INTERSECTIONALITY IN MUSIC EDUCATION:

SEEING BEYOND THE RAINBOW

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore the influence of past music making experiences on LGBTQ+ students' identity construction. Research questions used to guide this study were: a) How do these two students describe their past music making experiences as LGBTQ+ students? b) How do they describe the impact of music making experiences on their identity as LGBTQ+? and c) Do multiple identities combine to create the musicians they are now? Using a case study design, two participants were interviewed on their recollections of music class experiences as LGBTQ+ high school students. Analysis through the lenses of intersectionality theory and border crossing theory produced themes of *belonging, fitting in* and *issues relating to gender.* Participants were found to navigate among multiple identities including sexuality, gender identity, religion, and musicality in ways that mirror intersectionality and border crossing. While participants did not feel accepted at school due to their LGBTQ+ identities, they found belonging in music classes.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The lived experiences of young persons who self-identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ+) is a growing topic of research not only in the field of music education, but in other disciplines such as education, psychology, and other social sciences. Many researchers have devoted their time to unearthing and exploring the challenges that LGBTQ+ high school students experience, such as bullying, peer victimization, and increased risk of health concerns (Aragon, Poteat, Espelage, & Koenig, 2014; Daley, Solomon, Newman, & Mishna, 2007; Kosciw, Palmer, Kull, & Greytak, 2013; Russell, Ryan, Toomey, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2011). Though these challenges exist and deserve extensive discourse, they tend to provide a singular view of the LGBTQ+ student experience. Adichie (2009) cautioned researchers to be mindful of the danger of presenting only negative stories since they tend to create stereotypes, ". . . and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story" (Adichie, 2009, p. 3). Knowledge and understanding of the range of LGBTQ+ life experiences can help to give support not only to individuals facing discrimination and negative educational outcomes, but also to issues such as lack of inclusive curricula and policies concerning LGBTQ+ students (Bertram, Crowley, & Massey, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

There are few studies where researchers have explored the music experiences and musical development of LGBTQ+ students. More inquiry is needed in which researchers examine the influence of intersecting identities on LGBTQ+ music students.

Purpose and Research Questions of the Study

The purpose of this research was to explore the influence of past music making experiences on LGBTQ+ students' identity construction. With this study, I sought to respond to the call of Carter (2014) to engage in intersectional research. More specifically, I desired to examine the past high school music experiences of two college-age students who self-identify as members of the LGBTQ+ community.

This inquiry was guided by three research questions that I investigated through the lenses of intersectionality, (Crenshaw,1989), and border studies theory/*border crossing* (Anzaldúa,1987).

1. How do the participants describe their past music making experiences as LGBTQ+ students?

2. How do they describe the impact of music making experiences on their identities as LGBTQ+? and

3. Do multiple identities combine to create the musicians they are now?

Significance of the Study

This thesis has grown out of a need to increase visibility of LGBTQ+ music students. In recognizing the complexities of life, Carter (2014) explained that research is needed to understand the lives and musical experiences of people who identify themselves in multiple ways. Through examining and conducting research, educators

can gain insight that informs better teaching and learning practices. More objective studies will assist with creating a body of literature that offers multiple perspectives of the LGBTQ+ music student experience.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined to provide readers with ease of understanding the experiences of participants as well as the literature related to this study.

Agender is used to describe persons who have no internal sense of being male or female, or any combination of male and female (Harless-Balmer, R. 2016).

Allies are individuals that are supportive of one or more identities within the queer community; allies may choose to identify with the queer community (Harless-Balmer, R. 2016).

Asexual refers to a person who has no sexual desire or does not feel sexual attraction (Meyer, 2010).

Bisexual refers to persons who have sexual or romantic attraction to both men and women. The term bisexual is considered to be controversial since it is sometimes used to reinforce the notion that there are only two sexes (Harless-Balmer, R. 2016).

Border crossing refers to moving across diverse borders such as race, gender, or geography (Anzaldúa, 1977). According to Niday and Allender (2000), "border studies theory began when postcolonial and cultural studies theorists explored the complex political and cultural exchanges occurring along the United States and Mexican border" (p. 60). Anzaldúa was one of these theorists.

Cisgender persons are those who feel their assigned sex at birth and the gender they self-identify as are congruent. In other words, if one's birth certificate indicates

that one is male and that person identifies as a boy or a man then that person is cisgender (Harless-Balmer, R., 2016).

Coming out is the life-long process of discovering, defining, and proclaiming one's own sexuality, gender identity, or status as an intersexed person to oneself, family, friends, and others (Harless-Balmer, R., 2016).

Closeted is used to describe an LGBTQ person who will not or cannot disclose their sex, sexuality, sexual orientation or gender identity to their friends, family, co-workers, or society. It can also refer to one who has come out to only a few people. There are varying degrees of being "in the closet"; for example, a person can be out in their social life, while remaining in the closet at work or within family (Harless-Balmer, R., 2016).

Gay refers to a person who engages in same-sex relationships. Although the term can be used to describe both men and women, it is often used to refer just to men (Meyer, 2010).

Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) are student-initiated and student-run clubs in public or private schools. The goal of a GSA is to provide a safe, supportive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning (LGBTQ) and straight ally youth to meet and discuss sexual orientation and gender identity issues, and to work to create a school environment free of discrimination, harassment, and intolerance (Harless-Balmer, R., 2016).

Gender or **Gender Identity** is one's internal sense of gender (how one feels). Types of gender identities include but are not limited to being a woman, a man, trans or transgender, genderqueer, gender non-conforming, agender, and gender non-binary (Harless-Balmer, 2016).

Gender Expression deals with a person's appearance and mannerisms and can include, but is not limited to clothing, hair, and body gestures. Terms commonly associated with gender expression are feminine, femme, androgynous, gender non-conforming, drag king/queen, butch, and masculine (Harless-Balmer, R. 2016).

Genderqueer or **Gender Non-Binary** persons are those whose gender identity cannot be classified as solely a man or woman, but as a combination of both or neither (Harless-Balmer, 2016).

Gender Non-Conforming refers to the gender expression of a person that does not represent masculine or feminine gender norms (Harless-Balmer, 2016).

Identity refers to the set of meanings that define who a person is in relation to a role in society or membership to a particular group (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Intersectionality is a methodology used in the social sciences to study "the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relationships and subject formations" (McCall, 2005, p. 1771). Crenshaw (1989) suggested that race and gender are not the only factors that are important in shaping people's identities and life outcomes. Class, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, and age are also important aspects of identity that shape people's lives (Andersen & Collins, 2012; Crenshaw 1989, 1991, 1993).

LGBTQ+ is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer, in addition to other gender identities and sexualities (Harless-Balmer, 2016).

LGBTQQIA means Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and/or Queer, Intersexual, Ally and/or Asexual (Harless-Balmer, 2016).

Queer is used as an overarching term to refer to persons who do not self-identify as heterosexual (Harless-Balmer, 2016).

Questioning refers to persons who are unsure of or still exploring their gender identity or sexual orientation (Harless-Balmer, 2016).

Sexual Orientation refers to who we are attracted to romantically, emotionally and/or physically. Types of sexual orientation include but are not limited to gay, lesbian, asexual, bisexual, pansexual, queer and straight/heterosexual (Harless-Balmer 2016).

SOGI is an acronym for sexual orientation and gender identity (Harless-Balmer, 2016).

A **Social Category** is a collection of people who do not interact but who share similar characteristics (Tajfel, 1981).

A **Social Group** is a collection of people who interact with each other and share similar characteristics and a sense of unity (Tajfel, 1981).

Social Identity is a person's sense of who they are, based on their membership to a particular group (Tajfel,1978).

Transgender persons are those who feel their assigned sex at birth and their gender identity are not congruent (Harless-Balmer, 2016).

Summary

Although there is a growing body of LGBTQ+ literature in general education, research is limited on LGBTQ+ issues within the field of music education. The intent of this study was to describe and understand the high school music experiences of two LGBTQ+ college students. In the following section, I provide an in-depth literature review of studies pertaining to identity and LGBTQ+ student experiences. First, I present research where identity is defined and examined as used in social sciences. Second, I survey research on identity within a range of social categories, followed by

research on multiple identities. I then review studies on the support and safety of LGBTQ+ students in educational contexts, highlighting music and the arts as potential safe spaces for LGBTQ+ students. I conclude the review of literature with a detailed look at the history and development of LGBTQ+ research within the field of music education.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this study, I explored the past high school music making experiences of LGBTQ+ students and the effects of these experiences on their LGBTQ+ identity. I reviewed extant literature from various disciplines including music education and the social sciences to situate this research. I first present the history and development of LGBTQ+ research within the field of music education. Stepping away from education, I then dissect identity formation, social identity, and several social categories to provide context before examining ways in which multiple identities interact. I close my review of literature by discussing the vulnerability of LGBTQ+ students and their associated needs.

History of LGBTQ+ Research in Music Education

Though the researchers in these studies examined the need for students to have safe spaces to excel in music classes as well as the wider school community, as with many other areas of research within education and music education, the experiences of LGBTQ+ were not considered. In 1991, the Gender Research in Music Education (GRIME) network was established to create a body of support for persons interested in gender research within the field of music education. In 1998, the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) created a Special Research Interest Group (SRIG) for gender research, which is now known as the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) Gender and Sexuality SRIG.

In 2010 and again in 2012, the *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, a peer-reviewed journal in the field of music education, launched a call for papers with topics focusing on the experiences of music educators and students from

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an LGBTQ perspective. The special issues entitled *Establishing Identity: LGBT Studies and Music Education I & II* provided an outlet for scholarly publication of LGBT issues in the field, and brought together students, teachers, college faculty, and researchers to discuss relevant research, theory, and practice. Topics included career paths in music education and re/negotiating "the closet," experiences of LGBT undergraduates in music education, music educator identity and sexual orientation, queer institutionalization, and gender and music education. More than 40 research studies and papers have been presented between the two conferences, both held at the School of Music, on the campus of the University of Illinois in Urbana, Illinois.

After the successes of *Establishing Identity: LGBT Studies and Music Education I & II*, a third symposium entitled *LGBTQ Studies & Music Education* was held at the University of Illinois. The organizer suggested intersectionality as an emphasis of this third symposium in an attempt to encourage, promote, and disseminate discourse regarding the intersection of LGBTQ topics and music education. Through this symposium, the organizers sought to reveal how LGBTQ issues operate within music education in terms of research, curriculum, teacher preparation, and the musical lives and careers of LGBTQ music students and teachers. According to Bergonzi, Carter, and Garrett (2016) there was interest in generating information and resources related to the social issues surrounding equality and privilege that stem from gender and sexuality identity constructions; the development of increased awareness of educators; and support for LGBTQ individuals and groups through policy reform. Another central concern was introducing more LGBTQ inclusive and supportive music education programs at primary and secondary grade levels as well as higher education settings (Bergonzi, Carter, & Garrett, 2016).

Developments in LGBTQ+ Research in Music Education

Due to the efforts of organizations such as Gender Research in Music Education (GRIME), the NAfME Gender and Sexuality SRIG (Special Research Interest Group) and LGBTQ Studies & Music Education symposiums, the body of LGBTQ-related research that is available to music educators and students is expanding.

The winter/spring 2017 special issue of the *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* was mainly devoted to LGBTQ studies in music education that were presented at the *LGBTQ Studies & Music Education III* symposium in Illinois the previous year. Notably, this was the first time that the symposium had been given an entire issue. Editors Bergonzi, Carter, and Garrett (2016) used this platform as an opportunity to survey the research that has been presented at all three *LGBTQ Studies & Music Education* symposia. According to the editors, the presenters at the first symposium focused primarily on the meaning of identifying as an LGBTQ music education professional (Bergonzi, Carter, & Garrett, 2016). Bergonzi, Carter, and Garrett (2017) suggested that the high turnout of college students in attendance at the first symposium sparked presenters to include research on preservice teachers at the second symposium, where social justice issues were also a popular research focal point. In the planning stages of the third symposium, panel discussions were also held to help generate research ideas and graduate students were welcomed into the fold with their research studies, whether completed or in progress in an attempt to widen the scope of research topics.

Fitzpatrick and Hansen (2010) used a case study design to illuminate the high school music experiences of four students who self-identified as gay or lesbian. The researchers sought to explore lesbian and gay identity development in music classes

with respect to musicality, social structures of the music classroom, the influence of the music teacher, and the experiences of being either openly gay or closeted. At that time, no other research existed within the field of music education where researchers examined intersections between LGBTQ adolescent identity development and student musical experiences. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and after analysis, the researchers uncovered four main themes of *Fitting in, Developing Multiple Identities, Music as Community*, and *Music as Expression*. Fitzpatrick and Henderson outlined several areas where future research would be most beneficial to the field of music education: the role of the music educator in LGBTQ identity development, the intersection between music and sexuality, and the experiences of students with LGBTQ+ identities other than those they examined by the researchers (Fitzpatrick & Hansen, 2010).

To explore how transgender choral students navigate their gender identities, Palkki (2016) observed and interviewed three transgender high school students. More specifically, the researcher examined the positive and negative impacts that choral participation had on their gender identity as well as the role of factors such as voice changes, choral music structures, and choral uniforms, in their choral experience. The researcher also endeavored to "describe if/how transgender students in secondary school choral programs were supported by groups including their choral teachers, choral peers, and school administrators" (Palkki, 2016, p. 80). Palkki uncovered that the relationship between voice and gender identity was different for each participant, and that policies of the participants' districts, high schools, and choral programs all influenced and shaped their trans identity development.

Identity

Identity is a key concept in understanding the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ students. Many psychologists, sociologists, researchers, and educators have endeavored to define and give context to identity. Erikson (1968) clustered facets of identity as the (a) conscious sense of individual distinctiveness, (b) unconscious yearning for a continuity of experience, and (c) commonality within the ideal of a group. These clusters can be viewed as the answers to the questions of: Who am I? What is the theme of my life? and, What is my purpose or place in society?

More recently, sociologist, Jenkins (2008) defined identity and identification as "the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their relations with other individuals and collectivities. . . [and] the systematic establishment and signification, between individuals, between collectivities, and between individuals and collectivities, of relationships of similarity and difference" (Jenkins, 2008, p. 18). Beyond aspects of individual uniqueness, Jenkins suggested that the basis of social identity comes from a person's sense of who they are in relation to a group.

Identity Theory and Social Identity Theory

High school students are members of various social groups. As a result, understanding their roles within these groups can shed light on the effect of their musical experiences on their identity construction.

Identity theory is used mainly to explain role-related behaviors of individuals (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995), while social identity theory describes intergroup relations and collaboration among persons (Tajfel & Turner, 1978). Based on the notion that persons are members of several social groups and hence possess multiple identities, social psychologists use identity theory to explain individual meanings that

persons have for their differing identities, how these identities influence the behaviors, thoughts, and feelings of individual persons, and how possessing varying identities links individuals to the larger society (Burke & Stets, 2009). According to Tajfel and Turner (1978), social identity theory is used to understand how people see themselves in a group. More specifically, membership in a group can create a positive social identity, which in turn creates a positive self-image (Tajfel & Turner, 1978). Hogg, Terry, and White (1995), critically compared the research on identity theory and social identity theory and concluded that the main aspects of identity theory are that the idea of "self" emerges from the role that someone occupies in their social world and that these roles vary in their importance and prominence. Social identity theory presents that the "self" gains meaning from its value to a group. As a result, a person's social identity is continuously intertwined with intergroup relations (Hogg et al., 1995).

Tajfel suggested that social identity can be defined as viewing oneself as a valued member of a social group. However, social identities may contain clear distinctions but with vague categories (Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002). In music, an example of a clearly distinct social identity can be *marching band percussionists*, and an example of a vague category might be *music students*.

Wortham (2006) examined the confluence of social identification and the cognition of classification in the classroom and described the resulting concept as social identification. The researcher presented teachers and students as merging academic and social resources to identify themselves as members of different social groups as well as individuals. While students learned about social groups and the ways in which they have collective similarities and differences, they also learned that they each have individual differences. Jenkins (2008) suggested that collective

identification can be powerful and the stark reality that, in an attempt to define the significant matters in common within a group, the resulting inclusion does not exist with exclusion. At school, students form peer groups based on commonalities such as common interests. While forming peer groups, many times students are not included. Students who identify as LGBTQ+ or those who may be questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity are often ostracized, targeted by peers and are at a high risk of being bullied at school (Conoley, 2008).

Identity theory and social identity theory are both used to address the dynamic between the socially constructed self and society; both validate the reciprocal ties between the self and society (Stets & Burke, 2000). The self is structured into discrete social identities that are interrelated in various, important ways. For instance, the intersection of various identities within a person has consequences on one's self image, well-being, and interaction with others (Stets & Burke, 2000). Theorists have also used both theories to discuss the way in which identities are internalized and used to define the self. Social identity theory is used to show social identification and the process of self-categorization, while identity theory is used to discuss the process of self-identifying as a member of a social category. The main difference between the two is the type and depth of context associated with the concept of identity. Hogg et al. (1995) concluded that identity theory may be a more effective analytical tool in dealing with interpersonal social interactions, while social identity theory may be more useful to explain intergroup dimensions and in specifying the socio-cognitive generative details of identity dynamics (Hogg et al., 1995).

In contrast to the findings of Hogg et al. (1995), Stets and Burke (2000) found more similarities and overlap between identity theory and social identity theory. In

keeping with the findings of Thoits and Virshup (1997), the researchers purported that the only main difference was found in a "view of the group as the basis for identity (who one is) held by social identity theory and in a view of the role as a basis for identity (what one does) held by identity theory" (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 234).

Social categories commonly explored in research are race, ethnicity, culture, age, socio-economic status, religion, gender, and sexuality. As a basis for this study, I examined literature on cultural, adolescent, racial, sexual, LGBTQ+, and musical identities as well as identity as other. This literature informed me of the different groups that a person can belong to and the individual identities they may possess. As a result, I was able to delve into plural identities with a clearer understanding.

Identity within Social Categories

With a topic as broad as identity, it is necessary to distill the possible meanings of the term for the context in which it is used. According to Garnets (2002), "no single element of identity, be it race, ethnicity, class...sexual orientation can truly be understood except in relation to others" (Garnets, 2002, p. 126). As such, to address the research questions, I explored several categories of social identity including LGBTQ+ identity and musical identity.

Cultural Identity

Geertz (1963) defined culture as the habits and customs of a people, with their technologies and physical relics. Keesing (1974) suggested that everything one would need to know to become a functioning member of a society is embedded in the public definition of the society's culture. Swidler's research on the influence of culture in shaping a person's habits, skills, and behaviors was demarcated as an emblematic

vehicle of a society's meaning, which comprised "beliefs, ritual practices, art forms, and ceremonies, as well as informal cultural practices such as language, gossip, stories, and rituals of daily life" (Swidler, 1986, p. 277). Hall (1992) explained cultural identities as being tied to those aspects of identity which arise from belonging to distinctive ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, and national cultures.

Social identity and cultural identity are closely related and are sometimes used interchangeably in scholarly research. Researchers have shown that, within the context of the home, cultural group membership may become the most important basis for shared identity and the social self for family members (Roccas & Brewer, 2002).

Based on the concept that a sense of belonging is associated with self-value, Usborne & Taylor (2010) sought to determine the relationship between cultural identity and self-esteem. The researchers collected data by surveying 135 participants of varying cultural backgrounds in Quebec: Anglophone Quebecer, Francophone Québécois, Chinese North American, and Aboriginal Canadian undergraduate students. Students also completed a survey that measured self-esteem, personality, and cultural identity which comprised the *Rosenberg self-esteem scale* (Rosenberg, 1965), the *self-concept clarity scale* (Campbell et al., 1996), the *ten-item personality inventory* (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003), and a cultural identity clarity scale that developed from the *self-concept clarity scale* (Campbell et al., 1996). The Chinese North Americans possessed clarity of their cultural and personal identities, which led to high self-esteem and life-satisfaction. Aboriginal Canadian participants did not have a clearly established sense of cultural identity, which the researchers linked to the colonization of Aboriginal peoples. Among the French-speaking participants, the Francophone Quebecois, there was a clearly defined cultural identity and a strong

sense of self. In contrast, Anglophone Quebecers (the English-speaking participants), being linguistically and culturally in the minority in French-speaking Quebec, deemed their cultural identity as being central to their sense of self. The researchers discovered that participants needed to situate themselves with their sub-groups to elevate their value of self and concluded that, when students are left without a strong sense of cultural identity, it negatively impacts them and results in academic underachievement, low self-esteem, and addictive behaviors.

Adolescent Identity

During the teen years, adolescents go through a series of physical, emotional, mental, and social changes, all while navigating the formation of their own identity (Wolfe, 2016). At that time, adolescents experience role confusion when attempting to understand their role within society (Erikson 1972). Through exploration and experimentation, adolescents seek to achieve an assured sense of identity in religion, sexuality and gender role, politics, and occupation (Erikson, 1959). "The most commonly used conceptualization of Erikson's identity theory is Marcia (1966)'s [sic.] identity status model" (Klimstra et al., 2010, p. 150). Marcia suggested that an adolescent's identity can be categorized as one of four distinct identity statuses: diffusion (low in exploration and low on commitment), foreclosure (little exploration, but strong commitments), moratorium (high on exploration, but no stable commitments, yet), and achievement (high on commitment after a period of extensive exploration) (Marcia, 1966).

Developing a sense of identity is one of the main aspects of adolescence and young adulthood (Meeus, 2011). During this period, young people explore different facets of identity and individuality while desiring a sense of belonging.

Racial Identity

According to Helms (1990), the construct of racial identity is a sense of collective identity that is based on a perceived common heritage within a racial group. Carter (1995) defined racial identity development as a lifelong process that involves how a person interprets messages about racial groups.

Epstein (2001) examined the effects of children's and adolescent's racial identities on their interpretation of U. S. history. Data was collected through interviewing two African American (black) and two European American (white) students from two history classes of each of three grades (5th, 8th, and 11th), at the beginning and the end of the school year. The researcher found disparities between the black and white students' perceptions of historical events such as slavery, with the greatest disparity existing among fifth grade students.

Thompson (2018) sought to understand the perceptions of educators relating to racial identity education. The researcher acknowledged that some educators claim to be conflicted about their educational obligations concerning race. Thompson analyzed elements of this perceived dilemma and offered analytical tools for educators. The researcher also highlighted the notion that educating students about race influences their racial identity development, while neglecting to teach about race may suggest to students that race is not an important matter to discuss.

Sexual Identity

Sexual identity development is conjectured as the process that a person goes through in realizing the presence or absence of their romantic, emotional, and/or sexual attractions (Mohr & Fassinger, 2000). Though not equivalent, term *sexual*

identity development has become synonymous with *sexual minority identity development* or *LGB identity development* (Zoeterman & Wright, 2014).

Sexual and gender identities that do not conform to the norms of heterosexuality or the gender binary, fall under the umbrella of LGBTQ+. Sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) is no longer explored to iron out the sexual identity confusion of participants, but more recently to situate SOGI identity in context (Russell & Horn, 2017). "Forming one's sexual identity and integrating it into one's overall sense of who he or she is can be particularly challenging for LGB individuals" (Zoeterman & Wright, 2014, p. 336).

Cass (1979) proposed a six-stage model to describe gay identity development based within the framework of *interpersonal congruency theory* (Secord & Backman, 1961) and suggested that the development of a stable homosexual identity results from interactions between persons and their environments. Cass' gay identity development model of (a) identity confusion, (b) identity comparison, (c) identity tolerance, (d) identity acceptance, (e) identity pride, and (f) identity synthesis was formed through research with both male and female participants.

Though Cass' (1979) model included female participants, Sophie (1986) proposed and investigated a four-stage model of lesbian identity formation. The stages were (a) awareness, testing and exploration, (b) identity acceptance, and (c) identity integration. The researcher obtained data through structured interviews with 14 women who were unsure of their sexual orientation and deduced that some women did not fit the model created with some experiencing stages in a different order than hypothesized (Sophie, 1986).

Stevens (2004) explored environmental contributors to the development of gay identity through documentation of the experiences of 11 self-identified gay male college students. Stevens created five categories of *finding empowerment* namely self-acceptance, disclosure to others, environmental influences, individual factors, and exploring multiple identities. The researcher found that sexual identity is complex and is integrated into other identities possessed by an individual (Stevens, 2004).

For many years, transgender persons had been without information such as a model to guide them through their gender identity development, leaving some of them to believe that they were alone in their transitional process (Levitt & Ippolito, 2014). Devor (2004) endeavored to create one of the first such models, a 14-stage model of transgender identity development. For the creation of this model, the researcher collected data through "personal experience and contacts with hundreds of transsexed and transgendered people in settings such as face-to-face in-depth structured interviews, each lasting several hours, extended private consultations, innumerable heart-to-heart conversations in private settings, extended visits in one another's homes, private house parties, meetings at community and professional conferences, dinners, lunches, walks on the beach, and hard-working task-oriented committees of professional organizations" (Devor, 2004, p. 42). These proposed stages were:

1. abiding anxiety,

2. identity confusion about originally assigned gender and sex,

3. identity comparisons about originally assigned gender and sex,

4. discovery of transsexualism,

5. identity confusion about transsexualism,

6. identity comparisons about transsexualism,

7. tolerance of transsexual identity,

8. delay before acceptance of transsexual identity,

9. acceptance of transsexualism identity,

10. delay before transition,

11. transition,

12. acceptance of post-transition gender and sex identities,

13. integration, and

14. pride. (Devor, 2004, p. 41)

This model was built on Cass' (1979) model of homosexual identity formation, Ebaughs' (1988) work on role exit, and Devor's own personal experience, social and professional associations with self-identified transgender individuals, coupled with 20 years of sociological research.

LGBTQ+ Identity

According to the largest national LGBT civil rights organization in the U. S., the Human Rights Campaign, 92% of LGBT youth hear negative comments about being LGBT, with schools being one of the main sources of that negativity (Human Rights Campaign, 2014). Students who identify as LGBTQ+ are at an increased risk for negative health concerns. Adolescent gay and bisexual males have disproportionately higher rates of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases while young lesbians and bisexual females are more likely to have even been pregnant than their heterosexual peers. Furthermore, LGB students reported more bullying, unexcused absences from school, drug use, feelings of depression, and suicidal behaviors than heterosexual students (McFarland, 1998). The K-12 experience for transgender and gender-nonconforming youth is no different. In a survey by the

National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE), adults who identified as transgender or gender nonconforming during their K-12 years reported a high rate of harassment (78%), physical assault (35%), and sexual violence (12%). Respondents also reported worse conditions when harassment came from teachers (Grant et al., 2011).

In 2007, professors from three universities in England aimed to further research they previously conducted on identity formation and development of gay and lesbian youth. Crowley, Harré, and Lunt (2007) hoped to uncover the participants' experiences and need for supporting environments over the course of a multi-phased research study. The aim of this phase of their long-term study was to gain an understanding of the issues facing LGBT youth at that time. They conducted in-depth interviews with 10 teen-aged participants ages 15 to 18 years old who attended an LGBT youth summer school. Four main themes emerged. The participants felt that they were in the minority in comparison to their heterosexual peers, they felt isolated within social groups such as friends and family, they found it difficult to find companionship, and it was important to them to interact with other LGBT youth like themselves (Crowley, Harré, & Lunt, 2007).

<center>Identity as "Other"</center>

The concept of identity is pervasive in modern-day disciplines of the social sciences and is used to refer to the culture of a people such as their ethnicity, to the shared sense of identification within a social category, as in social identity theory or regarding the multiple roles in society in which a person views their own self (Stryker & Burke, 2000). Just as persons find belonging and inclusivity in shared sense of identification, identity has been used to exclude persons from groups based on

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differences, which introduces a notion of *otherness.* "Identity, unstable as it is, is bought at the cost of excluding or negating the other" (Lloyd, 2005, p. 21).

The idea of *otherness* is a postcolonial theory used in the social sciences, which is central to sociological analysis of how majority and minority identities are constructed:

> In dichotomies crucial for the practice and the vision of social order the differentiating power hides as a rule behind one of the members of the opposition. The second member is but the other of the first, the opposite (degraded, suppressed, exiled) side of the first and its creation. Thus abnormality is the other of the norm, deviation the other of law-abiding, illness the other of health, barbarity the other of civilization, animal the other of the human, woman the other of man, stranger the other of the native, enemy the other of friend, 'them' the other of 'us,' insanity the other of reason, foreigner the other of the state subject, lay public the other of the expert. Both sides depend on each other, but the dependence is not symmetrical. The second side depends on the first for its contrived and enforced isolation. The first depends on the second for its self-assertion. (Bauman, 1991, p. 14)

The experiences of some students in the music classroom can be likened to the experience of *otherness* as defined by Bauman (1991). For example, in music education, Bergonzi (2015) examined social justice educational practices outside of music education and outlined ways in which oppression can be recognized and addressed within the field of music education. Bergonzi highlighted that music programs are often safe spaces in school and suggested approaches to avoid students feeling othered such as choral directors referring to members by their vocal range and not their sex or gender.

A space that is safe can make an important difference to a single student, especially one whose life is lived mostly as Other. . . Affirming classrooms and

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programs are not only spaces of safety, but also spaces where Otherness is embraced, and where normalcy is not assumed, but contested. (Bergonzi, 2015, p. 225)

Musical Identity

Unlike racial and cultural identity, Garnett (2017) believed that one is not born into a musical social group, but instead one becomes a musician by actively practicing musical behaviors such as singing or playing an instrument. Garnett stated that, in most social groups, individuals learn and unconsciously imitate behaviors like yawning, smiling, or body posture; whereas, in a music setting, such as a choir, the behaviors like breathing techniques and singing are organized, and members intentionally learn them. According to Garnett, choral members attach their quality of vocal performance to their sense of value within the choir which translates into their own opinions of themselves. The author cautioned choral directors to be aware of the social identification aspect of a choir. The author suggested the possible negative impact of a member leaving based on self-internalized failure as well as persons who may fear joining because of thinking that they may be an outsider to other group members (Garnett, 2017).

Ruud (1997) developed a theory of music and identity and suggested that personal preferences in music create a personal soundtrack in life. In order to gain insight into personal music preferences of the 60 music therapy student-participants, the researcher asked students to audio record pieces of music that impacted their lives and then write down personal reflections about their recordings. In this article, identity was presented as a metaphor for self in-context, and music was suggested as a way in which people situate themselves in relation to time and place, other persons, or values (Ruud, 1997).

Eros (2008) sought to explore the relationship between instrument selection and gender stereotypes by presenting an extensive literature review on the topic. Brass and percussion were found to be male-stereotyped instruments whereas, high woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet) and high strings (violin) were found to be female stereotyped. Many students in the study considered the opinions and perceptions of peers in choosing an instrument to play, which left students who were afraid to break gender stereotypes with less instrument choices available to them. Even so, there were students who chose to play instruments attributed to either sex regardless of the possible negative social impacts. The author concluded that both music educators and students are now more aware of gender stereotypes with instrument selection, and that educators are responsible for removing student gender association of instruments (Eros, 2008).

Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz (2003) endeavored to explore "the world of the music classroom" (p. 190) through structured interviews with 60 students, 20 each belonging to band, choir, and orchestra. The researchers investigated the reasons members joined and remained in ensembles, the social climate within the music classes, and the perceptions of the ensemble in the eyes of members as well as non-members. The authors concluded that, though music class did not provide a home away from home for all participants, each student valued their membership in the ensemble and held their musical identity in high regard. For some, the benefits of being in a music class were social or psychological, while for others, the benefits were musical or academic.

Multiple Identities

According to Shen and Dumani (2013), individuals "simultaneously possess multiple social identities deriving from membership in different groups" (Shen & Dumani, 2013, p. 86). Gee (2000) presented identity as a person's state of being, based on the context of a situation. The researcher also suggested that each person can possess various differing identities.

In attempting to simultaneously explore more than one social category, some researchers have opted to observe two identities. After recognizing that some students become more confident when they learn to sing, Wolfe (2016), surveyed female adolescent chorus members to highlight the connection between adolescent identity formation and singing. According to Wolfe, identity and the voice are interconnected since identity is developed through self-esteem which is often showcased by the physical voice. Along their quest for an assured sense of self, adolescents masquerade in different identities and begin conforming their behaviors to match those of social groups.

Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett, and Sands (2006) conducted research with the purpose of identifying factors that were positively associated with adolescent ethnic identity development. The average age for the 187 Latino male participants was 14.61. The researchers found that family ethnic socialization, such as speaking in Spanish in the home and learning about cultural traditions, was central to positive adolescent ethnic identity (Supple, Ghazarian, Frabutt, Plunkett, & Sands, 2006).

Buchanan, Dzelme, Harris, and Hecker, (2001) investigated the conflict that persons who identify as LGBT experience with respect to their religious or spiritual identities. The intent of this research was to provide a narrative perspective to aid marriage and family therapists who work with persons experiencing this conflict. The

authors suggested that most persons are raised around religion or spirituality and that for LGBT persons, navigating these identities results in an internal struggle. The researchers further explained that the outcome of this struggle is either to switch between identities, or to integrate or merge identities. The constructs of switching between identities and merging identities, as presented by these researchers, are reminiscent of border crossing (Anzaldúa,1987), and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) respectively.

<div align="center">Intersecting Identities</div>

According to Rao and Donaldson (2015), the lack of positive research on issues of individual diversity such as gender, race, and ethnicity, or the absence of positive psychological issues of the intersections of social categories is very noticeable. Similarly, there is a lack of research with a positive focus on the intersection of identity in the lives of LGBTQ+ students. Researchers generally use intersectionality when depicting marginalization in varying forms (Davis, Brunn, & Olive, 2015). McCall (2005) described intersectionality theory as "the most important theoretical contribution that women's studies has made" (McCall, 2005, p. 1771). Lutz (2005), surveyed the existing literature at that time on intersectionality to resolve the debate on "what exactly is intersectionality? A theory? A concept? A heuristic device? A method? An analytical tool for textual analysis? A living practice?" (Lutz, 2005, p. 39). Lutz believed that intersectionality is most helpful as a method used in identifying the overlapping layers of inequality.

Intersectionality is a growing methodology in research. Bowleg (2013) conducted interviews to collect experiences of intersectionality in the lives of 12 gay and bisexual men aged 21-44, who were highly educated and from middle income

families. Research questions were designed to ascertain the participants' descriptions of their intersectional experiences of race, gender, and sexual identity, to understand which processes shaped their social identities, to uncover the challenges experienced due to these intersections of race, gender, and sexuality and to determine if there were perceived benefits of these intersections. Apart from oppressive themes based on intersecting identities such as heterosexism in black communities, racism, and negative stereotypes, the researcher also unearthed uplifting themes like freedom from traditional social norm (heterosexual marriages and having children), and introspection and growth, which suggest strengths in intersectionality of identities. Most participants found it impossible to separate their racial and sexual identities. The researcher used an insightful quote from one of the participants "once you've blended the cake, you can't take the parts back to the main ingredients" (Bowleg, 2013, 763), as part of the title of the article (Bowleg, 2013).

Rahman (2010) compared the strengths and weaknesses of intersectional theory and queer theory in the examination of Muslim gay identities. The author suggested that Muslim communities view the LGBTQ+ identity as a western civilization construct that does not exist within their communities, while western societies view Muslim nations as their polar opposites. Muslim gays do not exist in Muslim communities and are othered in western cultures. This doubly marginalized identity is both intersectional and queer. Rahman argued that the ambiguity of identities in queer studies is essentially intersectional and suggested that queer studies will always be intersectional and that intersectionality itself is queer: "intersectionality is inevitably disruptively queer, and queer must be analytically intersectional" (Rahman, 2010, p. 956).

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To gain the vantage point of intersectionality between culture and LGBTQ+ issues, consider Critchfield, a psychiatric specialist and Pula, a scholar in the field of gender and sexuality who interviewed Alison Bechdel, an acclaimed graphic novelist whose graphic memoirs have examined her closeted gay father's suicide. The goal of their study (2015) was to determine the intersection between her interest in creating visibility for LGBTQ+ persons and psychotherapy in her artistic work. The researchers examined cultural depictions of psychotherapy, development of gender identity and expression, and considered the implications of Bechdel's work for the mental health practitioner caring for LGBT individuals. They highlighted the existing tension between the psychiatry profession and LGBT advocacy, suggesting that more needs to be done to provide care to LGBT persons without pathologizing their identities. They also found psychotherapy in conjunction with artistic processes to be useful for exploring gender identity and sexual orientation and acknowledged LGBT persons' instinctive formation of subcultures as a therapeutic form of living (Critchfield & Pula, 2015).

Border Crossing

Though prevalent, intersectionality is not the only theory used by researchers to address the plurality of identities. "The idea of borders is a popular metaphor for thinking about multiple identities" (Ewing, 1998, p. 262). Gloria Anzaldzúa coined the term *borderlands* and made known the idea of border crossing as an analogy for navigating multiple identities. A Chicana poet, writer, and theorist, Anzaldzúa was born in Texas in 1942 (Reuman & Anzaldúa, 2000). Anzaldúa was a highly published author of poetry and prose, university instructor of Chicano studies, feminist studies, and creative writing, and a political activist. Anzaldúa used poems, short stories, and

other literary publications to promote cultural, sexual, political, and historical ideas, including the clash of religious, familial, and cultural expectation with sexual orientation (Reuman & Anzaldúa, 2000).

Facing homophobia within her cultural community and racism outside of it, Anzaldúa (1987) chose to accept neither her identity as a lesbian nor a Chicana as her main identity. She received numerous awards for her work and was best known for her collection of writings, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987) in which she described her attempt to maintain distinct identities and cross over back and forth over both a physical and metaphorical border.

Wind tugging at my sleeve

feet sinking into the sand

I stand at the edge where earth touches ocean

where the two overlap

a gentle coming together

at other times and places a violent clash.

Across the border in Mexico

stark silhouette of houses gutted by waves,

cliffs crumbling into the sea,

silver waves marbled with spume

gashing a hole under the border fence...

This is my home this thin edge of barbwire. (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 1-3)

Borderlands, as described in this excerpt, represents living in ambiguous physical, emotional, cultural, or sexual places, whereas, border crossing is the movement across diverse borders such as race, gender, or geography. Anzaldúa calls this place *una herida abierta*, an open wound where "the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. . . the lifeblood of the two worlds merging to form a third country, a border culture" (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.25).

Callis (2014) sought to explore non-binary sexualities such as, pansexual, bisexual, and queer as a sexual borderland between heterosexuality and homosexuality. The author presented the history of the sexual binary, literature on non-binary sexualities, and borderlands theory as proposed by Anzaldúa (1987). Callis chose borderlands theory for this study after finding a similarity between the definitions of borderlands and the descriptions of queer, likening the ambiguity of the identity of queer with Anzaldúa's "always in transition space lacking clear boundaries." Data were collected by interviewing 80 residents whose identities represented a broad range of sexual identities. Of the 80 persons, "28 people (35%) self-identified as heterosexual, 15 men and 13 women, 15 people (19%) can be classified as homosexual based on their self-identities, with 7 identifying as lesbians and 8 as gay men. The remaining 37 people (or 46% of participants) are best classified as having non-binary sexualities since they identified as queer, bisexual, pansexual, bi-curious, heteroflexible and 'mostly heterosexual,' as well as people who identified with more than one label and people who chose not to label at all" (p. 65). Callis concluded that although there is a recent shift away from the sexual binary, non-binary sexualities, namely all identities that are not homosexual or heterosexual can be viewed as forming a borderland between the two.

For the purpose of this research, I used intersectionality and border crossing as my lens for analyzing the interactions between the multiple identities of the participants including their LGBTQ+ identities and their musical identities. I used intersectionality to better understand the ways in which identities combined, worked together, or antagonistically, while I used border crossing to explore the ways in which participants switch or alternate between identities both consciously and unconsciously.

Support and Safety of LGBTQ+ Students

Support

"The school environment is one of the most important developmental contexts for children and adolescents. . ." (Russell & McGuire, 2008, p.133). Kosciw, Palmer, Kull, and Greytak (2013) explored both the effect of school environment on LGBT students and the role that school-based support can have on this effect. More specifically, the researchers examined "(a) the direct contribution of in-school victimization to academic outcomes for LGBT youth; (b) the indirect contribution of in-school victimization via psychological well-being; (c) the role of inclusive safe school policies, supportive school staff, and GSA clubs in contributing to a safer school environment, greater well-being and better academic outcomes; and (d) the potential of school supports in buffering the negative effects of victimization on academic outcomes (Kosciw, Palmer, Kull, & Greytak, 2013, p. 48). As part of their analyses, the researchers outlined GSAs, the number of supportive educators, comprehensive school policies, and inclusive curricula as four types of LGBT-related school support (Kosciw et al., 2013).

Fisher et al. (2008) used a public health framework to present ways in which schools can better meet the needs of LGBTQ students. The researchers highlighted LGBTQ students' negative school experiences such as harassment, victimization, bullying, and emotional, behavioral, and academic problems. Fisher et al. developed a three-tiered prevention and intervention program for schools. The primary level referred to school practices used to impact an entire school population such as school policies, curriculum, and staff development. The secondary tier included *diversity rooms*, group counseling, and support groups such as GSAs, and was designed to support a smaller group of students, namely those at risk of academic and emotional problems. The tertiary tier of the program was created for a very small group of students who are at risk for social and emotional problems--such as transgender and gender non-conforming students--and included individual counselling for these students (Fisher et al, 2008).

Safe Space

The term *safe space*, in reference to education, may seem self-explanatory but its meaning is much more complicated than it seems (Boostrom, 1998). Consequently, many educators and researchers have questions about safe space and what the idea means to education. "How is safe space imagined, lived and learned? Is comfort in the classroom compatible with the level of challenge necessary for education, for change?" (Stengel & Weems, 2010, p. 505). Stengel and Weems suggested that a safe space where safe, comfortable, and socially just learning takes place must be imaginary, not in the sense of not being real, but meaning that a safe space must be playfully and creatively created. "What is safe space and how do we create it, and can

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we have safe classrooms where students are academically and personally challenged and learn to think critically?" (Holley & Steiner, 2005, p. 50).

In 2005, Holley and Steiner conducted an exploratory study intent on gaining student perspectives on safe spaces. The researchers asked social work college students between the ages of 21 and 54 to share information about their ability to engage in open and honest dialogue in past learning environments with respect to the role of the teacher, the social and physical environments, and the role of other students. The researchers discovered that more male participants had experienced a safe environment than female participants, and, similarly, more white participants than students of color reported being in classes where they felt safe. They concluded that a safe space is one where students and teachers are safe from physical and emotional harm, and though safety for all may not be achievable, the first step toward this goal is open dialogue between teachers and students.

The term *safe space* in the context of the work of Boostrom (1998), Stengel and Weems (2010), and Holley and Steiner (2005), does not merely refer to actual or bodily safety, but more so represents the metaphorical and all-encompassing use of the expression. A safe space is a classroom climate that enables students to feel secure enough to take risks, honestly express their views, and share and explore their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors (Holley & Steiner, 2005). It is ". . . concerned with the injuries that individuals suffer at the hands of society" (Boostrom, 1998, p. 399) or when in reference to a classroom, at the hands of instructors and other students.

Music and the Arts as a Safe Space

Active participation is a necessary component of music education classes and is often directly linked to a student's level of musical achievement. Student participation in musical activities is dependent on specific teacher attitudes and behaviors that cultivate an environment of trust and respect, thus encouraging experimentation, risk taking, and self-expression (Hendricks, Smith, & Stanuch, 2014). According to a national survey, 60 percent of LGBTQ+ students were members of high school music ensembles (Kosciw et al., 2011).

Based on the notion that music teachers inadvertently create safe spaces in their programs due to retaining students for multiple years, Palkki and Caldwell (2017) sought to determine the role of high school choral programs in creating safe spaces for LGBTQ+ students. Participants (N=1123) who all self-identified as LGBTQ+ college singers were asked about their high school music program experiences with bullying and teacher responsiveness, about rules against hateful speech within choral programs, and the degree to which music educators encouraged them. Since the researchers found that they had enough participants from a wide cross-section of Canada and the U. S., Palkki and Caldwell generalized their results for LGBTQ students in choral programs across North America. Based on their analysis, Palkki and Caldwell deduced that many LGBTQ+ students assumed that their choral programs would be a safe space and most found this to be true (Palkki & Caldwell, 2017).

Summary

Though literature on LGBT studies is growing, gender and sexuality only account for a small portion of the identity of an individual. More research is needed in multidimensional research to examine the intersection of LGBTQ topics and music

education with other facets of the human experience. The idea that a person can possess more than one identity has been a recurring thread related to the purpose and problems of this study. Based on the literature, this confluence of identities for some, results in positive self-image and identity and for others, particularly LGBTQ+ students, navigating multiple identities is a tumultuous undertaking.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Many researchers both in and out of the field of music education are focused on bringing awareness to the plight of the underrepresented-LGBTQ+ students (Robinson & Espelage, 2011; Bergonzi, 2015). In doing so, they have focused primarily on the negative aspects of school experiences, seeking out data on instances of bullying and harassment of LGBTQ+ students and the resulting mental health concerns (Kosciw et al., 2013; Murdock & Bolch, 2005). Opposingly, within the past few years, some researchers have endeavored to understand the impact of the introduction of GSA's, inclusive school policies and safe spaces in schools (Hanna, 2017; Russell et al., 2010). Though victimization and bullying are serious problems in schools, inclusive school policies and safe spaces in school settings have made a tremendous positive impact (Saewyc & Homma, 2017). LGBTQ+ related research in the field of music education is rising in prominence, as evidenced by three LGBTQ Studies & Music Education symposia in the past 8 years. More recently, researchers are beginning to give opportunities to LGBTQ+ students to share their musical experiences and reflect on any possible interaction between their musical and LGBTQ+ identities. Through this study, I sought to explore the influence of past music making experiences on two LGBTQ+ students' identity construction. The research questions that guided this inquiry were:

1. How do the participants describe their past music making experiences as LGBTQ+ students?

2. How do they describe the impact of music making experiences on their identities as LGBTQ+? and

3. Do multiple identities combine to create the musicians they are now?

In this chapter I describe the participants and my role as researcher. I present the theoretical lens, design of the study, as well as data collection and analysis procedures.

Design of the study

Case Study

To better explore and understand the lives of some populations, in-depth study is necessary to illuminate social concepts and what makes people who they are (Vidich & Lyman, 1998). Consequently, I used a descriptive case study with a constructivist approach as the methodology for this study. "A case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 37). As such, I explored the high school music making experiences of two self-identified LGBTQ+ students. Researchers use constructivist qualitative research studies to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of those experiencing it (Given, 2008). The constructivist approach is welcomed in educational research. According to Merriam, "research is, after all, producing knowledge about the world – in our case, the world of educational practice" (Merriam, 1998, p. 3).

Interviewing was the best technique to use when conducting intensive case studies of two selected individuals since I was interested in their past experiences which cannot be replicated (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Limitations

While there are advantages to case studies, there are also limitations. There were two participants for this case study. In examining the high school music experiences of only two LGBTQ+ students, I recognize that educators and researchers

cannot generalize to the experiences of LGBTQ+ students. The data I collected from participants through their interviews is limited since it is based on their recollections and participants may not fully remember events that occurred years ago. Another limitation is that I only asked closed questions which could only yield certain types of responses and hence limit the findings. Further, as the researcher, my personal experiences may limit my objective lens; however, I used my awareness of possible bias to avoid it.

If I were to conduct this study again, there are a number of changes I would make. In recognizing that I did not capture as rich data as I initially envisaged, I would first and foremost, use open ended questions for interviewing participants allowing them the opportunity to more fully tell their stories. I would have also asked more probing questions as a follow-up to participants' responses within the interview. In addition, I would have interviewed each participant at least twice as conducting follow-up interviews might further illuminate ideas and themes raised by participants and thus saturating the data.

Background of the Researcher

I approach this thesis as a queer, non-American person of color who has been gender variant since about the age of three. During my high school years, I heard negative comments about the LGBTQ+ community almost daily, both in and out of school. Students and teachers at school, ministers and members of the congregation at my church, band members at rehearsals, and even family members and friends spoke with disdain about persons who, in their opinions, choose the LGBTQ+ lifestyle.

Now as an LBGTQ+ student pursuing graduate students here in the United States, I have recognized that some LGBTQ+ high school and college students

seamlessly intersect identities, while others struggle to do the same. I was eager to be part of a culture that was more welcoming to LGBTQ+ persons than the one where I lived in fear for most of my life. I then faced a brand-new set of social identity interactions. I took courses in my degree program where I was the only *black* student, or the only *international* student, or the only student that is a *parent*. These realizations were daunting at first, but the intersections were even more alarming when I tried to fit into social circles. I felt that international students, particularly those from the Caribbean (like myself) seemed more homophobic than the American students and often made negative comments about LGBTQ+ persons. The persons who are affiliated with my primary instrument, the steel pan/steel drum, are mostly of Caribbean origin, so I feared they would be as intolerant as persons back home. Because of this, I avoided them. In moving to the U. S., I also experienced racism for the first time, which has made me cautious in interacting with the predominantly white LGBTQ+ community on campus. It is evident that I am personally close to this study, and I see my experiences not as a hindrance to my objectivity in collecting and analyzing data, but rather as an advantage which helps me to better understand the identities of the participants and their musical experiences.

Role of the Researcher

As a graduate teaching assistant, I supervised college students in a music teacher education program at their practicum placements. During these visits, I noticed LGBTQ+ youth at the school, and that some music teachers had LGBTQ+ stickers in their music rooms that demonstrated they promoted inclusion, advocacy, and acceptance. This piqued my curiosity as to the intersections between LGBTQ+ youths' varying identities.

When I decided on researching the lived musical experiences of LGBTQ+ youth, for greater knowledge and understanding of a topic as sensitive as sexuality and gender, I attended several training workshops hosted by the University of Delaware-- including *LGBTQ+ 101*, which explored the definitions of the words and phrases commonly associated with this community; and *LGBTQ+ Ally Training*, which was intended to help persons both in and outside of the community to better understand lived experiences of LGBTQ+ students. As the role of researcher and non-participant of the study, these workshops helped prepare me to interview participants of the study in a manner that was respectful and non-threatening. As suggested by the workshop coordinator, I shared my LGBTQ+ identity with participants. I also asked them their preferred pronouns and practiced using gender neutral pronouns since those were new to me, prior to the interview process.

The Participants

I contacted the LGBT program coordinator at the university I attend to make her aware of my research. I then drafted an email describing the study, qualifications for participation, and my contact information. When I attended LGBTQ+ related events on campus, I spoke to students who identified as members of the LGBTQ+ community about my proposed research and I sent emails to the students who were interested in the project. To qualify as a participant, persons needed to be at least 18 years of age; be enrolled at the university; self-identify as a member of the LGBTQ+ community; and have taken music classes in high school. With this criterion, two persons agreed to participate in the study. I will describe each participant in detail below:

Mary

Mary is a quick-witted, white cisgender female music major who self-identifies as lesbian. Mary is of average height, has short dark hair, and wears glasses. When she smiles and laughs, which is often, her dimples are very prominent. At the time of the study, Mary was a 24-year-old college senior and had already come out about her sexuality to her family and friends. Her coming out was not well received by her family, which has caused a strain on her relationship with her parents.

Mary grew up in the suburbs of the northeastern part of the United States and described her family as being right-wing conservative. The elder of two sisters, Mary sees herself as the *black sheep* of her family. Her parents played sports when they attended high school--as did her sister at that age, while Mary pursued music. Mary attended public schools for both middle and high school. She believed that her high school was not a place where she could be herself and was closeted there.

Mary described herself as a musician and an artist. These musical engagements took place not only within her school but in her wider community. Her passion for music is evidenced by her involvement in three community orchestras--apart from her participation in her school's orchestra, band, and a string quartet. During high school, she was also the president of her school's music society. Mary did her due diligence to research music education at the university and ensured that by the time she graduated from high school, she would have covered all of the necessary high school classes to pursue her desired degree in music education. She prefers stringed instruments but decided to learn other instruments to help make her a more all-rounded music educator. Mary spoke fondly of her musical exposure, recalling that she first played the violin, then sang, before deciding on the cello as her primary instrument.

Maurice

Maurice is a shy, Hispanic transgender male economics major who identifies as asexual. Maurice is short and has long straight black hair that sometimes hides his face. Though he is generally soft spoken, Maurice makes his voice heard for LGBTQ+ rights and Latinx (gender-neutral form of Latino/Latina) visibility. At the time of the interview, Maurice was a 21-year-old college junior and was *out* to friends, classmates and professors. During his time at the university, his mother found out that he identifies as transgender and has been accepting of his gender identity. She now uses his preferred name and pronouns. Since the time of the interview, Maurice has divulged his gender identity to his father.

Maurice lived with his mother in a suburban area while attending a public elementary school and with his father, also in a suburb, while he attended Catholic middle and high schools. He has one sibling, his twin, who identifies as gender non-binary.

Facing isolation at home, and rejection at school, Maurice used art and music as outlets. Maurice admitted that he joined chorus because many of his friends were members. These friends were the only people to whom he had disclosed his true identity. To him, being in this music ensemble provided an opportunity to be himself. He was not allowed to spend much time with friends outside of school and filled the hours not spent socializing, listening to music and writing his own songs. In middle and high school, Maurice played percussion in band and was a member of his school's chorus. Outside of school, Maurice played the bass in a rock band he created with his friends.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework had an integral role throughout the process of this research. I used a framework of intersectionality theory and border crossing theory to first guide my creation of the research questions and by extension the interview questions. In exploring multiple identities of LGBTQ+ music students, the theoretical framework was also instrumental to my understanding and analyzation of the data.

Intersectionality

The concept of intersectionality refers to the interactions between different types of social identity structures that encompass an individual such as race, gender, geography, and class. The term was originally coined by Crenshaw (1989) as "the various ways race and gender interact to shape the multiple dimensions of black woman's employment experiences" (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 139). Through attempts to conceptualize their position, black feminists likened their situation to other groups of persons who belong to multiple disadvantaged social groups (Carbado et al., 2013). For example, a blind immigrant or a female homeless teenager would be persons belonging to such a group.

Over time, researchers not involved with black feminism began redefining intersectionality. Social scientists have moved beyond exploring individual identities and identity formation, using identity theory and social identity theory, and now use intersectionality as a lens through which identities can be examined in plurality (Lutz, 2015). According to McCall (2005), intersectionality can be defined as "the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations" (McCall, 2005, p. 1771).

Intersectionality has become increasingly popular within educational research. Educational researchers have long been examining inequalities in a race, ethnicity, and gender as they occur in schools (Weis & Fine, 1993). Carter (2014) suggested that researchers within the field of music education should borrow theoretical frameworks and methodologies from social sciences and presented intersectional theory as a possible method for examining the complexities of multiple identities of music students and educators. He advised music education researchers to "look beyond one-dimensional description of underserved populations" (Carter, 2014, p. 550). In recognizing the complexities of life, Carter (2014) explained that research is needed to understand the lives and musical experiences of people who identify themselves in multiple ways.

Though researchers primarily use intersectionality as a framework to examine interconnected occurrences of oppression and privilege, for the purpose of this study, I used intersectionality to examine the plurality (Lutz, 2015) of the participants' identities. From being a member of different social groups and social categories, each participant would possess varying social identities, such as religious, LGBTQ+, and musical identities as shown in Figure 1. Region A shows the possible intersection of musical and LGBTQ+ identities, region B shows the possible intersection of musical and religious identities, region C shows the possible intersection of LGBTQ+ and religious identities, while region D shows a possible intersection of musical, LGBTQ+, and religious identities.
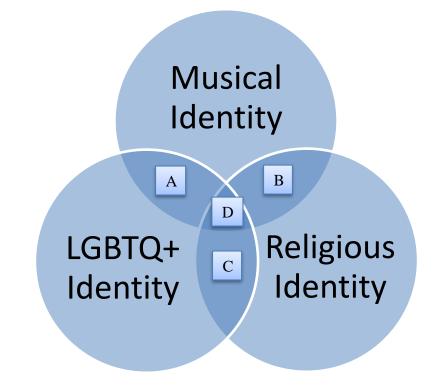
Figure 1   Identities that exist simultaneously and intersect to create new identities
              or experiences.

Border Crossing/Borderlands

Anzaldúa (1987) used her multiple identities as a Chicana and a self-identified lesbian as a source of personal strength and scholastic creativity. While some may view the boundary between Mexico and the United States as a geographical line, physically demarcated by a fence in some places, Anzaldúa instead fought to portray the *borderlands* as a location for the coming together of different cultures. Anzaldúa wrote poems, short stories, and other literary publications to promote cultural, sexual, political, and historical ideas, including the clash of religious, familial, and cultural expectations with sexual orientation.

Anzaldúa suggested that persons who exist *between* identities are tasked with moving back and forth across a cultural metaphorical border, while those who are unable or unwilling to cross over that border, exist and live on the border in a place called *borderlands*. She faced homophobia within her cultural community as well as racism from outside of it. As a result, she identified with neither her cultural community nor her LGBTQ+ community. She identified outside of both, which she calls the borderlands. Depending on the social context, she would present herself with one identity or the other. Switching between identities is what she refers to as border crossing and one of the lenses I used to inform the development of the research and interview questions and to examine and interpret the data as shown in Figure 2. Region X shows the movement across the border between two identities that are not intersecting: musical identity and LGBTQ+ identity. Region Y shows the possible borderlands between musical and religious identities from being unable or unwilling to move across a border between the two, resulting in the new region. Region Z shows the possible borderlands between LGBTQ+ and religious identities from being unable or unwilling to move across a border between the two, resulting in that new region.
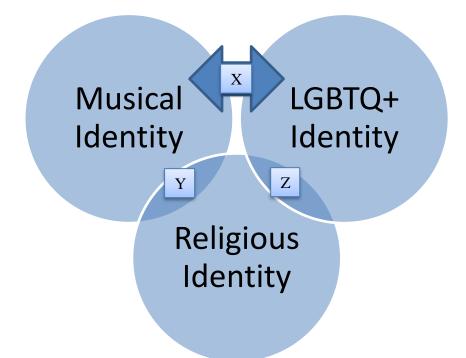
Figure 2   Alternating identities that do not intersect or exist simultaneously.

Data Collection

A qualitative approach afforded participants the opportunity to reflect on their musical experiences and any intersections with their LGBTQ+ identity. "Stories are how we make sense of our experiences, how we communicate with others, and through which we understand the world around us" (Merriam, 2009, p. 32). Through the interview process, participants were able to share their stories of music making in high school as self-identified LGBTQ+ students. At the end of fall semester, I met with each of the participants individually in the same classroom of the music building to engage in semi-structured interviews. Some questions were created to collect demographic information, while others were designed according to the research questions. Both participants were asked the same questions, with the only differences

being the order in which questions were asked. This was done to create a more natural flow of conversation during the interview process. These interviews lasted for approximately thirty minutes and were recorded using the app Recorder Plus on an iPad. To capture any non-verbal responses or gestures, I took field notes during each interview. The interview questions were:

1. How old are you?

2. Tell me about your family.

3. What is your religion?

4. Were you raised in an urban, rural or suburban area?

5. In which state did you attend high school?

6. Which music programs were offered at your high school?

7. Which one(s) did you participate in and why?

8. Who or what influenced you musically?

9. Did you engage in music making outside of school?

10. Were you part of any community groups growing up?

11. Were you 'out' or 'closeted' in high school?

12. How do you self-identify as LGBTQ+?

13. Was your family supportive of your "coming out?"

14. When did you first consider yourself part of the LGBTQ+ community?

15. Can you describe your experience in music class as an LGBTQ+ student?

16. Were LGBTQ+ related topics ever discussed in music class? (by teacher or students)

17. Were LGBTQ+ related topics ever included in the music curriculum?

18.   Were there gender specific dress codes for co-ed music groups such as choir at your school?

19.   Were there gender specific dress codes for school groups at your school?

20.   Which social group(s) or clubs were you a part of at school?

21.   Were there LGBTQ+ specific or inclusive clubs at your school?

22.   Did your school have any policies on safe spaces for LGBTQ+ students?

Validity (Credibility & Trustworthiness)

To test the validity of the interview questions, I vetted them with a college student who self-identies as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. We then engaged in a brief discussion about the wording of the questions. This was done to avoid assuming that participants would interpret questions in the way that I intended. I determined that I needed to make no changes to the interview questions before interviewing the participants. To further assure validity of the research, I used triangulation in the data collection process. While interviewing the participants, I took field notes to capture non-verbal forms of communication such as body language, recorded the interviews, and then transcribed the audio recordings. After I transcribed the interviews and analyzed the data, I conducted member checks to allow the participants an opportunity to ensure that their responses were represented accurately (Merriam, 2009).

Data Analysis

This study was conducted through the lenses of intersectionality and border crossing. After the completion of the interviews, I transcribed each interview and analyzed the data using the constant comparative method (Glaser, 1965). I read through the transcriptions several times and used open coding to hand code the data. I then hand coded the field notes in the same manner and grouped the interview and field notes codes to create themes for each participant. I used intersectionality and border crossing to understand the ways in which each participant negotiated multiple identities.

Ethical Concerns

Before commencing the study, I, the sole researcher of this study, completed Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI), (see Appendix A) training to gain knowledge about working with human subjects as participants. I submitted a proposal to the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), and then submitted a second proposal after the first one lapsed (see Appendix B), and the research was approved by the University of Delaware IRB.

Summary

The goal of this study was to explore the influence of past music making experiences on two LGBTQ+ students' identity construction. Using qualitative research methods, I collected data by interviewing the participants, taking field notes, and transcribing the recorded interviews for analysis.

Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

To collect data, I conducted semi-structured interviews with each of the participants, audio recorded the interview sessions, and wrote down observations that I made regarding the body language of the participants. I then listened to the recordings four times, pausing frequently to create interview transcriptions. The data set comprised the interview transcriptions and field notes from the interviews. I used interview transcripts to determine participant characteristics generally relating to social categories, as shown in Table 1, by reading through the transcriptions three times. On the first reading, I wrote down characteristics of each participant. I then read through the transcriptions a second time to determine whether all social categories were noted. Following this, I compared the participants' characteristics and conducted a third reading to ensure that I had listed a characteristic for both participants under each category I had discovered.

I then conducted a within-case analysis of each participant's interview (Creswell, 2007). I read the transcriptions of each interview separately and on the first reading, jotted down frequently recurring words and phrases that related to each research question. On the second reading, I added more words and phrases under the headings of the research questions. I then grouped these words and phrases into themes. I read the transcripts for the third and final time to be certain that I had collected all the data connected to each theme. I then used this data set to create individual participant narratives. To give each participant's experiences and perspectives its due focus, individual profiles are presented separately.

Individual Participant Profiles

Table 1   Description of participant characteristics

	Mary	Maurice
Year in College	Senior	Junior
Major in College	Music	Economics
High School Attended	Public	Catholic/Private
Music Studied During High School	Cello/Orchestra	Band Chorus
Musical Experiences Outside of High School	Cello/Orchestra	Songwriting Bass/Rock band
Family Life	Lived with both parents	Lived with either parent
Gender	Cisgender woman	Transgender man
Race	White	Latino
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian	Asexual
Outness in High School	Not out	Out to peer group
The Value of Music Class	"I was the happiest when I was there, because you're with people who care about you; people who are driven in the same way as you."	"I got to spend time with people who knew like who I was and people I could be myself around."

Mary

At the time of the study, Mary was a 24-year-old college senior, whose major was music. She is a white cisgender female who self-identifies as lesbian and has already come out about her sexuality to her family and friends. Mary welcomed the idea of being part of the study and during the interview she was warm and affable, occasionally chuckling at her own fumbles in response to questions or when sharing stories.

I uncovered one primary theme relating to Mary's experiences by reading the transcription of her interview, highlighting codes, and grouping these codes, as shown in Table 2. I read through the transcriptions several times and used open coding to hand code the data. I then hand coded the field notes in the same manner and grouped the interview and field notes codes to create themes for Mary's experience. The main theme that I uncovered relating to Mary was *belonging*.

Table 2   Theme and Codes for Mary's Experiences

Theme	Corresponding Codes
Belonging	• Feeling different from family members – (sports vs music, religion) • Dating persons that parents would approve • Depression, self-harm, and attempted suicide • High school was not a place where students could be themselves because of bullying • Spending time with people like herself (other driven musicians) • Member of multiple orchestras • Music class was a place she could be herself • Music ensemble as an unofficial safe space

Belonging

"Belonging involves becoming an insider within a group, organization or a somewhat less structured network of people with common attributes or beliefs" (Crisp, 2010, p. 124). At numerous junctures throughout the interview, Mary described herself as being different or opposite from her family. She sought after that missing sense of belonging at home and found it in music. Mary was part of an orchestra at her school and by middle school, she was a member of several school groups as well as multiple community orchestras. Though her focus was on orchestra, she ensured she was part of band toward the end of high school in preparation for her impending degree in music education. Mary is a very dedicated and self-motivated musician. Interestingly, her musical pursuits are in stark contrast to the athletic endeavors of her family members. This is one of the many ways in which Mary felt like she did not belong with her family.

She even joked after the interview that she was not sure how her high school football player father and cheerleader mother ended up stuck with her. When asked about her parents, Mary responded that:

> They're very different from me, uhh in a lot of different ways, umm. I mean even down to this year they, yuh know, support Trump and support a lot of the things he says and a lot of the things he stands for and I think it's absolutely disgusting. So, we're just very opposite. (Mary)

In describing her only sibling, Mary said "she and I are also very opposite. You know, I'm brunette, musician, artist. She's blonde, skinny, beautiful, 'yuh know' sports player. So, we're very opposite" (Mary).

Regarding her own religious beliefs, Mary talked about what it is like to believe in God and be reprimanded for doing so based on her sexual orientation. Mary

shared with me a question that she has been asked on occasion—and her thought process in response, "How can you be religious and gay at the same time? I'm always like, well, I think He's (God's) the one who put my girlfriend in my life" (Mary).

Mary had presented herself as a heterosexual because she sought belonging and acceptance from her religious homophobic family. When I asked Mary whether she was *out* or *closeted* during her high school years, she remarked with a disheartened tone that she had dated guys then. Immediately following this, Mary divulged that she was very depressed during high school and that she was hospitalized during that time for self-inflicted injuries and attempted suicide. At home Mary only heard her family members speaking about LGBTQ+ persons and issues with such disdain that she believed she had to be someone else. Mary explained:

> My parents, being the ultra-conservative religious people that they were, it was something that, if it was ever brought up, was talked about in such a negative tone that I was like there's no way like I'm not allowed like I can't do this . . .I kind of forced myself to be in relationships that I thought my parents would approve of until I grew up and moved out. . . .I was reading something recently where it was like people in the LGBT community kind of have to create their own family sometimes, when their biological family just like say hey deuces. (Mary)

Mary knew most of the students in her high school. However, this did not help her feel as though she belonged. She discussed with me that her school was not a place where students could be themselves, and expounded that, "you were bullied for everything, so it was hard to be anything that wasn't considered 'normal.' You were subject to being made fun of, to being you know, anything outside of them" (Mary).

Mary went on to talk about the recent development of particularized safe spaces in high schools and commented that such spaces at her high school did exist but were not quite as overt.

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Like if somebody was going through a rough time, whether it be related to coming out or whether it be related to depression or it be related to failing a class, we had places that we could go but it was never like advertised. (Mary)

For Mary, music class was a space where thoughts could be shared more freely than the general school setting. Musically, Mary felt as though she was a part of the ensemble and described music classmates as "people who care about you; people who are driven in the same way as you" (Mary). However, at that time she was unsure if her sexuality would be accepted. To protect her new-found sense of belonging, she chose to keep her sexual identity hidden. Upon reflection during the interview, Mary thought that perhaps she did not need to remain closeted in her ensemble.

I think that it [music class] just gave you a place to be yourself and it gave you a place to think about things and for me it was just even if I didn't really let myself do what I think I should have, now that I look back on it I wish I would have accepted myself a lot sooner than I did. (Mary)

Mary's final thought for the interview pertained to music class was: "It gave me some kind of solace and I was the happiest when I was there" (Mary).

Mary struggled to belong both at home with her family and with her peers at school. Though aware of her lesbian identity, Mary did not feel safe to come out and remained closeted. Through music ensembles she found belonging and acceptance and surrounded herself with music at high school and within her community. It was not until Mary graduated from high school and left her parents' home that she accepted her LGBTQ+ identity.

Interpretation through Theoretical Lenses

In Mary's opinion, her family expectations and her sexual orientation did not intersect. In an attempt to belong, she decided to date members of the opposite sex

while she lived at home, and then have a girlfriend after moving out which is an example of border crossing. She felt ostracized from her family and at the same time was not acting on her lesbian identity of which she was aware. She was neither with her family nor with her LGBTQ+ community. She occupied a new, at times, depressive place, one that can be viewed as borderlands. She felt belonging to neither, yet still she was aware that she belonged to both. Anzaldúa (1987) described borderlands as the one place where all other places existed within it. Similar to Anzaldúa, Mary created her own version of culture and crafted a new family through music.

Maurice

At the time of the study, Maurice, was a 21-year-old undergraduate college student, whose was in the process of changing majors from computer science to economics. He is a Hispanic transgender male who self-identifies as asexual. During high school, he was *out* only to a small group of friends, but at the time of the interview was *out* about his gender identity to his friends, his sibling, and his mother. He has one sibling, his twin, who identifies as gender non-binary. With both parents living apart from each other, Maurice was able to discuss his gender identity individually with each parent. Maurice was a very willing participant of the study and had even volunteered to recruit additional participants if necessary. He appreciated the opportunity to share his experiences and was pleased that the interview process helped to bring some forgotten fond memories to the forefront of his mind.

I uncovered themes relating to Maurice's experiences by reading the transcription of his interview, highlighting codes, and grouping these codes as shown in Table 3. As I did with Mary's data, I read through the transcriptions several times

and used open coding to hand code the data. Then I hand coded the field notes and grouped the interview and field notes codes. Through this analysis, themes that pertain to Maurice's experiences were: (a) *fitting in* and (b) *issues relating to gender*.

Table 3   Themes and codes for Maurice's experiences

Theme	Corresponding
Fitting In	- Being uncomfortable at home - Feeling like an outcast at school - Attempted to create GSA at school - Joined chorus to be among friends - Music was a place to be with people who knew his true self - Did not play drums to avoid being labeled as a female drummer
Issues Relating to Gender	- Gender stereotypes in instrument selection in band - Choral director referring to students by gender - Did not continue band in high school because it was a gendered space - Did not play drums to avoid being labeled as a female drummer - Did not join choral program at university because of dress code - Formed rock band with LGBTQ friends

Fitting In

Fitting in is being socially compatible with other members of a group (Jenkins, 2008). For Maurice, middle school was a tumultuous time, rife with change: living with his mother, who he knew well, was traded for living with his father who he barely knew in order to attend Catholic school. Maurice lived with his father and his twin during middle and high school and summed what it was like to live in a home

where his family members did not know his gender identity as ". . . just really uncomfortable" (Maurice). Attending a public elementary school with familiar peers, where you wore what you chose, was replaced by a Catholic middle school filled with unfamiliar classmates who all knew each other and wore school uniforms. Maurice indicated that he did not fit in at school for those reasons.

> I went to public school for elementary school and then middle school and high school I went to Catholic school which was horrible because uniforms and it was just a bunch of white people and like I'd never been, like, surrounded with, like, religion in that way before. (Maurice)

Maurice saw music class as an opportunity not only to relish in singing and other types of music making, but an opportunity to fit in. Maurice recalled:

> A lot of my friends were in the chorus, which is how I got time to spend with them outside of school, because I didn't really get to go over to friends' houses, so like going over to chorus practice after school was a time when I got to spend time with people who knew like who I was and people I could be myself around. (Maurice)

Issues Relating to Gender

When he was in middle school, Maurice was part of band and in high school, he was a member of the schools' chorus. Though still closeted at home and with family members, by high school, he was out to his closest friends who, as Maurice joked, all seemed to know before he did. During high school, Maurice's only support came from a small group of friends who mostly self-identified as part of the LGBTQ+ community. Along with these friends, he tried to create a space of safety and support in the form of a GSA. This venture was not permitted at the private Catholic school. Maurice recalled:

> My guitarist was bi[bisexual], and my one friend was bi but like *lesbianing*. I had this other pan[pansexual] friend, like we wanted to

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make a GSA, like a gay-straight alliance at the school, but they wouldn't let us and they were allowed to not let us because it was a private school. In a public school that wouldn't be allowed. (Maurice)

Though he loves music and enjoyed making music with friends, Maurice became discouraged by issues relating to gender within his schools' music programs.

In middle school I was in band, and in high school I wasn't. Because my high school was gendered. . . Like if a guy played the flute, they were like, what the hell. And the brass was very male dominated as well. . . my twin, who is non-binary actually. . . played the trumpet and blew best in my eyes and I think they actually were like one of the best trumpet players in elementary school and middle school. In elementary school they were treated like that [like the best] and in middle school. . . like they always had an eighth grader playing that part [the main part] like the oldest person. And when we were eighth graders, my twin…he [the teacher] picked the male seventh grader to play that part. So that was really discouraging. . . . I was a percussionist when I was younger and then like the percussion at my school was very male dominated and I was uncomfortable. . . . Like I could be the only girl drummer. It would be so cool but like that title didn't fit me and I just [shudders] didn't want anybody to call me that so that was another thing I didn't want to get involved because like it would just like point me out as being this thing that I'm not. (Maurice)

In the choral program, the dress code was gendered and school officials did not acknowledge the existence of transgender students. Maurice recollected what it was like to wear a dress in order to remain part of a beloved experience. "I hated that dress so much. It made me almost quit it (choir) actually. But I didn't" (Maurice).

Most of Maurice's high school music experiences were in his school's chorus. Maurice spoke with frustration about the issues relating to gender that existed in that program. For instance, the music teacher referred to vocal parts by the genders of singers generally associated with each, such as saying 'ladies' when speaking to the sopranos and altos. As Maurice explained, there were female members of the chorus that sang tenor and male member who sang alto.

It was really tough because I hated like being perceived in that way and like instead of her saying like sopranos and altos, she would say girls and. . .we really don't have to use all those gender binaries. . . .So being in that space was really, it was like awkward which I didn't like and then I didn't continue it in college. Like if it wasn't such a gendered space I'd definitely still be doing it now especially since I have friends who are in the music program. (Maurice)

During high school, even though he was not out to his family, Maurice challenged the strict dress code of his school and asked to be permitted to wear the boys' uniform. His request was denied. He and his friends asked to start a GSA at their high school, but this request was also denied. Incidentally, that group of LGBTQ+ friends joined together to create a rock band outside of school.

Interpretation through Theoretical Lenses

For Maurice, the intersectionality of gender identity and sexual orientation created a long confusing road to understanding *who he is.* He was unable to fit in at school because of the intersectionality between race, religion, and gender identity that he was experiencing. Within music classes, however, two different interactions occurred. Being out to a group of friends in music meant that his LGBT and music identities were able to intersect to a certain extent and he, in turn, fit in. Neither of these two identities were able to flourish at the same time. Because of his negative experiences in music ensembles in middle school, Maurice felt that he needed to choose between his musical identity and his gender identity, by opting not to be in band in high school. Maurice's decision not to pursue music in college due to the gender binary of the choral program can be viewed as border crossing from his musical identity to his gender identity.

Through analysis of the data, I uncovered *belonging* as the main theme of Mary's high school music making experiences as an LGBTQ+ student. Mary felt a

sense of belonging in her music ensembles, but not in her wider school community and at home. She remained closeted in an attempt to protect her sense of belonging in music and not worsen her situation at home and in her non-music interactions at school. For Maurice's high school music making experiences as an LGBTQ+ student, I found *fitting in* and *issues relating to gender* to be the main themes. Maurice had difficulty fitting in at home because he was uncomfortable around family members who did not know his gender identity. At school, he did not fit in because he entered a K-8 school in 6th grade making him the new kid. This was compounded by the fact that, for the first time, he had to wear school uniforms and was immersed in religion.

Summary

In this chapter, I analyzed the data, presented the findings that were drawn from analysis, and created individual participant profiles based on the themes of their experiences and the intersectionality and/or border crossing of multiple identities. In the following chapter, I present a discussion of the findings, conclusions, implications for music education and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 5

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Summary

Through this research, I explored the influence of past music making

experiences on two LGBTQ+ students' identity construction. The research questions

that guided this inquiry were: (a) How do the participants describe their past music

making experiences as LGBTQ+ students? (b) How do they describe the impact of

music making experiences on their identity as LGBTQ+? and (c) Do multiple

identities combine to create the musicians they are now? I collected data by

interviewing participants and taking field notes. I then transcribed the interviews and

analyzed the data for emergent themes within each case. I created participant

narratives based on the theme of *belonging* for Mary and the themes of *fitting in* and

issues relating to gender for Maurice.

Discussion and Conclusions

Relating the Findings to the Research Questions

Research question 1 - How do the participants describe their past music

making experiences as LGBTQ+ students?

Mary described music classes as time spent with people who were like her. In

her opinion, students who were passionate and dedicated about music learning and

performance were akin to her. She was able to distinguish herself as similar to these

students and hence, as defined by Jenkins (2008), this is one of her identities. Mary's

musical identity is of great importance to her since she was passionate about music

and felt a sense of belonging in her ensembles. Her dedication to her musicianship and becoming a music educator since she was in high school can be seen as achievement, one of the four categories of adolescent identity as outlined by Marcia (1966). "I think outside of school I was in three community type high school orchestras. . . as well as a string quartet. . . I joined 'band' my senior year because I knew I that wanted to be a music ed major and I knew I was going to need exposure to band" (Mary). Though being a musician is a big part of who Mary is, it is not her only identity. Mary also self-identities as a lesbian. Her experiences in developing her lesbian identity moved through awareness, testing and exploration, identity acceptance, and identity integration, each of the four stages of lesbian identity formation as proposed by Sophie (1986). Mary was aware of her LGBTQ+ identity but went through a period of exploration before accepting it.

Similar to Palkki's (2016) findings, I found that Maurice's gender and musical identities were intertwined in both positive and negative ways. Maurice was out about his gender identity to only a small group of friends. His interactions with these friends occurred either in music classes or in the rock band that they formed outside of school. As such, Maurice spoke with fondness about being able to fit in with his LGBTQ+ friends since he could be his true self.

Research question 2 - How do they describe the impact of music making experiences on their identities as LGBTQ+?

LGBTQ+ students are sometimes hesitant to come out to their parents and family members for fear of rejection. Similar to the sense of belonging that I uncovered to be of value to Mary and Maurice's desire to fit in, Fitzpatrick and Hansen (2010) highlighted the importance of fitting in to their participants. Tajfel

(1978) wrote about the value of belonging to a group while Jenkins (2008) discussed the power of identifying as a member of a social group. Music classes and ensembles provided value for both Mary and Maurice, in their separate contexts, when they were in high school.

During high school Mary had not yet integrated her musical and lesbian identities. At that time, her musical identity was more prominent than her lesbian identity. "The prominence of an identity depends upon the degree to which one: 1) gets support from others for an identity, 2) is committed to the identity, and 3) receives extrinsic and intrinsic rewards from the role identity" (Stets & Burke, 2003, p. 139). The negative comments Mary heard about LGBTQ+ persons both at home and at school led her believe that coming out would hinder her sense of belongingness.

Heteronormativity in music classes caused Maurice's gender and musical identities to intersect negatively and as a result, he was unable to fit in with the other students. Maurice's choral director referred to members using gendered terms as opposed to vocal parts. "As gender identity and sexuality are related but not overlapping constructs, choral music teachers need to become educated about gender identities and expressions that are not simply binary 'male' or 'female'" (Palkki & Caldwell, 2017, p. 42). This, in addition to gendered uniforms for choral performances, caused Maurice to feel misgendered in these spaces.

Research question 3 - Do multiple identities combine to create the musicians they are now?

Though Maurice enjoys making music with others, he is currently not part of an ensemble. The intersectionality between his gender and musical identities impacted his musical choices and consequently the musician he became. Maurice still engages

in music making; however, he does so as an individual, through songwriting and playing the guitar.

Mary found a sense of belonging in her music ensembles. This was something she did not have at home with her family because of the intersectionality between her lesbian and religious identities. The prominence of her musical identity that lead her to pursue a degree in music education stemmed from finding support there that she lacked elsewhere.

For Mary, issues regarding her sexual orientation and religion occurred outside of the school environment. Though her family was not very religious, she spoke about the religious underpinnings of her family's expectations of her. These expectations caused Mary's delay in accepting her lesbian identity. Buchanan, Dzelme, Harris, and Hecker (2001) found that youth who experience a conflict between their sexual orientation and religious identity may feel pressured to follow their familial path. This was also true for Mary as she was unable to border cross into her lesbian identity until she had moved out of her parents' home.

With Maurice, religion intersected with his sexual orientation and gender identity at school, since it was a Catholic middle and a high school. At this school, Maurice often heard negative LGBTQ+ remarks by students and school administrators rejected his attempt to form a GSA. Musical identity and LGBTQ+ identity are both important parts of each of the participants' overall identities.

Implications for Music Education

I do not attempt to generalize about LGBTQ+ students' experiences from the findings of this study. However, some findings may be transferable to other similar contexts. For example, the results of this study might be useful in improving the

classroom musical experiences of LGBTQ+ young persons. Apart from these students, non-LGBTQ+ students, parents of LGBTQ+ students, music educators, and other education professional such as administrators might benefit from my findings. Music educators are in a position to be allies for students who identify as LGBTQ+. LGBTQ+ students believe that they will find a safe space in music classes and ensembles and music educators should rise to that expectation. They should be proactive in recognizing their role in creating positive musical experiences and life-long learning for all students. Whether or not they are aware of students who identify as LGBTQ+ in their classrooms, music teachers can set a tone of inclusion and acceptance.

Upon reflection, Mary described music class as "a place to be yourself" (Mary), while for Maurice it was "a gendered space" (Maurice), one that he almost quit because he "hated being perceived in that way" (Maurice). The *gendered space* was created by the uniforms and speech of the music teacher. "Supportive classroom teachers can make a difference in improving school climate for marginalized LGBTQ students" (Garrett & Spano, 2017, p. 41). Music teacher preparation degrees should include content on LGBTQ+ students. For example, future educators ought to learn the correct terminology for speaking to LGBTQ+ students as well as other types of inclusive speech such as references to vocal parts or instrument types and not the sex or gender of students. Similarly, there should be mandatory workshops for in-service music teachers with this same LGBTQ+ content. Music educators can then use this knowledge to create welcoming and more inclusive environments within their classrooms and ensembles.

Recommendations for Future Research

Though music majors may be more accessible as potential research participants, music education researchers need to give voice to LGBTQ+ musicians who did not pursue music beyond high school to understand their lived experiences as LGBTQ+ high school music students. Past music making experiences of college students who are non-music majors might illuminate reasons why these students chose to pursue other majors.

Another consideration for future research on the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ high school music students would be to replicate this study with different participants to add to the body of literature of LGBTQ+ related material in music education.

Music is often presented as an outlet, safe space, or place of belonging for LGBTQ+ youth who have previously experienced feelings of alienation and rejection from the wider school community as well as at home (Fitzpatrick & Hansen, 2010). However, some LGBTQ+ youth have accepting home and school environments. Future researchers might consider studying the role of music and musical experiences on LGBTQ+ youth who have been constantly surrounded by acceptance.

Much of the research literature highlights the negative experiences of LGBTQ+ youth; there is a void where researchers objectively explore musical experiences of LGBTQ+ youth and whether those experiences are positive or negative.

Closing

LGBTQ+ students may find feelings of belonging and acceptance within their music communities that they may not find elsewhere. As a result, music educators should create safe and welcoming environments to foster positive intersections

between LGBTQ+ students' varying identities and an environment where all students can feel comfortable to be themselves. Affording LGBTQ+ students opportunities to share their stories and musical experiences will contribute to the small but growing body of LGBTQ+ research within the field of music education.

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Appendix A

CITI TRAINING PROGRAM

Appendix B

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

DATE: March 26, 2018

TO: Aneysha de Coteau, BA in Musical Arts
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1214113-1] Intersectionality in music education: Seeing beyond the

rainbow SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: <u>Approved for Data Analysis Only</u>
APPROVAL DATE: March 26, 2018
EXPIRATION DATE: March 25, 2019
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # *(7)*

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that <u>informed consent</u> is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this

study to this office. Please note that all research records must be retained for a

minimum of three years.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.