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A SURVEY OF VIOLA TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF VIOLA PEDAGOGY

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A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department

of Music

University of Houston

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In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Musical Arts

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By

Sophie Elizabeth Parker

May, 2014

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore college/conservatory-level viola teachers' perceptions of viola playing and pedagogy. Participants received a link to a researcher-designed survey instrument called the Viola Pedagogy Survey (VPS). VPS questions were designed to help define current practices in viola pedagogy and to assess participants' perceptions with regard to viola pedagogy. VPS topics included: (a) differences between violin and viola technique; (b) whether or not they encourage students to switch violin to viola and, if so, at what age; (c) methods employed to help former violinists obtain a more violistic sound; (d) teaching style and initial instrument, (e) recommended viola repertoire and etudes; (f) recommended remediation strategies, (g) influential mentors; (h) division of lesson time; (i) goals for students; and (j) important violists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Following a pilot study, 60 surveys were sent out for the main study, and 19 respondents replied, for a return rate of 32%. Participants in the main study ( $N = 19$ ) were current members of the American Viola Society who self-identified as university or conservatory level viola teachers.

The main categories of discussion were organized by corresponding Research Question topics, and included: (a) reasons for choosing or switching to the viola, (b) viola technique, (c) viola pedagogy and methods of implementing remediation, (d) viola repertoire and etudes, and (e) viola mentors. Participants gave five types of responses as to why they chose or switched to the viola, including chamber music, suggestion of teachers or peers, sound qualities, physical aspects, and playing opportunities. Participants described several areas of pedagogical technique unique to viola including right hand, left hand, and sound quality/tone production. Participants also cited many

different mentors and influential pedagogues, but only three were mentioned more than once as most important of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Karen Tuttle, Heidi Castleman, and Robert Vernon. The participants' quotes in this study indicate that many violists do see the viola as more difficult, less perfect than the violin. Their quotes also indicate that a violist needs special skills to play the viola, and/or that certain individuals may be better suited to its rigor, given certain physical attributes. Suggestions for future research include surveying a larger population of violists to compare attitudes towards viola pedagogy, then and now, and to observe for the emergence of new important teachers in 21<sup>st</sup> century viola pedagogy.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **Researcher Lens**

As a student, I began to play the viola as part of an orchestra program for all sixth graders in the school. As a supplement to our in-school group lessons, we were advised to study privately. My first viola teacher was primarily a violinist. After two years of study, she recommended that I study with a “real” viola teacher, meaning someone who had specialized on playing and teaching viola. I was not really aware of differences between the two at the time. As a young student, I had merely observed that most other string players preferred to play the violin, and that most non-musicians knew of the violin but not the viola. I had chosen the viola because I liked its deeper sound, but I was not ready to commit to its large cousin, the cello, because of its size and the relative difficulty of pushing down the thicker strings. I think my teacher knew that an expert in viola could better guide me as a teacher in relation to the correct repertoire and variations in technique required to play the viola well. Although starting on and/or specializing in the viola was unusual 100 years ago, that may no longer be the case. One aim of this study is to elaborate on the differences that my first teacher implied when she recommended a viola teacher to help me reach the next level of playing.

### **Introduction**

The viola is an instrument that has its own unique character and timbre. Yet, for centuries the viola did not garner as much recognition nor have as much repertoire as its cousins, the violin and cello. While it is more often relegated to the role of a supporting voice both in chamber music and orchestra, the viola has come into its own as a solo instrument since the middle of the last century due to a greater breadth of more difficult

repertoire and the ever-increasing level of technical expertise and virtuosity displayed by violists. Examples of such seminal 20<sup>th</sup> century viola works would include the viola concertos of William Walton, Paul Hindemith, and Béla Bartók (Nelson, 1972). A sample of important 20<sup>th</sup> century sonatas and other shorter pieces written for viola would likely include the following: Ernest Bloch's *Suite*, Igor Stravinsky's *Elégie*, Luciano Berio's *Sequenza* VI for Solo Viola, and Dmitri Shostakovich's *Viola Sonata*, Opus 147 (Maurice, 2000; Nelson, 1972; Uscher, 1982-1983). These pieces challenge the violist to play with a variety of bow techniques, to portray different kinds of musical character, and expect an advanced skill set with difficult left hand shifting and chordal playing. Meanwhile, they also demand the ability to play with a lyricism that may not have been expected of a violist prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Four 20<sup>th</sup> century violists have been instrumental in the co-evolution between composer and artist: Lionel Tertis (1876-1975), William Primrose (1904-1982), William Lincer (1907-1997), and Karen Tuttle (1920-2010). These violists were often the link between what a composer and an artist expected of one another. As their abilities as viola soloists surpassed the expected, they inspired composers to consider the viola as a solo instrument; thus, the viola's role evolved. The efforts of these violists included commissioning viola concerti from some of the most important composers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, concertizing as viola soloists, and teaching viola students at the highest level. For some, their teaching careers spanned over three decades. These pioneers thus helped to bring the viola out from relative obscurity to a more accepted vehicle for soloists and performers of the highest caliber.

This study sought to explore whether current practicing viola teachers at the conservatory/college level today view the viola as a solo instrument with its own repertoire and techniques and also approach their teaching with distinct pedagogical strategies and techniques. Previous studies have explored the practices of viola teachers mostly through qualitative interviews (Dane 2002, Dubois, 1996, Kella, 1983; although Kella also wrote historically about viola pedagogy). The current study used a researcher-developed qualitative survey rather than interviews. Through the use of this original survey, I inquired whether current college level viola teachers perceive viola pedagogy as different from the well-studied and documented violin pedagogy.

In order to provide a background for the discussion of viola pedagogy, this chapter provides a discussion of pedagogy as it relates to the viola. This is followed by a description of the emergence of the viola, including a history of the instrument, techniques used in playing the viola, and four master violists/pedagogues. The chapter closes with postulations for the future of viola pedagogy and formally presents the need for this study.

### **Pedagogy Definitions**

Among scholars who have studied pedagogy, Shulman (1987) defined pedagogy and its limitations in *Aspects of Pedagogical Reasoning*. He believed that teaching involves categories of knowledge that are needed in order to help “promote comprehension” in students (p.8). Among the categories he devised, *Pedagogical Content Knowledge* is of great importance, as it represents a blend of pedagogy and content that represents each teacher’s unique understanding of the topic based on their personal experience (Shulman, 1986, p. 9; Shulman, 1987, p. 8). In the case of the

present study, each participant shared their experiences as they related to teaching viola at the university or conservatory level.

Shulman (1987) pointed out that, unfortunately, most teaching has been, “devoid of a history of practice” (p. 11-12), and that, “the systematic study of teaching is a relatively new enterprise” (p. 12). He compared the systematic study of teaching with other disciplines, such as law, which has a written record of cases; architecture, which leaves behind physical structures for future generations to study; or even ballet, which developed a unique notational format for preserving choreography. Shulman bemoaned the unfortunate “collective amnesia” that results from not recording our teaching practices (p. 11). As he points out, teaching is not often taught before “an audience of peers” (p. 12). Although there is a communication between teacher and student, there is not often someone transcribing this transaction of knowledge. How, therefore, can we know exactly what was learned, and what was taught?

What is taught usually comes from a topic or subject matter that is predetermined. Whether it is Shakespeare, auto-mechanics, or physics, “teaching is initiated with some form of ‘text’” (Shulman, 1987, p.14). For music teachers, this text would translate into the music that is played, or the repertoire written for our instrument that is used to teach students. Music teachers must transmit their knowledge of the performance of a work from the repertoire into the studio setting. Through painstakingly arduous and meticulous work, and hopefully a bit of love and inspiration, music teachers transmit this knowledge to the best of their abilities. This often entails breaking down a musical phrase note by note, measure by measure, in order to convey their intimate knowledge of that work. This will aid the student to learn to play more than just the notes on the page,

but to play expressively and musically, as well as in tune, with dynamics, and to play in collaboration with their peers.

Shulman (1987) attempted to break down the processes involved with the different levels of pedagogical action into the following categories: comprehension, transformation (representation, selection, adaptation), instruction, evaluation, reflection, and finally, new comprehensions (p.15). For the present study, these levels of pedagogical action may be applied to teachers' opinions of their own teaching. For example, they were asked about their effectiveness in such areas as comprehension—students' learning of new techniques; transformation—effectiveness of remediation techniques with their students; and reflection—what they felt helped their students develop a characteristically “viola” sound, and who most influenced them in their own study of the viola. In terms of instruction, participants were asked about what materials they used in their instruction of the viola, and, how they divided time in lessons with a student. Teachers were also asked whether they assigned students pieces similar to the works they had played in their own studies on the viola.

New comprehensions in the studio setting would probably best be exemplified by a student who was able to take a new piece and master it by applying previously learned principles of how to dissect and tackle a work; or perhaps, the transition from student to teacher, whereupon the former student must now guide their students through the same works from their youth. For evaluation, participants were asked to evaluate their own work as teachers by reflecting on past techniques in the studio setting, especially in terms of helping students become the best musicians they can be through mastery of viola technique and understanding of the viola repertoire.



Shulman's term *Pedagogical Content Knowledge* has been discussed at length by other researchers, and some articles discuss it directly in relation to music. Haston & Leon-Guerrero (2008) point out that teachers of music must frequently draw on "knowledge gained from their performance experiences, or apprenticeship of observation" (p. 1). The complexity of applying *Pedagogical Content Knowledge* to teaching music, or in particular to stringed instruments, is that teachers must help students to develop both kinesthetically and aesthetically (Ibid). In this way, the student may become proficient at the musical tasks necessary for becoming a musician. Music teachers must also have the ability to convey "activities as concepts in action" (Schleuter, 1991, p. 49). Haston & Leon-Guerrero (2008) observed that methods courses alone may not be effective in preparing teachers for these tasks, but that teachers may often rely on intuition and their own apprenticeship of observation (p. 4). For string teachers, these experiences may be drawn from the lessons they took as students. They must then relate these lessons to current situations with their own students, as the teacher draws upon that knowledge to teach in their own studio.

In this study, when I discuss specific pedagogical techniques, such as how teachers work with students to create a more violistic sound, or areas of viola technique that need improvement with incoming college students, I will use the term remediation. A dictionary definition of *Remediation*, from the term *remedial*, involves a teacher's intention to correct or improve one's skill in a specified field; in this case, playing the viola (Flexner, 1988). Remediation, as stated above, can fit under Shulman's categories of both transformation and reflection. Once students are able to master these techniques and adjustments, they will be gaining knowledge in Shulman's category of new

comprehensions. The respondents in the current study answered questions relating to remediation, specifically how they deal with issues such as those stemming from tension while playing the viola, physical challenges related to the size of the viola, and whether they would recommend alternative techniques such as Alexander Technique or Yoga to help their students deal with these issues.

### **The Emergence of the Viola: The Instrument, the Technique, the Violist**

In order to define what a viola is, and how it differs from the violin, I will discuss some of the history behind its evolution into the modern viola in these three areas: (a) the instrument, (b) its technique, and (c) the violist. In the instrument section, I will discuss the development of the modern viola. I will also discuss the violin and draw some comparisons between the two instruments. In the technique section, I will discuss some articles that discuss bow hand and vibrato. I will also discuss pedagogical treatises and etudes in relation to the viola. In the section on viola performers, I will discuss four important 20<sup>th</sup> century viola performers who were also influential viola pedagogues. These individuals were selected as a representative sample of historically significant violists who were also influential viola teachers at the university/conservatory level.

#### **The Instrument**

The ancestors of contemporary orchestral stringed instruments were folk fiddles with names such as the *vièle*, *rebec*, *lira da braccio*, and *crwth* (Torti, 1993). During the Renaissance, the use of *rebecs* and *vièles* was surpassed in popularity by viols, which were usually played in ensembles. The viols often had six strings, and many were played in the alto or tenor range (Boyden & Woodward, 2013). The viola started off as a series of variants from the viol family, including the viola *da braccio* (arm), the viola *d'amore*

(love) with its sympathetic strings, and the viola *da gamba* (leg), which was played like a cello. By the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century, stringed instruments that hailed from northern Italy began gaining prominence (Midgely, 1976). These string instruments would become the model for the modern day violin, viola, cello and bass, and were generally superior in terms of projection abilities and tone quality. The violin, in particular, with its high soprano register and sonority, soon took precedence as the instrument of choice for many composers, as it could be heard well over other instruments and had a beautiful singing tone. The violin and the viol led separate but equal paths for about two centuries.

In terms of the development of elements from earlier instruments into the violin, it was a hybrid of several earlier stringed instruments. The tuning of the strings in fifths, the method of bow hold (overhand versus underhand), the use of tuning pegs, and playing the instrument between the neck and shoulder are all in common with the *rebec* (D'Epiro & Pinkowish, 2001, p. 247). The construction of the instrument, using a sound post inside the instrument, the use of an arched top piece of wood, a “shaped waist” for the outline of the body, and the use of f-holes came from the *lira da braccio* (D'Epiro & Pinkowish, 2001, p. 248). Lastly, the range and register, as well as parts of its construction, such as internal ribs of woods connecting the back and front of the instrument, the use of a separate neck, the use of a pegbox to hold the tuning pegs, a fingerboard, and the oval shape were all derived from the *vièle* (D'Epiro & Pinkowish, 2001, p. 248).

The violin and viola share many characteristics. They are both upper stringed instruments, held on the shoulder and played with a bow. The following are some defining differences. The viola is tuned a fifth lower (CGDA, starting on C3) than the

violin (GDAE, starting on G3). A full size violin is 14 inches (35.5 centimeters), while a viola can vary in size from approximately 15-½ to 18 inches (38-48 centimeters) (Boyden & Woodward, 2013). The viola and cello share some characteristics as well. They share the same string names (CGDA), although the cello is tuned one octave lower than the viola. However, as the cello is much larger, at 30 inches (approximately 75-76 centimeters) in length, it is not played on the shoulder, but played vertically with an endpin.

In terms of the viola bow, it is slightly shorter than the violin bow, sometimes with a slightly different shape to the frog, and it weighs slightly more. The cello bow is much shorter than either the violin or viola bow, and the right hand is positioned slightly differently, with the pinky placed over the stick, rather than riding on top. The viola strings are also thicker than violin strings, due to their deeper range, and thus may take slightly longer to respond.

The greatest luthiers of northern Italy such as Gasparo da Salò (of Brescia), Andrea and Nicolò Amati, and Antonio Stradivari (of Cremona), were active during what is now known as the golden age of violin making (Torti, 1992). They were famous for their work of unparalleled quality in string instrument construction. However, even these masters struggled with the imperfect size of the viola, which still today has no standard length (Farber, 2004). They could not decide whether the viola, with its deeper tone and mellower timbre, was better suited to an alto or a tenor range, or whether it should be played between the knees (*da gamba*) or on the shoulder (*da braccio*). Riley (1980) argued that the viola may have even predated the violin. Eventually, the viola became the alto voice of the string family, and is still called the *violonalto* in French.

If a viola is made too large, it becomes unwieldy to play; if too small, the tone can be nasal and muted. Violist Lionel Tertis entitled his memoir *Cinderella No More*, to call for an end to Berlioz's nickname for the viola, "Cinderella of the string family" (Tertis, 1974, xvi). Tertis noted that it was rare to hear solo viola when he was a student, and he often met with opposition from those who felt the viola was not suitable as a solo instrument. For example, after playing his own transcription of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto on the viola, a professor and violist for the Joachim Quartet, Alfred Gibson, told him, "The viola is not meant to be played high up – that is the pig department!" (Tertis, 1974, p. 18). Although violas can range in size, people today generally play the instrument that fits their hands most comfortably, usually averaging 16 inches in length. Some early instruments were cut down in length some time after their construction by someone other than the original maker because they were considered unplayable, but still were quite large afterwards by today's standards. For example, some of these were originally considered tenor violas, rather than alto violas, and have been sized down for the convenience of more modern players (Boyden & Woodward, 2013). Tertis also wrote about how he often had to play on altered instruments that had been cut down in size for the comfort of the player, sometimes to the detriment of the sound produced (Tertis, 1974, p. 17).

In *The Technique of Orchestration*, Kennan and Grantham (1990) give the practical range of the viola as C3 to C6, with the "extreme" range up to E6 (p. 19). Adler (2002) recommends the same range for non-professionals, but extends it to A6 for professionals. The F6 in the Enesco *Concertstück* and the G#6 in the Bartók Concerto are the highest notes in the standard modern viola repertoire. However, many earlier

composers did not use the highest octave of the viola, or did so only sparingly. For example, the Telemann viola concerto does venture up to a B5 (with one C6 added in a cadenza by editor Milton Katims), but for the most part it stays in first, second, and third positions (Telemann, 1956).

### **The Technique: Pedagogy, Pedagogical Treatises, Etudes and Solo Repertoire**

**Pedagogy.** Violin and viola technique have subtle but present differences. Among them are the application of vibrato and the use of bow arm. Such technical differences for the viola were discussed in MacLeod's (2008) article, "Influences of Dynamic Level and Pitch Register on the Vibrato Rates and Widths of Violin and Viola Players." She discussed how many variables can affect vibrato use, including "pitch register, dynamic level, instrument type, solo versus ensemble performance, level of training, type of vibrato motion, phrase direction, musical style and personal choice" (p. 43). She pointed out that vibrato widths have been found by various researchers to range from "26 cents to more than 100 cents" (p. 44). She also noted that "little research has investigated the possible differences between violin and viola vibrato" (p. 45). One of her aims was to study this possible difference. Her research questions were whether pitch register affects the rate or width of vibrato; if vibrato rates and widths of performers vary with dynamic level; and, if there are differences in vibrato width and rate between violinists and violists.

Participants ( $N = 58$ ) were high school and college-aged violinists and violists. For high school aged students, there were 13 violinists and 19 violists. For college-aged students, there were 14 violinists and 12 violists. They all were recorded playing the

same musical excerpt, which was then analyzed by vibrato rate by two independent observers. Vibrato rates were analyzed using a three-way ANOVA.

Results indicated that pitch, violin versus viola, and university versus high school age all affected the rate of vibrato. Participants vibrated at a faster rate during the high version of the excerpt than for the low version of the excerpt. University level participants had a tendency to vibrate at a faster rate than high school participants. There was also a tendency for violinists to vibrate at a rate slightly faster than that of violists. A graph demonstrating these differences showed that mean vibrato rates for both violinists and violists decreased in the low pitch register and increased for the high pitch register, but there still remained a constant difference between the two instruments. Violinists tended to vibrate at a faster rate than violists. She concluded that “the difference between violin and viola vibrato is of utmost importance pedagogically because the two instruments are frequently treated the same, when they may in fact need to utilize slightly different techniques” (p. 53).

Irvine also wrote numerous articles for practicing string teachers, both for the *Journal of the American Viola Society*, and in a series entitled “Viola Forum” in the *American String Teacher*. Irvine addressed a need for pedagogical support in the area of viola pedagogy, and wrote articles on topics such as avoiding and recovering from injury, and how to phrase with the bow. For example, Irvine said that, while a viola student employs more bow weight and less speed playing close to the bridge, he uses the opposite treatment of the bow near the fingerboard. He pointed out that to maintain a dynamic consistency, the viola bow may have to adjust in terms of both placement and speed.

Irvine (1991b), instructed violists on ways to develop variety in both speed and width of vibrato. He stated that violists generally choose to employ either arm or wrist vibrato, but wrist vibrato seemed to work better for most. He felt his vibrato was on the slow and wide end of the vibrato spectrum, so he had to work harder to maintain faster speeds. He used an exercise similar to that described by Rutledge (1998), in which one oscillates between the higher pitch and a lower pitch while using a metronome to gradually increase the speed of the basic beat to obtain narrower widths of vibrato. In addressing how to obtain a fast vibrato without increasing tension in the left arm, he recommended raising the tempo by increments of 2, increasing the metronome gradually from 100 to 200 beats. Irvine's vibrato tempi were as follows: 100-126 very slow, not to be used very often; 126-144 normal slow; 144-169 medium speed; and 168-200 fast, not to be used very often. For application of the new vibrato speed, he suggested matching it to a particular piece in the repertoire. Lastly, he recommended listening to recordings and trying to imitate another violist's vibrato (unlike Tuttle (1985), who said not to imitate a famous artist). He argued that when one emulates another player's sound, the second person's sound will not be exactly the same, but they will have added another color to their vibrato palette.

**Pedagogical Treatises.** The history and repertoire of the viola are relevant in that they add to our understanding of the way teachers teach the viola as opposed to the violin. Although the viola is a separate instrument from the violin, historically, the earliest treatises on how to play stringed instruments typically focused only on the violin, without addressing the viola. In all likelihood, this was because the authors of the earliest books on violin were usually violinist-composers. Italian violinist-composers Francesco



Geminiani (1687-1762) and Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770), and Austrian violinist-composer Leopold Mozart (1719-1787) were among the first to write such treatises (See Appendix A for Timeline of Important Pedagogues).

**Etudes and Solo Repertoire.** Etudes, solo repertoire, and scales comprise the main body of pedagogical materials used by most string studio teachers. Most of the earliest books of etudes were written for the violin. Viola etudes, with a few exceptions, were often transcriptions of popular violin etude books. Many of these books were composed approximately between 1800 and 1900, including Pierre Gaviniés' *24 Studies* (Cooper & Ginter, 2013); Rodolphe Kreutzer's *42 Studies* (Kreutzer, 1950); Pierre Rode's *24 Caprices* (Rode, n.d.), (Schwarz & Brown, 2013); Jacob Dont's *24 Etudes*, (Dont, 1957); and Henry Schradieck's *School of Violin Technique*, (Cobbett, et al., 2013). All of these books have since been transcribed for the viola.

However, despite the subsequent generations of violinists and violists who benefitted from the collective positive influence of these and other useful etudes, a side effect may have been that their methodology was violin-centric pedagogy. Riley (1980) discussed the development of the first major viola faculty positions in the United States. These teachers often hailed from Europe, and were often former violinists. Riley wrote that certain appointments of viola faculty were the first "recogni[tion of] the study of the viola as a major field of endeavor" (Riley, 1980, p. 293).

Originally, those students wishing to transfer the information contained in these violin treatises to the viola had no unique viola-specific sources of scales and etudes to reference (Tertis, 1974, p. 16; Kella, 1984, p. 536). Instead, teachers and performers of viola addressed viola technique by adapting violin technique. They borrowed from these

sources by transposing them down a fifth and transcribing them into alto clef, but violists still had to learn to adapt the fingerings (e.g., avoiding finger extensions) and shifting (e.g., using more half and second position) to their own larger instrument and fingerboard without a specific viola method to guide them.

Breaking with a 300-year-old tradition of focusing primarily on violin pedagogy, pedagogues in the 19th and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century began to write new etudes specifically for the viola, which differed from the previous approach to teaching viola with violin etudes. These new viola etudes included some earlier books of etudes from the Classical and Romantic periods, such as those by Bartolomeo Campagnoli (1751-1827) (*41 Caprices*, Opus 22); Antonio Bartolomeo Bruni (1757-1821) (*25 Studies*); Alessandro Rolla (1757-1841) (*Esercizio ed Arpeggio per Viola*); and Heinrich Ernst Kayser (1815-1888) (*Nouvelle Méthode d'Alto*) (Kruse, 2007).

Many of these books introduced the player to the alto clef and wrote out fingerings for the student. Others, such as the *Caprices* of Campagnoli, were challenging technically and musically, and were comparable to the Kreutzer violin etudes in difficulty. These authors were violinists who also played and taught viola. Rolla, for example, taught both violin and viola at the Milan Conservatory (Kreuse, 2007).

In the 19th century and into the 20th century, etudes written specifically for the viola increased in number, with works composed by Friedrich Hermann (1828-1907) (*Concert Studies for Viola*); Hermann Ritter (1849-1926) (*Viola Schule*); Johannes Palaschko, (1877-1932) (*12 Studies*, Opus 36; *12 Studies*, Opus 55); Samuel Lifschey (1889-1961) (transcription of Schradieck for viola); Vadim Vasilevich Borisovskii (1900-1972), (*Four Artistic Studies for Viola Solo*; catalogue of viola music

*Literaturverzeichnis für Bratsche und Viola d'amour*) (Potter, 2013); Lillian Fuchs (1903-1995) (*15 Characteristic Studies, 16 Fantasy Etudes, Caprices*); William Primrose (1904-1982) (*Technique is Memory: A Method for Violin and Viola Players Based on Finger Patterns*); Leonard Mogill (1911-1997) (*Selected Etudes, Scale Studies for the Viola*); and Paul Rolland (1911-1978) (*Approach to String Playing*).

The evolution that occurred in terms of solo repertoire for the viola during this period seemed to reflect a symbiotic relationship between composers and players. Major composers began to write new concerti for the viola, which was now considered a worthy subject of commissions. In turn, it is possible that by writing their concerti for viola, 20<sup>th</sup> century composers such as Paul Hindemith, William Walton, and Béla Bartók increased the level of technical ability and soloistic agility expected of violists.

Furthermore, following World War II, many prominent violists who were both performers and teachers became important in the transition to creating distinct and separate viola faculty positions at some of the most prestigious universities and conservatories of music (Riley, 1980, p. 294). These viola teachers included Paul Doktor, Lillian Fuchs, Raphael Hillyer, Milton Katims, William Lincer, Leonard Mogill, Joseph de Pasquale, William Primrose, Lionel Tertis, Walter Trampler, Francis Tursi, Karen Tuttle, and Emanuel Vardi, and they held viola teaching posts at institutions around the United States (Riley, 1980, p. 301). Many of these pedagogues were members of the viola sections of professional orchestras such as the New York Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra, while others were members of professional string quartets that held residencies at universities, thereby creating viola professor posts for the first time (Riley, 1980, 301-303). Thus the resulting increase in viola performers and teachers

at the university level could indicate a pedagogical shift, one focused increasingly on viola.

### **The Violist: Four Important Violists of the 20th Century**

In her book *The Violin and the Viola* (1972), Nelson wrote, “The recognition of the viola’s potential as a solo instrument could never have taken place [without] the...distinct personalities of Lionel Tertis, Paul Hindemith...and William Primrose...” (Nelson, 1972, p. 191). The viola’s increased prominence in the latter half the 20th century was due in great part to the efforts of musicians who were dedicated to teaching and performing almost exclusively on the viola. Four musicians in particular, all particularly important contributors to the field of viola study, will be discussed here: Lionel Tertis, William Primrose, William Lincer, and Karen Tuttle. This list of violists is not exhaustive, but due to the important contributions that these prominent violists each made in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they comprise a focused sample.

These violists all were performers at the highest level who ultimately taught viola at the university or conservatory, and had a substantial influence on their students and on modern viola playing today. These viola teachers were selected because they were very influential violists and/or viola teachers from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. For instance, in Riley’s (1980) history of the viola, violists Tertis and Primrose each had chapters dedicated to their importance to the viola in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Lincer (Kella, 1983) and Tuttle (Dane, 2002; Dubois, 1996) both had dissertations written about their teaching methods. This section will briefly outline their accomplishments as teachers and performers, as well as describe how each of them switched to the viola.

**Lionel Tertis.** Lionel Tertis (1876-1975), violist, chamber musician, teacher, and designer of violas, played a great role in furthering the promotion of the viola as a solo instrument, not just in his native England, but also around the world. Tertis entered the conservatory as a violinist, but began playing viola at the age of 19 at a friend's request, and soon fell in love with its sound (Tertis, 1947, p. 215). This friend<sup>1</sup> urged Tertis to become a violist to join his string quartet (Ibid). Tertis quickly studied the alto clef and borrowed an instrument in order to do so. The group practiced an early Beethoven string quartet for two weeks. After playing this piece for an audition, the school's principal told Tertis, "Well, in my opinion, you will never regret it," about his switch to viola from violin. (Tertis, 1974, p. 16). Not long thereafter, Tertis was appointed Full Professor of Viola at the Royal Academy of Music at only age 25 (Nelson, 1972, p.192).

As a pedagogue, Tertis wrote *Beauty of Tone in String Playing* (1938) and *Cinderella No More* (1953), as well as his autobiography *My Viola and I* (1974). Tertis transcribed dozens of works for viola, including the Elgar Cello Concerto, and the J.S. Bach *Chaconne* (c. 1911, Tertis, 1947, p. 217). He was also the first in the United States to perform Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante*, which had fallen into obscurity.

As a performer, Tertis had numerous compositions written for him. In addition to William Walton, who wrote his Viola Concerto for him, numerous British composers wrote especially for Tertis, including Arnold Bax, York Bowen, Thomas Dunhill, Percy Grainger, Gustav Holst, and Ralph Vaughan-Williams (Nelson, 1972, p.191). Nelson, author of *The Violin and the Viola*, summed up Tertis' achievements:

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<sup>1</sup> Percy Hilder Miles, a fellow student at the Royal Academy of Music in London (Tertis, 1947, p. 215).

[B]y adding an upper octave to the accepted range of the instrument and proving it capable of soloistic sonorities particularly in the region of multiple stops and harmonics, [Tertis] has brought the viola technically in line with the violin and cello. (Nelson, 1972, p. 192)

Tertis helped change the public perception of the viola as being an instrument one used mainly in a supporting role in orchestra or chamber music. According to Riley, author of *The History of the Viola* (1980), it was Tertis, more than any other violist, who was most responsible for bringing the viola to its new status as a solo instrument. In addition to his “unstinting efforts and artistry,” (Riley, 1980, p. 241) Tertis became a renowned teacher of viola in England, with students including violist and composer Rebecca Clarke (Riley, 1980, p. 241) and principal violist of the BBC orchestra Bernard Shore (Tertis, 1947, p. 243). It was his groundbreaking work that laid the groundwork for the next great violist of the 20th century, William Primrose.

**William Primrose.** William Primrose (1904-1982), a Scottish violist, began his studies on the violin, but switched to the viola when he was in his twenties. He studied with German violinist Camillo Ritter, and with Max Mossel at the Guildhall School of Music in London, where he was awarded the gold medal in 1924 (Riley, 1980, p. 281). Primrose then studied with Belgian violinist Eugène Ysaÿe from 1926 to 1929 (Primrose, 1978; Riley 1980, p. 281), during which time he was encouraged to take up the viola in earnest in order to play viola at his teacher’s informal string quartet gatherings. Primrose said his friends tried to discourage him from making the switch to viola, as they considered it “a form of musical suicide” (Primrose, 1978, p. 59). However, Ysaÿe was supportive of his Scottish student, saying:

We must not overlook the viola... This instrument is a necessity in all groups and must not be looked down upon. Both Paganini and Vieuxtemps played the viola from choice, and Joachim loved the color of the bigger instrument. My friend Tertis is doing much missionary work for his viola, and I have had a young man from Scotland who will blaze new paths in the years to come. (Primrose, 1978, p. 59)

Primrose's teaching posts included the Curtis Institute, the Thornton School of Music at the University of Southern California (USC), and the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University in Bloomington. Later, he lived and taught Australia and Japan, including the Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music (Primrose, 1978).

Primrose, in addition to his many transcriptions from the violin repertoire, added to string pedagogy through his treatises *The Art and Practice of Scale Playing on the Viola* (1954) and *Technique is Memory: A Method for Violin and Viola Players Based on Finger Patterns* (1960). Primrose based his scale treatise on his studies with Ysaÿe, for whom "the whole fingerboard was one position" (Primrose, 1978, p. 55). By this he meant that you shouldn't always think about shifting to a particular position or another, but to think more in terms of phrasing notes. He said that being too ensconced in a particular position can "create an obstacle to celerity and agility" (Primrose, 1978, p.55).

Although Primrose based his own treatise on scales (1954) on the teachings of his mentor, Ysaÿe, he also made sure to account for inherent differences between the violin and viola by recommending certain aspects of adjustment for viola students. These adjustments included more use of open strings, staying in lower positions where possible, and shifting on the half step if possible, rather than on the whole step. Violinists tend to

avoid open strings, especially the open E string, due to its strident nature. In contrast, open strings sound pleasing on the viola and help increase the ringing tone. Shifts are larger on the viola fingerboard, so by shifting on the half-step it assures accuracy and confidence within a fast run. Primrose also recommended practicing scales in modulations rather than the more usual relative major to minor routine (Primrose, 1978, p. 55-57).

Like Lionel Tertis, William Primrose wrote an informative autobiography, *Walk on the North Side* (1978). In this book he shared his ideals for expanding the repertoire for viola through transcribing works himself, making new editions, and requesting commissions from living composers. Primrose was also the subject of a book entitled, *Playing the Viola, Conversations with William Primrose* (Dalton, 1988). Dalton interviewed Primrose at length about his methods, pedagogy, how he came to the viola, and how to approach a viola lesson with a viola student. Dalton's book demonstrated Primrose's passion for the viola and his interest in seeing it distinguished as a solo instrument. He documented Primrose's pedagogy with photographs that demonstrated correct positions of the bow and left hand while playing the viola and included commentary on important musical excerpts. He also gave small examples of problem solving that allowed the reader a glimpse into what studying with Primrose was like, all of great significance for future violists and viola teachers.

**William Lincer.** William Lincer (1907-1997) was born in Brooklyn, New York and was principal violist with the New York Philharmonic for nearly 30 years. He was also a viola pedagogue for 50 years at institutions such as the Manhattan School of Music, New York University, and the Juilliard School. He made important contributions



to the field of the viola both in terms of promoting the viola as a solo instrument post World War II, and by training young violists at prestigious universities and conservatories in New York City. Lincer was nationally recognized for his excellence in teaching by the American String Teachers Association, which honored him with the Artist-Teacher Award in 1986, and by the New York Viola Society, which awarded him a certificate and medal in 1993 (Williams, n.d). Lincer's teaching philosophy and methods were the examined by Kella (1983) in a study that focused on development of a viola curriculum, and will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 2.

Lincer commenced his violin studies at age five, but began to play the viola in his twenties, while studying with Samuel Gardner at the Institute of Musical Art (later, the Juilliard School, c. 1968). Before graduation, Gardner neglected to tell Lincer that he was expected to play a viola jury in addition to his violin jury until the day before his final examinations. According to Lincer, in one day and night he was able to put together the Brahms E-flat Sonata, writing in every fingering, as he was not at all familiar with the alto clef, and borrowing an instrument on which to perform. To his astonishment, the jury expressed, "We have never heard such a beautiful sound as you have on the viola" (Kella, 1983, p. 508-509). This inspired him to dedicate the next few years to learning the viola. He soon secured the position of violist with the Gordon String Quartet, and he remained a member for eight years (c. 1936-1942), until he joined the Cleveland Orchestra.

As an orchestral musician, Lincer was a violist first with the Cleveland Orchestra (1942), then Principal Violist of the New York Philharmonic (1943-1972). While Principal Violist of the New York Philharmonic, he appeared as viola soloist 57 times

and played in more than 4000 performances with the orchestra. From his extensive experience in chamber music Lincer was able to impart great sensitivity to inner lines while performing in orchestra. As a result of having primarily taught himself and questioning how to correctly play the viola, he was able to give students specific feedback and advice. Lincer, along with Tertis and Primrose, advocated listening as a pedagogical tool and believed that violists should attend as many concerts as possible.

Tertis and Lincer added many pedagogical advances to the field because both claimed to have learned how to play the viola mostly by using intuition and trial and error, and gained inspiration from listening to great soloists. Tertis explained the paucity of viola-specific instruction in his autobiography, stating that he “learnt to play principally through listening to virtuosos” (Tertis, 1974, p. 16).

**Karen Tuttle.** Karen Tuttle (1920-2010), a violist, viola teacher, and chamber musician, was a pupil of William Primrose. She began her teaching career as Primrose’s assistant, and later went on to teach viola for more than half a century at the Curtis Institute and at the Juilliard School. She began to formulate her own unique method of teaching viola, which she called the Coordination Method.

As a viola teacher, Tuttle was selected as the American String Teacher Association’s Artist Teacher of the Year in 1994. Tuttle began playing the viola in her late teens. After seeing Primrose perform at a concert in Los Angeles, she asked to study with him (Rodland, 2004, p.45; Dubois, p. 181). Primrose insisted that she switch to viola and move to Philadelphia to study with him at Curtis, which she did. She had been touring as a violinist, but was experiencing a lot of physical pain due to playing. As a student, she asked a lot of questions in her lessons with Primrose, which he was not

always able, or willing, to answer. When faced with explaining a technical issue to his students, Primrose was soon sending his own students to Tuttle herself for a better explanation (Hanani, 1987). Tuttle became Primrose's assistant even before she graduated, and went on to head both the viola and the chamber music departments when Primrose left Curtis in 1951 (Dubois, 1996; Rodland, 2003).

Tuttle developed her "Coordination Method" of teaching in part as a result of her observations of Primrose and cellist Pablo Casals. Summing up the information provided in interviews with Tuttle (2001) Dane said:

In Tuttle's language, "coordination" describes the performer's process of harmoniously connecting the physical body with musical intention so as to express emotion...The chief currency of the physical world, with regard to playing an instrument, is in the physical releases. (Dane, 2002, p. 34)

One might say that Coordination is a process for developing artistry and expression in the performer, and/or that it is only for advanced players, but it can be applied to younger players as well. Playing with a relaxed technique is important at any stage of becoming a musician. However, being relaxed is not only a state of mind, but relates to technique in that the player must connect to the physicality of playing. For example, one may learn to let go of tension by learning to use larger muscles in order to facilitate the execution of difficult technical passages done by smaller muscles.

Tuttle discussed how she began to develop her Coordination Method after having the opportunity work with Pablo Casals at the Prades Festival (Dew, 1993). Casals, who was an inherently natural player, helped Tuttle immensely with her own playing by

helping her let go of tension. Tuttle described how she, in turn, helped her viola students to realize their full potential through breathing and muscle release:

...[I]t is the effect of coordination to get the humor, tenderness, sensuality, etc., inspired in the player by the music out of him, *through his instrument* [italics in original], to the listener. Coordination is thus linked to projection. (Dew, 1993, p.835)

Tuttle's husband of 50 years was a Reichian therapist, and consequently Reich was an immensely important nonmusical influence on Tuttle's teaching philosophy.<sup>2</sup> Concepts derived from studying Reichian therapy and philosophy, in particular, theories on muscular tension and release as they are entwined with emotional barriers or "character armorings" (Dane, 2002, p. 14-15) became part of Tuttle's pedagogy. Tuttle wanted her students to be as relaxed as possible while playing, often using Reichian psychological aspects of examining human emotion and sexuality in music to help find the deeper inspiration behind a musical phrase.

## Summary

I have defined what the viola is in terms of size, and also how it differs from the violin. At its most basic level, playing the viola is different from the violin in the following ways: reading in alto clef, negotiating fingerings on bigger instruments with fatter strings, using bow weight effectively on these thicker strings, and successfully creating the characteristic deeper, darker viola sound. I have discussed the viola briefly in terms of its historical evolution from the family of viols. One topic that will be discussed further is the difficulty of playing the larger viola. Articles have been written

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<sup>2</sup> Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957) was an Austrian psychoanalyst.

on the difficulty of playing the viola, and the increased possibility for physical strain due to its size (Castleman, 2002). Others have written about necessary technical adjustments for viola (Irvine 1991b, 1996, and 1997). MacLeod's (2008) article discussed vibrato differences and variation between violinists and violists.

I have discussed viola etudes and given an overview of popular etudes that were transcribed from the violin, as well as original etudes for the viola. I have also mentioned important viola solo works that aided in its evolution from being perceived mainly as an accompanimental instrument to an instrument worthy of solo commissions and concertos with orchestra.

I have given a brief synopsis of the contributions of four important viola pedagogues from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These four great performers, Tertis, Primrose, Lincer and Tuttle, were specifically recognized as artists and teachers of the viola. However, the majority mentioned teaching themselves to play the viola, without guidance on how to make the transition from violin. The trial-by-fire method Tertis and Lincer described, in which they taught themselves and learned in a very short time period, is thankfully no longer the norm.

Whether these violists taught throughout their careers or towards the end of their careers varied by the individual. Prior to the middle of the 20th century, few if any viola teachers of repute can be found who did not consider themselves to be first and foremost violinists. Tertis, Primrose and Lincer each professed that they did not have a proper viola teacher, but became violists and viola teachers of international renown. Tuttle had the advantage of having had Primrose as her mentor, but she also began her studies on the violin. Each of them had a desire to leave the violin for the viola, and so they worked

hard to make a career on the viola, and they succeeded. Today, most students can choose to start their studies straightaway on the viola. They can also find a teacher who specializes in viola should they later decide to make the switch from violin to viola, regardless of their age or amount of experience. Just as these master teachers had a huge impact on those who came afterward as teachers and performers, showing the beauty of the viola, supporting its cause as worthy of the solo stage, and inspiring new generations of violists, new teachers who are active today are helping inspire new generations of violists.

While these historical figures have had an immense impact on the field with collective pedagogical influences that remain widely felt today, more research should be conducted to study what is happening now in active viola studios in campuses across the country. We must follow the pedagogical path more closely to better understand how the family tree links current viola teachers to their groundbreaking predecessors. From Dane's (2002) and Dubois' (1996) research, we know that Tuttle students are now actively teaching in many major conservatories. As viola pedagogues, these forerunners expanded the repertoire, transcribed well-known books of etudes, made transcriptions of works to perform, and in some cases wrote their own cadenzas and original works for viola, and even designed a better viola. A study needs to be conducted to discover who might emerge as the revolutionary violists and teachers of our generation.

Other important developments for the viola have been the rise of viola-specific performance competitions, viola education workshops, dedicated library collections, and journalistic publications and organizations. The existence of organizations specific to viola playing and teaching suggest that viola studies may be more than merely an

offshoot of violin studies. In the case of the Primrose and Tertis competitions, young violists are given performance opportunities and prizes, such as new instruments on which to perform, in addition to the honor of winning an international competition to start a solo career. The Tuttle workshop allows violists and viola teachers to gather and exchange ideas, and to hear some of the world's best violists in recital. Masterclasses allow for information to flow between violists of disparate ages, geographical regions, and experiences, leading to communication and dissemination of currents in viola pedagogy.

### **Need For This Study**

There is a need to study viola pedagogy in more depth. In order to better define it, this study used a survey in order to gain opinions from current viola faculty members at universities and conservatories. Previous research has been conducted through qualitative interviews with master teachers or by surveying music students. I employed a qualitative survey focused on the population of viola teachers.

While some previous research has been conducted concerning instrument selection, but in a broader sense of surveying about all possible instruments, there is a need to look at other reasons for selecting a particular instrument of the string family, and particularly the viola. It may also be valuable to study not only why participants chose an instrument, but also why they chose to switch, which is a common practice in violin and viola studies.

More research is needed to discuss the perceptions of existing viola pedagogical practices, both in terms of pieces important to current pedagogues in their own training and in the repertoire they select for students. Such research could be of use to current

pedagogues to compare works that they use in their studio, with those being studied by other students and used in other studios around the country. Participants in the current study discussed their perceptions of existing viola pedagogical practices. For example, they discussed viola repertoire both in terms of which pieces were important to them in their training as well as those pieces that they teach to their own students. More pedagogical research is needed to discover which instrument is now being chosen by young musicians as their first instrument, violin or viola, and how viola instructors teach students who are interested in switching from violin to viola.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore college/conservatory-level viola teachers' perceptions of viola playing and pedagogy. The following questions guided this study.

### **Research Questions**

- 1) How did participants come to play and teach viola?
- 2) Do participants believe that there are playing techniques unique to the viola, and if so, what are they?
- 3) Do participants believe that there are pedagogical techniques unique to the viola, and if so, what are they?
- 4) Do participants believe there is a core viola repertoire and/or a standard set of etudes for viola?
- 5) Do participants believe there were important 20<sup>th</sup> century viola pedagogues? If so, who were they, and what was unique about their teaching?



## CHAPTER 2: SURVEY OF LITERATURE

The viola, treated as a separate entity apart from the violin, has evolved increasingly into a topic of inquiry, especially in the past 30 years. Branching into several categories, research pertaining to the viola has become the focus for numerous researchers dealing with such topics as viola pedagogy, viola repertoire and etudes, and careers of master viola teachers. This review of literature of viola pedagogy has been organized into four main areas of research: (a) string studio pedagogy studies, including articles and studies on both violin and viola pedagogy; (b) instrument choice articles; (c) master teachers of viola; and (d) viola etudes and repertoire.

For violin or viola playing, basic string playing technique pertains largely to the groups of technique categorized under either left arm or right arm technique. Most pedagogues today will also address how to comfortably hold the instrument and avoid tension. Within left hand/arm technique, issues that are typically discussed include shifting, intonation, vibrato, and fingerings. For right arm technique issues, other topics that are typically discussed are bow holds, bow pressure, tone production, and the use of various bow strokes (such as *detaché*, *staccato*, *collé*, *piqué*, *fouetté*, *tremolo*, *spiccato*, *sautillé*, *ricochet*), and how to play chords, such as double, triple and quadruple stops, both on and off the string (LaFosse, 1975). Other issues may include right-hand and left-hand pizzicato, trills, harmonics, chromatic glissando, as well as pressure of fingers, position of the arm, hand, and thumb (LaFosse, 1975).

### **Viola Pedagogy Articles**

Viola pedagogy articles written by violists and viola teachers in both general string and viola specific journals have proliferated in the past 30 years, which could

indicate an increased interest in viola-focused teaching at the university or conservatory level. The articles reviewed in the present study were all related to viola pedagogy and were published between 1982 and the present. It is not possible within the scope of this chapter to discuss every article in great detail, nor is the intent to present an annotated bibliography of all articles published on the topic of string pedagogy during this selected 30-year time period, but a summary of selected articles will be provided to enhance the viola scholar's understanding of the topic.

**Health Related Studies.** LeVine and Irvine (1984) co-wrote an article about violinists and violists who wished to reduce left-hand tension and performance anxiety through the use of biofeedback as a pedagogical tool. In this study published in *Biofeedback and Self-Regulation*, subjects were nine volunteer violinists and violists. They were professional musicians ( $n = 6$ ) or students majoring in violin or viola ( $n = 3$ ). All were aware of tension in the left hand or thumb, and most experienced a worsening of left hand tension with anxiety. Electrodes were attached to the subject's thumb and/or index finger muscles to detect movement. These sensors were attached to an autogen feedback myograph, which deciphered the signals. Subjects were asked to play self-selected difficult musical passages while being monitored by the machine. When excessive left-hand tension was present, a warning signal was emitted from the device; subjects then attempted to repeat the passage without triggering the alarm. Subjects received one or two 30-minute training sessions per week; they were told to attend at their own convenience, and to continue as long as they felt it was beneficial.

Interviews with subjects both before and after treatment determined participants' perception of the effectiveness of the biofeedback intervention (LeVine & Irvine, 1984).

They rated themselves on a Likert-type scale (0 = no problems with tension, 5 = complete incapacity due to tension). Most (89%) believed the biofeedback technique had lessened their left hand tension problems and most (78%) also rated their subsequent tension level as 0 or 1 in a follow-up interview. Subjects in interviews also stated that the treatment helped increase their awareness and helped them to train muscles to act in a new way, i.e., by not squeezing the neck of the violin with the thumb, or by pressing more lightly with the left hand fingers.

This study demonstrated an increased interest by the medical community in the problems of performing violinists and violists. It is possible that the techniques demonstrated in this study could be used for pedagogical purposes, especially for violists. The information in this study could be of use to violists or other players of stringed instrument by giving them an alternative way of potentially eliminating tension from their playing. This could be achieved by increasing their awareness of debilitating tension in order to combat it. Such alternative methods could be especially useful for violists, who often must work harder to play without tension, as the viola's larger size creates larger distances between finger intervals for the left hand.

Castleman (2002) gave five main categories of common causes for injury in violists including improper instrument fit, faulty practice habits, poor body support for the instrument, holding the instrument by squeezing rather than balancing (often caused by improper setup), and squeezing with the thumbs. According to Castleman, poor practicing habits can cause injury and pain. She warned that athletes would not treat their bodies this way, and neither should violists. She suggested checking standing posture, breathing, and sitting posture if one experiences back or neck problems. She advised

violists to avoid pressure and to keep both thumbs loose and flexible, the hands soft and relaxed. Both of these articles are relevant in that they informed the current study, which asked participants how they deal with remediation issues for students such as tension in their playing.

### **String Studio Pedagogy Studies**

Several survey-based studies have been conducted recently to examine string pedagogy (Au, 2007; Groody, 2000; Lesniak, 2005). While some focused their research specifically on the viola (Au, 2007), others examined more generalized string topics, such as attitudes towards string education (Lesniak, 2005). Most studies used a similar population to the present study and/or employed survey and interview methods. Some focused more on the pedagogical heritage of violinists than on that of violists (Groody, 2000).

In Au's (2007) study, 109 participants were surveyed concerning perceived differences between the violin and the viola. According to Au, participants included violists of different levels of expertise or career focus (amateur, professional, teachers, performers), and different ages. Participants were from Europe, the United States and Canada. He did not specify which ages or how many of each group responded, nor did he specify how participants were selected. The survey consisted of 18 questions and was divided into three categories: personal study experience, performance and pedagogy, and personal data.

As someone who had switched from violin to viola, Au (2007) was interested in exploring the ways that students transitioning from violin to viola must adjust their technique. Au theorized about the increasing awareness of the differences between the

two instruments. Au (2007) found that the majority of participants began on the violin; only one in five violists who completed Au's survey had begun as a violist. Participants had spent an average of 11.4 years playing the violin before learning the viola. The most frequent reasons participants attributed to their switch were affinity for the sound and opportunities for musical employment with a professional ensemble. Among the participants, 51% percent felt that they had had inadequate viola instruction, and that most of their teachers did not sufficiently distinguish the differences between the instruments. Additionally, 52% stated that they had no viola teacher, 34% percent continued to study violin while learning the viola, and 18% had taught themselves the viola.

Au concluded that the viola "is a fundamentally different instrument than the violin...[with] unique acoustic and physical properties [that] have important implications in ...sound awareness and technique." However, he cautioned that many violinists who switch to viola "are unaware of these differences...[and] consequently do not realize their full potential on the [viola]" (Au, 2007, p. 51). Au recommended that new violists should focus on their sound, in particular "the character, focus and clarity" of their viola sound (Ibid). He suggested that most of these differences will occur in the right hand, in terms of "increased energy input to activate the instrument," but that differences in the left hand would be also be necessary, such as adjustments to "intonation and tonal character" (Ibid).

Both Lesniak (2005) and Groody (2000) investigated string pedagogy, but neither aimed their survey questions specifically towards the study of viola and viola pedagogy. Au (2007) had an emphasis on viola pedagogy, made conclusions about the differences

between violin and viola, but did not present tables of his findings nor statistical analyses of the data. Groody asked questions similar to those posed by the present study in terms of asking participants who their teachers had been, and asking what they worked on in lessons in terms of methodology and technique. There needs to be more research that is specifically aimed towards the viola, and therefore I have presented a review of these studies as an example of the further need for inquiry into the topic of viola pedagogy.

### **Instrument Choice Articles**

Why did participants in the present study choose to play the viola? Some researchers have been asking this question about instrument selection, and what the motivations may be for an individual's choice of a particular instrument. I will include some of these studies to provide background for the present study in terms of instrument choice.

Chen and Howard (2004) surveyed conservatory students in Sydney, Australia ( $N = 157$ ). The researchers' aim was to find out why participants played the instruments they played, and the history of their experiences with their instruments. Participants answered 29 questions; most were open-ended. Participants indicated their age, sex, year of study at the university/conservatory, and they discussed their musical backgrounds. They indicated when they had started to play an instrument, whether family members also played, and what kind of music they played. They also stated how many instruments they played, and indicated their primary instrument if they played more than one. Whereas most participants played piano (61%), voice (40%), or guitar (39%), only 8.9% played violin, and still fewer, 5.1%, played viola. These numbers decreased to 5.1% for violin and 1.3% for viola when participants cited their primary instrument.

Chen and Howard's (2004) results showed that there are multiple reasons for instrument choice, due to the complex musical histories of each participant, and that multiple motives could lead to specialization on a particular instrument. They found that instrument availability was a factor, as was financial and other support of parents, but that those were not the only factors. Their suggestions for future research were that educators be aware that extreme variability and changing motives influence students' instrument choice, and that preferences for different instruments may evolve over time.

Conway (2000) interviewed 47 high school students who played a musical instrument in their school program about perceptions of gender and instrument choice. She was interested in finding out where gender stereotypes come from. Why did students choose their particular instrument? What factors influenced their choice? She chose a qualitative interview method, in comparison to previous studies, which had used a quantitative survey. The results suggested that certain prejudices or preconceptions of male or female instruments continue, such as the association of certain instruments with a certain gender. Some students felt these preconceptions were unwarranted. Others felt that preferences had to do with a proclivity for low sounds or high sounds, or with physical characteristics. Those who broke with stereotypes seemed to put less emphasis on the opinions of others about their atypical instrument choice (e.g. a female tuba player). Those who did follow stereotypes mentioned parents' opinions as playing a role, such as a girl who played flute, who had been dissuaded from playing drums by her parents. Those who broke gender stereotypes talked about wanting to be different. They also received parental and teacher support for their choice. The students also often

mentioned the size, sound, volume of the instrument they chose, as well as its role in the ensemble.

Cutietta and McAllister (1997) wrote that, for music students, there may be a correlation between personality, instrument choice, and continuation in a musical ensemble, be it band or orchestra. The purpose of their study was “to observe student personality and instrument choices and participation to determine whether relationships exist between these variables” (p. 284). Participants were 668 students enrolled in Grades 7-12 who played in school band or orchestra. The sample was drawn from eight different schools. Cutietta and McAllister administered the Junior Eysenck Personality Questionnaire to students, which measured four different variables: tough-mindedness; extroversion; emotionality; and lying, or the tendency to exaggerate answers. Results showed that beginning instrumentalists were not of a certain personality type, but were similar to their peers from the general population of middle school students. Similarly, high school students were also similar to their non-musician peers. When comparing music students to music students, they found that there was “a trend toward homogeneity of personality types among students who choose to continue in instrumental music across grade levels” (p. 290).

Eros (2008) wrote a literature review of articles (written between 1996 and 2008) that focused on the topic of instrument choice and gender. Among the subtopics discussed were the distinction between sex versus gender as influencing instrument choice, the persistence of gender stereotypes, the weight of the perceptions of other students in making the choice to play an instrument, music directors’ role in a student’s assignment to a particular instrument, the influence on instrument choice by an initial



instrument demonstration, and the ensemble's composition, such as having more boys in jazz band, or more girls in string ensemble. Eros concluded that, although stereotypes persist, both students and educators are becoming more aware of the presence and effect of stereotypes when choosing an instrument.

When discussing instrument choice, all of these researchers interviewed the learners, rather than the teachers of music. This is in contrast with my study. I was interested in the music teachers' choice of initial instrument, how they chose the viola, and how their initial instrument might affect their teaching style. The emphasis for some of the reviewed articles on instrument choice was on band instruments, rather than on orchestral instruments, which may have been due to the available sample. They did not discuss the topic of switching to a particular instrument in depth. Whether or not participants switched to viola was a question on the present survey. The reviewed studies instead discussed attrition or dropping out rates, and whether the instrument was their primary or secondary instrument. In the present study, I asked when and why participants switched to viola. This is more unique than general questions related to all instruments, and focuses on a particular subgroup, that of violists. These studies seemed interested in the connection between gender and instrument choice, but this was not a question for the present study.

### **Master Teachers of Viola**

String pedagogy was discussed in numerous articles and dissertations; a commonality among these studies was the fact that many were based on interviews with master string teachers. In particular, four dissertations were written as a result of the authors' interest in their mentors' methodological and pedagogical views (Burns, 2013;

Dane, 2002; Dubois, 1996; and Kella, 1983). These theses will be discussed as they pertain to the present study on viola pedagogy. These studies used interviews to examine the teaching practices of an individual teacher or several teachers in relation to their teaching philosophy.

### **Lincer's Teaching Methods**

Kella (1983) documented Lincer as a master viola teacher of the 20th century. According to Kella (1983), Lincer's viola teaching was responsible for "a quiet revolution in teaching...at the Juilliard School" (p. 38). Kella's dissertation covered three main topics, including: (a) an historical review of violin and viola instructional literature; (b) a discussion of what Kella called a "modular music curriculum" for stringed instruments; and (c) a biographical perspective of William Lincer, professor of viola at the Juilliard School and at New York University.

Kella (1983) described Lincer's pedagogy, teaching techniques, and methods, giving a unique viola perspective. In addition to discussing basic viola posture, bow arm, left hand, scales, etudes and warm-ups, Kella discussed a variety of topics with Lincer.

In Kella's study, not all his interviews with Lincer were standardized or clinically scientific. Some of the pedagogical information conveyed was of an anecdotal nature, in which Lincer related a story of a particular student and how they worked through a particular technical problem. Some information was philosophical, such as when Lincer would talk about the mind-set required for a successful performance.

Lincer was a viola teacher at the university/conservatory level with over 50 years of experience who sometimes used unorthodox methods to help his students overcome pedagogical challenges, be they of a technical, physical or psychological nature (i.e.

performance anxiety). Lincer's goal was not only to have his viola students play with a stellar technique, but moreover to play with intense emotion and feeling, while still being able to play confidently in any performance situation. Kella's documentation of Lincer's teaching is of great value to those interested in viola pedagogy, as Lincer wrote neither his own method book, nor an autobiography, as had other violist/pedagogues such as Lionel Tertis and William Primrose.

### **The Coordination Method**

Dane (2002) focused on another prominent master teacher in viola studies, Karen Tuttle, and her Coordination Method of teaching viola. The Coordination Method was the culmination of Tuttle's observations of master string players who were naturally relaxed. It evolved in part out of Tuttle's observations of her mentors, including violist William Primrose and cellist Pablo Casals, who were both innately natural players.

According to Dane, Tuttle believed that the goal of music was to, "integrat[e] our physical bodies with music so as to be able to emotionally connect with other people" (Dane, 2002, p. 34). With the development of her Coordination Method, Tuttle attempted to "harmoniously connect the physical body with musical intention so as to express emotion" (Dane, 2002, p. 34). In his study, Dane focused in particular on how Tuttle's Coordination Method has influenced modern viola teaching in the United States.

Dane (2002) conducted semi-structured interviews with nine current world-renowned viola teachers. Among those interviewed were former Tuttle students Jonathan Brown, Susan Dubois, Daniel Foster, Jeffrey Irvine, Kim Kashkashian, Lynne Ramsey, Karen Ritscher, Carol Rodland, and Tuttle herself. Dane asked his participants 21 interview questions divided into four main topics: (a) general background information

about their viola studies with Tuttle, (b) how they used Coordination in their own teaching, (c) whether they addressed personal emotional issues in lessons based on the work of Wilhelm Reich, and (d) what aspects of their own teaching could they directly attribute to Tuttle.

Dane's findings indicated that Coordination could be applied to any musical instrument in any genre of music, but as Tuttle was a violist, she developed her method in relation to her own instrument. According to Dane, "the ever-greater demands on technical execution...can unwittingly create an emotional separation between the performer and the performance" (Dane, 2002, p. 60). Playing and performing on a stringed instrument has an unnatural disconnect from the body in that we do not use our breath to create the sound, as do wind or brass players. String players may forget to breathe or to incorporate breathing into their playing. Lastly, orchestral string instruments such as the viola can be very challenging to play with good intonation because there are no keys or buttons to push to make an exact note. The notes are created on unfretted strings, with an action between the musician's muscle memory of the fingers and hands, with feedback from the ear creating the sound. These issues compound the "separation between performer and music" (Dane, 2002, p. 60). Tuttle's Coordination Method is especially helpful in trying to remedy this sense of disconnect from the body, and to make the performer at ease.

Dane (2002) condensed the concepts and techniques central to Tuttle's methods into a credo of her teaching philosophy, the Coordination Method. He gathered information regarding the perception of Tuttle by her former students, and attempted to ascertain what aspects of Coordination they then passed on to next generation of violists.

Ideas that were specific to Tuttle's studio of viola playing, namely her Coordination Method, could provide early evidence of a particular set of pedagogical strategies developed for the viola. However, just as Tuttle drew her inspiration from teachers of cello, oboe and viola, her strategies may likewise be applied to other string players and musicians to help improve their playing.

### **Voices of Master Teachers**

Tuttle was also one of several master teachers interviewed for a study on *Current Methods and Techniques in College Level Viola Pedagogy* by Dubois (1996), one of Tuttle's former teaching assistants. Dubois interviewed Tuttle and five other master viola teachers about their methods in the viola studio. The transcripts of these interviews documented celebrated string faculty members' methodologies, and are invaluable in that they will continue to supply a window into their teaching studios into the future. Dubois interviewed these teachers about their respective teaching philosophies, lesson structure, practice habits, and remediation (Dubois, 1996).

In her study, Dubois (1996) discussed methods of efficient practicing, such as observation and analysis, practicing slowly, and practicing without the instrument. She also discussed specific differences between violin and viola, such as strategic use of half-position; the use of a wider and slower vibrato on viola; the use of increased arm weight and slower bow speed; and the position of the bow, which should be placed lower in relation to the string, as on the cello. Dubois also addressed tension issues; balance of the instrument on the body; the use of Coordination; and release techniques.

Dubois (1996) explored Tuttle's work as a master teacher of the viola, and also addressed the topic of college level viola pedagogy by examining the methods of six

pedagogues: Tuttle, Heidi Castleman, Donald McInnes, Samuel Rhodes, Karen Ritscher, and violinist Dorothy Delay. Dubois conducted semi-structured interviews with each of these teachers. Dubois' participants responded to 20 general interview questions concerning their string studio teaching, such as how they divided lesson time, the main principles of their teaching philosophy, how they teach their students to practice, and how to correct bad habits in younger players entering their program.

During the interviews the teachers discussed orchestral excerpts, etudes and repertoire, as well as the teaching philosophy of the studio teacher. Dubois was also interested in whether these teachers had started as violinist or violist, and how they went about teaching violinists who wanted to become violists. These topics informed the development of questions for the current research study. Dubois' (1996) document serves as a good comparison of various methodologies from celebrated string faculty members who taught viola at the conservatory level. For example, Delay, one of the study participants, gave Dubois the practice schedule she would regularly assign to her students, which enumerated how to practice in terms of small time intervals, each assigned to 23 different aspects of preparing a work for performance, i.e. notes, rhythms, bowings, sound, stroke, breathing (Dubois, 1996, p. 202). By contrast, when she interviewed Ritscher, they had more of a philosophical discussion about "letting go" to express oneself through music. Ritscher described the learning process around Coordination as "non-doing." The more the student is able to "peel away" the more they will be able to connect with the music emotionally. Ritscher also asked some students to "love everything they play...because they are so used to hating everything they play" (Dubois, 1996, p. 171).

To summarize her findings, Dubois (1996) broached various topics related to viola pedagogy, such as emotion in music. Dubois addressed specific differences between the violin and viola, such as the openness of the left hand palm, and thinking about the webbing between the fingers to help make reaches for larger intervals. She also addressed balance of the body with the instrument, an issue of particular concern to violists, for whom tension can be a crippling opponent to a good sound. The neck must stay relaxed and not clamp down in any way. She quoted Tuttle in this regard, who warned against contracting the neck muscles in particular, and advocated the use of release techniques.

#### **Additional Tuttle Articles and Studies**

For those interested in studying more about Tuttle and her Coordination Method, numerous articles, including interviews with Tuttle, provide a wealth of additional information. These include articles by Ritscher (1993b), Weinberger (1998), and by Tuttle herself (1985).

Burns (2013) also focused her study on Tuttle, but this time in comparison and contrast to the renowned violin (and viola) pedagogue Paul Rolland (1911-1978). In addition to his books on violin pedagogy, Rolland is perhaps best known for his tenure as professor of violin and head of string studies at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign from 1945-1978 (Burns, 2013, p. 15). Burns noted the similarities between Tuttle's and Rolland's teaching methods in their emphasis on the naturalness of playing for their violin and viola students.

## **Other Master Teachers of the Viola**

In terms of master teachers of the viola, many teachers have written about their mentors, while recently some articles mentioned the passing of some of the great violists of the last century. Obituaries and accolades celebrating esteemed violists upon their retirement from teaching or from playing were written for William Lincer (Kozinn, 1997) and Joseph de Pasquale (2009). An editorial in the *Journal of the American Viola Society* (Bynog, 2011), honored violists Emmanuel Vardi (Fox, 2001), Raphael Hillyer (founding violist of the Juilliard String Quartet), Karen Tuttle (Rodland, 2004) and Rudolf Barshai who all passed away between 2010 and 2011. Previously, Tuttle had been the subject of interviews with her former students Hanani (1987), Dew (1993), Ritscher (1993b), and Weinberger (1998), addressing her viola pedagogy; and Lincer's pedagogy had been the topic of an article by Kella (1982). Other viola students who discussed their mentors were Broe (1992), Noble (2004) and Stierhof (1996).

The preceding section on master teachers has focused primarily on interview-based studies. Researchers Dane (2002), Dubois (1996), and Kella (1983) each interviewed their participants from a student-teacher perspective. Each of the researchers chose participants who either were professors with whom they had studied privately, had been the mentors of their private viola teachers, or were string faculty peers of their private teacher (i.e. at the Juilliard School, for Dubois' study). Each researcher discussed current teaching in relation to their mentors' (Tuttle, Lincer, etc.) teaching methods and philosophy, and each pointed to their teacher(s) as having been greatly influential to the current generation of violists. Tuttle's main pedagogical contribution has been her Coordination Method, whereby she encouraged students to play in the most relaxed



manner while imagining the character of the music in order to impart a natural musicality to their playing. Lincer used a similar relaxation method, but he related it to what he called visualization, and used acting style breathing exercises to encourage a student's natural and uninhibited playing. Both teachers also recommended regular practice of technique, scales, etudes, and other traditional techniques as well when learning repertoire. The following section will review studies that examined the body of viola repertoire in terms of etudes, and viola source materials.

### **Viola Etudes and Repertoire**

Through an examination of viola etudes and viola repertoire, as discussed in the following studies, I will attempt to further explore current viola pedagogy. Morgan (2007) integrated the study of a master teacher and the study of viola repertoire by examining William Primrose's numerous transcriptions for viola. Rather than focusing on master teachers, Castledine (1998) and Johnson (1988) explored viola pedagogy by studying viola etudes and viola repertoire. Castledine analyzed the viola repertoire specifically in terms of etudes, both those transcribed from the violin for the viola and those etudes written for the viola. Johnson examined the published body of work concerning viola history and pedagogy, and may be used for comparison to the list of repertoire discussed by current participants to the Viola Pedagogy Survey (Part II, Question 5). Castledine wrote, "while viola pedagogy has traditionally been tied to and dependent upon violin pedagogy, recent history has witnessed a gradual separation of the two, recognizing their differences and the need to address these differences in teaching" (Castledine, 1998, p. i).

Morgan's (2007) study aimed to show that by writing transcriptions for viola, Primrose had taken the initiative and was able to establish and perpetuate his solo career, showcase the possibilities of the viola as a solo vehicle, and promote the viola as an instrument capable of virtuosity. Morgan also aimed to study Primrose's concepts and ideals in relation to how he selected pieces for editing and transcribing. Topics addressed by Primrose included the key of a given transcription, fingering suggestions, when and where and how often to employ octave displacements, and bowing choices (Morgan, 2007, p. 4).

Morgan (2007) provided many musical examples, comparing and contrasting the original and the transcriptions, often in Primrose's handwriting, as not all transcriptions were published. She was able to access many manuscripts in the Primrose Library at Brigham Young University and credited Primrose's former student, violist and author David Dalton, with his help in her project. This study demonstrated the importance of Primrose as an arranger who broadened the viola repertoire for violists, giving them new and diverse additions to the standard repertoire. This is of interest to the present study in its examination of viola repertoire. Participants were asked about which pieces were most important to them in their training and which they used most with their students.

Castledine (1998) discussed the use of etudes in viola pedagogy by comparing the content of violin and viola etudes, and gave a list of those books of etudes that have become standard studying material for violists. Castledine analyzed and rated these standard etudes by level of difficulty and pointed out how, despite the number of new composers writing for viola, the majority of etudes continue to be derived from the body of work written originally for the violin and later transcribed for use as viola etudes. She

took the advice of violin pedagogue Carl Flesch and of author K. Marie Stolba, and came up with a list of the most prescribed books of etudes (Kayser, Mazas, Kreutzer, Rovelli, Fiorillo, Rode, Gaviniès). From this list, she analyzed which books utilized which types of techniques (arpeggios, bow control, cadenzas, *collé*, double stops, finger independence/speed, hand-frame, intonation, *martelé/detaché* strokes, ornaments, shifting, *spiccato*, *staccato* bowings, string crossings) and concluded that the books of etudes that called for the most kinds of techniques were indeed the most difficult.

In her discussion of etudes and the learning process, Castledine (1998) discussed the teaching philosophy of Kemp, a scholar in instructional technology, as derived from his book, *Designing Effective Instruction* (1994). She applied Kemp's philosophy to the process of learning etudes. Kemp's teaching philosophy is similar to that of Czikszenmihalyi (1990) in his book, *Flow: the Psychology of Optimal Experience*. According to Czikszenmihalyi, optimum learning occurs when a student works at his or her own pace, is actively involved in performing specific learning tasks, and experiences success in learning.

Castledine (1998) encouraged the reader that this process can be applied to etudes, in terms of technical challenges presented versus the skill level of the student. An etude should be appropriate to the skill or technique that the student has and is trying to acquire, but not too far beyond the student's current level, or the learning process becomes too frustrating. She discussed pros and cons of both individualized and non-individualized instruction, like learning etudes in private lesson instruction versus learning them in a group lesson. Castledine also gave examples of how viola etudes are typically learned and how students synthesize the information contained within them.

(She did not discuss how violinists might differ from violists in their approach to learning the same material.) She recommended self-paced or individualized instruction for both beginners and advanced students.

Lastly, Castledine (1998) concluded that violists still rely heavily on the violin literature for etudes for the “technical mastery they demand.” (Castledine, 1998, p. 46). However, she stressed that their use, “must be accompanied by an awareness of the subtleties that make the viola different from the violin, and these differences must be explored and cultivated” (Castledine, 1998, p. 46).

In another study that focused on viola literature, Johnson (1988) compiled an annotated bibliography of approximately 500 viola source materials, including literature on the history of the viola, viola repertoire, a bibliography of compositions written for the viola, notable violists, analyses of viola compositions, literature on viola pedagogy, and literature on the construction and acoustics of the viola. The section on viola pedagogy literature, which is of special interest to the current research project, included a list of 87 articles and books, with many interesting references. The section on notable violists included 72 books and articles based on the biographies of violists and viola pedagogues such as Vadim Borissovsky, Csaba Erdélyi, Lillian Fuchs, Paul Hindemith, Milton Katims, Martha Strongin Katz, William Lincer, William Primrose, Hermann Ritter, Donald McInnes, Joseph de Pasquale, Samuel Rhodes, Alessandro Rolla, Lionel Tertis, Michael Tree, Karen Tuttle, and Emanuel Vardi. This section is a good reference of violist biographies for those doing research on 20th century violists, and provides a wide array of violists to choose from. While this bibliography provides good place to find source material, it is limited to that published before 1986, and most of the publications

are in the English language. In her conclusions, Johnson (1988) was hopeful for the future of research on viola pedagogy, and she remarked that while “the pedagogy of violin and viola technique has often been compared, the comparison of different schools of viola technique has been neglected” (Johnson, 1988, p. 211). This demonstrates a need for the present study, which will compare participants’ viola backgrounds, how were taught, how they currently teach viola.

While Castledine (1998) discussed the use of etudes in viola pedagogy by comparing violin and viola etudes, and listed those that have become standard for violists, Van der Werff (2012) had a new book of technical exercises specifically aimed at violists that describes the mechanics of viola playing with an accompanying DVD recording of the author performing the exercises as video tutorials for the student.

Showell (1987) gave a detailed list of etudes, scales, studies and orchestral excerpts that he would recommend for study in his studio. His book was the amalgamation of his teaching philosophy, and gave his source list for repertoire and exercises. Baldwin (1995) wrote an informative article about how to use orchestral viola excerpts as etudes, promoting good use of lesson time by tying together the topics of how to divide lesson time and repertoire covered during lessons. He included an extensive list of 79 orchestral excerpts to use as etudes, each described in terms of what skills are utilized: *spiccato*, *sautillé*, string crossings, chromatic passages, etc. For example, standard viola excerpts such as Richard Strauss’s tone poem *Don Juan*, Dmitri Shostakovich’s 5th Symphony (movements I and IV), and Richard Wagner’s Overture to *Tannhäuser* were listed under “advanced studies for dexterity and shifting.”

Some more recent historical research related to viola repertoire delved into the composition and completion of a particular piece. Dalton, a pupil of Primrose, focused on Béla Bartók's Viola Concerto for the topic of his doctoral dissertation (Dalton, 1970).

Bartók's Viola Concerto was the composer's last work, left unfinished at the time of his death. Dalton (1970) was privy to a great many private documents belonging to Primrose, including letters, programs, photographs, and musical scores documenting his long and illustrious career as a concertizing violist. In addition, Dalton conducted interviews with Tibor Serly, Bartók's pupil, who "finished" the Concerto.

Dalton also mentioned how Primrose had made some changes to the work to make it more playable. For example, Primrose added octave displacements, which he had wanted to discuss with Bartók, but was not able to complete before the composer's death. Dalton hinted that the performer might choose to add these to his or her own interpretation of the work. Dalton's (1970) dissertation acts as a useful counterbalance to Primrose's autobiography, with a presentation of the facts and background concerning the concerto, such as a transcript of an interview with Primrose on the topic of the Bartók concerto. Eventually, Dalton also wrote a book on the subject of his mentor (Dalton, 1988). Dalton's examination may be juxtaposed against a newer discussion of the concerto, and its importance in the development of a solo viola repertoire commissioned by a viola soloist.

Wetzel (2010) also examined Bartók's Viola Concerto. Wetzel discussed the difficulties presented by the concerto, and commissioned three new etudes by contemporary artists Esa-Pekka Salonen, Paul Chiharra and Paul Coletti, that new

students of the work could avail themselves of in preparation for the performance of the Bartók (Wetzel, 2010, p. ix).

Wetzel (2010) chose to interview a violist who was instrumental in getting the work published, Burt Fisch (b. 1921). He argued that Fisch seemed to have been left out of the history of the concerto, but he was in fact the first violist to work on a performance from the manuscript without having first been influenced by Primrose's version in terms of performance (Wetzel, 2010, p. 5). Since the Primrose (Boosey and Hawkes) edition, other violists have revisited the work to argue in favor of *pizzicato* in certain sections, such as violist Atar Arad's version (1976). Other editions included those by Csaba Erdelyi, Donald Maurice (1978), and Peter Bartók, Nelson Dellamaggiore, and violist Paul Neubauer (1995) (Wetzel, 2010, p. 1-2).

Wetzel (2010) became actively involved in trying to expand the viola etude repertoire through his commissions of viola etudes for his project, arguing that by using traditional etudes from before the 20th century, the viola student of 20th century works is not fully prepared for the extreme technical challenges they must surmount in works such as the Bartók concerto. Wetzel's study gave a thorough overview of the history of the viola, by discussing its repertoire and etudes, technique and pedagogy.

Wetzel (2010) cited Bruni, Campagnoli and Hoffmeister as having been the first three composers to write etudes specifically for improving technique on the viola, rather than writing a manual aimed at describing how to play viola at the most elementary level. (Wetzel, 2010, p. 23). However, he also argued that the status of the viola between composers Mozart and Bartók had unfortunately changed little, especially in how viola was being taught. Wetzel felt the kind of specific pedagogical materials that were

necessary for the viola were lacking, in part due to prejudiced views against violists. Despite the interest of such composers as Berlioz, the old paradigm prevailed, with the Paris Conservatoire refusing to dedicate a viola major at their program until late in the 19th century (Wetzel, 2010, p. 24).

In addition to discussing the Bartók concerto, Wetzel (2010) also discussed works by Walton and Hindemith for viola. According to Wetzel, Hindemith's Sonata Opus 25, No. 1, was actually composed in preparation for performing the Walton concerto, as Hindemith was the one who premiered the work (Wetzel, 2010, p. 27). The particular challenges of the Bartók concerto are analyzed in extreme detail. According to Wetzel, as a pianist, Bartók wrote passages that made sense on the piano, such as using 11 black key notes for a particular opening passage. On the viola, these 11 flatted notes present numerous challenges for intonation and string-crossing coordination. Other pianistic compositional traits that present difficulties for the violist, such as leaps of single notes, as well as close position shifts between clusters of notes, were also discussed. Wetzel noted that the Bartók concerto was the first concerto for viola to demand the use of artificial harmonics (Wetzel, 2010, p. 40).

Looking beyond Bartók toward the future of music written for viola, DeStefano (2010) examined repertoire that bypassed the boundaries of Western tonality. He examined recent works that specifically explored the possibilities of employing microtonality on the viola. These works included György Ligeti's Sonata for solo viola; Luciano Berio's *Naturale* for viola, percussion, and recorded voice; Berio's *Voci* for viola and orchestra; and Iannis Xenakis' *Embellie* for solo viola (DeStefano, 2010, p. 5-



6). DeStefano also analyzed *Prologue* by Gérard Grisey as a case study in how to approach a microtonal piece for viola.

DeStefano (2010) argued that there exist four major kinds of microtonal music or pitch collections, which he delineated as derived, borrowed, Pythagorean and spectral. Compositions may include a key to indicate a quarter-tone change to a pitch, for example, sharps with three vertical lines intersecting two across, one vertical line with one across, or arrows above or below the note.

In order to tackle these intonation challenges, DeStefano (2010) suggests using Ivan Galamian's principles of violin study as a way to divide a student's practicing of microtones. In order to further aid the viola student who wishes to play Grisey's piece, DeStefano also created a "scale" from pitches collected from Grisey's work that include both tonal (or to use his phrase, non-microtonal) and microtonal pitches (DeStefano, 2010, p. 28). This study could be extremely useful to students and professors of viola who wish to perform microtonal pieces for viola.

Another study in a similar vein by LeBeau (1982) analyzed technical problems in the 20th century repertoire for solo viola. He recommended study materials in preparations for these 20th century solo works by composers such as Reger and Hindemith, and also discussed the availability of appropriate etudes for viola at the higher technical level. In some cases these study materials were not etudes, but works in their own right. For example, he recommended study of Bach's cello suites in preparation for playing triple-stops in the 20th century literature. He also advocated study of Kreutzer's 42 Studies (1796), especially the last quarter of the book, for studying double-stops. Other sources he recommended were by Campagnoli, Fuchs, Galamian-Neumann,

Primrose, (*Technique is Memory, The Art and Practice of Scale Playing on the Viola*), and Uhl (LeBeau, 1982, p. 111-113, 118-119). One of his suggestions for future researcher was to have more studies and etudes written specifically for the viola to aid in increasing the technique of violists that would be aimed at their instrument and the special difficulties associated with the viola. Through his research, referring to Zeyringer's (1985) *Literature für Viola*, he found 108 pieces for solo viola for his study.

The growing body of articles and books written by violists about viola playing constitutes an important resource for viola teachers and the string pedagogical community who wish to learn more about the viola, its pedagogy, and its history, but more study of this topic will help to promote a separate and equal treatment of the viola. The above articles and studies serve as a jumping off point for those who wish to investigate viola pedagogy sources further. By providing this review of literature, it is my intent to provide those interested in the topic of the viola with a single amalgamated source. This categorized collection of viola related topics may provide a point from which others may begin their own research in the future. It should be noted that publications in languages other than English could include a vast number of additional articles on the topic that have not been explored here. The preceding review of recent literature on viola pedagogy informed both the development of questions used in the current viola pedagogy survey, (see Methodology section, Chapter 3), and in the analysis of participants' responses (see Participants section, Chapter 4, and Results section, Chapter 5).

## Summary

As presented here, the following topics have been examined: (a) string pedagogy studies, (b) instrument choice articles, (c) master teachers of viola, and (d) viola etudes and repertoire. Referring to the surveys and interview questions used in previous research is a useful practice when developing an original survey. I became better informed as to how to construct a survey for my own project by reading and comparing other studies' surveys and interview questions. For example, the following are some of the ways that these studies influenced the development of the current survey.

In the discussion on string pedagogy, Au (2007) talked about the differences between violin and viola, Lesniak (2005) discussed reasons for the string teacher shortage, and Groody (2000) described the intergenerational importance of string teacher mentors. Au (2007) used a survey and discussed differences between violin and viola, but could have been more thorough in his presentation of data. Lesniak (2005) studied attitudes toward string education among different groups of university music faculty members. Similarly, the present study surveyed a population of university level professors of viola, although Lesniak's study used a broader group of conductors, string applied faculty and music education faculty. Groody (2000) presented pedagogical lineage charts related to violin pedagogy, but a study has not been done in a similar fashion for viola pedagogy. While these studies all looked at different aspects of string pedagogy, there is still a need to look more specifically at viola pedagogy.

While Eros (2008), Cutietta and McAllister (1997), Conway (2000), and Chen and Howard (2004) studied instrument choice, they primarily looked at aspects such as which are the most popular choices of instruments, i.e. piano or flute, or general trends in

choosing an instrument, and they focused on gender as a main contributing factor. There is still a need to look at why people might switch instruments, when teachers might encourage the switch, and what factors contribute to that choice.

In the section on master teachers, I reviewed a study by Kella (1982), who discussed the importance of his viola teacher Lincer, as well as studies by Dane (2002) and Dubois (1996), who discussed the importance of Tuttle as a viola teacher, and Burns (2013) who compared pedagogues Tuttle and Rolland. Dubois's (1996) questions from her interviews with master teachers were useful in that they were aimed toward the same population as the present study, viola professors. The current study differs in that it used a survey, and was able to pose questions to a larger sample of viola teachers. Also, rather than looking only at a few pedagogues with national reputations, this study seeks to find the current perceptions and pedagogical practices across this culture-sharing population.

In the section on viola etudes and repertoire, I reviewed studies by Castledine (1993), DeStefano (2010), Johnson (1988), LeBeau (1982), Morgan (2007), and Wetzel (2010), who discussed etudes and repertoire for the viola. The current study aimed to gather viola teachers' opinions about the etudes they use for incoming college-level students, and pieces of solo repertoire that they teach and that they were taught in their own studies.

This review of literature has been provided to establish a further need for the current study. In particular, the lack of survey research on viola professors may indicate the need for more studies that employ qualitative survey methods. The aim of the current study is to build upon the breadth of past scholarship on viola pedagogy by accessing a wider population of viola teachers at the university/conservatory level.

With the recent passing of so many esteemed teachers of viola at the beginning of the 21st century, the torch has been passed to the former pupils of master teachers, drawing a direct link between the past to current viola pedagogy. This new crop of teachers collectively influences modern viola pedagogy. They are current university professors in viola performance at some of the most respected conservatories and universities in the country, while maintaining very active solo and chamber music performance schedules. A potential benefit of surveying this population of pedagogues is to gain new insight into what is being taught in the modern viola studio. The surveyed population has shared unique information and knowledge, including their pedagogical methods, teaching philosophy, and specific materials, that present a current sample of what is being used in university/conservatory level viola studios in the United States.

### **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this basic qualitative study is to explore college/conservatory-level viola teachers' perceptions of viola playing and pedagogy. A sample of viola professors and teachers from across the United States were asked to share their opinions and insights in order to establish what current trends may exist in viola pedagogy and to answer questions about how violin and viola performance might differ in terms of technique, pedagogy, methods, and practice.

#### **Design**

This study used a qualitative survey design. According to Creswell and Miller (2000), "the qualitative paradigm assumes that reality is socially constructed and it is what participants perceive it to be" (p.125). With the present survey, I surveyed a specific culture-sharing population, university level viola teachers, concerning their perceptions of viola pedagogy. A qualitative survey design was selected to potentially reach a larger number of participants than would be possible through interviews, but also allowed opportunities to hear the voices of viola pedagogues.

According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research allows for more interpretation in order to make sense of the data, and may be based on more "hunches, insights, and intuition" than on quantitative methods of analysis that emphasize "magnitude and frequency" (p. 153). Originally, the survey data was analyzed quantitatively, but it was decided that reanalyzing the data qualitatively would be more conducive to the nature of the open-ended responses.

The present survey included a combination of closed and open-ended questions that allowed participants to add more detailed answers to questions in relation to viola

pedagogy. The background questions were mostly closed-ended and covered topics such as where participants had done their training and how many students they currently taught. The open response questions had to do with perceived differences between the violin and viola, including the topics of technique and repertoire.

Creswell (2007) stated that some of the key components to successful qualitative research are to employ descriptive details, develop themes through a classification system, and to then interpret the data in light of the researcher's own views and/or views supported in the related literature (p. 151). By surveying a larger population, I hoped to gain more details in order to observe for themes across a similar culture-sharing group, which in this case was university viola teachers. According to Merriam (2009), from this data, researchers must use both "inductive and deductive" reasoning in order to develop their own methods of "description and interpretation" (p. 176).

### **Data Collection**

After receiving university IRB approval, data collection took place through an original survey instrument called the Viola Pedagogy Survey (VPS), which was designed for the current study. By studying interview questions from previous studies on viola pedagogy (Dane, 2002; Dubois, 1996), I was better able to shape some of the questions on the present survey. The VPS format consisted of two parts: Part I, Viola Background and Part II, Viola Pedagogy. Part I had nine closed-ended questions (Questions 1-3, 5-10) and one open-ended question (Question 4). Part II had eleven questions, which were all open-ended. A complete copy of the VPS can be found in Appendix B.

#### **Part I. Viola Background**

The first section of the survey focused on the personal information of the

participants in relation to their viola teaching and training. The topics covered in Part I of the survey were participants' (a) initial instrument, (b) age at which they started playing a stringed instrument, (c) age at which they had begun playing the viola, (d) reasons they had chosen the viola, (e) primary instrument with which they identified themselves, violinist or violist, (f) role or occupation (teacher, orchestral musician, chamber musician, or other), (g) size of their teaching studio, (h) age at which they had begun teaching, (i) number of years spent teaching, and (j) geographical location of training. The development and editing of survey questions included review by an experienced music education researcher. The goal of the background questions was to give more insight into the training and experience of each participant. Sometimes participants shared more information including names of their teachers, where they attended conservatory or university, or music festivals they had attended. They were not asked to identify items such as their name, age, or gender.

## **Part II. Viola Pedagogy**

The second section of the survey focused on participants' views on contemporary viola pedagogy in relation to their own pedagogical practices, including their perceptions in relation to the following topics: (a) perceived central differences between violin and viola technique, (b) when they encouraged a student to switch to viola, (c) what methods they employed to help former violinists obtain a more violistic sound, (d) teaching style and initial instrument, (e) recommended viola repertoire, (f) recommended viola etudes, (g) recommended remediation strategies, (h) who were their most influential mentors, (i) how they divided lesson time among the different topics, (j) what were their goals for students, and (k) who were important violists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, if any.



The researcher attempted to limit the number of questions used in the Survey to increase the response rate and to avoid participant fatigue. However, in the final gathering of data, some participants failed to answer the second half of the survey. This may have been because they felt it was still too long, or it could have been due to a confusion with the online layout of the survey. Some questions were condensed into two-part or three-part questions (i.e. Question 5A, 5B, and 5C; Question 7A and 7B), while other questions from earlier drafts of the Survey had to be omitted in order to keep the survey length manageable. The time needed to complete the final version of the survey was estimated to be 15 minutes, although some participants reportedly took more much time. One participant noted that he added additional comments after reflection on the topic, for example, in terms of his own training and/or repertoire he had studied. The Viola Pedagogy survey was first evaluated through the use of a pilot study, prior to administration of the Survey to the Main Study participants. I received positive feedback from members of my doctoral committee regarding the survey, and it was subsequently sent to main study participants without further revisions.

### **Procedures**

In this next section, I will describe the various procedures for how I conducted the pilot study, solicited participants, and conducted the main study.

#### **Conducting the Pilot Study**

As a way to assess the face validity of the VPS, a pilot study was conducted prior to the main study involving expert viola teachers who taught at the university/conservatory level. The pilot study participants were drawn from a sample of violists who lived and taught in a large urban area in Texas at the time of the study, and had

taught or were currently teaching viola at the university and/or conservatory level. Those chosen for the pilot study were experts in their field, including viola faculty members from two major universities. Of these participants, three were also members of the viola section of a major professional symphony orchestra, and one had been the violist for a renowned professional string quartet. Another participant was a music education faculty member who had formerly taught viola at the college level.

An introductory letter and a copy of the survey were emailed as an attachment to selected pilot study participants, which they returned directly to the researcher by email or personal correspondence. Of an original sample of seven viola teachers, five completed the survey. For those pilot study participants who had not responded after two weeks, a reminder email was sent. Following an analysis of pilot study responses, in no case were questions deemed irrelevant or indecipherable. It was thus determined that no substantial changes to the Survey were necessary, and therefore, the survey instrument remained the same for both the pilot and the main study. Because no changes were made to the survey instrument, it was determined that the findings from the participants in the pilot study should be aggregated along with those of the main study.

### **Soliciting Participants for the Main Study**

For the main study, I selected 60 participants randomly from 220 American Viola Society (AVS) members who had self-selected as teachers of viola at the university/conservatory level in the AVS online member directory. The VPS was then distributed to these randomly selected members of the AVS. Those that were used for the sample had self-selected as teachers of viola at the university/conservatory level in the AVS member directory. (New AVS members must designate their teaching level with

checkboxes, so that those who are seeking a viola teacher through the database may select the correct level of teacher.)

Participants received an introductory letter by email with a link to a website called Survey Monkey hosting the electronic version of the survey (see Appendix C for a copy of the letter). Survey Monkey is an online resource for individuals or companies to send out surveys. Participants were asked to complete their electronic survey on Survey Monkey. A reminder prompt was sent after two weeks to all participants who had not yet answered in an effort to increase the response rate. At the four-week mark, at least half of the participants had not responded, prompting the second email reminder. After six weeks, telephone calls were employed in an attempt to contact those who still had not responded to the email reminders. Finally, after all possible prompting, a total of 18 participants responded to the online survey, resulting in a 30% response rate.

After analyzing the data, and because the Survey had not changed, it was decided to combine the pilot study in aggregate with the main study participants' responses. The final number of participants ( $N = 23$ ) therefore increased slightly for the final analysis of data (response rate total 38%). However, because some participants declined to answer Part II of the Survey, the total number of participants decreased ( $N = 19$ ) for Part II: Questions 1-11. It was subsequently decided not to include those who did not complete the second half of the survey in the final analysis of data.

Previous research has indicated that a typical response rate for an online survey is about 30% (Kaplowitz, Hadlock & Levine, 2004). This may be due to the impersonal nature of an online survey, as opposed to a telephone survey, a traditional mail survey, or a survey with promised incentives. Also, as a further disincentive to answer unsolicited

emails, many people may receive up to 39 such emails per day at their office email address alone (Sheehan, 2001). Although a higher return rate might have given more data, this response rate was deemed to be within the average range for an online survey, and fulfilled the necessary requirements for analysis. It should be noted that for the second half of the survey, not all participants answered every question. The number of participants for such questions was often 19 or less.

### **Conducting the Main Study**

The main study was administered in December 2009. The participants in this study were members of the American Viola Society (AVS), an organization that represents viola teachers and performers. Its members voluntarily join as a means of communication with the viola community. This musical population was chosen to solicit participants for the main study because it represented violists and viola teachers from across the United States. Only those AVS members who identified themselves in the member directory as teaching viola at the university/conservatory level were included in the sample.

AVS members are asked each year which levels of students they teach by checking boxes next to their name. The directory then lists teachers' levels of teaching next to their names. Those seeking a viola teacher may access the AVS website, and search the directory. This is a valuable resource for those seeking a viola teacher. Members self-identified as teachers at the university/conservatory level in the AVS online member directory. School affiliations mentioned by potential participants ranged from small colleges to large universities with music programs, and from top-tier conservatories to lesser-known music programs.

After choosing the population of AVS members, I found 220 members fit this description and then I entered them into database of names. Of these 220 viola teachers, I randomly selected 60 potential participants. The random numbers were generated using a website called [www.randomizer.org](http://www.randomizer.org) that helps researchers to chose unbiased numbers. These 60 selected AVS members came from nearly every state in the United States. However, the final sample of participants ( $N = 19$ ) was not as geographically comprehensive, due to the smaller sample size. In some cases, the information for the online directory was out-of-date, resulting in emails that were no longer valid or were blocked; in these cases new participants were again selected randomly.

### **Data Analysis**

Creswell (2007) suggested that a researcher prepare and organize data, reduce data into themes through a process of coding, condense the codes, and then represent the data in figures, tables, or in a discussion (p.148). To analyze the results of the VPS I used descriptive statistics for the fixed choice questions of the survey (Part I, Questions 1-3, 5-10). For the open response questions (Part I, Question 4; Part II, Questions 1-11), I used Creswell's method of qualitative data analysis in which I organized the data into themes, coded responses according to words or phrases that occurred most frequently, and found categories across responses.

I then studied these categories as they related to the various ways in which participants found similarities and/or differences between the violin and the viola, discussed repertoire, names of mentors, and discussed choosing or switching to the viola. I both discussed the data and represented the data in table form. Originally, I was using descriptive statistics for the open-response questions as well. It was determined that a

qualitative approach was more appropriate in that it allows the researcher to give more weight to individual voices of participants.

### **Trustworthiness**

Creswell and Miller (2000) discussed the ways in which validity may be established in a study, “Qualitative researchers use a lens...established using the views of people who conduct, participate in, or read and review a study” (p. 125). They recommended that the researcher go over the data multiple times, to make sure it makes sense, and to ensure that it “evolves into a persuasive narrative” (Ibid). The data for the present study were reviewed multiple times and at different points in the writing process. This allowed me to check my work in terms of themes that evolved, but also gave me the opportunity to reinterpret findings that I may have overlooked the first time, or to reassess what was important and to determine what were secondary findings. I also tried to look for more contrasting voices, to make sure I was giving voice to those who did not agree.

In order to provide trustworthiness, a version of the survey was administered in a pilot study. The pilot study participants gave positive feedback about the survey, and were interested to hear the outcome of the study. Additionally, data collected from both the pilot study and the main study were subject to peer review by music education faculty members (Creswell and Miller, 2000).

In another attempt to prevent bias, main study participants were chosen randomly. I could not employ every type of triangulation method to assure trustworthiness because my study did not involve more than one method of data collection, which is a limitation of this study. Through this qualitative survey design, I was able to provide some

trustworthiness by seeing the data emerge from multiple participants who belonged to a culture-sharing group of university viola teachers. Creswell and Miller (2000) call this form of triangulation the “systematic process of sorting through the data to find common themes or categories by eliminating overlapping areas” (p.127).

### **Limitations of Study**

Limitations of this study include a small sample size, for both the pilot and the main study. Therefore results should be interpreted as being exploratory in nature. Many (12 out of 21) questions on the survey were open-ended. Also, the amount of time needed for participants to answer some of these questions may have deterred a few participants from completing all questions on the survey. A future study may decide to include only closed-ended questions.

Another limitation was that some questions gave suggestions in the stem of the question. For example, for a question on differences between violin and viola technique, suggested topics included right hand issues, including bow arm and bowing, left hand issues, including shifting, vibrato, and set-up, as well as repertoire and personality. A limitation may be that participants’ answers were influenced by these suggested topics. The rationale for providing these suggestions was to limit the number of questions to avoid participant fatigue. Future studies may wish to go further in depth about the advantages of playing both the viola and violin, and how playing both may enhance a player’s technique, either for violists or violinists.

It is possible that my love for the viola and its repertoire makes me less objective than another researcher who may have had no preference for the viola over the violin. Yet, as both a professional violist and string teacher, my expertise has the potential to

provide unique insights into this topic. Drawing upon my own experiences and training was crucial in both construction of the survey and in interpretation of the data, i.e. understanding professional jargon and shorthand given by participants, being able to infer or fill in names of composers or suggested techniques implied by initials or abbreviations (VW for Vaughan-Williams, or LH for left hand.) By disclosing my potential biases above, I have employed a validity procedure known as researcher reflexivity (Creswell and Miller, 2000, p. 127).

Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003, p. 224) have a suggested list of for constructing and administering a questionnaire. This list includes time frame, geographical location, broad descriptive study versus specific and comparative study, aspect of the topic is to be studied, and reporting facts versus more abstract interests. Current viola teachers were the current population. They were asked about their own practices as viola teachers as well as their formative study of the viola. Those who were violin teachers as opposed to viola teachers were not surveyed, although this could be the focus group of future comparative research. Every attempt was made to construct questions as objectively as possible. The results of the data may provide information that could be of interest to the greater violist community.



## **CHAPTER 4: PARTICIPANTS**

This chapter will describe the background information provided by participants for Part I of the Viola Pedagogy Survey (VPS). The results of Part II of the VPS will be discussed in Chapter 5. The goal of understanding the participants was to make sense of them as a “culture-sharing group,” of university/conservatory-level viola teachers. Part I of the VPS included nine closed-ended fixed response questions (Questions 1-3, 5-10) and one open-ended question (Question 4) that focused on the participants’ backgrounds. The fixed response background questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics by taking tallies of responses, and then converting these into percentages based on the number of participants who replied. The single open response background question was analyzed through coding for common words and syntax, and will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 5.

Participants discussed when they had initiated their string studies, their reasons for choosing the viola, and where their training as musicians had occurred. Some participants gave multiple responses for some questions, and others skipped some questions, so the entire number of responses for each item does not always total to 19. I have also expanded the analysis to examine for some common findings between participants’ responses.

Table 1

Background Information of Participants Completing the Viola Pedagogy Survey ( $N = 19$ )

(n) %			(n) %		
1. Initial instrument studied ( $n = 19$ )			7. Size of teaching studio ( $n = 18$ )		
(9)	47%	Violin	(2)	11%	1-5 Students
(6)	32%	Viola	(4)	22%	6-10 Students
(4)	21%	Other	(4)	22%	11-15 Students
			(8)	44%	15+ Students
2. Age started playing string instrument ( $n = 19$ )			8. Age at which participants began teaching at university level ( $n = 18$ )		
(2)	11%	3-5 years	(3)	16%	> 25 years old
(10)	53%	6-9 years	(11)	61%	26-33 years old
(5)	26%	10-12 years	(4)	22%	34-44 years old
(2)	11%	13-15 years	(0)	0%	45+ years
(0)	0%	16+ years			
3. Age of switch to viola ( $n = 12$ )			9. How long teaching? ( $n = 18$ )		
(0)	0%	3-5 years	(0)	0%	> 5 years
(0)	0%	6-9 years	(5)	28%	6-10 years
(2)	17%	10-12 years	(2)	11%	11-15 years
(3)	25%	13-15 years	(5)	28%	16-20 years
(4)	33%	16-18 years	(2)	11%	21-30 years
(3)	25%	19+ years	(4)	22%	30+ years
4. Why did you choose/switch to the viola?* ( $n = 19$ )					
(8)	42%	Sound Qualities (sound/range/tone color)			
(7)	36%	Suggestion of others (teacher/peers)			
(4)	21%	Chamber Music (inner harmony lines)			
(3)	16%	Physical Aspects/comfort			
(3)	16%	Playing Opportunities			
5. Primarily a performing violinist or violist? ( $n = 19$ )					
(0)	0%	Violinist			
(19)	100%	Violist			
6. Primarily a teacher, orchestral musician, chamber musician, other?* ( $n = 19$ )			10. Geographical location of musical training* ( $n = 19$ )		
(8)	42%	Teacher	(10)	53%	Northeast
(5)	26%	Orchestra Musician	(8)	42%	Midwest
(4)	21%	Chamber Musician	(3)	16%	West
(2)	11%	Performer/Musician	(2)	11%	Germany
(2)	11%	Soloist	(1)	5%	South West
			(0)	0%	Other U.S. region

Note. \*More than one response allowed.

\*\*Some participants gave no or multiple responses to some questions.

## **Participant Backgrounds**

The backgrounds of the participants completing the survey can be found in Table 1; the number of participants is noted for each question in parentheses. As seen in Table 1, participants did not always begin their string study on the viola. Nearly half of participants (47%;  $n = 9$ ) had begun music study on violin. However, approximately one-third (32%;  $n = 6$ ) began on the viola, and less than a quarter (21%;  $n = 4$ ) began on other instruments, such as piano, baroque viola and bass (see VPS Part I, Question 1).

### **Beginning and Switching to the Viola**

Ninety percent of participants had begun playing a string instrument before the age of 13, and none were older than 16 (see VPS Part I, Question 2). Among those who switched to viola from another instrument, the age at which they switched varied widely. One-quarter (25%;  $n = 3$ ) switched to viola between the ages of 13 and 15, while one third (33%;  $n = 4$ ) switched to viola between the ages of 16 and 18 (see VPS Part I, Question 3). While the reasons behind switching to the viola from the violin will be addressed in more depth in Chapter 5, responses to Question 4 indicated that the participants' most frequently cited reasons for switching were sound (42%;  $n = 8$ ) and teacher/peer suggestion (36%;  $n = 7$ ). These two factors combined accounted for most of the responses. Either a previous teacher or peer felt participants had a good viola sound, or participants preferred the sound of the viola to the violin. An interest in chamber music (21%;  $n = 4$ ) was also a motivating factor in switching to viola.

In response to Question 4 of Part I, one participant mentioned that he switched for the first time in high school, but that he truly became a violist later, in college:

I was a senior at the Interlochen Arts Academy, not particularly happy with my

violin lessons and noticed that my friends were enjoying their viola lessons. I was also getting taller and lankier, and the violin was awfully small! So I took viola as a secondary instrument and enjoyed it very much. I continued on violin, though, but applied to Tanglewood after my freshman year of college, and offered to come as either a violinist, or a violist. Of course they said viola (I know how that works, now!) and I had a GREAT time: the sound, the role it plays, my ability on the viola, the groups I could play with: all made sense. So I made the full switch.

This participant implied that good violists may be scarcer than violinists, or at least they might have been when he was a student, and thus violists were in higher demand for a prestigious chamber music festival looking to fill spots. He also alluded to the fact that physical aspects of the player may influence a musician's choice to switch to the viola, such as in having longer limbs or being a taller person may aid in someone's playing the longer instrument more comfortably. Another who had always played the viola wrote that she chose it because, "I liked the range of the instrument, the dark, rich tone color and the inner harmony lines." These topics will be discussed further in Chapter 5 in relation to a discussion of choosing or switching to the viola.

### **Participant Self-Perceptions**

All the participants considered themselves to be primarily violists, rather than violinists (see VPS Part I, Questions 5). Forty-two percent ( $n = 8$ ) defined themselves primarily as teachers, while fewer, 26% ( $n = 5$ ) defined themselves as orchestral musicians, and 21% ( $n = 4$ ) defined themselves as chamber musicians; only 11% ( $n = 2$ ) were solo violists (see VPS Part I, Question 6). However, based on the selection of

multiple categories when responding to this question, 37% of the participants preferred to be defined more broadly than one category and chose a combination of the three main choices or included additional categories. The refusal to be pigeonholed into one category seems typical of violists, but may also be an illustration of how one must wear many hats to survive as a classically trained musician. For example one wrote, “1/2 teacher, 1/2 orch. musician, ” while another wrote “University Professor and all of the Professor and all of the above.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Teaching Experience**

Nearly half of the teachers (44%;  $n = 8$ ) had 15 or more students in their current viola studio, so they are quite busy teaching a full load of students. Nearly two-thirds of participants (61%;  $n = 11$ ) began teaching viola at the college/conservatory level between the ages of 26 and 33, while they were still relatively young. More than a quarter (28%) of the participants had been teaching for six to ten years, representing the largest and perhaps youngest group, while roughly another quarter (28%;  $n = 5$ ) had been teaching for 16-20 years, and 22 percent (22%;  $n = 4$ ) were veteran teachers with more than 30 years of experience. A quarter of participants were therefore still new to the profession, while another half were either midcareer, or perhaps thinking about retirement, which may have affected how they answered questions about teaching.

### **Location of Training**

Several participants received training in more than one geographic region, with 24 different responses. Most of the participants received the majority of their formative

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<sup>3</sup> For this and other questions with more than one response allowed, percentages were derived by dividing by the number of answers by number participants who answered that question.

musical training in the United States. Approximately half of all participants were trained in the Northeast (53%;  $n = 10$ ), and more than a third were trained (42%;  $n = 8$ ) in the Midwest; the two participants (11%;  $n = 2$ ) that received training outside of the United States specified Germany as the location of study (see VPS Part I, Question 10).

### **Summary**

The population of violists who chose to participate in this study comprised a sample of contemporary university level viola teachers in the United States. They came from and taught in a variety of locations, identified themselves as primarily violists, and had a variety of teaching experiences, both in terms of the years they had taught and the number of students in their viola studio. Based on the experience and diversity found in this sample of participants for Part I (Viola Background) of the Survey, it was concluded that this was a good group to provide the information needed to determine that which is discussed in Part II (Viola Pedagogy).

For those who began on violin, they ranged in age from roughly 38-70 years old. They had been teaching for an average of 17 years, ranging from new teachers with 6-10 years experience to those with 30 years or more experience. They switched to the viola at various ages, as stated earlier. (See Table 1). These numbers are based on the information they provided for when they began teaching and how long they had been teaching.

The six teachers that started on viola ranged in age from roughly 35 to 47 years old. They had been teaching for an average of 10 years, less than both than the overall average for all participants and the average for violinists. This may indicate that a certain younger generation began on viola, as opposed to those who began on violin, and perhaps

that they were newer to the field of university/conservatory-level viola teaching. Two thirds (66%;  $n = 4$ ) were between 6-9 when they began playing the viola, and the remaining third (33%;  $n = 2$ ) were between 9-12 years old when they began the viola.

Half of participants (50%;  $n = 3$ ) who had originally started on the viola ( $n = 6$ ) had been teaching only for 6-10 years. For the remaining three who began on viola, they had been teaching five years or less ( $n = 1$ ), 11-15 years ( $n = 1$ ), or 16-20 years ( $n = 1$ ). However, most (78%;  $n = 7$ ) of participants who had started on the violin and later switched to viola ( $n = 9$ ) had taught for more than 16 years. Three had taught for 16-20 years, one for 21-30 years, and three for more than 30 years. Only two had taught from 6-10 years. This difference may suggest that older, more experienced teachers in the current sample tended to have started on the violin and switched later to viola, while younger, less experienced teachers may have been more likely to have started directly on the viola.

## **CHAPTER 5: RESULTS**

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore college/conservatory-level viola teachers' perceptions of viola playing and pedagogy. In this chapter, the second half of the Viola Pedagogy Survey (VPS) will be presented and discussed in detail, and supplementary data will be presented in multiple tables. Participants ( $n = 19$ ) answered 12 open-ended questions that addressed the following topics: how they chose the viola as their instrument, what they felt were the biggest differences between violin and viola technique, how they would teach a violinist who wanted to switch to the viola, important viola repertoire in terms both of what they teach and what they studied, remediation, mentors, lesson planning, goals for the students, and who they believed were the most influential violists. Research Questions will be included in the text as headings for clarity.

### **Research Question 1: Switching to the Viola**

#### **Reasons for Choosing or Switching to Viola**

Research Question One asked, "How did participants come to play and teach viola?" The first category participants discussed was choosing or switching to the viola (in relation to VPS Question 4, Part 1). Participants had a variety of reasons for why they initially chose the viola, and most gave more than one reason in response to the question. The participants gave several different responses as to why they chose or switched to the viola. These were chamber music, suggestion of teachers or peers, sound qualities, physical aspects, and playing opportunities (see Table 2).

Participants stated most often that their choice was intrinsically linked with chamber music (42%;  $n = 8$ ). They gave reasons such as they loved the sound of the



viola and enjoyed playing the viola in chamber music, or simply that they preferred the viola's role in chamber music. One participant's switch to viola was precipitated by an invitation to join a string quartet as a violist upon completion of his graduate studies.

Nearly a third of the participants indicated they chose the viola at a teacher or friend's suggestion (32%;  $n = 6$ ). Participants mentioning the sound of the viola as the impetus for the switch (32%;  $n = 6$ ) gave reasons such as "the dark, rich tone color of the viola," or, "a friend played it and I was drawn to the character and sound of the instrument," or, "I liked the range of the instrument, the dark, rich tone color and the inner harmony lines."

Those listing physical aspects of playing the viola (21%) as motivating factors mentioned being more comfortable on the viola, especially as a taller person or someone with longer fingers. To revisit a previously quoted response, one wrote:

Table 2

Cited Reasons for Choosing or Switching to the Viola

42%	chamber music (inner harmony lines)
32%	suggestion of others (teacher/peers)
32%	sound qualities (sound/range/tone color)
21%	physical aspects/comfort
21%	playing opportunities

Note. Participants ( $n = 19$ ) gave multiple answers, thus percentages sum to more than 100%.

I was a senior at the Interlochen Arts Academy, not particularly happy with my violin lessons and noticed that my friends were enjoying their viola lessons. I was also getting taller and lankier, and the violin was awfully small! So I took viola as a secondary instrument and enjoyed it very much.

One participant objected to the term of switching; he called the conversion to violist less a switch to viola than “a change in concentration” since he was already playing viola in orchestra and chamber music, in addition to playing violin. This perspective could indicate that he did not see the viola as distinct, but slightly different.

A participant who had pursued violin studies in high school related a story about how he attended a summer music festival as a violist, not intending to leave violin playing behind; he remarked that the experience of playing the viola was so enjoyable that the switch became permanent. Two separate participants related stories about how they were recruited to play for the Suzuki Institute at Stevens Point at the University of Wisconsin as violists while in their teens. Neither had started out as a violist, one had been a pianist and the other a violinist, but both became violists as a result of their experiences there.

### **First Instrument’s Influence on Current Teaching Style**

Participants were asked to discuss if they thought that having initiated their string studies as either a violinist or a violist had influenced their own current viola-teaching style (see VPS, Part II, Question 4). Of the 18 participants who answered this question, 11 (61%) agreed that it had influenced their teaching, and gave details why. Four (22%) did not think it had influenced their teaching, and two (11%) had no opinion. Of those who responded, nine (50%) had started their own studies on the violin, six (33%) had

begun on viola, and three (16%) had started on the piano.

Of those participants who stated that their initial instrument influenced their current teaching style, many also said that they focused more on sound and technique with students than other participants. Other areas that they mentioned they pay more attention to were inner voices, harmonies, and repertoire choices. One of the participants who had started on violin and switched later to viola noted:

I remember being displeased at viola sounds I frequently heard when I was a violinist. As [a] result [I] searched for something better, [and] made discoveries which help with current students. [I] also use many violin-learning techniques and apply them to viola (suitable) [*sic*].

This participant also emphasized how working to improve his own viola sound can help when teaching methods of good sound production to students.

Some teachers who had started on the violin and later switched to the viola advocated studying violin first to improve technique and to learn repertoire:

...Developing a facile technique on violin can be an advantage—you develop fast reflexes without the weight/burden of the size of the viola—the solo repertoire is also, of course, much richer on the violin, and learning a body of violin repertoire can expand a student's musicianship.

This participant may perceive the viola as more “difficult” version of violin.

Another participant who started on the viola first advocated the introduction of viola to violin students to help enhance their violin playing skills:

...I am convinced that playing the viola CAN help violinists refine technique. They have to get better at it and when they go back to violin I see that they improve from

what they learned on viola.

Again, this may imply that viola is perceived as “more difficult” than violin by this participant.

Some participants were “switch hitters,” or played both instruments, such as one who felt that having also been a violinist was beneficial to their viola students as it could help them better understand their own instrument:

Because I play both I have a physical perspective that I can communicate to the student. Offering comparisons even when the viola student doesn't have experience on the violin, gives him/her an idea of how their instrument works and how they can best approach it.

One former violinist felt that viola students could be at a disadvantage for intonation:

Often the reason why student violists play out-of-tune is because they have to develop their aural skills by playing thirds of chords or harmonies that are not easily recognizable/hard for beginners to understand aurally how they fit into harmonies...

Although some teachers felt it was beneficial to play violin first, some didn't. Others felt the inverse to be true, that viola playing could help violinists to improve technique. There seemed to be a lack of consensus on this issue amongst these participants.

Some participants felt that violists should play viola-specific repertoire. One who began on viola herself stated that as a result, “I don't teach violin transcriptions.” By refusing to play transcriptions from the violin repertoire, she was stressing the importance of the viola's own rich repertoire, apart from the violin repertoire. This may have more

to do with her self-assigned identity as a violist. However, another participant who had switched to viola stated that because she had started with the violin:

My taste in repertoire runs to the more virtuosic, but I am aware of when to say “no” to things that absolutely do not work on the viola, because I know how much better they work on the violin.

One participant who started on viola suggested that students learn about and listen to other violists whom they admired to help develop their own viola sound, and advocated encouraging students to love the sounds produced by the C string:

Having always been a violist, I tend to be very eager to get my students into true viola repertoire. Since so many of the early books are essentially ones for violin that have been adapted, I make it very clear to my students when we are playing music truly written for the VIOLA. I also make sure to have them playing on the C string as early and as much as possible. ([The C string is] a string which is virtually unused in many beginning method books [that focus on the A and D strings].) I also try to teach them about the legacy of the viola as an instrument and how important players have helped to transform the viola world into what exists today. It is far more unlikely that they will come across the names of famous violist in newspapers, etc., than famous violinists. Instead of just feeling "weird" and not-a-violinist, I try to instill a feeling of pride in the history and legacy they are a part of.

Here, the participant identified strongly with being a violist, and this informed her pedagogical methodology in terms of selecting repertoire she assigns to students, and by encouraging students to enjoy the distinctive sound of the viola. As a teacher and promoter of violists, she encouraged students to explore historically significant viola

works and recordings through pursuing scholarship of viola history. However, it should be noted that for a third of participants ( $n = 6$ ), they either saw little to no effect on their style of teaching in conjunction with their own first instrument or had no opinion on the matter.

### **When to Encourage Violin Students to Switch to Viola**

Participants' own experiences of switching to viola could have influenced how they determine when and how to switch their students to viola. Participants ( $n = 19$ ) stated the circumstances under which they would encourage a student who was currently a violinist to make the switch to viola (VPS Part II, Question 2). Two main findings emerged: the physical attributes of the student and student's love of or interest in the viola's sound (see Table 3).

Almost half of experts stated that they would encourage a student to switch due to his or her physical attributes (47%;  $n = 9$ ). One participant wrote, "If a violinist has large hands and long arms, and is discouraged by the violin, I will often suggest it." Experts often cited physical attributes such as height, size of their hands, length of their arms, or length/thickness of their fingers, as being advantageous in that they could help students to play the viola more naturally than the violin, and/or could aid in their successful mastery of the viola.

However, two of participants warned that they did not think the decision should only "be dictated by size," but by a student's preference for or love of the viola. One acknowledged that a small female student could be drawn to the viola while a tall male could prefer the violin, and that it should be up to them to decide based on personal preference, not physical size.

Table 3

Cited Reasons to Encourage Students to Switch to Viola

<i>n</i>	<u>Reasons</u>
9	physical attributes of the student
9	student's love of the instrument's sound, affinity displayed for lower sounds and/or an aversion to the E string
6	student's personality/temperament
4	attraction to the inner voice/supporting role of the viola (in ensemble), wanting to be part of a team, rather than in the spotlight as a soloist
4	desire to play, enjoys the viola, student's preference to switch
2	viola playing enhances violin playing
1	intelligence of individual
1	viola could be a good instrument for a late bloomer
1	viola could be good for a student who was discouraged by the violin
37	Total responses

Note. ( $n = 19$ ).

The second finding that emerged was a student's love of the instrument's sound (47%;  $n = 9$ ). Some felt this to be the most important impetus for a switch to the viola. "I think it has to do more with matters of the heart than size in my experience." "The violinist should have a desire to play the viola, or at least demonstrate a capacity to learn to love it." Others wrote that a student should switch based on a proclivity for the timbre of the viola, as in a preference for lower pitches.

A third of experts also mentioned the potential viola student's temperament as a good reason to switch (32%;  $n = 6$ ). Among these reasons, "being willing to play as part of a team" was also cited as an important attribute to look for in students interested in

wanting to make the switch. One participant wrote they would encourage the switch, “mostly due to [the student’s] personality (drawn to the sound and role that viola plays in performance).” Several experts cautioned against switching for the wrong reasons, including the student who says, “I’m sure I can make more money as a violist than a violinist!” One participant lamented that sometimes students are made to switch regardless of their personal preference, e.g. “the less capable violinists are often lured by offering them a higher spot if they agree to switch to viola.”

Another participant mentioned she would encourage a “late starter/bloomer” to switch to viola since, “the violin is still a more competitive instrument at a younger age.” A couple of participants pointed out that learning the viola is “good knowledge,” and can also refine playing technique for violinists. They suggested that these violin students may not make the full switch from violin to viola, but can potentially enhance their playing on the smaller violin through study on the viola.

One finding that emerged was how adamantly participants stressed that switching be a discussion prompted by the student. One wrote, “I encourage them...but I don’t try to convert players.” Some participants felt that if a student expressed a “love of viola,” then they were ready for the switch to viola. “A violinist should have a desire to play viola or at least demonstrate a capacity to learn to love it. Personality is also important.” It seemed that these teachers did not want to convert violinists into violists. Instead, they were interested in helping those who already wanted to make the switch of their own volition, based on comfort and proclivity for the sound of the viola.



## **Research Question 2: Viola Technique**

The second Research Question asked, “Do participants believe that there are playing techniques unique to the viola, and if so, what are they?” Subthemes of this section are often in conjunction with the parenthetically suggested categories from the survey (e.g., Bow Arm, Bowing, Left Hand, Shifting, Vibrato, Set-up, Repertoire, Personality). This discussion will be divided into participants’ views on the topics of (a) right hand, (b) sound quality/tone production, (c) left hand, (d) tension, and (e) physical aspects of playing the viola, (f) ways to implement remediation, and (g) other areas of less consensus.

### **Right Hand**

**Use of bow weight/arm weight in the right arm/hand.** Participants discussed bow hand and bow arm most frequently (89%;  $n = 17$ ) when citing perceived technical differences between the violin and viola (see Table 4). In general, more weight and less speed were recommended to achieve a more viola-like sound. Participants offered precise descriptive terms in relation to the student’s treatment of the bow, citing balance, depth, leverage, and weight. The following terms demonstrate the variety of ways participants described the use of the bow: bowing, bow technique, bow grip, bow hold, bow arm, more natural arm weight, slower bow, bow strokes, bow speed, bow placement, bow use, and bow depth. Whereas some participants referred to more bow weight or bow leverage, and one called for “sensitivity in bow balance,” others preferred to talk about “bow weight application to compensate for longer onset time.” Another suggested, “more energy to produce sound.”

Table 4

## Areas of Technical Differences Between Violin and Viola

<u>% of experts who cited</u>		<u>frequency</u>
Right Hand		
89%	bow hand/arm	17
37%	tone/sound production	7
	bow weight	4
	slower bow speed	3
	variety of stroke/articulation	2
	more string crossings	1
	bow arm extended position	<u>1</u>
		35
Left Hand		
79%	vibrato	15
	left hand/arm	9
	LH fingerings	3
	shifting/bigger shifts	2
	LH speed/facility	<u>1</u>
		30
Physical Challenges		
37%	physical demands/tension-related issues	7
	ergonomic set-up	2
	posture	<u>1</u>
		10
16%	Different Aural Approach to Chamber Music	
	playing inner voices vs. primary voices	
	role of support	2
	intonation	<u>1</u>
		3
47%	Other	
	personality	5
	repertoire	<u>5</u>
		10
Total responses		88

Note. ( $n = 19$ )

**Slower bow speed and contact point.** More than half (56%;  $n = 10$ ) of participants discussed the speed of the bow as a perceived technical difference between the violin and viola. Fewer (22%;  $n = 4$ ) addressed adjusting the contact point as a perceived main point of difference between playing the violin and playing the viola (see Table 5). The need for using slower bow speed and for adjusting the contact point when playing the viola versus the violin was illustrated by the responses of several of the expert participants. One wrote, “Slower bow speeds on the viola, esp[ecially] on lower strings... Use of contact points is usually a bit different from what they are used to on the violin. Generally, not as close to the bridge.”

Another teacher stressed that the contact point was key to playing either instrument well:

...[T]racking/contact point should be a similar issue on both instruments (meaning not that the contact point is always in the same place on both [instruments] just that the importance of being able to control one's contact point is equally important and transfers pretty equally to both instruments).

It should be pointed out that such differences could also occur between different violas and with different bows. One must adjust to those slight differences in bow weight and finding the correct placement of the bow for each particular combination of bow and instrument.

“Slow down the bow speed; use more weight in the bow; relearn how to initiate sound (get the string to speak).” As another way of discussing the contact point, a different participant added that a student’s control of the bow was important in terms of learning how to start the sound on the viola in order to get the string to ring.

In general, there was more consensus about the use of slower bow speeds when playing the viola as opposed to the violin, but they had less agreement about whether the contact point was approached differently for both instruments to create a good sound. This could be because the VPS did not specifically ask about contact point, or it could be that most participants did not consider this the most important aspect of sound production in terms of differences between the two instruments.

### **Sound Quality/Tone Production**

When discussing how former violinists must adjust their technique to create a more violistic sound, participants gave specifics about how to use arm weight effectively while drawing the bow (VPS, Part II, Question 4). When discussing perceived technical differences between violin and viola, more than a third of participants (37%;  $n = 7$ ) discussed tone/sound production (see Table 4). As with the previous discussion of right arm issues, the category of using more right arm weight was also discussed in relation to the creation of viola sound/tone production (72%;  $n = 13$ , see Table 5). When discussing sound in terms of resonance, one participant wrote that it is important to get the string ringing to open up sympathetic overtones on the viola, which another participant described as, “very easy [to achieve] on the violin, [but] takes more thought and work on viola.”

Some emergent findings had to do with how participants felt that the viola was less perfect than the violin. (See “Emergent Findings” section later in the chapter.) This may have to do with its imperfect construction design, discussed by Tertis (1947, p. 219), who sought to help design and make new violas that were both playable in terms of size, but large enough to make a good sound. One way he set out to remedy this shortcoming

was by making a wider body instead a longer body. That way the string length was still manageable, but the projection qualities could be enhanced.

Normally, a viola is constructed in such a way that it is more naturally muted than the viola or cello. Such factors inhibit the projection of the sound being produced, without any fault of the violist. As such, a violist that is constantly aware of the need to counteract the dimensional limitations inherent in the proportional design of the instrument may be more apt to succeed at creating an optimal sound.

Another aspect of the discussion on sound was the role of the violist in chamber music or in orchestra. One participant stated that as a middle voice in the orchestra and string quartet, violists should enjoy their unique harmonic role and thus possess an “aural orientation to inner voices” (See Table 4). Other participants cited that in addition to enjoying playing the middle of the chord violists should also have an affinity for the lower versus higher register of the musical spectrum. “Violists tend to like deeper sounds, and want to fill out the chord, not be the primary voice at all times.” Often, violists acknowledge their affinity for being the middle voice in the string quartet or orchestra.

The viola is often perceived as an instrument of the middle, an inner voice in chamber music or orchestra (Boyden and Woodward, 2014). In fact, much of the part writing for viola in quartets and in orchestra follows this sort of role-playing of the supporting line. It is more rare for the viola to stand out, or for the section to be highlighted with the melody or with a solo line. If the viola part is highlighted, it is often to play a sort of eulogy or song of mourning. For example, Gabriel Fauré’s *Requiem* in D minor, Opus 48 (1888/1893), has two sections of violas, but omits violins except for a

solo violin in the third movement, while highlighting a solo viola part in the final movement. The solo violin is also optionally used in the last movement, where it doubles and then continues the solo viola line. Later, alternative editions of this work added violins elsewhere as well (Legge, 2005). An orchestral viola section solo line may also be doubled by another section, such as the second violins or cellos for support (Boyden and Woodward, 2014). Violas also may be doubled by a bassoon or trombone for an inner harmony in the orchestral setting. While violins often have the melody line in string quartet or orchestra, it is less common for violas to carry the main melody.

Participants also cited the viola's supporting role in a typical composition, such as the following:

Viola is not as practical as a solo instrument (even despite great strides in repertoire and technical ability), so musicians that are more interested in the inner workings of compositions (playing the inner voices in orchestra and/or chamber music) tend to be better fitted to the viola.

This aspect of being a supporting player or inner voice in an ensemble will be discussed further in relation to the personality of the violist (under "Emergent Findings"). It is also another reference to the viola as an "imperfect" relation to the violin.

## **Left Hand**

**Vibrato in left arm/hand.** Vibrato was the most discussed left hand topic, and participants referred to vibrato in relation to three main areas: participants' perceived technical differences between violin and viola, how to create a more violistic sound for those who switch, and remediation for freshman level college students. (The latter two topics will be discussed later in the chapter, under "Research Question 3"). Most often,

participants suggested a wider, slower vibrato, but some also stressed the need for a variety of types of vibrato in order to play successfully.

The term vibrato comes from the past participle of the Italian verb *vibrare*, to vibrate. According to Flexner (1988) vibrato is a pulsating effect, produced in singing by the rapid reiteration of emphasis on a tone, and on bowed instruments by a rapid change of pitch corresponding to the vocal tremolo (Flexner, 1988). This definition may be modified slightly, in that the following discussion will analyze to what degree of frequency that pitch fluctuation occurs.

Participants discussed vibrato most frequently (79%;  $n = 15$ ) when citing perceived left hand technical differences between the violin and the viola (see Table 4). Most participants discussing remediation also perceived vibrato (59%,  $n = 11$ ) as a necessary area to address for incoming college students (see Table 6). In addition, most participants recommended that students employ a wider and/or slower vibrato (72%;  $n = 13$ ) on the viola than they had previously used on the violin (see Table 5) when addressing students who had switched to the viola and wished to make a better viola sound.

Participants suggested that the optimal top speed for a viola vibrato may be slower than that used for a violin vibrato. As one participant wrote, “Vibrato - more dense and focused, sometimes wider and slower.” Other comments included suggestions such as, “Vibrato needs a different kind of care, due to thicker strings, viola response,” “Vibrato will be slower on the viola,” or more specifically, “Vibrato can be slower and wider to help draw out the sound.” When discussing vibrato, one participant recommended applying a “wider range of amplitude” for viola vibrato, meaning wider, as opposed to a narrower or tighter vibrato typical of violinists. A different participant

agreed, giving a detailed description of exactly how they felt it should be different on the viola and insisting that a violist's vibrato should be both slower and wider, "vibrato variance is critically different, particularly to the slow/wide side." By wide "variance," the participant was most likely discussing the waving back and forth of the fingers and hand during the motion of vibrato, as well as the pitch fluctuation of the note.

In general, these experts suggested that in most cases an adjustment of vibrato should be made that allows for the employment of a slower and wider vibrato for the viola than for the violin. However, some acknowledged that while in general viola vibrato may be slower and wider than violin vibrato, overall, having more than one type of vibrato at their disposal is the goal for any student. These vibrato suggestions do not necessarily mean that there is a single type of vibrato that should be implemented by all musicians, regardless of the type of music being played or the character of the music. Areas of agreement included weight of bow arm and slower bow speed, wider, slower vibrato, sound, and tension issues. Vibrato and tension issues will be addressed next in this chapter.

**Other left hand issues.** Other left hand/arm issues (47%;  $n = 9$ ) cited included a variety of aspects, such as position adjustment, hand balance, the use of  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> positions, and differences between violin and viola in terms of fingerings. The following are some dictionary definitions of terms used in this next section:

Shift: a change in hand position on the fingerboard of a stringed instrument (Flexner, 1988).

Position: any of the places along the neck of a stringed instrument where the hand is placed to finger a particular range of notes (Flexner, 1988).



Most participants gave a list of possible areas, as they did for right hand issues. For example, one wrote, “LH – more balanced hand weight distribution necessary – can't reach for notes, esp. 4th finger – wider steps, bigger shifts, larger shoulder to negotiate means smarter choices in position and balance.” This may have to do with the size of the viola. Violists tend to play bigger instruments than violinists (see Chapter 1, the Instrument), thus the distances between fingers are larger for any given interval, and similarly greater between positions for any given shift.

Another wrote, “Fingerings are similar, but I use more string crossings and less shifting on the viola than on the violin.” This is something that Primrose mentioned as well in his treatise on scale playing. Whereas a violinist may prefer an extension of the fourth finger to reach for a diminished fifth, a violist is more likely to favor crossing strings. Violists may also favor open strings over a shift, where the opposite may be true for a violinist.

Still another wrote about differences in technique as “fingering adaptations for ‘impractical fingerings.’” This participant may be pointing out that what works for violinists may not work equally well for the violist; fingerings that fit and sound well on each instrument can differ. This participant seems like she is advocating for “something different” for violists when it can improve the end result as well as feel more comfortable.

### **Physical Aspects of Playing the Viola**

In addition to the sonic differences that exist between the violin and the viola, surveyed experts perceived differences in terms of how they are physically played. Some participants noted the physical challenges related to the size of the instrument (37%;  $n =$

7) as being a main technical difference between violin and viola technique (see Table 4).

Participants detailed the following physical adjustments or challenges involved in executing proper viola technique. One wrote, “larger shoulder to negotiate means smarter choices in position and balance...Set-up – more important to find relaxed, ergonomic positions to relieve shoulder and neck fatigue.” Another discussed the “challenges of holding an upper string instrument that is large,” implying the size, weight and circumference of the viola. Similarly, another wrote, “...the physical challenges involved in playing the viola, which is naturally larger, and is harder to navigate in higher positions.” Another participant complained, “Set up on a full size viola with wide bouts is hard to balance on the clavicle.” One stated, “I think there are anatomical differences resulting from the size of the viola. The entire point of position is to allow for a free, relaxed movement around the instrument. The size of the viola necessitates variations to allow for this flow.” This is a difference that is due to construction and dimensions of viola. Still another discussed, “Posture: again, due to larger instrument, we must take care of our bodies (and again, not that violinists don’t: but we can’t be casual about it...).” Perhaps this participant is referring to the larger size of the viola potentially causing additional strain.

Although the topic of size may seem an obvious difference, the larger size of the instrument and the need for more energy to play the viola were among the examples the participants provided when they mentioned physical aspects or challenges of playing the viola as opposed to the violin. The dimensions of viola seem to be an issue both sonically (how they produce the sound) and physically (how they navigate the instrument) for players.

Other differences cited by experts in terms of size included the length of the viola's fingerboard, which is longer than the violin's. This additional length requires bigger shifts to be executed by the player's left hand to move between positions on the fingerboard, as well as larger distances between each half step and whole step played in a scale.

Experts cautioned that care must be taken not to injure the hand or arm in stretching the fingers to reach big intervals on the larger fingerboard of the viola:

I feel that left hand should be mostly the same – if the viola is not too big for the student. An instrument that is too big lends the need to "alternative" left hand techniques just to manage it and also often to injury.

To balance the hand properly on all strings in all positions, or to have a good position of the left hand frame, the viola should not be so large as to be unwieldy. Why wouldn't violists just settle for playing a viola that is identical in size to the violin in order to be more comfortable? Many, including Tertis, would argue that it would not sound like a proper viola. A viola cannot be too big to manage, but neither should it be too small for the necessary depth and color of sound. Tertis (1947) discussed how "enormous old instruments" that were "excessively difficult to handle" were in part responsible for giving "the viola a name for clumsiness" (p. 219). In some cases when a viola is too big, players must constantly re-adjust their left arm by swinging their elbow under the instrument in order to reach a fourth finger on the C string or to shift to an upper position around the bouts. This can cause undue back and arm muscle strain over time. Participants urged students to have a "proper set-up for ergonomics" in relation to playing the viola, to avoid encountering future problems with possible arm, back, or

shoulder pain. This may be where the real differences lie, and where the changes to playing technique stem from.

**Counter arguments: Technique is similar or the same.** In counter argument to those participants who perceived technical differences between the violin and the viola, five participants stated that they felt the technique was mostly the same or similar between violin and viola; however, some would qualify their statements. For example, participants wrote comments such as “Left hand mostly the same, if viola is not too big for the student”; “Fingerings similar”; “Concept of sound production [is different], otherwise the same”; and, “Left hand similar.” Still another went into more detail:

I think they are similar, but on violin you can get away with cheating in a way that you can't on viola. The viola demands that you use arm weight properly for bowing. A violinist can get away with using the index finger for a little longer, but I also believe that same violinist will sound better if they use the arm weight properly. While it is enormously helpful for a violinist to have a wide range of vibrato and many colors, the viola again demands it.

This participant noted that violin and viola technique were similar, yet pointed out how subtle differences in technique in terms of bow weight, fingerings, and vibrato can be adjusted to better suit the viola. They also talked about the viola having needs that you can't argue with, perhaps suggesting that the viola is more difficult than the violin.

### **Research Question 3: Viola Pedagogy and Methods of Implementing Remediation**

Research Question Three asked, “Do participants believe that there are pedagogical techniques unique to the viola, and if so, what are they?” Participants also discussed the use of more bow weight (72%; n = 13) and slower bow speed (56%; n =

10) most frequently as ways to help former violin students gain a more violistic sound (see Table 5). In addition, some participants suggested adjusting the contact point (22%;  $n = 4$ ), although one noted that they would treat contact point similarly for either the violin or viola. However, it should be noted that if a future study were to be conducted that focused on participants who switched from an upper-stringed to lower-stringed instrument, similar comments might occur, as switching to a bowed string instrument with lower pitched strings (e.g. from viola to cello) would require similar adjustments.

When discussing remediation, most participants also cited right hand technique (79%;  $n = 15$ , see Table 6; VPS Part II, Question 7) as an area they addressed with incoming college students. In relation to right hand remediation, participants used phrases such as “poor off-string strokes,” “bad bow hand,” “bow stroke inadequacies,” “distorted bow hold,” “bow grip...too high on the stick,” “bow control,” “not balanced.” However, it should be noted that if a similar study were to be conducted about violin players, many violin instructors might state similar findings when working with incoming college-aged violin players.

Table 5

## Methods to Achieve a More Violistic Sound for Former Violin Students

<u>% of experts who cited</u>		<u>frequency cited</u>
	Right Hand/Arm	
72%	weight of bow arm	13
56%	slower bow speed	10
22%	bow contact point/placement (not as close to bridge)	4
	RH differences	1
	RH pinky needs to be on stick and active	1
	bow balance	1
	Left Hand/Arm	
72%	wider/slower vibrato	13
	LH position/set-up	3
	bigger shifts	1
	LH speed/facility	1
	LH finger percussion	1
	different LH fingerings	1
	left arm has to swing under shoulder (of viola) more	1
44%	Sound Quality/Tone	
33%	velvety dark sound	6
	open up resonant overtones/ringing	2
	tone/sound production	1
11%	Physical Differences	
	ergonomic set-up	1
	posture	1
56%	Other	
	more attention given to inner harmonies/inner voices	3
	awareness of...	
	color	1
	blend	1
	focus	1
	intonation	1
	listening to other violists to cultivate sounds they want	
	to emulate	1
	gaining better proficiency with reading the (alto) clef	1
	learning viola-specific repertoire	1
	Total responses	72

Note. ( $n = 18$ )

Participants' other bow-related suggestions for those who switched to viola included, "more aggressive bow approach to start string [ringing]," "different bow depth/speed," and "proper use of arm weight." Some participants replied with instructions that they might give to a student, "Weight, weight, weight! Slow the bow speed, add articulation and get the string ringing. Very easy on the violin, but takes more thought and work on the viola." Others talked about balance between both left and right hands, "they must learn to work with weight, balance in the right hand, balancing left hand more over the 3[rd] finger," "Use of the bow quite different involving more weight and 'leverage' navigation." Just as tension may be unintentionally transferred from one hand to the other, correct balance of weight may be sought simultaneously in the left and right hands to create the optimal viola sound (Reel, 2006). One should also take into account that some of these suggestions may be based on a particular teacher's general style, and may be not used merely as remediation techniques applied to those switching from violin. Other right hand topics discussed were slower bow speed, contact point and tone production.

When discussing remediation, and the most common remediation areas encountered with incoming college-aged violists, the topic of sound was also discussed, but in a different way. This time the discussion was more in terms of the students' sound as it related to intonation (63%,  $n = 12$ , Table 6). Describing remediation areas for students with intonation problems, one teacher put it as "the inability [of the student] to hear in a key." Another teacher acknowledged that the source of the intonation problem is important for the teacher to pinpoint in order to learn how to help the student, as it "can be hearing related or tension [related]."

Table 6

## Cited Areas of Remediation for Viola Students

<u>% of experts who cited</u>	<u>Remediation Area</u>	<u>frequency cited</u>
89%	Tension-Related Issues	
	general tension	5
	RH/bow hold	6
	LH/vibrato	4
	shoulders	1
	chin	1
79%	Right Arm/Hand/Bow Technique	
53%	RH/right arm/bow hand/ bow	
	technique/bow control	10
	bow stroke/articulation	2
	bow balance	1
	frog work	1
	spiccato	1
	Left-Hand Technique	
59%	shifting	11
59%	vibrato	11
	left hand	5
	Sound	
63%	intonation	12
	tone/sound	3
	instrument issues: students must	
	adjust approach when playing	
	viola, i.e. size, tension; students	
	often play incorrectly sized and/or	
	poor quality violas	3
	musicality	1
68%	Other	
	physical aspects related to viola	
	playing	9
	speed/facility	1
	how to practice:	
	rhythm	2
	scales	1
	Total citations	91

Note. ( $n = 19$ )



One third ( $n = 6$ ) of participants suggested that students to try to produce a darker, more characteristic viola sound to help students who switch from violin to viola (see Table 5). One suggested in order to improve upon a violist's method of sound production it is important first listen to other violists in order to find a beautiful viola sound to aspire to. "Listening – they need to hear the great violists and cultivate preferences for sounds that excite them and they want to emulate..." Especially for students, this might aid in the discovery of differences between the respective sounds of the violin and viola.

A few participants focused on the sound that the transfer from arm weight to bow weight on the string would ultimately produce. As for earlier topics, they often described this as bow weight or arm weight. "Teach them to use arm weight in their bow playing for a more open, full, rich sound," or, "Bow arm is the biggest difference – violists use more arm weight...to...creat[e] a beautiful sound." One participant agreed, stating the difference between viola and violin was, "[M]ostly tone production – not really the 'how' but instead 'how much,'" implying that it was up to the player to adjust the weight of the bow according to the instrument being played. However, such an adjustment may not be so much a specific technical difference as a pedagogical philosophy of how to apply technique for a good bow stroke and a good sound. This mental image of how to create a good sound could be of use to any string player.

As an alternative term to bow weight, one participant articulated how a student may implement the use of bow weight by calling for the use of the "underside" of the string:

[Students should think about] drawing the bow in a different way to produce a big, rich sound. They have to understand that they are drawing the bow across a cylinder and must pull the underside of the string – not just the topside.

This could be a really effective way of getting a student to pull the sound out of the string. Perhaps it has to do with the intent behind the action, as the bow becomes really connected to the string with this image in mind, and may create the feeling of a rich sound that then develops into one. However, this image is one that could be implemented by a violin teacher as well.

These findings also related to participants' remediation methods for students who switch to viola (see Tables 4 and 5; VPS Part II, Question 3). When discussing technical adjustments to use for both students who switch to the viola (VPS Part II, Question 3) and for incoming freshman level viola students (VPS Part II, Question 7), similar findings were also noted. However, participants placed more emphasis on tension issues (89%;  $n = 17$ , see Table 6) when discussing remediation.

In order to create and enhance the violist's sound for the student who has switched from violin, one participant encouraged students to adjust their "vibrato first and foremost, slowing down bow speed opening up resonance/sympathetic overtones."

Another participant wrote:

...violists... have to think more often about creating a beautiful sound. The violin is physically more perfect than the viola, so violists have to work that much harder to create a great tone....The longer string length on viola is far more important to creating a clear, ringing sound...

As mentioned above, a student should keep in mind that to create a good tone on the viola, one must combat the viola's imperfect construction proportions in comparison to violins.

As demonstrated above, experts' opinions on remediation areas (Table 6) may be

compared to their opinions on perceived differences between violin and viola technique (Table 4). They may also be compared to experts' opinions on how to create a violistic sound for those who switch (Table 5). Comparison of these three tables may show connections between the many suggested areas of remediation with both the perceived areas of technical differences between violin and viola, as well as with suggested ways to obtain a more violistic sound for those who switch. A more quantitative future study could conduct statistical analyses for similar types of correlations, although that was not done in this case. Areas of agreement included weight of bow arm and slower bow speed, wider, slower vibrato, sound, and tension issues. Vibrato and tension issues will be addressed next in this chapter.

It may be that these similarities stem from the fact that the above topics are also those most commonly worked on by any string teacher. Whether for a beginner violist or for someone who switches to viola in college, the techniques involved with controlling the bow, creating a good sound, creating a good vibrato, and playing without tension will be issues to contend with.

Keeping the hands loose and relaxed helps to create a good vibrato for either instrument and may facilitate adjusting to the viola from violin playing. One teacher wrote about how vibrato is sometimes an issue when students switch from violin to viola, "Sometimes vibrato but a good violin vibrato (one that can be varied and is flexible) usually transfers easily to viola. It is the weaker violin vibratos (not able to vary speed, too stiff) that don't transfer well." This teacher implied that you must start with a healthy and relaxed violin vibrato technique to if you want it to transfer it to a good viola vibrato. She also implied that variety of speed and absence of tension are important for executing

vibrato successfully on either instrument. Stiff and inflexible vibrato should be remedied for either violinists or violists.

Some teachers agreed and wrote they were unsatisfied with the mastery of simply one type of vibrato, but called for “the necessity of using a wide variety of vibrato” for their students. However, one participant made the caveat, “while it is enormously helpful for a violinist to have a wide range of vibrato and many colors, the viola again demands it.” She made a distinction that for viola, a variety of vibrato colors and styles were imperative. One could argue that this is true of violin as well, but she made the distinction between the two instruments in this instance.

One participant wrote about listening to other violists’ use of vibrato to decide what kind to use and how to sound more like a violist:

Through listening, [students may] discover some of the vibrato differences on the thicker strings and learn to increase their possibilities. They need to learn that vibrato is not just a physical habit, but a sound they are wanting to make, something they already strongly conceptualize...

According to this participant, viola students may need to conjure up an aural image of the desired type of vibrato sound and then produce that specific sound, rather than just making mechanical adjustments without using aural imagery to guide the nature of those adjustments.

More than half of surveyed participants cited the left hand technique of shifting (59%;  $n = 11$ ) in relation to remediation (see Table 6). To describe shifting problems when discussing remediation, one teacher related, “A lot of them don't understand that a finger must stay on the string, albeit lightly, during the shifting process (except from an

open string).” However, it should be noted that such shifting issues, as described above, may also apply to any young string player.

## **Tension**

When participants discussed specific perceived areas of technical differences frequently needing remediation in collegiate violists, they referred to a provided list of parenthetical topics including vibrato, shifting, tension-related issues, intonation, or physical challenges, as in dealing with the size of viola. The most important remediation areas discussed were tension-related issues (89%; see Table 6). As one participant wrote, “tension is the biggest problem both in left and right hands – and often in shoulders and chin as well.” Another mentioned the problem as being simply, “tension with bow hold.”

In relation to tension, one teacher stressed, “tension is another big issue, and I take it VERY seriously. I don't want physical problems to hamper students. I teach a very ergonomic way of playing to avoid injury and increase flexibility and freedom.” Physical aspects of playing the viola, interrelated to tension issues, were discussed as a topic among participants’ responses. These will be discussed in the next section.

**Physical alterations due to size of instrument.** A third of participants (n = 6) discussed the importance of healthy habits in relation to positioning or holding the viola both in terms of the categories of Left Hand and Physical Differences (see Table 5). Merely holding the viola up on the left shoulder for a long performance can be a struggle for some people and can cause strain, which can lead to both short-term and long-term problems. Thus, learning to avoid injury is not only an important component of playing the viola, but also of teaching the viola. As one participant wrote in response perceived differences between the violin and viola, “Posture: again, due to larger instrument, we

must take care of our bodies (and again, not that violinists don't: but we can't be casual about it...)." It would be interesting to probe this participant further about why she felt this to be so. She may be implying again that the larger size may cause physical repercussions down the road for those who do not stretch or take breaks in order to give muscles a rest, and thus overstrain themselves, leading to injury.

Participants suggested ways to play the larger viola in a healthier manner in terms of keeping muscles relaxed. Participants gave suggestions of physical adjustments that must be made to play the viola more comfortably, like "left arm has to 'swing' even more in order to get around the shoulder [of the viola]." By this swinging, the left arm is able to get under the instrument to navigate left hand fingerings around the fingerboard of the viola, which is larger than that of the violin.

For those with shorter left hand fingers or smaller hands, reaching high notes or over to the C string is especially challenging, as it only complicates the task of reaching with the left hand. One participant discussed the adjustment and rebalancing that a person with smaller hands may need to make in order to play all the notes on the viola within a given position on the fingerboard, while another simply spoke of larger-handed players being better suited to the viola. Another even suggested going back to the violin for those with small hands. Her comments allude to the perception that you have to be "made" for the viola. She also underlined a theme among participants of the viola being similar to, but more difficult than, the violin:

I think [the violin and viola] are similar, but on violin you can get away with cheating in a way that you can't on viola... Set-up on a full size viola with wide bouts is hard to balance on the clavicle. For me, this all seems easier to figure out

on the fiddle, particularly for petite females...

A better suggestion might be to find a good-sounding smaller viola, or to find an ergonomically shaped viola that facilitates reaching up to the highest register without causing distress to the left hand and arm muscles. Size will be discussed further at the end of the chapter, under Emergent Findings. The next section will discuss how to attempt to make some of these problems better.

The majority of participants recommended more than one kind of remediation technique to help their students (see VPS Part II, Question 7B). Many participants felt that remediation could best be employed through a combination of traditional techniques and physical techniques, as mentioned above. The variety of types of specific methods used by participants suggests a lack of agreement regarding a single preferred method of remediation. This may point to the fact that many teachers prescribe remediation methods that are tailor-made to each student's needs, and no one method fits every situation.

Participants were asked to describe specifically how to implement remediation with incoming freshman viola students once it was determined that students needed to improve their technique (see VPS, Part II, Question 7B). These experts were given a list of parenthetical suggestions in the question to help them elaborate on the specifics of how they would go about remedying the deficiencies in the students' technique. This list included musical techniques, physical techniques, or non-musical approaches, such as Alexander Technique or Yoga. Although the answers were guided by teachers' experiences with their own viola students, some of their suggestions were also applicable to remediation issues with students of other stringed instruments or to general music

students.

Not surprisingly, many participants advocated the use of some traditional string pedagogy techniques, the most popular of which were to have students play open strings (33%;  $n = 6$ ), scales (33%;  $n = 6$ ), and to a lesser extent, etudes (11%;  $n = 2$ ). One teacher made a list of etudes, while another wrote about how etudes can be used as alternative repertoire for those in need of remediation:

...if the student does not buy into the fact that he/she needs remedial instruction, then going backwards can often be very demoralizing. In that case, you have to disguise the fact that you are "going back to the basics" by using various out of the ordinary etudes/pieces (meaning the student has no idea where they fit into the grand scheme of rep/etude sequencing). This is often frustrating for the teacher because you have to use rep[ertoire] that is often unfamiliar and also often less desirable just to hide your intention from the student to keep them on board.

This same teacher pointed out that remediation can be difficult for the student emotionally:

The hardest part about remedial teaching (at all levels) is the emotional reaction of the student. If the student is open minded and truly understands the need for "moving backward" to move forward, then the process is easy. You can go back as basic as needed (open strings, easier pieces, etc).

A few participants suggested that the teacher analyze how a students' execution could be improved upon by looking at their particular problem area, like vibrato, shifting or bow use (11%;  $n = 2$ ). One teacher suggested that students remove vibrato for



intonation until the notes in question have been successfully improved and are in tune.

Most participants recommended the use of some kind of physical techniques. A third of teachers (33%;  $n = 6$ ) discussed working to release tension through relaxation. More than a third (39%;  $n = 7$ ) gave suggestions such as, “simplify the problem until the new goal is incorporated.” By “keeping things simple,” and “going back to square one,” students would have a better chance of “building better technique from ground up.”

Two teachers recommended physical therapy techniques as a form of remediation. For example, one participant suggested an exercise where a double-jointed student could “crumple large wads of newsprint” paper to exercise hand joints (an exercise initially suggested by a physical therapist). Another teacher wrote that it was important to do “anything that helps [the student] to move more freely and to be in touch with feeling/function.”

More than half of responding experts (56%;  $n = 10$ ) stated that specialized approaches/techniques could be helpful in implementing remediation. Some participants recommended non-musical techniques such as Yoga, Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais, or Pilates to help their students combat this tension, although there was no consensus as to the best of these methods of intervention. One participant suggested that she tried to help students by creating “exercises to recreate tension to extreme then consciously release it.”

There were few areas of consensus, however, and physical techniques suggested most frequently by experts were to encourage students to release tension through relaxation (33%;  $n = 6$ ), and to a lesser extent, to be aware of their posture (11%;  $n = 2$ ). These suggested remediation techniques may not differ greatly from those used in general

violin pedagogy and/or for other music students. If a parallel study were to be conducted surveying opinions of violin teachers, then comparisons could be drawn more conclusively as to exact differences and/or similarities in terms of tension. However, for the present sample of viola teachers who responded to this survey, the attention paid to physical release of tension and posture indicated participants' increased awareness of and attention paid to tension as it arises from the difficulties of playing a larger instrument. The extra strain exerted on the muscles in order to navigate around the viola should not be underestimated.

### **Goals for Students**

Nineteen participants discussed possible goals for their students. Nearly half of participants felt that it really depended on the individual and the strengths of the student (42%;  $n = 8$ ). They wrote comments such as, "For them to become gainfully employed in a manner that caters to their strengths," and, "It depends on the context for each individual. In an ideal situation a good student will become a good teacher, with proper guidance." Another wrote, "It completely depends on the student, what motivates them, and what their abilities are. There is no one ideal career path that fits everyone."

Some of the teachers stated that would suggest traditional career options to their students such as becoming teachers (26%;  $n = 5$ ), orchestral musicians (16%;  $n = 3$ ), and/or chamber musicians (16%;  $n = 3$ ). Some suggested alternative career paths. These teachers may have been implying that most musicians cannot rely solely on one source of income, but must juggle teaching, playing, and perhaps other pursuits. Some of the alternative career paths suggested by participants included music education (as opposed to teaching the viola in the studio), arts administration, new music performance,

recording, arranging, and being supporters of music. Only two (11%) included the option of viola soloist as a possibility. “I rarely would encourage any student to become a soloist as that is not a viable option in our field.”

A few participants were quite pessimistic about the future prospects of their viola students as in comments such as, “there are enough unemployed orchestral musicians out there,” and, “none of my current students can look forward to getting an orchestra job.” Another cautioned, “I never encourage a pursuit of music, they must want it on their own,” alluding to the difficulty of supporting oneself as a musician. However, there are many potential reasons for this participant’s response, which may or may not be related to viola. It could also be that he was referring to the proficiency of certain musicians at this particular school of music.

One wrote:

I have no expectations. My goal is for them to find their right place in the world.  
(And sometimes, that is NOT in music!) I prepare them to be the finest artist they can be, and to have the necessary tools to move forward in their lives, confident that they know how to learn on a continuing basis. [*sic*]

This participant seemed to be a bit more hopeful than some of his peers. He seemed confident that serious music study has at least given his students the tools to succeed in life, no matter the direction it may ultimately take them, whether in viola performance or not.

### **Section Summary**

Separating the various technical topics from one another seemed difficult for most participants. As such, most mentioned more than one area of perceived difference

between violin and viola, often blending several topics together. Many participants gave a list, while some went on for several paragraphs. When discussing perceived central differences between violin and viola technique in relation to creating a strong viola tone, one discussed a combination of bow technique, vibrato, mastery of fingerings, and the use of aural imagery. Another participant discussing tone wrote, “We really must create our own tone – the viola (unlike the violin) simply can’t respond as immediately and needs real care with all bow strokes, speeds, placement, etc.” This is yet another instance of describing the viola as difficult or finicky, which will be discussed more under Emergent Findings. The fact that most participants made such lists and gave detailed responses demonstrates that there is not only a single element that is perceived as being different, but for most participants it was the combination of factors that indicated a measure of perceived difference between the two instruments.

#### **Research Question 4: Viola Repertoire and Etudes**

##### **Viola Repertoire**

The fourth Research Question for this study was, “Do participants believe there is a core viola repertoire and/or a standard set of etudes for viola?” Surveyed experts were asked to read a viola repertoire list provided on the VPS (see Appendix D), and to indicate 1) which pieces they worked on most frequently, 2) which pieces were the most important in their training, and which pieces they would 3) omit from, or 4) add to the list. The resulting list of viola repertoire suggested by experts was rich and varied in its scope (See VPS, Part II, Questions 5A, 5B, 5C, and Table 7).

A total of 85 responses were provided of the most frequently prepared works, consisting of 46 compositions by 24 composers (see Table 7). Although the repertoire

choices of participants varied widely, the majority agreed on the immense impact of the Six Cello Suites by Johann Sebastian Bach, transcribed for viola, which were cited by as being worked on most frequently (68%;  $n = 13$ ). Other works that received many citations in this category included Bloch's *Suite Hebraïque* and Hindemith's Sonatas ( $n = 10$ ; 53% each). Participants also mentioned the following works often: the three major viola concerti of Walton, Bartók, and Hindemith; the Handel (Casadesus), Hoffmeister and Telemann concerti; and the sonatas of Clarke and Schubert (47% each;  $n = 9$ ) (see Table 7).

The wide variety of responses indicates that this culture-sharing group of viola teachers may still be trying to define themselves in terms of an established body of repertoire that is accepted by a majority of people. The area of consensus for the Bach Cello Suites seems clear, yet they are a borrowed piece of repertoire, a series of works originally for cello. Most other pieces participants suggested were quite varied in scope. Whereas a similar query of repertoire sent to violinists might have produced a larger number of more similar works, the wide dispersal of participants' answers here demonstrates that there is still not a viola canon that is set in stone.

Participants also identified pieces that were considered the most important in violists' training, providing a total of 58 responses. Responses consisted of 42 compositions by 21 composers (see Table 7). The most popular selection was J.S. Bach's Six Cello Suites, transcribed for viola, cited by more than two-thirds of participants (68%;  $n = 13$ ), as in the previous question. Other works that received many citations in this category included the Bartók Viola Concerto, the Brahms Viola Sonatas, Op. 120, and the Shostakovich Viola Sonata (47% each;  $n = 9$ ). In some cases, multiple works by

the same composer were grouped into a single category (see Table 7). This is true for viola sonatas written by Hindemith and Brahms.

Most of the participants noted that the J.S. Bach Six Cello Suites were not only the most important piece to them in their training, but also among those pieces worked on most frequently. A discrepancy emerged between the number of people who had studied the Bach Cello Suites themselves (89%;  $n = 17$ ) and the number that taught them to their students (68%;  $n = 13$ ). One possible explanation has to do with the level of their students. Although many college viola teachers probably would have studied and performed all six suites, some may not believe that the Bach Cello Suites are beginner material, and thus would only give the Suites to students who were at a more advanced level.

For any pieces participants felt should have been omitted from the suggested viola canon, a total of ten pieces or groups of works were suggested, consisting of 15 works by seven composers (see Table 7). Mentioned most frequently as appropriate for omission were the J.S. Bach Sonatas and Partitas for Violin, transcribed for viola, Vaughan Williams' Romance, the J.C. Bach Concerto, and the Handel Concerto (each piece received three citations, or 16%). Those who felt the Bach Sonatas and Partitas should be omitted either did not study them themselves or felt that they did not translate well from the violin. While participants felt certain pieces that they suggested for omission were less important in terms of the viola canon of repertoire, they often suggested others that in their opinion should have been included instead.

Pieces listed in Table 7 that received many citations for both the category of "would omit from list," as well as the category of "worked on most frequently" and/or

the category of “found most important in their training,” may indicate some disagreement among teachers. In some cases, these pieces may not have been in fashion when the participant was studying viola, or may simply not yet have been composed (e.g., the Shostakovich Sonata was composed in 1975). As one wrote, “Shostakovich didn't exist when I was in school. Rebecca Clarke was not really on the radar...Otherwise, all of the above.” From the above statement, one may deduce that this participant may have been on the older end of the age spectrum than the average participant, since she had completed her studies prior to 1975. The generations may thus distinguish teachers from one another as to which pieces of repertoire they studied or did not study at their conservatory.

For those who had different opinions as to what they assign to their own students, for example the Handel (Casadesus) or J.C. Bach, a possible explanation may be that some teachers have grown tired of assigning the same pieces to their students, and they simply now look for alternative repertoire.

Expert viola teachers suggested many pieces viola repertoire that they would add to the VPS list, for a total of 119 responses. Among the pieces that participants felt were missing from the list and should have been included were various works by Bruch (Romance, *Kol Nidre*, Double Concerto), and Reger's Solo Suites for Viola. These pieces number among the most important in repertoire for the instrument, and participants seized the opportunity correct the list and add their own favorite pieces. In all, participants suggested 57 works by 47 composers (see Table 8).

Table 7

## Expert Viola Teachers' Viola Repertoire Responses to VPS List

worked on most frequently	found most important in their training	would omit from the list	
13	17		J. S. Bach Six Cello Suites, BWV 1007-1012
10	8		Bloch ( <i>Suite Hebraïque</i> for viola, <i>et alia</i> )
10	7		Hindemith Viola Sonatas (Opus 11/4; 25/1)
9	9		Bartók Concerto for Viola and Orchestra
9	5	3	Clarke Sonata for Viola and Piano
9	7	3	Handel/Casadesus Concerto for Viola in B Minor
9	8		Hindemith <i>Der Schwanendreher</i> Viola Concerto
9	6	1	Hoffmeister Viola Concerto in D Major
9	8		Schubert <i>Arpeggione</i> Sonata
9	7		Telemann Concerto for Viola and Orch. in G
9	5		Walton Concerto for Viola and Orchestra
8	4	3	J.C. Bach Viola Concerto in C minor
8	9		Brahms Viola Sonatas, Opus 120, nos. 1, 2
8	9	1	Shostakovich Viola Sonata, Opus 147
7	5	3	J. S. Bach Gamba Sonatas, BWV 1027-1029
7	7		Stamitz Viola Concerto no. 1 in D Major
6	4	3	J. S. Bach Violin Son. & Part., BWV 1001-1006
6	5		Enesco <i>Concertstück</i> for Viola and Orch.
6	5		Hindemith <i>Trauermusik</i>
6	6		Schumann <i>Märchenbilder</i> , Op. 113
6	3	3	Vaughan Williams Romance for Viola and Piano
5	6		Mozart <i>Sinfonia Concertante</i> in E-flat
3			Contemporary composers/Repertoire*
2	1		Reger Three Solo Suites for Viola*
2			Repertoire for upcoming concert*
1			J.S. Bach Viola Concerto in E-flat Major (reconst. from BWV, 169. 49, 1053)*
1	1		Eccles Viola Sonata in G minor*
1			Hummel Fantasy for Viola*
1			Martinů Rhapsody Concerto for Viola*
1			J. Schubert Viola Concerto*
1			Telemann <i>Fantasias</i> *
	1		Vaughan Williams Suite for Viola, Orchestra*

Note. ( $n = 19$ ) $n$  = participants that responded to this question

\* repertoire not included on the Viola Repertoire List provided in the VPS

Blank spaces indicate no entry made for a listed piece in that category



Pieces by the same composer were sometimes grouped together for calculating composers mentioned most often by participants including Bruch, Hummel, Penderecki, and Vieuxtemps (see Table 8). I felt that since participants frequently named these composers, the theme of their popularity among participants should be underlined in this Table in terms of importance, so I did not spread out the responses into separate works. The breadth of this list of repertoire by various composers may be of interest to teachers searching for alternative pieces to assign to their viola students, or for those who may wish to program something new when preparing their own viola recital.

As an aside to the topic of modern repertoire, one participant thought that violists' performing of such works was imperative for furthering the cause of the importance of the viola. The participant felt it was the duty of viola teachers to expose young players to modern compositions, so that they could absorb their distinct musical languages early on, rather than waiting until college to do so:

A violist needs to get familiar with and love modern music and the inner voice.

These all need to be cultivated when they are very young. [It is] hard to learn to love Hindemith when you are 20.

Her response also implied that if you wait too long to expose young viola players to 20th and 21st century composers, their eventual comprehension of and affinity for modern repertoire may be delayed, rather than nurtured.

Table 8

## Viola Repertoire Suggested by Expert Viola Teachers to Add to the VPS List

9	Bruch	<i>Romance, Kol Nidre</i> , Double Concerto
9	Reger	Three Solo Suites for Viola
7	Penderecki	Viola Concerto, Cadenza
6	Hummel	Fantasy, Sonata for Viola
6	Schnittke	Viola Concerto
6	Vieuxtemps	<i>Capriccio</i> , Elegy, Viola Sonata
5	Bloch	<i>Suite Hebraïque</i>
5	Bowen	Phantasy, Sonata, Concerto #1
5	Milhaud	Sonatas (No. 1), <i>Quatre Visages</i> for Viola
5	Vaughan Williams	Suite for Viola and Orchestra
4	Berlioz	Harold In Italy
4	Martinů	Rhapsody Concerto for Viola
4	Mendelssohn	Viola Sonata
4	Piston	Viola Concerto
4	Rosza	Viola Concerto
3	Britten	<i>Lachrymae</i> for Viola
3	Weber	Andante and Hungarian Rondo
2	Bach	Brandenburg Concerto no. 6
2	David	Viola Concerto
2	Glinka	Viola Sonata
2	Hindemith	<i>Kammermusik</i> no. 5
2	Hovhaness	<i>Chahagir/Talin</i>
2	Rochberg	Viola Sonata
2	Telemann	Fantasias
2	Vivaldi	Cello sonatas
1	Bax	Viola Sonata
1	Bliss	Viola Sonata
1	Rebecca Clarke	short pieces for Viola
1	Fauré	Elegy for Viola
1	Forsythe	Viola Concerto
1	Glazunov	Elegy
1	Handoshkin	Viola Concerto
1	Harbison	Viola Concerto
1	Gordon Jacob	short pieces
1	Michael Kimber	Baroque Suite
1	Kreisler	Various transcriptions
1	Kodaly	Adagio for Viola and Piano
1	Ligeti	Viola Sonata
1	Lars-Erik Larson	Concertino
1	Martin	Ballade
1	Gösta Nystroem	Viola Concerto “ <i>Hommage à la France</i> ”
1	Oiston	Concerto

Table 8. Suggested Repertoire (Continued)

1	Paganini	<i>Sonata per la Gran viola</i>
1	Quincy Porter	Speed Etude
1	Shulman	Theme and Variations for Viola and Orchestra
1	Vanhal	Viola Concerto in C
1	Zelter	Viola Concerto

Note. ( $n = 19$ )

$n$  = participants that responded to this question

Participants' responses included pieces from a variety of difficulty levels and eras, including difficult 20<sup>th</sup> century works by Britten, Penderecki and Schnittke, Romantic style works of varying difficulty by Bax, Berlioz, Fauré, Glinka, Paganini, and Vieuxtemps, Classical works by Mendelssohn, and Baroque era works of slightly less difficulty of Telemann and Vivaldi.

The variety of repertoire suggests that while some teachers are working most often on the earliest concerti (e.g., Telemann is often the first concerto students will play), others teach the most difficult concerti (e.g., the technically challenging Bartók), indicative of the various levels of their students at the institutions where they currently teach. A more rigorous program at a top conservatory would be more likely to regularly teach the most challenging repertoire.

The variety of experts suggested compositions for the viola could also point to the growing body of repertoire written for the viola in the latter 20<sup>th</sup> century, although they suggested primarily European and American composers. Some of the most recent works included the Penderecki Viola Concerto, the Schnittke Viola Concerto, and the Ligeti Viola Sonata, which were all written in the last 30 years. The variety of composers and compositions cited could also simply reflect the fact that different viola teachers from

different geographic locations studied with different teachers, each with their own personal favorite pieces. However, the Bach Suites seem to be agreed upon by nearly all. One participant argued that, “It is not the pieces that are important, it is how they are taught, the sequence, and the how they are reinforced through scales, etudes, etc.,” reminding us that it is the way that teachers prepare their students to play the repertoire with a good foundation that is important. Without this technical base, they will not be able to effectively convey the emotion and character of the works being performed.

Approximately half of all experts reported having worked the viola concerti of Bartók, Hindemith, and Walton with their students (47%;  $n = 9$  for all three works). However, when experts cited which pieces were most important in their own training, responses varied more widely. More participants had worked on the Bartók (47%;  $n = 9$ ) and Hindemith (42%;  $n = 8$ ) than on the Walton (26%;  $n = 5$ ). The dates of composition of these concerti could have been a clue, but all were composed mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. Chronologically, the Walton (1929) was not the most recent but rather the oldest composition of the three. Hindemith’s *Der Schwanendreher* was written and premiered in 1935, and the Bartók Concerto, unfinished at the composer’s death in 1945, was premiered in 1950. It could be that of this particular sample of experts, fewer had studied Walton. If the study were to be replicated, the same might not be true for a comparable sample of their peers.

The viola does not have five main concerti that everyone would acknowledge as the main staples of the repertoire such as the Beethoven, Brahms, Bruch, Mendelssohn and Sibelius for the violin. We as violists have fewer great works, with only three main concerti, but we also have a constantly expanding repertoire. Perhaps I am merely re-

emphasizing the perception of the viola as having a lesser number of great works than the violin, but it is something to consider. The number of works suggested by participants is encouraging in that we may yet have new masterpieces to discover and delight audiences with. Hopefully this repertoire list, that has culminated from the shared responses of participants and was derived from their own experiences, may aid those who are searching for a wonderful piece to add to their repertoire but have not yet found it.

### **Viola Etudes**

Research Question Four asked, “Do participants believe there is a core viola repertoire and/or a standard set of etudes for viola?” Participants stated which etude books they regularly assign to incoming freshman-level viola students, as well as examples of specific composers and exercises they use in lessons (see Table 9). In all, 91 entries were provided by 19 participants, resulting in the identification of 30 different composers’ books of etudes currently being used by viola teachers.

The majority of teachers cited Kreutzer’s 42 Studies (63%;  $n = 12$ ). More than half of the teachers cited Ševčík’s books of etudes, opus numbers 1, 8, and 9 (53% combined;  $n = 10$ ). More than a third of teachers cited Mazas (*Etudes Speciales*), Fuchs (Fantasy Etudes and Characteristic Studies), and Schradieck (School of Viola Technique) (37% each;  $n = 7$ ). For composers who wrote more than one book of etudes, such as Ševčík and Fuchs, these etudes were entered under the composer’s name in a single category. Although most of the etudes presented in Table 9 were transcribed from the violin for viola, some, like the Fuchs, were written specifically for the viola.

Table 9

## Etude Books Suggested by Expert Viola Teachers

<u>Teachers citing</u>	<u>Composer</u>	<u>Title</u>
12	Rodolphe Kreutzer	42 Studies*
10	Otakar Ševčík	School of Violin Technics, Op.1, Op. 2 (bowing), Op. 8 (shifting ex.) Op. 9 (double stops)*
7	Lillian Fuchs	Characteristic Studies, Fantasy Etudes
7	Jacques-Féréol Mazas	30 <i>Etudes Speciales</i> , Op. 36, Bk. 1*
7	Henry Schradieck	School of Viola Technique, Vol. 1*
5	Bartolomeo Campagnoli	41 Caprices, Op. 22
4	Jacob Dont	24 <i>Etuden</i> *
4	Carl Flesch	Scale System*
4	Jacques Pierre Rode	24 <i>Caprices</i> *
3	Ivan Galamian	Scale System*
3	Nicolò Paganini	24 <i>Caprices</i> , <i>La Campanella</i> , <i>Moto Perpetuo</i> *
2	Demetrios C. Dounis	Daily Dozen
2	Johannes Palaschko	12 Studies, 20 Studies, 10 Concert Etudes
2	Robert Starer	Rhythmic Notation, Basic Rhythmic Training+
2	Franz Wohlfahrt	40 Selected Studies, Op. 45, 54, 74*
2	Harvey Whistler	Introducing the Positions, Vol. 2*
<u>cited only once:</u>		
	Antonio Bruni	25 Studies
	Charles Castleman	Fingerboard Memory (Scales)*
	Jean Louis Duport	21 Studies for Cello**
	Federigo Fiorillo	31 Selected Studies
	Friedrich Hermann	Technical Studies, Op. 22
	Richard Hofmann	Melodic Double Stop St., Op. 96*
	H.E. Kayser	36 Studies, Op. 20, Op. 43*
	William Magers, Harold Rusch, & Frank Spinosa	The Artist's Studio for Strings Bowing Development Studies
	Emanuel Ondříček	Superior Finger Exercises*
	Hans Sitt	24 <i>Etuden</i> , Op. 32*
	Giuseppe Tartini	The Art of Bowing*
	Alfred Uhl	20 Studies
	Berta Volmer	<i>Bratschenschule</i>

Note. ( $n = 19$ ). \*Transcribed from Violin \*\*Transcribed from Cello +Suitable for any instrument

An additional fourteen composers' works were mentioned only once (nevertheless, these works constituted 15% of all entries, and were therefore included in the table so as to present a complete list of etudes). The number of etude books mentioned only once could indicate that teachers' preferences vary widely and may be based on participants' varied experiences when they were studying the viola. The location of the participants' training and with whom had they studied was likely to have influenced their choices of literature and etudes as well. It is clear that all teachers utilize an array of etudes in their teaching, as participants mentioned a total of 91 books of etudes. Participants mentioned some composers, such as Bruni, Magers, Ondricek, and Starer, less frequently than Kreutzer or Ševčík. It is possible that their books of etudes may be more specific in scope or technical areas addressed. A more standard book might be used for a majority of students, whereas a specific book may be used to target problem areas for a particular student. It could also be that some of these books of etudes were simply less widely known. Other possible explanations could be that teachers assigned the books that they had studied themselves, or that geographical location of study has influenced which etudes are assigned.

For the breadth of compositions and etudes suggested, it is clear that the young viola student has many works to explore. If one kind of etude book does not work for a particular student, this list may serve as a resource for the teacher looking for alternative suggestions. It is encouraging that so many compositions and composers were offered in terms of suggested repertoire. It means that participants took the time to think through their answers, and to reflect on the pieces that were both meaningful for them as students,

and that are important in their studio teaching. Those who disagreed with the list also helped to underline which pieces may be less important in the viola canon.

### **Expert Viola Teachers' Time Allotment for Exercises, Solo and Other Repertoire**

Participants approximated how much lesson time they spent with a typical student on any or each of the following parenthetically suggested topics, including scales, etudes, orchestral excerpts, solo repertoire, chamber music, warm-ups, or other exercises (VPS Part II, Question 9).

More than half of teachers let their individual student's needs or the solo repertoire being studied guide the lesson (61%;  $n = 11$ ). More than half of teachers also spent more time on repertoire and less on scales and etudes (61%;  $n = 11$ ). One third of teachers stated that they divided time more equally among subject matter during lessons, including work on scales, etudes, solo repertoire, and orchestral excerpts (33%;  $n = 6$ ). A third of teachers stated that they felt chamber music/excerpts should be taught separately (33%;  $n = 6$ ). While some teachers divided time allotment more equally among scales, etudes, solo repertoire and excerpts, others recommended half of lesson time or more be spent on solo repertoire, especially for upperclassmen or graduate students. This participant gave a breakdown of lesson time spent with students:

[U]nderclassmen: scales, etudes, technical work 30-40 minutes, repertoire 20-30 minutes. [U]pperclassmen: scales, etudes, tech work 20 min; repertoire/excerpts 30-40 minutes. Grad[uate]: scales, etudes, etc minimal; rep[ertoire]/excerpts the majority of the lesson.”

Another wrote, “Typically younger does more technique, older more repertoire, but not always.”



Teachers who felt orchestral excerpts and chamber music should be dealt with in separate classes, not in the lesson, argued that they did not have a great deal of time left to devote to these areas during the single hour of weekly private lesson instruction. This might vary based on the school curricula. A few made the caveat that they would work on excerpts if the student was preparing for an orchestral audition, or if they were specifically asked by the student for help in that area, for “a specific question about fingering, bowing, phrasing, interpretation, etc.” One teacher mentioned that she specialized in teaching orchestral excerpts, but she was the exception.

As not everyone agreed regarding excerpts in lessons, it seemed to have to do with time constraints, and also the level of the student. The most important finding seems to be the proclivity of teachers to assign students according to the present needs of the study, and to tailor fit the etudes to help with repertoire being studied.

### **Research Question 5: Viola Mentors**

#### **Viola Mentors**

Research Question Five asked, “Do participants believe there were important 20<sup>th</sup> century viola pedagogues? If so, who were they, and what was unique about their teaching?” The fifth category participants discussed related to viola mentors (See VPS Part II, Questions 8 and 11). Participants were asked who their main mentors had been and who had most influenced their current pedagogical style. Whether they cited violists, violinists or other musicians could indicate different findings. If most mentors mentioned were violinists, it could underline the fact that many participants had started as violinists and switched later. If most mentors mentioned were violists, it could show the beginning of a family tree of violists teaching violists. Yet, there could be many other reasons for

this as well. If teachers of other instruments were named, perhaps it would point to important music teachers from other disciplines who had influenced current viola teachers through chamber music study.

Eighteen participants cited 55 mentors or influential teachers and two chamber ensembles that they considered to have been the main influences on their current pedagogical style. Of those influential teachers cited, most were mentioned only once. This makes it difficult to draw conclusions. It could indicate both that participants had cited their own teachers, and that everyone had had more than one teacher whom they felt was important in their training. It could also indicate that participants studied at different schools and in different states, and therefore data reflect a variety of answers that were as varied as their own experiences.

The five mentors who received mention by more than one participant are each listed in Table 10. For the present sample of expert violists, the most frequently named influential teachers were Heidi Castleman (16%;  $n = 3$ ), Karen Tuttle (16%;  $n = 3$ ), Kim Kashkashian (11%;  $n = 2$ ), George Neikrug (11%;  $n = 2$ ), and Mimi Zweig (11%;  $n = 2$ ). One teacher professed to be self-taught, “I primarily learned from watching and experimenting on my own. The most influential teachers I had were chamber music coaches from well-known chamber groups who taught me about music, phrasing, tone, etc.” The two chamber ensembles cited were the Juilliard String Quartet and the Cleveland String Quartet. (See Appendix E).

Table 10

Prominent 20<sup>th</sup> Century Viola Mentors/Teachers Cited by Experts

<i>n</i>	<u>Name</u>	<u>School/Orchestral Affiliation</u>
3	Heidi Castleman	Juilliard School, Cleveland Institute, Eastman, International Music Festival at Aspen (Studied with Tuttle)
3	Karen Tuttle	Juilliard, Peabody (Studied with Primrose)
2	Kim Kashkashian	New England Conservatory, (Studied with Tuttle)
2	George Neikrug (vc)	Boston University
2	Mimi Zweig (vln & vla)	Indiana University

Note. (*n* = 19)

vc = Cellist

vln & vla = Violinist and Violist

(See Appendix E for a full list of mentors, including those mentioned only once)

Appendix E presents additional background information for the 55 teachers (when the teachers did not supply it themselves), so that most mentors/teachers may be identified by school, orchestra, or summer festival affiliation, as well by the time period of their lifespan, if available. When possible, Appendix E lists teacher's teachers, (e.g., studied with Tuttle) providing a view into three generations of viola teachers.

Appendix F presents the estimated geographic location of participants' mentors, according to their affiliation with a university/conservatory, professional orchestra, and/or chamber ensemble. The most frequent location was the Northeast; this corroborates the data in Table 1, in which 53% of participants stated that they studied primarily in the Northeast.

### **Most Important Viola Teachers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Many violin pedagogues from the 20<sup>th</sup> century may be well known to current

string teachers, but perhaps fewer viola pedagogues may spring to mind for string musicians other than violists. If participants could cite viola pedagogues whom they felt were equally as influential as violin pedagogues, this could be a useful list for the general string pedagogy community. Participants were asked if they believed there were important but perhaps opposing forces in 20<sup>th</sup> century viola pedagogy, as had previously existed between violin pedagogues.

Those viola pedagogues nominated more than once by participants included Karen Tuttle (35%;  $n = 6$ ), Heidi Castleman (24%;  $n = 4$ ), and Robert Vernon (18%;  $n = 3$ ) (See Table 11). In all, participants ( $n = 17$ ) cited 22 teacher's names (and one chamber ensemble). The answers often reflected participants' own viola teachers, whom they nominated as having been the most influential teachers and mentors.

Two participants held the view that there exists a dichotomy between those who had studied with orchestral violists versus those who had studied with chamber ensemble violists. On one hand is the Karen Tuttle Coordination school, on the other hand are the orchestrally trained viola pedagogues such as Robert Vernon. The Tuttle school would include Tuttle's former pupils such as Karen Ritscher and Kim Kashkashian, who continue the teachings of the Coordination Method, and represent teaching more from a chamber music infused background. The orchestrally trained violists would include, in addition to Robert Vernon, other former and current principal violists of major orchestras, such as Joseph de Pasquale, William Lincer, and Milton Katims. One participant stated this view tersely as, "Tuttle vs. Vernon." The other participant went into more detail:

Table 11

Most Important Viola Teachers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Nominated by Experts

6	Karen Tuttle*
4	Heidi Castleman*
3	Robert Vernon
2	Lilian Fuchs
2	Ivan Galamian
2	Kim Kashkashian*
2	Donald McInnes
2	William Primrose

Note. Participants ( $n = 17$ )

Names mentioned only once have been omitted

Names also mentioned in Table 10

Not in 20<sup>th</sup> century pedagogy, because most of the established viola teachers were former violinists and therefore should be considered offshoots of violin pedagogy. However, 21<sup>st</sup> century it is possible we will see a split of camps; on the one hand the Karen Tuttle “coordination” school (Tuttle, Ritscher, Kashkashian, Irvine) that yield[s] students who go on to mainly teach in universities and play recitals and do more workshops on coordination *versus* the violists of the orchestrally trained pedagogues (dePasquale, Lincer, Katims, Vernon) [who] go on to play in big orchestras and teach on the side and do not subscribe to the “coordination” technique as it has now developed.

Other participants, however, did not see a dichotomy between two rival pedagogues towering above all others. They wrote statements such as, “Rivalries are less likely in the viola world,” and, “Violists are friends...I don’t see opposing schools just lots of great people and information sharing.” One wrote:

There are influential performers and possibly in 50 years time we will look back and see the influence of a current pedagogue, but currently there is no one having a sweeping influence on the profession.

Some seemed neutral on the subject, writing simply, “Not yet.” While the results of this survey are more exploratory in nature, for this particular sample of viola teachers who responded to the survey, Karen Tuttle appears to emerge as having been one of the most influential pedagogues among 20<sup>th</sup> century violists.

In addition, one of her students, Heidi Castleman was named often enough to emerge as second most influential for this sample of experts. The fact that a Tuttle student also emerged could add the strength to argument of the influence of Tuttle’s Coordination Method for today’s violists. Combining participants’ citations for Tuttle with those of her former pupils Castleman and Kashkashian, a combined 71% ( $n = 12$ ) cited the Tuttle “coordination” school. Also, as a pupil of Primrose, the strength behind Tuttle’s lineage was further underlined. It should be noted that within this single sample of experts, three generations of the same school of viola playing were named.

On the other hand, Robert Vernon (b. 1949) was the third most mentioned viola teacher (18%;  $n = 3$ ). He studied with violinists Ivan Galamian and Sally Thomas, as well as with renowned violist Walter Trampler at the Juilliard School. It should be noted that two separate participants nominated Vernon as the opposing school of thought to Tuttle’s. One of these participants in particular suggested that Vernon’s pedagogical emphasis was on orchestral training. In fact, he is one of the leading orchestral violists in the country. For more than 35 years, Vernon has concurrently held the positions of the Principal Violist of the Cleveland Orchestra (since 1976) and professor of viola at the

Cleveland Institute of Music (since 1976); more recently, he joined the viola faculty at the Juilliard School (since 2008).

Some participants opined that current pedagogues must more actively contribute to their own legacies as teachers of viola and they suggested that new viola books should be written for this purpose. For instance, one participant suggested that identification of great pedagogues was difficult because not enough teachers have written books about viola, “It’s too early because most of the great [viola] pedagogues did not write method books.” Another wrote, “Not yet – someone like Karen Tuttle or Heidi Castleman might turn into the first. However, one would need to write a book or somehow document their life’s work...” This indicates the need for more viola books to be written that encompass the pedagogy of current viola teachers and their methods.

Of course, the view of chamber music versus orchestral pedagogues was not unanimous, and only represented two out of 17 participants. One wrote, “Yes, there are several schools of thought. Karen Tuttle, Heidi Castleman, Kato Havas, Atar Arad, Donald McInnes, Robert Vernon spring to mind. Many approach things differently, and address violistic problems differently.”

Of those who did not agree that there were viola pedagogues who were more important than others, one wrote, “The day of towering pedagogues is (in my opinion) over.” Some other teachers felt that pedagogy specifically for the viola does not yet exist, but is still primarily violin-derived. For example, “most of pedagogy is still taken from the violin world, at least that which has been written about.” Another disagreed with a separate viola pedagogy, “not really, because 20th century viola technique is mostly the result of violinists being trained on the violin and then switching to viola.”

The participants and those they nominated may have been peers, or they might have been master and student. While most were reluctant to name someone as having been the most important pedagogue, more than half of participants (59%;  $n = 10$ ) thought that important viola pedagogues do exist. Some participants suggested that such notable figures may yet emerge in the 21st Century (23%;  $n = 4$ ). In the case of the latter, we may have to wait and see what the next decades bring in terms of new pedagogical innovations and ideas for the field of viola playing. If, for example, five different teachers each approached this task of writing their own viola pedagogy book from their unique point of view, the benefit would be magnified, and the teachings of a few could be shared by all. Or, if another viola scholar were to codify the most recent viola repertoire, cite the etudes that they assigned to students in terms of specific technical remediation issues, and to delineate their general teaching methods in terms of technique, current violists would have a clear base from which to move forward in examining current viola pedagogy.

### **Emergent Findings**

While analyzing the participants' responses, some emergent findings came to the fore in terms of their perceptions of the instrument. These were on the topics of personality and how the is viola different.

#### **Personality**

An additional finding suggested by participants included personality and the perception of viola difference. When discussing perceived areas of differences between violin and viola, more than a quarter (26%;  $n = 5$ ) of the 19 participants mentioned personality as a factor in differentiating between violin and viola playing (See Table 4).



Some participants likened one's choice of instrument to one's personality attributes, thereby connecting the instrument to the personality of the player.

On the topic of personality, one wrote, “[Violists] tend to like to be the ‘supporting actor’ rather than the star.” Another pointed out that second violinists play a similar role in chamber music, “the viola and its role are very linked to that of support, color, inner workings: it takes a special personality to love that (and I think the best “2<sup>nd</sup> violinists” have a similar inner-voice skill!)”

For one participant, the emotions and personality of the player were intrinsically linked with their choice of instrument:

For the bow arm, vibrato, and many of the motor skills, the viola requires a little slower response than the violin. As a result, sometimes students with a more aggressive and impatient personality are more satisfied and compatible with the violin, and students who tend to be more methodical and contemplative work better on viola. This is a HUGE generalization. However, even the viola repertoire tends to be more focused towards inner emotions and soulful performance as opposed to much of the standard violin repertoire intended to thrill and elate.

We also need to consider the role of the violist in an orchestra or chamber ensemble. In his book, *Mastery of Music*, Green (2003) devotes a chapter to the viola player. He focused on the personality of the violist and how it is an integral ingredient to the string quartet or the orchestra in terms of its supporting role. He likened the violist to the manager in a business, in that they must get along with all sides, and be the negotiator at times.

Personality issues pertaining to the players of certain types of instruments have

been a previous topic of scholarly inquiry (Chen & Howard, 2004; Conway, 2000; Cutietta & McAllister, 1997; Eros, 2008). The intersectional perceptions of players in professional symphony orchestras, gender perceptions of students in relation to certain instruments, and the affinity for bass versus treble instruments by young musicians were some of the topics discussed by Kemp (1996) in his book about musicians' personalities, *The Musical Temperament: Psychology and Personality of Musicians*. In particular, Kemp discussed antipathies amongst orchestral groups, in terms of the personalities of strings versus brass players in the orchestral setting. For example, he discussed how string players may be more introverted or aloof than brass players. He was also surprised by violists being particularly emotionally stable, in comparison to violinists, in matters of anxiety in conjunction with his research on the personalities of orchestral performers.

As discussed in the section on Instrument Choice in Chapter 1 (Cutietta & McAllister, 1997), there are many variables involved with choosing a particular instrument. It is possible that the choice of the viola could indicate particular personality traits inherent in the player. Among orchestra members, players of different instruments may fall into different types of personalities, based on the role their instrument plays in the ensemble. For example, those who are drawn to a certain woodwind, brass, percussion, or string instrument may not differ greatly from one another; yet, stereotypes associated with each of these groups of orchestral instruments prevail. The soprano register instruments are dealt the most audible and important parts in much orchestra writing, while cellists and violists play more of a supporting role. These types of role assignments in the voicing of a composition may draw certain players to that aspect of playing an instrument, or the pitch range of the instrument may also play a role in

influencing their decision. Although these are generalizations, and personality is not specifically a technical aspect of playing, the discussion of personality emerged as a potential indicator of difference between those who choose the violin versus the viola.

### **How the Viola is Different**

**Less Perfect.** Some other themes that emerged were participants' perceptions that the viola was somehow "less perfect" or "more difficult" than its cousin, the violin. As described by one in relation to differences, "The violin is physically more perfect than the viola, so violists have to work that much harder to create a great tone." As another wrote, as an example of viola as an imperfect relation to violin, "Viola is not as practical as a solo instrument (even despite great strides in repertoire and technical ability), so musicians that are more interested in the inner workings of compositions (playing the inner voices in orchestra and/or chamber music) tend to be better fitted to the viola."

**Size.** In relation to differences in terms of size, one participant stated:

I think there are anatomical differences resulting from the size of the viola. The entire point of position is to allow for a free, relaxed movement around the instrument. The size of the viola necessitates variations to allow for this flow.

Another wrote:

I feel that left hand should be mostly the same – if the viola is not too big for the student. An instrument that is too big lends the need to "alternative" left hand techniques just to manage it and also often to injury.

Another example of similar, but viola more difficult, as well as size:

I think [the violin and viola] are similar, but on violin you can get away with cheating in a way that you can't on viola... Set-up on a full size viola with wide

bouts is hard to balance on the clavicle. For me, this all seems easier to figure out on the fiddle, particularly for petite females...

(Also see previous section on Physical Aspects of Playing the Viola in Chapter 5.)

**Different Identity.** One wrote, “Instead of just feeling ‘weird’ and not-a-violinist, I try to instill a feeling of pride in the history and legacy they are a part of.”

**Difficult.** One participant wrote:

...Developing a facile technique on violin can be an advantage – you develop fast reflexes without the weight/burden of the size of the viola – the solo repertoire is also, of course, much richer on the violin, and learning a body of violin repertoire can expand a student's musicianship.

Another wrote about how the viola is a more “difficult” version of violin, requiring more skill or a different set of skills:

...I am convinced that playing the viola CAN help violinists refine technique. They have to get better at it and when they go back to violin I see that they improve from what they learned on viola.

**More fun.** One participant wrote:

I was a senior at the Interlochen Arts Academy, not particularly happy with my violin lessons and noticed that my friends were enjoying their viola lessons. I was also getting taller and lankier, and the violin was awfully small! So I took viola as a secondary instrument and enjoyed it very much.

He expressed that he thought it would be more fun, and perhaps a means to studying with a different teacher. All of the above positions expressed a notion of the viola being

somehow different, whether it had to do with personality, size, being less perfect, or more difficult, or just more fun.

**Similar.** However, there were some for whom violin and viola were similar, a topic discussed in more depth earlier in Counter Arguments. One participant called his switch more of “a change in concentration” since he was already playing viola in orchestra and chamber music, in addition to playing violin. This perspective indicates that some did not see the viola as distinct, but slightly different.

## CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

### Introduction

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore college/conservatory-level viola teachers' perceptions of viola playing and pedagogy. Participants were randomly selected members of the American Viola Society who taught viola at the university level. An original survey instrument, the Viola Pedagogy Survey (VPS), was designed for the current study. Participants ( $n = 18$ ) received an introductory letter by email with a link to an electronic version of the VPS. Data collection took place through a website called Survey Monkey.

A pilot study ( $n = 5$ ) was conducted prior to the main study in order to test for trustworthiness. Because the VPS was identical for both the pilot and the main study, it was decided to combine the results ( $N = 23$ ). However, because not all participants completed the second half of the survey in its entirety, the final number decreased for Part II of the VPS ( $n = 19$ ). It was then decided to omit data from the surveys that had left Part II blank. Limitations of this study include a small sample size and the length of the survey, which may have caused the attrition of participants; therefore results should be interpreted as being exploratory in nature.

The first section of the VPS focused on the personal information of the participants in relation to their viola teaching and training. The topics covered in Part I were participants' (a) initial instrument; (b) age at which they started playing a stringed instrument; (c) age at which they had begun playing the viola; (d) reasons they had chosen the viola; (e) primary instrument with which they identified themselves, violinist or violist; (f) role or occupation (teacher, orchestral musician, chamber musician, or

other); (g) size of their teaching studio; (h) age at which they had begun teaching; (i) number of years spent teaching; and (j) geographical location of training. The goal of the background questions was to give more insight into the training and experience of each participant.

The second section of the VPS focused on participants' views on contemporary viola pedagogy, including their perceptions in relation to the following topics: (a) perceived central differences between violin and viola technique; (b) when they encouraged a student to switch to viola; (c) what methods they employed to help former violinists obtain a more violistic sound; (d) teaching style and initial instrument; (e) recommended viola repertoire; (f) recommended viola etudes; (g) recommended remediation strategies; (h) who were their most influential mentors; (i) how they divided lesson time among the different topics; (j) what were their goals for students; and (k) who were important violists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, if any.

## **Summary**

### **Part I of the VPS**

Nearly half of participants started on the violin 47% ( $n = 9$ ), while approximately a third began on the viola (32%;  $n = 6$ ). Most had started playing a stringed instrument before the age of 13 (89%;  $n = 17$ ). These were similar to Au's (2007) findings. The age at which participants switched was divided into three main groups: 13 to 15 years old (25%;  $n = 3$ ), 16 to 18 years old (33%;  $n = 4$ ), and 19 or older (25%;  $n = 3$ ). For those participants who had switched to viola, their most frequently cited reasons were sound (42%;  $n = 8$ ) and teacher/peer suggestion (36%;  $n = 7$ ). For the four major viola

pedagogues studied in the first chapter, they had also all begun on the violin, and had had a teacher or colleague suggest their switch to the viola.

All the participants considered themselves to be primarily violists, rather than violinists. Nearly half of the teachers (44%;  $n = 8$ ) had 15 or more students in their current viola studio. Nearly two-thirds of participants (61%;  $n = 11$ ) began teaching viola at the college/conservatory level between the ages of 26 and 33. The length of time teachers had been teaching was divided into three main groups: those that had been teaching six to ten years (28%;  $n = 5$ ), 16-20 years (28%;  $n = 5$ ), and 30 years or more (22%;  $n = 4$ ). Most of the participants received the majority of their formative musical training in the United States. (Only two mentioned studies in Germany). Approximately half of all participants were trained in the Northeast (53%;  $n = 10$ ).

## **Part II of the VPS**

In relation to the second section of the survey, which focused on participants' views on contemporary viola pedagogy, the main discussions were in the categories of five Research Questions, including: (a) reasons for choosing or switching to the viola, (b) viola technique, (c) viola pedagogy and methods of implementing remediation, (d) viola repertoire and etudes, and (e) viola mentors.

For the present study, Shulman's (1987) levels of pedagogical action (comprehension, transformation, instruction, evaluation, reflection, and new comprehensions) may be applied to how teachers replied to the VPS. Participants discussed how they currently teach, how they reflected upon their own experiences as students, and how their previous experiences shaped their current teaching practices.

Shulman's term *Pedagogical Content Knowledge* was also discussed by other



researchers (Haston and Leon-Guerrero, 2008) in relation to music, in terms of how teachers apply “knowledge gained from their performance experiences, or apprenticeship of observation” (p. 1). They also discussed subsequently relating such lessons learned to current situations in the studio as they relate to pedagogical practices.

In relation to choosing or switching to the viola, participants were asked how they initially came to choose the viola, how likely were they were to recommend it to others, and how their choice of viola affected their teaching style. Participants stated most often that their choice was intrinsically linked with chamber music (42%;  $n = 8$ ). Almost half of experts stated that they would encourage a student to switch due to his or her physical attributes (47%;  $n = 9$ ). Those listing physical aspects of playing the viola (21%;  $n = 4$ ) as motivating factors mentioned being more comfortable on the viola, especially as a taller person or someone with longer fingers. Another finding that was discussed was a student’s love of the instrument’s sound (47%;  $n = 9$ ). Some felt this to be the most important impetus for a switch to the viola. Conway’s (2000) article on instrument choice indicated that this is a similar finding in other studies, and the timbre or range of the instrument is a known factor in choosing an instrument.

Nearly a third of the participants indicated they chose the viola at a teacher or friend’s suggestion (32%;  $n = 6$ ). Participants mentioning the sound of the viola as the impetus for the switch (32%;  $n = 6$ ) gave reasons such as “the dark, rich tone color of the viola.”

Seven main findings were discussed by participants in relation to their perceived areas of difference between violin and viola technique. These perceived areas of

difference were right hand, sound quality/tone production, left hand, counter arguments, tension, physical aspects of playing the viola, and methods of implementing remediation.

In relation to the bow, participants used a variety of terms and phrases. Perceived technical differences cited most frequently included bow hand and bow arm (89%;  $n = 17$ ). When discussing how to work with a viola student who was formerly a violinist, participants were asked to identify what problem areas would need to be addressed to give the students a more violistic sound. In relation to this question, participants' most frequently cited perceived technical difference between playing the viola and the violin was bow weight/arm weight. In general, more weight and less speed were recommended to achieve a more viola-like sound. Participants offered precise descriptive terms in relation to the student's treatment of the bow citing balance, depth, leverage, and weight.

When discussing how former violinists must adjust their technique, participants gave specifics about how to use arm weight effectively while drawing the bow to create the desired viola tone. More than half (56%;  $n = 10$ ) of participants discussed the speed of the bow in terms of perceived technical adjustments between the violin and viola, while nearly a quarter of participants (22%;  $n = 4$ ) addressed adjusting the contact point as a perceived main point of difference between playing the violin and playing the viola (see Table 5).

For the category of sound, a third (33%;  $n = 6$ ) of participants suggested striving for a velvety dark sound/tone production in order to produce a more violistic sound quality for those who switch from violin to viola (see Table 5). A specific suggestion to improve upon a violist's method of sound production was to first listen to other violists in order to find a beautiful viola sound to aspire to.

Vibrato was also discussed by participants as the most frequently perceived area of technical difference, both in terms of left hand technical differences between violin and viola (79%;  $n = 15$ ; see Table 4), and in terms of creating a more violistic sound (72%;  $n = 13$ ; see Table 5). In general, these experts suggested that in most cases an adjustment of vibrato should be made that allows for the employment of a slower and wider vibrato for the viola than for the violin. However, some acknowledged that while in general viola vibrato may be slower and wider than violin vibrato, overall, having more than one type of vibrato at their disposal is the goal for any student. These vibrato suggestions do not mean that there is but a single type of vibrato that should be implemented by all musicians, regardless of the type of music being played or the character of the music.

MacLeod's (2008) study also found that there are vibrato differences between the violin and viola. She pointed out that these differences may have pedagogical implications because teachers may "need to utilize slightly different techniques" (p. 53) rather than treating them identically.

Aside from vibrato, three participants mentioned shifting as another perceived technical difference between violin and viola left hand technique. In particular, one participant mentioned the difficulty that violists have when shifting into the higher positions.

The size of the viola was a topic that was discussed by some participants, especially concerning the physical challenges of playing a bigger instrument upon the left shoulder. More than a third of participants (37%;  $n = 7$ ) discussed the importance of

maintaining healthy habits when positioning or holding the viola in terms of physical demands and tension-related issues (see Table 4).

Participants discussed specific perceived areas of technical differences frequently in need of remediation in collegiate violists. More than half of surveyed participants cited left hand techniques such as shifting (59%;  $n=11$ ) and vibrato (59%;  $n=11$ ); other important remediation areas discussed were tension-related issues (89%;  $n=17$ ), right hand technique (79%;  $n=15$ ), and production of viola sound, especially in terms of intonation (63%;  $n=12$ ).

Specific suggested remediation techniques included having students play open strings (33%;  $n=6$ ), scales (33%;  $n=6$ ) and to a lesser extent, etudes (11%;  $n=2$ ). Most experts also recommended the use of some kind of physical techniques. A third of teachers (33%;  $n=6$ ) discussed working to release tension through relaxation. More than a third (39%;  $n=7$ ) gave suggestions such as, “simplify the problem until the new goal is incorporated.” More than half of responding experts (56%;  $n=10$ ) also stated that specialized approaches/techniques could be helpful in implementing remediation. Some recommended non-musical techniques such as Yoga, Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais, or Pilates to help their students combat this tension, although there was no consensus as to the best of these methods of intervention. Such suggestions could also be applied to violin students or other instrumentalists as well.

In terms of viola repertoire, 19 participants gave a total of 85 responses for the most frequently prepared works, consisting of 46 compositions by 24 composers (see Table 7). Although the repertoire choices of participants varied widely, the majority of participants agreed on the immense impact of the Six Cello Suites by Johann Sebastian Bach

(transcribed for viola), which were cited by as being worked on most frequently (68%;  $n = 13$ ). Other works that received many citations in this category included Bloch's Suite Hebraïque (53%;  $n = 10$ ); Hindemith's Sonatas (53%;  $n = 10$ ), the three major viola concerti by Walton, Bartók, Hindemith, as well as the Handel (Casadesus), Hoffmeister and Telemann concerti (47% each;  $n = 9$ ). Sonatas by Clarke and Schubert were also common (47% each;  $n = 9$ ).

In terms of etudes, the majority of 19 teachers cited Kreutzer's 42 Studies (63%;  $n = 12$ ). More than half of the teachers cited Ševčík's books of etudes (including his opus numbers 1, 8, and 9) (53%;  $n = 10$ ). More than a third of teachers cited Mazas (*Etudes Speciales*), Fuchs (Fantasy Etudes and Characteristic Studies), and Schradieck (School of Viola Technique) (37% each;  $n = 7$ ). Books of etudes cited by teachers in the present study may be compared to lists from both Castledine's (1998) dissertation on viola etudes, as well as with Lincer's suggested etudes, as discussed by Lincer in Kella (1983) (see Table 9). The books of etudes by Kreutzer, Mazas, and Rode, cited by teachers in the present study, were also mentioned by Lincer (in Kella, 1983) and Castledine (1998). A last point of comparison between etudes cited by participants and those mentioned in other studies may be made with Baldwin (1995). His article included an extensive table of excerpts to be used as etudes, organized by specific type of technique viola applied. However, this would be a tangential comparison as no current participants suggested excerpts in their discussion of etudes.

The following summarizes experts' allocation of time when teaching viola lessons: more than half of teachers let their individual student's needs or the solo repertoire being studied guide the lesson (61%;  $n = 11$ ). More than half of teachers also spent more time

spent on repertoire, and less on scales and etudes (61%;  $n = 11$ ). One third of teachers stated that they divided time more equally among subject matter during lessons, including work on scales, etudes, solo repertoire, and orchestral excerpts (33%;  $n = 6$ ). A third of teachers stated that they felt chamber music/excerpts should be taught separately (33%;  $n = 6$ ).

Some of the teachers stated that would suggest traditional career options to their students such as becoming teachers (26%;  $n = 5$ ), orchestral musicians (16%;  $n = 3$ ) and/or chamber musicians (16%;  $n = 3$ ). Some suggested alternative career paths. These teachers may have been implying that most musicians cannot rely solely on one source of income, but must juggle teaching, playing, and perhaps other pursuits. Some of the alternative career paths suggested by participants included music education, arts administration, new music performance, recording, arranging, and being supporters of music. Only two (11%) included the option of viola soloist as a possibility.

Eighteen participants cited 55 mentors or influential teachers and two chamber ensembles that they considered to have been the main influences on their current pedagogical style. For the present sample of expert violas, the most frequently named influential teachers were Heidi Castleman (16%;  $n = 3$ ), Karen Tuttle (16%;  $n = 3$ ), Kim Kashkashian (11%;  $n = 2$ ), George Neikrug (11%;  $n = 2$ ), and Mimi Zweig (11%;  $n = 2$ ).

When discussing other perceived areas of differences between violin and viola, more than a quarter (26%;  $n = 5$ ) of 19 participants mentioned personality as a factor in differentiating between violin and viola playing (See Table 4). Some participants likened one's choice of instrument to one's personality attributes, thereby connecting the instrument to the personality of the player. Cutietta and McAllister (1997) were

interested in studying the relationship between instrument choice and personality.

Personality emerged as a factor discussed in relation to the topic of perceived areas of difference. Other emergent findings included how the viola is perceived as different, including topics such as less perfect, size, more difficult, more fun, similar, and size.

While the results of this survey are more exploratory in nature, for this particular sample of 17 viola teachers who responded to this question on the survey, Karen Tuttle (35%;  $n = 6$ ) appears to have emerged as one of the most influential pedagogues among 20<sup>th</sup> century violists. In addition, one of her students, Heidi Castleman (23%;  $n = 4$ ) was named often enough to emerge as second most influential for this sample of experts. The fact that a Tuttle student also emerged could add the strength to argument of the influence of Tuttle's Coordination Method for today's violists. Combining participants' citations for Tuttle with those of her former pupils Castleman and Kashkashian (10%;  $n = 2$ ), a combined 71% ( $n = 12$ ) cited the Tuttle "coordination" school. In addition, as a pupil of Primrose, the strength behind Tuttle's lineage was further underlined. On the other hand, Robert Vernon (b. 1949) was the third most mentioned viola teacher (18%;  $n = 3$ ).

Some participants opined that current pedagogues must more actively contribute to their own legacies as teachers of viola and they suggested that new viola books should to be written for this purpose. This indicates the need for more viola books to be written that encompass the pedagogy of current viola teachers and their methods.

The participants and those they nominated may have been peers, or they might have been master and student. While most were reluctant to name someone as having been the most important pedagogue, more than half of participants (59%;  $n = 10$ ) did think that important viola pedagogues exist. Some participants suggested that such notable figures

may yet emerge in the 21st Century (23%;  $n = 4$ ).

### Conclusions

My researcher's lens has been shaped by my experiences as a viola student, violist and teacher. These experiences may thus cause bias towards the viola. My own pedagogy and teaching philosophy have been based on the experiences I had with various violin teachers and viola teachers who served as my mentors. Likewise, how they each taught was shaped by their previous experiences on their primary instruments, violin or viola. As a result, each individual teacher's approach to technique and repertoire was directly affected by those experiences.

With some of my teachers who were primarily violinists who also taught viola, or who had studied both violin and viola seriously, I played a lot of transcribed works from the violin repertoire: duos by Wienawski, Paganini's *24 Caprices* and *Moto Perpetuo*, J.S. Bach's Sonatas and Partitas, and Sarasate's *Ziguenerweisen*. With other teachers who identified more strongly as violists, I studied Hindemith's Viola Concerto *Der Schwanendreher*, and some of Hindemith's Sonatas for Solo Viola and Sonatas for Viola and Piano, Penderecki's *Cadenza*, Bartók's Concerto, Walton's Concerto, and more of J.S. Bach's Cello Suites and Gamba Sonatas than the Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin.

Learning from both kinds of teachers has been an invaluable experience, and has opened up my own teaching to more inclusiveness in terms of trying out new things with my students. Cross-pollination is important for violists and violinists. The participants' quotes in this study indicate that many violists do see the viola as more difficult, less perfect than the violin. Their quotes also indicate that a violist needs special skills to play



the viola, and/or that certain individuals may be better suited to its rigor given certain physical attributes.

The breadth of works suggested by participants in response to the VPS question on repertoire has been very encouraging in terms of the total number of viola works they deemed important. However, it also demonstrates that for this culture-sharing group, there was not a great deal of consensus in terms of one single piece mentioned as the most important work written specifically for the viola. (The most often mentioned works were the J.S. Bach Cello Suites, transcribed for viola.) Instead, they discussed a wide variety of pieces that they would suggest to others, and that they had played and taught, reflecting participants' individual experiences as a performers and teachers. I hope that these detailed lists of repertoire may serve as a sounding board for contemporary viola teachers looking either for recommendations for new works to try with their students, or as a sort of validation from the community that the works they are already using in their studio are those being used by many other teachers as well.

In terms of perceived technical differences between the violin and the viola, these differences are admittedly subtle ones. The differences are not as pronounced as between instruments from different families of instruments, such as brass or percussion. Both instruments belong to the upper string family and share the same or a similar silhouette, depending on the maker. Both are played on the shoulder, as opposed to with an endpin, and both are played with a bow. However, there were commonalities among the perceived differences that were agreed upon by this specialized population of university level viola teachers in relation to the VPS questions. However, among these subtle yet perceived differences were voices of dissent. Some argued that technique was mostly the

same for violin and viola. Others indicated that the understanding of both violin and viola is helpful to both violinists and violists, both in terms of improving technique and for understanding each other. In some cases they stated violin and viola were the same, but then immediately following that statement, they would give a list of possible differences.

For example, one participant wrote:

Left Hand: basic technique pretty similar (we even use many of the same texts for LH development.)...

RH [Right Hand]: We must really create our own tone – the viola (unlike the violin) simply can't respond as immediately and needs real care with all bow strokes, speeds, placement, etc. (That said: if all violinists thought this way, their tones would deepen and develop, too!)

Posture: again, due to larger instrument, we must take care of our bodies (and again, not that violinists don't: but we can't be casual about it...)

Even more important, perhaps: As you imply, the viola and its role are very linked to that of support, color, inner workings: it takes a special personality to love that (and I think the best “2<sup>nd</sup> violinists” have a similar inner-voice skill!)

This participant's response was excerpted previously in Chapter 5, but I have included the longer version here to demonstrate conflicting ideas. Her use of the word “imply” could mean that she was answering the question in relation to the parenthetically suggested categories of possible differences, including the topic of personality.

For an example of where this participant refutes the differences, see the first sentence of this quote, in relation to left hand technique. She states left hand technique is

similar to the violin, and the texts studied are the same as those used by violinists. The next sentence, about right hand, starts out with a strong statement in favor of the viola. She states the viola is different in terms of sound and how to produce sound (“we must really create our own tone”). Then she backtracks and admits that if violinists thought the same way about tone, their sound would also improve. The next point states that violists must be more careful about posture, but then she states this is also important for violinists, but then shifts her position again, that it is really is more important for violists. (Is she having a Shakespearean interior dialogue as a survey response? To be or not to be...a violist?) Lastly, she talks about the viola’s role as an inner voice, and the personality involved with loving that quality. However, in parentheses she states that this is also important for a second violinist. As a whole, this quote is indicative of the agreement/disagreement nature of quite a few responses, and especially of the yin-yang quality of this individual in terms of defining differences between the violin and viola. However, it could also reflect that she felt that there are more similarities than differences.

Sound awareness and technique were also among the areas discussed by participants for the present study in terms of perceived technical differences. Similarities and common themes between discussed topics from the published literature and the present study included instrument choice, perceived technical differences, repertoire and etudes, switching to the viola, and mentors, especially in connection with Tuttle’s Coordination Method. Dubois (1996) found similar results in terms of perceived technical differences, and Dane (2002) found similar results in terms of Tuttle’s importance.

Similar to Au (2007), participants in this study discussed the ways that students transitioning from violin to viola must adjust their technique. Participants in this study gave more specific and gave longer responses, and were able to go into greater detail with the open response format of the survey. In terms of having a more violistic sound, Au cautioned that many violinists who switch to viola “are unaware of these differences...[and] consequently do not realize their full potential on the [viola]” (Au, 2007, p. 51). However, participants in the present study were very aware of these differences/similarities and were working to share them with their students. They also discussed the importance of creating a specific viola sound and gave suggestions for how to do so.

Participants in this study discussed their mentors. Previous studies that also focused on mentors were Burns (2013), Dane (2002), Dubois (1996), and Kella (1983). While the present study did not focus on a single teacher in terms of great pedagogues, other studies did. Kella (1983) documented the emergence of a master teacher in the field of viola pedagogy with a study that included a biography of the renowned violist and pedagogue William Lincer. Dane (2002) focused on another prominent master teacher in viola studies, Karen Tuttle, and in particular on her Coordination Method of teaching viola. Dubois (1996), however, interviewed multiple teachers including Tuttle, as well as five other master viola teachers, about their methods in the viola studio. Dubois’ interviews also served as a model for some of the current survey questions.

Dane (2002) argued that Tuttle’s teaching was a philosophy unto itself, and that the pedagogical importance she had in terms of influencing modern viola teaching was

considerable. Some current participants (35%;  $n = 6$ ) also indicated that Tuttle was one of most important pedagogues of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Repertoire and etudes were other areas discussed by current participants and in the review of literature. Morgan (2007) studied viola repertoire by examining William Primrose's numerous transcriptions for viola. Johnson (1988) created an annotated bibliography of viola source materials and repertoire. Castledine (1998) and Johnson (1988) explored viola pedagogy by studying viola etudes and viola repertoire, respectively. Baldwin (1995) wrote an informative article about how to use orchestral viola excerpts as etudes. LeBeau (1982) discussed viola repertoire by analyzing technical problems in the 20th century repertoire for solo viola. Current participants discussed both topics: etudes and excerpts. Current participants' discussions of viola repertoire and viola etudes continued the dialogue begun by previous research.

Some participants wrote that in order to establish who were important viola pedagogues of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, more current viola teachers should write method books. New treatises on viola teaching by prominent viola teachers could help establish viola pedagogy as being something unique. Newer resources that are currently available include Van der Werff's (2012) book of technical exercises, specifically aimed at violists, and Showell's (1987) book, which lists possible repertoire and exercises for the viola student.

### **Implications**

Some participants in the present study did see a separate viola pedagogy. Some wanted there to be one, but did not think it was there yet. Others did not see a difference between violin and viola pedagogy. What does this say about viola pedagogy in general?

Perhaps that it is not as established as it could be. Or, it could mean that there isn't a separate pedagogy – that it's more of an upper strings pedagogy. Is this desire for a separate pedagogy more of an indication of a need for recognition as a group of instrumentalists to have a unique identity? Could it be an identity crisis of this culture-sharing group? Although it does not yet seem to be established at this time, those who did think there was a distinct viola pedagogy stressed the importance of feeling like and having pride in being a violist can help students to play the viola well. This underlies that perhaps it is more of an identity issue. However, others were dismissive of the question, and said they used the same technique when teaching both viola and violin. Still others seemed to be pondering the question for the first time. Some people might not have even thought about this topic before having completed the questionnaire, but the survey could have given them new insights or thoughts on the matter.

A more established viola pedagogy could include more jobs at the university level that specialize in viola, either in studio teaching or in string pedagogy. For example, there currently seems to be a lot of disconnect between string education and string performance (Lesniak, 2005). Those who teach strings in public schools may have a music education degree, but perhaps not a deep knowledge of the differences in teaching the very different instruments of violin and cello, much less the smaller and more subtle differences between teaching the violin and viola. The minutiae of the amounts of difference between violin and viola technique may seem like trivial differences to someone with 50 students to teach simultaneously. However, without private lessons to supplement in-school orchestral program instruction, there is the potential for bad habits to form that are hard to correct.

Future implications for budding performers are potentially large. What may begin as merely a bad habit, such as playing an instrument that is too large, squeezing the left or right hand while playing, or clenching the instrument with the chin, may after much repetition for many years, have the potential for developing performance-related injuries (Irvine, 1991a). Also, without teaching a student good tone on the viola, and without utilization of what the instrument is capable of, many students may complain that the viola is just a boring cousin of the violin. Based on participants' quotes, many do see it as a difficult relation to the violin.

Having a positive take on the beauty of playing inner harmonies and supporting the violins' melody can be the input of the viola teacher who also teaches orchestra, or music appreciation, or music education. What does this mean for pedagogy training? Should more schools be providing pedagogical training?

Different types of roles that people who play viola could include soloist, teacher, orchestral player, violinist and violist, or combinations of any of the roles above. Formal pedagogical training with pedagogy distinct for viola can help to create a more distinct identity for violists, improve performance, and help to prevent injuries. This may have to develop over time.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Participants discussed perceived differences between the violin and viola when responding to the VPS. Future studies could attempt to pinpoint these perceived differences more effectively with a more efficient survey design, a larger sample size, and/or by comparing violinists and violists. A future study could also run statistical analyses for a more quantitative approach to studying for similarities or differences.

A topic that emerged, how violin and viola study may overlap, could become another possible topic for future research. While some participants cited the ways in which they felt violin playing can help viola playing, others felt that study of the viola can also be beneficial to violinists. A future research study could further explore the co-existence of the violin and viola in the development of skilled string players in a more comprehensive approach. A survey and/or experimental study could include elements to examine whether or not teachers have their students play both instruments in order to address issues that may be better served by a violin or a viola. Teachers could also give their opinions on such topics as whether violinists gain better technical abilities after stretching their hands to play the viola; violists are better who practice faster technique on the violin; violists are better at listening because they play the middle of the harmony; or, worse at intonation because they never play the melody.

Another area that could be a possible topic for more research would relate to etudes and excerpts. As LeBeau (1982) suggested, more compositions need to be written to create a better resource for violists who desire more technically challenging, yet viola-specific etudes. Other future research could also be conducted about the importance of studying excerpts in regards to subsequent success in orchestral auditions.

Another possible area could be to compare violin and viola repertoire more in depth. It could involve surveying both violin and viola professors about which pieces they studied and which they currently taught, to examine more thoroughly for differences or similarities. A future study may also probe further into the details of possible differences between how they teach certain repertoire as opposed to how it was taught to them.



In terms of choosing or switching to the viola, a future study could involve a longitudinal design, where participants, in collaboration with a school district, would be surveyed twice to see if their initial instrument, violin or viola, varies over time. This study could either focus on the transition from middle school to high school, or from high school to college.

Lastly, to further study mentors, a future study could survey a larger population than the one used in the present study, or it could study a different population of violists entirely, such as European violists. It could be that geographically different or larger groups would conclude very differently about who had been the most important viola mentors. In terms of the future, a replication in 20 years' time might also lead to different or more conclusive results.

## Appendix A

### Timeline of Important Pedagogues

#### Violin

Francesco Geminiani (1687-1762)  
Giuseppe Tartini (1692-1770)  
Leopold Mozart (1719-1787)  
Pierre Gaviniés (1728-1800)

Rodolph Kreutzer (1766-1831)  
Pierre Rode (1774-1830)  
Jacob Dont (1815-1888)  
Heinrich Ernst Kayser (1815-1888)

Leopold Auer (1845-1930)  
Henry Schradieck (1846-1918)

Otakar Ševčík (1852-1934)  
Carl Flesch (1873-1944)

Demetrius Constantine Dounis (1886-1954)

Shin'ichi Suzuki (1898-1998)

Ivan Galamian (1903-1981)

Paul Rolland (1911-1978)

Kató Havas (b. 1920)

#### Viola

Bartolomeo Campagnoli (1751-1827)  
Antonio Bartolomeo Bruni (1757-1821)  
Alessandro Rolla (1757-1841)

Friedrich Hermann (1828-1907)

Hermann Ritter (1849-1926)

Lionel Tertis (1876-1975)

Johannes Palaschko, (1877-1932)

Louis Bailly (1882-1974)  
Samuel Belov (1884-1954)  
Samuel Lifschey (1889-1961)

Vadim Vasilevich Borisovskii (1900-1972)

Lillian Fuchs (1903-1995)  
William Primrose (1904-1982)  
William Lincer (1907-1997)  
Milton Katims (1909-2006)  
Leonard Mogill (1911-1997)  
Raphael Hillyer (1914-2010)  
Walter Trampler (1915-1997)  
Emanuel Vardi (1915-2011)  
Paul Doktor (1917-1989)  
Joseph de Pasquale (b. 1919)  
Karen Tuttle (1920-2010)  
Francis Tursi (1922-1991)

Note. These are pedagogues mentioned in this doctoral document. This list is not meant to be comprehensive, in particular for violin pedagogues.

Appendix B  
Viola Pedagogy Survey

For open-ended questions, please complete with as much detail as possible. The information you provide is vital to the research, and your time is appreciated.

Part I: Viola Background

1. Which string instrument did you start playing?  
\_\_\_ violin \_\_\_ viola \_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_
2. At what age did you start playing a string instrument?  
\_\_\_ 3-5 \_\_\_ 6-9 \_\_\_ 10-12 \_\_\_ 13-15 \_\_\_ Older than 16
3. If viola was not your first string instrument, at what age did you switch?  
\_\_\_ 3-5 \_\_\_ 6-9 \_\_\_ 10-12 \_\_\_ 13-15 \_\_\_ 16-18 \_\_\_ 19-21 \_\_\_ older than 22
4. What were the reasons or circumstances surrounding your switch to viola? OR  
choosing the viola?
5. Do you consider yourself primarily a performing violinist or violist?  
\_\_\_ violinist \_\_\_ violist
6. Would you define yourself as primarily a(n) \_\_\_ teacher \_\_\_ orchestral  
musician \_\_\_ chamber musician? (\_\_\_ other)
7. How many students are in your current teaching studio?  
\_\_\_ 1-5 \_\_\_ 6-10 \_\_\_ 11-15 \_\_\_ more than 15 students
8. At what age did you start teaching viola at the college/conservatory level?  
\_\_\_ younger than 25 \_\_\_ 26-33 \_\_\_ 34-44 \_\_\_ Older than 45
9. How long have you been teaching viola at the college/conservatory level?  
\_\_\_ Fewer than 5 years \_\_\_ 6-10 years \_\_\_ 11-15 years \_\_\_ 16-20 years  
\_\_\_ more than 21-30 \_\_\_ More than 30
10. In what part of the country did you receive your formative musical training? Check  
more than one if appropriate.  
\_\_\_ Northeast \_\_\_ Northwest \_\_\_ Midwest \_\_\_ South \_\_\_ South East  
\_\_\_ South West \_\_\_ West \_\_\_ Outside of the U.S. please specify country  
\_\_\_\_\_

Part II: Viola Pedagogy

1. What are the central differences between violin and viola technique? (e.g., bow arm,  
bowing, left hand, shifting, vibrato, set-up, repertoire, personality)
2. Under what circumstances would you encourage a violinist to switch to viola?

3. When working with a viola student who was formerly a violinist, what problem areas may need to be addressed to give the students a violistic sound?

4. If you were always a violist, how do you believe this influences your teaching style? - OR - If you were initially a violinist, how has your teaching of the viola been influenced by this?

### 5. Repertoire

The following pieces can be considered core to the viola repertoire:

(J.C. Bach Concerto; J. S. Bach Cello Suites, Violin Sonatas and Partitas, Gamba Sonatas; Bartók Concerto; Bloch Suite; Brahms Sonatas op. 120; Clarke Sonata; Enesco *Concertstück*; Handel-Casadesus; Hindemith Sonatas, *Trauermusik*, *Der Schwanendreher*; Hoffmeister Concerto; Mozart *Sinfonia Concertante* in E-flat; Schubert *Arpeggione*; Schumann *Märchenbilder*; Shostakovich Sonata; Stamitz Concerto; Telemann Concerto; Vaughan Williams *Romance*; Walton Concerto.)

a. Which pieces do you work on most frequently?

b. Which were the most important to you in your training?

c. What other pieces do you consider central to the viola repertoire or are there any above that should not be included?

### 6. Etudes

Which Etude books do you regularly assign to an incoming freshman-level viola student? (Please name specific composers and exercises)

### 7. Remediation

a) What are the most common remediation areas that you encounter with incoming college-aged violists (e.g., vibrato, shifting, tension-related issues, intonation, physical challenges, as in dealing with the size of viola, etc.)?

b) Please describe how you approach the remediation process (including alternative

techniques such as Alexander technique or yoga, if applicable).

#### 8. Mentors/Influential Teachers

Of your past teachers, who were the main influences on your current pedagogical style today?

9. Approximately how much lesson time do you spend with a typical student on any or each of the following: scales, etudes, orchestral excerpts, solo repertoire, chamber music, warm-ups or other exercises?

#### 10. Goals/Careers

What is the ideal career path of your students and how do you encourage them towards these goals? (Do you envision your students becoming orchestral players, members of a chamber ensemble, teachers of music, soloists, other?)

#### 11. History of Viola Pedagogy

Just as Leopold Auer and Carl Flesch were two important but perhaps opposing forces in violin pedagogy, do you believe such figures exist in 20<sup>th</sup> century viola pedagogy?

Other comments:

Appendix C  
Cover Letter

Dear Viola Teacher:

I am a doctoral student under the direction of Dr. Jennifer Mishra of the Music Education Department at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston, Houston, Texas. I am conducting a research study on Viola Pedagogy.

I am requesting your participation, which will involve filling out the following survey. It should take approximately 20 minutes of your time. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time. The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used.

The expected risks to participants in this study are minimal. By recalling past experiences as a teacher, past emotions linked with these experiences may resurface which could be either positive or negative. In the majority of cases, the successful completion of the survey will not be a stress-provoking endeavor. Although there may be no direct benefit to you, the possible benefit of your participation is to promote knowledge concerning the unique characteristics of viola pedagogy (versus violin pedagogy) and to contribute information about viola pedagogy to share with the music education community at large. This research can inform future teachers how best to approach their new viola students and may be used as a reference of contemporary teaching styles and methods of American viola teachers at the University/Conservatory level.

This project has been reviewed by the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects:  
(713) 743-9204.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please call me at: (713) 861-6929.

Sincerely,

Sophie Parker  
DMA Candidate, ABD  
Moores School of Music, University of Houston

## Appendix D

### *VPS List of Viola Repertoire*

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J. C. Bach	Viola Concerto in C Minor
J. S. Bach	Six Cello Suites, BWV 1007-1012; Violin Sonatas and Partitas, BWV 1001-1006; Viola da Gamba Sonatas, BWV 1027-1029
Bartók	Concerto for Viola and Orchestra, op. posth.
Bloch	Suite for Viola and Piano
Brahms	Sonatas op. 120, nos. 1 and 2
Clarke	Sonata for Viola and Piano
Enesco	<i>Concertstück</i> for Viola
Handel/Casadesus	Concerto for Viola and Orchestra in B Minor
Hindemith	Viola Sonatas (i.e. Sonata in F, op.11 no. 4; Sonata, op. 25 no. 1); <i>Trauermusik</i> – Music of Mourning for Viola and String Orchestra; <i>Der Schwanendreher</i> – Concerto for Viola and Orchestra
Hoffmeister	Concerto for Viola and Orchestra in D Major
Mozart	<i>Sinfonia Concertante</i> in E-flat Major for Violin, Viola and Orchestra, K. 364
Schubert	Sonata <i>per Arpeggione</i>
Schumann	<i>Märchenbilder</i> – for Piano and Viola, op. 113
Shostakovich	Sonata for Viola and Piano, op. 147
Stamitz	Concerto for Viola and Orchestra no. 1 in D Major
Telemann	Concerto for Viola and Orchestra in G Major
Vaughan Williams	Romance for Viola and Piano
Walton	Concerto for Viola and Orchestra

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## Appendix E

### *Prominent 20<sup>th</sup> Century Viola Mentors/Teachers Cited by Experts*

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<u><i>n</i></u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>School/Orchestral Affiliation</u>
3	Heidi Castleman	b.1943?	Juilliard School, Cleveland Institute (CIM), Eastman, International Music Festival at Aspen (Aspen)
3	Karen Tuttle	1920-2010	Juilliard, Peabody
2	Kim Kashkashian	b. 1952	New England Conservatory (NEC), (Studied with Tuttle)
2	George Neikrug (vc)	b. 1925?	Boston University (BU)
2	Mimi Zweig (vln/vla)	b. 1950	Indiana University (IU)

### *Other Prominent 20<sup>th</sup> Century Mentors/Viola Teachers Cited by Experts*

#### Listed only once:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>School/Orchestral Affiliation</u>
Max Aronoff	1906-1981	Curtis String Quartet; Curtis Institute of Music
Atar Arad	b. 1945	Cleveland Quartet (CSQ); IU; Eastman; Rice University
Chamber Music Coaches	N/A	N/A
Victoria Chiang		Peabody, Aspen
Cleveland Quartet members	(CSQ) N/A	CIM (CSQ: 1969-1995)
Joseph de Pasquale	b. 1919	Curtis, Philadelphia Orchestra
Alan de Veritch	b. 1947	Los Angeles Philharmonic, IU
David Dalton		Brigham Young University
Dorothy Delay (vln)	1917-2002	Juilliard, NEC, Aspen, etc.
Paul Doktor	1919-1989	Juilliard, Mannes
James Dunham	b. 1950?	Rice U., NEC, Eastman, Violist of CSQ (1987-1995)
Daniel Foster	b. 1969?	National Symphony Orchestra, Principal Viola (Studied with Tuttle, Irvine, Ramsey)
Felix Galamir		University of Maryland
Wendy Gannett	19--?-2004	Marlboro Music Festival (Marlboro)
Joseph Gingold	1909-1995	Milwaukee Symphony, 35 years
Don Hamann		IU
		University of Arizona, University of Northern Colorado (Studied with P.

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Appendix E, *Mentors* (Continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Kató Havas (vln)	b. 1920	Young at University of Texas at Austin Author of "A New Approach to Violin Playing" (1961); Royal Academy of Music in Budapest
Robert Hill (pno, H)	b. 1953	<i>Hochschule für Musik</i> , Freiburg, Germany (Chamber music)
Raphael Hillyer David Holland Fred Hoeppner (vcl)	1914-2010	Juilliard String Quartet (c.1946-1968) BU Interlochen Principal Cellist of Denver Symphony Orchestra, Colorado Symphony Orchestra, Denver School of the Arts
Jeffrey Irvine	b. 1953?	CIM, Aspen, Oberlin (Studied with Castleman, Tuttle, Katz, Primrose, Trampler, Rhodes, DeLay)
Juilliard Quartet Members (JSQ) Carolyn Kenneson	N/A	Juilliard Esterhazy Quartet, former violist, String Quartet in Residence at University of Missouri
William Lincer	1907-1997	Juilliard, Manhattan School (MSM), New York University (NYU)
Paul Kantor (vln)	b. 1955	Rice, CIM, Juilliard, NEC, Yale, Royal Conservatory of Music in London
Milton Katims	1909-2006	Seattle Symphony, NBC Symphony Orchestra, University of Houston
Patricia McCarty		BU, prizewinner at 1979 Primrose Competition
Cathy McGlasson		Suzuki Trainer, Kingsport, TN (Studied with Suzuki, Rolland, W. Starr)
Paul Neubauer	b. 1963	New York Philharmonic, Principal Viola (1984-90), Juilliard, Mannes, New School, Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center (Studied with Doktor, de Verich, Primrose)
Sallie O'Reilly (vln)	b. 1945?	University of Minnesota, Caecilian Trio, (Studied with Galamian, Gingold, Primrose for chamber music)
Margaret Pardee (vln)	b.1925?	Juilliard (Studied with Galamian, Persinger, S. Jacobsen, Spalding)
William and Doris Preucil	b. 1925?-	Suzuki Institute teacher trainers since 1960's, W.P.: Detroit Symphony, D.P.: Rochester Philharmonic

Appendix E, *Mentors* (Continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
William Primrose	1904-1982	Curtis, University of Southern California (USC), IU, Tokyo University (Studied with E. Ysaÿe)
Lynne Ramsey	b.1950?	Cleveland Orchestra: Assistant Principal, CIM (Studied with Tuttle, R. Scavelli and D. Dawson.)
Joyce Robbins Karen Ritscher	b. 1930?	Met. Opera Orchestra, SUNY Stony Brook NYU, MSM, Houston Grand Opera, Dallas Opera, Rice, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra (Studied with Tuttle, M. Katz)
Serban Rusu		Marlboro
Misha Schneider		Marlboro
Sasha Schneider		Yale University
David Schwartz	b. 1950?	Marlboro
Rudolph Serkin (pno)	1903-1991	Curtis, Marlboro
Leonard Shure (pno)	1910-1995	NEC, Longy, Cambridge, CIM, Harvard, Mannes, UT Austin (Studied with Schnabel)
Robert Slaughter	b. 1926	Ball State University
Ron Smith		Ball State
David Soyer (vcl)	1923-2010	Guarneri String Quartet (Studied with Casals, Feuerman) Marlboro, Curtis, Juilliard, Manhattan School
Elizabeth Stuen-Walker		Suzuki Teacher Trainer in Viola and Violin, Bellingham, Washington
Shinichi Suzuki (vln)	1898-1998	Founder of Talent Education Research Institute (TERI) in Matsumoto, Japan, and of Suzuki Method
Lionel Tertis	1876-1975	Soloist; Royal Academy of Music, London
Michael Tree	b. 1934	Guarneri String Quartet, Curtis, Juilliard, (Studied with Zimbalist, L. Luboshutz, and V. Reynolds)
Andor Toth (vln)	1925–2006	University of Colorado (CU) at Boulder, UT Austin, Oberlin, Stanford University, NBC Symphony Orchestra
Don Weilerstein (vln)		Juilliard School; CSQ member (1969-1989); (Studied with Galamian, DeLay)
Lee Yeingst	b. 1933?	Denver Symphony, former Principal Violist

*Number of Mentors Total*

55

Appendix E, *Mentors* (Continued)

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*Note.* ( $n = 19$ ). Key to abbreviations below:

vc = Cellist

vln = Violinist

vla = Violist

pno = Pianist

H = Harpsichordist

? = Indicates approximate date

CSQ = Cleveland Quartet (original) members: violinists Donald Weilerstein and Peter Salaff, cellist Paul Katz and violist Martha Strongin Katz (replaced first by violist Atar Arad, then by violist James Dunham).

JSQ = Juilliard String Quartet (original) members: violinists Robert Mann and Robert Koff, violist Raphael Hillyer, and cellist Arthur Winograd. (Samuel Rhodes violist from 1969 to present.)

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## Appendix F

### *Geographical Affiliations of Mentors of Participants*

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33	New York (Juilliard, Eastman, Mannes, Manhattan School of Music, New York University, Metropolitan Orchestra, State University of New York Stony Brook, National Broadcasting Company/NBC Symphony Orchestra, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra)
11	Massachusetts (New England Conservatory, Boston University, Longy, Harvard)
9	Ohio (Cleveland Institute of Music, Oberlin, Cleveland String Quartet)
8	Indiana (Indiana University, Ball State)
8	Texas (Rice University, University of Houston, University of Texas at Austin, Dallas Opera, Houston Grand Opera,)
7	Colorado (Aspen, University of Colorado at Boulder, Denver Symphony)
7	Pennsylvania (Curtis)
6	Vermont (Marlboro)
5	Maryland (Peabody, University of Maryland)
2	California (University of Southern California, Stanford)
2	Connecticut (Yale)
2	Great Britain (Royal Conservatory of Music, Royal Academy of Music, London)
2	Japan (Tokyo University, Suzuki Institute)
2	Michigan (Interlochen, Detroit Symphony)
2	Washington (Seattle Symphony, Suzuki Training program)
1	Arizona (University of Arizona)
1	Germany ( <i>Hochschule für Musik</i> , Freiberg)
1	Hungary (Royal Academy of Music in Budapest)
1	Minnesota (University of Minnesota)
1	Missouri (University of Missouri)
1	Tennessee (unknown affiliation)
1	Utah (Brigham Young University)
1	Wisconsin (Milwaukee Symphony)

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<i>Total Number of Schools/Affiliations:</i>	101
<i>Total Number of States:</i>	19
<i>Total Number of Foreign Countries:</i>	4

*Note.* Participants' mentors ( $n = 55$ )

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