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December, 2015

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY OF ORCHESTRA DIRECTORS AT HISTORICALLY
BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the
Moore School of Music
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Music Arts

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this ethnographic study is to explore the experiences of orchestra directors at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). While there have been a few studies regarding African American orchestra students in public schools, I am unaware of research that has explored these college level ensembles from the perspective of their directors. Critical Race Theory (CRT) was used as a theoretical framework for this study.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions: (a) What are the experiences of orchestra directors at HBCUs? (b) What are the challenges faced by HBCU orchestra directors, and how do they address them? and (c) How do HBCU orchestra directors describe their successes? I chose five participants based on their reputations as successful directors. Data collection included audio-recordings of semi-structured interviews and observations of the directors at their respective campuses. Data were coded and analyzed for emerging themes, and trustworthiness was ensured through member checks, peer review, and data triangulation.

Themes that emerged included (a) “Striving for Excellence”: the determination of these directors to continue striving for the best from their students, (2) “General Lack of Funds”: the shortage of funds for student scholarships and resources, (3) “Do Everything”: these directors have limited assistance and wind up doing almost everything for their ensemble, (4) “Teaching Strategies”: different approaches regarding how to help students grow musically, (5) “Recruitment Activities”: recruitment challenges especially with the shortage of high school orchestras in their areas, and (6) “Critical Race Theory and the world of HBCU orchestras”: racism and its effect on orchestra participants and their students.

Based on these findings, I recommend that HBCU orchestras receive more support both inside and outside of the African American community. The directors of these programs perform heroic feats within the reality of multiple limitations. Though they are not as well-known as the HBCU bands and choirs, these orchestras and their directors offer a unique glimpse into a fascinating world that future researchers should also explore.

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Thank you to the conductors at the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Your dedication to your student programs is inspirational. Please continue helping students grow musically and show them and others that with diligence, great things can be achieved.

To my family, I love you and thank you for encouraging me during my challenging times. Even though he is no longer with us, to my husband, Derrick Lewis, I couldn't have done it without him. To our son, Gregory, continue growing and reaching for your potential. To my mother, Fannie, sister, Jessica, brother, Mike, and their respective families, thank you for holding me together with your words of encouragement. Thanks to the Community Music Center of Houston, and our Scott Joplin Chamber Orchestra, for being my inspiration. Thank you to friends and coworkers who offered invaluable support and feedback.

Finally, I offer my thanks to God and my belief that praising God through music is one of life's most noble endeavors. *Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him up the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord, Praise ye the Lord. (Psalm 150: 3-6)*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose Statement and Research Questions	2
Theoretical Framework	2
Historical Context	7
Professional Orchestras and the African American Community	19
The Influence of Social Justice in Music Education	21
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH	23
Research Concerning African Americans in Music Education	23
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy	29
Critical Race Theory and its Variations in Music Education Literature	33
Black College Music Ensembles	38
Need for the Study	42
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	43
Design	43
Participant Selection	43
Procedures	43

Data Analysis and Trustworthiness	44
Limitations	45
Participants	45
Researcher Lens	50
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS	53
Striving for Excellence	54
General Lack of Funds	58
Do Everything	64
Teaching Strategies	67
Recruitment Activities	71
Discussing Race in the HBCU Orchestra	75
Summary	81
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS	84
Study Summary	85
Discussion	89
Implications	92
Recommendations and Suggestions for Future Research	94

APPENDICES	97
Appendix A: Consent Form	98
Appendix B: Questions for Semi-Structured Individual Interviews	100
BIBLIOGRAPHY	101

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

African Americans are underrepresented in America's college orchestras. DeLorenzo (2012) wrote that the underrepresentation begins in elementary schools and continues through high school orchestras, with college orchestras ultimately suffering from the shortage. It is possible that Americans have grown accustomed to seeing the small representation of African American musicians in orchestras and consider it normal. However, some music educators at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have attempted to counteract the shortage through orchestra programs on their campuses. They provide an important link between the world of orchestra and students who face the challenge of existing in two worlds that appear to be unrelated: the Eurocentric orchestra world and the Black community. These college orchestra directors also help their students negotiate the economic challenges that they face as performers in the world of Black college orchestras.

Some scholars view the issues of African American underrepresentation in orchestras as a matter of social justice (DeLorenzo, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2004; Willox-Blau, 1990). They call attention to this disparity and remind music educators that the low level of African American participation in orchestras requires further attention. DeLorenzo (2012) cited a number of problems concerning students of color in music education, like access to ongoing private lessons, quality instruments, and ongoing interaction with professional musicians of color. She supported the need for honest conversations about race and stated that ignoring the child's color also ignores the child's identity, which she maintains renders the child invisible (2012, p. 45). While DeLorenzo pointed out the lack of African American participation in orchestras in K-12 schools,

the problem extends into the university level, even at HBCUs. In order to gain a deeper understanding of what might affect African American involvement in orchestras, it is important to find information from music educators that are associated with them.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

African Americans are underrepresented in American orchestras. Researchers have cited a number of challenges including socioeconomic realities, a lack of African American mentors, misperceptions about African Americans and their place in Eurocentric music and other issues (Hamann & Walker, 1993; Willox-Blau, 1990). Currently, there is very little research on African American orchestras compared to mainstream orchestras.

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to investigate the experiences of five orchestra conductors at HBCUs. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the follow research questions:

- What are the experiences of orchestra directors at HBCUs?
- What are the challenges faced by HBCU orchestra directors, and how do the directors address them?
- How do HBCU orchestra directors describe their successes?

Theoretical Framework

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is the theoretical framework that guided this study. CRT is a concept derived from a progressive movement in Americas' legal studies (Delgado, 2005).

The founders, Derrick Bell, a Black Harvard Law School professor and Alan Freeman, a White

scholar at SUNY-Buffalo Law School started the movement in the late 1970s. Delgado (2005), and Yosso, Parker, Solorzano, and Lynn (2004) described it as a movement that grew from activists and scholars who studied and sought to transform relationships between power and racism. DeCuir-Gunby and Dixson (2004), and Hiraldo (2015) described CRT's five basic tenets as: (1) the permanence of racism in society, (2) the importance of counter-storytelling, (3) Whiteness as a property, (4) interest convergence, and (5) critique of liberalism.

The “permanence of racism in society” refers to racist policies which are deeply entrenched in the fabric of American society. Decuir-Gunby and Dixson stated that, “[t]he permanence of racism suggests that racist hierarchical structures govern all political, economic, and social domains. Such structures allocate the privileging of Whites and the subsequent Othering of people of color in all areas, including education” (2004, p. 27). CRT also employs a policy of activism in which the end goal is to implement social justice through change.

“Counter-storytelling” is a CRT tenet that refers to the importance of learning about people of color by exploring their stories. It challenges the validity of stories from the majority culture as being superior to stories based on people of color. It also serves as a means of giving legitimacy to voices of marginalized groups. Counter-storytelling “help[s] us understand what life is like for others, and invite[s] the reader into a new and unfamiliar world” (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001, p. 41).

Hiraldo (2015) described “Whiteness as property” as the third tenant. He suggesting that due to the history of racism, being White could be viewed as a right of possession. He argued that it operated on different levels including the right of possession, the right to use, and the right of disposition. (2015, p. 55)

“Interest Convergence” refers to the idea that Black civil rights are allowed if the rights converge with the self-interest of Whites and are not seen as a major disruption (DeCuir & Dixon, 2004). Bell (1980) suggested it as a challenge to the early civil rights gains that Blacks achieved which have been enjoyed by Whites for centuries. DeCuir and Dixon (2004) argued that:

We would add that these concessions were offered to the extent that they were not seen (or exacted) as a major disruption to the “normal” way of life for the majority of Whites. Furthermore, given the vast disparities between elite Whites and most communities of color, gains that coincide with the self-interest of White elites are only likely to make a substantive difference in the lives of people of color. (DeCuir and Dixon, 2004, p. 28)

“Critique of Liberalism” is the fifth CRT tenet and is critical of law practices that espouse that the law is indeed colorblind and neutral. It discusses ways in which people of color are seen as being different, while being White is considered the norm. The critique of liberalism also argues against a colorblind society in which inequities and oppression are seen as problems of past eras and cannot be easily remedied by ignoring current racial practices. Finally, it also challenges the notion that changes by marginalized groups must come at an incremental pace for the comfort of those in power (DeCuir-Gunby and Dixon, 2004).

Based on the previous descriptions of CRT and for the purpose of this study, I define CRT as an outlook that stresses equity by acknowledging that the playing field between Blacks and Whites is unequal. CRT attempts to correct the inequalities Blacks face by highlighting them, discussing the problems caused by these inequities, and proposing solutions to change the existing problems. Because the challenges caused by racist policies continue to exist in our

society and especially in our education system, the following section will examine CRT's place in education.

CRT in Education

Gloria Ladson-Billings (1996), a prominent education and CRT scholar, described how racism is enmeshed in America's schools. With that outlook, she and Bell (1996) viewed racial subjugation as a normal and permanent fixture in American life. Ladson-Billings also suggested that CRT offers a new way to view school failures for diverse students. She challenged student labels such as "culturally disadvantaged," and described those terms as a code for a derogatory label. She also questioned the view held by many that schools before the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* Supreme Court decision had no problems and that integration contributed to the downfall of America's schools. *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* was a landmark 1954 Supreme Court Decision which declared that state laws establishing separate schools for Black and White students were unconstitutional (347 U.S. 483). Ladson-Billings used the term "Public School Way Back When" (PBWBW) to describe that imaginary era. As American schools struggled with tough integration issues, workshops for teachers on cultural sensitivity became a common method of addressing those concerns. However, CRT theorists like Ladson-Billings criticized these as token gestures and pushed for more substantial changes. She stated, "Rather than a radical reformation of teaching, most teacher education programs attempt to embrace the idea of diversity as long as it does not require any fundamental attack on the PBWBW structure" (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 223).

Scholars at the college level pointed out ways in which racism is deeply embedded within America's consciousness. Tatum (2007) discussed racial disparities in America's

education system and brought to light the need to face the discomfort that comes from discussing this thorny issue.

Can we talk about race? Do we know how? Does the childhood segregation of our schools and neighborhoods and the silence about race in our culture inhibit our capacity to have meaningful dialogue with others, particularly in the context of cross-racial relationships? Can we get beyond our fear, our sweaty palms, our anxiety about saying the wrong thing or using the wrong words, and have an honest conversation about racial issues? What does it mean in our personal and professional lives when we can't?

(Tatum, 2007, p. xiii)

Many scholars who address these difficult issues are not from communities of color. However, giving more of an “insiders” perspective can have advantages. Spellman College’s President, Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, spoke frankly about her experiences as an HBCU leader. She described herself as an African American “integration baby”; born in 1954, and she recalled problems she has lived through and the hope that she maintains for change.

Students look to their teachers for guidance and help for living in an increasing diverse and complex society, and educators are becoming more aware of the need to prepare their students to live in a multiracial society. Most teachers in the United States are White teachers who are raised and educated in predominately White communities. Their knowledge of communities of color and their cultures might be limited. One way to address this deficiency in teachers’ experiences is to provide them with antiracist, multicultural education courses or programs. (Tatum, 2007, p. 71)

Tatum also addressed how she explored race within the context of higher education. As an HBCU president, she described the challenge of establishing a learning environment that supports the achievement of those who have been historically marginalized. She supported active intervention for students of color across the spectrum of education. “This is still my goal even as I work to ensure the strength of Spelman College and other institutions like it, *It is not an “either-or” choice, it is a “both-and” solution*” (Tatum, 2007, p. 114, italics in original).

Tatum also described how even enlightened educators can feel like “preaching to the choir” when they remind colleagues of the work to be done in our multicultural education environment. She expressed her support for voluntary audiences who want to learn how to improve their multicultural teaching skills. These opportunities could result in professional development workshops in which more motivated educators can influence less motivated ones, inspiring a ripple effect.

The most effective work that I’ve done has been with educators who are participating voluntarily. And yet when we talk about voluntary audiences, people often say, “Well, you are just preaching to the choir.” My response is that is always that the choir needs rehearsal. (Tatum, 2007, p.78)

Moving beyond “preaching to the choir” to examining the outlook of African Americans in the world of orchestra requires examining it from a number of perspectives. One perspective is through an historical context. Black orchestra players contributed to American musical culture for many years though few music scholars examined their input.

Historical Contexts of African American Orchestra Participation

Slave violinists

An historical examination of the relationship between African Americans and the performance of orchestral instruments begins during the time of slavery. This section will cover the experience of slave violinists, early Black orchestras, and current Black orchestras. Southern (1997) stated that a number of slaves performed on the fiddle as a source of entertainment for their masters' families and guests. These fiddlers were in high demand, and many plantation owners took pride in owning them. Slaves who possessed musical skills often found that they were able to gain entry to places commonly denied to other slaves. Their musical talent would often exempt them from the harder days' work expected by other slaves. Southern described ensembles of slave musicians who performed for their master's dances and cotillions. They were sometimes called orchestras and could range in size from two to six members. The instrumentation might be violins, cellos, and basses, and sometimes included flutes, oboes, clarinets and French horns.

Solomon Northup (1808-1863?) wrote about his 12 years of captivity and how his violin playing ability allayed the horrors of slavery. His autobiography *Twelve Years a Slave* (Northup, 1854/2013) provides a vivid account of the importance music played in his life as he endured the hardships of slavery.

Alas! Had it not been for my beloved violin, I scarcely can conceive how I could have endured the long years of bondage. It introduced me to great houses—relieved me of many days' labor in the field—supplied me with conveniences for my cabin—with pipes and tobacco, and extra pairs of shoes, and oftentimes led me away from the presence of a hard master, to witness scenes of jollity and mirth. It was my companion—the friend of my bosom—triumphing loudly when I was joyful, and uttering its soft, melodious consolations when I was sad. Often, at midnight, when sleep had fled affrighted from the cabin, and

my soul was disturbed and troubled with the contemplation of my fate, it would sing me a song of peace. (Northup, 1854/2013, p. 143)

Northup began his story by describing how he had been born free and because of his father's diligence, had received a formal education that included music lessons. His violin talents and his wife's famous cooking skills allowed them to gain a degree of financial security of the era (Northup, 1854/2013). Unfortunately, his musical abilities made him more desirable to slave catchers who could exploit those skills as a means of getting a higher price on the slave auction block. Northup's memoir expressed how he continued to use his musical skills to endure the cruelties of slavery until his rescue twelve years later.

Another historical example of Black violinists is included in early American colonial newspapers. The slave-advertisement columns offered slaves for sale or for hire and also listed runaway slaves. If a slave presented special skills, the advertisement included that information. The following is an example from the Virginia Gazette and is dated December 5, 1745.

RAN away from the Subscriber's Plantation, in the Isle of Wight, on the 17th Day of November last; a likely young Negroe [*sic*] Man, named Tom; he is a middle-siz'd Fellow, country-born, and plays very well on the Violin; he had on when he went away, a lightish colour'd Kersey Waistcoat and Trowsers. Whoever will take up the said Runaway and convey him to me, shall have Four Pistoles Reward. Robert Whitfield.
(Southern, 1971, p. 32-33)

This slave advertisement offers a glimpse into America's colonial life and one of the many roles that slaves played. Many slave owners valued skilled craftsmen and musicians more than field hands (Southern, 1971).

Cuney-Hare (1936) and Southern (1997) wrote about the violinist Joseph Douglass who was the grandson of the famous abolitionist Frederick Douglass. Though Frederick Douglass was an amateur violinist, Joseph Douglass studied music extensively and influenced others as a teacher and mentor. “Joseph Douglass (1871-1935) was the first black violinist to make transcontinental tours and was the direct inspiration for several young violinists who later became professionals” (Southern, 1997, p. 283). Joseph Douglass was born in Washington D. C., studied at the New England Conservatory of Music, and received his first big break by performing at the Chicago World’s Fair on August 25, 1893. Afterwards he is credited with performing at every university in Washington, D. C., conducting a theatre orchestra, and teaching privately (Cuney-Hare, 1936; Southern, 1997).

From the time of slavery, Black violinists have demonstrated their musical skills. Those skills resulted in both positive and negative consequences. The skilled violinist, Solomon Northup (Northup, 1854/2013), described his musical skills as a reason for his kidnapping while the same skill did, at times, lessen his anguish by allowing him to enter and perform in nicer surroundings. Also, early American newspapers identified slaves by physical appearance and trade skills; including musical abilities in an attempt to recover runaways (Southern, 1971). However, the great abolitionist Frederick Douglass’ grandson, who trained and performed professionally, gained both national and international prominence in the Eurocentric classical orchestra world soon after legal slavery had ended.

Early African American Orchestras

A limited number of scholars examined early ensembles whose information is limited to more recent orchestras that have more documentation available. Cuney-Hare (1936) and

Southern (1997) stated that even informed musicians and music lovers are generally aware of choirs and bands in the African American community, but many assume that orchestras are a rarity, although they have existed for many years. In describing some of these early ensembles, it appears that a common characteristic was a dedication of the conductors to the cause which these ensembles personally represented to these leaders.

Southern (1997) described one of the earliest known African American orchestras: the *Negro Philharmonic Society*. It was organized in New Orleans in the 1830s and had over 100 members. It was led by violinists Jacques Constantin Deburque and Richard Lambert. Lambert was also a prominent music teacher and the patriarch of a musical family that produced generations of professional musicians. The *Negro Philharmonic Society* performed concerts and arranged for performances by visiting artists with some of the players providing music at the Theatre de la Renaissance for the “free colored” audiences (Handy, 1998; Southern, 1997). Also in New Orleans at the turn of the century, William J. Nickerson was the founder/director of the Nickerson School of Music and the *Nickerson Ladies’ Orchestra and Concert Company* (Handy, 1998; Southern, 1997). Nickerson’s dedication to Black orchestras appears to have spread into Houston. A few years later, beginning in 1915, Jessie Covington Dent, Oberlin graduate and concert pianist, attributed his influence as to the reason why Houston had its own *Ladies Orchestra* from approximately 1915-1920.

...When the ladies wanted to form this orchestra—and I read this just recently—I find that my mother was instrumental in getting the orchestra started—the women’s orchestra. They decided that I should have violin lessons so that I could be a part of the orchestra. That meant I had to have a teacher. Somebody told us about a young man who was a mail clerk [on a train that ran] between New Orleans and Houston. So on his day off,

after he came into Houston, he'd come and give me violin lessons. His name was Willie Nickerson; he was a brother of the famous Miss Camille Nickerson, who wrote creole song. (Lundy, 1984, pp. 245, 247)

According to Dent, the orchestra performed arrangements of classical favorites such as themes from operas like *Il Trovatore* (Lundy, 1984, p. 252).

Anderson-Free (1994) wrote about the *Baltimore City Colored Orchestra and Chorus*, which existed from 1929-1938. It was created to address the Baltimore Symphony's discrimination practices of omitting African Americans as members. However, part of its uniqueness lay in the fact that it is believed to be the first Black orchestra that was municipally-supported in the United States (Anderson-Free, 1994). It began after a 1928 test concert by the Baltimore Symphony, when a concert was given in the African American community to see how it would be received. The concert was made possible by an anonymous contribution of \$1,000, and was given to establish a Negro symphony. Most of the members of the *Baltimore Colored Orchestra* were amateurs; however a few professionals also performed with the group. She remarked,

The purposes of the Baltimore City Colored Orchestra and City Colored Chorus were to create and educate appreciative audiences of all ages through their exposure to classical concerts, to develop the performance capabilities of the musicians by learning and playing the classical repertoire, and to feature new talent. (Anderson-Free, 1994, p. VII)

Unfortunately, conflicts with the musicians' union led to the orchestra's demise.

Badger (1995) wrote about unique performances in New York City's Carnegie Hall that would raise the visibility of a different African American orchestra. On a yearly basis, 1912-

1915, James Reese Europe conducted the *Clef Club Symphony Orchestra* in the prestigious New York Hall. Europe is perhaps best known for his service during WWI as he conducted the famous “Hellfighters” band in France (Badger, 1995). However, Europe began his musical studies on the violin and was taught by the famous soloist Joseph Douglass. Europe would expand his love for performing the violin by including the instrument in both classical and popular settings (Badger, 1995). The 125—member ensemble Europe conducted included both traditional orchestra instruments and unusual ones, like mandolins and banjo. His programming choices were also unusual because he featuring orchestral works by Black composers; including Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, James Weldon Johnson and himself. The programming choices were supported by some but criticized by others who believed that the ensemble should also perform works by mainstream composers. Europe responded to the criticisms by expressing the need to showcase Black composers’ works to all audiences (Cuney-Hare, 1936; Handy, 1995; Southern, 1997; Wilson, 1986).

The *Symphony of the New World* existed from 1964-1976 as a fully integrated professional orchestra in New York (Southern, 1997). Formed during the turbulent 60s, it reflected the desires of civil rights leaders to be inclusive in both its makeup and program selections. The orchestra contained 85-90 performers with more than 40 percent from minority communities. It began with a debut in May of 1965 at Carnegie Hall, conducted by Benjamin Steinberg and Everett Lee. They performed standard classical repertoire and musical works by mainstream Black composers such as William Grant Still and Howard Swanson as well as established jazz performers such as Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington and John “Dizzy” Gillespie. The Modern Jazz Quartet also performed with the orchestra (Handy, 1998; Southern, 1997). Another function of *Symphony of the New World* was that of a support program

channeling instrumentalists of color to perform with professional “mainstream” orchestras. “Within a short period of time the Symphony of the New World began servicing other orchestras. Former members moved on to the Baltimore, Syracuse, Denver, Quebec, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and North Carolina Symphony Orchestras” (Handy, 1998, p. 11). *Symphony of the New World* behaved as a training orchestra for African American and other musicians of color to compete more equitably within the world of professional orchestras. These musicians benefitted from network opportunities performing the repertoire they learned in this unique ensemble (Southern, 1997).

The previously mentioned orchestras demonstrate how African American instrumentalists have performed in orchestras throughout early American history. However, these ensembles are rarely studied in traditional music history courses due to a lack of documentation in the academic world about the role of Black musicians. This omission leads to the belief that the African American community did not have a presence in orchestral ensembles. The following descriptions of more current ensembles demonstrate that the interest in African American participation in orchestras continues today.

Current Orchestras

An examination of orchestras that include a majority of African Americans as members is limited. The following orchestras include African Americans as members beyond the 1% listed by top professional orchestras.

In Los Angeles, the *Southeast Symphony* was established in 1948 and continues to perform. It began with four performances in African American churches and describes itself as the longest continuously performing African-American orchestra in the world (Southeast

Symphony, n. d.). Their web site also described itself as a training ground for many young African American instrumentalists, claiming that afterwards, some members were able to find employment with professional orchestras such as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, The Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, the El Paso Opera Company and others. Its organization has an educational component called the *Southeast Symphony Conservatory*, which offers lessons ranging from beginners' lessons through advanced instruction. The conservatory aims to educate and inspire students in Los Angeles' cultural communities.

Paul Freeman founded the *Chicago Sinfonietta* in 1987 in response to the lack of opportunities for classical instrumentalists of color (Chicago Sinfonietta, 2013). It was designed as an example of diversity and inclusiveness in the contemporary world of professional orchestras. The 2011-2012 season marked its 25th year of serving the greater Chicago area and beyond, including international tours to Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, and other locales. The diversity of the orchestra is reflected in its membership of which 45% of the performing musicians are people of color, and in its audience in which 46% are also people of color. This unique audience/musicians mix reflects Maestro Freeman's aspirations to reflect the Chicago demographic.

In 2007, the *Chicago Sinfonietta* began a program entitled "Project Inclusion: Musicians of Color Mentoring Program" (Chicago Sinfonietta, 2013). It is described as a two-year fellowship program with the *Sinfonietta* during which time the trainees, most of whom are college music majors, participate in one-on-one mentoring sessions with senior orchestra members, receive full salary for rehearsals, perform with the *Sinfonietta*, and upon conclusion, receive assistance in securing professional orchestra positions. The programs include partnerships with colleges, such as Roosevelt University, DePaul University, and Northwestern

University, which help identify possible candidates. The fellowship program is limited to four to six musicians each year, and the orchestra attempted to increase the musicians' pool by expanding the program in 2009. "Project Inclusion Ensembles" (PIE) is the orchestra's newest training program. Trainees in this program perform in community events throughout greater Chicago. This program highlights the importance of the need for mentoring young musicians of color.

Composer, Darin Atwater, founded Chicago's *Soulful Symphony* in 2000, and currently serves as its artistic director. It is composed primarily of African American instrumentalists and in 2004 partnered with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. It described itself as an African-American orchestra with a strong Latino component (Soulful-song, 2009).

Amadi Azikiwe founded the *Harlem Symphony* in 2004. It described itself as a fully professional ensemble whose mission is to highlight African American instrumentalists and perform concerts in Harlem's historic Aaron Davis Hall. "Its mission is also to provide positive role models, to encourage youths of all ethnic origins to pursue careers in the field of classical music, and to tour under-served, minority and inner city communities nationwide and internationally" (Harlem Symphony, 2012).

Jeri Lynne Johnson, one of the few African American women orchestra conductors, founded Philadelphia's *Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra* in 2007. It is dedicated to normalizing participation from underrepresented groups in classical music. "The name of the ensemble is a translation into English from the term *Baroque*, derived probably from the ancient Portuguese noun *barroco*, which is a pearl of unpredictable and elaborate shape" (Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra, n. d.). Consequently, the majority of works they perform are from the Baroque and

Classical eras though they sometimes modify the ensemble to accommodate modern works as well. They also allow ensemble members to perform solos with accompaniment by the chamber orchestra.

Aaron Dworkin founded the *Sphinx Organization* in 1996. In 2001, the *Sphinx Organization* and the League of American Orchestras collaborated to have the *Sphinx Organization* execute its Music Assistance Fund, which is designed to help classically trained musicians of color (Sphinx Music, 2014). The partnership led to the formation of the *Sphinx Virtuosi*, a conductor-less chamber orchestra that featured its members as both soloists and ensemble performers. It is formerly the *Sphinx Chamber Orchestra* and is composed of alumni from the *Sphinx Competition*, a nationwide competition for Black and Latino String Players. The purposeful construction of the *Sphinx Virtuosi* suggests that it is currently the better known organization in actively addressing the lack of African Americans and Latinos in America's orchestras. The 18—member chamber tours throughout the U. S. and includes diverse repertoire which includes mainstream classical masters as well as lesser known composers like Latin composer, Astor Piazzolla, and African American composer, Coleridge-Taylor Perkinson.

Houston's *Scott Joplin Chamber Orchestra* was founded by myself in 1983. I started it for two reasons: to give African American instrumentalists opportunities to perform together and to research and perform music by Black composers. The repertoire has included music of an 18th century African French composer, a 19th century African English composer, African-born composers and African American composers, although the ensemble has also performed works by mainstream composers such as Handel, Copland, and Gershwin. It is mostly an African American community orchestra that performs principally in Houston area churches and schools (Houston Post, 1993). Two concerts stand out in its 30 year history; first was the "Music of

Africa” that featured little known orchestra music written by African born composers, and our collaborative concerts with the Houston Symphony in summers of 1989 and 1990. Additionally, the group performed the National Anthem at Super Bowl XXV with pop superstar Beyonce (Houston Chronicle, 2004).

These unique ensembles were created as endeavors to address the shortage of African Americans in America’s orchestras. Though each ensemble is unique, all strive to transform the orchestra experience by diversifying the composition of the orchestra and thereby changing the audience’s composition and perspectives towards the orchestra. Los Angeles’s *Southeast Symphony* stands out as the one with the longest history. Some of their members grew from amateur to professional orchestra membership (Los Angeles, 2013). The *Chicago Sinfonietta* and its founding music director, Paul Freeman, worked to bridge the gap between the Chicago Symphony and the African American community. The newer Chicago’s *Soulful Symphony* places ensembles into the diverse African American and Latino communities that they serve. The other previously mentioned groups strive to serve their local communities with their repertoire and membership. Information regarding the *Sphinx Virtuosi* suggests that it is currently the strongest organization that actively addresses the lack of African Americans and Latinos in America’s orchestras. Knowledge about these professional and semi-professional orchestras helps to better inform interested scholars about ensembles that traditional music history studies often overlook. However, African American participation does exist in professional and semi-professional orchestras and deserves attention by scholars and other interested music lovers. Greater knowledge of these unique orchestras could also raise awareness of HBCU orchestras and their contributions to the world of orchestra.

Summary

Although African Americans have played an important role in the history of American orchestra, there exists a vast gap in the literature concerning the needs and nature of African American orchestras. DeLorenzo (2013), Willox-Blau, (1990), and others examined African Americans in the world of orchestra, however, there needs to be more research in this area to provide a more comprehensive view of Black experiences in music scholarship. An historical review of African American musicians during slavery and Reconstruction dispels the notion that African Americans have only recently begun playing orchestra instruments. As the 20th century progressed, a number of ensembles ranging from all Black to mixed-race orchestras have received some coverage from the mainstream media. Recent outreach efforts from professional orchestras into the African American community have received attention and a degree of scholarly examination.

Professional Orchestras and the African American community

The performers in America's symphony orchestras do not reflect the ethnic make-up of the communities they serve (Clements, 2006; DeLorenzo, 2012; Williams 2013). The League of American Orchestras (2007) surveyed professional orchestras regarding Black participation in professional orchestra and the results displayed a problematic outlook. According to the survey, the percentage of African Americans who perform in America's professional orchestras is approximately 1.5%. Unfortunately, the same survey lists only 19 African Americans in America's top orchestras. These cities include New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Phoenix, Philadelphia, San Antonio, San Diego, Dallas, San Jose, Detroit, San Francisco, Jacksonville, Indianapolis, Austin, Columbus, Fort Worth, Charlotte, Memphis and Boston. That collection leaves African Americans as less than 1% in America's top professional orchestras (League of American Orchestras, 2007).

As in most professions, a network exists in the orchestral world that is determined by where and with whom one has studied, who one knows, and even the style in which one plays. Although audition procedures attempt to be fair by having the instrumentalist perform unseen behind a screen, other factors come into play that allow bias to inform the selection process. More than half of those who make the finals at the New York Philharmonic graduated from Juilliard, and many violinists in the Boston Symphony studied with former concertmaster Joseph Silverstein (Willox-Blau, 1990). An orchestra is a small, closely knit community. Many symphony players also teach, and teachers often prefer to have their own students sit beside them; they also feel a responsibility to help their students when they can. Increasingly, the players have quite a bit to say about who gets to the final round of the audition, and they will naturally prefer someone similar to themselves. All these factors add to the unconscious element of prejudice that is experienced by Black musicians, as well as other musicians of color.

The earlier, more detailed survey by the American Symphony Orchestra League's 1990 survey of professional orchestras examined African American participation in professional orchestras. This major finding showed a problematic outlook.

The following study demonstrates that, in spite of the good will and the efforts of numberless people over the past two hundred years, black Americans have been largely excluded from participation in the professional orchestra world in the United States. Misconceptions and prejudices, deeply engrained in society—and, by extension, among the people who have traditionally controlled America's orchestras—have effectively prohibited the inclusion of blacks among orchestra musicians, composers, conductors, administrative personnel, boards of directors, and audiences. (American Symphony Orchestra League, 1990, p. 4)

This organization recommends hiring Black players and administrators in America's professional orchestras to counteract past practices.

The Influence of Social Justice in Music Education

DeLorenzo examined the issue of social justice in reference to the missing faces from the orchestra (2012). She contended that the Black and Latino underrepresentation in America's orchestras requires active intervention. The intervention includes examining students' socioeconomic status (SES) as it relates to music education programs. Not surprising, schools with higher SES status are found to have stronger music programs than those with lower SES (Albert, 2006; DeLorenzo, 2012; Gaziambied-Fernandez, 2011; Hamann and Walker, 1993). While that may seem obvious to many, finding solutions to the disparity remains challenging.

DeLorenzo described how urban school districts often rely heavily on government support. This support can include city, state and federal aid. Politics can mean an uncertain future for budgets, which results in planning problems for the next school year's music program. Additionally, testing often affects urban schools that struggle to continually improve their test scores just to remain open and can lead to inconsistent rehearsals. This can have huge negative impacts on lower SES schools' music programs. DeLorenzo stated,

From the perspective of resources and instruction, the alarming inequities in music programs (discounting urban schools designated as arts magnet school or special grant-funded programs) is clearly evident. In short, poor Black or Latino children do not stand an equal chance when it comes to the experiences needed for a college music program. Without continuity in music instructions, money for private lessons, or instrument rental and other resources, students cannot develop a competitive level of performance skills

that lead to participation in music camps, community orchestras or admittance into college music programs. (2012, pp 41-42)

Socio economic status is a key factor in determining which students have access to orchestra participation. These factors can also affect whether students have good or poor experiences while performing in the orchestra. When all students have access to private lessons and quality instruments, they are more successful and are more likely to receive praise and support from family and peers. This will hopefully lead to a higher degree of retention in orchestra programs involving larger number of Black orchestra students. Hopefully university orchestra programs, like the ones on the campuses of HBCUs, will reap the benefits of better prepared orchestra students.

The need for research regarding the challenges and successes that conductors and students in African American orchestras face continues. DeLorenzo (2012) challenged the assumption that there is little interest in the African American community for orchestras resulting in suburban school orchestras receiving more funding than urban school orchestras. A lack of funding often led to the absence of Black school orchestras, which hinders HBCU orchestras' attempts to develop their programs. However, the world of professional orchestras should also be examined since the ultimate goal of university training is preparing students to be employed in their fields.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

This study examines the world of HBCU orchestras through the voices of the conductors. In Chapter 1, the literature revealed that African Americans have performed instruments associated with orchestras from the time of slavery to the present day. Unfortunately, there exists a dearth of scholarship regarding HBCU orchestras. However, a small number of studies have presented information that offers insight into related areas. This chapter will discuss studies covering research about African Americans in music education, culturally relevant pedagogy, Critical Race Theory in music education literature, and Black college music ensembles.

Research Concerning African Americans in Music Education

This section presents an overview of scholarship that relates to African American music education both inside and outside of the world of orchestra, beginning first with studies of African American orchestra students and then studies of African American students in other ensembles. The studies show the importance of Black music traditions, beginning with the church and continue with other musical forms, including storytelling and improvisation. These forms are important because they reveal ways in which these African American orchestra students remain successful in two distinct worlds.

Studies of African American Orchestra Students

The following studies examined young orchestra students' involvement in the world of orchestra. The purpose of Williams' (2013) case study was to identify factors that motivated African American orchestra members to begin and continue performing in orchestra. Williams investigated what factors motivated three African American string players to begin and later to

continue their involvement in music. Her data collection included participant observation, in-depth interviewing, document collection, and analysis with field observations. Three participants were interviewed over a 22-week period.

Her findings revealed that African American orchestra players adapted to being in two worlds (Williams, 2013). These two worlds included performing in orchestra, which is a largely white environment, and also keeping their roots in the Black community. The students learned to speak bi-dialectally, which meant knowing when to speak in mainstream American English and when to use African American vernacular. They became more comfortable relating as adults to the largely white environment that exists in America's orchestras due to that experience.

Williams also found that participants placed importance on the music traditions from the Black church, including both traditional hymn-based songs and newer gospel pieces. The students also developed an ability to play by ear and improvise, which are paramount in the Black worship traditions. For these participants, playing music for the church provided expanded musical opportunities in which they could flourish without formal training, which may be common for many in the Black community. Williams' study was an important examination of the orchestra experience from an African American perspective. Though it was limited to three string players, the information gathered provided some insight into the world of orchestra from an African American standpoint.

The purpose of Tuncer's 2008 study was to understand and explain the experiences of seven African American elementary violin students in northern Florida. A hermeneutical approach was used to answer two broad research questions: What are the musical lives of these Black children? and How do those children relate to their school violin program? However,

Tuncer's investigated one overall research question, which was, "How do the individual perceptions of the violin program and the sociocultural musical background of these students relate?" (2008, p. 8). The data were collected by semi-structured interviews and were analyzed using Spradley's "Ethnographic Analysis Model."

Findings from this study pertained to two musical dimensions of the violin students. Tuncer (2008) sought to uncover the details of the children's musical life, which included both violin and non-violin experiences. Tuncer (2008) found that telling stories with a beat was very important to these African American children. "The data revealed that the participants of this study had shared perceptions of music; in particular, that it tells stories and has a distinctive beat" (p. 113). Like Williams (2013), Tuncer's study revealed the importance of violin playing away from school, specifically in church and at home, and how in less structured environments, the children often created their own beats. This study revealed the importance of casual, less structured music making by children and its importance in their lives. A significant finding from the study was the notion that African American students learn to successfully navigate between the two worlds of their Black community's music traditions and the Eurocentric orchestra traditions.

Hamann and Walker (1993) conducted a quantitative study of African American high school music students' perceptions of high school music teachers. Students were participants in band, choir, orchestra, music appreciation or a combination of these groups. The study included 811 African American high school students and utilized descriptive statistics to analyze the data. The purpose was to determine what portion of the students identified music teachers as role models. It was also designed to determine whether there were any differences in the students'

perceptions of the number of Black students or teachers of their race or sex in their non-music versus music classes.

Results from this study found that music teachers, regardless of race, were important both as role models and as individuals who can help influence program or class decisions at all levels. Findings from this study also reported that “African-American teachers tend to have a better understanding of the difficulties that African-American students face” (Hamann and Walker, 1993, p. 304), which may have been based on their shared background. They interpreted their findings by stating that African American teachers better understand firsthand both the strengths and challenges their African American students face, pointing to the need for more culturally diverse teachers to be recruited into public school music classrooms. In their study, the importance of the teachers’ expectations was highlighted. They noted,

[I]f teachers believe students to be academically capable and socially desirable, the learning environment becomes challenging, student performance is facilitated, and their achievement is praised. Conversely, teachers who expect less, provide less challenging instruction, create fewer opportunities for participation in qualitative interactions, offer less praise for performance, and give more criticism for failure. (Hamann and Walker, 1993, p. 304)

Findings from this study point to the need for teachers to be culturally sensitive by strongly encouraging their students to reach for high standards instead of settling for lower ones. This study also described the need for more African American teachers who have a shared background with their students.

Studies of African American Students in Other Ensembles

Scholars have studied African Americans' participation in bands, choirs, and other musical ensembles. One factor, socioeconomic status, was found to be an important contributing factor in the students' success. In 1980, McCarthy produced a study to explore how SES affected the choices of band students. Her quantitative examination of 1,199 urban fifth and sixth grade beginning band students found that SES was a major factor in retention of students. She concluded that students with higher SES continued longer in instrumental program than students with lower SES. Klinedinst (1991), in a qualitative study also found that SES was a significant factor in retention of band students. He found that SES was a better indicator of retention than musical aptitude or academic measurement.

Shields' 2001 quantitative study presented different ideas regarding music education for at-risk students. She investigated the importance of music education for urban adolescents. Participants were 150 sixth graders who performed in choir or creative percussion and were designated as at-risk students by their homeroom teacher, guidance counselor, and/or principal. Using both pretest and posttest data over a 16—week period, the study demonstrated that the students' ranking of music's importance increased from 76% to 82% as a result of their participation in performing groups while receiving instructors' mentoring, both musical and non-musical. The teachers who mentored the students also offered extra music instruction during lunch times and visited the homes of each study participant (Shields, 2001).

However, Shields (2001) used code words "urban" and "at-risk" to describe the students. Progressive music education scholars have recently come to describe these code words as offensive (DeLorenzo, 2012; Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1999). Throughout the study, Shields used derogative descriptions of the student's community. She described these at-risk students as living with a magnitude of problems and that music could counter the negative

influences in the community and at home. However, she based some of her research on outdated articles from the 1970s that supported her contention that the at-risk students were struggling to achieve success. She wrote,

People in both the educational community and society in general are concerned with the historic and increasingly severe problem of at-risk students. These individuals fail to prosper within the framework of schooling as it exists for them. Many of these students do not graduate or acquire the basic competencies necessary to participate successfully within American society. Often they operate outside the mainstream of daily life in the schools they attend. Frequently disenfranchised and frightened, many are socioculturally distanced from those around them and the setting of the school. (Shields, 2001, p. 273)

It is possible that some educators will share Shield's views regarding the students' problems. She may have begun her study with good intentions; however, those statements of negative influences in the students' communities and home life reinforced the article's biases against an inclusive view of working with students of color.

In summary, Williams' 2013 study of three African American string students demonstrated how the students successfully existed in two worlds. They continued performing in the majority White orchestra while they held on to their music traditions, especially from the Black church. Tuncer (2008) studied seven fourth and fifth grade African American orchestra students and found that the students thrived in less structured, more creative musical environments. Hamann and Walker's (1993) examination of 811 high school music students in band, choir, orchestra, and music appreciation revealed the importance of teachers believing in their students' capabilities by providing challenging opportunities for them. Hamann and

Walker also maintained that Black teachers were attuned to the students' challenges but proceeded to push them to excel. McCarthy (1980) explored how SES affected band students' musical choices and found that it was a major retention factor. In McCarthy's study, students with higher SES remained in the band longer than students with lower SES. Klinedinst also found that SES was a significant factor in retention of band students, in this case, better than musical aptitude or academic measurement. Shields' (2001) examination appears to employ descriptive terms of the students' lives that are somewhat dated. She described severe problems of at-risk students and students with low graduation rates. Presently, those terms are considered problematic and stereotypical, but were perhaps more acceptable to educators previously.

While these studies examined African American students in K-12 musical ensembles, none addressed HBCU orchestras. The void of HBCU orchestra data supports the need for this study and future studies to address this environment. The lack of knowledge about orchestras on Black college campuses suggests a greater need for racial sensitivity regarding students of color in the world of orchestra.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) emphasizes the responsibility of educators to know and be sensitive to each student's culture. Though it began initially addressing concerns of Black students, it now includes other students of color. Ladson-Billings explained that:

[C]ulturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order. (p. 160)

The students' critical consciousness encourages them to examine and criticize current social norms.

In this section, I will review literature related to African Americans in music education, which includes scholarly articles regarding race and how it impacts policies in music education. Next, I will show why exploring the world of HBCU orchestras through the interviews of their directors helps expand music educators' knowledge of this little-known environment.

Studies of African American Conductors and their Students

The goal of this section is to present studies regarding African American music students. This field has received some examination but more is needed to better understand these students' concerns. Butler, Lind and McKoy (2007) proposed a conceptual model that investigated issues of race, ethnicity and culture and how they relate to music learning. They explored five major categories: teacher, student, content, instruction and context. Their model appeared to exhibit some of CRP's characteristics of race, ethnicity and culture; however, they did not specifically state that CRP was the framework for their work. They suggested that teachers are aware of America's changing demographics and understand the need for multicultural education. They proposed that, as teachers attempt to better relate to their students, a number of issues arise, including the need to know about the background of their students' lives and how to use the knowledge to expand the students' horizons.

However, while CRP music instruction is beneficial for students, many educators are unsure how to effectively implement these types of programs. This often results in an expressed desire to implement CPR music programs but uncertainty towards their execution. For example, White teachers are often expected to be multi culturally competent with little training. If,

however, as Butler, Lind, and McKoy (2007) stated, pre-service teachers are immersed in multicultural experiences, they are more likely to re-conceptualize teaching as a more bi-directional experience between themselves and students, in which students and teachers learn from each other.

Butler, Lind and McKoy (2007) also described how studies reveal that multicultural programming is often only used superficially and relegated to world holidays and celebrations. How music is instructed can dramatically affect how students respond. Oral learning skills in the African American community may offer a less structured method of sharing musical information. A collaborative, less competitive approach has also been effective in environments where students work together instead of competing against each other. They stated:

The student population and teaching force will become increasingly diverse, and expectations for learning will continue to shift as new policies and procedures are implemented. The conceptual model must reflect not only the new knowledge gained through systematic and focused research, but also the changes in schooling and music learning. It is our hope that the proposed conceptual model will help organize existing research and clarify what we already know, facilitate conversations, and direct our thinking about music education in new ways, and serve to move the research agenda forward as we strive to find ways to provide equitable education to an increasingly diverse student population. (Butler, Lind & McKoy, 2007, p. 250)

Their findings demonstrate that as the enrollment of students of color increases, music educators should re-conceptualize how to better serve this diverse body of students

Emmanuel (2003) promoted cultural immersion for pre-service music teachers by having them live and work in the communities of the students. The five music education majors had a one-week orientation on a university campus followed by a two-week immersion internship at an elementary school in Detroit, Michigan. The school's racial makeup was approximately 60% Hispanic, 20% African-American, 15% White, and 5% Arab. The immersion included a "Multicultural Awareness Quiz," readings focused on gender and race, viewing two videos that highlighted common biases in the U.S., and student journaling to record their impressions and reactions. The pre-service teachers lived for two weeks in an apartment in downtown Detroit, which forced them to confront this new environment head-on because they were not allowed to retreat to their familiar environment.

The five pre-service teachers participating in this study were driven to and from the schools, which also led them to have more discussions in transit about their experience. They began to examine how to go beyond a surface-level multicultural approach of singing a few ethnic songs to experiencing cultural relevant pedagogy as a conscious understanding of the students' environment. Emmanuel (2003) found that this type of immersion experiences combined with course work and opportunities for guided reflection under the supervision of an informed instructor had dramatic effects of the attitudes and beliefs of the participating pre-service music teachers. She asserted:

If we do not reach beyond content alone and consider the process of how to teach and who we are teaching, our future music educators will be unable to gain understanding that will enable them to work effectively and equitably with all students, including those of diverse cultural backgrounds. (2003, p. 38)

This study encouraged university music education programs to go beyond teaching multicultural children's songs to their pre-service music education majors to forcing them to confront long-held beliefs about diverse students. The study supports the idea that pre-service teachers need to have first-hand experience with students of color. This examination did not avoid contentious issues surrounding race, but rather prominently discussed them. As Tatum (2007) mentioned earlier, forcing these problematic discussions is necessary and thoughts shared during these exchanges can be used as a lens to examine race and the world of HBCU orchestras.

Critical Race Theory and Its Use in Music Education Literature

Scholars also explored how Critical Race Theory (CRT) was employed in the field of music education. Gaztambide-Fernandez (2011) investigated four urban music education theories and described how these theories could be re-imagined. Using the major Canadian city of Toronto as the setting, he proposed urban music practices that range from familiar to less familiar: The Civilizing Approach, The Culturalist Approach, The Critical Approach and The Cultural Production Approach (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2011).

According to Gaztambide-Fernandez (2011), The Civilizing Approach was the older teaching style for music education. It stressed exposing urban youth to professional musical experiences. This included having students attend college and professional ensembles so they could be exposed to the *right* kind of music, which meant European classical music. Gaztambide-Fernandez criticized this music education practice for its patrimonial style that stressed the importance of European classical music over music that is indigenous to many of the students' cultures.

Gaztambide-Fernandez's Culturalist Approach included a more multicultural approach to teaching music. This style generally included teaching both traditional musical skills and supporting students' rich cultural traditions, such as Mariachi ensembles, African American gospel choirs, and Asian musical ensembles. However, he stated that problems could occur when this approach freezes the cultural lives of students of color by confining them to well-known musical styles. This approach can limit the students' musical experiences and can lead to educators ignoring the evolving musical practices of the students (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2011).

The Critical Approach values the students' cultural practices as starting points. He stated: "This requires the recognition that *the lives of all students are already filled with meaningful musical practices*" (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2011, p. 32, italics in original). It was also critical of the current political climate and demands the recognition of racism as being deeply embedded in today's society.

Finally, Gaztambide-Fernandez proposed the Cultural Production Approach, which stressed the need for students to produce their own music. He said,

By putting students own musical creations at the center of the process, this production approach rejects the premise that music education should be about reproducing the work written by other (usually dead, white, and male) composers whose work is deemed legitimate music. Enabling students to draw on and to combine a range of musical genres, a production approach also avoids the culturalist implication that there are neat boundaries between "authentically ethnic" and "traditional" musical styles. (Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2011, p. 35)

Gaztambide-Fernandez presented four theories for music education and encouraged the reader to evaluate his/her own cultural experiences. He believed that most students grow up with the Civilized Approach and are taught that European classical music is the highest musical genre, which can lead to university studies where that view is reinforced. This approach often influences music educators' teaching style. While the Culturalist Approach is one that some music educators have learned about and have grown to implement in their teaching, the Critical Approach may be new to many music educators. In this approach, music educators criticize the status quo and openly acknowledge and discuss racism. This can translate into teachers supporting styles such as hip hop and considering them as musical critiques of students' cultures. Finally, encouraging students' productions using current media outlets challenges today's music education practices. The Cultural Production Approach presents a position in which the teacher's role was changed to more of a partner rather than always a leader. As students create their own musical forms, music education as a teaching entity has to re-invent itself.

Bradley, (2006) presented different views that challenged how music educators struggle with multiculturalism versus anti-racism. She suggested that music educators often avoid the difficult racialized discourse by going for the less divisive term of multicultural. This can lead to a decolonization of our understanding of multiculturalism in music education. Bradley challenged the manner in which coded language hinders societies' ability to talk directly about the difficult issues of race, with examples of coded language including terms such as "ethnic" and "multicultural." She stated that learning to talk about racially coded language was difficult within the system that places Western European art music on a higher plateau than other forms such as soul, rock, folk, indigenous, and other popular musical styles. Bradley also reported that

multicultural programming in choirs has become more commonplace however she believed that people often reacted to the deeper dialogue regarding racist policies with silence.

Bradley (2006) suggested that race is coded into multicultural terms but by using those terms, music educators avoid talking about racism's permanence in education's culture. "As a pedagogical practice, multiculturalism has been criticized for its failure to interrogate biases and power relations built into the foundational principles in the Canada and the U.S., thus allowing systemic racism to remain unchecked" (p. 10). In the world of music education, systemic racism translates into valuing Western European classical music forms over other forms.

Finally, Bradley (2006) challenged music educators to use rehearsal time to teach the social, economic, and historical contexts in which multicultural musics originated. In doing so, Bradley encouraged music educators to move beyond multicultural education to anti-racist education. She cited an example of her choir performing anti-apartheid songs from South Africa, and, while most of her "ethnically diverse" choir appreciated the enthusiastic response from the South African delegation, she described a few choir members' racist and colonial views of Africa. Bradley closed by stating that even though some rehearsal time had been used to inform her choir of the heritage and strong traditions that music had during the oppressive reign of South Africa's apartheid era, even her group had not achieved a full appreciation of racists' policies and music's attempt to unify the oppressed population. She said,

How do we, the, as teachers, use that tool; what kinds of people are we helping our students to be? Do our music education practices provide a new lens through which we can imagine what it means to be human, and does that lens help our students understand how power perpetuates inequality through racialized discourses, including the discourse

of multiculturalism? When we teach from a multicultural perspective, are we teaching for social justice, or perpetuating the status quo? (Bradley, 2006, ps. 22-23)

Bradley's (2006) discussion was insightful because she did not avoid the discomfort that many music educators feel when addressing racist policies. She challenged music educators to move beyond safe programming tactics, generally used for cultural celebrations such as Martin Luther King concerts and Cinco de Mayo celebrations. These events should be used to educate students about the historical and discomfiting racist policies that generally resulted in the formation of these cultural celebrations. Bradley quoted others who share her views regarding the impossibility of living in a 'color-blind' society and re-states the need for ongoing dialogue by closing with the question, "Can we talk?" (p. 24).

Summary

The previous research writings presented different approaches to addressing issues of race in music education. Butler, Lind and McKoy (2007) found that while teachers are aware of America's changing demographics, they have difficulty successfully navigating between the different cultures. Culturally relevant pedagogy discussed how music educators can better relate to students of color. It stresses the importance of musics that the students bring from their environments on an equal footing with western European classical music. Emmanuel's 2003 study immersed pre-service teachers in the students' environments for three weeks. Results from that study indicate that the immersion was successful in forcing the pre-service teachers to grow beyond their pre-conceived notions of potential students' environment.

Gaztambide-Fernandez (2011) examined four different music educational approaches, ranging from the older, European based approach to outlooks that are more culturally sensitive.

He argued for a newer approach in which the students create their own music, with educators' roles being reimagined as coaches rather than traditional teachers. Bradley's 2007 study explored how systemic racism remained unchecked in music education. Her unflinching examination of how students were affected by racism in music education settings, challenged conductors to use rehearsal time to educate the students about the sometimes uncomfortable origins of beautiful music. Bradley dismissed attempts to live in a 'color-blind' society and pushed for ongoing dialogue regarding sometimes racist policies in schools. Bradley also expressed that performing for a Martin Luther King celebration does little unless it also includes uncomfortable discussions about racist policies that led to King's imprisonment and assassination. Those studies discussed the difficulties that continue to exist between predominately White and Black communities, though perhaps these music ensembles can begin to act as a bridge between cultures.

Black College Music Ensembles

A few studies examined Black college music ensembles. These have included HBCU groups and ensembles on larger university campuses. Chadwick (2011) studied the work of Dr. Ollie Watts Davis with the University of Illinois' Black Chorus. Dr. Davis's pedagogy showed how CRT and higher education intersect in a college choir by supporting African American students at a predominately White university. Davis used the choir to help students who may feel disenfranchised feel more "at home" with their peers. This can be seen as a way to counteract what can be an alienating experience for students of color. Singing in the choir allowed them to continue celebrating African American music and culture within this unique group of singers. Chadwick described Davis's use of Ladson-Billings' philosophical with three pedagogical outcomes: (a) academic success, making good grades; (b) cultural competence,

performing music from a Black perspective; and (c) critical consciousness, allowing students to retain their social background without having to ‘act white.’

Mentors in the choir actively worked with other members to also achieve the first pedagogical outcome, academic success. More experienced choir members were paired with freshmen singers and on at least a weekly basis, gave guidance to their mentees. The second outcome was cultural competence, which was supported through the celebration of African American musical traditions. Some members described their choir membership as a lesson in Black history. They performed musical styles from African chant to Black oratorios to songs of Dionne Warwick. Critical consciousness was the third pedagogical outcome. Dr. Davis used culturally relevant pedagogy to challenge inequities that African American students face and allowed these students to validate their own culture (Chadwick, 2011).

Chadwick also discussed the issue of learning to perform music by rote. This choir was accessible to all students of all musical backgrounds and did not depend on learning the music by reading printed musical parts. This choice allowed the conductor, Dr. Ollie Watts Davis, to promote ownership of the music from the beginning. The benefits of this style of teaching and learning were many, including the possibility for nuance and expression without the challenge of formal note reading.

Another study of Black music ensembles looked at Black band traditions. Lewis (2003) presented an historical account of African American marching bands. His study examined artifacts dating back to the 1700s and then proceeded through American wars, where Black bands were incorporated into Black regiments. These bands often marched in styles that were derived from popular Black minstrel bands and achieved great popularity both in the U. S. and abroad.

Lewis described the style as being highly syncopated, with body-moving rhythms that largely White bands did not incorporate.

Henry's 2009 historical dissertation focused on the Prairie View Interscholastic League's (PVIL) band contest from 1938-1970. It described the pre-integration band contests in Texas and the contests' importance to HBCU and Black high school bands. Henry stated that, in most cases, little is known about HBCU bands outside of the Black community. Integration led to the elimination of the PVIL and with that, a loss to the Black music community. One major loss was the elimination of many jobs for African American band directors, who were often important role models for African American children.

Carter (2013) included issues of social justice in his exploration of what it means to be Black and gay in a HBCU band. Carter found that the participants faced issues of bullying and harassment but they also expressed their enjoyment in playing in the band and the camaraderie they experienced. Carter closed by stating that little research exists about HBCU bands and that more was needed. He noted,

... given the rich historical musical traditions ever present on HBCU campuses, it would seem logical that a similarly robust amount of writings would exist in music education journals. However, there was no empirically based research to be found that addressed the music experiences of students attending HBCUs. Detailed accounts of the HBCU musical experience are desperately needed from numerous perspectives, including historical, philosophical, and pedagogical lenses. (Carter, 2013, p. 40)

Carter's research reminds the reader of the importance of HBCU bands in the Black music community. Unfortunately, the importance appears to be unknown outside of the African

American community. Carter also reinforced the band's importance by demonstrating the band members' love for the ensemble in spite of the issues of harassment and bullying.

The main findings from these studies present the importance of Black collegiate music ensembles and how their traditions are little known outside of the Black community. Henry's (2009) research revealed information about a self-contained band contest tradition inside the Black community while Lewis' study (2003) presented the historical context of Black bands. Chadwick (2011) examined a Black choir on a largely White campus and described the social importance that the choir presented to the singers, while Carter (2013) presented information about both the positive and negative experiences of students in HBCU bands. Unfortunately, there is no current research on HBCU orchestras. This absence of information might lead to the assumption that HBCU orchestras do not exist. This incorrect assumption led to the examination of the little known but fascinating world of orchestras at HBCUs.

Summary

Carter (2013) concluded that based on information gathered from scholarly literature, little information has been written about Black collegiate music programs. However, some scholars have explored band and choir programs (Carter, 2013; Chadwick, 2011; Henry, 2009). Since many African American schools are located in urban areas, these music programs are often struggling with issues ranging from badly needing equipment to wondering if their programs will be funded in the next school year (DeLorenzo, 2012).

Butler, Lind & McKoy (2007) and Gaztambide-Fernandez (2011) found that music teacher training was another major issue related to culturally relevant pedagogy. Music educators, regardless of race, need to be shown how to reach the needs of students of color

beyond programming a few Black or Latino works at appropriate times of the school year. Some scholars argue that teachers, ranging from pre-service to veteran teachers, need ongoing cultural education (Emmanuel, 2003). These different approaches can allow students to move beyond believing that Eurocentric musical styles are a more refined musical form to valuing musical works that the students themselves compose (Butler, Lind & McKoy, 2007; Emmanuel, 2003, Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2011).

Issues of social justice became more important as more vernacular musical styles were explored in the education system. Bradley (2006) reminded music educators that racist policies continue to affect students' lives and that music educators must sometimes use rehearsal time to address issues that students face, despite the discomfort the music teachers may face when dealing with these sensitive issues.

Need for the Study

Based on studies presented earlier in this chapter, information about African Americans in America's music education system was available, but often, only bands and choirs are examined and how they relate to the Black community. Unfortunately, only a small body of scholarly literature explores the world of orchestra and the Black community, and no studies have yet explored HBCU orchestras. The purpose of this study is to examine the experiences of orchestra directors on HBCU campuses. To my knowledge, no one has ethnographically examined this unique culture.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This chapter focuses on the methodology of the study. It will describe the design, participant selection, data collection procedures, data analysis, trustworthiness, limitations, and researcher lens.

Design

This was an ethnographic case study. According to Creswell (2007), ethnography is a means of studying a culture-sharing group. He stated that the cultural group could be large or small, such as these specialized music educators who work in unique circumstances.

“[E]thnography is a way of studying a culture-sharing group as well as the final, written product of that research” (Creswell, 2007, p. 68). In this study, the five participants were conductors of HBCU orchestra programs. Data forms included observations, field notes, and semi-structured individual interviews (Creswell, 2007).

Participant Selection

Participants were five orchestra conductors at HBCUs. They were chosen based on the concept of purposeful sampling, in which “the inquirer selects individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 125). These participants were successful in their fields, and their work was informative to this inquiry.

Procedures

Internal Review Board (IRB) approval was received in April 2014, after which I called the conductors to solicit their participation and gain consent. Data collection, including site visits and interviews, took place during the month of April 2014.

I completed one observation at each site and interviewed each participant once. I used the maximum variation sampling strategy among the participants (Creswell, 2007). According to Creswell (2007), this sampling strategy "...increases the likelihood that the findings will reflect differences or different perspectives—an ideal in qualitative research" (Creswell, 2007, p. 126). I interviewed four participants immediately following a concert and interviewed the other participant after a rehearsal. The interviews ranged from 20 to 50 minutes in length. In the observations, I noted the participants' interactions with their orchestras and took field notes of the participants' activities from pre-concert rehearsal to the post-concert break down. This gave me the opportunity to observe their interactions with the students. I also saw other duties, in addition to conducting, that the participants assumed. In my journal, I recorded the condition of the rehearsal/and or performance space, condition of the equipment, chosen repertoire, activities of the orchestra members, demeanor of the conductors, and interactions with the audience.

Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

Data analysis was ongoing. Coding (Creswell, 2007) began after collection of the data. First, I coded the data by hand. I then wrote memos regarding the codes and interpreted the data based on "hunches, insights, and intuition" to find the emerging themes (Creswell, 2007, p. 154). In order to ensure trustworthiness, I used peer review and member checks (Creswell, 2007). After data collection ended, I asked experienced music educators to peer review the data.

I gave excerpts of my data to experienced researchers in the fields of music education and African American studies. Their feedback helped me as I continued to refine my analysis. Participants also performed a member check of their interview for accuracy and made desired changes to the text.

Limitations

This study includes a small group of conductors, which may limit its generalizability to other music programs. Another limitation is due to the limited amount of time that I spent with each conductor. As a conductor, my experiences may have influenced how I viewed the data, and yet my unique lens as an HBCU orchestra director aided my ability to analyze the data. I believe that someone who was not familiar with this context might not have understood what these directors' experience, from moving chairs and stands to asking musical friends to perform with student orchestras. However, I hope that findings from this data might be adapted and useful for other conductors and music educators.

Participants

Each participant was chosen based on their expertise in the field as orchestra conductors at HBCUs. The five participants were Sandra Anderson, John Butler, Debra Collins, Rebecca Davis, and Amanda Evans. All names of individuals and places are pseudonyms. I am presenting the participants in order of their respective interviews, and I hope to highlight the unique characteristics, backgrounds, and conducting approaches that each participant brought to this study.

Sandra Anderson

Sandra Anderson began her musical studies on the flute. She taught at HBCU 1 for many years and earned advanced degrees at mid-sized and major universities. She was responsible for reviving the orchestra program at HBCU1 after its absence for a number of years. She began with a small group of string players and within two years, the orchestra grew to include woodwind, brass and percussion players (Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14). Her desire to continue this small orchestra program was obvious from the way she described seeing obstacles in her path as things that simply had to be overcome. Sandra said: “Sometimes I get discouraged but then I think it’s a good thing and I’m not gonna give up. I’m very persistent as an individual and you have to be” (Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14).

Sandra described the need to show the students how much they were supported and accepted when they expressed initial interest in the orchestra. Later, she also had to motivate them to work hard towards improvement as the semester continued. In describing her need for persistence she said,

You can’t give up till they shut you down! You can’t give up. So I guess that’s it. I hope we’re building a little bit of momentum. We’re trying to bring in players. Now we can have music majors who play stringed instruments. That’s a huge thing; before we didn’t have that. So, we’ll see where we go. I don’t know. The picture’s unclear but I believe in it. I believe we’re doing a service to the students. And when they go to graduate school and they are asked; “Do you have any orchestra experience?” They can say “Yes, there was an orchestra at my HBCU.” It’s better than nothing. (Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14)

Her eyes lit up when she described being pleasantly surprised by students knocking on her door after a concert. When they said that they wanted to join the orchestra, even though it was too late in the semester to get credit for the class, she was delighted. Her passion for working towards higher quality is also obvious as she talked about future plans. She used the term “thrilling” when she heard the sound transform from playing notes to playing music.

John Butler

John Butler was a professional violinist and violist who taught part-time at HBCU 2. He received his advanced degrees from major universities and has performed in a number of professional symphony, opera and ballet orchestras. His passion for the HBCU orchestra was obvious as he discussed his admiration for students who committed to the orchestra in spite of the scarcity of student scholarships. He stated,

They're not on scholarship; the vast majority are getting no money for this. They're getting money for band or jazz band or whatever. You know orchestra is virtually nothing in terms of the money. So there's a little bit of a sense of obligation because of that, but at the same time you know I think that the students overcome it. (John, Interview 4/23/14)

John appeared to be strongly committed to his student orchestra though he was soft spoken. During rehearsal, his gentle nature was apparent as he quietly asked the string section to think low. That was his attempt to combat the students' tendency to perform certain musical passages too sharp. John's passion to the student orchestra also came through when he spoke with pride about the students' accomplishments, in spite of the challenges.

Debra Collins

Debra Collins at HBCU 3 was a professional violinist and member of a mid-sized professional orchestra. She received her advanced degrees from a music conservatory and performed regularly as a soloist and chamber ensemble member. Debra also performed both classical and jazz violin. This enables her to share both styles with her students. She was the conductor of the string orchestra at HBCU 3.

As with the other participants, I spoke with her after her interaction with the string orchestra. Her demeanor was more relaxed than the other conductors because, unlike the other participants who had performed a concert that day, her concert had taken place in the previous week. She was eager to share her experiences as an HBCU orchestra conductor. Debra's feelings were intense when she discussed what she saw as children's lack of education in the art of being both good audience members and performers. However, she remained hopeful since she believed that people are naturally creative and just needed opportunities to develop those skills. She mentioned,

So we're at a point where perhaps we're in a downward spiral. But I see glimmers of hope; some of the programs I've seen on TV where people introduce different kinds of instruments. People do really want to be creative. We are creative beings. It's just that a lot of times, we don't have opportunities we're not aware of, or what we want to be a part of. (Debra, Interview 4/24/14)

Debra also expressed a strong desire to reach the African American community through the playing of orchestra instruments for young children

Rebecca Davis

Rebecca Davis was a violinist who was born and received her advanced degrees in Europe. She taught violin and viola at HBCU 4. She also coached chamber music ensembles and conducted the student orchestra. She spoke of her work with the students as a mission,

I'm going to give my lifetime experiences to these kids because they are highly competitive and nobody's going to give them the secrets that I know. So they feel that, and they feel the love that I have. I don't think everybody with different personalities look at our leading of the orchestra not as a job but as a mission. (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14)

Rebecca freely admitted that English was not her primary language and encouraged me to ask for clarification if it was needed. It is possible that her journey from overseas and the struggles with the English language led to a level of empathy with her African American students in a field where they are underrepresented. However, no translation was needed when she came alive while discussing some of her students and their accomplishments. Her pride in their work was obvious.

Amanda Evans

Amanda Evans at HBCU 5 was a cellist who received her music degrees at mid-sized and major universities. She had performed a number of music genres including sacred, symphonic, chamber, modern, country, fiddle, opera, and popular music. She had been a guest lecturer and artist throughout the region.

Amanda spoke in a voice that I describe as quiet, but intense. Her dedication to HBCU 5's orchestra was obvious as she discussed her dealing with African American orchestra players.

She described a nation-wide problem that happens with African American children who began in school orchestras at the elementary level but most abandoned the orchestra as they age.

So that's what I find that wonderful about HBCUs, it's like when I was growing up I was very fortunate. They had a youth orchestra program and a lot of my classmates were young African American students. They were just so vibrant, so kind and I find that as we got older and older, there were fewer and fewer of them and I found that disheartening. And I think it's something that really should be encouraged and nurtured. There's no reason that we should have less so that's why I'm here. Here to foster and nurture for all of us. Music is for all of us! (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14)

Amanda's desire for getting the African American community excited about the world of orchestra was obvious. She displayed a flexibility of programming and instrumentation which involved many different musical combinations to achieve her results.

Researchers Lens

I grew up in the world of orchestra. From the time I was eight, I have performed in school orchestra programs. During that time I also joined city-wide youth orchestra ensembles. I was fortunate that my parents were educators and understood the important of private music lessons, and I loved playing with other children in the youth orchestras. Most of the time I was the only Black player in the youth orchestra and I learned to adapt to that environment.

I also had a secret love of conducting orchestras that I kept mostly hidden. It seemed absurd that a Negro born in the south in the 1950s would want to conduct orchestras; that just wasn't done! The fact that I was a girl made it even more absurd to others. I was bitten by the conducting bug around the age of four when I was allowed to lead a children's rhythm group and

I loved it! Since I was too young to realize the limitations placed on individuals of my race and sex during this time period, the experience planted a seed in me that would continue to this day. That experience led to me creating my own opportunities such as writing arrangements for my high school orchestra that my teacher then let me conduct. Fortunately, that teacher would inspire me to keep striving for conducting opportunities, regardless of the limitations that society seemed to place on me. Also, the fact that the teacher was White made a big impression on me that the mainstream orchestra system might accept a Black woman as a conductor. As a teenager I assumed that orchestra conducting was reserved for White men with hard to pronounce European names. That White teacher and a Black violinist who mentored me inspired me to dream big.

During my first formal conducting class as an undergraduate, I was reminded how much I loved it and how I was not nervous in front of our class, unlike some of the other students. That inspired me to complete my graduate degree in orchestra conducting. While in graduate school, I was delighted that the university orchestra had an African American cellist. The presence of the cellist, along with two Black violinists who were string teachers in the area, allowed me to form a Black string quartet; the *William Grant Still String Quartet*. Our quartet group performed in the Houston area and did some touring with our performances ranging from typical wedding gigs to higher profiled televised performances.

The quartet gave me the first opportunity to perform exclusively with Black string players. This awakened my desire to reach out to other instrumentalists in hopes of forming an orchestra. Fortunately, in the Houston area there are enough performers, music educators, and business people to form a community orchestra that was initially composed of only African Americans. Since its founding in 1983 a few Latin players and interested Whites have also

joined. The *Scott Joplin Chamber Orchestra* has performed a variety of musical styles, including obscure music from an 18th century African French composer, a 19th century African English composer, and familiar composers such as Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington and Michael Jackson. Additionally, since many of our concerts are in Black churches, we have performed numerous spirituals and works combining vocalists and instrumentalists. Our Annual “Musical Tribute to Martin Luther King Jr.” and our “Discovered Treasures-Music of Black Composers” have become regular shows, with Handel’s “Messiah” also frequently performed.

After a few years I began to wonder how I could set up my own “feeder” program for the *Scott Joplin Chamber Orchestra*. Unfortunately no high schools in predominately Black communities had orchestras, so that left the few music magnet programs as the only local options. I decided to start at the college level and build from there. Beginning in the 1990s I began a tiny student orchestra at Texas Southern University (TSU). It grew over time but remained relatively small when compared to the university’s band or choir. However, I was encouraged by the fact that a few string players who received university training at TSU did graduate and were able to find teaching positions in local schools. I was so pleased because, nationwide there is a shortage of Black string teachers. Unfortunately, the student orchestra was eliminated because of its small size. As I spoke with other HBCU orchestra directors, I found that they also struggled with needing more members. It is not a surprise that in the African American community support for orchestra programs is uneven at best. However this small group of conductors, including myself, is dedicated to addressing the need to bridge the gap between the African American community and America’s orchestras.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to investigate the experiences of five orchestra conductors at HBCUs. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions: What have been the experiences and challenges of orchestra directors at HBCUs, and how do the directors address the challenges and describe their successes? The principal need for the study was to better understand the African American experience in the world of orchestra, specifically at HBCUs.

In this chapter, I will discuss the themes that emerged from the data. The first theme, “Striving for Excellence” describes the conductors’ desire for their students to attain high standards in spite of the challenges they faced. The second theme is the “General Lack of Funds.” The conductors often stated insufficient funds as a concern, especially as it related to monies for student scholarships. The third theme highlights how the participants must “Do Everything” for their student orchestras. This included playing multiple roles—from their primary role in preparing their ensembles for public performances to being administrators, stage managers, accountants and advertisers. “Teaching Strategies” is the fourth theme, which describes the variation in instruction methods among the five participants. Some were willing to teach students at all levels of experience; however, one conductor preferred to only work with more experienced orchestra members. The fifth theme describes the “Recruiting Activities” by the conductors. The participants wanted to recruit more high school orchestra students, but found there were few school orchestras in surrounding areas. To counteract the shortage, some participants attempted creative activities as a solution. “Discussing Race in the HBCU Orchestra” is the sixth theme. Two of the five participants responded openly about the influence of race in orchestra while the other three avoided direct discussion of the thorny issue.

Striving for Excellence

Striving for excellence describes the participants' need to help their students be the best that they could be. To help achieve that goal, these participants worked tirelessly with their students, which included coaching students before, during, and after rehearsals. These orchestras ranged from only a few years old to more established programs, but the passionate drive for excellence expressed by the participants was remarkable, though I never asked for their input on the matter.

The theme of striving for success is divided into two subthemes. The first subtheme was their students' success stories. The participants were thrilled that their students overcame their present realities and nevertheless succeeded. The second subtheme was the unanimous goal of striving for excellence. Each worked hard to overcome their students' shortcomings and, although each had different means, they found success using methods that worked for their circumstance.

Success Stories

The participants were committed to their orchestras and spoke with pride about their students' accomplishments. Debra was excited about two students she had worked with in the past year. She described their weak musical backgrounds, but was excited about their growth. Specifically, she said that the majority of her students didn't come from privileged backgrounds, but they had a strong work ethic and were succeeding with the guidance they received in their private lessons. "I'm basically starting a lot of kids from zero and a lot of kids who come to me have never taken a private lesson" (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14). Debra became excited when she described how those students were looking forward to their private lessons once they were

shown how improved techniques resulted in better sounds (Field Notes, 4/24/14). Her advice was to be patient because when they come alive musically, “It is thrilling” (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14).

Rebecca beamed as she described the concert that had just ended (Field Notes, 4/27/14). She spoke with pride when she described five graduates who had performed in the concert, including four who were not music majors. She said it was great when they performed concertos accompanied by their peers. Rebecca described how she valued her students’ success: “So that is my award, not reward, because that means in terms of money, but award in terms of recognition, and most of all satisfaction with the results of my students and their progress; that is the best” (Interview, 4/27/14).

John’s student success stories revolved around those who “stuck to it” (Interview, 4/23/14). He was frustrated with the lack of funds for student scholarships, so the students who continued in spite of the lack of scholarship support were his successes. He described the students who stuck with it and were willing to meet those challenges as those who didn’t fall by the wayside and were a source of true satisfaction (Field Notes, 4/23/14). His motto was “Be Persistent” (John, Interview, 4/23/14).

High Standards

Amanda expressed her desire to excel even though she had been at her HBCU for a relatively short time. She spoke with intensity about getting the students and audience members excited about changing the image of orchestra by expanding the approach to include unconventional repertoire and instrument combinations. An example of the concert’s repertoire included new works for a three-member percussion ensemble, a violin trio, and a piano and harp

duet. As she continued to work towards excellence, she was willing to look at untraditional musical offerings. “You can make beautiful music with untraditional orchestras. You can make it work with five players. You can make it work with a Tuba soloist” (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14). She explained that working towards excellence was crucial to orchestras’ survival in the changing environment. Amanda asserted,

You have to just get inspired. Work through the challenges and then every performance [will] work out if you have the right attitude. Striving for excellence is important.

Project the sacred flame, of course. Yes, the integrity of the music but also the integrity of the spirit behind it. (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14)

Amanda’s use of the “sacred flame” metaphor represents her belief that orchestras should continue striving for the best musical presentation possible while protecting the human spirit’s ability to rise above present circumstances.

Amanda shared that she wanted to get her students excited about orchestra and not allow old stereotypes to keep others from enjoying it. “There’s this image that strings are just dry, and it bothers me that it’s so stereotypical that this is orchestra and it’s so much more. It’s a soul, passion, and that’s just humanity” (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14). She also spoke about presenting different orchestra images to keep the experience an exciting one.

Debra stated that she continued to work towards excellence. Regardless of the backgrounds of the students, she expected them to work diligently on overcoming past limitations towards strong outcomes. She pointed out,

I find that the students work really hard. And they appreciate the fact that I do come from other [classical, jazz, and country] experiences but I’m still trying to give them the

same kind of experiences that I had. Excellence. So overall the experience is college for me. As long as I'm with the students, the students are fantastic. (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14)

As I listened to Debra, I believed that her desire to raise the musical level of her students was genuine. Debra believed she should try to give her students something close to her professional orchestral experiences even though her students didn't have all of the musical opportunities to develop skills and techniques that she had. Despite her students' limited musical background and weak skills, she worked diligently to raise her students' musical growth with private lessons at the college level.

Though John used a different term than excellence, he also pushed his student orchestra to sound better. When he was asked how to better prepare his students to continue to be engaged in the world of orchestra, his response was, "I think that's the easiest one in a way. They have to operate at the highest level you can, and at a certain point you have to decide that you're not going to compromise anymore" (John, Interview, 4/23/14).

Rebecca worked tirelessly to push her students to achieve more by using a different approach. By often using student competitions, she pushed her students to strive for excellence with her guidance. "In Europe where I was originally from, we had lots of competitions. If you don't put challenges in any mind then it doesn't help much to develop skills" (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14). She brought her competition experiences to her HBCU as a way to have students listen to each other, compete against each other, and learn from each other in a peer-to-peer fashion. Rebecca also differed from the other participants in how she encouraged students to participate in chamber music as a method to strengthen their performing skills. She suggested

that students participate in local, state and national solo and chamber competitions. Rebecca stated,

This also will improve a dilemma [of striving for higher musical quality] by excluding mediocrity to have excellent ensembles without extra work. When the students want to participate in competitions, they push themselves to work more, to learn more and that improves the level of everybody. (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14)

Sandra used different phrases in describing her push for student growth. Her push for excellence could be seen in how she transitioned from the dress rehearsal sounds to a more polished, stronger sound. Her excitement was obvious when she said,

Did you notice that in the performance that they rose above what they played in rehearsal? They did it! I felt them responding to me. That is the thrilling thing. Then we're playing music, not just notes—even if they're wrong notes. We're playing music; [and] saying something! (Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14)

All five participants worked in challenging environments. Yet they continued to strive for excellence, which I summarize as pushing for improvements regardless of the circumstances. Student shortcomings were acknowledged but the participants were undeterred in their desire to have their students achieve greater musical goals.

General Lack of Funds

Another major theme that the data revealed was the lack of funds that the participants had for their orchestra programs, especially for student scholarships. The context of the HBCU orchestras revealed a contrast to non-HBCU orchestras. Most large university orchestras are

composed primarily, if not exclusively, of music majors; these HBCU orchestras were a mixture of music majors and non-music majors. Thus, the HBCU directors felt a pressing need for scholarships as a way to recruit students, since non-music majors were not required to perform in university ensembles as a degree requirement. The music scholarships were important to these students, some of whom had performance experience but were not choosing to be music majors, because many non-music majors were not willing to make the commitment to being in orchestra without some sort of incentive.

In addition to scholarships, funds were also needed for upgrades since the music departments were located in older buildings with older equipment. However, I observed that some of the participants were creative in ways to acquire funds and later use the money wisely. The next sections will expand upon the subthemes of monetary needs and the participants' creative solutions to alleviate them.

Monetary Needs

Four of the five participants expressed their lack of funds as a significant problem, particularly in having scholarship funds for students. This was Amanda's main concern. She had limited scholarships for the student orchestra members and was always seeking more. She stated,

What I'm working on is funding. Funding, funding, funding. It always helps. I'm working on different projects to find donors and try to find ways for our little orchestra. Most of what I'm working on the most is to try to find scholarships for my students. I want to help them as much as I can. I just don't have anything to give so funding, funding. (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14)

Similarly, John strongly expressed his need for scholarship funds. He also bemoaned the lack of funds for needed recruitment trips which could have allowed the students to act as ambassadors for the university. He stated,

I couldn't even count the number of students who've come in, played good auditions, and then, well, they get a full ride somewhere else. So, well, that's something that I think unfortunately [happens]. I think until the higher administrations at the [HBCU] schools really recognize the value of the orchestra as an ambassador; that having a touring orchestra, and is willing to back [it], that's not going to happen just by accident and completely organically. It has to be kick-started, and the kick-starter is really money; that's what it comes down to. (John, Interview, 4/23/14)

As he described his region in terms of musical offerings, he expressed a strong desire to get students in the area to attend the local HBCU. He was fortunate in that the surrounding area did have a number of youth orchestras. However, he struggled to attract these experienced orchestra players to attend his HBCU because of limited scholarship offerings. He also said,

The local youth orchestra has a very strong program, and most of the players in the youth orchestra are African American, but they don't choose to go to the HBCU in the majority simply because, well, the other thing is money. If you're a good string player, there are a lot of schools that are going to pay your way, and I'm asked all the time "What kind of scholarship money do you have?" Fortunately I can pass the buck and say I'm not in charge of scholarships. Because I don't like to say what the truth is, which is, "Not much." (John, Interview, 4/23/14)

John also expressed his disappointment in not having the funds for an orchestra camp. He believed that an orchestra camp for school-aged string students could have been a recruitment vehicle. “I believe there’s sort of a band camp in the summer time, but there’s nothing that feeds into the orchestra, especially in terms of strings” (John, Interview, 4/23/14). However, John appreciated the students who committed and attended rehearsals in spite of the lack of scholarships. He described feeling a “real source of satisfaction” regarding students and alumni who freely gave of their time and talents by performing in the HBCU orchestra (John, Interview, 4/23/14).

Sandra also discussed her orchestra program’s need for funds. She mentioned using her personal contacts from friends and university colleagues to get donations, which she put into scholarships. Sandra used the scholarships as a major incentive to attract students.

One way to get kids involved is to say, “I have a scholarship for you and in order for you to keep that scholarship, I need you present, and I need you practicing.” So I think money is part of it. It’s just like anything else. What schools have the best basketball teams? It’s the schools with the big scholarships. So I also worked with the Dean and he’s given me some money. (Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14)

In addition to receiving funds from her Dean, Sandra was delighted by the receipt of scholarship funds from unexpected sources. When she approached the student government association on her campus, she was awarded \$2,000 for scholarships. She admitted that she was “floored” with the donation because her program was relatively new and not well known on campus (Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14). She also mentioned that while the funds were not huge, every little bit helped.

Rebecca discussed her multiple challenges when describing her students' financial challenges. When I asked her to describe her orchestra's financial needs, she sighed and said, "Of course we don't get the support" (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14). She described how most students in her orchestra program came from low-income households and really needed scholarships. However, like the other participants, her program received little in funds for student scholarships.

However, Debra's views about funds differed. She was the only African American participant, and, although she discussed a number of issues, she did not mention financial challenges as one of them. Perhaps she did not address her limited funds because she, like many in the Black community, already knew that HBCUs are underfunded. Since this is often common knowledge, many African Americans approach these HBCUs with a giving heart while admitting that limited funds are simply a fact of life.

My observations revealed that the programs were generally in older buildings (Field Notes). As a member and director of university orchestras, I am aware that music departments often receive private funds to build new facilities, which are often named after major donors. None of these HBCU orchestras existed in music departments with names such as the "Bill Gates School of Music." The equipment, including chairs and stands, were older, and I observed participants moving better looking ones to the front while poorer ones were placed in the back. However the participants did not complain about the conditions, but they were creative in ways to keep their programs afloat.

Creative Solutions

All of the participants demonstrated ways in which they had to work around deficiencies at their universities. “Being creative” was mentioned as a survival tactic by both Amanda and Sandra (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14; Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14). They downloaded older music that had entered Public Domain to access some works at no cost for their student orchestras. Both participants utilized Petrucci, which is also known as the International Music Score Library Project, a web site that uses volunteers to upload music from public domain, as a creative way to use limited funds and allow students the opportunity to perform mainstream classical music works (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14; Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14).

Participants also utilized their personal connections as a creative solution. Sandra called friends and colleagues to play with her student orchestra, generally for free, and she used the stronger sounding players to assist the weaker sections (Sandra, Field notes, 4/8/14). These creative approaches aided the conductors in their programming choices. By adding necessary players, the entire orchestra benefitted by performing more challenging full orchestral works instead of arrangements that could have been performed exclusively by a string orchestra. String orchestra arrangements are generally performed by younger, less experienced ensembles while full orchestra works are performed by more experienced ensembles. This allowed for the inclusion of woodwind, brass and percussion sections, which created the fuller sound.

As indicated in the program from the concert, both Sandra and John acknowledged the guest performers, called “ringers,” with a star or asterisk by their name (Field Notes, Sandra, 4/8/14; John, 4/23/14). Ringers are normally paid to perform in ensembles; however, most of these were friends of the participants and were generally unpaid volunteers. Sandra introduced the university faculty, returning alumni, community members, and high school players (Field Notes, Sandra, 4/8/14; John, 4/23/14). Additionally, Sandra included four bassoon players from

a local high school and invited them to perform with her HBCU orchestra. Their presence filled in a necessary void in the woodwind section.

The interviews revealed the general lack of funds for the HBCU orchestras. The funds were needed for student scholarships as well as musical supplies. However, these directors were creative in continuing to present their student orchestras to the public while successfully using the limited funds that were available.

Do Everything

These orchestra conductors assumed multiple responsibilities. Their primary duty was preparing their student ensembles for performances; however, they also took on additional roles like being the music librarian, taking attendance, doing the publicity for the concerts, organizing guest players and staying in touch with alumni and professional musical colleagues. College level orchestra conductors at larger institutions utilize university staff or student assistants to perform most of these extra duties.

These participants did everything for their orchestra performances including moving chairs and stands, distributing programs to students and audience members, and returning equipment after concerts (Field Notes). As previously mentioned, these participants generally had little or no staff to help with the many duties that come with conducting a university orchestra. They were responsible for being their own publicists, organizing their own recruiting efforts, being accountants, stage managers and whatever other duties arose. For instance, Rebecca was constantly doing more for her orchestra. She described her duties by saying, “I am also administrator, stage worker, accountant, advertiser—everything together” (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14).

Sandra was conducting a relatively new orchestra program. She described the difficulty of dealing with a program that was still in its developmental stage. “The difficulty again is here that we didn’t have a program in place. So I had to do a tremendous amount of calling people; announcing on campus,—‘are you interested?’” (Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14). Sandra called potential students as part of her recruiting efforts to get more students to join the orchestra. She described how the students who joined were a mixture of different types of instrumentalists, ranging from a violinist, to a saxophonist, to a bass trombonist. Sandra’s orchestra had much larger woodwind, brass, and percussion sections and relatively small string sections (Field Notes, 4/8/14), while mainstream university orchestras have larger string sections than wind and percussion sections.

John expressed his impatience with the limited support that he received from his university. He described his having to do everything from “soup to nuts.”

I feel like, you know, there are a lot of challenges doing this. We usually don’t get a lot of support from the administration. There’s not a lot of publicity given to it. And at least at our university, there’s no staffing to assist with these things. So basically you put the whole project on from soup to nuts on your own. (John, Interview, 4/23/14)

As I observed the orchestra preparing for the concert, I saw John as he entered the concert hall before rehearsal and immediately began replacing stronger stands for wobbly ones (Field Notes, 4/23/14). He placed the printed programs on the stands of the players and later, took the programs to the back of the auditorium for the audience. He appeared to do all of these tasks without complaining, even though these are duties that assistants or student leaders usually accomplish.

Two of the participants found that doing everything for their students meant being flexible. Amanda stated that since most of the orchestra members were not music majors, she had to be flexible to the student's performance abilities. She specifically spoke about the different levels of student performers and mentioned with delight regarding how non-music majors or minors dedicated their time to the orchestra.

So I am trying, first of all, to make the program flexible for different levels of students who are coming to my orchestra. But I am amazed how a non-music major or minor dedicated their time and they make a good concert. (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14)

She described her respect for the extra efforts from her students and how she was doing her best to help them progress in music and continue on their life's journey. She spoke about her desire to have her students continue to perform in orchestras outside of the university setting. "It doesn't have to be just school. You can reach out and play in community orchestras. There are community orchestras all over the place. And it just shows again that orchestra is for everyone" (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14).

Amanda also learned about the need to be sensitive to student's schedules. She stated that flexibility was crucial when working with her students since many of them also work.

The problem we sometimes have is just class conflicts. These students don't have a lot of resources, a lot of them have to work. We juggle schedules. We make it work! So it's just a matter of figuring out what we can do; putting it all together, being compassionate about schedules and resources and coming together. (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14)

She stressed the need for patience and support while continuing to help the students grow musically.

These participants were incredibly busy doing everything for their student orchestras. Unlike orchestras from larger college music departments, these ensembles lacked needed assistants. This resulted in the participants doing publicity, recruitment, stage management, as well as assuming administrative and accounting duties. However, they all strived for musical excellence from their students, which varied according to their individual teaching strategies.

Teaching Strategies

Teaching strategies varied greatly from instructor to instructor. Some instructors adopted a policy of welcoming all students, including beginners. Others had established performance standards for taking only more experienced instrumentalists. Of the five participants, four were string players and one was a flutist. All taught their students in an orchestra setting as well as private lessons. In larger university music departments, private teachers are hired to teach applied lessons. However, because of the smaller size of these HBCU music departments, the orchestra conductors also had to be responsible for teaching private lessons. Their students' abilities ranged from beginners to experienced players, and students' playing level greatly influenced the quality of the sound that the orchestra produced.

Debra shared her passion for teaching all students regardless of their musical backgrounds. Though she began studying the violin with the aid of a private teacher at an early age, she was sensitive to her students' lack of early training. She noted,

...[T]he kids don't come from privileged backgrounds where parents can afford private lessons, but they have a lot of heart. And once you show them what a private lesson can do to change their technique, they're like, "I'm ready for my lesson," especially those that really want to play. I have a couple of students this year who now are so eager to

play. When you see them play you can tell they love it! And I say to myself, “Boy, if they’d only had the private lessons, where would they be now?” (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14)

She admitted to spending a great deal of lesson time working on basic skills, like reading music (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14). Fortunately, a number of her students blossomed as a result of private instruction

Debra graduated from a major music conservatory. That level of performance training led to her long-term employment as a member of professional orchestras. She was honest in her evaluation of her students’ performing abilities and admitted that, though the students displayed remarkable progress, the possibility of these students being accepted into a major conservatory was remote. At the same time, Debra described how she wanted her students to develop a good “work ethic” to help them develop persistence in their growth as musicians.

It takes sometimes a little bit longer to work on pieces, but I’m still trying to push for the same kinds of work ethic that you’d have at a school of music-regular schools of music. I’m not going for conservatory because that’s a whole other-trajectory. (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14)

John viewed working with beginners differently. Though he firmly supported the students’ participation in the orchestra, he preferred not to admit beginners in college orchestras (John, Interview, 4/24/14). He said that when he came to his university, the program was very small and he took any student with a violin or cello in their hands. This policy changed after he established a minimum skill level for orchestra members.

They [the students] have to operate at the highest level you can, and at a certain point you have to decide that you're not going to compromise any more. You know, you compromise and compromise, but I think it's up to each individual director to say "Well, there is a minimum level that you say that if students really can't meet that minimum, then just getting bodies in the seats is not enough." (John, Interview, 4/24/14)

John's approach met some resistance from the university's administration, who asked about his low enrollment. He described himself as being stuck in the middle as he tried to raise the sound quality of the orchestra while justifying smaller numbers of students in the program. "When I came here there was almost nobody in the program, and I kind of just took anybody who could put a violin under their chin or put their hands on a cello, and it just doesn't really work" (John, Interview, 4/24/14). In his case, since he was a part-time employee, he decided that while the number of students might be small, he wanted students with a certain level of experience and musical achievement.

You have to be at least a little bit selective in terms of taking that first impression. You have to hear people and be willing to draw a line where you say "Well I don't think this person is equipped to make it." (John, Interview, 4/23/14)

His minimum standards also allowed him to choose programming that reflected his goals. John clearly stated his views about his orchestra not performing easier arrangements of classical works. "I won't do arrangements of music that people would play in high school orchestras, and so on. To me it's a university and we play the music in its original form" (John, Interview, 4/23/14). He held strongly to his beliefs, however, he did occasionally substitute needed instruments.

I observed John's 33-member student orchestra as they performed Beethoven's *Coriolan* Overture, *Adagio* for Strings by African American composer, Adolphus Hailstork, and Haydn's *London* symphony #104. They did not perform simple arrangements and the students seemed to be challenged to strive for musical growth through these works (Field Notes, 4/23/14).

Rebecca's approach regarding teaching beginners to advanced players was different from both Debra's and John's. Rebecca, like Debra, did accept beginning string players but, she used competition within the student orchestra to inspire the students to make rapid progress as performers. The competitions resulted in a closing student concerto concert. I attended the concert whose repertoire included Hummel's *E Flat Trumpet Concerto*-First Movement, Vivaldi's *Cello Concerto* in G Major-First Movement, *L'amour est oiseau* from Bizet's Opera *Carmen*, Mozart's *Sinfonia Concertante* for Violin and Viola soloist, and a world premier by student composer Johanathan Vordzorgbe's *Fantasy for Piano and Orchestra* (Field Notes, 4/27/14).

Rebecca's orchestra concert was a unique, though lengthy, performance. In addition to the orchestra, 12 students performed as soloists. Before the concert, I heard students using the pre-concert time by practicing their concertos (Field Notes, 4/27/14). Rebecca's approach required that students make stronger musical progress when they face the pressure of a public performance instead of just teacher encouragement. Rebecca believed that this caused her students to move at a faster musical rate. However, some individuals may have been intimidated because of this type of competition and discouraged from joining the orchestra. Though students' abilities varied, Rebecca explained that some students came to the orchestra with little or no experience on their instruments. Despite this, I found their performances to be remarkable.

She used the method of featured soloist as a means of self-motivation for the students (Field Notes, 4/27/14).

The students were also encouraged to participate in chamber music performances. When asked for advice to other orchestra directors, Rebecca commented on her two methods to motivate students: “One suggestion is to be very musical and helpful, second is [to] use competitions, and also I would suggest [for] them to encourage the students to participate in chamber music and individual competitions” (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14). Thus, Rebecca used both solo performances and small ensembles as a motivational tool, which she felt resulted in visible success in her overall orchestra program.

Each participant utilized different teaching strategies. While John avoided working with beginners, most were willing to teach students at all levels and work towards their improvement. The participants’ programming styles also included performing commonly recognized classical orchestra repertoire to premiering 21st century works. However, I found that these participants, using different teaching styles, were very motivated to share their musical offerings to interested music lovers through their student orchestras.

Recruiting Activities

Recruiting students for any musical ensembles is an ongoing endeavor. Collegiate ensembles often recruit by sponsoring camps for middle and high school students. This method, as John described earlier, allows college directors to get the word out about their programs and meet potential students. These participants described two recruitment activities they used to find students for their orchestras: addressing the shortage of orchestras in surrounding high schools and interacting with young children.

Shortage of High School Orchestras

Debra said that the lack of high school orchestras in her area made it difficult for her to find and recruit new players. She stated,

That's what we're struggling with. I don't know if the other HBCUs are struggling the same way because there are no real feeder programs currently in my area. The high schools are no longer teaching strings. They teach it in the elementary and middle schools and now suddenly in high school it's nothing but bands, so we really struggle with trying to get students. (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14)

The shortage of high school orchestras in her area led to recruiting attempts in other parts of the country. She described her HBCU's limited high school recruitment efforts and how having only one recruiter is killing efforts to effectively recruit since more staff is needed,

...[S]o we're having this huge effort to try to recruit all over the country. We have this one person specifically designed to try to recruit all over the country but that is part of what's killing the progress of actually developing and building a program, you know to make it march larger. (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14)

Based on her interview, it appeared that Debra simply wanted more people involved in recruiting so that potential students could learn about the orchestra on her campus.

John described the feeder programs as extremely small. As he mentioned earlier, the surrounding area had ample youth orchestras but his orchestra had not been able to recruit students from it because his HBCU lacks ample student scholarships (John, Interview, 4/23/14). He expressed a strong desire to have an orchestra camp for high school students, but had been

unable to make that a reality. He also wanted an orchestra preparatory program or funds for a recruiting ensemble that could act as an ambassador to local schools. He said,

If we had a camp, if we had a prep department, if we had money to go on recruiting trips and so on—something where you had an ensemble that is based at the university and could act as an ambassador to local school programs—then you’d have some semblance of a feeder program. It’s kind of like we’re dependent on people who happen to come our way. (John, 4/23/14)

Rebecca described her recruitment efforts and how she looked for support from area high schools. She also described the economic challenges the students faced and how it impacted the neighborhoods.

The neighborhood high schools don’t have music programs. They’re from low income [areas], and they don’t have musical programs. It’s very difficult to take kids from the surrounding community and bring them to our orchestra. What I’m trying to do is enroll the high school students before they graduate, but most of all I’m looking for support from the surrounding community and the neighborhood schools music programs.

(Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14)

Rebecca also expressed her determination to counteract the absence of high school music programs. She refused to allow income disparities to halt her efforts to have orchestra programs in her area.

Both Sandra and Amanda worked with relatively new orchestra programs, and they were more optimistic and forward looking. Sandra said that she was just beginning to go out to the area schools and was in the process of developing feeder programs. She said that she could “feel

it in her bones” about the dawning of a feeder program on her campus (Sandra, Interview, 4/8/14). Amanda admitted that while there were currently no feeder programs from local high schools to her university, she was optimistic about establishing a program soon. She had been working with local fine arts schools in her city and wanted to reach as many young people as possible (Amanda, Interview, 4/28/14).

Younger Children’s Involvement

At two universities, the participants were involved in positive interactions with young children. Though it was not true for most participants, I believe that this is an important feature that warrants some discussion. At Rebecca’s university, a small group of elementary string players performed at the beginning of the orchestra’s concert. At Debra’s university, an elementary class attended during the orchestras’ rehearsal and observed from the back of the rehearsal room.

At her university, Rebecca invited 13 young string players, including 12 violinists and one cellist, to perform on the concert. The students were carefully positioned on stage by their string teacher. They were likely a mixture of beginners with some more experienced string students, as some played the melody while others played open strings. The students seemed excited to be performing on stage with university students (Field Notes, 4/27/14). Some of the university students smiled with the children, which may have inspired these young string players to continue studying their instrument.

During Debra’s rehearsal, a class of approximately 40 children was brought into the back of the rehearsal room. She later told me that she was surprised by their visit, but she engaged the children by introducing the instruments. She entertained the children by borrowing the concert

master's violin and playing brief violin excerpts. Her stroll around the youths made many of them giggle and she made great eye contact with them. One of the children began to imitate her conducting style when she returned to conducting the orchestra. Afterwards she told them that she expected to see all of them in the orchestra in five or six years (Field Notes, 4/24/14). I have observed that many conductors are also recruiters for their orchestras. However few mainstream college orchestras involve children visibly in their public concerts. Though other universities may teach children's music lessons, these two HBCU orchestras involved children more directly as a portion of their recruiting efforts. The directors' involvement of the children can also be viewed as a way to engage with the communities that they serve.

Recruiting new students for college ensembles remains an important activity. At larger universities, some staff members are devoted exclusively to that activity. However, the smaller staff at HBCUs demanded that their faculty also assume that role. As a result, these participants were constantly struggling with ways to recruit more students for their orchestras. Two participants involved children more directly.

Discussing Race in the HBCU Orchestras

American orchestras have struggled, as does the rest of society, with the question of how to be truly inclusive. Unfortunately, African Americans have continued to lag behind in membership in America's orchestras. Since professional orchestras generally get their new members from major universities and music conservatories, the question arises as to how HBCU's relatively smaller programs can be included in the quest for inclusiveness.

In this section, I initially explored "bridging the gap" between the African American community and the world of orchestra. Two of the participants spoke passionately about their

experiences in the two worlds and how they work towards having their students succeed. In the second section, I reported on the experiences of “HBCU conductors and mainstream conductors.” Finally, this section ends with a discussion of “the orchestra membership and repertoire.” These participants welcomed colleagues and friends to complete the sound of their student orchestras; however the non-student performers were generally older and White or Asian though the repertoire was more culturally mixed.

Bridging the gap

Debra was the only African American participant who was interviewed for this study and she described her work as a gift to her community. “Because I’m an African American violinist, for me it’s been a way for me to give back to the community and be able to share my experiences in the field of classical music” (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14). Debra also shared her belief that a person from outside of the African American music community might believe that Black children are incapable of performing instrumental classical music but she wanted to change that belief. “So for a person who doesn’t necessarily come from the African American experience, they may be more quick to think that they [Black children] are incapable of doing certain things, but that’s not true” (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14).

Debra had performed in classical orchestras and chamber ensembles where she was usually the only African American. She wanted her students to see that they had a place in America’s orchestras. In order to convey her views, she shared with her HBCU students the importance of contributions by people with African descent to the world of classical music. “If we examine our own history, our true history, we would understand that our history is connected to something older than what we ever imagined” (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14). She began with

sharing her passion regarding Egyptian arts and their world-wide influence. From that, she moved to highlight the historical African people who were known as Moors and their contributions on European culture by way of Spain.

Ok, the book starts with medieval [Era], well who are the people who brought knowledge to the people in the Medieval? [c. 500-1400] Moors. Right? They came out of Spain. So then we look at this whole body of work about the Moors and all this history that's coming out of Spain and Egypt and North Africa and from the Sudan.
(Debra, Interview, 4/24/14)

Debra felt that this positive African influence on the European arts is a view that African American students were often not exposed to, but needed to learn. She noted,

So at the HBCU it would be important for them to understand that they are connected to European music in a real way. Not only in the way that we have to study it, but [to highlight] the Moors influence. There's so many records that I've read. I've been doing a lot of research on it, about just how broad the influence was, and how important a lot of the African people in Europe were pre-Medieval and even during the Renaissance. That's why you have all of these references to different people in Shakespeare. Ok, so I see all of these references and paintings [referring to Blacks in visual arts] because I've been through Europe, and it sparked my curiosity. We have a connection, but it's being deeply hidden from us about our past and about how much influence and how much knowledge was taken out of Africa in order to help European societies develop. (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14)

Debra did not use the term, Critical Race Theory. However, her views reflected acceptance of CRT's basic tenant that Black culture from around the world was ignored in America's educational system, including orchestra programs. Debra emphasized the importance of learning about the Moors influence on European arts as a way to help her African American students find identity in the arts (Field Notes, 4/24/14).

Rebecca also spoke with passion regarding her dealings with African American students at her HBCU. Though she is not Black, she was empathetic to her students' experience because she had experienced prejudice as an Eastern European trying to succeed in Western European orchestras.

They [my orchestra students] sometimes make enormous effort just because I'm asking them. And that is making my heart feel very good because I chose these campuses [after] coming from Eastern Europe. I had been highly discriminated in Western European countries. When I played a solo with my wonderful orchestra, no one applauded there. It was much better than their domestic orchestra. So I said I'm going to give my lifetime experiences to these kids because they are highly competitive and nobody's going to give them the secrets that I know. (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14)

She felt that her life experiences made her more sensitive to her African American students and what they faced in their lives.

Rebecca adapted a universal view of her students that made them citizens of the world through their musical studies. "[M]y moral is that musicians are citizens of the world and we don't need translation for communication with music, and it is from all over the world that talented students are coming" (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14). She expressed a view that musical

talent allows students to transcend their surroundings. She, like Debra, was more comfortable addressing the challenging questions of race and prejudice and how they related to their students at HBCUs.

Afterwards, I wondered why two participants were comfortable talking about race while three were not. Perhaps because two of them had personally experienced prejudice in their lives, they have a greater awareness about cultural differences, and could develop empathy for their students. That may have allowed them to speak openly about its effect. The lack of acknowledgement by the other three participants also may reflect the world of orchestras' avoidance of addressing prejudice.

HBCU conductors and mainstream conductors

The data revealed a pattern of activity by the participants that showed some similarities and differences to mainstream orchestras. As stated earlier, in the "Do Everything" theme, all of the conductors were actively involved in moving chairs and stands. This is different from performances in larger university orchestras that typically have students or staff members move the equipment. However, smaller university orchestra directors may also share similar duties.

I observed that the protocol at the participants' concerts was somewhat different than what I've observed of other orchestras (Field Notes, 4/23/14; 4/27/14). Specifically, at two campuses, background music was piped in before and/or after the concert while, usually, orchestras sit on stage and warm up before the concert. Before John's concert, orchestra members were told to leave the stage after the pre-concert brief rehearsal so that the audience could be admitted, rather than having audience members enter at will while performers continue

warming up on stage (Field Notes, 4/23/14). This is behavior that I experienced at plays, not orchestra concerts.

The participants did not initiate these actions; which indicates that this reflected their knowledge of orchestra concert behavior and protocol (Field Notes, 4/23/14; 4/27/14). Possible reasons for the differences include the unfamiliarity that exists in the African American community regarding the world of orchestra. I remember being asked to have the orchestra members sit quietly before the concert as I had previously conducted an HBCU orchestra. I explained that orchestras generally use this time as a warm-up period and I made the analogy of an athlete remaining active before an event for optimal performance. Again, conductors at HBCUs face audiences that typically don't attend orchestra concerts and must adjust accordingly.

Orchestra Membership and Repertoire

Non-student performers appeared to be older and non-African American. My field notes, combined with names printed on the program, told a story of participants often using faculty members and participants' friends to fill in the gaps in their student orchestras (Field Notes). College alumni were also liberally used to supplement the ensemble.

Repertoire reflected a mixture of well-known Western Classical works and newer musical compositions. Examples of the musical works included J. S. Bach's *Violin Concerto in E Major*, Maurice Ravel's *Pavane pour en infant defuncte*, 21st century works by Carlos Gonzales, and Olga Harris. At three universities, music by Black composers was featured, including those by more established Black composers and a premier by a young composer. The programming choices were more inclusive and multi-cultural even though only two participants

were comfortable directly addressing the issue of race in the world of orchestra, and three were not. This information was important, since it reflected opportunities by the orchestra and their participants to expand the view of Black musicians in the world of classical orchestras.

Summary

As a result of studying the experiences of these five HBCU orchestra conductors, a number of important themes emerged. All participants expressed how they were “Striving for excellence.” They worked tirelessly to get their students to continue their musical growth. They used different methods, but each achieved success with their student orchestra programs. This was a unanimous goal that translated into participants’ providing an environment that allowed for students to succeed despite challenging circumstances.

Four of the five participants stated that the “general lack of funds” for more student scholarships, summer camps, and repertoire was crucial. Unlike larger music departments, these HBCU orchestras were a mixture of music majors and non-music majors. As a result, the participants’ primary need was for scholarships as an incentive to attract and keep these students in the orchestras. However, the participants were also creative in acting as fundraisers for their ensembles and actively pursued funds. They acquired funds from on-campus entities, personal friends, and colleagues. The participants’ musical colleagues also helped by performing with the student ensembles and filling in needed voices in the ensemble. In light of the general lack of funds, the conductors saved money by using free musical services to get older musical works instead of spending funds on purchasing new works. Another creative use of tight budgets was wisely using existing equipment instead of buying new.

The limited funds also meant that the participants had to “do everything” for their student orchestras. They rehearsed and conducted their orchestras for public performances and assumed other duties, including fundraising, recruiting, publicity work, and moving equipment. Ensembles from larger music departments use staff or students to accomplish many of these duties. These participants, however, assumed multiple roles, including teaching private lessons, and taking on non-musical duties.

Each participant utilized different “teaching strategies” when they described their concerns regarding teaching beginners in college orchestras. John did not want beginners to perform in his orchestra because he felt it compromised his ensemble. However, Debra and Rebecca had previously experienced success with beginners and welcomed them into their programs. The contrasting attitudes regarding competency levels displayed the different teaching personalities of each participant. Most area high schools did not have orchestras on their campuses and their absence led to the participants creating their own student involvement opportunities. Two of the participants included children more directly in their programs by having children observe a rehearsal or perform on stage prior to the concert.

Only two participants “discussed race in the HBCU orchestra” and how it affected aspects of classical music. Of the five participants, Debra, the only African American, spoke with passion about her experiences of generally being the only Black orchestra member in professional orchestras. She shared her commitment with her HBCU orchestra students and intentionally shined a different light on European fine art traditions by highlighting the influence of the Moors. She encouraged her students to consider “... all this history that’s coming out of Spain and Egypt and North Africa and from the Sudan” (Debra, Interview, 4/24/14). Also, Rebecca’s encounters with prejudice as an Eastern European performing in Western Europe led

her to have a greater sensitivity to the experiences of her African American students. However, the other three participants' avoided addressing race and racism directly.

The findings demonstrated the participants' experiencing success in spite of challenging situations. Though the HBCU orchestras were smaller, and not as well-known as the bands and choirs, these HBCU orchestras were surviving because of the tenacity of the conductors who worked tirelessly at having their ensembles thrive on their respective campuses.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

The encounters with the conductors demonstrated their ongoing commitment to their student orchestras. Amanda spoke with intensity when she described her commitment to “Keep the sacred flame” alive in her students while she dealt with her constant need for funds (Interview, 4/28/14). This chapter will seek to illuminate the larger picture of this study and what made this project important to music educators who seek to “keep the sacred flame” of the orchestra experience alive.

In this chapter, I will discuss the results of this study. It begins with a summary of the study and methods, and ends with a summary of the results and their relationship to prior research. Then, I will propose conclusions in light of participants’ input while using CRT as the theoretical foundation. I suggest that these directors’ primary issue is a need for student scholarship funds. However, they also needed funds for recruiting endeavors, musical supplies, orchestra camps and assistants. As a result, these directors “do everything” in order to have their orchestras survive while they continue striving for improvement. The shortage of high school orchestras in their areas was another primary issue. I will consider the implications for music educators, including these participants’ flexible approach with their students, the racial implications in the world of college orchestras, and the conductors’ drive for excellence. Finally, I will make suggestions for future research. In concluding this study, I hope to spotlight the world of HBCU orchestras through the observations and voices of these conductors. Since this is an ethnographic study of five orchestra conductors, the results cannot be generalized. Also, this study represents limited observations of a few individuals. However, I hope that others in similar environments may find the information useful.

Study Summary

The purpose of this ethnographic study was to investigate the experiences of five orchestra conductors at HBCUs. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What are the experiences of orchestra directors at HBCUs?
- What are the challenges faced by the HBCU orchestra directors, and how do the directors address them?
- How do HBCU orchestra directors describe their successes?

Methods

This was an ethnographic study of five orchestra directors at HBCUs. Data collection involved site observations and in-person interviews (Creswell, 2007). Participants were interviewed once at their respective universities. The interviews were audiotaped and were later transcribed. Field notes were taken at each site and were later typed. In order to insure data trustworthiness, I employed data triangulation, member checks, and peer review of the data (Creswell, 2007). The data were coded by hand for emerging themes. The participants included five HBCU orchestra directors— Sandra, John, Debra, Rebecca, and Amanda— with varying ages, backgrounds and ethnicities. They were selected based on their reputations as successful HBCU orchestra directors.

Summary of Results

Themes emerged relating to six main areas: (1) “Striving for Excellence”: the determination of these directors to continue striving for the best from their students, (2) “General

Lack of Funds”: the shortage of funds for student scholarships and resources, (3) “Do Everything”: the variety of roles directors assumed, from preparing ensembles for performances to being publicists, (4) “Teaching Strategies”: different approaches regarding how to help students grow musically, (5) “Recruitment Activities”: recruitment challenges especially with the shortage of high school orchestras in their areas, and (6) “Critical Race Theory and the world of HBCU orchestra”: racism and its effect on orchestra participants and their students.

“Striving for Excellence.” Of the five questions posed to the participants, no question asked about striving for excellence, yet each participant, in their own words, mentioned it. These participants were aware of the challenges that their students face. The participants mentioned that many students worked and went to school, many had family obligations, and most struggled with financial challenges. As the participants said, most were not music majors and were not required to perform in orchestra in order to complete their degrees. Both Debra and Rebecca spoke with pride about some of their students who enrolled in private lessons even though it was not required for degree completion. These dedicated instructors continued to strive for excellence with private lessons in an effort to strengthen the students’ performing abilities. These more intense lessons enabled students to grow musically, which many students had not previously had in larger high school ensembles.

“General Lack of Funds.” The second theme revealed in the data was the general lack of funds, especially for student scholarships however, funds for supplies and recruitment activities were also needed. I learned this during the process of interviewing these conductors when four conductors emphatically stated this need. As Amanda stated, she needed “funding, funding, funding” (4/28/14). John, Rebecca, and Sandra stated similar needs. However, Debra, the only African American participant, did not express this concern, which may be because the

underfunding of HBCUs is common knowledge in the Black community. The African American community generally struggles economically, and therefore a smaller specialized program like a student orchestra would likely face financial challenges. While having greater funds will not solve all of problems these HBCU orchestras face, the participants, who presently work wonders with so little, could find more ways to attract new orchestra students.

“Do everything.” Unlike mainstream university orchestra directors, these participants described their reality of doing everything for their ensembles. This led to Rebecca traveling to surrounding schools as a recruiter while she was also the orchestra’s publicist and accountant (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14). Debra demonstrated her recruiting strategies as she performed violin excerpts for the visiting children and encouraged them to attend her university in a few years. She had no university staff or student assistants helping her; she simply picked up the violin and began entertaining the visiting children. Amanda, John, and Sandra were also moving chairs and stands, and passing out programs before their respective concerts. These activities demonstrate how the participants do whatever they can to help their ensembles.

“Teaching Strategies.” Each participant’s teaching strategy was unique. Debra was comfortable working with students with varying levels of experience. Rebecca also worked with students of all levels but her teaching style included student competitions and chamber music performances as motivators. Conversely, John clearly stated that he wanted students with more experience. He mentioned that when he arrived at his university, he felt obligated to take “...anybody who could put a violin under their chin or put their hands on a cello, and it just doesn’t really work” (John, Interview, 4/23/14). He chose not to accept students that he felt were not equipped for a college orchestra. The sound of the orchestras reflected the personality of

different directors but each achieved success with their different teaching strategies and each participant deserve support for their hard work.

“Recruitment Activities.” The orchestra directors also faced challenges regarding how to continue bringing in new student orchestra players. When I asked the participants to describe the enrollment of new students, they cited a number of problems. Debra described a situation in her region where children were introduced to orchestra instruments in elementary school but the continuation in upper grades was absent. She was emphatic about her desire to have more high school orchestras in her area and how having these programs would help her HBCU orchestra. John said that at his university there was a general lack of a feeder program. Rebecca also described a similar situation in her region where the absence of high school orchestras in the Black community was forcing her to introduce the instruments to college students. While she was willing to teach everyone and had achieved some success with motivated beginners, she mentioned how she would have preferred teaching more experienced players where polishing their sound was the goal rather than introducing beginning techniques.

However, some participants utilized outreach efforts by perhaps planting a seed of interest with children for future recruiting. Debra responded to the surprise visit by a group of 40 children during the orchestra rehearsal by acting as a recruiter of the children. After she asked for their ages, she announced that she was looking forward to seeing them at her university when they reached college ages. Rebecca included children as performers prior to her orchestra concert. It appeared that having the children performing on the same stage as the university students was a way to bring both the children and their parents closer to the experience. The smiles on the faces of the university performers indicated that they also enjoyed seeing the children as potential future members.

Discussion

The five conductors who participated in this study demonstrated their ability to succeed and thrive on their campuses. Previous studies of African American students in the world of orchestra examined factors that younger students face (Hamann and Walker, 1993; Tuncer, 2008; Williams, 2013). Also, a few studies examined other ensembles, which include band and choir (Klinedinst, 1991; McCarthy, 1980). However, no studies have explored HBCU orchestras. Based on the information from this study, several points of discussion can be made regarding HBCU orchestras.

HBCU orchestra conductors continued to strive for excellence in spite of present difficulties.

The five conductors in this study agreed on the idea of working for excellence. Each one addressed it differently. John was pleased that his students “worked at the highest level,” while Amanda asked her students to “keep the sacred flame” and Debra pushed her students to strive for excellence while acknowledging their weak musical backgrounds. Rebecca sought excellence through student competitions, and Sandra marveled at the progress between rehearsal and performance. These participants believed in their students’ potential and proceeded to actualize it. However, the participants struggled in their quest for excellence as the result of a small pool of potential students. The shortage of local high school orchestra programs negatively impacted the participants’ group of incoming students.

Orchestra conductors continued describing their funding needs.

Information from these participants revealed a primary need—funds for student scholarships. Orchestras based at larger universities are primarily composed of music majors.

That means that as a music major, one is required to perform in designated ensemble in order to complete a degree. Unfortunately, the participants described a different reality for their HBCU orchestras in which most of their members were not music majors. This translated into a need for scholarships to entice the students to join and continue performing in the HBCU orchestras. Amanda and John emphatically described it as their number one concern.

Racial sensitivity in orchestras was discussed by some but not all conductors.

Of the five participants, two directly addressed how to advise other orchestra directors who work with programs involving a large number of African American students. The only African American, Debra, spoke freely regarding her views on race in the world of orchestra. She advised other conductors to understand that HBCU students may not have come from privileged backgrounds with years of private lessons but that they can have a lot of heart. She said: “I think what they have to do is be culturally aware and truly sensitive to the kinds of backgrounds that a lot of the kids come from” (Debra, Interview, 4/24/24). Rebecca spoke freely of the prejudice that she faced as a minority in Western Europe and why she chose to teach at an HBCU. “...I chose these campuses coming from Eastern Europe. I had been highly discriminated in Western European countries” (Rebecca, Interview, 4/27/14). Her descriptions suggest a racial sensitivity level that she had learned through experience. Those experiences led to a level of empathy by two of the participants that demonstrate some tenants of Critical Race Theory (Hiraldo, 2015).

It is problematic that three of the conductors did not directly discuss the thorny issue of racial prejudice, though even a casual look at America’s orchestras will demonstrate a glaring difference between overwhelming White orchestras and the Black community. It appears that

their silence regarding orchestras' exclusion of Black performers says more than one might think. This is indicative of what Ladson-Billings (1999) calls the permanence of racism. Ladson-Billings also argues that because racism is so pervasive, it has become invisible to most Whites. Rather than seeing issues as an outcome of racism, they choose to look at other differences as a way to deal with the discomfort of admitting racial inequalities.

Because racism is so deeply entrenched in every aspect of American culture, it also influences perceptions and standards in orchestra. More specifically, the issue of colorblindness is one aspect of the permanence of racism. DeLorenzo (2012) encouraged music educators to acknowledge and celebrate the differences in the students' colors and avoid the politically correct view of not seeing the race of the children. "To ignore color is to ignore identity. Ignoring identity is tantamount to rendering a child invisible" (DeLorenzo, 2012, p. 45). In light of today's push to become more inclusive in the orchestra field, directors, and others in leadership positions, need to be willing and open to examining the intersections of traditional orchestra practices and race.

How the world of orchestra can constructively address issues of race

As mentioned earlier, the world of orchestra, from professionals to younger ensembles struggle to be truly inclusive. The American Symphony Orchestra League described how orchestras are aware of America's changing demographics but their membership does not reflect the changes (American Symphony Orchestra League, 1990; League of American Orchestras, 2007-08). These HBCU orchestra directors currently involve students of color and the directors could be a bridge between professional orchestras and the African American community.

These directors' and students' experiences can open windows into the hearts of this rare group of HBCU orchestra performers. At the same time, professional orchestras could aid HBCU orchestra student by performing with the student orchestra when they visit campuses. These participants did something similar with young orchestra students to make an impact in influencing them to continue performing on their orchestra instruments. Likewise if professional orchestras visit and perform with HBCU students, the impact would be just as strong. When students on campuses see peers performing with professional musicians, the HBCU students' perspective of Black orchestra players could be dramatically altered. Also, when the HBCU student musicians perform with professionals, their identities can be strengthened by believing that professional status, though difficult, can be achieved by longer years of private study and is not impossible to achieve. As described earlier, HBCU orchestra conductors were constantly in need of more student scholarship funds. Their ongoing duties leave them little time to seek funds through grants writing for their student orchestras. Assistance from professional grant writers could result in a win/win situation for both entities. There are a number of granting sources offering funds for collaborations between music ensembles that serve different communities but share a common musical goal. The HBCU orchestra could benefit from more student scholarship funds and professional orchestras win by demonstrating community outreach efforts. Also, HBCU orchestra directors can benefit from collaborations that give their orchestra students real contact with professional orchestra members. This can help to "de-mystify" the world of professional orchestras.

Implications

While there is a small amount of research regarding Black children's orchestra involvement (DeLorenzo, 2012), no research has previously examined the world of HBCU

orchestras. Because this study examined this world through the perspective of their directors, it can be an avenue for others to examine this multifaceted world from different outlooks. Within that perspective, the following implications and recommendations should be considered:

1. Sharing information about Black orchestra involvement.

The Black experience regarding the world of orchestra is largely unknown (Southern, 1997). Debra used her European travels as a backdrop for sharing with her HBCU students how Blacks have been involved in all aspects of fine arts for centuries. Specifically, she insisted on expanding her students' views of the world of orchestra to include a Pan-African view. Other orchestra directors could learn from her approach and seek to include similar strategies in their own teaching. Debra taught classical titans such as Mozart and Beethoven to her students, but she also included the Black perspective. Her views support the need for an active historical inclusion of Blacks in classical music.

2. Providing additional funds.

The need for funds has been previously stated by the participants. While this may be unknown to those outside the African American community, it is common knowledge to those inside the African American community. HBCUs are underfunded nationwide and none of the music departments exists in a "Wealthy Patron School of Music." The results are that small programs such as the student orchestras are always searching for student scholarship funds. Professional orchestras can aid these student orchestras by partnering through grant writing. The HBCU orchestra directors have demonstrated that they do everything to keep their programs alive. However, their limited time does not allow them to acquire professional grant writing skills and later get accountants to close out the grants. This task can appear daunting to

inexperienced grant writers but professional assistance can go a long way towards acquiring needed funds. Thus, partnering HBCU orchestras with professional orchestras' grant writers can result in badly needed funds for student scholarships.

3. There is a need for more high school orchestras in the Black community.

Presently, the shortage of high school orchestras in predominately Black schools is acute. Debra mentioned that though there were some beginning programs in the elementary schools, the orchestras were largely absent in Black high schools. Rebecca also described the challenge of recruiting from low-income neighborhood high schools without orchestras. John's situation was different as he described that in his area, he found that there was very little in the way of a high school feeder program. He did, however, mention a university band camp while he bemoaned not having a similar string camp. These realities result in an ongoing need for high school orchestras in predominantly Black schools, although some elementary programs are also in danger of being cut. The orchestras' absence continues to negatively impact HBCU orchestra programs. Based on these interviews, it is obvious that HBCU orchestras could benefit tremendously from the ongoing presence of high school orchestras in their respective areas.

Recommendations and Suggestions for Future Research

Future research from this study relates to the experiences of orchestra directors at HBCUs and issues of racism in the world of orchestra. This study revealed that HBCU orchestras do exist and thrive, in spite of the multiple challenges. Throughout this study, I found that even educated musicians had no idea that orchestras existed on HBCU campuses. They were aware of the bands and choirs but simply had not considered the orchestras' existence. This has led to the orchestra directors' struggling to keep their programs alive. More research is needed to learn

better avenues for partnerships between HBCU orchestras and professional orchestras, especially in the area of grant writing.

Also, two participants commented directly on issues regarding race while three did not. It is possible that what these participants did not say could be more revealing than what they did. Contextually, orchestras rely heavily on their Eurocentric beginnings where they generally perform music composed by mostly dead white men of German, French and Italian ancestry. I'll confess to my appreciation for Brahms, Mozart, and Debussy as a lifelong love affair. However, these older forms of music can contribute to an attitude that prevents the world of orchestra from fully embracing the 21st century. Professional orchestras are composed of talented, smart people who are aware of America's changing demographics and they have attempted to address the changes with non-controversial events such as community and youth outreach concerts. Unfortunately, most professional orchestras continue to relate to the Black community with these outdated efforts. As I read more about Critical Race Theory during this study, I came to believe that some of CRT's theories can be further applied to the world of orchestra.

CRT's urges a number of changes with storytelling being an important bridge between academic worlds and everyday people (Bell, 1996). Future researchers should explore the ways in which storytelling can be utilized in orchestra concerts on an ongoing basis. The storytelling might include updating performances of Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf" to including a hip hop version of a standard work. It also does not have to be limited to only children's concerts but could be used more regularly. Future research can also explore how CRT can help America's orchestras reflect the people that they serve. All professional orchestras exist in large cities. These large cities contain a substantial Black population, in some cases Blacks are the majority. However, the professional orchestras do not represent the populations in their cities. The

American Symphony Orchestra League stated that Black orchestra members are approximately 1-2% nationwide with Black performers representing less than 1% in the top ten orchestras (League of American Orchestras, 2007). DeLorenzo (2012), a CRT proponent, clearly stated the need for active intervention in addressing the world of orchestra's racial imbalances. More research is needed to examine how professional orchestras can do more beyond token gestures. More research is also needed regarding the HBCU orchestras from other perspectives, including those of students, parents, administrators, and community members. As was stated earlier, this little known world is fascinating and deserves attention of educators and scholars.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Consent Letter

A SELECTED SURVEY OF ORCHESTRA DIRECTORS AT HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

You are being invited to participate in a research project conducted by Anne Lundy from the Music Department at the University of Houston's Moores School of Music. This is a part of Anne Lundy's Dissertation conducted under the supervision of Dr. Julie Kastner.

NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any questions.

PROCEDURES

You will be one of approximately five subjects asked to participate in this project. You will be asked to answer approximately five questions with three follow-up questions. You will also be asked to participate in a focus group interview at a later date. Anne Lundy is requesting that she observe a concert or rehearsal. It will take approximately two or three hours total time.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your participation in this project is anonymous. Please do not write your name on any of the research materials to be returned to the principal investigator.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

You may experience a slight discomfort answering the questions; however, no major risks are anticipated.

BENEFITS

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand orchestras at HBCUs and their conductors.

ALTERNATIVES

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual subject will be identified.

If you have any questions, you may contact Anne Lundy at (713) 299-6462 or annelundy1@gmail.com You may also contact Dr. Julie Kastner, faculty sponsor, at (713) 743-4547 or jdkastner@gmail.com

ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (713) 743-9204.

Participant Name: _____

Signature of Participant: _____

Appendix B: Questions for Semi-Structured Individual Interviews

The following are the open-ended questions that will be asked of the participants:

1. What have been your experiences as an orchestra director at a HBCU?
2. Please describe your “feeder” programs or how their absence affects your orchestra. (Do local high schools have orchestras?)
3. Please give advice to other orchestra directors who work with programs involving a large number of African American students.
4. Please discuss how orchestras at HBCUs can better prepare students to continue to be engaged in the world of orchestra.
5. Do you have any final thoughts you wish to share?

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