most of the time and say, 'oh geez, this is junk; I hate this. This is nasty. It sounds awful.' And somewhere between the time he gives the music out and the time we hit the stage, it becomes an emotional high. You

think, ‘This is deep. This is fun.’ It’s like a rollercoaster, and it’s very exciting. And I come away from the stage going, wow that was great.”

The literature played by the NOCB is reflective of the music that is usually encountered in this type of ensemble: original works for band, transcriptions from other media, medleys, marches, and solo accompaniments. Although the participants indicated that the choice of literature was less important than the act of music-making, they chose to join a group that played this type of music. Most members had past experiences playing this type of literature, so they were comfortable with it. They indicated, however, that they wanted the literature to provide them with a challenge, although the challenge was contained within a medium that was comfortable. In contrast, Community Music seeks to provide opportunities for participants to move out of their comfort zones. Higgins (2008a) described the structure of Community Music activities as “safety without safety” (p. 394). In other words, activities should provide the structure required for the activity to take place, but should provide for freedom from restraints as the activity progresses.

### **Social Interaction**

The participants were asked to describe how important they considered the music, the act of music-making, and the social nature of music-making. None of them considered the social aspects to be most important; all indicated that music-making was most important. My observations of the group served to corroborate this finding. I observed that the level of social interaction varied from member to member. Some members usually arrived by 7:00 PM and engaged in conversations until rehearsal began. The conversations often accompanied some other task, such as setting up chairs and stands, getting music folders ready, or assembling instruments. Conversations never led to the delay of the start of rehearsal. Others arrived at the last minute, just in time to get set for the start of the rehearsal, and engaged in little social interaction with

other members. The same type of behaviors occurred at the end of rehearsals, with most members taking care of their instruments first, followed by chairs and stands, and then leaving by 9:45 PM. Some left in pairs or small groups, others left alone. Some members always stayed after the others were gone and continued conversations, often staying as late as 10:30 PM. The same group always was the last to leave.

Each rehearsal had a break. The break occurred between 8:30 and 8:45 and lasted for about ten minutes. Some members never left the room during this time while others always left. The ones who left stood in the hall outside the rehearsal room and carried on conversations, checked phone messages, used their cell phone to make calls or send texts, or got water to drink. The conductor usually signaled when the break was over and most people responded quickly. Some took longer to get back in place than others, and often caused those who were ready to be irritated. Occasionally some expressed the opinion that the break lasted too long while others indicated that there should be no break. Shansky (2010) described the social interactions she observed during rehearsals of a community orchestra, and as described by the participants, in similar terms: "Observations made at the rehearsal were that any socializing is left to break time and did not spill over onto rehearsal time. In fact . . . socializing was not a high priority for those interviewed" (p. 8).

The participants described the social nature of making music as members of the NOCB as important, but did not have a common viewpoint as to what about it was important. Some mentioned that friendships had developed among members, especially among those who had been involved for many years, while others indicated that they were not interested in personal relationships with others. Some expressed the idea that the social aspects were bonuses; they were important but not the reason for belonging. One of the most interesting findings was that



some expressed the belief that the act of music-making was in itself a social act. Although they indicated through their words and behavior that the social nature of music-making was less important than the act of music-making, the participants spoke about it at length.

The membership of the band represents a wide range of ages, experience levels, professional activity, and interests. Meredith S. addressed the diversity, saying “The band is kind of unique in that we have young people, people who are much younger than I am as well as people who are much older.” Patrick S. explained it this way: “The social aspect is wonderful because I get to talk with a group of people that have completely different experiences and attitudes. It’s fun to talk with different people about different things.” Participants commented that the band is a community and that the diversity of the membership is desirable. Peyton S. said, “The social part is important, too. When I go there (to rehearsal) there are people that I know. It’s kind of like a little family or a little community.”

Bowman (2009) called music-making a “community of practice,” which is situated within a community and forms its own community. The NOCB exists within a city and a larger musical community, yet it has become its own community, with music-making as its form of practice. Bowman defines musicking as “a mode of interaction, or a mode of social engagement, relationship, and exchange between and among human agents” (p. 112). For the members of the NOCB, music-making has served as the catalyst for developing a community of practice which satisfies a need in their lives. Terence R. spoke eloquently about the community of the band and the fact that the community of the band is situated within a larger community to which it contributes:

I guess it’s a community for me. Steven Spielberg did the thing called *Band of Brothers*; I think it’s a band of musicians, fellow musicians for me. I think we celebrate music for the same reason. It is our passion, our avocation. It’s not our vocation, but it is our avocation. I think we appreciate music for the same reasons and it is as part of a community that we

practice and participate and give back. I see myself as an integral part of a very unique group of people, a very talented group of people, a very committed group of people who are not playing only for the satisfaction of playing, but to give something back to the community, to provide a service.

Participants spoke about the fact that they have become acquainted with many people they would not have met outside of the band. The acquaintances were often considered not as friendships that flourished outside of band but as important relationships nonetheless. Elise L. said,

I like being with different people, people that I would not have met otherwise. I'm not going to say that I know every single band member by the detail, or by first or last name, but in a different environment with something in common.

Speaking of the band members Kay A. said:

It's rare that they cross my path in my outside life, but it's a group of people that I am just amazed on a weekly basis. I'm very lucky, I think, to have been touched by that many lives and added that many more people into my world.

Since members of the band have been involved for many years, it is inevitable that friendships have formed. Participants referred to these friendships as important outcomes of the band. Harold C. spoke of the importance of these friendships:

It offers me a way to communicate with other band members and to have friendships that I otherwise wouldn't have; I think that also goes for a lot of other band members. There are a lot of small, close-knit groups, people getting together and having a lot in common.

Catherine M. described a particular friendship that she considered to be important:

There are some people, like (her) that I have known for 33 years. I was really fortunate with (her) because (her) kids are just a little bit older than mine. In one sense it was nice because she had kids. All the other people around me didn't, so we talked about other parts of life. But with (her), I could talk about kids; I probably would have gone crazy without it.

Some members have been friends since high school; they played together in band with founder of the NOCB as their band director and have played together in the NOCB for over 30 years.

Others, especially those who joined in recent years, have fewer ties with other members,

although some of the newest members joined along with friends or encouraged friends to join later, giving them ready-made relationships. Even though friendships exist and are mentioned, it was difficult through observation to ascertain where friendships existed. It appeared that the rehearsal time was a group time and that members sought out the people with whom they talked on rehearsal nights rather than gathering in small groups.

For participants, the relationships they found in the NOCB have had a profound impact on their lives. Lindsey K. spoke about the way people seem to care for each other: “It’s nice to know that people care about you on some level; if you are looking low or feeling low or you miss a week, somebody notices.” Lindsey K. got married while this study was in progress and she expressed concern that the ceremony was going to be quite small and that she couldn’t invite the band. In the weeks that preceded the wedding, people asked her about it and expressed how happy they were for her, never expressing concern about not being invited. There was a concert the week before the wedding and Lindsey K.’s mother came to town early so she could attend the concert and meet the members.

Chase L. spoke about how the camaraderie he found in band has helped him develop verbal expression:

It gives me a place to be with others and it opened up my ability to actually speak. I was quite the ‘in the corner’ guy all through middle school and the first half of high school, but then I started to open up. I opened up when I was in band, but then I closed myself off when I graduated. Now I probably can’t shut up and it’s because of the camaraderie that we have as a group.

Ann R. spoke of a similar experience: “It’s just being with other people, because honestly I’ve gone days before without seeing anybody, just staying at home. I know that’s not good, but I’m working on it. So that’s why I look forward to band.” Megan M. spoke about how the band experience fills a void in her life:

I'm becoming an empty nester and I'm solo, and not having a husband makes it a lot different. I think that, dare I say it, it gives me an adult experience and adult conversation that I don't have when I'm at home. It fills a void for me in the respect that I'm around other people.

Terence R. spoke about the influence the band and its members have had on his life:

I would say that music to me, and especially the band, introduced me to another way of living, another way of life, and with a more positive element—I say element for lack of a better word—but a more positive group of people. I think that had a very good influence, a very positive bearing on my life. And it also demonstrated to me what the power of possibilities are, and it sort of rounded out my humanity. It's a great group of people and they have substituted as a family for me.

Participants viewed music-making itself as a way of socializing with others. There were two threads to this line of thought: (a) socializing about music-making and (b) socializing through music-making. Socializing about music-making occurred in two forms. The first was concerned with sharing information with others about music or musicians that had been encountered and might be of interest to others. Harold C. provided an example:

I bought both the violin and trumpet arrangements and I told (him; a trumpet player) about it and I said, 'this is a beautiful piece of music. I'll bring it to you.' So he looked at it and played it, and he really loved it. I like that kind of interaction, and I like hearing things that are new to me.

The second was concerned with learning about music or music-making from others. Ann R. spoke about learning from another member of her section:

I look forward to sitting next to (him) because of the feedback I get. You know, I'm missing every accent on the page and he says, 'I'm going to slap you.' I need that. Even though I may not be in the mood to hear that, I need that and I like that. It's not like I'm there to visit, but I need that person telling me that I'm doing something right or pointing out how I could be doing something better.

Fredrick T. spoke about socializing through music-making:

I think that's the social part of it; you are listening to each other back and forth. That's not a conversation of words, but it's a conversation of music that you're trying to put together; that's the social aspect. It could be a good social combination or it could be a mistake, a tragedy sometimes.

Terence R. added that music-making is an expression of our humanness and is entwined with its social nature:

I don't think you can really appreciate true musicianship without understanding its connection with our humanity. I think it's like a piece that comes together. It has this beginning, middle, and end; you kind of build toward the middle going towards the end, and I think that's what we do as human beings. I think we're more comfortable with each other as we learn and grow together, and I think that it's a result of our participation. I even notice the type of music we play—I think that as we learn to appreciate each other more, it's easier to play more difficult pieces, because it's as much about feeling and appreciating each other as it is musicianship.

Participants spoke about the growth they have experienced from socializing about and through music-making. Figure 2 illustrates this relationship. Frank M. spoke about his return to music-making as a member of the NOCB and the community orchestra as a life-changing experience:

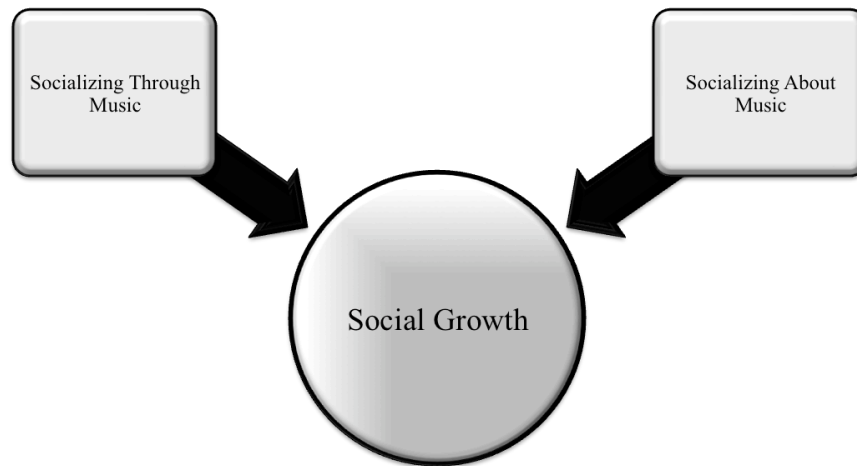
I think it has played a significant role in balancing my life. During a 25-year hiatus (from music-making) I didn't have balance in my life. I was totally absorbed in climbing the corporate ladder, kind of proving myself in a corporate environment and trying to rise to the highest level I could go. Well, I got to be president and chief executive officer of the company, and chief financial officer. But it took an awful lot out of me and I didn't have a good balance between that and a family life and relaxation. What music and these organizations did was they allowed me to meet new people, new interesting people, and make friends that I would never come across in my walks of life; it was an enormous stress reliever. When I started playing music again, I had a much, much better balance in my life.

Terence R. provided a description of the interaction of music-making and social growth that is more universal and less personal. He compared the act of social interaction with the act of music-making:

To me, playing music is like learning different people, getting to know different people. Music is very demanding in that way; you can't force it. You have to wait and you have to listen; it calls for patience and it makes you reflect on what's going on around you. It demands your full attention. It's like when you're talking to someone, you're having a conversation; your mind is someplace else and they can tell you're not paying attention. But if you really want to know what's going on with a person or appreciate a person, you have to concentrate and your focus has to be what is going on at that moment. And that's

what music is; you can't think about something else and play music. So I think of music as getting to know the person.

Figure 2.  
Socializing and the Process of Social Growth



The social nature of music-making in a group is apparent to anyone who is involved in this type of activity. Members of an ensemble must interact with each other and the conductor (if there is one) in order to achieve a cohesive performance. At the simplest level they must respond to each other to agree on a tempo, to agree on intonation, to achieve a proper balance between parts, to agree on the appropriate dynamic levels, and to adjust to changes that may occur during the course of the performance. Upon finding that the participants in his study expressed that there is more to the social dimension of music-making than simply establishing and maintaining friendships, Palmer (2008) offered a similar explanation about the social nature of music-making: “Music-making is a social activity in itself. It requires listening and responding to the details of the sounds the other musicians are making as well as following the directions of the conductor” (p. 210). Coffman (2006) also found that for the participants in his study, “music-making was inherently a social activity” (p. 19).

The members of the NOCB, however, appeared to consider the social nature to be more than simply reacting to each other as they made music; as Terence R. said, “It’s as much about feeling and appreciating each other as it is musicianship.” Faulkner and Davidson (2006) addressed similar findings in their study of a men’s chorus. The members of the chorus expressed a strong affinity toward singing in harmony, to the point of disparaging unison singing. The authors concluded that “singing together in harmony appears as an almost natural way of being and relating, fulfilling basic needs for vocal collaboration and social connectiveness” (p. 231). They stated further that singing in harmony “recognizes difference and individual value, but constrains excessive displays of individuality through interdependent behavior in pursuit of a single collective and homogeneous voice” (p. 231). Because they require different skills, one cannot equate the experience of singing in harmony with playing an instrument as a member of a band. However, the analysis provided by Faulkner and Davidson helps to give voice to the expressions of the members of the NOCB. The members play together each week and several have played together for many years; they have learned to trust each other and to rely upon each other as they make music. This connection provides them with a social experience that is different from the other types of social experiences they encounter in their lives. Because the social nature of music-making is not expressed verbally, it may be that some members are not conscious of its existence and dismiss the value of social interaction as a result. Reimer (2003) used the term “communion” to describe what happens between and among individuals engaged in group performance. He said that, “in the act of ensemble performance individuals ‘commune’ in joint creativity, a self-combined-with-other-selves experience in which individuality and community are fused in service of original musical expression” (p. 115).

The social interactions that have occurred as a result of being a member of the NOCB were described several times as a bonus. Those that described them in this way considered music-making to be the most important reason for being a member, yet considered the social aspects to have some importance: They joined for musical reasons and received social benefits as a result. Christina K. called the social aspects of membership “added benefits” while Lindsey K. used the word “bonus” when describing her thoughts about the social interactions. Although participants spoke quite eloquently and candidly about the importance of the social aspects, they usually returned to the idea that music-making is most important. Jack T. expressed the priorities of many when he said, “I would say playing comes first and then the music that’s being played; the social is a kind of bonus.” As described earlier, the rehearsals reflect this priority. Harold C. provided an appropriate summary:

I would say the act of making music is the most important thing. I do enjoy the social nature of making music and all of the things we talk about socially and the friends you make and the interaction you have with the person sitting next to you, sometimes to the conductor’s chagrin, you know, talking during the time he’s talking. I think at the breaks, our ten minute breaks, we get to talk about some of the music we’re playing and other things, too, but for me, the act of making music there is really, really important.

The participants made it clear that they considered music-making to be the most important reason for participating in the band. However, they spoke with conviction about the importance of the interactions they have with the other members of the band. The interactions they described were not inconsequential or fleeting; they were rooted in music-making and appeared to have been made stronger through music-making. Bowman (2009) argues that “musically sonorous experience is never just individual: musical engagement is fundamentally and invariably collective” (p. 121). A desire to engage in music-making may have provided the motivation for the band members to join, but the process of music-making together led to deeper connections among the members. Returning to the idea of the band as a community, Bowman



said, “Music creates and sustains the senses of collaborative togetherness on which community (com/unity) relies for its very possibility” (p. 121).

### **Extramusical Benefits**

The purpose for asking about the roles music-making and band membership play in the lives of the participants was to help focus their attention on how and why they chose to occupy the roles of music-maker and band member. The responses, however, also included expressions of the value of extramusical benefits that the participants derived from making music. Each benefit is an outcome of music-making and band membership; no one indicated that these were reasons for participating. Although these are not central to identity construction, extramusical benefits appeared to increase the value of music-making and band membership for some members.

### **Source of Confirmation and Confidence**

Participants described music as a source of confirmation and confidence, although the descriptions were quite individual in nature. Catherine M. offered a reflection upon her life when she was in school:

I think I had a lot of self-confidence issues, but that’s one thing I always knew I could do: I could play. I could make music. I was in the band and I received the award for outstanding musician—the best clarinet player in band. I think it helped my self-confidence a lot.

Megan M. spoke about music as the one thing that remained constant throughout her life: “I think it’s the one constancy in my life. Friends come and go. I moved a lot while growing up, but it’s the one thing that was always part of me that no one else could take away.”

### **Escape from Everyday Life**

One of the most common expressions was that music and band provided opportunities to escape from everyday life, or at least time to think about something else. One thread that ran

through several interviews was that “escape” did not infer that the activity was without purpose. Frank M. said, “I play music and I’m relaxed. Music is creative; mindless things don’t do anything for me other than coax me to sleep. I can relax while I’m being creative. The opposite of relaxation to me is boredom, and mindless things are boring to me.” Lindsey K. considered music-making to be a stress reliever and a source of personal growth: “It’s a vacation from everyday mundane activity and I assign great value to it in my life for giving me an activity to focus on, not so much as an escape, but as something to really work on to improve myself.” Pitts (2005) found that some of the participants in her study expressed similar sentiments: “Being able to concentrate solely on the music helped clear other thoughts from their minds, and contributed to the rejuvenation that musical involvement could bring.” That music-making offered an escape from work and family issues served as motivation for participants in her study to take part in music-making activities, as it did for members of the NOCB.

Many members of the band have stressful jobs and many family obligations. Included in the membership are several doctors, attorneys, teachers, corporate executives, nurses, and engineers; one member is the anchorperson for a local television news department, one is a heart surgeon, and two are bank examiners. Several members have children at home and/or obligations to older family members. One common expression was that music-making and band rehearsals and concerts provided a source of relaxation. Matthew G. said,

I could go to band on Tuesday night and the whole thing would relax. My whole body would relax. My brain would relax. I would not think about my problems as long as I was at band. I knew at least once a week for two hours everything was going to be normal and relaxed.

Rodney B. began playing music again specifically as a source of relaxation, “I realized the stress factor was killing me, so I started doing what I had done in high school. I used music to relax. I found that during the two hours I would spend in band I would literally forget about all of the

stress. It would just go away.” This reflects a characteristic of flow: By concentrating on the task at hand, “one is able to forget all the unpleasant aspects of life” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, p. 58). According to Csikszentmihalyi, this is a result of “the fact that enjoyable activities require a complete focusing of attention on the task at hand—thus leaving no room in the mind for irrelevant information” (p. 58). The type of activities in which the band members engaged during rehearsals was quite different from the type they encountered as part of their jobs; in order to be invested fully in the rehearsal, the members had to shift away from other mindsets and focus their attention on music-making.

### **Enhancing Everyday Life**

Participants considered music-making and/or band membership as enhancements to everyday life, not only as an escape. One common idea was that it was good for their minds; music-making was a thoughtful activity. Lindsey K. said, “It keeps me actively doing something instead of just passively sitting and watching television, something to keep my mind working.” Ida C. suggested that it provided a means for continued growth, “It kind of helps me to keep working towards something, to strive rather than to wither.” Frank M. spoke about how music provided a companion while growing up, “I was an only child, so I had no brothers or sisters. Beyond my school work, when my friends weren’t available, I really was by myself. But when I was with an instrument, I wasn’t.”

### **Source of Spiritual Fulfillment and Pleasure**

The idea of music-making as a source of spiritual fulfillment and/or pleasure was mentioned by participants. They spoke of the enjoyment they get from playing music and from playing as a member of the band. Robert H. referred to music as his passion: “I like to play as

much as I can. It's definitely important to me and I enjoy it. I mean, music is my passion."

Martin H. used enjoyment as justification for making music,

When I perform and I play well, it just gives me such a good feeling. There are plenty of times when I ask why am I doing this? It's taking up so much of my time. Then I play a performance and I do well, assuming I do well, I say that's why I'm doing it. It's something I do that I enjoy, and it makes me feel good.

Wendell C. spoke of his enjoyment and that of the other band members, "It makes me feel good to know that I'm enjoying it and that probably 65 other musicians are enjoying it. To me, it's very cheap therapy."

Other participants chose different words to express the fulfillment they receive from making music and playing in the band. Although the words change, each person seemed to find some strong connection to music. Ida C. described music-making as the best part of her life and said, "I guess it feeds my soul. It's the only time that I can really sit still and feel centered."

Dylan W. spoke about the emotional high he received from a specific performance,

I felt like the band came together, that collective nirvana or whatever, and all of a sudden you could feel the emotion or the expression coming across. It was pretty uplifting. Of course you're somewhat emotionally drained when you get done. You've given what you could and you wanted to make it your best at the time.

Terence R. described music-making as therapy as well as an escape:

Music is my therapy. It reconnects me to my humanity. It's the soothing or healing balm for the wounds that are open because of the bad stuff we have to deal with. It's my opportunity to just forget about all of that. It's almost healing.

Pitts (2005) indicated that discussing the value of musical participation in the lives of those involved is a difficult task: "Articulating the value of musical participation is a tremendous, perhaps impossible, challenge, since part of its appeal lies in the wordlessness with which it connects participants more deeply with themselves and with other people" (p. 10). This was true also of this study; the values that led the members of the NOCB to choose to include the

roles of music-maker and band member as part of their identities were many and varied. The one strong constant was the value they placed upon the act of music-making. In a study that explored musical participation, Pitts (2005) identified eight roles that music played in the lives of the participants. She indicated that performers and audience members both were “driven on by the multiple satisfactions of their participation—personal, social, and musical” (p. 141). The eight roles defined the satisfactions derived from musical participation as expressed by the participants. They included:

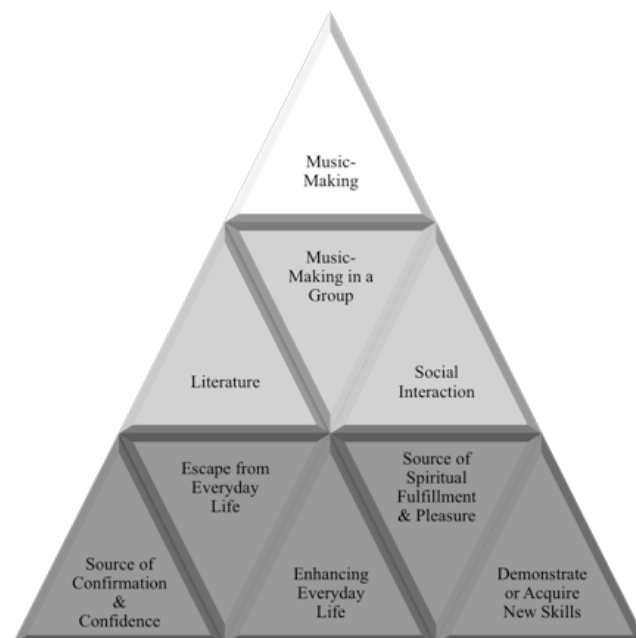
- Musical participation as a potential source of confirmation and confidence
- Musical participation as a way of escaping from everyday life
- Musical participation as a way of enhancing everyday life
- Musical participation as a source of spiritual fulfillment and pleasure
- Musical participation as an opportunity to demonstrate or acquire skills
- Musical participation as an opportunity to perform with others
- Musical participation as a way of promoting or preserving repertoire
- Musical participation as a forum for social interaction and friendships (pp. 142-144)

The themes that emerged from the present study were similar to the satisfactions identified by Pitts. As extramusical benefits derived from music-making and band membership, the members of the NOCB identified the value of music as a potential source of confirmation and confidence, a way of escaping from everyday life, a way of enhancing everyday life, and a source of spiritual fulfillment and pleasure. As they spoke about the value of music-making, the participants addressed the role of music as an opportunity to demonstrate or acquire skills. The values of performing with others and social interactions and friendships were addressed extensively; each was the topic of direct questions. The only satisfaction not addressed in the

way it was used by Pitts was musical participation as a way of promoting or preserving repertoire. Each participant addressed the music literature; however, it was done in the context of determining its value in relation to the act of music-making and the social nature of music-making. Although the participants identified the quality of the music and the challenge it provided as important, there was no opportunity provided to address the idea that music-making as members of the NOCB was done to champion the cause of a particular type of music.

Figure 3 illustrates the relative importance placed upon the values associated with music-making and band membership as perceived by the participants in this study. The highest level of value was placed upon the act of music-making, which occupies the top of the pyramid. This was followed by the literature played by the band, the act of music-making in a group, and the social interactions that were a part of the activity, all in the middle row of the pyramid. At the lowest level of the pyramid are the extramusical benefits. Although each of these had value, the pyramid illustrates the taxonomy of perceived values.

Figure 3.  
Taxonomy of Perceived Value



## **Commitment and Identity Salience Hierarchy**

Stryker (1968) related one's salience hierarchy to commitment: "The greater the commitment premised on an identity . . . the higher will be that identity in the salience hierarchy" (p. 561). He also indicated that the greater the commitment, the greater the positive emotional response one will have to an identity and the more that identity will be perceived as fulfilling one's wants; in turn that identity will be higher in one's salience hierarchy. The relationship between commitment and identity salience hierarchy was reflected in the results of the present study.

In order to ascertain how they perceived their commitment to music-making as a member of a community band, participants were asked to describe their level of commitment to playing in the band and how their commitment may have changed over time, the other roles they occupy. From the answers to these questions four themes emerged: (a) priority, (b) commitment to others in the group, (c) leadership, and (d) frustration with inability to do more. In addition two indicators of commitment emerged from organizational documents: (a) members' length of tenure, and (b) members' rehearsal and concert attendance. In order to ascertain the place of the musician role identity in their identity salience hierarchies, participants were asked about other roles they occupy and how they would construct their individual hierarchy. Two themes emerged from the answers to these questions: (a) place of music-making in identity salience hierarchy, and (b) changes in commitment and salience hierarchy.

### **Priority**

Participants expressed that they have made participating in the band a priority in their lives and consider band rehearsal to be an obligation that they meet each week. Amber S. said,

I consider myself, on Tuesdays, to be very selfish about my band. It's rare when I miss a rehearsal. If you miss one it would be easy to miss a few others. I feel that it is important for me to be there.

Lois H. concurred, adding that only a few things would interfere with attending: "I'd hate to miss a rehearsal unless I have to if I'm sick or we're going out of town. Or if the Red Sox are in the World Series, then I'd probably miss that rehearsal." Catherine M. spoke about the importance of making a commitment, "My feeling is that if I'm going to play I have to come every week and I have to be there. You can't just go sometimes. You have to make the commitment to go."

Christina K. addressed the idea of commitment this way:

If I'm going to join a group, music or anything else, I'm going to do the whole thing. I'm not going to just say that I'm going to be a part of it and then not show up. If I'm going to commit to something, it's total.

The word "commitment" was used by several participants to describe their relationship to the band. Shamir (1988) identified two types of commitment: (a) External commitment refers to circumstances that cause a person to be tied to a certain behavior and that will not allow for easy termination, such as feeling compelled to spend leisure time sailing because one has invested in a boat, (b) Internal commitment refers to "a motivational state or a motivational disposition to continue a line of activity, a role performance, or a relationship . . . because it expresses or enables the attainment of one's internalized goals, values, or norms" (p. 244). The stronger the association of the activity, role, or relationship with a person's self-identity, the stronger the internal commitment becomes. For participants, a sense of internal commitment served as the primary motivation to attend rehearsals on a regular basis and to approach music-making as a serious endeavor. External forces played a lesser role; there is no financial compensation for members, or any other extrinsic rewards. The tools needed for success in this activity require a monetary investment; members must own their own instrument and related equipment such as



reeds and mutes, and they must pay yearly dues of \$50.00. Except for the annual dues payment, the largest investment, the purchase of an instrument, usually is a one-time occurrence unless the members choose to purchase additional instruments or equipment.

### **Commitment to Others**

For participants, commitment included the realization that others depended upon them. Kay A. said, “It’s a commitment and your fellow band mates are counting on you to be there.” Some realized that they depended upon each other when they played, and that when one person missed rehearsal, others were affected; they may not be as secure or able to play as well when the person next to them is missing. Catherine M. spoke about how her commitment affects those she sits next to in the band: “I’m a minimal part, but I do know that I listen to (her) and (she) listens to me. I don’t want to not be there when they are used to me being there.” They realized that the commitment they had made, although based upon internal motivations, affected others.

Burke and Reitzes (1991) defined commitment as “the sum of the forces, pressures, or drives that influence individuals to maintain congruity between their identity setting and the input of reflected appraisals from the social setting” (p. 243). In other words, commitment influences the relationship between identity and behaviors; it reinforces expectations that are associated with the roles that construct one’s identity. Commitment brings with it expectations for action that must be fulfilled in order for the role to be acknowledged as part of one’s identity. According to Burke and Reitzes, commitment helps define identity and that “high levels of commitment will result in involvement in activities, in organizations, and with role partners, all of which support the person’s identity” (p.245). For participants, the level of commitment appeared to be quite high based upon the regularity of attendance, the longevity of tenures, and the recognition that others were affected by their commitment actions.

## **Leadership**

The strength of the commitment of participants was indicated by the roles they assumed within the NOCB. Some assumed roles as officers or board members, while others helped with non-musical duties whenever they can. The members who assumed leadership roles tended to see this as strengthening their own commitment in order to help the group function and grow. Dylan W., one of the current officers, spoke about how his commitment has evolved:

The last three or four years I've made a commitment to play and be on the board, too, because any organization of this size is not going to run by itself. You have to have a group of people that sort of carry the torch.

Another member of the board, Rodney B., expressed a similar view:

When I first went in, I tried to fool myself and say that I would just show up, play my part, and leave. But I've never done that in any aspect of my life. I realized there's more to running a band than just playing notes, and I've always been involved in that.

Meredith S. spoke about her desire to be a part of the leadership and take part in establishing the goals of the band:

Obviously, I'm a musician in the band and every musician has to do their part. I'm also a board member and one time was an officer. I don't do the officer position anymore because it's a little more work than I can keep up with, but I do like playing an active role in deciding the direction of where we're going.

Not all members assumed additional responsibilities or sought leadership roles. Some indicated that their commitment was to making music as a member the band and that they only played a small role within the group. There seemed to be a belief among participants that commitment was tied to contribution and that those who assumed roles in addition to that of performer were more committed. Peyton S. described himself as a team player who is not interested in being on the board: "I think I'm just one of the team, a team player. I try to pitch in like when we do concerts as far as setting up and helping the guys with the percussion. But I

haven't had an interest in running for the board, maybe because I have a lot of other things going on." Elise L. described herself as a member musician:

I'm a member as a musician, but there's nothing else to it. I would not dream of being involved in another position within the band because I don't have time and I won't get involved if I know I can't do it properly.

### **Frustration with Inability to Do More**

Some participants expressed frustration because other responsibilities limit the commitment they are able to make to the band. They are committed to attending rehearsals and concerts but cannot do more. As they spoke about this, though, some expressed a desire to be more involved someday. Jack T. spoke of the effect his job has on his commitment to band:

My problem is I can't practice enough with my job; I don't feel like I can devote the time to play the best I could possibly play. I think I contribute and play decent enough to help the band out, but I don't have the time to be on the board and all that. If I had a regular hour job, maybe I could.

Martin H. described a similar situation in his life but started to think about what he might be able to do:

Mostly I just try to play music. A big part of that in the past has been that I was chair of my department; that just sucked up so much of my time. I really didn't feel like I could afford to become more involved. The orchestra asked a couple of times if I would be a member of the board and I kept saying 'no, I don't have the time.' You know now I might say, let's give it a try and we'll see.

Terence R., who works at night, spoke about how he had to arrange his work schedule so he could attend rehearsals:

For the longest time it was very difficult. Tuesday nights are my band nights and I have to let my bosses know that that's important to me, because its community oriented work, as well. So I compartmentalize what I do. On Tuesday nights I know that I'm going to band rehearsal and I know that, depending upon how close we are to performances, I'll call out sometimes to stay later, but generally if the band rehearsal starts at 7:30, I'll leave by 8:30 or 8:45. The latest I can stay is about 9:00.

### **Length of Tenure**

Several participants have been members of the NOCB for over 30 years, with three having been present at the first rehearsal in 1975. According to the membership roster 44 members have joined since 2000. Sixteen members joined between 1990 and 1999, 12 joined during the 1980's, and eight joined during the 1970's. It is a rare occurrence for a member to leave without a compelling reason, such as changing jobs or leaving town. For example, six members left the band before the start of the 2011-12 concert season: One had been in town as a part of a one-year sabbatical from his regular teaching position in another state and had to return home, one was a member of the military and was reassigned abroad, and four took new jobs or were transferred to jobs out of town.

### **Rehearsal and Concert Attendance**

The rate of rehearsal and concert attendance by the members of the NOCB was another indicator of commitment. One of the officers checked the attendance for each rehearsal and according to the attendance records, the average weekly attendance for the 2010-11 season was 88%. This figure did not include those members who notified the band in advance that they had to miss an entire concert cycle; only those who had committed to a concert were counted in the attendance records. Members were asked to contact the conductor, a board member, or their section leader if they are going to be absent from a rehearsal. Most did this; many told the conductor about planned absences well in advance.

Each of the six indicators of commitment served to illustrate the importance of music-making and band membership to the participants of this study. Commitment was not one dimensional; it was demonstrated in their behaviors and communicated during their interviews.

Figure 4 provides an illustration of the six indicators of commitment that emerged from the findings.

Figure 4.  
Indicators of Commitment



### Identity Salience Hierarchy

When asked to prioritize their life roles, most indicated that family came first. Some indicated that their job came second, although several described their job as the thing that allows them to pursue other things that interest them, particularly music. Megan M. placed children as her first priority, but said “music is number two. And my job is a means to an end. It has to be up there because it is required in order to have numbers one and two.” Participants indicated that job requirements did not allow them the time to pursue their musical interests as much as they would like. While talking about his job, Jack T. said, “When I’m doing that (working), I wish I wasn’t. I wish I could be playing music.” Jack T. continued, “It’s (playing in the NOCB) making me think about what I want to do, when I want to start doing what I really love to do in my life. But I just keep working because I have to.” Martin H. placed his career as the top priority in his life but

spoke about his desire to be more active in music: “I’ve kind of fantasized about becoming a professional musician and just practicing all day long and performing. But that’s never going to happen.”

Commitment is a result of one’s priorities and the commitment one makes to something may or may not be as strong as one would desire. The priorities that must be constructed within one’s personal identity may not reflect one’s wishes; rather they are a result of necessity. A member of the NOCB may want to practice more or be a member of the board, but other roles they play may exert a stronger influence. One’s job may have requirements that make it impossible to have a stronger commitment to the band, but the commitment to the job has to be stronger because it is the source of income for the family. The prioritizing of roles is at the core of Identity Theory. According to Identity Theory, the roles played or identities assumed by an individual form a hierarchy that allows one to play several roles and assume several identities at the same time yet provides a means for prioritizing them. According to Stryker (1991), “Self is conceptualized as a hierarchical ordering of identities, defined as internalized role designations, into a structure of salience, defined as the probability of invoking a given identity across or within situations of interaction” (p. 23). The higher the salience of an identity relative to other identities, the greater the probability that one will choose behaviors attached to that identity. Stryker then established the connection between salience and commitment: “The salience ordering of identities is understood to be a consequence of commitment” (p. 23). For some participants, then, it is necessary for their identity as band member to have a lower salience than their occupational or professional identity.

## **Change in Commitment and Identity Salience Hierarchy**

Participants spoke about how their commitment has changed over time. For those who had been officers or board members, the change was quite drastic, although most spoke well of their time in office and all have continued to play. For others, the change has been in the form of an increase in commitment. Christina K. said,

When I first joined the community band, it was just like an escape, no responsibility. I didn't have to do anything, just come here, sit down, and play. You didn't have to make sure anything was ready. We showed up, played, put the music up, and left. But it's gradually increased over the years.

She attributed her increased commitment to the fact that she no longer has children to care for and is free to be more involved. Harold C. spoke about how his commitment to music-making has increased:

I've always been committed to it, but over the years I've begun to play more with other individuals, let's say a piano player or duets with a clarinet or flute. During those times the focus was more on what I was doing individually, but it didn't mean that I missed rehearsals. I was always at rehearsals.

Some members of the NOCB are retired, so they no longer have a job as a part of their salience hierarchy. For Ida C., this retirement allowed her to move music-making to a higher priority: "I would say that it's probably the priority in my life, next to family, and probably my family and my husband would dispute that, because sometimes it's my top priority." Some participants had difficulty in prioritizing the roles they play because the roles have been integrated. Rodney B. addressed this issue, "I've been doing it so long I don't know if there is a priority anymore. You just fit everything in; everything just works out."

Shamir (1988) called commitment a "time-related phenomenon" (p. 254). One's commitment to something changes over time as a result of many things, among which may be changes in other roles that force one to reevaluate their commitment to this role, changes in one's

physical or psychological ability to continue with the commitment, an increase in knowledge about that to which they are committed that may allow one to become more involved, or an increase in comfort with the role that may lead to a desire for an increased level of commitment. According to Shamir (1988) there can be no commitment until one has made contact with the role in question, and that the forces that cause a person to sustain and/or increase a commitment are different from those that initiated the commitment.

Results indicated that a high level of commitment to band membership and to music-making existed among the members of the NOCB. Although they were participating freely with no outside coercion, they appeared to have an internal force that compelled them to participate. Shamir (1988) considered commitment to be stronger than valuing because commitment required one to enter a role relationship whereas valuing involved feelings that did not require action. Thus, commitment could grow out of valuing. Although Shamir did not make this clear, it would be logical to conclude that commitment grows from values. The participants expressed the values they placed upon music-making, music literature, and the social nature of music-making; they moved beyond this by making a commitment to make music with the NOCB on a regular basis and to engage in activities that enhance the music-making experience. The commitment they made to music-making as members of the NOCB in turn resulted in that role being placed either second or third in their identity salience hierarchy.

There was one event that demonstrated the strength of the commitment shared by members of the NOCB. In July the band had been asked if they would play an outdoor concert in December as part of an event. The board accepted the invitation and presented it to the members as part of the concert schedule for the year. It was to be a repeat of a concert program that was already scheduled, so it would not require the band to learn a new program. The details of the



concert were established: The band would play the concert on a Friday evening at 6:30 PM. The concert would last for an hour and would include a ceremony for turning on the Christmas lights in the park. Two weeks before the concert, the band president was contacted by the chairperson of the event. There had to be a change in the starting time in order to get television coverage. The event would start an hour earlier, at 5:30 on a Friday. This caused much concern because most members hold jobs and it could be difficult for some to arrive by that time. In addition, it was to be on a Friday evening at rush hour during the holiday shopping season. The members were told about the change and some expressed concern that they would not be able to do it. However, on the night of the concert, with the exception of those who could not make either time, every member participated without complaint. In addition, there were some stories of the strength of individual levels of commitment. One member had surgery a week before the concert, but played anyway, while another had a surgical procedure the day before the concert because of heart problems, and still played the concert. Three other members played even though they had serious but less severe medical issues that had occurred during the week before the concert.

### **Musician Role Identity**

The members of the NOCB find music-making to be rewarding and are committed to playing with the band. They have received much from both the activity and the collaboration. They engage in behaviors that one expects of musicians. When asked if they considered themselves to be musicians, they gave several responses. Some dismissed the idea that they were musicians because they considered someone to be a musician only if they received compensation for playing. Carla E. said she was not a musician: “I don’t get paid for making music, so I guess that’s the line I’ve drawn. If someone were to ask me what it is I do, I’d say I play music.” Peyton S. also said he was not a musician,

I think of musicians as these friends of mine that do it for a living; some of them have studied music in college. They're very accomplished. I'd look at it more like a hobby, like an avocation. So I don't really think of myself as a musician—a musician to me is someone who is a professional.

Other participants did not describe themselves as musicians because they felt that they were not good enough. Patrick S. said, "I describe myself as a member of a band because I don't have the confidence to stand up and say I'm a musician who has other pursuits. I don't have the confidence in my ability to go out and say that." Catherine M. added, "I don't think I'm a performer; that's one of my problems. I like to play but I don't like other people to listen." Christina K. concurred, "I've never felt adequate enough to call myself a musician." This was consistent with the results of a study of two adult community bands by Kruse (2007) who found that "an overwhelming majority of the informants did not view themselves as 'a musician'" (p. 218). Although the participants in his study were from groups with different focuses than the NOCB, lifelong learning as opposed to performance, the same concerns about what it means to be a musician arose. The participants in Kruse's study equated being a musician with being able to read music and having status as a professional. Pitts (2005) found that many of the participants in the four cases that were included in her study about the value of musical participation also struggled with identifying themselves as musicians. She identified two factors that led to this struggle: uncertain self-perception and insecurity resulting from the context in which the participants made music. In other words if the context was not perceived as one in which musicians operated, they were less likely to self-identify as a musician. It is interesting that so many people actively engaged in music-making were unable or unwilling to identify themselves as musicians. It appeared that the problem was in the definition of "musician" that they had adopted.

What makes one a musician? Small (1998) says that anyone who sings, plays, or composes is a musician and professional status is not required for one to be called a musician. If, as Blacking (1973) believed, all humans have the capacity to be musical, then Small's definition is logical. Elliott (1995) employed the term "musicer," a contraction of the phrase "music maker," to identify a person who engages in one or more of five types of music-making: performing, improvising, composing, arranging, and conducting (p. 40). He further explained that music is a diverse human practice that is rooted in the practice of a particular contextual setting, and that musicers are those who engage in the practice of musicing within that setting. Furthermore, one can be a musicer without being a professional (p. 43). If the only requirement for one to be described as a musician is that they make music, then the members of the NOCB and the participants in the studies of Kruse and Pitts are all musicians.

Some participants, however, did describe themselves as musicians. Often they qualified it by adding that they were amateur musicians. Harold C. said,

I don't really describe myself as a musician, but I let people know how important music is to me and they get the idea that I really like playing music. I guess I do describe myself as a musician somewhat. I'll let it be known that I'm just an amateur. I'm not a professional.

This self-description placed amateur and professional in the context of quality; the phrase "I'm just an amateur" appeared to indicate that "amateur" implied a lesser status than did "professional." Regelski (2007) suggested that the terms amateur and professional do not indicate quality; rather "amateur" merely indicates that one has a love and commitment to an activity: "Amateurism is a musical practice that has its own valid criteria and its own valuable contributions to make; it has standards of its own, prime among which is a love that sometimes escapes professionals who must make their living doing it 'on cue'" (p. 39). He suggested that musical amateurism plays a role in one's identity: "Musicking done in the spirit of amateurism

becomes a significant part of one's identity, of one's deepest values, of who one 'is' and is always 'becoming' through continuing involvement" (p. 28). The members of the NOCB would do well to describe themselves as amateurs based upon this description of "amateurism," but the stigma that is often attached to the term makes it difficult for some people to embrace it. Using Regelski's description as a measure, the members of the NOCB are amateurs: they expressed a deep connection with music-making and a desire to continue to learn and practice in order to get better, and they exhibited a serious approach that is the hallmark of amateurism.

Frank M. expressed a similar thought, although without using the word "amateur":

I do (consider myself to be a musician). I don't use the word hobbyist and I don't use the word professional. I call myself a musician. I don't earn a living as a musician. Sometimes I refer to myself as a clarinetist just to limit myself to an instrument, but I'm not ashamed of it; I'm very proud of it.

Terence R. described himself as a "fair" musician: "I describe myself as a fair musician. But I embrace the term because it's what gives me the most joy. It's an inseparable part of my life because it has gotten me through so much and brought me so far."

Megan M., a member who identified herself as a musician, expressed that, although she did not make her living through music-making, it was more important than her job:

I think a lot of us work to support our music. We have that in the background, but we're sensible enough to know that there are better ways of making money. I think it does take the pressure off of you as a musician to not have to earn your income from it and lets you enjoy playing. For me, working as an architect supports my habit of being a musician.

In one of the most poignant moments I experienced during this study, Ann R. evolved as she contemplated whether or not she was a musician. Her initial response was negative because she did not meet the expectations she believed were attached to the musician role identity: "I guess because I don't get paid for it, and I don't have the degree that says I can do it, I don't have the right to call myself a musician." As she continued to consider the question she reversed her

decision, while employing reasoning similar to that of Small (1998) and Elliott (1995): “But now that somebody points it out, I guess I am. Now that I start looking at it, I play four or five nights a week, so I guess that does make me a musician. I just don’t get the checks.” It was exciting to see this transformation and to see how satisfied she was with the conclusion.

For members of the NOCB, music and the band have played important roles in their lives. They identify themselves as musicians and/or members of the band, they demonstrate a strong commitment to music-making in and out of the band, they have a desire to continue to improve as players, and they have done so for many years. Participants expressed how these things have helped to shape who they are and that music has been important throughout their lives. Ann R. said, “I’ve always liked music. I was a little kid and would go to the parade. I couldn’t care less about the floats; I was waiting for the band to go by. Music has always been my thing.” Meredith S., a music teacher, said,

Music is a part of my life. I think from the time I was probably about 12 I couldn’t think about doing anything else. I wanted to do something musical and was told by a hundred people, you’re not going to make any money, and you know, I don’t. But I think it’s important—I’m fortunate enough to be able to earn money to support me and my family as a part of a career dealing with music.

Catherine M. said, “I’ve pretty much played music all of my life and I can’t imagine not.”

Robert H. considered music to be an important part of his identity both now and while growing up:

It’s a sense of identity. I know it gives me a feeling of belonging. I mean all the way through school I had a ready-made group of friends. It was a way for me to connect with people, a social circle. In later years it continues to be a source of identity for me; I’m a musician. I can tell people that, more than like what I do in my career. I can look at myself and say ‘I play music.’

Frank M. expressed the idea that playing music leads to gaining respect:

When you play, you’re respected for what you do. It is part of me and I’m proud to admit that. Not everyone can sit down and play orchestral music. I have told members of the

board of directors in my company that I am a musician and they look at it with respect. I look at it as something I have been able to achieve.

Megan M. spoke of the depth of her identification with music: “We call ourselves amateur musicians, but I think that it’s just an ingrained part of me. I can’t live without music. It’s not a hobby, it’s something I do. A hobby is something you play with. I think it’s more than that.”

For Rodney B., music-making was a part of raising his children:

Some fathers hunt or fish with their kids; I always played music with mine. My kids thought that everyone on the planet played music except their mother. When I started playing I looked for venues I could play where they could come with me. They played in the American Legion band with me; they played with me in the Dixieland band when we went to London.

Matthew G. said that being a member of the NOCB “defined him:”

It’s a source of friendship, it’s a social outlet. But most of all, it’s my fun. It’s my relaxation. It’s my escape. It’s so many things to me that without it I don’t think I would be (Matthew G.). I don’t think in 35 years there has ever been a Tuesday night that I thought, I don’t feel like going. When I say it defines me, it’s kind of the center where all things grow from.

Hargreaves, MacDonald, and Miell (2002) suggested that there are two sides to the relationship of music and identity: “Identity in music,” which was defined by social and cultural roles people assume within music and by the ways in which “humans view themselves in relation to these culturally defined roles” (p. 13), and “music in identity,” which was described as the ways people use music to develop other aspects of their identities (p. 14). The “identities in music” of the members of the NOCB are readily apparent; they engaged this identity on a regular basis. At the very least, the members of the NOCB played the roles of performer, band member, and instrumentalist within their personal identities, while some identified themselves as musicians. “Music in identity” was more difficult to identify because it is quite personal; the individual stories told by the members in the interviews were necessary in order to gain some understanding of the role played by music in their personal development. As has been

demonstrated earlier, participants spoke passionately about the role music has played in their lives and how it has helped shape who they are.

For the members of the NOCB, musician role identity appeared to have great importance. Unlike the studies of older adult ensembles (Dabback, 2008, Tsagawa, 2009), the members of the NOCB occupied the musician role identity in addition to other roles rather than as a replacement for a past or lost role identity. The salience of the musician role identity was high; this was evident in what was said in the interviews and in the behaviors that were observed. Many members expressed that this role identity was among their most important roles. Megan M., a well-respected professional, provided a summation of the role music played in her life that expresses what others tried to explain: “I could easily say that I used to be a [professional], but I don’t think I could ever say I used to be a musician.”

## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusions**

The primary purpose of this study was to ascertain how music-making and band membership fit in the identities of the members of the New Orleans Concert Band (NOCB), and how their identities influenced their behaviors. As a member of this band I came to the study with some preconceived ideas about the members and the importance they placed upon their band experience; as mentioned earlier I was struck by how serious they were about music-making and the band itself. I knew that they were committed to the group and worked to make the group successful. They were proud of the history of the group and believed that the group would continue to thrive and improve. They were proud of the fact that the band attracted new members and that the band succeeded in playing challenging literature. I sensed that music-making and band membership were important in the lives of the members. The NOCB appeared to be a potent example of community music and in need of examining in order to determine what made it so successful and why the members had such a strong attachment to it. However, agreeing with Finnegan (1989), I realized that I should not assume that I knew what was going on.

The research questions that guided this study were:

1. What do members of the New Orleans Concert Band value most about band membership?
2. Where does musician role identity fit in the identity salience hierarchy of members of the New Orleans Concert Band?
3. What label do members of the New Orleans Concert Band apply to their musician role identity?
4. To what extent does this community band reflect the characteristics of Community Music as defined by the literature?



The first three questions were designed to place the focus upon music-making and identity construction. Identity construction, as defined by Identity Theory, includes self-descriptions of the roles occupied by individuals, and the salience hierarchy of those roles (Stryker and Burke, 2000). Previous studies of community music ensembles (Gregory, 2009; King, 2009; Mast, 2000; Palmer, 2008; Paterno, 2010; Patterson, 1985; Spell, 1989; Spencer, 1996; Vincent, 1997; Wilhjelm, 1998) did not address identity in detail, if at all. Previous studies that dealt with identity and music (Benham, 2004; Dabback, 2008; Dagaz, 2010; Hoffman, 2008; Kruse, 2007; McIntosh, 2009; Mills, 2008; Tsugawa, 2009) did not do so in the setting of a traditional community band. The intended outcome of this study was to paint a picture of the views of the members of an adult community concert band concerning the aspects of the activity they value, their level of commitment to the activity, and the its place in their identity. This picture was then used to develop a description of how the musician role identity fit into the individual identities of the members.

### **What Do Members of the New Orleans Concert Band Value Most About Band Membership?**

The participants spoke eloquently and passionately about the role music-making played in their lives. When asked to prioritize the importance of music-making, the literature, and social aspects of being a member of the band, the participants consistently placed music-making as most important. They said music-making had a positive influence on their personal development, as did Frank M. who said that music-making helped him find a center in his life, and that their involvement in music-making activities enhanced other parts of their lives, as did Chase L. who attributed his ability to talk in public to his experience making music. Participants demonstrated a strong emotional attachment to music-making and to membership in this particular community band. For participants, the attachment has been long-standing and they expressed a deep

devotion to the band and its continued excellence. Their actions reflected their words; they attended rehearsals regularly and practiced between rehearsals, and they looked for opportunities for personal musical development outside of the regular band activities. They valued the opportunity to make music in a group that provided them with a desirable and attainable challenge.

Several participants indicated that they engaged in music-making outside of the community band, often several times each week. In the context of his theory of serious leisure, Stebbins (1982) said that amateurs have a tendency to turn leisure activity into a career. This tendency was apparent in several members of the NOCB. In addition to those who played several times per week, others mentioned that they have created opportunities to make music and have participated in spontaneous music-making events. Still others described past music-making experiences that had profound influences on them and about individuals and groups with whom they had been associated who had exerted an influence on their music-making.

### **Where Does Musician Role Identity Fit in the Identity Salience Hierarchy of Members of the New Orleans Concert Band?**

The participants were asked to identify the roles they occupy in their lives. Most identified family roles as most important and their occupational role as second in importance. They never placed music-making lower than third; some indicated that the only reason they placed music lower than their job was that the job provided the resources necessary for everything else. As several stories in the previous chapter indicate, the actions of the participants tend to confirm this finding—scheduling a wedding around the band schedule, scheduling surgery so that it does not conflict with a concert, and so forth.

For some, there appeared to be a conflict between identities, particularly between music-making and occupation. Stryker and Burke (2000) explained that this type of conflict was not

uncommon and that the conflict was usually resolved in favor of the identity to which the person had the greatest commitment. Although the commitment to music-making and band membership among the participants was strong, the commitment to their job was stronger. This was not unexpected; what was unexpected was that the variation in commitment was not great. If they did not need the income that was generated by their job, several participants would place music-making ahead of their jobs.

### **What Label Do Members of the New Orleans Concert Band Apply to Their Musician Role Identity?**

Some participants identified themselves as musicians. However, several qualified this by calling themselves amateur musicians. Others refused to call themselves musicians because they believed that “musician” implied “professional musician,” a role they did not occupy, or they believed that they were simply not skilled enough to call themselves musicians. One identity that was common to all was that of band member; they all spoke about the importance of band membership. A second identity that was apparent, although never mentioned in these words, was that of music-maker. The definition of “musician” may be difficult to ascertain and the term carries certain connotations for some people, so it may be better to describe the members of the band as “music makers.”

Whether called “musicians,” “music-makers,” or band members, the members of the band exhibited the characteristics identified by Stebbins (1977) as being evident in both amateurs and professionals: confidence, perseverance, continuance commitment, preparedness, and self-conception. Although each is evident in both amateurs and professionals, he explained that they were more evident in professionals. The members of the NOCB are best described as amateurs: they make music outside of their regular employment and receive no compensation for their effort.

Stebbins identified confidence as a quality found in professionals but not in most amateurs and that most amateurs doubt their own abilities and experience high levels of nervousness that lead to loss of control. The members of the NOCB seemed to exhibit confidence. They spoke confidently about their desire to make music as members of the band, although several individual variations in levels of confidence were evident in their self-descriptions. Some did not express confidence in their personal musical skill, but they all expressed confidence in the ability of the group and in their personal ability to work hard and improve. The concerts were well-performed and appeared to be free from nervous loss of control.

Stebbins described perseverance as staying with a pursuit “when the going gets tough” (p. 597). Although he indicates that this is a characteristic more evident in professionals than in amateurs, the members of the NOCB appeared to stay with the pursuit of making music when things became difficult. Perseverance was evident in personal expressions of time spent practicing alone, in the high rate of attendance at rehearsals, and in the serious approach they exhibited in rehearsals. It was also evident in the actions of the participants: Matthew G., who came to a concert days after heart surgery or Lindsey K., who had back problems so opted to practice playing the entire concert program at home while sitting in a straight back chair to see if she would be able to play the concert.

Continuance commitment was defined as “the awareness of the impossibility of choosing a different social identity . . . because of the imminence of penalties involved in making the switch” (p. 597). Stebbins said that this is a characteristic more evident in professionals than amateurs because amateurs rarely have pressures to stay with their commitment; he identified the commitment of amateurs as “value commitment” (p. 597). The participants expressed a high

level of commitment to making music in the band and demonstrated that commitment many times during this study. It appeared that they expressed a type of continuance commitment; although there would be no external ramifications if they stopped making music, their identification with music-making and the NOCB was strong enough to make it difficult for them to stop being music-makers.

Stebbins described preparedness as “readiness to perform the activity to the best of one’s ability at the appointed time and place” (p. 597). Preparedness was evident in the statements made about practicing outside of rehearsal and about having a duty to the other members to be prepared and be in attendance. During the course of this study there were no incidents of members being late for concerts, arriving without the materials required for the event, or wearing improper attire.

In describing self-concept, Stebbins indicated that professionals and amateurs both identify themselves using the terms “professional” and “amateur.” The participants were uncertain of how to identify themselves. As mentioned earlier, some identified themselves as amateurs, while others could not even go that far: they could not conceive of themselves as any type of musician. Although their behavior was closer to that of professionals than amateurs, they refused even to assume the title of musician. According to Identity Theory, “the core of an identity is the categorization of the self as an occupant of a role, and the incorporation, into the self, of the meanings and expectations with that role and its performance” (Stets and Burke, 2000, p. 25). The participants appeared to have incorporated the meanings and expectations of the role of musician without assuming the title. The reason for this contradiction was not made clear by the data from this study. However, it is reasonable to describe them as “musicians”

because they appear to be so. Bowman (2009) says, “Identities are shaped by the ways our actions are interpreted and reflected back to us” (p. 122).

After examining the behaviors of the members of the NOCB in light of Stebbins’ descriptions of the characteristics he ascribed to both amateurs, it appeared that their behaviors were close to those of professionals. Since Stebbins said that each of the characteristics could be applied to both amateurs and professionals, with the difference between the two being one of degree, it is reasonable to assume that some amateurs’ behaviors may appear to be closer to the level ascribed to professionals.

The expressions and behaviors of the participants indicated that they considered music-making as members of a community band to be an “agreeable obligation” (Stebbins, 2005). It was something that they chose to do, they expended much effort to be successful at the pursuit, and they derived much enjoyment and satisfaction from it. It was evident that they were involved in a “serious leisure” activity (Stebbins, 2005). The four reasons for participating in any serious leisure activity, extrinsic rewards, external commitment, intrinsic rewards, and internal commitment (Shamir, 1988), were evident. Extrinsic rewards included personal satisfaction with concert performances and rehearsals, and positive responses from concert audiences, including close friends and family members. Intrinsic rewards included satisfaction with personal accomplishments and positive personal emotional and physical responses to music-making efforts. External commitments were evident in regular rehearsal attendance, length of tenure, individual practice outside of rehearsal, and the expressed importance of working together as a group. Internal commitments were evident in expressions of the role played by music-making and band membership in the lives of the participants and the expressions of emotional and intellectual connections to music-making and band membership; in other words, internal

commitments were those things that helped to shape their identity as musicians and band members.

It is now possible to construct a description of the identities of members of the NOCB: They are amateurs who engage in music-making as a form of serious leisure, but who often exhibit the same characteristics as do professionals. This description helps confirm what I suspected before I began this study: the members of the NOCB are serious about music-making. It is clear that their involvement in music-making and band membership is not fleeting but is grounded in a deep sense of commitment based upon a strong identity in music.

I believe that the most striking finding from this study was the emotional intensity of the statements of the participants. Music-making was not a trivial pursuit for any of them; it was a pursuit that had helped shape their identities and their lives. Most expressed a deep attachment to music-making and band membership. I assumed that this activity was important to the members or they would not exhibit the level of commitment that I had observed, but I was unprepared for the outpouring of emotion and the degree of introspection that my questions elicited. It was not possible to ascertain whether these emotions were experienced while involved in the activity or whether they were experienced upon reflection. However, the expressions that occurred during the interviews appeared to be deeply felt and genuine. There was more to their attachment to the activity than a desire to make music, a desire to recreate events from the past, or a desire for social interaction. Musician role identity was an important part of their individual identities. Bowman (2009) said that there are “profound links between music and identity,” and that “music is who ‘we’ are when ‘we’ experience it” (p. 122). To return to a statement by Matthew G., who said that being a member of the band “defined him;” it was clear that for the members of this band, there was a profound link between music-making and “who they were.”

## **To What Extent Does the New Orleans Concert Band Reflect the Characteristics of Community Music as Defined by the Literature?**

The NOCB is a traditional concert band. It utilizes orchestral woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon) and brass (French horn, trumpet, trombone, and tuba), saxophones, euphoniums, and an array of percussion instruments within a prescribed instrumentation to ensure the balance required to execute the music properly. The musicians perform using printed music written by composers both living and dead. A conductor leads the group and makes many of the musical decisions. New members are accepted if there is an opening and if the potential member exhibits a skill level that is appropriate for the demands of the group. Rehearsals occur weekly and serve as time to prepare music for public performances. Performances occur according to a predetermined schedule that has been followed for several years.

The members appeared to appreciate this format. They chose to become members of a group that operates in this way and they continued to return on a regular basis. They expressed a strong attachment to the band and to making music in this context. Although members also make music in other contexts and indicated that they are not as concerned with what they play as long as they play, the other contexts they described had characteristics similar to those of the NOCB, particularly the use of printed music, having regular rehearsal and performance schedules, and employing traditional wind and percussion instruments.

This type of community music group appears to have a tenuous relationship with the concept of Community Music (CM). Veblen (2005) characterized CM programs as having a “sense of organic unfolding” (p. 324) that is the opposite of the structure and more formal approach to music-making that characterizes the NOCB. The NOCB can be identified as a community performance organization, which is one of the three categories of community music groups identified by Leglar and Smith (2010). However, it does not meet the three-part test for



CM, designed by *Sound Sense*, a CM organization in the United Kingdom, which was explained in Chapter 2. To reiterate, (a) CM involves musicians from any musical discipline working with groups of people to enable them to develop active and creative participation in music, (b) CM is concerned with putting equal opportunities into practice, (c) CM can happen in all types of community, whether based on place, institution, interest, age or gender group, and reflects the context in which it takes place (Higgins, 2008b, p. 32). The NOCB involves musicians working with a group of people, but the relationship is one of conductor and players; the goal, however, is to develop participation in music, both active and creative, although the creative side may be considered minimal by some because the music-making involves realizing the compositions of others. It is not concerned with providing equal opportunities; membership is limited to those who meet the skill and instrumentation standards established by the group. The community in which the NOCB operates is not unique; it is a community in which many types of musical activities flourish and the NOCB is one of several music-making groups within the community. It does limit its community to those persons who enjoy this particular type of music-making and have the requisite skills, so it has a sense of unity in its approach to music-making.

The concept of CM has been tied to changes that have and are occurring in the world. Joss articulated this connection at the first Seminar of the Commission on Community Music Activity, sponsored by the International Society for Music Education:

Community music activity, and other more formal kinds of music education, can make a significant contribution to life in a changing world. Because it concerns participation in music-making of value to the community, community music is grounded in the real world of the lived experience. Changes in that world are often reflected in the musical activities undertaken—which may, for instance involve high technology, or the exploration of new fusions between traditional and contemporary, or the celebration of possibilities for cultural integration in newly free nations. In these circumstances music becomes a direct reflection of, or expression of, change in the world. (Joss, 1994, p. 128)

The NOCB is not a reflection or expression of change in the world. It is a traditional concert band whose members not only choose to make music this way, but have indicated a deep attachment to it. Music-making as a member of a traditional concert band is such a desirable act that it has helped to shape their personal identities.

The concept of CM has many strong adherents; however, this study has provided evidence that the traditional modes of community music-making, in particular the community band, that have grown out of traditional school music programs and the world of Western art music, also have strong, passionate adherents. In the introduction to an essay about community in music, Bowman (2009) suggested that “references to ‘community’, community music’, partnerships’, and the like warrant considerably more critical reflection than is typically devoted to them by music education and by music educators” (p. 111). The critical reflection provided by this study indicates that community music as manifested in the NOCB can be successful when rooted in both school music and concert band traditions, and that there must continue to be room in CM for this type of musical community.

I undertook this study because I was intrigued by the serious approach to music-making that I saw in the members of the NOCB and was curious about the story behind it. During the process of collecting data I encountered intense, powerful stories that often led to strong emotional reactions from the story-tellers. They spoke of the important role played by both music-making and band membership in their lives. Their expressions and behaviors helped me to understand how an activity in which one engages freely can exert a profound influence upon one’s personal identity. I now believe that the members of the NOCB would be different people if music-making were not a part of their lives; how they would be different is open to conjecture.

If it is important to determine what is meaningful about music participation to adults as well as students, then this study, and future studies like it, may help provide the answers. The NOCB is a successful community band. It is successful in attracting new members, exhibits a high level of musical competence in performance, and has members who are serious about making music. It serves as a model for other community bands and has attributes that should be emulated by others. However, its importance may be found in its success at providing meaningful music experiences for its adult members, experiences that should first be encountered in school music programs where the process of lifelong learning begins.

### **Implications for Future Research**

This study was designed to examine the musician role identity of the members of one community band, the NOCB. Future research should investigate the musician role identity of members of other American community music ensembles in order to determine whether or not the results of the present study are representative of all similar community ensembles.

While this study examined individual musician role identity, future research should also examine the collective identity of community ensembles. As Bowman (2009) said, “musical engagement is fundamentally and invariably collective” (p. 121). Collective musical identity can be used to both unite and divide; it may be a source of common purpose or it may be used to define one group as different from another. The collective identity of the members of a community music ensemble may add to our understanding of why people continue to engage in music-making outside of their professional lives, as a form of serious leisure.

One of the interesting aspects about the founding of the NOCB was that the impetus for its formation came from the alumni of a public school band program. Future research should investigate the school band experiences of community band members in order to ascertain what

aspects of their school band experience encouraged them to continue making music after graduation. The results of such studies may assist music educators in developing school music programs that lead to lifelong music-making.

Future research also should examine further the characteristics of professionals and amateurs in order to ascertain how a community band like the NOCB fits into the professional-amateur continuum, as described by Stebbins (1977). It appeared that the members of the NOCB exhibited characteristics that were closer to those of professionals than amateurs; however, it may be necessary to construct a framework within which it is possible to determine the level of professional or amateur in which an individual or ensemble resides. The characteristics that several participants from this study ascribed to “professional,” including that professionals have specialized training and get paid for making music, may not lead to appropriate conclusions about one’s status.

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## Appendix A

### Roster of Occupations and First Year of Membership

#### Flute

Retail Sales*	2006
Flute Teacher	2011
Consultant*	1996
Retired*	1993
Optometrist*	2002
Music Teacher*	1988
Architect *	1991
Graduate Student	2011

#### Oboe

Retired*	1976
Retired Principal/Music Teacher*	1975

#### Clarinet

Hospital Asset Management	2004
Music Teacher	2011
Retired Social Worker*	1976
<b>Ophthalmologist*</b>	1975
Music Teacher	2011
<b>Resident Inspector*</b>	1976
Retired Medical Technologist*	2007
Retail Store Manager	2008
Church Musician*	1977
Audit Manager*	2008
Nurse*	1978
<b>Retired</b>	1996
Military	2011
Geologist*	1989
Bank Examiner*	1996
Retired Teacher*	2007
Music Teacher	2008

#### Bass Clarinet

Informaticist	2011
Retired Music Teacher*	1982
Chief Financial Office*	1993

#### Bassoon

System Analyst	2000
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#### Trumpet

Retired	1989
Technical Writer	2009
Freelance Musician*	1993
Physician	1992
System Analyst*	1997
Physics Professor*	2010
Student	2011
Student*	2011
Project Manager	1984
Retired*	1993
Freelance Musician*	2010
Finance	2011

#### Horn

Military	2011
Military Spouse	2011
Music Teacher*	1996
Music Teacher	2001
Research Scientist	2007

#### Trombone

English Teacher*	2008
<b>Audiologist*</b>	1988
Physician	2006
Retired USPS Employee*	1994
Retired*	1984
Freelance Musician	2009

#### Euphonium

Journalist*	1980
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#### Tuba

IT Specialist	2011
<b>Mfg. Rep.*</b>	1975
Director Sales Marketing	2011
Truck Driver	1979
Non-Profit Acct. Mgr.	2010
Engineer	2003

**Saxophone**

<i>UNIX</i> Administrator*	2001
French Teacher*	2006
Apple Employee	2006
Military	2011
Music Teacher*	2004
Retired Engineer	1994
Engineer	1996

\*Study Participant

Bold: Fortier High School Band Alumni

**Percussion**

IT Consultant	1997
<b>Tax Attorney</b>	1980
Freelance Musician	2010
Engineer	1980
Bank Examiner*	2000



## Appendix B

### Permission to Conduct Study

November 1, 2010

Dear Tiffany Adler, President, and the members of the board of the New Orleans Concert Band,

I am a Ph.D. candidate at Louisiana State University. As part of my dissertation I am conducting research into the role music-making plays in the identities of community band members and the value they place on participation. I am requesting permission to have the New Orleans Concert Band and its members serve as participants in this study. The study will begin in May 2011 and continue through December 2011.

The research will include multiple observations of rehearsals and concerts, review of the organization's documents including but not limited to mission statement, by-laws, membership records, and concert programs, review of the organization's website, and individual interviews with a minimum of 30 members. Interviews will be arranged at times and locations convenient for the members. Each interview participant will be provided written information about the study and will be asked to sign a letter of consent before the interview can begin. I intend to have the interviews completed by August 2011. Observations will not disturb the operations of the band and will occur at regularly scheduled rehearsals and concerts between May and July 2011.

Participants will not be compensated and may choose to not participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Results from this study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. Participant identity will remain confidential.

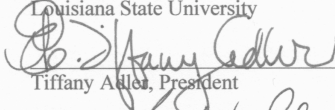
I will seek approval for this research through the Institutional Review Board at Louisiana State University. The study will not begin until approval has been granted.

Thank you for considering this request. I look forward to working with the band on this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Pamela G. Taylor  
Ph.D. Candidate, College of Music and Dramatic Arts  
Louisiana State University



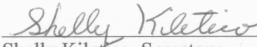
Tiffany Adler, President



Mark Wall, Vice President



Donna Thompson, Treasurer



Shelly Kileto, Secretary



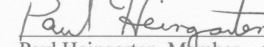
Keith Buccola, Member



Lisa McDonald, Member



Bruce Miller, Member



Paul Heingarten, Member



Charlene Strain, Member

## Appendix C

### Permission to Use Name of Band

April 05, 2012

Dear Tiffany Adler, President, and the members of the board of the New Orleans Concert Band,

I am requesting permission to use the organizational name "New Orleans Concert Band" in the title and the text of my Ph.D. dissertation. The individual members of the band will remain anonymous; pseudonyms will be used instead of actual names.

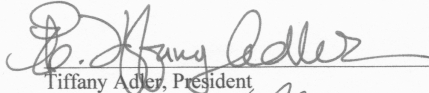
Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

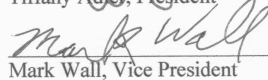


Pamela G. Taylor  
Ph.D. Candidate, College of Music and Dramatic Arts  
Louisiana State University

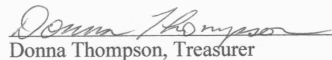
We, the members of the Board of the New Orleans Concert Band, grant Pamela G. Taylor permission to use the name of the "New Orleans Concert Band" in the title and text of her dissertation.



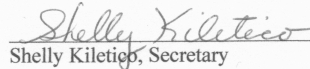
Tiffany Adler, President



Mark Wall, Vice President



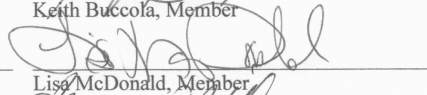
Donna Thompson, Treasurer



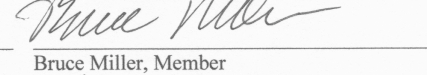
Shelly Kiletic, Secretary



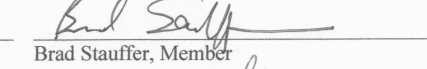
Keith Buccola, Member



Lisa McDonald, Member



Bruce Miller, Member



Brad Stauffer, Member



Charlene Strain, Member

## Appendix D Informed Consent

### Informed Consent

1. Study Title: The Role of Community Music Making in the Identity Construction of Members of the New Orleans Concert Band
2. Performance Sites: University of New Orleans; LaFreniere Park, Metairie, LA; National World War Two Museum, New Orleans, LA
3. Investigators: The following investigators are available for questions about this study.  
Pamela Taylor (513) 288-6487  
Dr. James Byo (225) 578-2593
4. Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to explore the musical and social worlds of an established community band—the New Orleans Concert Band—in order to ascertain: (1) how music making and group membership affect the participants' identity and (2) the value they place upon participation.
5. Subject Inclusion: Individuals who are members of the New Orleans Concert Band. All members are adults ranging in age from 25 to 80.
6. Number of Subjects: 65 to be observed; 30 to be interviewed
7. Study Procedures: The study will employ two procedures. The investigator will observe rehearsals and performances during weekly rehearsals and two concerts. Individual interviews will be scheduled with 30 members. Each interview will last approximately 30 minutes and will be scheduled at mutually agreed upon times outside of group rehearsals.
8. Benefits: Participants will not be compensated. The study may yield valuable information about community music making.
9. Risks: None
10. Right to Refuse: Participants may choose to not participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
11. Privacy: Results from this study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. Participant identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law.

12. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

The study has been discussed with me and all of my questions have been answered. I may direct additional questions regarding specifics of the study to the investigators. If I have questions about subjects' right or other concerns, I can contact Robert C. Matthews, Institutional Review Board, (225) 578-8692, [irb@lsu.edu](mailto:irb@lsu.edu), [www.lsu.edu/irb](http://www.lsu.edu/irb). I agree to participate in the study described above and acknowledge the investigator's obligation to provide me with a signed copy of this consent form.

**Study Exempted By:**  
Dr. Robert C. Matthews, Chairman  
Institutional Review Board  
Louisiana State University  
203 B-1 David Boyd Hall  
225-578-8692 | [www.lsu.edu/irb](http://www.lsu.edu/irb)  
Exemption Expires: 6-8-2014

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix E**

### **Interview Protocol Before Revision**

#### *General Information*

1. Would you describe your musical background?

Prompts:

- a. When did you begin playing?
- b. Did you play in middle school? In high school? In college?
- c. Did you play after high school in other groups before joining the NOCB?

#### *Personal Identity*

2. Would you describe the role music-making plays in your life?

Prompts:

- a. Do you consider yourself to be a musician?
- b. How would you describe your musical self to others?
- c. Do you identify yourself as a musician?
- d. How important is it to you to be identified as a musician?

3. Describe the role played by being a member of a community band.

Prompts:

- a. Do you identify yourself as a member of the NOCB to others?
- b. How important is it to you to be identified as a member of the NOCB?

4. Do you play in other music-making groups or settings?

5. Describe your level of participation in the music-making community.

Prompts:

- a. Would you consider yourself to be an amateur or a professional?
- b. Do you consider music-making a leisure activity?

6. Describe other roles in your life.

Prompts:

- a. What other words would you use to identify yourself to others?

#### *Commitment*

7. How does the experience of playing in the community band compare with your other music-making experiences and activities in which you are involved?

Prompts:

- a. What types of music do you play in other groups?
- b. How many days per week do you play?
- c. How often do the other groups rehearse/perform?

8. How do the experiences of playing in music-making groups and activities compare with your other nonmusical activities in which you are involved?

Prompts:

- a. Does playing music provide you with something different than other activities?
- b. What do you consider to be your most important role?

9. How would you describe your level of commitment to playing in a community band?

Prompts:

- a. Do you forgo doing other things in order to attend band activities?
- b. Do you spend time making music or thinking about music outside of rehearsal?

10. Has your commitment changed over the years?

Prompts:

- a. Do you attend more rehearsal than before? Fewer?
- b. Do you practice more than before? Less?

11. How does your commitment to playing in a community band compare to your commitment to playing in other music-making groups and activities in which you are involved?

Prompts:

- a. Do you forgo other music-making opportunities in order to participate in the community band?
- b. Do you prepare differently for community band activities than you do for other musical activities?
- c. If you had to give up one thing, would it be playing in a community band?

12. How does your commitment to playing in music-making groups and activities compare to your commitment to nonmusical activities in which you are involved?

Prompts:

- a. Do you forgo other activities in order to participate in music-making?
- b. What activities would cause you to not attend a regularly scheduled music activity?
- c. If you had to give up one thing, would it be music-making?

### *Music-Making*

13. Describe how important each of the following is to you: (a) the music, (b) the act of music-making, (c) the social nature of making music.

14. What causes you to continue to play music in a band?

Prompts:

- a. Is it important for you to be a member of a band?
- b. Does this provide musical satisfaction, social satisfaction, or both?
- c. Which do you find most important?

## **Vita**

Pamela G. Taylor received the degree of Bachelor of Music with a major in music education in 1989 from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the degree of Master of Music with a major in horn performance in 2004 from the University of New Orleans. She taught middle school band and high school band for twelve years in Mount Orab, Ohio. As a performer on horn, she has been a member of community bands and orchestras in Cincinnati and New Orleans. Currently, she performs with the New Orleans Concert Band and the New Orleans Brass Choir. Her professional affiliations include the National Association for Music Education, American Orff Schulwerk Association, National Band Association, Association of Concert Bands, and the New Orleans Concert Band Education and Outreach Committee. She lives in Kenner, Louisiana, and is a member of the faculty of the College of Education and Human Development at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana. The degree of Doctor of Philosophy will be conferred on Mrs. Taylor at the spring commencement 2012.