

2014-04-25

Functional Harmony: The Social Culture of a High School Orchestra

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

FUNCTIONAL HARMONY: THE SOCIAL CULTURE OF A HIGH SCHOOL
ORCHESTRA

By

Lindsay Moraczewski

A THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty
of the University of Miami
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Music Education

Coral Gables, Florida

May 2014

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UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
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ORCHESTRA

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Functional Harmony: The Social Culture of a
High School Orchestra

(M.M., Music Education)
(May 2014)

Abstract of a thesis at the University of Miami.

Thesis supervised by Professor Carlos Abril.
No. of pages in text. (216)

The purpose of this case study was to examine the sociomusical dimensions of high school orchestra culture. There were three main areas that were investigated: the sociomusical nature of the orchestra, social stratification within the orchestra, and alignment of perceptions between the director and students. Of particular interest were participants' perceptions of the school orchestra, what it means for them socially to be part of the orchestra, and the nature of social groups within the orchestra. The seven student participants were all of junior or senior class standing and ranged in age from 16 to 18 years old. The director had taught for 35 years. The study took place in a large suburban public high school in South Florida. Data were gathered through interviews, extensive field work, and miscellaneous artifacts. Through individual interviews, participants in the study shared their perceptions of the sociomusical aspect of the orchestra. A thematic analysis of the interviews revealed several emergent themes including 1) meaning and value, 2) collective identity, 3) socialization and social stratification, and 4) leadership. Results of the study suggest that high school orchestra is an important social space for many adolescents, and that this opportunity to socialize with their peers through music-making is highly valued by them. Participants indicated that, unlike their school band, many different types of students played in the orchestra including baseball players, "math nerds", cheerleaders, and students involved in student council. This diversity, in part, was thought by the participants to contribute to the

orchestra's lack of a cohesive identity throughout the larger school community.

Implications and suggestions for orchestra directors to embrace and foster a positive social atmosphere within their ensembles are offered.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my husband and our family for their patience and unwavering support. I would also like to thank our cats, Felix and Dmitri, for providing wonderful company during my long hours of writing.

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CHAPTER 1

The bell rings as a high school senior takes her seat at a desk in her history class. She chats with the person beside her before the teacher directs the class to the assignment on the board. Throughout the class period, the teacher quizzes students and asks discussion questions based on a reading assignment. When volunteering answers, students address the teacher, but rarely address each other. When it is time to move on to the next class, the high school senior leisurely makes her way to the band room, the door to which opens up to a world of completely different sights and sounds. Musicians are tuning, singing, playing excerpts from their music, chatting, and setting up the room for rehearsal. They are trying out each other's instruments, playing popular music, and laughing. Some are collecting permission forms, others are distributing music. They are enthusiastically greeting their teacher, and eager to share with him the new riff they learned on the cello. The classroom is active, loud, and energetic.

This scene is not uncommon in ensemble classes at American high schools. According to Abril and Gault (2008), 98% of secondary schools offer courses in music, most of which are large ensembles. While rates of participation in large ensembles may have dropped in the last thirty years (Elpus & Abril, 2011) and there are many factors that impact school music programs (Abril & Gault, 2007), large numbers of students continue to be drawn to these elective music classes. Previous studies have found that music students are aware of a unique social culture within the music classroom. Music students have reported that this is a positive aspect of being involved with music, and makes their musical experiences particularly meaningful (Abril, 2013; Adderley, 2009;

Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007; Carter, 2013; Laine, 2007). Interest in socializing as motivation to enroll in music ensembles is a common theme found by those conducting social research in music education.

Participants mentioned the opportunity to make new friends, to “feel part of something,” and to transcend “social barriers” (p. 195) of the larger school population as reasons for wanting to join a music ensemble (Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz, 2003). In fact, social benefits were the most often cited benefit when students were asked to talk about why their ensemble experience was valuable to them. Even popular culture has capitalized on the distinctive social culture of school music ensembles. Movies like *Drumline* and television shows like *Glee* depict and sometimes satirize the social experiences of young people involved in their school’s marching band or show choir.

However, largely absent from previous studies and popular culture is the depiction of school orchestra as an important social space for high school musicians. In fact, considering that 98% of secondary schools in the United States offer some type of music instruction, it is surprising that more research has not yet been conducted on the social dimensions of all three of the most popular types of large school music ensembles, let alone on just orchestra (Abril & Gault, 2008). Information resulting from such research would be valuable to any orchestra director constantly striving to create a positive social climate within and reverberating outward from the rehearsal space. In order to begin to construct a picture of the nature of the social interactions in high school music ensembles, we must examine adolescence, music ensemble culture, and finally, the social stratification that may exist in these music cultures.

Background

Social World of Adolescence. Adolescence is not just a stage in human development; it is also a culture, which has been the subject of countless sociological and psychological studies in the last several decades (Adler & Adler, 1998; Coleman, 1961; Kinney, 1999). As a social group, adolescents have a unique value system, language, communication, and social protocol governing their world (Coleman, 1961). They also share common experiences and express themselves through things like music and clothing, which unite them as a group representing more than just strangers of the same age (Kinney, 1999). The lives, identities and values of adolescents are not separate from their music ensemble experience. They bring their culture into the musical classroom, and as a result, the band, orchestra, or choir contribute to, or may be shaped by that culture, too.

As evidenced by their inclusion and organization of field trips, class parties, and other extra-curricular activities, many music teachers recognize that socialization is an enormous part of the experience that comes with joining an ensemble. This is especially true for adolescents, whose social experiences play a central role in their lives. There are two different lenses through which we can examine adolescent involvement in music ensembles: 1) from a social psychological perspective, the formation of social identity, or 2) from a sociological perspective, the complex social system of the American high school.

For adolescents, socializing is an opportunity to engage in the process of personal and social identity formation. This is a major component of social identity theory, which suggests that much of what we use to construct our identity comes from our social experiences. Within the adolescent world, every social choice could become part of the

process of identity formation (Kinney, 1999; Tarrant, 2002). These decisions might include how and with whom to spend free time, how to dress, what music to listen to, which classes to take, how to speak, or whether to join the school band, choir, or orchestra. These social choices are visible and noticed by other adolescents.

Related to and interacting with social identity is the adolescent social system into which high school students tend to organize themselves, which has been investigated by many (Adler & Adler, 1995; Adler & Adler, 1998; Coleman, 1961; Kinney, 1999). This social system consists of friendships, cliques, subcultures, hierarchies of power, popularity, influence, rules, and consequences. For example, Adler and Adler (1995, 1998) investigated the social system and politics of preadolescents. They found that the formation and maintenance of cliques is a complex process whereby popular leaders use power and the allure of popularity to reel in members of the out-group. Their position as leader of the clique is maintained by creating division and anxiety within the group stemming from the members' fears of rejection. This results in the group's reliance on them for feelings of acceptance. It also contributes to feelings of pressure to conform to social norms and group rules, and to actively or passively subjugate other students. Coleman (1961) and Kinney (1999) found that similar processes take place within the social dynamics of older adolescents. However, Kinney's study of adolescent subcultures found one alternative subculture – “the hippies” – to have largely rejected these social politics in favor of a more inclusive and welcoming social circle, which, along with their increased interest in the environment, social issues, and classic rock, came to more or less define their peer group. Consistent with these findings on the need to fit in and the fear of rejection that comes with social groups and clique politics, several studies have supported

the idea that adolescents are happier when they feel a sense of belonging to a peer group than when they claim no affiliation with a group or experience discontent with their peer group (Coleman, 1961; East, Hess, & Lerner, 1987; Gottlieb, 1987).

Music ensemble culture. Situated within this complex social system is the music student subculture. Researchers and scholars have investigated and discussed music and musical ensembles within and as culture during childhood and adolescence (Abril, 2013; Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Campbell, 1998; Morrison, 2001). Morrison (2001) asserts that music ensembles represent a subculture because they share the common goal of creating music, and in working toward that goal they develop highly specific customs, values, behaviors, and manners of expression and communication unique to their group. Morrison cites identity, transmission, social dimensions, practical and personal boundaries, an organizational hierarchy, traditional song, lore, traditional performance practices, indoctrination, and diaspora as possible artifacts and ideas that unite musical ensembles as their own culture. He explains that, although school band, orchestra, and choir have borrowed many traditions from their professional counterparts, the school ensemble has developed unique customs and traditions that correspond with each of the cultural dimensions he cites. For example, one tradition that appears frequently in research on this topic is the music room as a social space, where students congregate during lunch time, before school, and after school. This falls under Morrison's category of practical and personal boundaries. In Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz's study, the music room is seen as a "home away from home." Their use of the word "home" to describe the music room is symbolic of a safe, nurturing space for students, and because it is a central

space in which much of the ensemble's identity is created and maintained, it also functions culturally as a symbol of familial unity.

Social stratification of the music ensemble. In his article defining and describing ensemble culture, Morrison (2001) notes that one component of culture which helps to unify music ensembles as subcultures is the presence of a social organizational system. Similar to the structure which stratifies the general population of high school students, there exist cliques, peer groups, and hierarchies of power within music ensembles. This aspect of music ensemble culture has been a largely unexplored at the high school level.

Christopher Small (1998) discusses the hierarchy at the professional level in his dissection of symphony orchestra culture. At the top of this hierarchy is the conductor. Small characterizes the conductor as a charismatic autocrat with a large public persona who exercises unlimited power by asserting his interpretation of the score as the only legitimate interpretation. Small goes into great detail to illustrate the grandeur and notoriety associated with the position of the conductor, which is sharply juxtaposed by the nature of the orchestra members over whom he governs. Describing the majestic manner in which the conductor walks on stage to thundering applause Small states, "the humility of his bow is part of the drama" to suggest that the audience expects someone as powerful as he is to be humble, so he obliges by agreeing to be part of the charade (p.78). Small explicitly connects the conductor's power to his control of the score, which, along with his/her baton, are used to dominate the orchestra and impose his/her will upon them.

Echoing Small's (1998) characterization of the conductor as an authoritarian, O'Toole (2005) critically examined issues of power in a choral ensemble, which implies

a hierarchical relationship among members. She placed the conductor at the top of the hierarchy, and explained how his use of choral pedagogy reinforces power imbalances within the choir that, ironically, silence the singers. She described tactics used to control the choir, which are similar to the methods employed by clique leaders in Adler and Adler's studies (1995, 1998). Voice sections are pitted against one another as blame is assigned for mistakes. Much like the victims of exclusionary tactics used by popular kids in Adler and Adler's study, this bitter competition has been found to create anxiety within the group and a painful desire to avoid the judgmental glares of fellow singers as well as to please the conductor. Seemingly innocuous dismissals of questions and lighthearted jokes are viewed through a critical lens to reveal that they function as tools to dominate the singers.

Until Abril's (2013) study on band culture, a hierarchical dimension to social stratification at the high school level had not been deeply explored. His study exploring the perceptions of five so-called "hardcore band kids," named for their unwavering commitment to music, especially the band, shed light on the previously unexplored sociomusical hierarchy of the high school band classroom. According to the participants in the study, the high school band is divided into three levels, which are related to music ability, seniority, and commitment level to the band. Older students with the highest music ability, commitment level, and involvement were thought to reside in the upper echelon of band called the "hardcore" level. Within this level there existed an exclusive clique of passionate jazz musicians. Under this top level, participants spoke of a middle level in which most of the band resided. These students had moderate abilities and learned their own parts, but they were not seen as having the exceptional commitment

level to the group and abilities that characterized the hardcore band students. In the bottom level of the hierarchy was a group known for having low commitment, ability, and involvement. Participants felt that the lowest stratum of the social system was actually harmful to the band.

The idea that music ensembles are thought to have their own unique culture and social organization within the general school population further complicates this adolescent-constructed social system studied by Coleman (1961) and Adler and Adler (1998). Students in a music ensemble, who have a broad range of ability levels as well as social capital within the general high school social hierarchy, are expected to work together to achieve the common goal of a successful musical performance. Concern for the overall good of the band is a theme that was repeatedly reflected in Abril's (2013) investigation into the band's social system.

This music ensemble paradigm essentially means that many different types of students are constantly interacting with one another and working toward a common goal. In stark contrast to music class, a typical math class expects students to worry about their own achievement, and to not be concerned whether the person next to them consistently passes or fails exams. It is commonplace in these traditional types of classes for students to stick to their own peer group and participate (or not) in a manner consistent with the values of that peer group. If arriving on time to math class and acing tests is inconsistent with the values of a student's clique, that student's decision to neglect the class is seen as having little negative impact on other math students outside of such a clique. High-achieving math students do not feel slighted or betrayed by less serious students or struggling students. However, unlike math class, students in orchestra, for example, are

expected to be concerned with the achievement of the entire group. If a few students are not playing well, it is considered detrimental to the entire group. The team-like nature of group music-making necessitates that all musicians have the same or similar goals in mind and are willing to work together to achieve those goals. Thus, a refusal to carry one's weight is seen as a betrayal to the entire group, which could create an opportunity for the inception of negative attitudes and a caustic social atmosphere. The possibility of an interaction with or clashing of the social stratification within an ensemble and the larger high school social hierarchy which governs the entire high school is a possibility for our music classrooms, and is deserving of our attention.

Need for the Study

With the exception of the sociomusical hierarchical component of music ensemble culture, the sociocultural aspect of the American high school band has received a considerable amount of attention from researchers (Abril, 2013; Laine, 2007; McNeill, 1995). In addition to being the subject of scholarly research, high school band has long enjoyed a place in popular culture. Movies such as *Drumline*, *American Pie*, *Mean Girls*, and *Mr. Holland's Opus* have all focused on, or at least referenced band as a unique subculture within the American high school. When we consider these popular culture references in addition to marching band's highly visible role as entertainment for high school and college football games, it is clear that high school band has a relatively consistent identity that is recognized by our society.

Choir has enjoyed a similar place in popular culture as evidenced by the popularity of shows like *Glee* and movies like *High School Musical*. An internet search of the term "choir geek" yields tee shirts, coffee mugs, memes, and jokes focusing on student choral culture. Choral composers like Eric Whitacre pride themselves on their

frequent social media activity and interactions with fans, choir students, and teachers. Whitacre regularly engages in conversation with supporters of his work on social media sites like Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit. He has been known to tweet fan parodies of himself, which have consisted of photos of choral conductors dressed as him, with his signature long feathered blonde hair. The impact that such activity has had on the creation and maintenance of professional and student choral culture cannot be overstated.

Unlike band and choir, however, the high school orchestra is rarely mentioned in popular culture. Occasionally, stringed instruments are used to depict a stereotypical high-brow elitist, geek, or misfit, but depictions of the high school orchestra as its own subculture within adolescent society are rare if they exist at all. Unlike the band and choral world's popular contemporary composer superstars, Eric Whitacre and John Mackey, the high school orchestra world has no such uniting figures.

In addition, little research has been done that focuses specifically on the culture of high school orchestras, which we have established is rarely present in popular culture. Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz's (2003) study draws from perspectives of students in band, orchestra, and choir, but does not specifically focus on the perceptions of orchestra students above all others. What little research that has focused specifically on public school orchestras is entirely quantitative and reports information on the state of orchestras from the perspective of an outsider, but does not begin to mention the inner-workings of the culture or social dynamics of the ensemble (Leonhard, 1991; Smith, 1997; Gillespie & Hamann, 1998; Gillespie & Hamann, 2002). Interestingly, these studies point to an upward trend in student enrollment in string orchestras, as well as an upward trend in the establishment of string orchestras in schools and districts that previously did not have

them. Yet, despite the orchestra's increasing presence in schools, very few researchers, especially qualitative researchers, have chosen to focus on social issues within the orchestra as a subject of their inquiry.

Finally, a general understanding of the culture and social dynamics within a music ensemble is extremely helpful for a director looking to create a positive, meaningful environment for his or her students. Kerchner and Abril (2009) affirm this by stating, "in order to understand the complexity of musical experience and its implication for music education, the literature should situate musical experience in its sociocultural context" (p. 3). Several researchers have found that the social dimension of school music weighs heavily on students' decisions to join and continue to enroll in these ensembles. If we believe that the meanings students construct within our ensembles are just as important as the musical content we present, it is imperative that we embrace this social dimension. This is why we must have an understanding of exactly what we are embracing. If the social environment we promote and embrace within our ensembles is unhealthy and alienates certain students, we must ask ourselves some serious questions about the purpose of our ensemble and the type of experiences we want our students to take away from our classes. Similarly, if the social environment within our ensemble strengthens the bond between our students, and therefore enriches their musical and nonmusical experiences, we should try to replicate this. First, we must explore and describe the social dimension of the high school string orchestra.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate the sociomusical dimensions of high school orchestra culture. The following research questions will drive the study:

1. What is the nature of the social aspect of high school orchestra?
2. What is the nature of social stratification in a high school orchestra, and in what ways does the social stratification of a high school's orchestra align with prior research on social stratification?
3. How do the director's perceptions of the sociomusical dimensions of the orchestra align with the perceptions of students from different places within that ensemble?

Definitions

Sociomusical hierarchy: This term refers to the social organizational system of students in an ensemble. This organizational system is hierarchical in nature, meaning that some students have more power and influence than other students. This power and influence or lack thereof is necessarily related to and facilitated by roles that students take on within a music ensemble, so the hierarchy is *sociomusical* (Abril, 2013).

School ensemble: For the purposes of this study, a school ensemble is any school-sponsored music ensemble that meets during the regular school day, before or after school, or on weekends. A school ensemble is usually directed by the school music teacher. This most often includes choir, band, and orchestra.

School orchestra: While a school orchestra can encompass many more families of instruments than strings, this study will refer to school orchestra as a school-sponsored string ensemble, which is usually directed by a music teacher or orchestra teacher at the school.

High school: Within the context of this study, high school refers to a public secondary school in which students in 9th-12th grades are served.

Adolescents: This refers to people between the age of 13 and 19 in the stage of adolescence. This study will deal primarily with older adolescents who are between 16 and 18.

Delimitations

The population defined for this study is fairly narrow. While the exploration of the social culture of elementary and middle school orchestra students is valuable, this study only examines the perceptions of adolescents ages 16-18 who have participated in orchestra for at least two years. There are a few reasons for this. First, this study deals with issues of identity, and adolescence is a critical period of identity exploration and formation. Although it depends on a person's rate of maturity, this exploration lessens as adolescents get older and begin making choices about who they are (Tarrant, Hargreaves, & North, 2002). Included in these choices is the decision regarding whether one is a musician or a musical leader. Kinney (1999) found that individual identities interact with collective identities, which is a central theme for this study. Juniors and seniors are more likely to have settled on an identity in the orchestra, which, according to Kinney, may affect the social climate of the orchestra. Furthermore, it is likely that older adolescents have spent more time in school orchestra, and will therefore have more experiences to reflect upon and discuss. Because interviews are the primary mode of data collection and analysis, this discussion is incredibly important.

CHAPTER 2

The social dimension of the high school orchestra classroom is complex and contains within it many intersecting issues including music's place in social experiences, music and adolescent culture, the culture of music ensembles, and social stratification within those ensembles. An overview of these issues provides a thorough view of the context in which this study took place.

Music, Socializing, and Human Relations

The focal point of this study involves the social interaction between the students in a high school orchestra class. Merriam (1964), Abril and Kerchner (2009), and Small (1998) are some of many who have made noteworthy contributions to this topic. Music is a remarkably powerful force in human relations. Merriam (1964) asserts that music is something that is essential to humanity, and that "there is probably no other human cultural activity which is so all-pervasive and which reaches into, shapes, and often controls human behavior" (p. 218). Merriam further defines and describes ten functions of music in culture, all of which can be applied to human civilization on a macro-level and adolescent culture on a micro-level. For example, one function of music according to Merriam is to evoke a physical response, which can be seen in religious institutions, large crowds at sporting events, and other cultural gatherings. Merriam notes that, although there may be a biological component to the physical response brought on by music, which has been confirmed by other studies (Vickhoff, et. al, 2013), this response is likely culturally shaped. In other words, people are socialized to know when, how, and why to move to music.

McNeill's (1995) research on the collective physical response evoked by music supports Merriam's (1964) assertion that physical response is a function of music in society. McNeill describes this psychomotor phenomenon in great detail, characterizing it as a "sense of pervasive well-being" (p. 2). He calls it "muscular bonding", which he describes as "the euphoric fellow feeling and rhythmic muscular movement aroused among nearly all participants" (p. 2). In addition to being evident on the larger scale of human civilization, it is also apparent within the micro-level of adolescent culture. This is evident in their activities and events such as dances, pep rallies, cheerleading, and marching band. Although orchestras do not march, they have their own form of synchronized muscular bonding through the coordination of bows.

Another function of music in culture asserted by Merriam (1964) is to enforce conformity to social norms. While the idea of conforming to social norms may be met with vastly different attitudes from teens and society as a whole, there is evidence that both groups acknowledge this function of music in their culture. On the macro-level, music might be used to promote ideas of patriotism and civic duty. The sounding of the national anthem at sporting events is intended to stimulate patriotic behavior, such as removing one's hat, resting one's right hand over the heart, and remaining silent for the entire anthem. Failure to conform to these behaviors once the music starts may elicit glares or hushes from others. Similarly, within the context of adolescent culture, it is certainly possible that popular musicians play a role in dictating what is acceptable dress and behavior for teens. For example, within an adolescent subculture built around punk rock music, the punk scene will reinforce social norms for that group (Kinney, 1999). Coleman (1961) also found evidence that the musical preferences of popular students

shaped musical preferences of the high school as a whole, which suggests that the less-popular students felt pressure to conform to the culture that the popular students were promoting.

Emotional expression and communication are two other functions of music in culture, which may be least understood (Merriam, 1964). Nonetheless, the potential for music to communicate is mentioned by several participants in studies on music and adolescence. Participants discuss how music has helped them to express and communicate their emotions, values, and identities (Abril, 2013; Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz, 2003; Campbell, Connell, and Beegle, 2007; Kinney, 1999; Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2002). For example, Kinney (1999) reports that adolescents in the “hippie” subculture used music to communicate their new commitment to values popularized by the counterculture of the 1960’s.

Affirming Merriam’s (1964) assertions that music and human relations are inseparable, Abril and Kerchner (2009) apply this idea very liberally, stressing that even an activity as seemingly socially isolated as listening to music in one’s bedroom is situated within a larger sociocultural context. Solitary musical experiences do not happen in a vacuum, but rather take place as a result of previous and/or continuous socialization. It is possible that the teen’s music selection for solitary listening was suggested by a friend, or obtained through social media, “social” being the operative word. Small (1998) also discusses the idea that music is not discovered, enjoyed, or otherwise experienced in total isolation. The juxtaposition of the modern concert hall with descriptions of those performance spaces from the past suggests that a failure to acknowledge socialization as an entangled feature of the musical experience can cause tension. For example, Small

notes that the concert hall for a symphony orchestra is designed for minimal interaction among audience members and between the audience and the musicians. His description of a stoic and impersonal concert hall is contrasted by referencing performance spaces from the past, such as the Rotunda in Ranelagh Pleasure Gardens, which, in paintings is depicted as a social and “agreeable” place (p. 29).

While the functions of music outlined by Merriam (1964) are applicable in many ways to adolescent culture, it is helpful to examine more closely the scholarly contributions to this topic.

Adolescent Culture

A considerable amount of research has been conducted on the culture of adolescence. Studies have addressed the nature of adolescent culture, as well as implications for the psychological health of teens and the relationship of adolescent culture to society as a whole. Coleman (1961), Adler and Adler (1998), Kinney (1999), and Campbell, Connell and Beegle (2007) have made contributions that are relevant to this study.

Coleman’s (1961) landmark study on the culture of adolescence provided an important foundation upon which psychological and sociological research into adolescence has built in the last five decades. He observed that as the United States industrialized, the level of education needed for important jobs kept rising, and increasing numbers of teenagers entered and graduated from high school. This, he posits, created the right conditions for an adolescent culture to form. Coleman’s extensive study examined ten high schools, which varied greatly in size, diversity, socioeconomic level, and size of community population. The schools were chosen from rural, suburban, and urban towns and cities in northern Illinois. Data collection involved informal interviews with several

students from each school, mass-distributed questionnaires to students, parents, and teachers, and official records from each school district, which included information such as IQ scores, attendance, and grades for each student.

Coleman (1961) investigated everything from interest in cars, to how teens spend their free time, to drug use, smoking, and purchasing habits. Of particular interest to Coleman, and directly related to this study, were the social status systems and accompanying values that seemed to govern adolescent society. Unsurprisingly, Coleman found that adolescents in the late 1950's attended highly stratified high schools, with divisions based on certain values familiar to us today. For example, several students indicated divisions based on socioeconomic level, as well as membership on the football team and cheerleading squad. These groups were found to make up highly exclusive and popular cliques. Coleman further corroborated this finding by having students write down the first and last names of all of their friends. He analyzed the data from every student in each school and found that the boys who received the most mentions from other boys were on the football team, citing that the most popular students on the football team often received mentions by as many as fifteen other students. Additionally, interviews and surveys found that students received more social benefits from both parents and peers for achievement in athletics as opposed to academics. However, Coleman notes that many students felt that academic achievement and intelligence were important attributes for being part of the "leading crowd" (p. 39), even if they are not considered first and foremost before athletic ability, socioeconomic status, appearance, and personality.

Data collection for Coleman's (1961) study took place in the late 1950's. It should be noted that regarding matters of gender, sexuality, and religion, Coleman's data

collection instruments like questionnaires, his findings, and his analyses are fraught with blatant sexism and ethnocentrism. For example, in his student questionnaires participants are asked to select their religion. Only three choices are given: Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish. In addition to being offensive, this also creates obvious errors in data collection because it suggests something that is not necessarily representative of reality, which is that all students self-identify as followers of at least one of those three religions.

Furthermore, Coleman used separate questionnaires for male and female students. A scan of the questionnaire reveals that this is because he made assumptions about the career aspirations, values, and sexual orientation of the students. This is likely a product of the time period during which this study was conducted. Although gender, sexuality, and religion are only tangential to the main focus of my study, it is important to acknowledge these issues with an otherwise notable and exhaustive glimpse into adolescent life.

Despite these clear errors in his assumptions of the values of mainstream America, many of Coleman's (1961) findings still ring true in today's adolescent society. For example, his results regarding the tendency for popular students to display athletic ability are also supported by the extensive ethnographic research of Adler and Adler (1998). Additionally, the results of his exploration of cliques and social hierarchies are affirmed in subsequent research (Abril 2012; Adler and Adler, 1998; Kinney, 1999). Of particular interest to my study are Adler and Adler's (1998) findings on cliques and social stratification. Adler and Adler conducted an extensive investigation into children's peer culture. They studied children from twelve schools in a middle- and upper-middle class suburb over a timespan of eight years, and gathered data through participant observation and interviews. From this research they contributed valuable information to

previously unclear issues like popularity, clique relations, and the social stratification of children's culture.

Four main social strata were identified in Adler and Adler's (1998) study. At the top of the hierarchy were the popular clique(s) who held the most power and influence. Underneath the popular clique(s) were the wannabes, who actively attempted to gain entry into the popular cliques. The next level down were the middle cliques, which consisted of many students who were not actively seeking popular clique membership and were more or less content to stay where they were. The middle group made up the majority of the school population. At the very bottom were the loners and students who did not quite fit in. The researchers note that these students occasionally found friends, but they are largely defined by their social isolation.

Adler and Adler (1998) characterize cliques as highly exclusive friendship circles with microsystems of social stratification in which some members are leaders who wield power over the identity of the group. Affiliation with cliques is not typically fixed, and often involves irregular inclusion and exclusion of certain students based on criteria that are often not stated explicitly by either the clique members or the leaders. This also supports Coleman's (1961) findings, who observed that many students had difficulty articulating what led to a student's expulsion from the group. The best that most students could do was to speculate about what led to clique leaders to ostracize some students and not others.

Regarding membership, Adler and Adler (1998) observed that students could be targeted by clique members for potential acceptance. Cliques with more social capital often had an advantage in pursuing non-members, and participants noted that very

popular cliques could get whoever they wanted to join. Non-members could actively seek entry, but ran the risk of appearing as “wannabes” (p. 81). Participants also generally agreed that the best time to move up in the social system was at the beginning of the year when cliques were actively evaluating their peers for new members. They mentioned that this was difficult to do once social circles started to solidify and peers became complacent.

Adler and Adler (1998) observed that, in addition to the stratification of the school, popular cliques also had their own micro-stratification system. Participants indicated that cliques had one or two leaders. The cliques in which there was only one leader tended to display a pyramid-shaped power structure characterized by the distribution of more power to fewer and fewer people toward the top. The researchers noted that the levels underneath the leader’s position were marked by dependence, fear, admiration, and “unhesitant acceptance of the leader’s actions” (p. 78).

One significant feature of these peer groups and social ranks is that they shape interactions, and thus, shape identities. Adler and Adler (1998) observed that the extreme differences in socialization experienced by members of different groups and social ranks seemed to change how the participants viewed themselves. These findings are similar to those of Kinney (1999) and Stryker (1980) whose results affirm the theory of symbolic interactionism.

Symbolic interactionism places a heavy emphasis on everyday social experiences, the symbols created and reinforced by these interactions, and their potential to shape identities (Kinney, 1999; Wright, 2011). A longitudinal study by Kinney (1999) which explored alternative groups in adolescent peer culture found that students who self-

identified as part of the hippie alternative culture in their high school sought out different social interactions in order to create their own subculture that aligned more closely with the progressive ideologies they had adopted. Students in the hippie group had previously belonged to a crowd called the headbangers, a group known for identifying with heavy metal music, questioning authority, rebellion, and drugs. However, as these former headbangers got older and continued to adopt more nuanced ways of looking at the world, they decided that they no longer identified with the headbanger's close-mindedness and characteristic immaturity. Kinney (1999) reported that these students began socializing with other students who felt similarly. The result of this socialization and sharing of ideas was the hippie group, which prided itself on being inclusive and open-minded. Findings from this study affirm the idea that adolescents create and maintain their own culture. Their identities seem to be simultaneously influencing and being influenced by the social climate around them.

One way that the hippies set their group apart from the others was through the use of music. The hippies in Kinney's (1999) study used music from the 1960's and 1970's to help define their clique and its values. Musical preference seemed to be a method by which many adolescents from Kinney's study distinguished themselves and declared membership in certain cliques. The headbangers listened to heavy metal music, which helped to define their subculture. The punk rockers listened to punk music, which helped to give their subculture an identity as well.

In Kinney's (1999) study, music helped to define each clique. Particularly within the hippie group, the themes expressed in the music from the 1960's and 1970's seemed to interact with and affect their world views, self-identities, and the collective group

identity. The idea that music had such a profound influence on this subculture is unsurprising, especially considering Merriam's (1964) ideas on the functions of music in society. It is not unreasonable to suggest that music holds quite a significant role in adolescent culture, and that they find and create meaning in these sociomusical experiences.

A 2007 study by Campbell, Connell, and Beegle aimed to explore the meaning that adolescents ascribed to their musical experiences both within and out of school. The researchers analyzed essay responses from 1,155 American middle and high school students whose ages ranged from 13 to 18 years. The self-selected students were instructed to write a persuasive essay in favor of keeping music education in their schools. Responses were submitted online via a popular magazine's website. In order to avoid leading the participants to characterize their musical experiences using "preordained categories" generated by adults, the essay contest was open-ended and allowed the researchers to study "the messier side of adolescent thought processes in an attempt to explain the complex reality of their musical experiences" (p. 223). The researchers were able to extrapolate five main themes regarding the musical meanings expressed by the respondents: 1) identity formation in and through music, 2) emotional benefits, 3) music's life benefits including character-building and life skills, 4) social benefits, and 5) positive and negative impressions of school music programs and their teachers.

Regarding the first theme of personal and social identity formation, participants in Campbell, Connell, & Beegle's (2007) study referred to their musical preferences as a dimension of themselves that they can consciously construct. A 13-year-old girl noted,

“One thing that we have a choice about is what we listen to. The music we listen to makes us individuals.” Some participants discussed their awareness of music being central to cultural and group identity, using phrases like “it brings us all together” and “it defines and inspires our culture” (p. 227). Many of the participants discussed how music benefits them in practical and emotional ways. They described the positive feelings they experienced through the hard work it takes to achieve a goal in music and how this motivates them to strive for the same results in other areas of their life. Students asserted that having access to music education helped them to explore their musical potential. Some participants described their frustration with how narrow the musical opportunities are, and how their current identity did not fit well with the limited musical opportunities that were offered by their school. For example, one participant, age 16, explained how the band did not fulfill what some students desired for their music education. She asserted that the band was “generic” (p. 231) and not reflective of the many musical possibilities open to teens because it neglected their preference for popular music.

Of particular interest to the present study are the perceived social benefits of music that Campbell, Connell, and Beegle (2007) extracted from participant responses. Students were enthusiastic in their descriptions of the social opportunities that music activities and classes afforded them. Some wrote about the ability to meet and make friends with new people who they would not have otherwise met. Similarly, some students perceived music as a way to bring many different types of people together in a positive way. Others discussed how music involvement gave them a sense of belonging and made them feel like less of an outsider in what can be a stressful social climate in high school. Further, other students explained how music classes enabled them to find

and fit into a positive group of students and resist pressures to try drugs, join gangs, or engage in other delinquent behavior. Students also described socializing and music-making outside of the formal music classroom. A 16-year-old boy wrote about how making music was a favorite pastime and explained how an excellent way to make new friends is to offer free music lessons to one another. One 13-year-old girl accurately summed up music's place in the lives of teens by referencing its ubiquity and incredible importance: "Music gives you a place to belong inside and outside of the walls of your school" (p. 230). Music is clearly valued by adolescents for various reasons.

Music Ensemble Culture

With such enthusiastic and passionate responses from the participants in Campbell, Connell, and Beegle's (2007) study regarding music's significance in their lives, it is no surprise that musical experience has the capacity to facilitate a subculture of music students in high school. Music ensemble classes are unique in so many ways that have allowed them to develop their own music student subculture within the high school. Swanwick (1988) defines the criteria for a subculture as "any group of people sustained by a common interest or a set of shared values [who] develop customs, conventions and conversational manners of a more or less specialized kind" (p. 3).

Morrison (2001) further developed the idea of a music ensemble high school subculture by identifying nine themes which tend to unite high school music ensembles as their own unique culture. The first theme that Morrison describes is identity. Adolescence is a critical period in identity formation, which may be frustrating, turbulent, and confusing as students constantly ask themselves "where do I fit in?" By high school, identity starts to solidify and teens begin to settle into their niches. Morrison notes that it is around this time in high school that students begin connecting music ensembles to the

identity that they have created for themselves. A group of students emerges as people who are not just enrolled in band but, “they *are* the band” (p. 25). This explicit or implicit declaration of identity as a band member, or as the concert master stands in sharp contrast to self-identity with respect to other classes in which students are enrolled. It is not often that students refer to themselves as “members” of a geometry class, or as holding positions in their history classes, but students do identify themselves by their membership and social positions within music ensemble classes.

A second theme that Morrison (2001) discusses is transmission in which members of the culture transmit aspects of that culture to newer and younger members. Included within that transmission are expectations of how less experienced members should act musically and socially. The ensemble director is perhaps the most important “culture-bearer” (p. 26) because he or she creates and/or perpetuates much of the ensemble’s culture and passes it down through instruction, classroom management, interactions with students, choices of repertoire, and so on. For example, it is unlikely that a culture of intense competition among student musicians would exist within an ensemble if the director did not have a hand in creating or perpetuating an environment in which that culture could thrive. By either promoting competition or passively acknowledging its embrace by the student musicians, the ensemble teacher transmits a culture.

The third and fourth themes from Morrison’s research, which go hand-in-hand, are the existence of a social dimension and the practical and personal boundaries of that social dimension. Unique to high school music ensemble classes is this social dimension. Students within in the same math class may casually chat with one another, but because Honors Geometry with Mrs. Smith may never manifest as a collective identity for those

students, their socialization may stop when the bell rings. This is what makes music ensemble classes so special – this intersection of collective identity and socialization. As students eventually create a self-identity that includes their membership in a music ensemble, they may begin to view other members as also sharing in that collective identity. Students who might never have otherwise talked with each other come to share a common identity and begin to socialize as a result of their prolonged bonding experiences and collective identity. The social dimension may not disappear when the bell rings, either. Students socialize on band trips, orchestra festivals, after school rehearsals, and even non-music related social functions like going to the movies, the mall, or sharing meals with one another as a social outing.

A fifth theme described by Morrison (2001), which contributes to the creation of an ensemble's culture, is traditional song. Depending on the high school, this could refer to any number of musical artifacts from the school's alma mater, to the fight song, to the favorite repertoire of the students, or something else entirely. Morrison points out that certain groups of composers, arrangers, and publishers are entirely devoted to writing, arranging, and publishing music for student ensembles. It is less common to find a public high school orchestra performing difficult, unarranged and unabridged standard repertoire with full wind and percussion sections. Although the reasons for avoiding this repertoire are more practical, it is also worth noting that this music may be claimed by professional orchestras as their own symbol of cultural unity. Similarly, many high school orchestra students and teachers may be familiar with the works of Soon Hee Newbold, Shirl Jae Atwell, Sandra Dackow, and Brian Balmages all of whom compose music with a student's skill level, potential pedagogical value, and interests in mind. Certain pieces

become favorites among high school orchestra students. This is particularly true if the orchestra has a collective positive experience performing the piece, perhaps winning a competition, or performing it with greater energy than they had previously performed anything else. Favorites may even be requested two or three years after they were last performed as older students reminisce about their favorites to the newest members. A high school orchestra's collective embrace or ownership of certain pieces of composers can be considered their traditional song, a theme which unites them as a culture.

The cultural theme of traditional song may play a significant role in the ensemble that is to be the subject of this study. The director of the ensemble in which this study takes place is an established composer for student-level bands and string orchestras. They regularly perform pieces that he has composed or arranged, and it is possible that he has his group in mind during his creative process. Because of the unique experience of having a teacher who is also a composer, the ensemble may have a large body of traditional songs that unite their culture.

A sixth theme discussed by Morrison (2001) is the presence of traditional performance practices within an ensemble. These can come from within the ensemble, such as when particularly advanced members or the teacher demonstrates performance practices. These can also come from the larger school ensemble community. A unique or high-achieving high school string ensemble may catch the attention of high school string ensembles in the area, inspiring adoption of the high-achieving string ensemble's performance practices as their own. Wherever they come from, a set of performance practices to guide a high school ensemble may also serve to unify them as a culture.

The seventh theme identified by Morrison (2001) is diaspora, or the scattering of people from a common cultural origin. In high school ensemble culture, diaspora usually happens as a result of graduation. Students leave high school and may go to any number of places. Whether it is higher education, the military, or the workforce, most students usually do not continue to play their instruments. Morrison speculates that this may be because students have left the familiar culture of their high school music ensemble. Even if they are presented with the opportunity to play in a community band or a collegiate orchestra, students will be entering a new and unfamiliar ensemble culture. The six themes discussed above will all be different for them. Morrison notes, however, that students do not simply erase their membership within a high school music ensemble from their identity after they graduate. In the age of omnipresent social media, many schools have alumni networks where past students can share what they are doing or simply reminisce about their time in the orchestra. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other social media sites make it easier than ever for students to stay connected to their programs once they have graduated.

To acknowledge what is likely a very wide diversity in the cultures of school music ensembles, Morrison (2001) leaves the eighth theme open for other areas which may be specific only to a few ensembles. He cites summer band camps as being an example of an intense bonding experience, a milestone that students must cross in order to participate in the marching band. In the string world, some orchestras have “string boot camps” in order to prepare students for a rigorous concert season. Both of these examples, which border on initiation for music ensembles, contribute to the creation and maintenance of school ensemble culture. Other areas of culture include folklore and

urban legends. Students may pass down stories about the fastest trumpet player to ever participate in the band, or the orchestra concert that went on despite a power failure in the concert hall. Lore is another way in which ensemble classes move beyond temporary classroom situations and into the realm of a unique and withstanding culture.

A final theme identified by Morrison (2001) is an ensemble's organizational hierarchy. Morrison describes the organizational hierarchy as a formal internal power structure that may consist of section leaders, presidents, secretaries, or music librarians. He notes that this power structure is not usually found in other classes like history or math, but is unique to music ensemble classes. This cultural theme is a central focus of my study and is discussed in great depth in the next section.

In addition to Morrison's (2001) ideas about the existence of a unique culture within music ensembles, Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz (2003) conducted a study, which has also greatly contributed to our understanding of music ensemble culture. The researchers interviewed 60 high school students enrolled in music ensembles at a large public high school in an affluent suburb. Twenty students from each of the three main ensembles – band, choir, and orchestra – were interviewed in order to learn about how they viewed their ensemble experience. Interviews were transcribed, coded, and sorted to uncover common patterns and themes of student responses. Aptly titled "a home away from home," this study found that most students viewed the ensemble classroom as a positive, nurturing environment, similar to a home. Students discussed their motivation for joining the ensembles, their favorable view of their teachers, their perceptions about how the music program is viewed within and outside of the program, the social climate of the ensemble classroom, and the social experiences that their participation afforded them.

One emergent theme was motivation to join the ensemble, which represents a wide variety of responses. The reasons that participants gave for their interest in joining the ensemble included family influence, early exposure to music, a desire to have a career in music, a desire for performance opportunities, a desire for a well-rounded curriculum, the positive reputation of the school's program, and a general interest in music or the sound of a certain instrument. Motivation to join also included several social reasons. Students mentioned the ability to make friends as a significant reason for joining. One student mentioned the allure of being able to feel "part of something" (p. 196). Another student also discussed the appeal of the music classroom to "break down social barriers" (p. 196) and provide students from different peer groups a chance to interact and make friends.

Another theme consisted of the participant's perceptions of their group, as well as how they felt that their group was viewed by the larger school community (Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003). Students mostly indicated that this view had evolved over the course of their ensemble participation. In middle school, music ensemble membership was considered unpopular and detrimental to one's social rank. However, the participants added that as they got older the school population's view shifted from one of ridicule to one of respect (although, not as much respect as the athletic teams). However, despite this feeling of increased respect from the rest of the school, students still mentioned the use of insulting labels and name-calling from students outside of the music department. However, the researchers also called attention to the use of playful and sometimes derogatory labels by ensemble students to refer to themselves. This was seen as a way for them to reclaim previously offensive labels in the name of cultural unity. Students

referred to themselves as “choir geeks” and “band dorks”, and implied that this kind of language was not expected or welcomed from those outside of the ensemble (p. 197). Interestingly, the researchers noted that “there did not seem to be such wide-scale use of such labels for the orchestra members” (p. 197). Unfortunately, the researchers did not elaborate upon the lack of playful and unifying labels for the orchestra students. My study, however, attempts to shed some light on this mystery of identity.

Also included within the theme of participant perceptions of their group in the larger context, and further supporting Morrison’s (2001) ideas on ensemble culture, Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz (2003) observed that students used their instrument cases, clothing, and other symbols to publicly declare their music ensemble participation. The researchers characterize this as a “badge”, and added that it seemed to contribute to the cohesiveness of the ensemble, making them more identifiable as a group by the larger school community. Yet, despite student comments regarding cultural cohesion and the visibility of the ensemble, Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz (2003) mentioned that some students felt more connected to the larger school population, while other students felt that their membership in the ensemble gave them a totally unique experience and identity from the rest of the school. However, the researchers did not attempt to discern social rank or clique membership within their participant groups. It would be interesting to explore where in the sociomusical hierarchy these students were who felt a stronger connection to the mainstream school community. In this way, my study helps to clarify issues uncovered by Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz.

Finally, participants in Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz’s (2003) study mentioned several benefits of their participation in a music ensemble and indicated that this

contributed to the meaning they pulled from it. The researchers noted that the most frequently mentioned benefits centered on the social aspect of the ensemble. The researchers took time to remark that statements regarding friends were present throughout the entire interview, and did not seem to only get mentioned for certain types of questions. Participants discussed the sense of community, a positive relationship with their teacher, and the ability to foster friendships and romances as significant benefits to their membership in an ensemble.

Social Stratification in Music Ensembles

As mentioned above, within music ensembles there are formal and informal social and power structures among the students, teachers, and conductors. Although Morrison (2001) only acknowledges formal power structures as contributing to the culture of the ensemble, both formal and informal group segregation and sociomusical hierarchies have been a subject of discussion and inquiry for Abril (2013), O'Toole (2005), Allsup and Benedict (2009), and Small (1998), and is one of the foci of my own inquiry for this study. A sociomusical hierarchy may formally recognize different leaders, cliques, and levels of influence as described in Morrison's article. However, despite the fact that formal titles like conductor/director/teacher, concertmaster, and section leader may explicitly stratify the ensemble, their influence or power may move far beyond their explicitly stated duties, roles, and values. Depending on the ensemble, the opposite could also be true if students see the formal and informal sociomusical hierarchy to be blurred or flexible. Further, a hierarchical relationship among members may be absent entirely, even if the social boundaries are still present.

The social structure of musical ensembles has been characterized in many different ways. Christopher Small's (1998) deconstruction of the professional orchestra

paints a picture of an internal power structure wherein the conductor stands at the top and the lowly performers are expected to suppress their individuality for the good of the orchestra. He observes, “These virtuosi, all of them masters of their instrument and possessed of a will and individuality of their own, are expected to submerge those skills and that individuality in the collective performance” (p. 66). Of the conductor, Small states, “He is the autocrat whose every movement and facial expression controls how they play and mediates their relationships” (p. 79).

In her article deconstructing the power dynamics of the choral ensemble, O’Toole (2005) echoes Small’s sentiments, describing the conductor as someone interested in maintaining power over the members of the ensemble by presenting himself as the sole owner and distributor of musical knowledge. She holds that “the conventions of choral pedagogy are designed to create complacent singers who are subjected to a discourse that is more interested in the production of music than in the laborers” (p. 65). O’Toole unravels the choral singer’s experience to illuminate ways in which the choral director controls and coerces the singers into working towards goals designed by him and him only. She expresses frustration over being compelled to perform for a “concert into which [she] had no creative input” (p. 70). Additionally, she points out that the choral director strives to maintain control over both the bodies and minds of the members of the ensemble, using psychological tactics such as pitting one section against another to create a reliance on himself, and dismissing suggestions and questions, thus controlling “[our] physical responses” (p. 71).

Similar to Small’s (1998) and O’Toole’s (2005) observations on the professional orchestra and choir, respectively, Allsup and Benedict (2009) have written about social

issues and power dynamics within the school band room as part of their philosophical inquiry. One issue raised by the authors is the “judicial use of fear” (p. 164) by band directors to motivate band students, which is a concern that has also been voiced by O’Toole. In their article, they question why fear instead of praise or “an occasional expression of general satisfaction” is the preferred method for pushing students to work toward the goals their director has set (p. 165). Furthermore, Allsup and Benedict allude to a force larger than the conductor himself: the band program as a social institution with its own imposed, accepted, and omnipresent values and expectations about what is an appropriate way to direct a band program. This social institution, as Allsup and Benedict see it, values efficiency and seeks to eliminate (usually through collegiate music education curricula, pathways to certification, professional development, and general discourse) anything that is not efficient in achieving the highly-polished product so valued by the institution. They described a highly-praised, almost militaristic manner of running rehearsals, in which teachers refuse to stop for more than 10 seconds in order to keep the rehearsal moving, and minimize the possibility of students contributing anything other than the sound of their instruments on demand.

Although Allsup and Benedict (2009), O’Toole (2005), and Small (1998) provide an important context in which we can examine the relationship between the conductor or director and the members of the ensemble, the social climate in every ensemble is unique. Their depictions of the director as having a somewhat adversarial relationship with the ensemble are not always the case. Respondents from Campbell, Connell and Beegle’s (2007) study described their music teachers as caring, encouraging, and worthy of their trust. The researchers reported that many students saw their music teacher as someone

who was on their side, a friend who would “do anything for us” (p. 232). Similarly, Adderley, Kennedy and Berz (2003) found that most students viewed the relationship with their teacher as one built upon mutual respect and friendship. Participants in their study on the high school music classroom expressed gratitude and admiration for their music teachers, using phrases like, “you really learn a lot from your chorus teacher!” (p. 200).

In addition to the relationship between the teacher and the students, another dimension of the social stratification is hierarchical, and is evident in the relationship among the students of the ensemble. Abril’s (2013) study on the perspectives of “hardcore band kids”¹ (p. 440) found that his participants’ ensemble had three levels in its social structure. The five participants in the study came from the very top of the band’s social structure, the self-described hardcore band kids. These students saw themselves as dedicated leaders of the band, students who invested a great deal of time and energy into their ensemble. Within the top level of the social structure there was also a small, highly exclusive clique consisting of the hardcore members with an intense passion for jazz. Members of the jazz clique saw themselves as having the greatest level of musical ability and the highest level of commitment as evidenced by how much more time they spend in band-related activities.

Making up what is thought to be the largest portion of the band is the second level of the sociomusical hierarchy, “the middles.” (p.441) The participants characterized “the middles” as possessing satisfactory musical ability, but lacking the dedication and

¹ This label was self-imposed by the participants of Abril’s (2013) study. For this reason, I will continue to refer to this group by their label, as Abril did in his article.

passion of the hardcore members. One participant from the hardcore band group, Raymond, said that they “don’t really hurt the band but don’t do so much to make it great...but they aren’t really with us.”(pg. 441). Other participants also seemed to focus on the middle group’s lack of commitment to the collective, expressing that “the middles” do not offer to help out with extra work and are not as focused on the collective group. They fulfill their own responsibilities, but the middle group does not go above and beyond like the hardcore band kids do. Abril (2013) pointed out that this middle group is analogous to the middle social group observed by Adler and Adler (1998). However, unlike Adler and Adler’s study, Abril’s study focuses on the perceptions of the top social rank. A deeper comparison between the nature of the middle social rank in the general student population and the middle social rank in the music class would be helpful. My study attempt to address these unanswered questions.

At the bottom of the hierarchy were “the slackers,” a small group known for having little commitment, and suspected of not putting the success of the ensemble high enough on their list of priorities (Abril, 2013, p.441). This lowest stratum of students has also been identified in Adler and Adler’s (1998) as well as Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz’s (2003) study. According to the participants, the students in the slacker group forget their instruments, do not practice, and are generally unprepared. It seems that the hardcore members are thought to be an integral part of the band’s success, and that “the middles” do not actively drag down the quality of the ensemble, but that the “slackers” are seen as wholly detrimental to the quality and success of the band. Participants also noted that the slackers did not seem to belong with each other the same way that the hardcore members did. Slackers appeared to have allegiances elsewhere, perhaps with

cliques outside of the band. It was also speculated that some slackers were loners, and did not quite belong anywhere. Some participants seemed puzzled about what could possibly motivate the slackers to continue returning to the band. It is interesting to note they appeared not to have seen them receiving anything positive from the experience.

In addition to more clearly defining a sociomusical organization within the band, Abril's (2013) study also gives us a glimpse into the interactions between the hardcore band students and band members from other levels of the hierarchy. For example, participants admitted to using their status as the elite members of the band to perpetuate the structure and steer the culture in the direction they wanted. Hardcore members talked about criticizing and demanding the slackers to "shape up" (p.441). Their behavior draws a clear line between themselves and the slackers, thus perpetuating the hierarchy, arguably to their benefit.

Summary

Adolescent social culture. Popularity is an issue that many teens, including those in our ensembles, find themselves navigating at one time or another. Coleman (1961) and Adler and Adler (1998) both found that popularity was related to athletic ability. Specifically, in Coleman's study, this meant football team/cheerleading squad membership. However, it is important to take into account the year of the study and the fact that different regions may place different degrees of emphasis on athletics, academics, and socioeconomic status when it comes to popularity. In fact, in the smallest town he studied, Coleman found that the high school band was the "pride and joy" of the town, and strangely, football was not mentioned. Nevertheless, the consuming nature of athletics cannot be disregarded completely, nor can we disregard the allure of the popularity it may bring. After all, we have the term "band geeks" – originally derogatory,

but more recently proudly reclaimed by band members - but not “football geeks” in the pop culture lexicon. It is not unreasonable to speculate that the glorification of some activity, whether it is the marching band, the football team, the computer science club, or the thespian society, can have an impact on the relationships within other school-affiliated groups and between those groups.

This idea of popularity being relative is particularly relevant to the school in this study, which is surrounded by magnet schools whose arts programs are highly desirable. While a star football team in many towns may seem to soak in popularity and community support, perhaps at the expense of other school-sponsored activities, it is not unreasonable to speculate that a competing arts magnet school could also do the same for a non-magnet school. Magnet schools often require auditions or other types of evaluated criteria for entry. They are so-named for their ability to attract the highest-achieving and most talented students. The school in which my study will take place is located in close proximity to a very well-respected and admired mega-magnet school. Considering that above-average athletic ability distinguished popular students from unpopular students in Adler and Adler’s (1998) and Coleman’s (1961) studies, the same relationship might be found in terms of the prestige and confidence that comes with attending a school that is highly regarded.

Considerable research supports the idea that self-identities are shaped by daily social interactions (Adler & Adler, 1998; Kinney, 1999; Stryker, 1980; Wright, 2011). Adler and Adler found evidence that participants’ self-esteem and self-identity seemed to be related to their situation in the social hierarchy. The social isolates had the lowest self-esteem, which they recognized as being related to their low social status. By the same

token, the popular students thought very highly of themselves, which they also recognized as being related to their social rank. Kinney, on the other hand, found that older adolescents carved out their own place when their values and self-identity seemed incompatible with those of their current group membership, which was most obviously employed by the hippie subculture in his study. Given that Abril (2013) also found evidence of a social hierarchy similar to the one described in Adler and Adler's study, it would be curious to see whether the self-identities of high school orchestra students are related to their place within their social stratification system. For example, the highest social ranks in Abril's (2013) study and Adler and Adler's (1998) study seemed to display high levels of self-esteem and a positive self-identity. It remains to be seen whether analogous social ranks can be applied to the participants in my study, and whether their identities seem to relate and interact with their social role in the orchestra.

Social aspect of music ensemble culture. As mentioned previously, high school orchestra is nearly absent from research into the culture of school-sponsored musical ensembles. It is also lacking in a public identity, which, unlike school band and choir, has been unexamined by pop culture. Morrison (2001) identifies nine dimensions of culture, most of which have been identified and described in one way or another within band and choral research by Abril (2013), Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz (2003), Campbell, Connell, and Beegle (2007).

Several studies (Abril, 2013; Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Campbell, Connell, and Beegle, 2007) referred to the various labels assigned to members of certain ensembles such as "band geeks" and "choir nerds." These labels, although originally derogatory, have been reclaimed by these ensemble members and used as a tongue-in-

cheek symbol of unity. However, it is important to point out that no such labels were mentioned for orchestra members. In fact, this is explicitly mentioned in Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz's study, but no discussion follows this observation. Is this because the orchestra is not as unified as the band and the choir? Is this because orchestra members are equated with the band by the general school population? Or is it simply because it is difficult to craft an insult using the word "orchestra"? Whatever the reason, the lack of label is one less way in which orchestra members are afforded the opportunity to group themselves together. My study tackles this issue of a collective identity among orchestra members.

Although Abril's (2013) research on the perspectives of hardcore band kids illustrates how the highest-achieving students view the social structure of their ensemble, it remains unclear how other members of the ensemble see themselves in terms of their place in a social stratification system. To them, is the system hierarchical? Do the first and last chair players have similar perceptions on who leads the orchestra? If not, where do their perspectives misalign? Does membership in the orchestra carry the same weight or meaning for members of different social strata? If not, how and why are their meanings different?

One objective of my study is to investigate what, if anything motivates the students in the lowest stratum to continue their participation in a music ensemble. From the perspective of the hardcore band kids it appears that nothing motivates the slackers, but this is just one angle, and it does not give a sense of the whole picture. The heart-wrenching portrait of the social isolates in Adler and Adler's (1998) study suggests that these students are aware of their low rank relative to the rest of the group, and that they

attempt to safeguard their emotions by ignoring it, or denying that it exists. Is it possible that the lowest stratum of students in a band or orchestra also employs these psychological defense mechanisms? Does the denial come across to other members as callousness? These questions will be addressed by my study.

What also remains unclear is whether the orchestra director is aware of this social stratification, and if so, how he perceives it, and how he views himself in relation to the social stratification system. Research by Allsup and Benedict (2009) and O'Toole (2005) suggests that the orchestra director might be highly aware of this social stratification and use it to his advantage in order to garner more power and control over the ensemble. O'Toole details attempts by an autocratic conductor to pit sections against one another in a way that creates shame and blame among players and singers. Allsup and Benedict discuss ways in which fear is used to manipulate and coerce students to meet objectives. However, other research (Adderly, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007) suggests that many students have a very positive relationship with their music teacher, and feel that he or she is a positive force in their life. How does the director feel that he fits into these two opposing views? This study addresses these unexplored perspectives regarding the social culture of the high school orchestra.

CHAPTER 3

Qualitative Research

Qualitative methods of inquiry are often used to investigate and describe issues of great complexity, particularly those within the social sciences. Data are collected in the naturalistic setting(s) where the persons and phenomena reside. Results are meant to be understood in their natural context. Exploration for the purpose of describing sociocultural phenomena is best completed in a cultural group's natural setting.

Qualitative research relies on the notion that "action can best be understood when it is observed in the setting in which it occurs" (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 4). Qualitative researchers often subscribe to the worldview of social constructivism, which is the assumption that the world is made up of multiple realities, and that people seek and construct their own reality (Creswell, 2009). This view is contrasted by a quantitative paradigm, which operates on the assumption that there can be objective reality, which could be verified and generalized by empirical evidence and quantitative analysis (2009).

This study aimed to explore the social aspect of high school orchestra culture. Specifically, what is the nature of high school orchestra culture? What is the nature of its social stratification? Do different members of the orchestra perceive their social culture in similar ways? These questions are most effectively addressed using a qualitative mode of inquiry because of their potential to have multiple answers, which can be equally valid for each participant.

Finally, a chief concern in qualitative research is describing and interpreting phenomena. This study does not aim to quantify any issue related to the sociomusical culture of high school orchestras. Rather, this study aims to describe that culture, to explore not only the most apparent characteristics of the culture, but also the nuances,

meanings, and multiple perspectives of that culture. The researcher will approach the phenomena with the stance that “nothing is trivial, that everything has the potential of being a clue that might unlock a more comprehensive understanding of what is being studied” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 5). For these reasons, a qualitative research design is most appropriate for addressing the research questions framing this study.

Observational case study. The exploration of the social dimension of a high school orchestra program took the form of a case study focusing on the perceptions of multiple participants and the researcher’s observations of the participants’ orchestra program. A case study is “a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals” (Creswell, 2009, p. 13). The researcher has chosen to use an observational case study design because it is the most appropriate design for a study which aims to describe an aspect of an organization (Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K., 2003). In this case, the organization is a high school orchestra and the area of interest is the nature of the culture and its sociomusical dimensions. Additionally, observational case studies focus on the current state of an organization. Although an historical perspective may help the researcher to better understand the context of what is being observed, the history of the organization is not the main focus of an observational case study or this study (Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K., 2003).

Research Setting

Gaining entry. This case study focuses on the social aspect of orchestra culture at Ibis High School, a large suburban high school in South Florida. In order to gain access to the school, I contacted the director via email, provided him with a brief description of the project including his involvement, and offered my assistance in rehearsals during

observation. Both the director and his administration approved the project provided that it was approved by the university IRB and school district. All research conducted on or within the county's public schools must be approved by their research review board. As part of this process I obtained a background check and fingerprinting. I submitted my protocol to the University of Miami's IRB and the school district's review board, and received approval from both.

Contextual information. Given that each ensemble's culture is unique, it is helpful to be given school- and community-level contextual information for a lens through which data can be examined and analyzed.

Ibis High School is located within a middle- to upper-middle class suburban community. The houses surrounding the high school have manicured lawns and lush gardens, and it is common to see cyclers and joggers during a drive around the neighborhood. Most of the houses appear to provide a comfortable amount of space for a family; they are not mansions, but they are not modest, either, so it is no surprise that the median household income in the community is \$110,530 (United States Census Bureau, 2012) - a figure which is more than twice the median income for the state of Florida.

Ibis High School has an approximate population of 3,000 students (GreatSchools, 2014). The student population is culturally and socioeconomically diverse. Despite the high median household income surrounding the school, nearly a third (31%) of students are eligible for reduced lunch (GreatSchools, 2014) because many are bussed in from outside of this neighborhood. Further, only 86% graduate, which is just slightly higher than the state average of 74%. Approximately 41% of students identify as Hispanic, 36% identify as White, 17% identify as Black, 4% identify as Asian, and 1% identify as

multiracial, which make it somewhat more diverse compared to the entire state of Florida.

Although Ibis High School is not a magnet school, it boasts healthy music and arts programs including dance, drama, ceramics, painting, photography, band, choir, and orchestra. As is typical of many schools in South Florida, Ibis High School was constructed as a partially-open campus in 1958 with breezeways showing glimpses of palm trees and shrubs around several wings of the school including the performing arts wing. The school orchestra rehearses in the band room, which is attached to the auditorium. Because the building opened over 50 years ago, the band room appears neglected and cluttered, as is the case with much of the inside of the school. Instrument lockers used by both the band and the orchestra students line the front walls of the room. The band director and the orchestra director share an office, the entrance to which is located in the back of the room. Their office, at best, can be characterized as barely organized chaos. Stacks of field trip forms, sticky notes, sheet music, folders, and music catalogs line every surface of the office, including chairs and the floor. I regularly witnessed the directors, as well as their student leaders enter the office to dig through piles of paperwork in search of an important document. Many left in frustration without having found the item they needed. The entrance to the auditorium, as well as a couple of practice rooms, uniform closets, and equipment closets are also located in the back of the room. I did not get many chances to see these closets, but the director assured me that, like his office, they were quite messy and disorganized.

This high school is ideal for this study because the same director has been with the orchestra program for over 25 years, which provides consistency. He has taught at

Ibis High School since before the magnet school movement impacted schools all over the county. If the atmosphere of the program has changed slightly over time due to the changing student population as a result of the nearby magnet schools, the director can provide valuable information about the nature of those changes. Further, most of the student participants have had the same orchestra director for their entire high school involvement in the orchestra, so both he and they are able to give more thoughtful and thorough answers to interview questions regarding each other.

The music program's positive reputation despite its non-magnet school status is another reason Ibis High School was chosen for this study. My goal was to get a sense of how students perceive the social aspect of orchestra within a program whose enrollment, involvement, commitment, and ability levels are more diverse than those of an arts magnet school, where many more students are likely to take private lessons and may be attending a particular school *because* of the orchestra program. Arts magnet schools often serve students with aspirations to pursue music as a career. Ibis High School has a respectable orchestra program, but it is average in that the majority of the students do not intend to pursue music professionally.

Additionally, the school's overall socioeconomic diversity contributes to the possibility that the orchestra program will also have a wide distribution of socioeconomic levels among members. Socioeconomic status can be related to an enormous number of variables both within music education and outside of it (Elpus & Abril, 2011). Access to private lessons, decent instruments, and parental support can be exceedingly more difficult to obtain for a student whose family has a low socioeconomic status. Achievement (cognitive and affective outcomes) in music ensembles is likely related to

parental involvement (Zdzinski, 1996), access to private lessons, and decent instruments. Previous research has shown that ability level and achievement may be related to the development of cliques and social groups within high school ensembles (Abril, 2013). If achievement and ability level are related to both social group formation and socioeconomic status, then this school's diverse distribution of socioeconomic levels within the orchestra provides a suitable space for exploring and describing students' perceptions of the possible interactions between these two variables when forming cliques within the orchestra.

Participants

Sampling. In order to ensure the highest diversity of participants who can provide the most meaningful insights about the social climate of their orchestra, this study employed purposeful and diverse sampling. Sampling was based on age, number of years involved in the orchestra program, instrument, section, ability level, leadership skills, and involvement level. This purposeful sampling was accomplished based on the recommendations from the director. The director sat down with me after a rehearsal and systematically listed every student who fit the criteria described below. Then, I chose students keeping diversity of age, grade, section, ability, involvement level, and leadership skills in mind.

The study's participants consisted of the director and seven orchestra members who were in 11th grade or 12th grade and have been members of the orchestra since their freshman year of high school. Most of the participants have been in orchestra since at least 6th grade, and a few said they have participated in orchestra since elementary school. These students have spent the most time with the orchestra and can give the most detailed

information about their perceptions of the social climate and culture of the orchestra. Additionally, the thought was that older students were more likely to have stable identities as members of the orchestra, whereas freshmen and sophomores may still be finding their high school niche (Tarrant, North, and Hargreaves, 2002). Campbell, Connell, and Beegle (2007) found that students between the age of 14 and 15 were most likely to discontinue their music classes, which suggests that this may be the age when students begin to solidify choices about their identity. Choosing a sample of students who have surpassed this age increases the likelihood that they have already made a decision regarding their identification with orchestra. Considering adolescent psychological development, older students are often more likely to feel a sense of ownership of the ensemble, and are therefore more likely to actively transmit orchestra culture to the younger, newer members (Tarrant, Hargreaves, and North, 2002). By the same token, if an older student does not feel a sense of ownership of the ensemble, or does not primarily identify him or herself as an orchestra member, this is noteworthy and warrants further exploration.

The participants also come from different sections of the orchestra. This was used as a criterion for sampling in order to provide a more holistic view of the social climate of the entire orchestra. Bass players may have profoundly different perceptions than do violists or members of the first violin section when it comes to the social nature of orchestra. Kemp's (2000) research on personality variances among different instrumentalists suggests that there are real personality differences in string players and that there is some level of truth in our anecdotal understanding of how bassists interact with each other versus how first violinists socialize. I am interested not only in describing

the perceptions of individuals representing these different sections, but also in the possible differences and similarities in perceptions of the social stratification between these instrument groups.

Other factors, were ability level, leadership skills, and involvement with the orchestra. Because this study aims to compare perceptions of orchestra culture of students from different locations within the orchestra – both socially and musically - factors that may be related to a student's place are necessary to take into account for the interview selection process. The criteria used for choosing participants is based upon previous research on the social culture of school band in which a three-tiered social hierarchy was found (Abril, 2013). So as not to superimpose this same social system on a unique ensemble, I took broad ideas that embodied each level of the hierarchy found in Abril's (2013) research and presented a dichotomized version to the director in order for him to understand the scope of motivation, ability level, and involvement I was looking for.

1. Very high motivation, high ability, high involvement
2. Moderate to lower motivation, lower ability, moderate to little involvement

The first profile was meant to find the typical school orchestra enthusiast. This might include students who spend their lunch/free time in the orchestra room, take private lessons, hold section leader positions, participate in extra activities like all-county, all-state, or solo and ensemble, or students who plan to major in music. Students who fit the first profile were thought to be highly motivated, technically proficient, and more involved than most orchestra students.

Students who fit the second profile were thought to be lower-achieving, not very technically proficient, and may be unenthusiastic. These students may be primarily

interested in orchestra because of its status as an “easy class,” or have perhaps been forced by their parents to continue playing in the orchestra despite their disinterest and lack of motivation. Some students who fit this profile may have gradually lost interest over the course of their high school involvement with orchestra.

These profiles served only as a loose guide to help the director identify students with the greatest diversity in their involvement, ability level, and motivation, which may be related to social stratification of their orchestra. When I presented these ideas to the director so that he could identify potential participants, I made no mention of the three-tiered hierarchy from previous research (Abril, 2013). However, much to my surprise, he started by listing all of the seniors and juniors in the class, their instrument, their age, and then he rated them as a one, two, or three on overall leadership, ability, and motivation. A rating of one was the highest level, and three was the lowest. We then selected a group of seven students from his list. This particular group was chosen because the students represented the highest level of diversity in the criteria for participation that I provided for the director.

Next, I called students into the director’s office one at a time and invited them to participate in the study. All students enthusiastically agreed, and they were handed IRB-approved consent forms, which explained the broad purpose of the study and how their involvement will help the researcher gain a better understanding of the social culture of high school orchestras. Students were told that they were chosen because of their involvement with the orchestra.

The group of participants consisted of four violinists, one violist, one bassist, and one cellist. Although violinists seem to be over-represented, they do make up half of the

orchestra. Additionally, several lower string players were not eligible for the study because they were sophomores. Of the participants, three were rated as 1's by the director, two were rated as two's, and two were rated as three's in leadership, motivation, and ability level. The participants consist of five girls and two boys ranging in age from 16-18 years old. Table 1 shows the student participants at a glance.

Table 1
Age, Grade, Instrument, and Level of Student Participants

Student	Grade	Age	Instrument	Level
Cosima	12	18	cello	3
Hazel	11	16	violin	1
Karina	12	17	viola	1
Mica	12	17	violin	2
Rudolph	11	16	bass	2
Serena	12	17	violin	1
Valencia	12	18	violin	3

Participants²

Cosima. Cosima is a senior cellist at Ibis High School who loves to laugh and identifies with being the class clown. She was voted “Best Hair” in her senior class for her unique and funky afro, which matches her vibrant and outgoing personality. Cosima began orchestra in 3rd grade as a violinist. When she was in 6th grade her teacher asked the class if any of the violinists would be willing to switch to cello. Cosima enthusiastically jumped at this opportunity, she recalled, because a “really cute guy with big brown hair and blue eyes” also played cello. She has played cello ever since. In addition to violin and cello, Cosima has also studied piano and clarinet, which she quit because “there was too much spit going on” as she humorously put it. Cosima also loves

² To protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants, pseudonyms are used in place of their real names. Pseudonyms are also used when participants reference other individuals in the orchestra.

to sing and greatly enjoys acting and drama, which was evident based on the way she theatrically shared her stories as if each was a soliloquy to be performed on stage. Cosima is heavily involved in student council for which she serves as the senior class secretary. She is eighteen years old

Hazel. Hazel is a young woman with blonde hair, blue eyes, and a cheerful smile. Despite being only a junior, she is the concert master at Ibis High School. She is also an orchestra manager, which involves filling out paperwork and filing things for the director. From my first visit to the high school Hazel stood out to me for her enthusiasm and sociability. She cheerfully walked into the orchestra room and smiled at me to acknowledge a new person in the room. She was wearing a t-shirt displaying the words “I Like Big Books and I Cannot Lie,” a shirt which clearly captures her passion for reading, as well as her quirky sense of humor. Hazel has been playing the violin since she was in fourth grade. She used to study violin privately, but the high prices her family had to pay for a teacher appropriate for her level were much too costly, so she discontinued lessons when she was a sophomore. Hazel is also a member of a local youth orchestra, and occasionally plays ukulele, guitar, sings, and writes music with her friends. She is sixteen years old.

Karina. Karina is a senior viola player in the orchestra who is an orchestra co-manager with Hazel. She is tall and thin with shoulder-length curly brown hair that she often pulls back in a low ponytail. Karina was quiet and soft-spoken when I first met her, but became more outgoing as our conversations progressed. She admittedly talks a lot, and has mentioned that she gets in trouble for it sometimes. She has been playing viola since 4th grade. In 8th grade she began taking private lessons with hopes of attending a

magnet school. Karina was admitted to the magnet school, but by 10th grade she was frustrated with the lack of diversity in her curriculum and suffered from burnout. She discontinued lessons, and left the magnet school for the comprehensive high school in which this study takes place. She has mixed feelings about the orchestra, but wanted to finish high school having participated all four years. In addition to viola, Karina also plays the guitar and piano. She is eighteen years old.

Mica. Mica is a senior who plays in the first violin section of the orchestra. He has long, curly brown hair, and often wears it tied back in a loose ponytail, which matches his laidback and easygoing personality. Mica has been playing violin since 6th grade, but along the way he has picked up other instruments including oboe and guitar. Although he loves playing in the orchestra, he primarily thinks of himself as a guitarist, and plays in a band. He described the music his band plays as “loud, obnoxious music.” Mica is the equipment manager for the orchestra, which involves minor repair work such as adjusting bridges and helping students with new or broken strings. In addition to music, Mica loves physics, which he would like to study in college. He is seventeen years old.

Serena. Serena is a senior violinist in the orchestra. She is tall and thin with thick brown hair that falls just below her shoulders. Serena is very outgoing, friendly, and always has a smile on her face. When I first met her, she struck me as exceptionally welcoming – a true ambassador for her orchestra. Of all the participants, Serena was the most enthusiastic and eager to share her thoughts with me. She has been playing the violin since she was in 6th grade, and started taking private lessons at the beginning of her senior year of high school. Serena is also the orchestra’s treasurer, which involves

collecting fees and keeping records of who has paid what and when. Her love of music and natural leadership qualities are also reflected in her participation in the Tri-M Music Honors Society, for which she proudly proclaimed her recruiting efforts yielded more orchestra students than band students. Her stand-partner is her good friend, Mica, in the first violin section. She is seventeen years old.

Rudolph. Rudolph is a bass player in his junior year at the high school. He is tall, with an athletic frame, short curly hair, and glasses. He is soft-spoken, friendly, and easygoing. Rudolph started orchestra as a cellist in 6th grade, but switched to bass for his junior year because the orchestra need another bassist. Like many of the other participants, he can play many instruments including saxophone, guitar, and piano, in addition to cello and bass. Rudolph considers himself to be the jokester of the ensemble. Although he does not fit the stereotypical extroverted class clown persona, he has been regarded as the “comic relief” by several participants. His most topical and side-splitting wisecrack involved dubbing the orchestra a “twerkestra”, a reference to a controversial popular music performance from the beginning of the year. Even the director could not help but laugh with the rest of the orchestra. In addition to being a musician, Rudolph is also an athlete who plays basketball. He is sixteen years old.

Valencia. Valencia is a senior who plays in the second violin section. She is petite with long brown hair and thick-rimmed glasses. She has a quiet and relaxed demeanor that, at times, almost seems indifferent. Valencia is the orchestra’s uniform manager, a job she has had for two years in a row. The uniform manager’s job involves issuing and collecting uniforms, and making sure that everyone has one for a performance. Out of all the participants, Valencia has been playing her instrument for the longest time – 11 years,

but she had no reservations about admitting that she does not practice her instrument. Like many of the other orchestra members, Valencia takes challenging courses like calculus, and has her mind on college. She believes her four-year commitment to orchestra will help set her apart from other students applying to the same colleges. Valencia is eighteen years old.

Mr. Kimble. Mr. Kimble is an experienced music teacher who has taught at Ibis High School for over 25 years. He has white hair, glasses, and often wears tan slacks and a school-themed polo shirt. The director is an active composer for student band, orchestral, and choral groups, and his own orchestra classes often perform works that he has composed or arranged. Originally a wind player, he credits his students for teaching him how to be a better composer for string ensembles. From my initial contact with the director he was very friendly, and very welcoming. His passion and creativity are very evident in his teaching, and his students spoke very highly of him, using phrases like, “he’s my favorite teacher” and “after taking AP Music Theory with him, you definitely understand how he really knows what he’s doing.” On several occasions I listened as he painted a vivid picture for the students to envision as they played a particular phrase, comparing musical ideas to smooth, dark chocolate, or a beautiful green pasture. This type of imaginative teaching faded, however, close to high-pressure concerts such as the music performance assessment, when I observed that he was visibly more impatient and tense – something that every participant described when they talked about him. Other than the understandable pre-concert stress, the director is generally easygoing and mild-mannered.

Data Collection

Observation. According to Shank (2006), observation is the essence of qualitative research. To get a general sense of the culture of the orchestra, I attended the advanced orchestra class over a period of three and a half months and two concerts. My observation hours totaled 15 hours. Table 1 shows my data collection time broken down by activity.

Table 2

Data Collection Time by Activity

Data Collection	Time
Cosima	00:40:30
Hazel	01:15:30
Karina	00:54:00
Mica	00:36:00
Rudolph	00:40:00
Serena	00:51:00
Valencia	00:49:00
Mr. Kimble	01:27:00
Observation	15:00:00
Total Time	22:12:00

Note. Participant names represent individual interviews

My very first visit was a concert setting, which featured performances by the band, orchestra, and choir. For my first three classroom visits I was a complete observer, meaning that I only observed and recorded field notes; I did not interact extensively with the participants. Shank (2006) notes that observation can be incredibly taxing as it involves switching between many frames of mind and taking in enormous amounts of information, which then, depending on observation style, will be further filtered and organized within the observer's mind before even being recorded in field notes. This is why I chose to use my first four visits as opportunities for complete observation periods in order take note of the general atmosphere of the class, class procedures, cursory

interactions between students and teachers, and other details which might otherwise be lost if I were to begin participant observation from the outset.

Furthermore, I placed this period of complete observation at the very beginning of my data collection term because certain novel characteristics of the culture are less likely to go unnoticed. It is only natural for people to take for granted something as mundane as the way a classroom is arranged. However, the way that a classroom is set up may prove to be a very important detail which gets noticed upon entering the classroom for the first time, but not after having visited the classroom and spent extended periods of time within that classroom (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). For this reason, a period of complete observation was placed at the beginning – as opposed to the end – of the data collection phase.

Field notes. I employed an organizational system of field notes to ensure that objective observations and inferential comments remained separate. Each time I visited the classroom I brought a small green notebook and took a seat at a different point in the classroom for a varied observation. I folded a page in half to divide my objective observations and the inferences I made with each observation. I noted anything that fell under Morrison's (2001) descriptions of music ensemble cultures. For example, an orchestra inside joke was explained to me, which I noted because it represents something unique to the people in that group. Additionally, any issue that seemed to overtly or subtly reinforce social stratification within the orchestra was noted. Issues of interest included seating/ranking arrangements, interactions between students of the same and different instrument sections of the orchestra, verbal and non-verbal messages communicated between students and teacher, especially those regarding issues of power

and social stratification, casual conversations about socializing within the orchestra, and behaviors indicative of certain sociomusical roles within the orchestra.

Participation. During my observation, I was afforded only a couple of opportunities to be a participant-observer. Although I offered to play in the orchestra, assist with instruction, lead sectionals, and anything else that may help the director during class time, the did not take me up on my offer, which I suspect was because he thought it would interfere with my field notes. Most of the students were very independent, but I did find a few times when I could help students who appeared to be lost, had instrument/equipment issues, or appeared to need help setting up. Assisting the director and students served a dual purpose to both establish rapport and to immerse myself in their world by doing the same things they do. Through my involvement, the students may have also seen me as someone closer to their own age than the director, as well as someone who is interested in their growth as musicians. This active contribution provided increased interactions with individual students and with the teacher, which gave me a more meaningful sense of the culture than if I were only observing.

Interviews with students. I conducted a single in-person interview with the seven participants individually for approximately 40-60 minutes each. These interviews were semi-structured and were audio-recorded by permission of the student and permission of his/her parent/guardian. Interviews were recorded using a Zoom H2 Digital Audio recorder and my password-protected iPhone as a backup method in case the digital audio recorder failed. The purpose of the interview was to gain specific information on the students' perceptions of the social climate of the orchestra. Unlike engaging in casual conversations during observation, an interview is more formal, and the participant

expects to be asked one or more follow-up and clarifying questions. This allowed me to be slightly more direct and forthright (while remaining sensitive to the issue of maintaining a positive rapport) about the issues I was exploring, which might otherwise come across during a casual conversation as interrogative. An interview, unlike a survey, also allows the participant and me to ask one another clarifying questions, which can contribute to the validity and trustworthiness of the research because both parties are working toward a clear, mutual understanding.

Additionally, participants occasionally share ideas and perspectives that I cannot always anticipate beforehand, and an interview allowed the flexibility to accommodate further exploration of these ideas, which is not possible using a survey. An interview can also capture inflection, emphasis, and emotion, which are certainly relevant when investigating how a student feels about a particular topic. Further, a semi-structured interview allows the participant the freedom to focus on issues he or she finds important or meaningful. This is significant because the idea that some students may choose to focus heavily on leadership while others fail to mention it says a great deal about the importance each student places on certain social issues within the orchestra. In other words, sometimes what participants choose not to discuss can shed light on the nature of the ideas being explored, and this is why I chose to use semi-structured interviews as opposed to structured interviews or surveys.

All interviews took place at the Ibis High School in the music theory classroom, which was not located near the orchestra room. This room was chosen because it was generally quiet and out of the earshot of the director and other students. This also ensured the best recording quality by guarding against noises from the ensemble rehearsal or

other extraneous noises. Interviews were conducted one-on-one to diminish the likelihood that students will only express opinions they feel will be validated by their peers. Additionally, if the interviews had entered into sensitive issues such as self-esteem, music ability, drug use, or bullying, the participants may not have felt comfortable discussing these issues in front of their peers, so a one-on-one interview was most appropriate. The orchestra director was also not be present for the interview because his presence could have prompted students to answer differently out of fear or anxiety for expressing an opinion that he would not like.

Interview with the director. I conducted one audio-recorded face-to-face interview with the orchestra director for approximately one hour and 30 minutes. The purpose of the semi-structured interview with the director was to gain information on his perceptions of the social aspect of his ensemble. As a chief creator of the culture, his perceptions can shed light on social issues within the orchestra that he deems most important.

The interview with the director took place at his high school, and was not conducted within the company of his students as this could have caused the orchestra director to withhold observations or opinions that he would not deem appropriate for his students to hear. Unfortunately, because the music department at Ibis High School is so active, the choir director had to enter and leave the classroom several times during the interview to retrieve sheet music to file. There were no other classrooms that could accommodate our interview, but the director expressed that he did not mind continuing with the interview.

Construction of interview questions. Interview questions were designed to first establish rapport with the participants, and then to address issues brought up by the research questions driving this study. Questions were constructed based on analysis of and adaptation of interview questions from other related qualitative studies (Abril, 2013; Campbell, 1998), as well as my own interests. Questions were reviewed and evaluated by my thesis committee and then evaluated a second time by my advisor.

Establishment of Trustworthiness

Triangulation of data. Data was gathered through multiple sources including seven different perspectives from student interviews, the director's perspective, and my field notes. This strategy of verification helps to ensure that the most holistic view of the orchestra's social climate can emerge. Qualitative research involves gathering and analyzing multiple realities. Common themes, views, and meanings – especially those that may be suspected as nearly universally held by the whole group - can be triangulated through the examination of multiple sources. For example, if several students and the director separately acknowledge a social organizational system within the orchestra, which I also observe, then my claim that this system exists is strengthened and made valid by the data offered by the students, the director, and evidence I gathered by observation.

Member checking. After all interviews were conducted, I transcribed the interviews and traveled back to Ibis High School to invite the participants to read through their interview to ensure that all statements had been transcribed correctly and that all statements reflect the participant's ideas. This technique called "member checking" is commonly employed by qualitative researchers to ensure the highest accuracy of data gathered through interviews. Stake (2010) describes it as "more than being careful; it is

being skeptical that they were seen or heard right and checking further” (p. 123). This skepticism helps to ensure that the conclusions I draw are extrapolated from data that are as accurately reflective of reality as possible.

When I traveled back to the high school, the director allowed me to use his office as a space for students to read through their interviews. Because the timing of this coincided with a few concerts, the director preferred for me only to invited one or two students at a time. As a result, this process took a couple of weeks to complete. I gave the students pencils and instructed them to note anything that was incorrect, clarify anything that did not seem clear to them, and elaborate on an issue if they wanted. Students were extremely meticulous. Some took up to 40 minutes to read through their interviews, and ended up making only minor changes. A few students chose to elaborate, and many carefully corrected my inconsequential typographical errors.

Role of the Researcher

Researcher bias. As mentioned previously, qualitative research recognizes the existence of multiple realities, which is as true for the researcher as it is for the participants. In order to establish validity and trustworthiness, I will disclose any information that has a potential to color how I interpret the data. This includes my background in music education.

Although I make every attempt to be as objective as possible, the nature of qualitative research leaves a potential for bias, which should be acknowledged. It is valuable for the audience’s understanding and interpretation of the results and important to the validity of the research to disclose any information that might color the way that the researcher interprets data.

My own high school orchestra experience as a student took place in a middle class suburb in southern Maryland. Holding the concertmaster position for three of my four years in high school, I developed ideas about the social nature of orchestra from the perspective of an enthusiastic and high-achieving top member. My role in my high school orchestra was likely similar to the hardcore band kids from Abril's (2013) study.

The pursuit of my bachelor's degree in music education led me to experiences teaching elementary through high school general music, choral music, and string programs primarily in West Virginia, Kentucky, and Maryland. Although the culture within each school's music program is unique, most of these programs – especially those in West Virginia and Kentucky - have a very similar demographic makeup. The majority of the schools in which I have taught are more rural, less diverse, and less affluent than the school in which the present study will take place. In most of these programs, the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch is more than half, and over 90% of the student population identified as white.

I have also worked with and taught elementary and middle school strings students in Miami-Dade County, Florida. These students came from schools whose student populations may feed into the high school where the present study will take place. I have had no direct interaction with the students or the director of the research setting prior to contacting him to request permission to study his program.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is different from quantitative data analysis in that qualitative researchers do not form a hypothesis before collecting data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The purpose of qualitative data analysis is not to prove or disprove a hypothesis as is characteristic of quantitative research. Rather, the purpose is to gather data first, then

use the data to form ideas and theories about the phenomenon being studied. The amount of data gathered and the trustworthiness of the data and techniques can contribute to the strength of the conclusions drawn.

As all empirical data is being filtered through the senses of the researcher, some data analysis takes place simultaneously with data collection. For example, during observations I chose to note anything that may have overtly or subtly reinforced social stratification within the ensemble. In order to keep my objective observations separate from my inferential observations, I used a guided observation form. However, my choice to record one observation over another presupposes that I have already done some amount of data analysis in my head by categorizing an event as something that may contribute to the social climate of the orchestra. For example, if I notice that the director has repeatedly praised the viola section, and I decide to record this, I have already coded this observation in that I have already deemed it as possibly contributing to a certain social climate within the orchestra. Glesne (2006) contends that this type of early analysis is practical, and helps to focus and narrow the scope of the study.

After all of the interviews were conducted, I transcribed the interviews, invited participants to read their interview transcriptions, and extracted themes through thematic analysis. A thematic analysis is an inductive process that includes coding data, sorting the data by the assigned codes, and forming hypotheses based on the themes that emerge from the coding and sorting process (Glesne, 2006). This type of data analysis necessitates that the researcher is able to recognize patterns of organization, label, and dissect these patterns. A thematic analysis is also a continuous process. An initial categorization of the data can lead to further possibilities for codes as patterns begin to

appear. Results of the data analysis are written in narrative form and organized by the research question that the data addresses, and then by themes and categories.

CHAPTER 4

This study aimed to explore the sociomusical aspect of the high school orchestra culture. The following specific questions guided the study: 1) what is the nature of high school orchestra culture, 2) what is the nature of social stratification within the high school orchestra, and 3) in what ways do student perceptions align or misalign with the director's perceptions? In order to investigate these issues, I examined one high school orchestra, Ibis High School's advanced orchestra.

This chapter will provide a description and analysis of each of the participant interviews. Because the purposeful sampling method I employed was meant to recruit a diverse group of students from all different locations within the orchestra, each interview was distinctive, and each participant represented a unique perspective on a number of issues. Table 3 provides a summary of the themes that emerged from each of the participants. To reveal the nuances of each participant's perspective, I decided to represent my data, in part, through edited excerpts of the actual interviews. A portrait of each participant will precede an excerpt of his/her interview. The raw interview data was reduced and organized based on themes that emerged during the data analysis process. Interpretations were made based on the interviews and field note data. Interpretations are organized by theme and follow each interview. The interviews have been edited for clarity and relevance. Cuts were made to some responses that digressed to topics outside the scope of this study. Redundancies were also cut from the excerpts, but it is noted in the interpretation if a participant emphasized a point by saying it repeatedly. Cuts are represented in the interviews by an ellipsis (...). Although the interviews provide incredibly rich information on a number of social issues within the orchestra, only the

salient and powerful themes for each participant are reported; others, while may be interesting, are outside the scope of this particular study. Interviews served as the primary source of data; Field notes served to contextualize and validate these interpretations from the interviews.

Students and Their Perspectives

Cosima. Cosima is an outgoing and energetic senior cellist in the orchestra. She was one of the most extroverted interview participants who undoubtedly enjoys the art of storytelling. Cosima joined her elementary school's string program as a violinist when she was in third grade. She started playing cello in sixth grade, and has been playing it ever since. Over the years, Cosima has received instruction in many different instruments including clarinet and piano. On weekends, and sometimes after school she works at a restaurant in which the employees regularly get to sing, which is her favorite part of that job. Cosima clearly loves music, which she professes many times in her interview, but contradicts herself a few times regarding the degree to which she identifies with the orchestra, and the degree to which she socializes with the other members of the orchestra. She sits in the back of the cello section and admits to not practicing very much, but proudly asserts her identity as an "orchdork" and a "back person," someone who sits in the back row of the orchestra. Cosima is eighteen years old. The themes that emerged during our interview were: (a) meaning and value, (b) collective identity, (c) socialization and social stratification, and (e) bullying.

Q: Can you describe your practice routine for me?

A: Zero... Well, actually, I have like senioritis, so I don't really care about orchestra. It's like the last thing, so this year it's like zero, but last year I used to practice a lot, but only

‘cause I had a private teacher and she made me practice, so I practiced like 3 hour a week, and then I’d have her lesson, so it’s 4-5 hours sometimes.

Q: Ok, so why do you participate in the orchestra? Why is it meaningful to you?

A: ‘Cause I love music. I even have a job that you have to do music in, so...

Q: What’s your job?

A: I work in Johnny Rockets! We have to sing every day. Every 30 minutes we get to sing like some random jazzy song, and I was like “I need a job with music, let me just work at Johnny Rockets”, like I love music a lot! It’s pretty bad.

Q: How do you feel when you walk into the other classes [besides orchestra]?

A: Why am I at school? Why am I here?! But like orchestra it’s a little bit happier. It’s the last class. I get to go home.

Q: Cool. So, what are the best parts about being in the orchestra?

A: A lot of skip days... ‘Cause we’re really involved in school, like we have caroling things, and we get to play for other faculty, so it’s pretty fun. And we get to play for like little kids. That’s like the best thing.

Q: So, those are some of the best parts about being in the orchestra?

A: No, but they’re really fun. And like when you see that kid who never goes to an orchestra concert or anything, and they see, and you look at their face and they’re all like, “oh my god, what is that?” I love doing that, just to see their face. It’s pretty fun. I like that.

Q: So what are the worst parts about being in the orchestra?

A: Practicing... or getting stopped. No, getting stopped is the worst, especially if it's at a really good point and you're almost there and he stops you right before. It's like, a commercial break. [Laughs] That's like the worst part of orchestra!

Q: So, how have you managed to stick with orchestra all these years?

A: My mom. She makes me sign up for orchestra every year. It has to be like number 1 on the list every year.

Q: What if she didn't make you? Would you have quit?

A: Yeah.

Q: So, I want you to imagine that you're the orchestra director in a school that's kind of like this one. What would you do differently from Mr. Kimble?

A: Probably not yell as much. I'd do more like outside stuff. Make us go out. Like field trips. Like see more like people playing, like our music, like if there was someone playing our music... Yeah, like Yo-Yo Ma was here over here sometime over the weekend.

A: I like the kids in orchestra. I like the orchdorks.

Q: The orchdorks? Is that what you guys call yourselves?

A: What we call ourselves... yes!

Q: Do you think that you define the orchestra, or does the orchestra define you or is it a little bit of both?

A: I think it's a little bit of both, because you can be in drama and you can still have a little bit of orchdork in you. I was one of those drama kids, but I would always bring up music for some reason. You can be a baseball player and still be an orchdork, and still

talk about, like, orchestra, 'cause I know my stand partner's a baseball kid and he'll always talk about orchestra when he's practicing or something, so it's a little bit of both.

Q: Alright. Do you think it's the same for the band kids? Do they have a lot of different—

A: --No. Not band. They're just... all around me, like weird. Like *really weird*. We can't associate with them. And when people call us band geeks, we're like "no, no, no."

Q: You don't like that?

A: No. We're nothing like them. They're like a species, like an ugh! Aw god, they're so gross! [Laughs] Thank god I quit!

Q: Ok, so you don't like being called a band geek? Who typically calls you band geeks?

A: Anyone who doesn't know the difference between a cello and a clarinet, so, people who aren't into, like, music will call you a band geek, and it's like, "no, I play strings! I don't use my mouth to make music...even though a chorus kid does that, but no."

Q: Do you think you're more like a class, or like a club, or a family, or anything else?

A: Not a family. We're like... a zoo. And we don't all wanna be there.

Q: Can you explain that a little bit more?

A: Wait... is that the word? No, a circus! Not a zoo. We're in a circus because some of us don't wanna be here and you have to like whip them to work, or to like be quiet, but some of us are like really good, but only because we've been whooped so hard. I'm not one of those people, obviously, because I'm not that good. But Hazel, that girl has been playing since like 3rd grade. It's kinda gross.

Q: So, you know how some groups in the school are given labels? You've mentioned some of them, like the jocks and the math kids, and the nerds and stuff. Does the orchestra have a name like that?

A: I wish we had a name. We're not even on the map. We're like a club. Most people think we're a club. They don't even think of us actually. If they think of us, it's like a club.

Q: So you wish there was a little bit more group identity kind of like the drama kid?

A: Yeah. Like they, the drama kids... their shows are always like on TV, you'll see like "oh drama show!" And the orchestra shows not once are mentioned, and if they are it's like for 3 seconds and then it like goes away.

Q: Ok, so you wish that there was a name? Even if it was a derogatory name?

A: [Laughs] Yeah, even if it was like orchdorks. No one even says that. We're nothing at school.

Q: So, the band kids, they have a name?

A: Yeah, only because they're so popular. They're always in our pep rallies. You never hear us in pep rallies. They're really good, also. They're amazing.

Q: How do you think the people in your school view the orchestra?

A: I don't think they view us. I don't think they really know there's an orchestra at school, unless they see us caroling, and then they're like, "oh...I guess it's a... club"

[Laughs]

Q: What about your teachers or your principal? How do you think they see the orchestra? What do they think of your participation?

A: I think they think of us as like, an extra group that plays for them every time they have a meeting to eat food for. [Laughs] 'Cause we play every time they eat and that's about it and we never see them again, like in our concerts or anything, but when they eat they get to hear us.

Q: Ok, so what do you get out of the orchestra socially?

A: Nothing. I don't hang out with those kids.

Q: You don't hang out with anybody in the orchestra?

A: No. I laugh with them. Like Gabe is probably the best friend I have in the orchestra, but I wouldn't hang out with them outside of school.

Q: So who do you think the most important people in the orchestra are? Who sort of defines the orchestra?

A: First chairs... 'Cause they're in first chair and they made it to first chair. They play the best.

Q: So, what do you think they're really contributing to the orchestra?

A: They make us sound better. Like, without them we sound awful, and we don't know how to keep up with our music. We're all a whole two measures away behind everyone. Like Erin, our first chair [cellist], if she's not there we sound really bad. The whole cello section just sounds awful.

Q: So, do you feel like there's a division between you and the first chairs?

A: Yeah, I don't talk to first chairs. I only talk to everyone in the back. Except for Hazel. I don't know why. She acts like a back person.

Q: How does she act like a back person?

A: Back persons are just way cooler, and are chillier than first chairs. First chairs, they're really into music. I'm into music, but... they're the kids who walk around with music notes on their backpacks. And she's just way more chill than everyone, and she doesn't really care. Well, she does care about orchestra way too much, but I don't know. She knows how to turn it on and off.

Q: So [during free days] you all get into a circle? That's everybody in the orchestra?

A: Yeah, everyone. Except maybe like two, but those are the two people that we don't talk to, I don't know who they are.

Q: You don't know who they are? So there's two people, you've never met them before?

A: I'm just saying, like, on a random note, there's maybe like two people that no one really cares about.

Q: They're kind of outcasts?

A: Yeah, only 'cause they put themselves out, but they can sit with us. We're not like mean girls. Like the new kid? I don't know who he is. He doesn't even try to associate with us. He just plays and leaves.

Q: Does the orchestra have cliques in it?

A: We used to, like last year we had a lot of cliques... There was the senioritis clique last year, and it was just all the seniors, all the guy seniors, and they wouldn't do anything. They didn't care about orchestra at all. And then there was this Meredith, Hazel, and Alex clique, and they were the loudest kids for no reason. They were super loud when they talked, they were always laughing, always playing the ukulele, and then there was like the few sports cliques...

Q: Why did Meredith, Hazel, and Alex make up a clique, do you think?

A: 'Cause they had been friends in [the youth orchestra] since forever. The [youth orchestra] kids. The next clique was sports. There were these 3 girls who were just way into lacrosse and softball and I think golf... And then there was the smart math kids, which was Karina, Jimmy, Kevin, and some other kid...

Q: So, what do your friends who are outside of the orchestra think about your participation in the orchestra?

A: They can't imagine me playing an instrument. They think it's weird. 'Cause like they thought that I was like a drama kid the whole time, but I'm not. I was, and then I quit that. The kids in drama are like too clique-y and super annoying. You had to be in drama like all year, like all 4 years, and then they'll like you. I was only in drama for like 3 years 'cause I missed my freshman year, and so they wouldn't talk to me. Like they'd just walk away. They wouldn't talk to new kids. They'll talk to you if they've known you from other drama programs and stuff like that, so no, I didn't like those kids at all.

Q: So the orchestra's not like that?

A: No. We'll accept you if you try to talk to us. That kid, I don't know, the new kid, I don't know why he doesn't try to talk to us. Maybe 'cause he's a freshman. I don't know.

Q: How did the upperclassmen help you assimilate into the orchestra?

A: Freshman year in orchestra, I was at [a different high school], and there was this girl, she hated me so much. She was a senior and she was first chair violin, and every day she would throw me inside the dumpster, and I would just hate her, I just hated her so much. And I left, and I was so happy when I left... She picked me up. I was so small, and like this scrawny skinny freshman, and she picked me up and just throw me in, and I'd be like

“why do you hate me so much?”, and I wouldn’t cry because that’s sissy, but I’d be like “I hate orchestra people.”

Q: Does anybody do stuff like that at Ibis High School?

A: No, we’re not like that. But they were awful to freshman kids in orchestra. They would throw water bottles at you or balloons at you. They weren’t nice at all. But at Ibis? I feel like they used to throw water bottles.

Interpretation. Meaning and value. Part of what distinguishes Cosima’s interview from those of the other participants are her multiple contradictions, which may be interpreted as mixed feelings toward the social culture of the orchestra and of orchestra in general. She clearly states that she loves music, but condemns other students for loving orchestra *too* much. She both admires and condemns Hazel, the concertmaster, for her commitment to orchestra. She loves playing her cello for other people to see their reaction, and longs for more diverse activities such as field trips to experience great musicians like Yo-Yo Ma, but admits that she would not have kept signing up for orchestra had her mother not required it.

Collective identity. Cosima identifies herself as an “orchdork,” as one of the group, and wishes that the orchestra could receive as much attention and recognition as the band, but also emphasizes that she would not hang out with any of the orchestra students outside of class, and prefers not to associate with the highest-achieving orchestra students. These contradicting feelings are further supported by her comparison of the orchestra to a circus. She states “We’re in a circus because some of us don’t wanna be here and you have to like whip them to work, or to like be quiet, but some of us are like really good, but only because we’ve been whooped so hard.”

Socialization and social stratification. Cosima's interview also helps us to navigate of the intricacies of the social structure within the orchestra, the way in which groups are divided, and the collective values of the group which determine where certain people fall within that pecking order. For example, Cosima states that she believes the first chairs are the most important people in the orchestra because they make the orchestra sound better, and this is a value mentioned by many of the other participants as well. This suggests that, at least to Cosima, musical proficiency is a factor that determines a person's importance in the orchestra because orchestra members value musical proficiency, as opposed to extra-musical traits such as humor, sociability, organizational skills, or popularity. Within the same breath, however, Cosima also clarifies her perceptions of the relationship between the first chairs and the "back people," or those students sitting in the last row of the orchestra. Even though Cosima values the musical proficiency that the first chair players contribute to the group, she indicates that there is a divide between her – the last chair cellist – and them. She values the nonchalance and relaxed nature of the "back people."

Cosima is one of the only participants who did not emphasize seniority as an indicator of importance or leadership within the orchestra. In fact, she felt that her "senioritis" was the reason that she had no interest in practicing, or in her own musical contribution to the group. In contrast to other participants, she viewed musical proficiency as being the strongest influence in whether a person is perceived as being important to the group or being a leader, whereas other orchestra members felt that musical proficiency was important, but that underclassmen had to earn their leadership positions through time spent in the orchestra. This aligns with findings from Abril's

(2013) study of high school band culture in which both musical proficiency and seniority were viewed as necessary elements a student must possess to lead and gain access to the exclusive clique in the top tier of the band's hierarchy.

Furthermore, Cosima indicated that in addition to chair placement the formation of cliques is another way in which orchestra members are stratified. A theme that is prominent throughout many of the interviews, as will be seen shortly, is the pluralist nature of the orchestra. Students who identify primarily by their activities outside of the orchestra such as jocks, cheerleaders, community orchestra members, and math nerds are all welcomed into the orchestra just the same. Cosima observed that cliques within the orchestra often form based on students' identification with their outside activities.

Bullying. Cosima was the *only* participant to mention any type of bullying within the orchestra. Her troubling story, which did not occur at Ibis High School, but at a high school she attended prior to transferring to Ibis High School, is significant for a couple of reasons. First, it illustrates that orchestra, like many other musical ensembles, is not immune to the very serious issue of bullying (Carter, 2013). Second, Cosima's story of bullying helps to juxtapose the orchestra culture from her old school with the orchestra culture of Ibis High School. She clearly distinguishes between the two, noting that she was happier when she left the old school and that Ibis High School was "not like that." Further supporting that claim, Cosima mentioned at various times in the conversation that the orchestra was not full of "mean girls," and that students who wanted to associate with them were welcome to do so. She also compared the orchestra students to the drama students, characterizing the drama students as exclusive and "clique-y," and differentiating them from the more welcoming orchestra students. Cosima's account of

the bullying she suffered at the hands of a cruel concertmaster in her old school speaks volumes about the current culture in which she participates. Although psychological and cyber-bullying is disturbingly less apparent to an observer, not once did I witness any type of hostility or exclusionary tactics between students.

Hazel. Hazel is a friendly junior with a quirky sense of humor and a passion for music. She has blonde hair, blue eyes, and dresses up for school, often wearing skirts, leggings, and ballet flats. She is the concertmaster and a co-manager for the orchestra. When she is not practicing, rehearsing with the local youth orchestra, or doing homework, Hazel likes to spend her time jamming with her friends on ukulele, violin, or guitar. She is also an avid reader and enjoys connecting with new people through mutual tastes in literature. Hazel loves her position as concertmaster, but admits that it puts a great deal of pressure on her to play accurately and to behave in orchestra class. Of all the students, Hazel gave the most detailed description of her practicing, and clearly takes her leadership position seriously. However, she also does not forget to have fun, too. I frequently observed her dancing in her seat and making silly faces as she played, a contagious behavior that eventually happily affected her stand-partner. Hazel is 16 years old. Themes that emerged from Hazel's interviews were a) collective identity, b) leadership, c) meaning, value, and the collective, d) responsibility to the collective, and e) socialization and social stratification.

Q: Do you think that you define the orchestra, or does the orchestra define you, or is it a little bit of both?

A: Probably a little bit of both. I think everyone to some extent defines the orchestra, anyone who's part of it because without you it won't sound exactly the same, and with you it gives it an entirely different layer. Even though you're all trying to blend... there's a difference, even if it's so slight you can barely hear it, it's still there. So everyone involved defines, but also, the combined efforts of everyone... when a new person comes in it sends an entirely new dynamic in the class, and kind of enveloping them in the whole society of the orchestra, and making them a part of it. And it takes a while, and I don't know... you've seen the stuff like orchestra jokes, you just have to get into it. Rudolph, our bassist, he makes jokes a lot. At this point they're not explained, so if someone new comes in it's hard for them at first to adjust, like "oh, ok, that's what they're talking about."

Q: Are you talking about inside jokes? Or like music-specific jokes?

A: Inside jokes, yeah.

Q: Ok, can you maybe explain one of your inside jokes to me?

A: [Laughs] Um... I don't know when it started, but it started this year where... Do you know what twerking is? [Laughs]

Q: Yeah [Laughs]

A: [Laughing] he started calling us the Twerkestra (laughing). And so now all the time Mr. Kimble'll say "do you guys know how we're supposed to do this?" and you know, we'll say "twerk", and everyone will start laughing, and it's really great 'cause like Mr. Kimble, he wants to be mad about it, and then he'll just be like "now, you guys..." and he'll just start laughing 'cause he thinks it's funny, too. And I remember when we did the caroling when we go around the whole school playing for everyone, Mr. Kimble, to

pump us up, and give us a motivational speech, he was like “you should have seen them twerking after when we played Silent Night” and stuff like that, he says a lot. And that’s fun.

Q: How do you think teachers view your involvement in the orchestra?

A: All my teachers really like it because playing in an orchestra... there’s no one really stupid in there... There’s no one that’s just like... it’s tiring how stupid they are. There’s no one like that, so I guess teachers appreciate that. First impressions, if I tell a teacher I’m in orchestra they’re like “Ok, she can’t be entirely stupid.”... All of my teachers know me as... I work really hard, I get good grades, so I think they assume, “ok, she’s decent. She practices, probably spends time on it... just as much as she does for school”, so they appreciate that. And a lot of my teachers this year at least appreciate classical music so they are like “oh ok, that’s cool.”

Q: You know different groups in schools are given labels like jocks and preps and punks and you know, goths and stuff? Is the orchestra seen as a group like that?

A: Not really. Band? Definitely yes. Band. Yes... Band kids. Everyone just calls ‘em band kids. They’re a very specific type of person... all of them [Laughs]. They’re all the same.

Q: Describe this type of person for me, the band kid.

A: Aw god... I don’t know what the song is called... uh what’s it called? They all play it. It’s like really annoying. (sings)

Q: Ohhh, the saxophone song?

A: Over and over, and over. All of them do. All of them. It’s terrible. So, they like to do that and that annoys everyone. No one likes the song anymore. All the orchestra kids,

whenever band kids walk into the room, we're all expecting them to do it, and then they do it, and we're just like "ugh... of course they did it. Of course!" So they all do that, and then, the band kids, I think probably because they have the whole summer thing where they come in like every day in the summer for hours and they're there for all the time, they're all way closer than the orchestra 'cause like they're disgusting and sweaty on the field together, so of course you're going to get close. You gotta learn to be close when you're all disgusting. We don't have to do that. We never see each other at our absolute worst, so we don't get that kind of bond... They're all friends with each other. They all hang out with each other before school.

Q: So how do you feel about the band kids having a label and the orchestra kids don't really have a label?

A: It bothers me that the school doesn't really recognize us as much. The band kids, for our booster organization, they get so much more attention and money, and I get their parents are more involved. That's not necessarily our fault, and we should get just as much funding as they do. And I wish we had more recognition. I wish people were like, "oh yeah, the orchestra" or other kids were like "yeah the orchestra at our school is really good." Everyone hears the band 'cause they're at football games and stuff, but no one really hears the orchestra, no one really comes to our shows unless it's extra credit for one of their teachers. So I wish we had that, but I don't really wish we had like an orchestra group, clique.

Q: So, talk to me about your roles in this orchestra.

A: I'm the concert mistress so... it's a lot of leadership, everyone relies on me to cue them in and to show them, like if someone doesn't know how a note goes or how a part

goes, then I'm expected to know it. And a lot of times when we're starting a new piece of music someone will ask me, like we'll all be looking through it for a few seconds before we actually start practicing it, and so I have to know if they ask me "how does this go?" I have to look at it and figure it out, and do that. Mr. Kimble calls on me a lot and says like "can you show everyone how this goes?" or "show everyone how this technique works" like if we're doing *col legno*, he'll ask me, "can you show everyone that?" and so I have to do a lot of showing. And then it's also just a matter of... I also have to behave. I can't talk too much, and I can't use my phone too much or I can't do anything 'cause I have to set an example, and also I'm in the front so he would see me if I did.

Q: So, you kind of feel this pressure to be the model student?

A: Yeah, and I have to practice the music. Like, if it's something that, even I have slight difficulty with, I have to practice it a lot 'cause I don't wanna mess it up in class and be embarrassed. And if I have solos then... and I have them pretty regularly I have to be able to do it.

Q: Do you like being the concert master?

A: Yeah. I think all violinists do. It's a lot of competition, and it's really fun. I like the pressure because it makes me practice even when I don't want to... It's that, and then also it's just fun. I get the upfront view of everything.

Q: What do you feel is the most important contribution that you make to the orchestra?

A: Probably just being a leader. My stand-partner, he's technically just as good as I am, and probably even better, but he's really quiet. I always am like, "play louder! You sound really good there. Play louder!" 'Cause I think that's really the only difference between

me and him is that... I've been a concert mistress for three years, so I'm really comfortable in the position, and I'm comfortable playing in front of the whole class, and I'm really loud. Always really loud. And he just doesn't. He's really, really good. He just doesn't sound confident. And we had a seating audition, we had one midway through the first quarter, and Mr. Kimble put him as first chair, and then he decided to make us co-first chairs so we could switch off every day or whatever, and it really just didn't end up happening that way because he didn't like leading. He played, but he didn't cue in the people behind him. He wasn't big enough with his gestures, and he wasn't confident coming in. He knew all the music and he could do it, and he could play it really well, but it just wasn't leadership, and I think I do a pretty good job of playing that role. Even if I play stuff wrong I'll play it confidently wrong, so at least I can lead people in and do that.

Q: What does it mean to be a leader in the orchestra?

A: It's a lot of cuing. Another thing is that in orchestra always, it's kind of up to the first few stands to count. It's not really up to them. Everyone should be counting, but no one does. No one ever does. It's always the first stands. If we have 20 measures of rest, I know they should, and I hope they do, but I don't expect them to count all 20 measures, so me and my stand-partner will count and then when we put our violins up they'll put theirs up and then, cue them in, when we start. Counting's a big part of it. Really just that, probably, is like what you do a lot.

Q: Who are the leaders in the orchestra, specifically people?

A: I think for each section I think I'm the leader in the 1st violins. In the 2nd violins it's probably Anne. She doesn't sit first chair, but whenever there's solos she usually gets them anyway. Her stand-partner is really good. It's kind of like me and my stand-partner.

They're both equally technically good, but Heather, her stand-partner... obviously she can count [Laughs], but she doesn't. She's not as confident with coming in. She's not as confident with shifting to high notes. She can do it, but she just doesn't. She's scared of it, and Anne's not scared at all, and even when she messes up she does it loudly, so everyone still gets the general idea. And when we're sight-reading Heather's really nervous. I think she just kind of freaks out, and then Anne takes over, and she's a lot more confident with the sight-reading and so she does a lot better. And then in violas, I think it's kind of the same deal. I'm not entirely sure 'cause I don't know the skill of the individual violas as much. The first chair is really good, but she's really quiet and nervous-sounding, and her stand-partner's good, but is 2nd chair, and she's a lot more confident, too... And in the cellos there's not really a leader. They've switched first chairs like four times. Not four times, probably like two or three times. All the other sections have mostly retained their first chairs 'cause there's just one person who's clearly way better, but in the cellos, they're all around the same skill except for two or three of them, and it just pretty much is like what day it is, and who's practiced that particular part whenever there's auditions or anything.

Q: How do you become a leader in the orchestra?

A: Practice and confidence. You have to be comfortable playing in front of other people. A lot of people are really nervous when the teacher asks them to play something in front of everyone, or to play a solo, or to do really anything that they don't normally do, and it's really just getting over that. You can just tell like looking at the sections who everyone's following just because everyone looks at them, and even if someone's first

chair everyone looks to that person for help, and looks to that person when they don't know how something goes.

Q: Why is your participation meaningful to you?

A: Probably because, it's taught me a lot. It's taught me a lot about not being a soloist, about being a part of a whole ensemble, and trying to blend with everyone, and trying to match with everyone, and trying to sound the same. And it's also surrounding yourself with people that love... have the same passions as you. It's easier to connect with people when they have that same drive as you. My stand-partner, like every stand-partner I've ever had I've gotten really close to because you sit next to them, you play with them, you bond with them just over playing, and just, like music in general it's like a form of expression that... orchestra music... obviously when you hear music on the radio and lyrics, you can feel the emotion in their lyrics and in their voices and you know exactly what they mean. But orchestra music is so much more open to interpretation, open to your own feelings. And I think it speaks to you on an entirely different level, it's a lot more personal. And it's not only just playing, it's also just being in the middle of an orchestra. It's really nice.

Q: How does the feeling you get from walking into orchestra compare to the feeling that you get from walking into other classes?

A: I have like one or two friends that either sit near me or don't that I talk to, and that's really the only interaction I have with other people in my classes. We have class discussions and stuff, but I don't feel like... like I'll contribute and people will contribute, but it just doesn't feel like group work. It feels like people volunteering answers for a teacher who's asking questions, and with the orchestra there's a lot more

like group work. It feels like a group. It feels like we're working together. It feels like we're all helping each other. When we have group discussions in other classes, it doesn't feel like we're helping each other. It's really just like reciting stuff we took notes on, or the teacher lectures, or doing math. There's not the same kind of group work in other classes. With orchestra you feel a lot more friendly with everyone. There's kids in my other classes that I don't know at all, but in orchestra everyone gets a lot more involved with each other, and talks to each other. And there's a lot more general friendliness because of that, but there's also just a whole feeling of being with people, doing stuff with them. That's nice.

Q: Who do you think are the most important people in the orchestra, who really define it, who make it what it is?

A: Uh... the violas. I think good violins are a dime a dozen. There's so many of them, there's so much competition, everyone plays violin. It's just not impressive. It's really fun to play violin, and I wouldn't trade it for viola 'cause I'm just too attached to switch, but if you have a really, really good viola section that makes the entire difference. It's always like the inner voices that I think if they're doing a good job of what they're doing... violins obviously are going to be practicing a lot doing the melody, getting it perfect, whatever, but if the inner voices are doing it right, it can bring all the difference. So like second violins too, but mostly violas. Like in [the youth orchestra] the violas there, they're really good, they go to all state. They definitely make the difference. Our school orchestra... the kid that did viola I dated, he was really, really good. He was first chair in that year. The difference between last year when he was here and then this year is just huge because whenever we do have a viola solo or whenever we do it's just not the

same. Violas add to it. They don't usually have the melody. They add that something to the music that makes it special. Without that there's a huge gap. There's a gulf of difference between them.

Q: What about here then? Who are the most important people here that really make the orchestra what it is?

A: Probably the cellos. We have really, really good cellos this year. And cellos are kind of like violins, but not as bad in terms of there's just billions of them that are good, that are passably decent... Last year we didn't have this many good cellos. We have a lot of really good cellos this year, and it's added a lot. A lot of the technical stuff last year we couldn't do 'cause we had like one or two good cellos, but when they're doing everything and everyone behind them is not up to par, it's not the same as when you have an entire section that's all doing almost perfect on it. It sounds entirely different. We can do a lot harder music this year. The stuff we're doing this year we couldn't have done last year for some of it.

Q: Imagine that you're the orchestra director at a school like this one. What would you do differently?

A: I would be a lot stricter. I'd be a lot meaner. My middle school teacher was. And even my private teacher. Both were really harsh and if something sounds bad, they'll tell you, like "that sounds bad. You need to practice." And my middle school teacher, we would have playing auditions all the time, just like "play this for me. Play this for me" and, "if you can't play it, fake it 'cause you're not playing that at the show. I don't wanna hear that. It's noise in the orchestra. That shouldn't taint the sound." And Mr. Kimble is really, really sweet and he never tells anyone like "that sounds terrible" like, "it's you." He's

just like “someone’s outta tune over there” and like, “you guys should practice at home.” He doesn’t really, really push us, and I feel like the main way to get someone started with violin is just make them feel bad... My private teacher... I would be playing something and she would be like “does that sound good to you? Did you practice that? That doesn’t sound very good to me. You need to go home.” I’d get yelled at, and I’d be embarrassed, so I would go home and practice for hours, and I would get the part right. It just sounds a lot more put together because people are embarrassed. Yes, encourage them when they do really well... When something sounds good, or even if there’s improvement you should recognize that and show them “ok, I appreciate that,” but when something’s clearly not up to par and when someone’s not putting effort in Mr. Kimble doesn’t yell. He doesn’t make people feel bad, or give them personal criticism and I think he should.

Q: Is there anything else that you would definitely change?

A: I’d pick harder music than he picks. I think he doesn’t push us enough. It sounds bad because we don’t practice... It’s not easy enough that it sounds good without practicing, but it’s not hard enough that I really want to practice. You can scrape by without practicing, and it’ll still sound decent. There’s nothing that I’m just like, wow I just cannot play that at all, not even a little, I need to go home and work that out a lot... In other orchestras when I do have parts like that I go home and I practice because I’m embarrassed to be sitting next to someone who’s playing it, and then I’m not ‘cause I don’t know how it goes, so probably do that. And then I would do auditions, not seating auditions, but playing auditions, like “play that in front of the class,” like “everyone here’s going to play it for me.” I would do that a lot ‘cause when you have to play it out loud and you know it’s coming, you practice.

Q: What about an unofficial roles that you have in the orchestra? Your official title is the concert master and you have all these responsibilities that come with it, but what about something more unofficial?

A: Me and my stand-partner joke around a lot. We say stuff a lot, and the violins laugh at it. None of the other sections can hear us usually 'cause we have to mutter it, so me and my stand-partner are kind of like the comic relief for our section... That's mostly it. I'm really good friends with everyone in there. We're a pretty tight-knit orchestra I think. Like last year there were people that didn't get along kind of. And this year there's not that at all. We're all friends and we all joke around and laugh with each other.

Q: Do you mind if I ask you a little bit more about that experience last year?

A: Yeah, and in freshman year there was, too, and in freshman year there was one kid that was a jerk, and he was really... I don't know, he would just say kind of like... trying to be witty, but just really being a jerk. And really annoying everyone and everyone would just tell him to shut up, and that bothered everyone and it kind of brought us down. And then last year it was because mostly relationships. Last year my best friend, she moved, but she dated a senior in the orchestra, and then they broke up, so there was a little tension with that. And that same year I had just broken up with one of the violists, so... Yeah, it was a little tense [Laughs]. It was a little uncomfortable. Like sideways glances, and, hmmm...

Q: So, you mentioned that there was a little bit of tension, but how much do those relationships change the whole group dynamic?

A: The whole group? It distracts everyone slightly 'cause everyone... obviously everyone talks about it and kind of gossips about it and just like, "oh my gosh, did you hear so-and-

so broke up?” And it was also really weird ‘cause my friend, ‘cause they sat next to each other, they were stand-partners, and they would hold hands and stuff, and then there was not that and they were still stand-partners, so it was still really weird. And then the kid I dated, it was in the musical in freshman year, and we sat like 2 chairs away from each other, so it also just like eh-h-h. It didn’t necessarily affect the whole group, but it definitely affected the sections, like individually, ‘cause everyone was looking and watching, and that was big drama.

Q: So, what word would you use to describe the orchestra as a group?

A: You couldn’t call us a direct family. We’re not as close, obviously, as brother and sister, but we’re like cousins, kind of. [Laughs] I feel like that kind of family. We’re not super, super, super close, we’re not all super tight-knit best friends all know each other really well, but we all know each other, like extended family. We’re really friendly, and we all get along and we all work together. Even when we all don’t like a song, we all stick through it together, and we all try to work things out with each other.

Q: What about socially? What are the benefits socially to orchestra?

A: Even if you don’t have friends, if you consider yourself a friendless person, you’ll make friends in orchestra. You’re at least going to get comfortable with your stand-partner. Even if you don’t become best friends you’ll still become close because you have to sit next to each other and you have to work with each other, and it always just ends up like, “oh we might as well talk to each other and make it fun, so let’s be friends and talk a lot, and mess around.” Just in general there’s always groups of friends, so if you’re friends with one person in the orchestra, chances are they’re friends with a lot of other people, so if you go over, walk over, and talk to one cellist, you’re going to be around all

of them, so if someone overhears something funny usually they'll laugh and then they join the conversation, too. There's a lot of just having general friendly acquaintances, that kind of relationship with people.

Q: Are there any friendless people in the orchestra?

A: They're not friendless, they're just quiet. The three people next to them are the only people they'll talk to, or their stand-partner's the only person they'll talk to, but other than that there's no one friendless. There's no one that doesn't have any one to talk to. If there's a new kid they'll be friendless for like a week, and then everyone's just friends with them. They integrate.

Q: How do the older orchestra members prepare the younger members to be part of the orchestra, to be assimilated into the orchestra?

A: We don't have that many seniors this year, so there's no one like "I've been in here 4 years and this is how this is going to..." There's no one like that who's had a lot of experience. There's mostly like two seniors in our class, I think. But there's definitely me and Jane, one of my friends in there, and there's a few other people who were in there last year and the year before. We prep people for musicals. And we'll tell people, like "oh, he always does this" with Kimble, and like "don't worry about this, he's not actually mad." Mostly just comforting like "yeah, we don't have these 4 hour rehearsals *that* often." That and then just preparing them for stuff he does, like we'll say "no he always gives this" or "he always does that at this time"...

Q: How do you feel about the caroling?

A: I like caroling. I like the music... It also depends who's in the orchestra that year. This year we're a lot closer as whole. Last year there were a lot of... not cliques, but people

who were closer to other people. The violas were really close to each other, except for one of them, and then the cellos were all friends with each other, and it wasn't really like all the violins were friends with all the cellos like it is this year. So, the caroling, mostly just depends. This year's a lot more fun 'cause we're all laughing about it and learning it together.

Q: Does the orchestra have cliques or anything like that?

A: Not as much this year.

Q: What seems to define the cliques?

A: Sections are part of it. Who's in what section. Obviously the cellos are going to be more inclined to all hang out with each other than they're going to be to hang out with us. But also this year since there's a lot of freshman since they're all new they're all getting really close to each other 'cause they're all going through this scary first year together... so all the freshmen in orchestra are really close, even if they're in cellos and violins or whatever. And then other than that what they do outside of school, like if anyone's friends outside of class they'll hang out with each other.

Q: And you said that there's not as much clique-type of activity this year as there was last year. What difference do you notice?

A: There's friend groups, but last year me and my friend sometimes, we would go and try to join one of the groups of people that are in a little scramble talking on free days. And they wouldn't necessarily exclude us, but they would just kind of ignore us, and so we'd be like "alright, whatever, let's just go hang out over there." Or, people would just be doing their own thing, or people would be like "oh my gosh, did you hear about this?"

and they'd be not talking to everyone else. And then this year it's mostly just everyone talking to each other, everyone joking around.

Q: So, what usually made up those scrambles? Are you thinking of a specific time when you guys tried to do that?

A: Yeah, there's also some people that are just like very... not that they necessarily have a right to be like musically, but I guess just in terms of people they're very, very superior. And freshman year me and my friend would try to go join, just kind of trying to join the conversation with this group of kids, and one of them was just kind of getting annoyed with us for no reason. We weren't saying anything. We were just sitting there and listening and then we would occasionally comment. And everyone else was okay with it, but there were two people that were just being very superior and thinking we were stupid freshman...

Q: Ok. Do you think that a freshman would feel that way in class today? Or like in your orchestra this year? Like they were being excluded?

A: Uh-uh. 'cause most of our orchestra is freshman, and I feel like the whole "stupid freshman" thing, that's really on the decline in high school in general. No one's just like "nah, stupid freshman." Obviously everyone's annoyed like "ahh these little people." There's not animosity towards them like there used to be. Especially in orchestra it really doesn't matter. It's really skill and what you're like as a person. If you can play well as a freshman then no one's going to be like "ahh you're a stupid freshman." Everyone's like "well, you're on the same playing field as us, so I guess I can't criticize you too much."

Interpretation. Leadership. Unsurprisingly, as the concertmaster, Hazel had a great deal to say about leadership in the ensemble. Hazel frames leadership in the

orchestra as confidently modeling a high level of musicianship. She cites confidence in sight-reading as an important indicator of leadership ability, and explains how the students who currently hold principal positions in the second violin and viola sections are too timid to lead, so their stand-partners fill the leadership void by playing with volume and strength. Hazel also points out that simple observation can reveal who is actually leading the section because “everyone looks at them, and even if someone’s first chair everyone looks to that [other] person for help, and looks to that person when they don’t know how something goes.” Hazel’s perceptions of leadership within the orchestra indicate these positions are fluid, and that people can ascend to positions of leadership by asserting their confidence and musical proficiency, especially during sight-reading when many students are unsure of themselves. Her statements also suggest that official chairs are not necessarily an indication of leadership, as many students are musically proficient, but lack the initiative and poise to lead. Hazel uses the first stand violas, second violins, and her own leadership position as an example of this. She points out that the first stand players in these sections, including her own stand-partner, are great musicians, but do not have what it takes to lead. They do not cue their section in, or they approach their solos with trepidation.

Responsibility to the collective. Similar to the hardcore band students in Abril’s (2013) study, Hazel, the concertmaster feels an immense responsibility to the collective good of the ensemble. She frames her leadership position as a way to help people know when to come in after rests, to demonstrate for them how to play tricky sections of a new piece, and to give them an example of model musicianship and behavior. She also emphasizes her responsibility to blend in with the rest of the group as opposed to playing

like a soloist. During one of my observations after this interview and before the orchestra's music performance assessment, Mr. Kimble chided Hazel repeatedly for playing with a soloist sound instead of blending in with the rest of her section. My observation of this is likely not the first time she has experienced this, which may be why she mentioned it in her interview. Hazel finds it necessary to suppress her individualistic playing in favor of highlighting the whole violin section equally.

Additionally, when asked who the most important members of the orchestra are, Hazel did not respond with the first chairs as every other participant had. Instead, she highlighted the violas and the cellos, and explained that the inner voices, who are not always characterized as the superstars, have the power to lift the orchestra up to its true playing potential. She explains that great violinists are "a dime a dozen", but "if you have a really, really good viola section that makes the entire difference." This is significant because Hazel has already outlined her own contribution to the orchestra as the concertmaster and a leader. While she could have identified the first chairs like the other participants, she chose to focus on the inner voices, which, in a world where a chair number or instrument section can often be read as a musician's level of importance, are frequently forgotten. This demonstrates her strongly held commitment to the collective good of the orchestra.

Meaning, value, and the collective. Further illustrating Hazel's belief in the collective good of the orchestra is the way she distinguishes her feelings towards orchestra and her feelings towards her other classes. She condemns the traditional practice of students "volunteering answers for a teacher" and points out that what is often framed as "group work" is usually just students "reciting stuff [they] took notes on."

Hazel explains that orchestra is significantly different from this model of instruction because students are working together and helping each other. She emphasizes that the social aspect of orchestra is a large part of this because she knows the members of the orchestra and feels involved with them, whereas in her other classes there are some students that she does not know at all. In essence, students in her other classes are working next to each other to please the teacher, whereas students in the orchestra are working *with* each other and *for* each other in service of the whole ensemble.

Socialization and social stratification. Regarding the general social climate of the ensemble, Hazel had many positive things to say. She repeatedly refers to the group as “tight-knit,” and explains how she feels that the orchestra is like an extended family in which all of the students are friendly cousins who help each other. This aligns with Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz’s (2003) study, which found that many students view their music class as a “home away from home.” Hazel takes the less than desirable situation of playing music that is not preferred and emphasizes that even in these cases the students have a mentality of pushing through it together. Similarly to Cosima, Hazel characterizes Ibis High School’s orchestra as a non-threatening place to make friends, an atmosphere in which even “friendless people” will make friends. Referring to the high degree of interaction between stand-partners as a suitable springboard for developing a friendship, Hazel states, “You’re at least going to get comfortable with your stand-partner. Even if you don’t become best friends you’ll still become close because you have to sit next to each other and you have to work with each other, and it always just ends up like, ‘oh we might as well talk to each other and make it fun, so let’s be friends and talk a lot, and mess around’.” Furthermore, Hazel admits that like any other organization, certain social

issues can affect the group, such as romantic relationships. She describes the comically uncomfortable awkwardness of two stand-partners who dated, held hands during class, and then broke up, stating, “They were stand-partners, and they would hold hands and stuff, and then there was *not* that and they were still stand-partners, so it was still really weird.”

Hazel acknowledged a few ways in which the ensemble is stratified. She mentioned instrument section and suggested that proximity was the main factor, stating, “Sections are part of it. Who’s in what section. Obviously the cellos are going to be more inclined to all hang out with each other than they’re going to be to hang out with us.” However, Hazel felt that this divide was not constant, but could change depending on the year and particular group of students. She explains, “This year we’re a lot closer as whole. Last year there were a lot of... not cliques, but people who were closer to other people. The violas were really close to each other, except for one of them, and then the cellos were all friends with each other, and it wasn’t really like all the violins were friends with all the cellos like it is this year.”

In addition to instrument section, Hazel identified class standing as something that could influence stratification, but did not think it was a significant factor unlike the other participants. Particularly the students in 12th grade did not mind the freshmen, but felt they should maintain a certain level of humility within the orchestra, unlike Hazel, who did not see such a large divide between underclassmen and upperclassmen. She suggested that a high level of musicianship was more important than class standing, stating “especially in orchestra [grade level] really doesn’t matter. It’s really skill and what you’re like as a person. If you can play well as a freshman then no one’s going to be like

‘ah you’re a stupid freshman.’” She also states, “We don’t have that many seniors this year, so there’s no one like ‘I’ve been in here 4 years and this is how it’s going to [be]...” However, Hazel did feel that the freshmen often stuck together because of the novelty and uncertainty of the high school experience. She explained, “...this year since there’s a lot of freshmen since they’re all new they’re all getting really close to each other ‘cause they’re all going through this scary first year together... so all the freshmen in orchestra are really close, even if they’re in cellos and violins.”

Although she devoted far less time to it, Hazel, like Cosima, identified outside activities and friendships as variables for clique formation with the orchestra, explaining, “And then other than that what they do outside of school, like if anyone’s friends outside of class they’ll hang out with each other.” I observed evidence of this during a day that deviated from the regular orchestra agenda. Instead of rehearsing as a group, the students were to perform their solo and ensemble pieces for the class, so students were not necessarily required to sit in their section. During my time in the field, I noted that although most students stayed within the general vicinity of their respective upper-string section or the lower-string section, a few students did cross over. One group of students sitting in the back seemed to be united by a mutual interest in one bass player’s attempt to play matchmaker with one of the cellists, and the resulting text messages of this endeavor.

Collective identity. Hazel also had some illuminating perspectives on the collective identity of the orchestra. She felt that all students define the orchestra, and that each student’s uniqueness helped to make the group what it is, which is consistent with pluralist themes other participants have noted. Furthermore, new students are “enveloped

into the society of the orchestra” and inside jokes such as Rudolph’s “Twerkestra” were noted as experiences that bonded the orchestra together and gave them something only members could understand and appreciate. Hazel also pointed out that membership within the orchestra carried with it a certain expectation from her teachers. Students in orchestra are perceived to be smarter and more studious than the general school population. On the judgments of some of her teachers, Hazel said, “First impressions, if I tell a teacher I’m in orchestra they’re like ‘Ok, she can’t be entirely stupid.’ All of my teachers know me as... I work really hard, I get good grades, so I think they assume, ‘ok, she’s decent. She practices, probably spends time on it, just as much as she does for school’, so they appreciate that.”

Regarding the rest of the school’s perceptions of the orchestra’s identity, Hazel shared Cosima’s frustration with the orchestra’s lack of recognition in the larger school community. She did not have particularly nice things to say about the band, but noted that they are “way closer than the orchestra” and was envious of their solid niche within the school. However, also like Cosima, Hazel seemed uneasy about the orchestra being characterized as an exclusive clique like the band students, saying, “Everyone hears the band ‘cause they’re at football games and stuff, but no one really hears the orchestra, no one really comes to our shows unless it’s extra credit for one of their teachers. So I wish we had that, but I don’t really wish we had like an orchestra group, clique.”

Hazel and one other participant, Serena, (who also considers herself a leader in the orchestra) took severe stances on the whole orchestra’s responsibility to play their best, as well as the director’s responsibility to motivate them to do so. Hazel felt that the orchestra did not play music that was appropriately challenging for them, and felt that

this was a main reason why she was not motivated to practice and why other students were not motivated either. She also felt that the director's easygoing and nonthreatening approach to making corrections and supporting higher levels of musicianship was not sufficient to motivate the students. She wanted specific students to be called out by name, explaining, "And Mr. Kimble is really, really sweet and he never tells anyone like 'that sounds terrible' like, 'it's you.' He's just like 'someone's outta tune over there' and like, 'you guys should practice at home.' He doesn't really, really push us, and I feel like the main way to get someone started with violin is just make them feel bad." Hazel elaborates on her stance by pointing out that the embarrassment she felt during other orchestra rehearsals and during her violin lessons as a result of not being able to play what was asked of her motivated her to learn the part.

Karina. Karina is a senior violist in Ibis High School's orchestra. She is tall and thin with short, curly brown hair, and brown eyes. She is quiet and mild-mannered, but really warms up to her friends, and really opened up to me during her interview. In addition to viola, Karina also enjoys playing guitar and piano. In her guitar class, she likes to set her phone on her stand and look up tablature to popular music. Karina has a unique perspective as a participant because she transferred to Ibis High School from a mega-magnet school, which she was attending for the strong orchestra program. She spent two years engaged in rigorous study at the magnet school, and is now finishing up her second and final year at Ibis High School, which is a comprehensive school. Karina admits that she does not practice the orchestra music, and that she does not care very much about orchestra even though she loves music. She sits in the middle of the viola

section next to a freshman boy. Karina is eighteen years old. Themes that emerged from Karina's interviews were a) meaning and value, b) leadership, c) socialization and social stratification, d) collective identity, and e) the director.

Q: Why did you stop taking lessons?

A: Because I got into the school and once I got into it I realized that I didn't want to continue with it as much as I had in 9th and 8th grade. I never realized, when you take it for 2 hours a day you start to notice that you don't love something as much as you did, or thought you did.

Q: Can you talk about how your experience with orchestra in the magnet school is different from the one that you have now? Why did you decide to do orchestra here even though you just left the magnet school?

A: [Laughs] bad answer. It's because I wanted to get into college, and it looks really good on an application if you played for most of your life, and to have played for that many years. I had played for like 6 years before, and then just to stop in 11th and 12th doesn't really make sense. And also I wanted to make friends. But, it's really different here than it is there 'cause there it's like a family, and you're there for two hours with these same people every day, and here, Mr. Kimble doesn't really let us talk so much, so we don't really get the social aspect of it.

Q: So, what other things were different between your experience with that orchestra and the one that you have now?

A: [Laughs] It was much better. The music level was stronger, the conducting was better... I was like last chair there, not last chair, but I was towards the back of the section. Here I'm like mid-section but it's because I don't really practice. I don't try as

hard as I did at the magnet school, which is saying something because I was almost last chair. It was much stronger playing level, and the music was super difficult. We played the same music from the beginning of the year to the middle of the year, and here we played like a billion different songs.

Q: So talk to me about your practice routine.

A: The magnet school you kind of had to practice, not every day, but you'd have to practice a few times a week at least because it's really tough music. If I didn't practice at home I wouldn't have been able to place like 3rd to last chair. And then here the music is really easy. Mr. Kimble, he writes a lot of the music himself, and I think that a lot of the music is played by middle schools in the area, and we're playing at a middle school level, and I notice that a lot of kids also don't practice because they don't care. If we were playing more difficult music I think we would play better...

Q: So why is the orchestra meaningful to you?

A: I mean, I've been doing it for so long now that it's kinda like a part of my life. Every day I go to school and I play, and in this orchestra... I don't know... I guess it's kinda like I care about all those people because we're friends.

Q: Why do you feel the way you do about the music performance assessment (MPA)?

A: Because you get judged on that, and my friends at the magnet school, last year we got straight excellents, and they were all like "ah haha" because they always get superiors and they rubbed it in my face. Mr. Kimble, I think he's been really wanting to get a superior and I think every year they get excellents. We're really out of tune, and that's always reflected in the comments, and we're still really out of tune, so...

Q: Alright, what about academically? What do you get out orchestra academically?

A: You get a college recognition, like colleges look at instrument, and... Our section leader last year, he got into Cornell, and he went far with it. And I think he also submitted like a music piece, like he performed for them.

Q: Talk to me about your roles in the orchestra here, either unofficial or official.

A: I'm supposed to be orchestra manager, I guess... Mr. Kimble asks us at the end of the year what role we want to take on, and I think last year I said I wanted to be treasurer or something, but he made up orchestra manager, and that means I do paper work, and I'm supposed to be a leader in the orchestra, but I don't really do anything.

Q: Have you had to do any paper work so far?

A: Yeah, I've had to fill out field trip forms, which it's not really a big deal, and I've also had to put in solo and ensemble requests, process stuff. All I have to do is type in a few words. It usually takes like 20 minutes every time he asks something. And Hazel's also orchestra manager. We're co-orchestra managers.

Q: What about your unofficial role in the orchestra, maybe something people know you as?

A: I don't know... all the other violists are underclassmen. The other one is a sophomore and the rest of them are freshmen, so I think they kind of look to me, like what's going on, because they weren't there last year, and they don't really know, so I talk to them a lot. And then I get in trouble. Mr. Kimble stares at me and he gives me the stink eye because I talk more than they do. [Laughs] Yeah, it was the same last year. The worst behaved kids in the class are the oldest because they don't care anymore.

Q: So you said that you think that the younger kids kind of look up to you. Do you ever help them out or anything?

A: Well, no. Usually about other school stuff, like I'll explain to them that there is a show going on, not really about orchestra stuff. They're all good players so they don't really need my help.

Q: So what do you feel is the most important contribution that you make to the orchestra?

A: I think I play loudly, and I think that's what helps most because all the viola players are really timid, even our section leader. She plays very quietly, and when I play, I'm really loud and obnoxious. I'm just a loud player, so I think I add that because a lot of times, especially in sight-reading, people hold back. Even if I make a mistake I just keep going [Laughs] and barrel on.

Q: What does it mean to be a leader in the orchestra?

A: I don't know... Hazel's the closest thing we have to a leader. She's our leader, but no one really... listens? We follow her kind of, but I don't even think we have any leaders. Everyone does their own things.

Q: Did you talk a lot more when you were in the magnet school's orchestra?

A: So much more. Mr. Kimble always complains about how we're talking, but that's kind of a normal aspect of orchestra, as long as it's not being too disruptive. And we don't really talk that much here. Over there, you talk to your stand-partners, and as long as you keep it quiet. It was like a 100-person orchestra when we were all together, so there was no way to keep all of us focused, and we're in high school [Laughs]. You kinda had to. He was very relaxed about it, the conductor over there.

Q: Is there anything else beyond the college aspect of it that has kept you continuing with it?

A: I guess friends. I made friends last year when I came, and I have fun. I don't know if you've sat in on a few of the classes, but you know that the bassists in the back make comments and Mr. Kimble never hears them, and they're very inappropriate, and that's fun, and I've made new friends this year, and they're all younger, but I don't care [Laughs].

Q: How did you feel when you came in [to orchestra]?

A: The friends I made in orchestra this year, or last year were like my first friends 'cause it's really hard to make friends coming in as an 11th grader because all of these kids have been going together since middle school, and I'm out of area also. I live far away, and I didn't know anybody, but there's 3 other violists. I'm still friends with one of them, but the rest graduated. And they were the first friends I made. They were really nice to me, and that's good.

Q: What do you get out of it socially would you say?

A: You make new friends that you usually wouldn't meet because you're thrown together with all 4 grade levels. I take gifted classes, so maybe some of these people I wouldn't actually see. I take AP, so... Some of the kids, maybe I wouldn't even know they exist. Sometimes I'm walking down the hallway and I see a new person, and I'm like "oh, you go to school with me?" [Laughs]. You get to see more of the school, I think.

Q: Is [the orchestra] more like a class, or a club, or a family?

A: I guess it's a class. I feel like I have a little family of my group of friends, but it's not the whole orchestra. I don't talk to the kids that are all the way on the other side of the

room, and we only have class for an hour a day, and the first and the last 5 minutes are gone so you don't really get to talk to them.

Q: How do the older orchestra members prepare the younger members to be part of the orchestra?

A: I mean, I gave them an introduction on the first day of what to expect, and I said we're going to play 30 different songs before MPA and we won't end up performing one of them for it [Laughs]. And I said to get used to Mr. Kimble talking for a long time, and just to stay quiet, and I talked about the seating auditions, and just tell them about everything.

Q: When you were at the magnet school, how did they prepare you when you came in as a freshman? Was it different than what you got here?

A: Yeah [Laughs]. They're really obnoxious, and it was mostly boys, and they didn't even talk to us, and when they did it was like "turn the page." They're funny. They didn't acknowledge anybody that wasn't an upperclassmen. I mean, they were nice. They weren't mean.

Q: Is there a lot more mingling between all the different grade levels in this orchestra, than in the magnet school?

A: I guess so, yeah. Once you become a 10th grader there, it's like you're inducted because you go into full orchestra, but when you're a 9th grader you don't play with full orchestra. You play with the freshmen group, and then a concert group, but not the full...

Q: Does this orchestra have cliques?

A: Yeah, I'd say so.

Q: Yeah? What seems to define the cliques?

A: I don't want to say grade level, but the freshmen all kind of hang out together like a little band. I would also say location in the orchestra because since we can't really talk, I mean, I can't talk to someone who's all the way at the violin section, so I talk to the basses, and I talk to the violas, and then, like, two or three of the cellos.

Q: Ok. Did your other group at the magnet school, did that orchestra have cliques in it?

A: Yeah

Q: What seemed to define the cliques there do you think?

A: Where you went to middle school, and I kept the same friends that... I also got new friends, but I kind of stayed with the same people that I was in orchestra with at middle school.

Q: Do all the cliques interact with each other, or is it, people from this group, they don't really talk to other people?

A: Nah, I think they all talk to each other. Our orchestra's so small, so even the cliques... there's not a lot of people to talk to. There's like 25 kids.

Q: Is there anything you would keep the same about this orchestra if you ran the orchestra?

A: I guess I would say, like, the diversity of the group, how he kind of, he auditions it based on skill level. A lot of orchestras, they won't take a freshman into an advanced class, so that's good... Some of the freshmen are really good.

Q: What do your friends outside of the orchestra think of your participation in the orchestra?

A: Most of my friends... I don't think they think anything of it. It's just part of me, like how they play a sport, or part of everything I do. They're actually surprised, like if I have a new friends and they're like "you're in orchestra?" and they always think it's band, and I'm like "No. No it's not. It's different" [Laughs].

Q: What about the teachers or the principal? How do they feel about your participation, or about the orchestra in general?

A: Some of my teachers get really excited when I tell them, especially if they see me at a performance. When we did the caroling- Were you here for that? Yeah you were. My English teacher was like "I didn't know you played an instrument!" and she was so excited, and she was clapping. I think they like getting to know you more, and, most people don't know, if I tell someone this person plays in orchestra, they're like "what?" They have no idea. I don't think people brag about being in orchestra [Laughs].

Q: You know how some groups in the school have labels, like the preps and the jocks and the punk kids? Does the orchestra have a label like that?

A: I would say no because... today I was talking to this kid... about one of the basses, and he was like "he plays? He's in the orchestra"? He had no idea. People don't really think about it, and it's such a small part of the school that most people... I think they'd be surprised if they knew.

Q: What about at the magnet school? Did they have labels?

A: There it's more like you're labeled by your program. The IB kids have a connotation to it. It's a magnet, the IB program... each program is different, but that one, you know that they're cheaters, you know that they like to do parties, they like to go crazy when they're not taking tests. And then the orchestra kids you know... most of them are Asian

[Laughs]. Most of them are... weird, and then the band kids are obnoxious... They're kind of like labels. Yeah the band kids, the orchestra kids, but [at Ibis High School], being in orchestra doesn't make you an orchestra kid. It just makes you *in* orchestra...

Q: Ok, can you describe that a little bit more, just the divisions, and what assumptions you would make based on the labels?

A: Well, the programs there don't really mix, so if you're in orchestra, most of your other classes you're with orchestra kids and other arts program kids because it runs in the same schedule, so you know who the band kids are. You know the drama kids especially. You know those are the kids, they dress whimsically, and you can point them out, who they are, the way they dress, the way they talk. It's kind of clique-y... The VPA program is like a family within each family because you have each of those arts, and then they get all together to do a show at the end of the year, so you kind of get to know everyone.

Q: And here is not like that? You wouldn't be able to point an orchestra kid out, just in the hallway like you could a drama kid?

A: No, I don't know anybody who's in the younger orchestra. I wouldn't know. I'm surprised when I find out, "oh you're in band" and I know most of the band kids.

Q: How would you describe your orchestra director to someone who's never played in an ensemble before?

A: I don't have nice things to say [Laughs].

Q: That's totally fine.

A: It's really overwhelming, and he's really controlling, and strict, and this is really mean, I feel bad saying it, but he whines so much. When we're talking, which isn't talking, somebody's whispering on one side and he stops everything and he yells at us,

and he starts whining, like “guuuyyys”, and it really gets on my nerves. I’ve never had someone, any of my conductors... usually they get their baton, and they start slamming it on the thing, and they’re like “everybody shut up”, and they just keep going. It’s quick.

Interpretation. Meaning and value. When it comes to the musical aspects of the orchestra, Karina’s general view is apathetic at best and negative at worst. It is clear that, despite the burnout she suffered from the intensity of the magnet school she had attended, she loves music. She takes extra music classes like guitar and spends time at home playing piano and revisiting old viola solos, but she feels frustration with the level of Ibis High School’s orchestra. She mentions that many of the local middle schools perform the same music that Ibis High School performs, and this clearly embarrasses her. This attitude is also reflected in the way Karina discussed her view on the music performance assessment. She believes it is important participate in the music performance assessment, but is ashamed when her friends in the arts magnet program point out their superior ratings and compare their performance to Ibis High School orchestra’s performance. She recalled, “my friends at the magnet school, last year we got straight excellents, and they were all like ‘ah haha’ because they always get superiors and they rubbed it in my face.” Karina pinpoints intonation as one reason for the orchestra’s lower rating, but fatalistically groans that they continue to play with poor intonation anyway. Similarly to Hazel, Karina believes that if Mr. Kimble raises the level of the music, students will feel more motivated to practice.

However, Karina clearly views the orchestra as a positive social space, and has identified this as a reason why orchestra is still meaningful to her despite the group’s inability to provide what she wants out of it musically. It can be very difficult to change

schools midway through high school, which Karina did. Many students have already established clique memberships, and each high school's social climate is slightly different. It takes time to adjust and learn the new rules of the school's social culture. Despite her burnout as a result of her magnet school experience, Karina explains that one of the reasons she chose to continue with orchestra is because she knew that she could make friends there. She recalls, "The friends I made in orchestra this year or last year were my first friends 'cause it's really hard to make friends coming in as an 11th grader because all of these kids have been going together since middle school, and I'm out of area also. I live far away, and I didn't know anybody, but there's 3 other violists. I'm still friends with one of them, but the rest graduated. And they were the first friends I made. They were really nice to me, and that's good." This corroborates much of what the other students have noted about the social climate of the orchestra, as well – that it is a suitable space to make friends and feel like part of a group. She notes that the social aspect of the ensemble is what makes orchestra fun for her, and mentions the bass players as an example: "I guess friends. I made friends last year when I came, and I have fun. I don't know if you've sat in on a few of the classes, but you know that the bassists in the back make comments and Mr. Kimble never hears them, and they're very inappropriate, and that's fun, and I've made new friends this year..."

Another source of motivation for Karina and the other participants is the weight that orchestra membership can carry on college applications and student resumes. In addition to friendships, Karina cites this weight as one of the main reasons she has remained a member of the orchestra. One reason why she chose to continue with orchestra after she left the magnet school is the hole it would leave in her resume, noting

“it’s because I wanted to get into college, and it looks really good on an application if you played for most of your life, and to have played for that many years. I had played for like 6 years before, and then just to stop in 11th and 12th doesn’t really make sense.” It is interesting to note how Karina prefaced her response with “bad answer” when she talked about the orchestra’s value for applying to colleges. This suggests that she understands people expect her to value orchestra for the musical experiences, and not to view orchestra as subservient to extra-musical goals like college acceptance.

Leadership. Although Mr. Kimble identified Karina as being one of the leaders of the orchestra, she does not appear to view her leadership with the same enthusiasm that Hazel and Serena do. She did not seem very interested in talking about her co-manager position in the orchestra, and had trouble finding an example of her leadership in the viola section, explaining, “Usually about other school stuff, like I’ll explain to them that there is a show going on, not really about orchestra stuff. They’re all good players so they don’t really need my help.” Although, she did mention that she considers her loud playing to be an important contribution to the viola section noting that, “...all the viola players are really timid, even our section leader. She plays very quietly, and when I play, I’m really loud and obnoxious. I’m just a loud player, so I think I add that because a lot of times, especially in sight-reading, people hold back...” When asked to identify other leaders, Karina mentioned Hazel, but then seemed uncomfortable with declaring a leader. She stated, “I don’t know... Hazel’s the closest thing we have to a leader. She’s our leader, but no one really... listens? We follow her kind of, but I don’t even think we have any leaders. Everyone does their own things.”

Socialization and social stratification. Karina also offered her perspective on the various ways in which the orchestra is stratified. Consistent with many other participants are Karina's perceptions of an orchestra stratified by instrument section. She says, "I don't talk to the kids that are all the way on the other side of the room, and we only have class for an hour a day, and the first and the last 5 minutes are gone so you don't really get to talk to them," which she later clarifies is really just an arrangement of convenience, but not a conscious effort to avoid the first violinists.

Furthermore, Karina's experiences in both the magnet school's orchestra and Ibis High School's orchestra provided a unique perspective regarding social stratification. She was able to compare the social structures of each group and noted that the magnet school appeared more highly stratified by class standing. Younger, newer members were usually not acknowledged, or, they were asked to do silly chores like turn the pages even if they were not the inside stand-partner. But, Karina said, "Once you become a 10th grader there, it's like you're inducted because you go into full orchestra, but when you're a 9th grader you don't play with full orchestra." According to Karina, this social structure is different from Ibis in that there is more camaraderie among students of different age levels. Karina admitted, "...and I've made new friends this year, and they're all younger, but I don't care." Furthermore, when Karina was asked what benefits she received from the orchestra socially, she identified the fact that orchestra caters to all four grade levels and it enables her to "see more of the school" and meet more people, and despite her numerous criticisms of the director, she agreed with his decision to allow entrance into the advanced orchestra based on merit instead of grade level, noting, "a lot of the freshmen are really good," which suggests that she views the variation in ages positively.

The director. Of all of the participants Karina was the most critical of the director. While many students considered Mr. Kimble their favorite teacher, Karina was blunt when she prefaced her feelings with, “I don’t have nice things to say.” Unlike the other students, though, Karina had not been working with Mr. Kimble since she was a freshman, so she had a limited amount of time to develop respect for him and to nurture the same type of relationship that many of his other students already have. She felt that he spent too much time addressing behavior issues when she wanted to play, which is a sentiment shared by Cosima, as well. Comparing Mr. Kimble to her director from the magnet school, Karina explained, “When we’re talking... [Mr. Kimble] stops everything and he yells at us, and he starts whining... it really gets on my nerves. I’ve never had someone, any of my conductors... usually they get their baton, and they start slamming it on the thing, and they’re like ‘everybody shut up’, and they just keep going. It’s quick.”

Collective identity. Finally, Karina’s perceptions of the collective identity of the orchestra corroborate what many of the other participants have also noted, which is that there is a general lack of identity among the larger school community. The orchestra is not as visible as the band or the drama program, and unless a student is walking with their string instrument in the hallway, Karina admits that she would have no clue whether they were in the intermediate orchestra. Although her teachers view her involvement with support and enthusiasm, which is also consistent with accounts from other participants, Karina asserts that students do not “brag about being in orchestra” and notices that when she makes new friends outside of orchestra, they are always surprised when they find out she or another mutual friend is involved with the orchestra. One quote encompasses the whole issue of the orchestra’s identity: “...but [at Ibis High School], being in orchestra

doesn't make you an orchestra kid. It just makes you *in* orchestra." Karina compared the collective identity of the orchestra at Ibis High School to the identity of the orchestra at the mega magnet school from which she transferred. She explained that at the magnet school, each program has its own identity and stereotypes that go along with it. She described the stereotypes associated with the "IB kids" and the students from the arts magnet program. Students are able to develop, interact with, and transmit cultural norms for each magnet program because they spend so much time together each day, but at a comprehensive high school in which involvement with music may be more casual, the prototypical orchestra student is not well-defined.

Mica. Mica is a senior violinist and equipment manager for the orchestra. He has long brown hair that is thick and curly, which he usually ties back in a loose ponytail. Mica is quiet and easygoing. He always seems relaxed and carefree, which is reflected in his perceptions of the orchestra. Although he admits that he does not practice very much, Mica considers himself a strong enough player to help out less experienced players when he hears something being played incorrectly. He plays in the first violin section. In addition to violin, Mica has picked up other instruments like the oboe and the guitar. When he was in 8th grade, he took a brief break from orchestra to join the band for a year. There, he learned to play the oboe. Now, Mica primarily thinks of himself as a guitarist that also plays violin in the orchestra. He is seventeen years old. Themes that emerged from Mica's interview are a) meaning and value, b) leadership, c) socialization and social stratification, and d) collective identity.

Q: Can you describe your practice routine for me?

A: I really only practice violin if it's for, like, for solo and ensemble, where it's something I have to play myself. The rest of the orchestra can carry fine enough with me and I'll figure it out anyways. And mostly I really don't have that good of a practice routine 'cause I don't have enough time with school to practice as much. I more just play. I just pick up my instruments and play whenever I feel like it.

Q: Why do you participate in orchestra?

A: I just find it fun. I enjoy playing violin, and doing it in school kind of forces me to play, which I enjoy. [Laughs]

Q: Why is the orchestra meaningful to you?

A: 'Cause other people will have the opportunity to play. I mean, it's just fun to play instruments, I think, so, getting to do that in school kind of, not choosing everything you wanna do, I find a bit challenging, I guess... I mean Mr. Kimble chooses all the songs. He'll ask us for input, but I mean it's mostly him choosing. And I guess as a guitarist it's weird for me to have to get the bows right and get all the little details right.

Q: So, what feeling do you get when you walk into the orchestra classroom?

A: The high schooler in me would say it's a free period, but it is fun, and something productive, definitely.

Q: And how does that feeling compare to the feeling you get when you walk into other classrooms?

A: it's something more relieving, don't have to worry about taking a big test or anything, or what grades, so it's a bit of relief walking in.

Q: What are the best parts about being in the orchestra?

A: I guess being close to people who share the same things as you. I also enjoy playing instruments. Something not a lot of people seem to do anymore.

Q: What about the worst parts about being in the orchestra?

A: Honestly there really isn't anything that bad.

Q: So, there's nothing you really would be like, "ehhh, that's not my favorite part...?"

A: Nah, not really.

Q: Is the orchestra more like a class, or a club, or a family, or something else entirely?

A: It's somewhere between a club and a family... 'Cause it takes a dedication like a club, but we're also closer together. We're not just there for it to look good on college or anything. We all really care about playing music.

Q: So, what do you see are the benefits to being in orchestra?

A: I think it's good 'cause... you're part of a team, and people actually rely on you. And instead of... like a sports team, and they can't just pop you out for someone. You're really needed there 'cause the more people always the more your orchestra will sound.

Q: So, how have you managed to stick with the orchestra all these years?

A: I just enjoy playing a lot.

Q: So, talk to me about your roles in the orchestra, official or unofficial.

A: I guess, officially, the equipment manager.

Q: What do you do as the equipment manager? How did you get that job?

A: He had a survey or something last year asking everyone what we wanted, like what jobs they would want, and I chose the equipment manager. And pretty much I'm just in

charge of all the violins and instruments. If a string breaks or something then I'll, you know, get them a string or fix it if I need to.

Q: So that's your official role, and you've been doing that since last year?

A: No, just this year. Last year I think I was director's assistant, but in intermediate orchestra.

Q: Talk to me about the director's assistant. What do you do?

A: Pretty much it was just whenever he was absent I would just get everyone to play. That way we don't waste a day when there's a sub.

Q: What types of things did you encounter as the director's assistant?

A: Well, since it was intermediate they don't care as much, so it's a lot harder to get everyone to play. Unlike now in advanced where everyone actually wants to play, which is one of the reasons why I chose to go to advanced.

Q: What types of things did you like about being the director's assistant?

A: I just think I could keep a beat steady enough. I thought that would benefit the orchestra and we need that.

Q: And what were some things that you didn't really like about being the director's assistant?

A: Everyone was just talking, so it took a long time to get everyone to quiet down.

Q: So, what do you feel is the most important contribution that you make to the orchestra?

A: That's a good question [Laughs]. I mean, I guess I tend to help the people in the back, sort of.

Q: Talk to me more about that.

A: Well, since I stopped taking lessons I feel I'm not as good, but since I have the potential I can... also from taking music theory... like sight-reading I can get odd time signatures and things like that easier, so I could help people next to me, around me, with that.

Q: How do you usually do that? Like if you notice somebody who might be having an issue, how do you usually address it?

A: I just try to work it out easily for them. Yeah, I don't know how to explain it.

Q: Let's say maybe somebody next to you is counting a half note incorrectly. How would you fix it? What would you say?

A: I guess I would try to put emphasis on where the note actually is while trying to keep a metronome so they know where it goes in the actual beat.

Q: So, would you talk to them about it or would you just play with more strength?

A: It depends who it is. If I'm friends with them I'll probably say something. A lot of times people just play it wrong for a little bit and then they figure it out for themselves anyways.

Q: What does it mean to be a leader in the orchestra?

A: I guess it means to get everyone pretty much shut up, but not tell them to, just, bring out the part in them that actually wants to play.

Q: Who are the leaders in your orchestra and how does one become a leader?

A: I'd say the leader would be Hazel, obviously being first chair. She knows how to be a leader. She puts on being first chair. She'll take initiative, like if she doesn't like a bowing or something, she'll go in the section and tell everyone to change it. There was a

part from each section, the first player, she's playing something, and she would count everyone in and make sure that they're coming in on time.

Q: How do you become a leader if you're not one?

A: Just take more initiative, and not fool around as much.

Q: What are the good things that you would want to make sure to tell [a prospective 8th grader] about?

A: It's just a really fun class, and you'll remember more people in orchestra than your other classes. Make long-lasting friendships. Just be smart when you're talking in class, not to make it obvious [Laughs].

Q: What if Mr. Kimble gave your class a free day? How would you use your free time in orchestra?

A: I'd probably just talk with my friends. Like I said you're so close to them anyways that you really do want to talk to them.

Q: And what do you get out of it socially?

A: Just with people, like I said, you're just with people who enjoy the same things you do a lot... have the same passion...

Q: Where do most of your friends come from?

A: Probably, my closest friends are definitely from orchestra.

Q: How do the older members of the orchestra prepare the younger members to be part of the group?

A: I guess just talk to them. Yeah, orchestra, it's one of the few classes where what grade you're in doesn't really matter as much... Yeah, just be friendly. Talk to them like you would any of your other friends.

Q: Does your orchestra have cliques in it?

A: Maybe a little bit. There's like 3 or 4 seniors I think, so we kind of have our own group that even Mr. Kimble started acknowledging.

Q: The senior clique?

A: Yeah, although we're not even all seniors. It's just the people that talk, I guess, in that group.

Q: What seems to really define the group?

A: I'd say since we're upperclassmen, and we've had those experiences of having the big orchestra, so we kind of see the whole difference.

Q: Who is in the clique that you're talking about?

A: I'd say me, Serena, Valencia, Ivy, who's not a senior... that's pretty much the main ones.

Q: Are there any other cliques in the orchestra that you've noticed?

A: Not really. Maybe just like Hazel and Jane, 'cause they're juniors, so again I think it's just that age difference.

Q: So, you know how some groups in schools are given labels, like preps and jocks and the goths, and the punk kids? Is orchestra seen as a group like that?

A: No, that's more band, 'cause band seems more involved with things after school, but orchestra, we do a lot of things outside of the orchestra. I'd say there'd be a big difference between band and orchestra, like who goes into college and majors in something music-related, or takes place in a music-related, say the college orchestra or college band. I've definitely seen a bunch of people in band who go on to college and then they play in the bands there, but I can't remember an orchestra person doing that.

Q: So, what is the label?

A: Just... the band kids [Laughs]. Yeah, 'cause they're always hanging around the band room, and since there's more band classes to take they can spend half their day in there anyways.

Q: So, what about the choir? Are they more like a group like the band, or are they more like you guys?

A: I'd say they're more like us. Plus, there's also a good number of people that are also in drama, and drama is more their own thing.

Interpretation. Meaning and value. For a laidback guy like Mica, the meaning and value he finds in orchestra is fairly simple: it is fun. This is something he repeated numerous times in one variation or another throughout the interview. He simply loves making music and playing an instrument, especially with other people who share that interest. As an aspiring engineer, Mica takes an academically rigorous schedule and feels that orchestra is a respite from that. In fact, he had a difficult time coming up with anything he disliked about orchestra, saying, "Honestly, there really isn't anything that bad." It is interesting to note how Mica projects this optimistic view of orchestra's perceived value onto his fellow ensemble members, using an inclusive "we," saying, "We're not just there for it to look good on college or anything. We all really care about playing music" despite some of the other participants admitting that college aspirations are a heavy incentive for their continued membership.

Leadership. Mica also discussed leadership and other roles within in the orchestra. Consistent with his positive disposition, he feels that an important component of leadership is to "bring out the part in them that actually wants to play." He admires

Hazel's demonstration of leadership through her ability to take initiative and cue her fellow musicians in after rests. In general, Mica feels that Hazel "puts on being first chair." Although he was modest and nonchalant about it, Mica discussed his own contribution to the orchestra through his leadership. He cited his knowledge from the advanced placement music theory course as something that has helped him contribute in this way, explaining, "...like, sight-reading I can get odd time signatures and things like that easier, so I could help people next to me, around me, with that." Last year, when Mica was a junior he served as the director's assistant for the intermediate orchestra, which is an officer position that involves rehearsing the ensemble in the director's absence. He expressed frustration with the younger orchestra's disinterest in rehearsing and noted that this was a challenge for him.

Socialization and social stratification. The ability to make friends is a common theme throughout many of the participant interviews, and is something that Mica mentions, as well. He asserts that people can expect to make long-lasting friendships in orchestra and believes that his closest friends are from orchestra. The social aspect of the ensemble seems to be important for Mica, who enjoys being involved with an activity in which people who share the same passion can interact with one another. This appreciation for the social aspect of the ensemble is also reflected in Mica's emphasis on the collective in some statements. For example, he compares orchestra to a sports team by noting that a sports team can "pop you out" for someone else, but in the orchestra it is not advantageous to dismiss people because this diminishes the sound of the orchestra.

Echoing the sentiments of several other participants, Mica, too, feels that grade level does not matter as much in the orchestra as it does within the general school

population. He feels that older orchestra students should just “talk to them like you would any of your other friends.” Although there is friendly intermingling between students of different ages, Mica does acknowledge that age can play a role in how students tend to group together. For example, he mentions the senior clique in the orchestra, which the director has started acknowledging. Two other participants, Valencia and Serena, are members of the senior clique, as well, and they also corroborate Mica’s claims in their interviews.

Collective identity. Finally, Mica illustrates a familiar picture of the orchestra’s collective identity by juxtaposing it with the band. He and many of the other participants view the band as having a unique identity, one that can be labeled, and one in which generalizations can be made about that label. He explains that band students are more heavily involved with the band than orchestra students are involved with the orchestra. He cites their numerous after school rehearsals and the fact that they have more band classes afforded to them as electives, so the students spend much more time together throughout the day. Whereas, there are only two orchestra classes and students are only allowed to enroll in one. Mica also points out that the band students typically have different goals and priorities regarding how they might or might not use their experience in a high school music ensemble, stating, “I’d say there’d be a big difference between band and orchestra, like who goes into college and majors in something music-related, or takes place in a music-related, say the college orchestra or college band. I’ve definitely seen a bunch of people in band who go on to college and then they play in the bands there, but I can’t remember an orchestra person doing that.” He also repeatedly mentions

that orchestra students “do a lot of things outside of orchestra”, which is consistent with other participants’ perceptions of the pluralist nature of the high school orchestra.

Rudolph. Rudolph is a soft-spoken bassist in Ibis High School’s orchestra and he is in 11th grade. He is tall, with an athletic build, short, curly brown hair and thick-rimmed glasses. Most days he came into orchestra wearing a t-shirt and athletic shorts, and often has sports practices after school for basketball or volleyball. Originally a cellist since 6th grade, Rudolph switched to the bass as an 11th grader. This transition was natural for him, and he has seen a lot of success as a bass player. Although he is quiet, Rudolph considers himself to be the jokester of the orchestra. He enjoys making the back row of violas and cellos giggle during rehearsals, and according to the other interview participants, the enjoyment is mutual. Both Hazel and Karina mentioned Rudolph as someone who makes their orchestra experience more lighthearted and fun. He is sixteen years old. The themes that emerged in Rudolph’s interview are a) meaning and value, b) socialization and social stratification, c) roles and leadership, and d) collective identity/perceptions from outside the orchestra.

Q: Why do you participate in the orchestra?

A: I like music. It’s great, you know. It’s pretty much like a stress-reliever after a long day of math and reading and hard work. I look forward to orchestra.

Q: Why is the orchestra meaningful for you?

A: ‘Cause it’s just part of me. I’ve been listening to music since I was pretty much in my mom’s stomach. My dad always play rumba or salsa, and he kinda passed that on to me.

Q: What feeling do you get when you walk into the orchestra classroom?

A: I feel a sense of superiority since I know my music really well, or somewhat well. It's just a calm and placid place.

Q: Imagine that you're the orchestra director at a school kind of like this one. What would you do differently if you were the orchestra director?

A: Try to make every kid learn their music, 'cause I think some kids in our class don't really know their music that well. I don't know how they get away with it [Laughs].

Q: Who are they?

A: I don't blame them 'cause they're freshmen and sophomores. It's rare to see a senior not know their music, but I've seen a couple. Like, my freshman year I had seniors not play well, and I happened to be the first chair as a freshman for cello.

Q: Let's say that the orchestra director, Mr. Kimble, gave your class a free day. How would you use your free day in the orchestra?

A: I would try to play piano a little bit, and if there was a guitar, or if I brought one I would also play that. I would try to socialize a little bit. Everybody likes talking in class.

Q: How do you think other people would use their free time?

A: They would just probably talk, or play other instruments if there was any other available.

Q: Are there any students that are in the orchestra that are in a band outside of school?

A: Uh huh. The other bassist, Maurice, he also is in a band. He plays the drums. And one free day, he got the instrument, the drums, from a room, and Mr. Gray (the band director) told them not to take it, but he went out, hooked it up, and started playing it [Laughs]. And then he started teaching all the other kids how to play it also.

Q: So, Maurice was teaching drums?

A: Not teach, like teach, but, he was playing and these people were like “oh that’s really cool, can you, like, teach me something real quick?” and then he would teach them something.

Q: Is there anything else you’d like to share with me?

A: The only thing I have is, Mr. Kimble would make us speak in front of the whole class about ourselves. He would make us sit on a chair and talk about how old we are, our name, [birth] date, our past. Not on a personal level, but like, how long we’ve been playing the instrument, and if we play any others, what college we’re going to if we’re a senior.

Q: Does that make you feel better about getting to know some of the other students in the orchestra?

A: It makes it easier instead of approaching them, like “hey what’s your name” [Laughs]

Q: What about the freshmen? How do the freshmen do when they’re talking about themselves in the orchestra?

A: They’re probably a bit scared since they don’t know anybody. It’s new faces. And the older people in the class are eager to hear them.

Q: Since you’re in the back of the class sometimes you can see the orchestra a little bit better than somebody sitting all the way up at the front. Have you seen anything that you want to share as the bassist?

A: People talk to each other across the room, sign language, or read lips. Other people would just read, talk to each other, be on their phone, be like, “oh look at this picture on Instagram.”

Q: Are you in a clique in the orchestra?

A: Oh, I get [along] pretty much well with everyone. Very sociable guy.

Q: Is there a way that you guys make [the freshmen] feel welcome?

A: We make 'em feel welcome, or try to. Like in every high school experience, we'll be like, "oh, let the freshmen do it."

Q: What types of things like that?

A: We would try to encourage the freshmen to be first chair, if they can. We're like, "oh, keep playing, keep playing, you'll be first chair." Or sometimes we'll have competition, and I remember the seniors would tell me, "oh, you're not going to be first chair" so, you know, that would help me step up.

Q: When you were a freshman, there were the seniors who said the same things to you?

A: They would do it with a smile, you know, joking, be like, "this freshman right here..." like they picked. I was their favorite freshman, I don't know why. Like, "ohh, come on freshman", whatever. But there was this one senior who was always very competitive, and I would always compete with him.

Q: What do you feel is the most important contribution you make to the orchestra?

A: Hmm... I don't really feel anything special. I don't think I contribute anything... I-I don't know...

Q: What would the orchestra be missing if you weren't there?

A: Uh...another bassist? [Laughs]... Or, to laugh in class, again, since I'm the jokester.

Q: Who do you think are the most important people in the orchestra, the ones who really define the orchestra?

A: All of the first chairs...since they pract-well, I *assume* they practice their music. They're the ones who really know how to play.

Q: What does it mean to be a leader in the orchestra?

A: Taking a lot of responsibility... Telling the people to quiet down. Knowing when to be serious, and always being disciplined and listening to Mr. Kimble. Being part of every event, being outstanding, practicing at home.

Q: Who are the leaders of your orchestra, and how do you become a leader?

A: I think Hazel's a leader. She's a concerto-master—mistress. She's always practicing constantly, even after school, during class. To be a leader like her you'd have to do the same thing.

Q: And what are the roles of the leaders in the orchestra? What do they do?

A: They follow Mr. Kimble's instructions, and when to quiet down, when to speed up, slow down.

Q: What are some things that you would want to make sure an 8th grader would know?

A: To know when to shut up [Laughs]. To practice also. 'Cause, if you know you're good, then just stay good. If you know you're slacking, then just practice at home to catch up, so Mr. Kimble doesn't have to say anything.

Q: What about the worst parts about being in the orchestra?

A: [Laughs] probably get teased a lot. It doesn't affect me at all, I don't mind. Some people don't know their instruments...they call the bass a big violin, a big cello.

Q: Where does that usually come from?

A: The people who are probably not musically talented, or don't know, they're ignorant, I guess.

Q: Alright, so the worst part about being in orchestra is—

A:--Oh I don't know if that's the...that's not the worst part for *me*... I don't really have a worst part. I like music. If someone says, "hey, you suck 'cause you love music", you know, I don't care. They suck 'cause they don't enjoy music.

Q: What do your friends who are outside of the orchestra think of your participation?

A: Some of them make jokes. Others are like, "oh, you play the bass, or cello, that's pretty cool", you know, they like it, and they would give me suggestions to learn music. Or if they see me with an instrument, they'll be like, "oh, can you play this?" on the spot, and I'll try to learn it quick [Laughs].

Q: What kinds of things?

A: Like hip-hop, I guess. They would make me try something really quick on the spot. Or some pop music.

Q: Have you been able to?

A: It's very difficult, but a couple times. The people would ask me, "oh, can you play this and that", and I would make something up really quick.

Q: So, you said that you have some friends that kind of joke around with you a bit?

A: Not make fun, but they'll probably grab the instrument and start playing random notes, and start singing a song [Laughs]

Q: So, what do your other teachers think about your participation in the orchestra?

A: Individual-wise, they probably don't know anything. On the orchestra level, they enjoy it. Especially the principal 'cause she's very strong for music, or the arts program. We played for them also during Christmas while they were in their office. We went in there and started playing Christmas medleys.

Q: And how did they feel about it?

A: It brought joy, of course. It brought a smile. Some kids also find out that I'm in the orchestra. Like, "ohhh, you're in the orchestra?! Ohhhh!"

Q: And they didn't know before?

A: Nah, they didn't know.

Q: What types of things do they say?

A: They'll be like, "oh, that's really cool", you know, or "what type of music do you play, or "what instruments?" and then, like on the basketball team, some kid'll be like, "Oh, I saw Rudolph playing the big violin" [Laughs] "I saw him play the big violin" and then he starts singing some song, like dum dum de-dum de-dum (sings).

Q: And so they try to imitate what you're playing on the bass?

A: Yeah, it doesn't bother me though. It's very funny. I enjoy.

Interpretation. Meaning and value. Rudolph speaks positively about his involvement with the orchestra, characterizing it as a stress-reliever and a "calm, placid place." He loves music, and cites his family as a large influence, sharing, "'Cause it's just part of me. I've been listening to music since I was pretty much in my mom's stomach. My dad always play rumba or salsa, and he kinda passed that on to me." The orchestra is also a source of confidence for Rudolph, who takes pride in knowing his music well. He recognizes that others do not know their music as well and wonders aloud, "I don't know

how they get away with it.” Rudolph values practicing, and feels that fellow orchestra members should not put themselves in a position where “Mr. Kimble has to say something” because they have not learned their music.

Roles and leadership. Although the director identified Rudolph as one of the leaders, he was very reluctant to identify any type of musical leadership that he contributed to the orchestra other than just playing. When asked if he had any other responsibilities in the orchestra, he simply stated, “a responsibility to play my music.” However, it is possible that Rudolph is being too modest, or that he has never put too much thought into the ways he might lead the orchestra. During one of my observations, Rudolph was absent, which left the other bassist, Maurice, on his own. The orchestra was sight-reading music from *Shrek: the Musical* in preparation for serving as the pit orchestra for the show. I recorded in my field notes that Maurice was visibly upset and nervous because his stand-partner, Rudolph, was not there to help him sight-read. When I walked over to offer my assistance, Maurice said, “I wish Rudolph was here. He helps me count.” I witnessed Rudolph helping Maurice during another observation that took place a week later. The orchestra was rehearsing for their music performance assessment, which Rudolph was prohibited from attending because he had exceeded the number of late arrivals allowed within a school year and was banned from participating in extra-curricular activities. As a result, Rudolph was in class, but he did not play. So, for the duration of the class period Rudolph sat next to Maurice and helped him. Interestingly, when I asked Rudolph what the orchestra would be missing if he was not there, he joked, “another bassist?” It is possible that Rudolph did not know the extent to which Maurice relied on him for help with the music.

Despite downplaying his own opportunities to lead, Rudolph did share his thoughts on leadership displayed by other members of the orchestra. In general, he felt that leaders in the orchestra know when to be serious, they take responsibility, practice at home, and are actively involved with the orchestra. Consistent with most of the other participants, Rudolph identified the first chairs as the most important people in the orchestra, and he mentioned Hazel, the concertmaster, as the main leader of the orchestra. He cited her dedication to practicing as the most obvious display of her leadership.

Socialization and social stratification. Rudolph's interview was peppered with different ways that students in the orchestra class interact socially. He talked about how some students make faces and sign across the room to each other, while others text to communicate from opposite sides of the orchestra. I observed this behavior during my visits. Most students had their phones set to silent sitting on their stands next to their music and would pick them up during rests or during times when the director was working with a different section. He also shared with me how the director helps students to get to know each other at the beginning of the year by asking each student to introduce themselves and share some information about themselves. He found this to be helpful, saying, "It makes it easier instead of approaching them, like 'hey what's your name?'"

Another major opportunity for socialization occurs during free days, which usually happen when the director is absent immediately following a concert. According to Rudolph, most students do not play their instruments during these days, and he admits that he enjoys giving his bass a rest to play the piano that is in the classroom. Students take a break and socialize, which typically involves getting into circles and talking. One of the preferred activities, which was also mentioned by both Serena and Cosima, is to

take out the drum set, which is actually prohibited, but Rudolph confessed that they do it anyway. He shared with me one of the most memorable free days, which involved the other bassist, Maurice, taking out the drum set, and sharing that skill with the other orchestra students. He described it with a smile on his face: “The other bassist, Maurice, he also is in a band. He plays the drums. And one free day, he got the instrument, the drums, from a room, and Mr. Gray (the band director) told them not to take it, but he went out, hooked it up, and started playing it [Laughs]. And then he started teaching all the other kids how to play it also.”

As an agreeable and easygoing student, Rudolph was reluctant to discuss cliques or labels within the orchestra. He emphasized that he gets along well with everyone, and he considers himself to be a “very sociable guy.” However, he did reveal that class standing can influence how people interact in the orchestra, which deviates slightly from what others like Karina and Hazel have described. For example, he mentioned that upperclassmen are friendly and encouraging to the freshmen, but this is not without the occasional teasing and egging on, which Rudolph insisted they did “with a smile.” He shared an example of this from when he was a freshmen in the cello section. Seniors encouraged him go for first chair, but would also engage him in well-intentioned competitive behavior because of his freshman status.

Collective identity/perceptions from outside the orchestra. Rudolph, who plays volleyball and basketball, was the only student who mentioned any type of participation in sports, and many of his friends outside of the orchestra come from those sports teams. While most other students speculated that their friends outside of orchestra were either surprised to learn that the school had an orchestra or indifferent toward their participation

in orchestra, Rudolph was the only student to add teasing to those reactions, which he viewed as just harmless fun. He recalled how most students end up finding out who is in the orchestra when they travel the school to perform holiday carols for the teachers and students. This embarrassed some of the participants, like Valencia, but it did not embarrass Rudolph, who thought his friends' reactions were entertaining. He shared how some of his friends would jokingly call his bass a "big violin" or try to imitate his bass by humming. Rudolph notes that his friends are not hostile toward his involvement with orchestra, and in fact, some show their interest by asking him to play hip-hop songs on his bass. He admits, though, that this is difficult, so he usually makes something up as quickly as he can.

Serena. Serena is a confident and outgoing senior violinist who plays in the first violin section of the orchestra. She is tall, thin, and has brown hair that is thick and falls just below her shoulders. She sometimes wears thick-rimmed glasses. Serena has been playing violin since she was in 6th grade, and enjoys telling the story about how it was originally a misunderstanding that started her multiyear involvement with orchestra. When she was in 5th grade preparing to choose classes for middle school, she saw "strings" and assumed this meant guitar class. Initially confused and slightly disappointed on the first day of class, Serena stuck with it and ended up loving orchestra. Serena is heavily involved with orchestra and the music department in general, holding the treasurer position in the orchestra, and actively participating in the school's Tri-M Music Honor's Society. Always striving for improvement, she also began taking private violin lessons at the beginning of the school year. She is seventeen years old. Themes that

emerged in Serena's interview were a) meaning and value, b) leadership, c) socialization and social stratification, and d) collective identity.

Q: How does it feel to walk into orchestra class as compared to your other classes?

A: I think it's more of a comfort zone 'cause we've known each other so long, and 'cause you're with the same teacher for four years. I'm glad I got to spend all four years of my orchestra time with Mr. Kimble, 'cause, you know how people call like a cool teacher someone who's... I don't know how to explain it, but I guess it's a sense of respect and, like a caring that we've come to have for Mr. Kimble...

Q: What are the best parts about being in orchestra?

A: The music. It's just awesome to play the music. These are things that some people in the school have never even heard of... some of these people's names. I guess everyone knows Mozart and Bach and all that stuff, but if we said Dvorak, or what we're playing now, Waltz number 2 by Shostakovich, they'd be like, "who is that?"[Laughs]. I guess because we play the music it's just natural to have more knowledge of those composers.

Q: That's the part you like most about orchestra?

A: Yeah, I like having that fun fact knowledge... Music students would know it, but not people outside of it. It's like... a humble exclusivity, 'cause we don't hold it over anyone else, it's just knowing that you do something different.

Q: So, how would you describe your orchestra director to someone who has never played in an ensemble before?

A: I guess someone who's going to be joining that group, I'd say, as an older person when you first meet him, you'd be like "oh wow, this guy's, you know, typical, older teacher", but, over the years knowing him, I've just had this immense respect for him. I

think he's a great guy. He really, I can tell, loves what he does so much. I know that the majority of orchestra directors, they do love the music, but there's a certain, I don't know... I guess because he's also a composer, he has this whole... an idea about how the music should sound because he can hear it all in his head. There's a certain passion that he has that I think is amazing, and I think he's a very inspiring individual. He's probably one of my favorite teachers I've ever had in my entire life. I'm going to be sorry to see him go. 'Cause since he's retiring I can't just come back to school and be like, "oh, Mr. Kimble." 'Cause that's what a lot the seniors do. They just come and visit. They come to the school itself and then they visit whatever teacher is still teaching here. So yeah, so that's the only thing I'm really sad about. If they were coming into the school, I'd say although he can be like... that old guy that's like, "get off my lawn, you kids!" He's an awesome person.

Q: So, tell me about your roles in the orchestra. What do you do? Unofficial or official, what types of responsibilities?

A: Well, officially I have the treasurer's position, so I just collect the money, just so that he doesn't have to waste time, 20 minutes of the class collecting from people. And we're doing solo and ensemble now, when somebody gives me the money I have to write down which event they're doing and things like that. And also when we have fees I have to keep a list of who has and has not paid. But there's not really much paperwork to go with that, it's all just making sure everyone pays up.

Q: What does it mean to be a leader in the orchestra?

A: I guess just being involved in general, because although Hazel, she's a leader musically, but not to the group as a whole. She can lead a section like there's no

tomorrow, she's so good. And there are songs, they do solis for one violin, one second, you know, and right before that person has to come in, she cues them in. She's very good when it comes to things like that. But, it's just musically. When it comes to the group as a whole, I think that I would consider myself one of the group leaders because a lot of the people come to me in the sense of, "oh, where do I turn this in, and who do I give this to?" and things like that because I've been involved so many years, and it's just knowing how things work, 'cause I know how Mr. Kimble is after all these year. I'm also a bit organized... I have an organized mess, so, if you need something come to me, and then also, I'm a leader of the music honors society, and I try to get the orchestra involved as much as I can.

Q: How do you become a leader in the orchestra?

A: I think it's just initiative, like if you want to be a leader then you just end up being the leader. A lot of times in the orchestra Mr. Kimble can tell if you don't put any effort in, and he understands that a lot of us don't put the effort just because the music is obviously not easy, but it's doable in the amount of time we have, so the fact that Hazel puts the initiative to be the best violin in the orchestra, so she's obviously the concert master. And then in my case, just being like the leader of the group, in a sense of like "oh, let's do something about our problem" or whatever. It's taking that initiative. Because before Tri-M was run by basically like band kids, and then I was the one orchestra kid that was an officer last year, and now I got my friends involved and now it's all orchestra people except for one band kid. And I got the orchestra involved in... they have us do projects, and for our Thanksgiving basket we turned in enough food for like two baskets. And

some clubs and classes turned in incomplete baskets. Everyday I'd be like "guys, bring in stuff, sign up for stuff 'cause it's for a good cause."

Q: What about a typical year? What would you want to make sure [an 8th grader] knows about?

A: Well, that throughout the year, there'll be days definitely where you're like, "ugh, this guy's being crazy" or you'll say like, "this student needs to, like, keep his mouth shut", but then there are also really good days, Like, some days after concerts he'll just let us relax and it's just a fun time, everybody's talking to each other. And at the end of the year you end up with friends that you wouldn't think you'd have. 'Cause before orchestra, some of the people, that's the only class I have with them. And like I said before, like the jocks, and people who are in student council, like class president, or class secretary, and you end up being friends with them just because of orchestra. If they continue on, it's friends that you'll remember forever because you spend four whole years with them.

Q: Where do most of your friends come from?

A: Most of my friends I met in my middle school orchestra. And the friends that I have now I met through those friends. So it was kind of like orchestra started a whole chain event, I guess. I know my three closest friends, I met them sixth grade first period orchestra, Ibis Middle... And the majority of my friends that I met, actually in elementary orchestra are from Ibis elementary. And the majority of my friends are all from Ibis elementary now because they were friends with those two or three that I met in middle school, and now I'm friends with them, so I guess like a chain reaction... through association with the orchestra... And also one of my three closest is actually my stand partner, Mica.

Q: What about unofficial roles in the orchestra, like maybe something that's not your official title, but you, sort of, act as that?

A: We're all kind of equal. Other than our actual positions we all kind of see each other on the same plane.

Q: What about the worst parts about the orchestra?

A: In the orchestra in general, a lot of times people aren't always at the same playing level. It's sometimes difficult when someone can play something amazingly, and then the whole orchestra wants to play that, but then there's a few that can't play it. It doesn't just frustrate the conductor himself, but it can also frustrate the other players, too, because they play their part well, and the other section can't, or it's a little more difficult, and so it does get a little frustrating, like sitting and waiting 'til someone else learns their part.

And another thing is just, I guess having to be quiet in a room for an hour, like for the most part 'cause most of the sound, although our orchestra, specifically we talk a lot. Most orchestras it's just like, you're sitting there, and most of the sound comes from your instrument, not from yourself. Socializing usually happens before and after, which I guess is kind of cool. Specifically about this orchestra, a lot of people, although they enjoy it, they don't take it as serious as Mr. Kimble wished they would. 'Cause I take it, I enjoy it, but I do also take it seriously. And although we always do end up talking, it's kind of hard not to 'cause we're just high school kids, but sometimes people just go overboard.

Another thing is, sections-wise, the violins usually get their things, like not exactly on point the first time, but violins and violas are usually the first to get their parts, and then often we're like, "cellos, basses, get on that beat!" [Laughs]. Also, just Mr.

Kimble, I guess 'cause he's older, and he's worked with professional orchestras, he gets frustrated easily when we get out of hand, so that kind of sucks, too, 'cause he'll say, "come on guys, concentrate", and then somebody coughs in a way that sounds like a word, and then he'll just stop the orchestra and he'll be like, "look, guys we're trying to get things done here. This is an orchestra, guys. Can we act like adults here?" and it's kind of hard when he says that 'cause we're not adults, we're just kids.

Q: So, you've mentioned that it's kind of frustrating when some of the sections or some of the people don't really learn their parts. Is it specifically certain people?

A: It's just usually just the cellos in general, or cellos and basses in general, 'cause their part, although it's on the beat, they always get speedy parts that are on the beat, so they tend to either speed it up or slow it down, and they get really intense I guess. And they usually don't stay on beat, that's the only thing. Even the best of the cellos. She's good, but you know sometimes she's just not in her prime that day.

Q: So, what would happen if one of the younger students tried to step into a leadership role, like one of the freshmen or the sophomores?

A: Well, considering that we don't have that many seniors I guess it wouldn't be so bad but, there's like three or four of us seniors, and we definitely wouldn't... we would respect them to a certain extent, but after that, it'd be like ugh... you're not a concert master or a senior, so why should we listen to you? It's the seniority thing.

Q: How do the older members of the orchestra prepare the younger members to be part of the group, to be assimilated?

A: We just kind of socialize with them. I remember when I was a freshman and I entered the orchestra it was kind of the same thing. Although we were freshmen we still... we

wouldn't be friends outside, but we would have conversations with them. They wouldn't mind. They would say jokes like "oh haha freshmen", but in the end of the day we'd still be talking to them, and they'd still make jokes with us, and we'd still make jokes with them. So it's still like that now, too. A lot of the freshmen, they're very cool. We don't like disassociate ourselves. We definitely involve ourselves with everybody, 'cause I'm friends with some of the sophomores, the freshmen, the juniors.

Q: So, you said there's always a couple of students who are kind of annoying. Can you talk to me about them?

A: Well, there's quite a few freshmen that I don't agree with in our class. But there's a lot that I do. There's a lot that are great. I know the violinist freshmen, they're awesome kids. I don't think I've ever had a problem with them. But there's one viola. She's kind of a know-it-all. [Laughs]

Q: Is she trying to step up into a position of leadership?

A: Definitely! I can tell that she uses her information or her knowledge. She'll look it up. Also, when Mr. Kimble explains a music theory situation in one of our songs, and she would go once the class is over, the rehearsal is over, she'll be like, "oh can you explain that further?" and sometimes it's kind of like do you really want to know about that or are you trying to get on his good side? It's sometimes questionable. And it's kind of funny, 'cause Mica had taken music theory two years ago, and I'm taking it now, and so we joke like, "oh, she's a freshman, she could just take music theory in the next couple of years. She doesn't have to know now." The freshmen in the violin section, they seem to be a little bit more humble about being freshmen. 'Cause a lot of times freshmen are like "oh, I'm in high school and now I own this place." And there are many that are just fine,

they're just like, "oh I'm in high school, it's kind of cool, like alright." So it's... like who they are as a person 'cause I feel like outside of class they're probably the same thing. It's probably not just the orchestra.

Q: So, if the director gave you a free day, can you describe a little bit in more detail what you guys do during your free day?

A: Well, free day, it starts out... everyone's like, "oh, we don't have to play. That's great." We don't necessarily separate, but we just naturally fall into our own little groups. Our group is generally the upperclassmen, so juniors and seniors are generally with each other. And the freshmen and sophomores tend to cluster together. Last time that we had a free day recently, they were just telling stories about things that have happened, like their experiences. And then, the upperclassmen, we were just talking, or making jokes. It wasn't like we decided, "oh let's not go with the freshmen" it was just naturally we did that, and later on we were like "oh, wow look at that circle of like underclassmen"

[Laughs]

Q: How is this disrespectful guy seen by the rest of the orchestra?

A: People saw him as annoying. Everyone saw him that way, and he would make conversation with us... but in general people knew his character type, and how he was very disrespectful of people in general, especially of the girls. A lot of the girls did not appreciate him because he would always make comments during class while we're playing music. He would make comments about our bodies, or how the pants looked on us. And it was very like... very creeper status! Extremely... so a lot of the girls were like, "Neil, please, that's not necessary, shut up" or you know "stop looking at me, that's creepy" and then he would wink and like kiss noises. It was very super creeper status.

And a lot of the guys were like “wow, he takes it too far” and a lot of the girls were like “he’s very annoying”, but in the end, we wouldn’t disassociate him either. I guess naturally we felt like it wasn’t fair to leave him out just because he’s a terrible person. [Laughs] We would all curse him out that day, and then the next day we’d have a perfectly fine conversation.

Q: Do you think that you define the orchestra, or does the orchestra define you, or is it a little bit of both?

A: I think it’s a little bit of both because, I guess, when it comes to the orchestra, we all kind of make up who the orchestra is. A lot of students in our orchestra, people would think that they’re these prim, pristine kids that are... all AP’s and all we do is practice all day, and that’s the usual stigma with being in orchestra in a lot of schools, but for us it’s just we get together and we play music, and it’s kind of cool. And then we all kind of have our own little groups in a way, like usually the people closer in age, so a lot of the juniors and seniors in our class are closer. So, I feel like it’s just a little bit of everybody, like who people are. And also, it’s more like an extension of ourselves, it’s just something that we do, ‘cause there are all kinds of people in that class. You wouldn’t think people like that would be doing something like this together, but it’s just something we do, you know.

Q: What do you mean by “you wouldn’t think people like that would be doing this”?

A: We’re all just so different. Like outside of orchestra you wouldn’t know that we had known each other. We’re just so polar. ‘Cause if we put titles like jock and all that stuff, we have jocks in that class, we have people who don’t really do much except, like go to

school and have orchestra on the side. We have people who are dancers, we have I guess you could say preppy girls. It's all kinds of things.

Q: So, there's just a lot of different types of people?

A: Yeah, exactly. No one comes to school just for orchestra. People are doing other things, too.

Q: Do you think the band is like that, too, and the choir? Or is that kind of more of an orchestra thing?

A: I feel like it's just more of an orchestra thing, 'cause a lot of the band kids, since it's pretty demanding, considering that they have practices nonstop, most of them just do band, and then, 'cause a lot of times they need community service hours for college, and that's what they do. And then chorus kids, at least at our school chorus kids aren't exactly, well, truly involved in the music. There are a select few that are very talented, but then there are some that are just doing it for the fine arts credit.

Q: You've mentioned some of these labels like jocks and nerds and preps, and things like that. Does the orchestra have a label like that? Do they call you guys anything?

A: Not at this school. We kind of make our own thing, I guess. Like, I have a few band friends, and I'll call them band geeks and they'll be like "oh, orchestra nerds", but it's just a joke thing, I guess. I think a lot of people, actually, don't even know that we have an orchestra at our school. I can honestly say that at least half of the school doesn't even know that we have an orchestra.

Q: So what word would you use to describe the orchestra as a group?

A: Um... a machine.

Q: A machine? Interesting.

A: We all have to work properly. We're each parts of a machine, and if we don't play our part properly or work properly then the machine won't exactly run very well. A lot of the songs that we're playing, they're usually... Rondo in Blue. When we play that, it's a syncopated song, which a lot of us aren't used to. If you've heard when we're not together, you can tell we're not together in a song like that...

Q: Who do you think are the most important people in the orchestra, the ones who really make up what it is, who define it?

A: The perfect example of an orchestra person in Ibis would be... the majority would be a mixture between Hazel and Mica. 'Cause Hazel, she's amazing at what she does. She's definitely concentrated on her music, but only when she's there. Outside of it, she has her own thing going on. It's the same thing with Mica. He's kind of like that. But, then, Hazel, I think she takes the music - although she jokes around a lot - I think she takes her skill more seriously, but Mica's very like, "nahhh", very chill. Another thing, though, just the school itself, I guess because Ibis's such an academically competitive school, a lot of the students are AP students not because they want to be, but because we're being compared to our peers. I guess it could be a mixture of that. Also, another person could be Gabe 'cause he's involved in quite a few things outside of [orchestra], and Andy, also. They're both sophomores. Other than orchestra, Gabe does baseball. There's a good amount of people in the orchestra that do sports as well. And Andy, he's in student council. So it kind of makes up, 'cause a good amount of the students in the orchestra are extra-curricular kids, like, besides orchestra, but they're also AP students.

Interpretation. Leadership. Leadership is a topic that came up repeatedly during my conversation with Serena. She has some very strong opinions on what it means to be a leader in the orchestra, and she approached describing leadership much differently than the other participants. Serena divided leadership into two categories. One category is for musical leadership, which she felt that Hazel, the concert master, exemplified through her dedication to practice, her initiative, and her accurate cuing that helps other sections in the orchestra. The second category of leadership is what Serena calls “whole group leadership”, which she feels that she represents. For Serena, whole group leadership is meant to include the non-musical aspects of orchestra, such as helping students figure out where to turn in forms, understanding how to deal with the teacher, and getting the ensemble actively involved with service projects through the Tri-M Music Honors Society. Serena proudly and enthusiastically told me about how the music honors society was originally run by the band students, and how she was able to dramatically improve membership of orchestra students such that they overtook the program. During my observations, I noted Serena engaging in these types of leadership behaviors. Often when she walked into the class she had a task to do. I could see her checking off lists and stuffing envelopes addressed to certain students. She also appeared to answer questions posed by younger or less experienced students.

Collective identity. Serena gave one of the most detailed descriptions of her perceptions of the collective identity of the orchestra. Other participants characterized the orchestra with *people* in mind. Specifically, they considered the relationships between the people when explaining their descriptions. Other participants likened orchestra to a class, club, or family depending on how close and friendly they perceived the members to be

toward each other. However, Serena used the word “machine” to describe the orchestra. She explained that each person is like a part of the machine, and all of the parts must work properly for the whole machine to create a good product or, in the orchestra’s case, a good performance. It is notable how Serena’s characterization suggests that she is focused on the product of the orchestra rather than the members.

However, Serena did not focus solely on the product. Most of her other perceptions regarding identity align with what the other participants have also noted, which is that the orchestra’s identity (or lack thereof) is derived from a diverse group consisting of many different types of people with various interests and activities outside of the orchestra, which is consistent with previous research (Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007). Dancers, baseball players, AP students, and preppy girls are types of students Serena references as examples of the multidimensionality of the ensemble members. She asserts, “No one comes to school just for orchestra. People are doing other things, too.” Furthermore, Serena holds up Hazel and Mica as examples of the typical orchestra student. She notes that Hazel is dedicated, but she does not take the ensemble too seriously, and outside of class “she has her own thing going on.” Mica is similarly dedicated, Serena points out, but he is not as serious as Hazel.

Another way that Serena illustrates the collective identity of the orchestra is by highlighting the differences in identity between the band and the orchestra by saying, “I feel like it’s just more of an orchestra thing, ‘cause a lot of the band kids, since it’s pretty demanding, considering that they have practices nonstop, most of them just do band, and then, ‘cause a lot of times they need community service hours for college, and that’s what

they do.” In other words, the band students are known primarily for their involvement in the band, but because the orchestra does not require as much time, which affords students the opportunity to pursue other interests, orchestra students are not known or defined by their involvement with the orchestra. In fact, Serena, as well as other participants, speculate that there are students at Ibis High School who have no idea an orchestra program exists there.

Socialization and social stratification. Friendships and socialization were frequently mentioned by Serena during her interview. She discussed how orchestra facilitated friendships that she would not have had otherwise because those students were not in any of her other classes, a sentiment also expressed by participants in previous research on this topic (Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Campbell, Connell, and Beegle, 2007; Carter, 2013). Orchestra started a “chain reaction” of friendships starting in elementary school for Serena. These are friends that she still has to this day. In fact, one of her closest friends is her stand partner, Mica. She also referred back to the diversity of the ensemble as a positive thing, which enabled her to make many different types of friends from jocks to the class president to the AP students. In general, Serena characterizes the orchestra as a friendly group whose members are reluctant to alienate anyone, even someone who is known for something very harmful like repeated sexual harassment. Serena shared a story with me about a student named Neil who was not well-liked by the members of the orchestra because of his tendency to take jokes too far. Girls in the ensemble especially did not like him because he was known to make extremely inappropriate comments of a sexual nature. However, Serena claimed that the orchestra members did not have the heart to alienate him, saying, “And a lot of the guys were like

‘wow, he takes it too far’ and a lot of the girls were like ‘he’s very annoying’, but in the end we wouldn’t disassociate him either. I guess naturally we felt like it wasn’t fair to leave him out just because he’s a terrible person.”

Serena’s perceptions of the social stratification of the ensemble are very similar to what other participants described to me. In general, class standing does not usually matter when socializing with fellow orchestra members. The seniors and the freshmen joke around and talk during class, and Serena admits that she has friends from different grade levels within the orchestra. When she described what usually happens during a free day in the orchestra, Serena said that people naturally fall into their preferred groups of friends, and this is often loosely based on class standing. She emphasized that the upperclassmen group, which is her group, does not try to alienate the underclassmen. They do not deliberately avoid them, which is different from findings in previous research regarding the inclusion and exclusion of peers (Adler & Adler, 1998). Rather, she noticed this pattern after the fact because at the time she was not conscious of it. However, despite the friendliness between the age levels of the orchestra, Serena notes that underclassmen cross a line when they go beyond socializing and attempt to lead the ensemble, and, by extension, lead the seniors. For example, Serena felt that a freshman violist overstepped her boundaries by being too inquisitive about the music theory behind the pieces they play in the orchestra. This was considered a threat, and an attempt by the freshman to win over the teacher. She reacted to the idea of a freshman leading, saying, “We would respect them to a certain extent, but after that, it’d be like ugh... you’re not a concert master or a senior, so why should we listen to you? It’s the seniority thing.”

Meaning and value. When discussing some of the less fulfilling aspects of orchestra membership, Serena shared with me her frustration from certain students and instrument sections failing to learn their parts. She identified the low strings, specifically the cellos and basses, as the main culprits, which may be another way in which the ensemble is stratified. Serena's dissatisfaction with the low strings is in direct opposition to Hazel's assertion that the orchestra has excellent cellos this year. Serena revealed that it is irritating for her to have to wait for the lower strings to learn their parts, and felt that the violins and violas typically carried their own weight in the ensemble. I did observe that Mr. Kimble seemed to stop more frequently and for longer periods of time to fix and rehearse figures in the cellos. While I never observed the upper strings expressing impatience over the lower strings' difficulties with their parts, Serena suggested they have a desire to mention it to them: "... but violins and violas are usually the first to get their parts, and then often we're like, 'cellos, basses, get on that beat!'"

While friendships, socializing, and the ability to be part of a group are some of the features that make orchestra meaningful and valuable to Serena, she also talked about an appreciation for a more specialized musical knowledge and her relationship with the director as other significant aspects of orchestra. Serena characterized the feeling she gets from this deeper understanding of music as a "humble exclusivity", which means, "'cause we don't hold it over anyone else, it's just knowing that you do something different." She enjoys the "fun fact knowledge" about music that she has gained from orchestra and feels that this is one reason that orchestra is valuable to her. Further, Serena values Mr. Kimble as a mentor and feels that he is a special teacher who has impacted her life more profoundly than any of her other teachers. She smiled as she explained, "...over the years

knowing him, I've just had this immense respect for him. I think he's a great guy. He really, I can tell, loves what he does so much... There's a certain passion that he has that I think is amazing, and I think he's a very inspiring individual. He's probably one of my favorite teachers I've ever had in my entire life." Serena went on to say that she is disappointed that he is retiring this year because she was hoping to partake in the common graduate tradition of returning to the school and visiting beloved former teachers.

Valencia. Valencia is a senior in the orchestra who plays in the second violin section. She is petite, wears thick-rimmed glasses, and has long brown hair, which she often wears down. Valencia is quiet and reserved, but also appears carefree and indifferent toward much of what goes on around her. High school students might describe her as "cool." Valencia has played the violin for 11 years – since second grade. She likes orchestra, but she admits that she does not practice unless she has to. She sits toward the back of the second violin section. Like most of the other participants, Valencia holds an office in the orchestra, which is the uniform manager. Her job involves fitting students, issuing, and collecting uniforms at the beginning and end of the school year. She must also deal with uniform emergencies including those that might come up on the evening of the concert, although no such emergencies came up in our conversations. Valencia is eighteen years old. Themes that emerged in Valencia's interview were a) meaning and value, b) seniority, c) collective identity, and d) socialization and social stratification.

Q: Why do you participate in orchestra?

A: Partly for college, 'cause it looks good. Um... it's fun.

Q: Yeah? What parts are fun?

A: I guess, 'cause I'm good at it I guess. I kind of want to use my talent.

Q: Why is it meaningful for you to be in orchestra?

A: 'Cause I'm a part of something. I do something with school, like I'm part of the... I represent the school, I guess.

Q: Do you think that you define the orchestra, or does the orchestra define you, or is it a little of both?

A: I don't know. I think it kind of defines me. I don't think I define it.

Q: How does it define you?

A: Well, I've been in it for a long time, since childhood...So, I guess it kind of formed me in a way. Plus, all the things I've learned from it, including socially, like all the friends I've made, and it kind of defines me.

Q: How does the feeling when you walk into the orchestra room compare to when you walk into your other school classrooms?

A: Well, going to other classrooms is always... you have to be prepared for something, like homework is due, or you have a quiz, or whatever, and going to the orchestra room, it's kind of stress free, you just play, and if there's like a quiz for playing, it's, I mean, you've already been practicing... it's pretty stress free.

Q: What does it mean to be a leader in the orchestra?

A: To make sure that everyone is cooperating, and everything functions well, and to help out Mr. Kimble 'cause he has a lot of things to do. Well, also lead the younger kids. Normally the leaders are the upperclassmen.

Q: How do you lead the younger kids? What types of things do you do?

A: Well, I don't really, but I'm supposed to [Laughs]. Like, telling everyone to be quiet, or listen to Mr. Kimble, to not talk pretty much while we're playing, just cooperate.

Q: How do the older members prepare the younger members to be orchestra members?

A: Well, I guess they kind of warn them... Of certain things that we have to do, and have to deal with. Like, we have to go caroling, which is really embarrassing... pretty much telling them that class is still good. That's really embarrassing, you have to do it. We tell them everything we have to do for the year, and that's just what it is, and it could be pretty embarrassing, so we warn them. We tell them how they should behave because Mr. Kimble can be very temperamental, so, "just don't do anything stupid." You can't take things too personally because Kimble gets mad at everyone, and if you feel really bad, I guess we just prepare them for that. It's like socially.

Q: Who do you think are the most important people in the orchestra, the ones who define it and make it what it is?

A: Okay, I guess the first chair kind of defines us in a way, but like if we don't have her one day... I think it's not one person, maybe all of the first chairs. The first and second chair in all of the groups kind of define us in a way, but we can do without, as in, it's not *bad* without them, but kind of a little bit essential. People who define us are... the older kids because we've been here for a long time, so they know, [Mr. Kimble] knows us. Everyone knows us. That is what orchestra is until the next year when the juniors take over.

Q: Who are the leaders in the orchestra?

A: It's me and Serena, and Mica, and Ivy, and... Yeah, I forgot, but there might be some others.

Q: What makes you say Serena and Mica and Ivy over other students? What makes them stick out in your mind as leaders?

A: Because we're older and we know how Mr. Kimble feels about us, we know how to act in class... I mean, it feels like the freshmen... I don't know how they would control everyone. People listen to us.

Q: So, if a freshman tried to step into like your role, tried to do the things that you're talking about, what would happen?

A: They don't know everyone. They're new, so people might not listen to them, especially someone older. Not to be mean, it's just, that could happen. It just might be hard for them to step in. They might be shy. They don't know everyone. And they don't know how Mr. Kimble is. You kind of have to learn from him.

Q: What if the orchestra director gave your class a free day? What would you guys be doing?

A: Ok, well first of all, free days are normally the day after a concert. I don't know why, just normally they're the day after a concert. But, our free days normally, but not always, normally we play for like 20 minutes, maybe 10 minutes. And it's normally with the sub. He's not here, so it's with the sub, and we'll play for a little bit, but not everyone takes it so seriously, 'cause it's like "oh, we don't have to play", so no, we won't be playing on our free time. We'll probably be talking, socializing. There'll always be a whole set up so people start grouping. So, it'd be groups of people... freshmen and the seniors and the juniors. But in a way everyone knows each other, but also there are groups between

cellos, so everyone knows each other, but violins might not know some cellos 'cause it's on the other side. When we have free time, it's anyone around you, you normally sit near and you just start talking. Some people might get a little crazy, throwing balls, or whatever. There'll always be crazy people.

Q: Tell me more about these groups. So you've got groups that are made up of just freshman, or just seniors? How do you they make up the groups?

A: I've seen it, I don't know if it's because I'm a senior that I notice it. I think it's because we have a lot of freshmen this year, and they all know each other and they all group, but except one person. She doesn't like hanging out with the orchestra, I don't know. We have groups. The thing is, when I was a freshman, we were all a group, the whole class, so then, every year there were less people, and less people, and like this year it's just like, who's left? No one because the other seniors in that class either went into intermediate, like 10th and 11th grade, or came in 10th grade. Last year, the senior that was graduating, he was the last person I'm going to remember. Now there's all these new people in class, and I don't know them. There's all these freshmen, and I guess you have to become friends with the freshmen, which is fine, whatever, but they're kind of annoying sometimes. I never noticed until this year. But yeah, there are groups.

Q: Do you think the orchestra is more like a class, or a club, or a family, or something else entirely?

A: I would say it's not a class, only because some of us have known each other for like four years, maybe three, maybe two, so it's kind of like a club, and kind of like a family, but not a close family. Some of us have known each other for a while.

Q: So, you know how some groups in the school are given labels like you have the preps and the jocks and the goths? Does orchestra have something like that? Do you guys have a label?

A: A lot of people in the orchestra do other things. Like, sports, so I was a cheerleader. No one has seen a cheerleader in the orchestra, but I wasn't labeled as one.

Q: You weren't labeled as a cheerleader, or you weren't labeled as an orchestra person?

A: The cheerleader. I'm the cheerleader, or he's the baseball player, and the jock. There's like no labeling [within the orchestra].

Q: Yeah, do you think other people label *you* guys?

A: Oh. I would say I have no idea 'cause I haven't heard anybody talk about people in orchestra. We label the band kids. At least I do.

Q: What do you label them?

A: I don't know, I always found them kind of strange [Laughs].

Q: Do you have a name for them?

A: [Laughs] The band geeks. But people have called us band geeks, but we're not 'cause we're not band geeks.

Q: How do you feel about that when people call you a band geek?

A: I say I'm a band geek.

Q: You just let them do it?

A: I don't say I'm a band geek. I tell them I'm not a band geek 'cause I'm not in band. But sometimes I'll play along, like "yeah, I'm a band geek, whatever," but I'm not in the band technically, so yeah, and I don't really care.

Q: So, where do most of your friends come from?

A: Not from orchestra.

Q: Not from orchestra. Ok. Where, then? A club, or a class, or a sport?

A: Uh... class. Well, some of my friends, I've known them for a while, either elementary or middle school, like my best friends I've known since middle school. It's not from orchestra. Everyone kind of knows each other in orchestra. Everyone is kind of friends with each other, but I think it's just... sports. I've made some friends in sports, but they're not long-term friends. It's mostly class. Just one class you could be friends. If you had three classes in two years with someone, I could become friends with them, but I could not. It's not just by how much time I've known them.

Q: So, do they mostly come from your same grade?

A: Yeah, mostly, mostly my grade. Most of the people that I know that are younger than me or older than me are people from orchestra. I know ninth graders and tenth graders because of orchestra. Calculus, I think I have a tenth grader in that class because they are geniuses. [Laughs] so you might have younger friends, but you're not as good friends as with your same age, at least that's with me.

Q: What are the best parts about being part of the orchestra?

A: The fact that you can play with others...the same thing, and kind of, compare your talent, 'cause everyone gets seats, so you have parts, someone else has their part, but a group of people have the same thing, same part, and you just have to play in unison so, it sounds nice, and not just playing alone, and you get help from others.

Q: What about the worst parts about being the orchestra?

A: When someone else in your group, violin 2, or whatever... doesn't play it right. Like, when the teacher gets mad about, "oh second violins aren't doing this right," and you're doing it right, but you don't get the credit for it 'cause it's everyone together. It doesn't sound right.

Q: Are there cliques, would you say?

A: Yeah, cliques, but everyone kind of knows each other. I would say always every year, someone doesn't like someone else, just always happens. It's not like everyone loves everyone. There's always going to be someone does not like someone else. There's like a love-hate between some people.

Q: What does that mean?

A: Yeah, love-hate relationship, you know. As in, "you're like my classmate" or "you're my stand-partner, but I don't like you, so what am I supposed to do?" [Laughs]. I don't know, you kind of have to like them, but you don't. But then everyone's kind of interconnected. Everyone's kind of friends with everyone. But there's always people no one likes.

Interpretation. Meaning and value. Although Valencia's nonchalant and indifferent demeanor might lead some to believe otherwise, she values her participation in orchestra and sees many benefits to it including the ability to make new friends, its status as a relatively stress-free class, and the weight that orchestra can carry on college applications. Valencia also believes that she has a talent for the violin, and orchestra helps her to make use of that talent. Additionally, Valencia is one of the only participants to express that the orchestra defines her. She explains, "Well, I've been in it for a long time, since childhood...So, I guess it kind of formed me in a way. Plus, all the things I've

learned from it, including socially, like all the friends I've made, and it kind of defines me." Further, orchestra gives Valencia an opportunity to get involved in the school, saying, "Cause I'm a part of something. I do something with school, like I'm part of the... I represent the school, I guess."

Although Valencia cites the ability to make new friends as a positive aspect of the orchestra, and one that has given it meaning for her, she admits that most of her friends do not come from orchestra. Like Cosima, she is not as socially involved with the orchestra as the other participants have described themselves. Most of Valencia's friends come from her other classes and sports. However, she does note that the people she knows outside of her own grade are usually a result of the variety of ages in the orchestra, she points out that most of those people do not end up becoming close friends.

Seniority. Seniority and class standing are emphasized much more heavily throughout Valencia's interview compared to many of the other participants. She takes pride in being a senior member of the orchestra and feels that certain social privileges accompany that. Consequently, Valencia's discussion of seniority is often wrapped with other themes like leadership, social stratification, and identity.

For Valencia, seniority is seen as a prerequisite for leadership positions and influence within the orchestra. She explains that seniors prepare the younger members for orchestra by "warning them." One example that Valencia gave was the caroling that the orchestra does around the school every December, which she found embarrassing because "uneducated" students she had never met before were in the audience watching when she played violin and when she played the jingle bells. Newer members are also given advice about the director, who Valencia describes as "temperamental" on occasion.

She explained that the seniors show the younger members how to behave, and advise them not to “do anything stupid.” She seemed concerned that younger members might take the director’s frustration personally, and she wanted to make sure that they knew “the class is still good” despite some the aspects she does not enjoy.

Valencia was skeptical that a freshman would even be bold enough to make an attempt to lead, much less gain the respect and following of juniors and seniors. She did not feel that they had the knowledge to do so, and that it was a job better left to the seniors. In fact, when asked who the leaders of the orchestra are, Valencia named all senior violinists, and omitted Hazel, who is a junior, the concertmaster, and a student who had been named by nearly every other participant for her leadership abilities. Seniors hold the most power in the ensemble, according to Valencia, which suggests one way that the ensemble is stratified socially. It is also noteworthy that Valencia did not mention seniors in other instrument sections, like Karina, who is a senior violist, or Cosima, who is a senior cellist. There could be many different reasons for this. For example, it is possible that Valencia only pays attention to the people in her immediate vicinity, which is a phenomenon that has been noted by other participants. It is also possible that Cosima and Karina do not display the behaviors listed by Valencia that are necessary for leadership. Cosima, for example, is well aware that she does not try to get other students to quiet down and cooperate, which are behaviors mentioned by Valencia that exemplify leadership.

Furthermore, Valencia linked seniority with identity within the orchestra. She emphasized that seniors in the orchestra are well-known by the rest of the orchestra, and especially by the director. For Valencia, older members define the orchestra. She states,

“People who define us are... the older kids because we’ve been here for a long time, so they know, [Mr. Kimble] knows us. Everyone knows us. That is what orchestra is until the next year when the juniors take over.”

Socialization and social stratification. In addition to leadership and seniority, Valencia’s other descriptions of the social climate within the orchestra are less cheerful than many of the other participants. She was very open about disliking some of the orchestra members and finding some of the freshmen to be annoying. While she did mention that she felt orchestra members are “interconnected”, Valencia had no hesitations about describing cliques, which, like leadership, are usually aligned with levels of seniority. She pointed out that the freshmen tend to group together just as the seniors tend to group together during free days. She also highlighted the dissonance she feels when she knows that it is in the best interest of the orchestra for everyone to cooperate, but dislikes another member, such as her stand-partner. Valencia called this sensation a “love-hate relationship.”

Collective identity. Finally, Valencia shared her perceptions of the collective identity of the orchestra. Consistent with nearly every participant, she referenced the fact that many of the orchestra members are involved in other activities for which they are known around the school. She cited her own involvement as a cheerleader, and another student’s involvement with baseball, and she felt that she was not known as “the cheerleader” by members within the orchestra. Also aligning with what other participants shared is Valencia’s assertion that the orchestra does not have a label, but that the band students *do* have a label for which she is partially responsible. Valencia pointed out, however, that her labeling backfired when she started getting labeled as a band geek,

although this did not bother her too much. Amused by it, she occasionally plays along with those who mislabel her as a “band geek.”

Mr. Kimble. Mr. Kimble is the orchestra director at Ibis High School. He has white hair, glasses, and a soft voice. Although he was originally a wind player and a band director, Mr. Kimble is a veteran music teacher who has been teaching orchestra for approximately 35 years. This is reflected in his teaching, which appears natural, comfortable, and enjoyable for him. He is also an active composer of band, choral, and string music for student groups. When I asked him how his background in composition shaped his teaching, he flipped the question around and shared that his teaching has actually shaped his composition because he has learned such a great deal from his students. In addition to teaching intermediate and advanced orchestra classes, he also teaches a guitar class, and the Advanced Placement Music Theory course, which he really loves. Mr. Kimble is held in very high regard by his students, who say he is one of their favorite teachers, and someone they would return to visit after they have graduated high school. Themes that emerged in Mr. Kimble’s interview were a) meaning and value, b) leadership, c) collective identity, and d) socialization and social stratification.

Q: Regarding the students who take orchestra through their junior and senior years, why do you think they stick with it for so long?

A: Well, I think the ones that stick with that that long are really passionate about music... It’s been a part of their life to the point where they can’t imagine not doing it. I really think the kids who are with us that long are doing it for the love of music. They love playing their instrument. They like playing in a group. They like sharing their

performances with the public. Their school experience would be less so if they weren't in.

Q: "Their school experience would be less so if they weren't in." Can you expand on that a bit?

A: Well, I think when a kid is in orchestra up to a point and then drops out a lot of times it's because there's some other activity that's going to fill that spot. One that would come to mind would be sports... They see the time demands of either are not going to be compatible, so they make that choice. They're not dropping to do nothing... They've decided to join the drama team. They got picked to be the editor of the school newspaper and they're going to devote all their extra time and energy to that. So, for a student who is really in love with playing music... that's their activity, that's what they do, they might be involved in other clubs and things, but that's part of their image, they're a musician and they're part of the orchestra, same way that the basketball player looks upon himself, as that's part of what he does, plays basketball. If they didn't do that, there's nothing comparable that's going to fill that hole.

Q: Why do you think other students quit orchestra?

A: I think there's all kinds of reasons. The other activities could be a whole large number of things. Student is anticipating he's going to have, or she's going to have a job, or already has one, and knows because they've been in orchestra before there's going to be conflicts, so is choosing the opportunity for a job, and that means a lot of things to a kid... Or... the year that they were in orchestra... they also played baseball, and there were a lot of conflicts that came up... and they just decided that doing both isn't going to work, so they're going to go towards the sports. And imagine the AP classes. In some

cases, a disgruntled student just decides that “I didn’t like this. I’m going to do something else.” Or maybe a student sees that almost all of his peers are playing at a higher level than he is, and decides erroneously in my opinion, that he probably can’t get better... and maybe it’s time to do something else. Could be a kid has decided what he wants to major in college and do professionally and... takes electives in those areas, and then doesn’t have enough time. But there’s all kinds of different reasons, and I don’t know that there’s any one or two that stand out over any other. The student’s in the orchestra because mom and dad, or mom or dad... and the student’s finally deciding there’s really things I want to do, and this isn’t it.

Q: Why do you think 8th graders or students in the intermediate orchestra aspire to be in your top orchestra?

A: ...Most kids are pretty competitive right off the bat, and so if there is something out there for them to achieve and they haven’t achieved it yet, they’re going to want to do that. And of course they have opportunities to hear the other group, and it should sound better if it’s the advanced group, so they hear it sounds better, or they’re playing more difficult music. Maybe the music in the intermediate isn’t challenging to them, but because of the instrument they played, it was just really competitive to get in so they’re hoping that the next year they can move up... There are some activities that the advanced orchestra does that the other groups don’t, so that may be an incentive. The musical for one. There’s some kids for whom that’s a disincentive because it takes up a lot of after school time, but there will be other students who say “boy, I’d really like to do that, but I know I have to make the advanced orchestra, so I’m going to really work hard to make that happen.”

Q: So, besides the instruments, what are the main differences that you have noticed between your orchestra students and the band students that you taught?

A: Both groups of students run the spectrum from very serious about music with lots of practice time and private lessons and playing in youth groups to the other end... students who are either marginally interested or very interested but not terribly motivated to work, so I don't know that that's really a difference. In my experience the classroom atmosphere is different, and it struck me when I started doing orchestra from having already been a band director for several years that there was a difference. And what it seemed to me is, first of all, it's a quieter setting. Usually in my experience [orchestra] classes were smaller, and there were no percussion, people playing percussion instruments and brass instruments, so the noise level or the lack of that noise level, it was a calmer, a more serene atmosphere. And then the students on the other hand in the band seemed to be more – the best word I can think of – spirited, and more outgoing, and the orchestra students were more reserved and less spirited, not spirited at all in a lot of instances. Just enthusiastic level, enthusiasm for non-musical things. School spirit would be part of it, loyalty to the group is probably part of it.

...I think one of the reasons is that in my experience in high school band the kids would come in typically one or two weeks before the start of school and have a camp together, and a lot of the bonding goes on because they're together all day long, and they're enduring hardships together, hard work, and in South Florida brutal temperatures during that time of year. So by the time school starts they're really a pretty cohesive unit. Most of the kids will know most of the other kids, and the fact that they hung around in the band room for two weeks, probably ate lunch there, or took breaks there, or hung out

afterwards waiting for their ride. There was a lot of social bonding that went on. The orchestra kids on the other hand showed up pretty much on the first day of class, the same as they would in an English class, or a math class. The bonding that took place there took place at a slower rate and over a much longer period of time...

I've often times found it harder to motivate the orchestra students for things that took place after school, for example. And on the other hand the band kids... it was just a way of life for them. They always had rehearsals. They hang around there. The orchestra kids were there for an hour and then they left. Now, the orchestra kids, a lot of them knew each other from the year before if they were returning, or they may have played together in middle school. But, it was just a different sort of thing. They just seem to be a little more composed, and a little more withdrawn as opposed to a typical band class where they were spirited sometimes more so than you would like in an atmosphere where you're trying to get some work done.

Q: How do you think the population of the orchestra compares to the school population as a whole? Is the orchestra population a special population, markedly different from the whole school?

A: ...It has changed over the years. I would definitely say that the orchestra – the band as well – but, the orchestra was a special population. It was, consistently higher grade point averages, consistently high class rankings, more motivated, taking rigorous academic schedules, more so than an average student, a lot of advanced placement classes. Then, a number of things happened over the years. One was that a magnet school opened a mile or so down the road, and they heavily recruited a lot of the top players from the feeder schools that would be sending their students to our school. As a result the overall musical

level of the orchestras here went down... so as a result, the population of the orchestra started to look more representative of the school population than it did a special group that was at a higher level than the school population. That was a big factor. Another factor was the proliferation of AP classes, and the social pressure, particularly at this school, for the advanced students to enroll in AP classes... AP classes gave a student 2 extra honor points on their grade point average... A fairly significant number of very good musicians who dropped orchestra in favor of taking AP classes... The reason was “it raised my grade point average”, or they would tell us being in orchestra lowers their grade point average... So, as a result of those students leaving, the musicality and the average grade point average of the students who remained in the orchestra also went down.

Q: Do you have extra rehearsals, like after school rehearsals and how often does that happen?

A: ...There are after school rehearsals. For performances that involve the self-contained class for the most part there are no after school rehearsals. We try to get our work done in class. Kids have lots of conflicts after school. We have a fair number of kids who are playing sports, different sports, all year long. We have students who belong to clubs, various clubs, organizations at the school, some of them are officers in those clubs and they have meetings. We have kids who play in outside musical organizations or they're taking lessons, or we have kids with transportation difficulties, so if it's a performance that involves just the kids in the class playing together for the most part we try to do it in class...

Q: Would you say the orchestra is more like a class, or a club, or a family, or something else entirely?

A: I would describe it as more of a club atmosphere. But, I would say more of a club atmosphere than I would like. 'Cause I mentioned earlier, you asked me to compare orchestra students, and I said they seemed to be a little more serious, quiet, focused on the music rather than the other kinds of things, but my group right now is very social. Pretty young, so quite a few freshmen, much more so than is typical in the advanced group. Very few seniors, and a fairly big freshmen class... and sometimes that gets in the way of the seriousness of what we're trying to get done.

Q: How do you think the orchestra is viewed by the rest of the school population?

A: I think as far as the students go we're kind of a mystery. And many of the students are probably not aware of our existence. We have done some things, noticeably taking them right to the students, and this caroling thing, to try to put us on the map, have them realize that, yeah, this is an orchestra, and orchestras have string instruments in them. It's different than the marching band that they see at the football game. The musical also is very well-attended, and so students get to see an orchestra, rather than the band, or jazz band, or something. But...it's a big school. Kids don't know that we exist, or maybe they don't even know what an orchestra is.

Now, the teachers and the administration are different. We do have a very loyal following of teachers... [they] come to our concerts love music, love classical music, and orchestral music, and they know they have students in their classes who play in the orchestra... And then the administration is very aware of us and of what we do, and very supportive, and certain types of events that they have they come to us all the time to

play... They've told us the orchestra would add a very classy touch... Or, we have a visit from a school board member, or some dignitary, or some other kind of event...

Q: In what ways do the students lead? What types of behaviors do you notice?

A: Well, we have a pretty well-structured system of student officers, and they're given responsibilities... Those responsibilities break down into 2 parts. The first part is that they are be representative of their director at all times, whether he's there or not. They are to act as if he would want them to act, and they would expect the same from the other students. The other thing is specific to their particular position. So, we have a student conductor... her job is to direct the orchestra in my absence... so that's just not a day when nothing goes on. I expect they have a rehearsal like they would if I was there. And her other responsibility is... she might run one of the sections. Or to give particular help to a particular student or a section... I also give her opportunities to actually conduct at performances throughout the year, so it's not just a rehearsal thing. Then I have 2 student-managers... Their responsibilities ... are to handle all kinds of various paperwork... It's managing the business end of the orchestra.

Then, we have 3 librarians... Their job is pass out music, collect music, stuff the folders. Every day at the start of the rehearsal the 3 of them very quickly and efficiently pass the music out, so we don't have to wait, and at the end of the rehearsal it's very simple of the students to leave them on the music stand, and the 3 of them collect it...

Then we have 2 uniform managers... They have to fit all of the students and keep records of what's going out, and then that same thing at the end of the year. They collect everything. But in addition to that throughout the year if there are any emergencies, any

problems, anything dealing with uniforms, students are to see them and they take care of it.

We have a property manager... Somebody breaks a string, rehearsal goes on and he takes care of it, finds a string, helps them, he would actually string the instrument. Most of the instruments he would do. If we have a program and we have equipment moved, chairs, stands, whatever, he's in charge of that... Then our last position is treasurer... Any kind of money matters, there are fees to be collected at the beginning of the year, the school has a procedure and receipts have to be written, and forms, deposit forms, she takes care of all that...

All that is designed so that... rehearsal time is never used because the director has to take care of any of these issues, music, paperwork, money, uniforms... If we have a concert I expect the librarians and the uniform manager to be there earlier than the orchestra so that they're available if there's any kind of last-minute problems. And it's also meant to foster leadership and responsibility. There's not much glory in it, but the kids, hopefully, have a feeling that they're really providing a service... They're doing more than just being a member of the group...

Q: Are there any other official or unofficial roles in the orchestra?

A: ...I don't have section leaders as a position, as an officer position because I leave open the possibility that section leaders could change in the year. I don't want them to feel that because... I mean, to me the section leader's the first chair player. Doesn't necessarily have to be, but that's the way I've done it, and I don't want them to feel, ok they were named first, or concert master in August that they've got that positions sewed up the rest

of the year. They should, but they have to continually demonstrate that they're the right person for that.

Q: So, leadership within a section is a little bit more fluid?

A: Yes, or at least there's a possibility that it could be more fluid.

Q: How do you think that the section leaders are viewed by the rest of the orchestra?

A: Well, I think if the members of the section agree with my choice, they're really well-respected. I think they look up to them because the students are trying to do well, and the section leader's a player that's playing the best or the most musical, or most experienced, and I think that they're greatly respected for that. There's also kind of the social side, too, and that can skew that perception one way or another. But, just in terms of the playing I think that they earn the respect of their peers. Now, if, a member of the orchestra does not agree with the selection of who's first chair they might, they may be kind of disgruntled, but for the most part I think the section leaders command the respect of the rest of the students.

Q: Ok, you said that certain social things can kind of skew their perception?

A: Right.

Q: Can you think of anything or any specific instances where you've noticed that has happened?

A: Well, off the top of my head I can't think of any specific instances, but... Person A is clearly the most talented person in the section and has been installed as the first chair, but that person also disrupts rehearsals, comes late, is absent for things, you know, speaks ill of his or her classmates, well, that's going to skew their respect for the person as the

section leader because music is at the top of the list, but there are other factors involved in being a leader and a role model, as well.

Q: Flipping the question, how do you think the section leaders view the rest of the orchestra?

A: Well, it varies a lot. There are some students that, they're very happy they're first chair and they play their part and they play it really well, and that's about what they do. Then there are others that are working with their section, even in the context of a full orchestra rehearsal, marking bowings, looking over their shoulder to see how people are doing, listening for intonation problems, suggesting different fingerings. So, depending on the student some of them have lots of interaction and kind of take responsibility for the whole section. Others are first chair players and that's kind of where it ends.

Q: Who are the students you mentioned looking behind their shoulders and sharing bowings and everything?

A: Um, I think Hazel does a nice job. Erin in the cello section does a nice job. There's only two basses, but they're constantly sharing. There's not really a section leader, but they work together a lot, and help each other out a lot. Kat in the viola section is very, very talented, and a super role model in every regard, but she's kind of quiet, and just does not do those kinds of things.

Q: How do the students choose their solo and ensemble groups?

A: ...The top of the list I would say friends. I discourage that. I tell them that, you know, if you want to do a quartet and your best friends are two bass players, a viola, and a cello, that you're not going to find any music, so that isn't going to work. Also, if there are three really advanced players and one less so, selecting the music is a problem. Do you

do something really easy, which is not going to be a challenge to the more advanced, or do you do something more difficult, and then you're going to have a weak member? So, they do tend to pair off with friends, and a lot of times that works fine, but I just kind of caution them that this is a musical event, and when you start to decide who's in your group that there are musical things that should be considered.

Sometimes I see them by grade level. You'll see a freshmen quartet, or a senior quartet, or something in the middle. A lot of times by section. You know, their stand-partner, or a violin trio, or, you know, or something like that. So, it's a little bit of all of those, but probably the thing, the factor that's most involved is their friends. The other thing that I ask them to consider is compatibility of schedules for rehearsal purposes because it might be four friends that want to do this, but one's not available on Monday, and the other can't come on Tuesday, and they find difficulty putting together, so I do let them choose their ensembles. If somebody wants to play in an ensemble, and can't put together a group, then I'll say just let me know, I'll help you, I'll put it together, we'll find a combination that works, and most of the time they work out very well...

Q: The ensembles that I saw today, would you say that those are all based on friendship groups? There was an all-violin ensemble?

A: Well, Ok, violins. So that was based on similar instruments... The boy in the group plays really well, and Hazel's the concert master, so that was kind of a good decision, "we're going to get him to play with us." That was a musical decision to include him.

Q: Are they also very good friends, or do you think the music, the compatibility of the music was the biggest factor?

A: Well, I, from what I observe in class they are very friendly. I don't know outside of class they're friends, you know? But, Hazel and Jane are, and have been for the last several years, three years they've been in orchestra. Oh, and then the 4th student was a very good freshman, very good. So, you've got three upperclassmen and then a freshman. I think that group was formed a combination of friendship and musicality, and desire to get 4 good musicians, so nobody would be a weak link.

Q: Does the orchestra here have cliques?

A: I think that exists, but... it's just friends who have either joint experiences or are the same age or they play together. I would say we do, but I don't think it's terribly exclusive. I think it's just sort a natural, something that you would probably even expect to happen.

Q: If you gave your orchestra a free day how do you think they would use it?

A: There is no such thing as a free day.

Q: [Laughs] I know, but if, hypothetically if there was a free day...

A: I think that if I had everything set up as to what was going to happen... Now, let me ask you about your question. Am I going to be there or not?

Q: Let's say that you are going to be there, but they just performed or something and you're giving them a break.

A: Ok, it just doesn't happen. Now, there may be a day when we don't play, but we may be reading the judges sheets, or evaluating, or... there just may be a day when we just got so much other stuff, business to take care of. But a situation when they come in and there's a sub... If I have it set up, and unless there's some sort of emergency I will, my expectation is that they will run completely independent of me. The subs typically are not

music subs, so they're there, they take role, and they're there if there's a problem, but my expectation, and I get reports from the students in charge, the officers, and the sub, which I consider a more independent report, that things have run very well, that the sub says "boy, I enjoyed that class because the kids were terrific." If I don't have things set up, I will expect that nothing will happen. A few of them might practice individually. I don't know right now that there's somebody that would just tell every to, you know, "let's get going."

Q: So, what would they be doing instead of practicing?

A: You were in class when I came in late from the meeting today. Well, a lot of sitting around and talking. Again, a few kids playing. Some kids will gravitate to the piano.

Q: Ok. Who gravitates to the piano?

A: Nobody in particular. I mean, there's a few kids that play and sit down and play, and others would play twinkle, twinkle on the piano or something. Yeah, I think if there was no clear goal established and it wouldn't be established with the orchestra, it would be with the officers, if I know that situation's going to exist, everybody knows what they're supposed to do, especially my student conductor. But, if they were just left really totally free and directionless I'm not sure that much of anything would happen.

Interpretation. Meaning and value. Mr. Kimble shared with me why he believes the orchestra is valued and meaningful for his students. He feels that a student's passion for music drives their participation in the orchestra, and asserts that, "the kids who are with us that long are doing it for the love of music. They love playing their instrument." He referenced identity, as well, when explaining student retention, and felt that students who remain in the orchestra throughout their high school career do so because they come

to see themselves as musicians in much the same way a basketball player sees himself as an athlete. He also observed that students do not usually drop out of orchestra without having another activity to fill the void. Often, he feels, the student has found a different place to belong, although he recognizes that this could be one of many factors such as ability, lack thereof, and parental influences. Further, Mr. Kimble cited a few reasons why he believes students aspire to be in the advanced orchestra including the desire for a greater challenge, a student's inherent competitive nature, a more polished-sounding orchestra, and for the opportunity to play in extra groups like the pit orchestra for the musical.

When the student participants discussed orchestra's meaning to them, they replied with many of these same answers. Several students, like as Hazel and Mica, expressed an intense love of music, and a passion for playing their instrument. Others, like Valencia, enjoy the opportunity orchestra gives them to be involved with their school, and some students, like Serena and Rudolph, mentioned their pride for the knowledge they gain from orchestra, such as history and theory lessons. These responses align well with Mr. Kimble's perceptions.

While there was considerable overlap in the responses given by the students and Mr. Kimble, two factors were brought up by the students that suggest some misaligning values between the director and the students. First, most participants talked about friendships. Karina, for example, expressed that the opportunity to make friends was one of the reasons that she chose to join orchestra in her new high school even though she was actually transferring schools because of orchestra burnout from her old school. That a student would still choose to enroll in orchestra despite musical exhaustion in order to

make friends is a testament to how important the social aspect is for many students. Although Mr. Kimble acknowledges the social aspect of orchestra, he seems apprehensive about touting any potential benefits to it, or relating it to meaning and motivation for the students. He compares orchestra to a club atmosphere, but then adds, “I would say more of a club atmosphere than I would like. ‘Cause I mentioned earlier, you asked me to compare orchestra students, and I said they seemed to be a little more serious, quiet, focused on the music rather than the other kinds of things, but my group right now is very social.”

Second, students viewed their four-year commitment to orchestra as potentially beneficial because of the weight orchestra can carry on a college application or resume, and many, like Valencia and Karina, cited this as a reason for remaining in the orchestra through their senior year. While college aspirations were not absent from the director’s comments, he saw this as a *disincentive* to join orchestra because of Ibis High School’s policy of inflating the grade point averages for students who take advanced placement courses. Mr. Kimble and I discussed this at length right after a morning performance for the faculty, and he explained the school’s heavy emphasis on AP courses, and referenced several very talented students who quit orchestra to add more AP courses to their schedule.

Collective identity. Mr. Kimble is able to offer a valued perspective about the collective identity of the orchestra because he has extensive experience teaching both

band³ and orchestra. Mr. Kimble was a band director for 25 of the 35 years he has been teaching music and identified some noticeable, yet subtle, differences between the cultures and collective identity of each ensemble. He described the band students as more “spirited” and enthusiastic about the program and about school in general. Whereas, he perceives the orchestra students to be quieter and more “reserved.” Mr. Kimble’s perceptions align with previous research on the relationship between personality and instrument. For example, Kemp (2000) found that string players tend to be more introverted than choir and band students. Mr. Kimble also described the band students as more social and more cohesive as a group. He cited band camps and the collective experiences of enduring “brutal temperatures” as part of what bonds the band students and fosters loyalty and group identity among them. Mr. Kimble juxtaposes that with orchestra by pointing out that orchestra students do not usually endure any hardships together during the summer before school starts. He states, “The orchestra kids on the other hand showed up pretty much on the first day of class, the same as they would in an English class, or a math class. The bonding that took place there took place at a slower rate and over a much longer period of time.”

Mr. Kimble also talked about the orchestra’s identity with respect to the entire student body at Ibis High School. While students like Hazel pointed out that the orchestra program has a positive reputation for its greater concentration of high-achieving, conscientious students with fewer behavioral problems, Mr. Kimble felt that this special

³ Why compare the collective identities of band and orchestra? I do this because band is culturally symbolic. It is present in popular culture and stereotyped quite frequently. There is very little written about the culture and identity of high school string orchestra students, but it is helpful to describe the unfamiliar (orchestra) with the familiar (band) as a reference.

status has been declining during his tenure as an orchestra director. He identified two main reasons: the proliferation of arts magnet schools in the area and the heavy emphasis Ibis High School places on advanced placement courses. He explains that magnet schools recruit the top players in the neighborhood around Ibis High School, which is a more affluent area in which the term magnet school may carry a great deal of prestige. Mr. Kimble also, again, referenced the talented students who drop orchestra in favor of taking AP classes to boost their grade point averages and earn college credit.

The student participants and Mr. Kimble also aligned in their identification of the orchestra as a group consisting of many different types of students with a variety of interests and activities. Mr. Kimble cited this as one reason why he tries to keep after school rehearsals to a minimum, explaining, “Kids have lots of conflicts after school. We have a fair number of kids who are playing sports, different sports, all year long. We have students who belong to clubs, various clubs, organizations at the school, some of them are officers in those clubs and they have meetings. We have kids who play in outside musical organizations or they’re taking lessons, or we have kids with transportation difficulties...” Therefore, this aspect of the orchestra’s identity may be seen as exerting influence on the activities of the group. Whereas band students may enroll in band with the understanding that it will monopolize a great deal of time, and thus have more after school rehearsals, orchestra students enroll with the understanding that they will have time to participate in other activities as well. Consequently, after school rehearsals are used sparingly to accommodate the needs of the whole ensemble, which are necessarily related to their pluralist identity.

Furthermore, it was not surprising to see that the director's observations about the general student body's perceptions of the orchestra aligned with the thoughts of the students. Many of the students quoted or at least referenced their director when they explained to me that the orchestra seems to be a "mystery" to the rest of the student body. The consensus between all participants and the fact that students referred to the director when addressing this topic suggests that this idea of a non-identity within the school is reinforced in class, even if it is unintentional. Additionally, the director and students had shared similar thoughts on how the teachers and administration view the orchestra. Both the director and the students felt that the faculty views the orchestra positively, and that they appreciate the performances given for them.

Leadership. When Mr. Kimble discussed his thoughts on leadership within the ensemble he started off by listing and describing each of the officer positions in the orchestra. He explained that each of the officer positions have different obligations to the orchestra such as filling out forms, collecting fees, setting up equipment, conducting, and managing uniforms. However, regardless of the officer-specific responsibilities, Mr. Kimble emphasized that respectful and mature personal conduct is a universal requirement for each officer, and that it is expected that officers display a higher degree of maturity than their peers. He framed this expectation with reference to himself, saying, "The first part is that they are to be representative of their director at all times, whether he's there or not. They are to act as if he would want them to act, and they would expect the same from the other students." All but two participants hold officer positions in the orchestra. Of the five students who are officers, not one mentioned a pressure to behave appropriately in class because of serving as the orchestra manager, the treasurer, the

librarian, or the conductor's assistant. While other students made vague and half-hearted references to behavioral expectations for upperclassmen, Hazel was the only student to express that she felt *pressure* to behave, which was with reference to her position as concertmaster, not her officer position as an orchestra manager.

The director also discussed seating as a possible avenue for leadership in the orchestra. However, he emphasized that section leaders are not like officer positions because they may change throughout the year if a student is not carrying his or her weight in the section. This fluidity of leadership was also recognized by the students, who cited section leaders that do not fit the leader persona. Hazel, for example, discussed her stand partner's timid demeanor as an impediment to his leadership, which is what solidified her position as concertmaster. Similarly, both the director and the students referenced two different types of section leaders, although the director described the distinction with much more specificity than the students. Mr. Kimble defined the first type of section leader as an active and involved leader who is "working with their section, even in the context of a full orchestra rehearsal, marking bowings, looking over their shoulder to see how people are doing, listening for intonation problems, suggesting different fingerings." The students and director alike agreed that Hazel embodies this type of leader. The second type of section leader is passive, and usually leads only by his or her musical ability. The director explains the distinction, noting, "There are some students that, they're very happy they're first chair and they play their part and they play it really well, and that's about what they do... So, depending on the student some of them have lots of interaction and kind of take responsibility for the whole section. Others are first chair players and that's kind of where it ends... Kat in the viola section is very, very talented,

and a super role model in every regard, but she's kind of quiet, and just does not do those kinds of things." Kat was also mentioned by Hazel and Karina as someone who is musically talented, but is a shy and passive section leader.

Socialization and social stratification. Socialization and social stratification came up in my interview with Mr. Kimble, and were usually framed as issues that threaten - as opposed to enhance - music-making, instruction, and goal achievement. This is an understandable perspective. Most orchestra teachers like Mr. Kimble have numerous concerts and evaluations to prepare for throughout the year, and they do not want to place their students in a situation in which they are likely to fail. For these reasons, Mr. Kimble often discussed socialization as a possible barrier to musical growth. For example, he observed that most students choose their chamber groups for solo and ensemble based on friendship, but emphasized that he cautions against this for musical reasons. He expressed concerns over students forming groups without taking into consideration traditional instrumentation, as well as comparable music ability levels for group members. When I asked students how they choose their solo and ensemble groups, they, too, cited these concerns, but friendship was also a significant factor for them. One of my observations fell on a day close to their solo and ensemble festival, so I was able to watch some student groups and soloists as they practiced their performance for the class. One violin quartet consisted of Hazel, her stand-partner, Flint, the conductor's assistant, Jane, and a freshman violinist. Mr. Kimble initially declared confidently that this was a group that was formed with chiefly musical considerations, but when I asked about the relationships between the group members, he amended this statement, saying, "I think that group was formed a combination of friendship and musicality, and desire to get 4 good musicians,

so nobody would be a weak link.” This statement aligns more closely with student explanations on how they choose their groups.

The idea of socialization was met with greater discomfort in the context of a “free day,” a day typically after a concert when students take a break from rehearsing. Every participant described engaging in some type of social activity during a “free day” in the orchestra. Some talked about sitting around and chatting with classmates, others mentioned taking out other instruments like guitars, drums, and ukuleles and playing music with their friends. However, despite the students’ consensus that free days happen occasionally, and that they are often used for socializing, Mr. Kimble was very resistant toward even entertaining the idea of a hypothetical free day, asserting, “It just doesn’t happen. Now, there may be a day when we don’t play, but we may be reading the judges sheets, or evaluating, or... there just may be a day when we just got so much other stuff, business to take care of. But a situation when they come in and there’s a sub... If I have it set up, and unless there’s some sort of emergency I will, my expectation is that they will run completely independent of me.” After recalling a recent day on which he was unexpectedly called to an IEP meeting and came back to find students chatting instead of rehearsing, Mr. Kimble revised his statement, adding, “...a lot of sitting around and talking. Again, a few kids playing. Some kids will gravitate to the piano...if they were just left really totally free and directionless I’m not sure that much of anything would happen.”

Finally, although he did not discuss seniority with respect to social stratification, the director’s perceptions of social stratification in the orchestra generally align with what students observed. Mr. Kimble indicated that there are cliques in the orchestra, which are

usually formed based on age or activities outside of the orchestra, but noted, “I don’t think it’s terribly exclusive. I think it’s just sort of natural, something that you would probably even expect to happen.” He also said that it is extremely rare for him to see a conflict between students, and that it is usually the result of a misunderstanding, or a student unknowingly taking a joke too far. Many of the students made similar statements. They recognized that there are some students with whom they share more in common, but did not want to exclude members of the orchestra outside of their friendship groups even for situations in which a student is acting inappropriately by the group’s standards. Serena, for example, did not feel that this was “fair” to do to someone, no matter how annoying they are.

Summary

Table 3
Salient Themes by Participant

Theme	MV	CI	SS	RL	B	RC	D	Se
Cosima	*	*	*		*			
Hazel	*	*	*	*		*		
Karina	*	*	*	*			*	
Mica	*	*	*	*				
Rudolph	*	*	*	*				
Serena	*	*	*	*				
Valencia	*	*	*	*				*
Mr. Kimble	*	*	*	*				

Note. MV = Meaning and Value, CI = Collective Identity, SS = Socialization and Social Stratification, RL = Roles/Leadership, B = Bullying, RC = Responsibility to the Collective, D = Director, Se = Seniority

Each of the previous interviews is unique and helps to illuminate the diverse perspectives that participants can develop from their experiences as individuals of different ages, grade levels, primary instruments, and pronounced formal and informal leadership and authority within the orchestra. The interviews show the subtle nuances in the perceptions of their world. Even within the common themes like collective identity

and leadership each participant had a unique depiction of his or her own reality that varied based on individual differences.

CHAPTER 5

Participants in this study provided unique perspectives on the sociocultural dimensions of their high school orchestra. While there were commonalities among these individuals, there were also vast differences in their perspectives. This chapter addresses themes across participants, framed around the research questions. This chapter also provides implications for teachers of ensembles based on the results and offers suggestions for future research into this topic.

Research Question One

What is the nature of the social aspect of high school orchestra culture? Two major themes emerged across participants in regard to the social aspect of orchestra culture, which were social climate, and collective identity. Both themes are interrelated. The students and the director noted that the amount and type of socializing could influence the collective identity of the orchestra.

Social climate. Regarding the social climate of the orchestra, the results of this study align considerably with previous studies on the social aspect of school music ensembles (Adderley, Kennedy and Berz, 2003; Campbell, Connell, and Beegle, 2007). Orchestra is a place to make friends. Many students like Serena, Karina, Hazel, and Mica talked about how orchestra helped to initiate friendships. Karina admitted to joining orchestra even after she was exhausted from her experience at her old magnet school because she knew it would help her make friends during a difficult period to do so, which is late high school when social groups have already been established. Serena credited her involvement with orchestra as starting a “chain reaction” of friendships. Hazel discussed getting to know her stand-partner more intimately, as well as sharing stories of orchestra

romances, and Mica felt that most of his closest friends probably come from his involvement with orchestra. Participants also most often characterized the orchestra as somewhere between a club and an extended family. Valencia, for example, brought up that students in the orchestra get to know each other throughout multiple years of membership like families, and this does not happen in a math class, which evokes the “home away from home” theme that has been documented in prior research (Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003). Even the director described the orchestra as being “more of a club atmosphere than [he] would like” because of how young and outgoing his group is this year.

However, not all participants socialize within the orchestra to the extent that Hazel, Serena, Mica, and Karina claimed to do. Valencia, Rudolph, and Cosima admitted that their social circles are much wider, and that, although they have made many friends in the orchestra, most of their friends come from other places like other classes (Valencia), sports (Rudolph), and student council (Cosima). Interestingly, these are also three students who were identified by the director for having lower levels of motivation and involvement in the orchestra. These students provide a new perspective that was not examined in Abril’s (2013) study on “hardcore band kids.” In his study, the “hardcore band kids” believed that band was an important social space, but a perspective from less motivated students was not explored. The results of this study show that exploring diverse groups within ensembles may lead to multiple unique perspectives. Although it is possible that investment and motivation within the orchestra are related to socialization for these students, future research could examine the nature of this relationship - if one even exists - within a high school orchestra. An affirmation of the relationship between

socialization and motivation in music ensembles may help music teachers to reach those students who seem to lack drive by providing them with a tool – embracing students’ social nature to foster ownership and commitment to the ensemble.

Students seemed to feel pressure to keep the social environment in the orchestra free of conflicts and maintain social harmony. Valencia described this phenomenon as a “love-hate relationship.” She explained, “As in, ‘you’re like my classmate’ or ‘you’re my stand-partner, but I don’t like you, so what am I supposed to do?’ I don’t know, you kind of have to like them, but you don’t. But then everyone’s kind of interconnected.” In other words, according to Valencia, members of the orchestra are engaged in a group effort, they are “interconnected,” and this is an incentive to cooperate with a classmate or stand-partner, rather than start a fight with them, whether a participant personally likes them or not.

Discussion of conflicts in the interviews was rare, but it did come up. Mr. Kimble characterized the orchestra as relatively conflict-free, and what few arguments happened between students, he claimed, were usually a result of a misunderstanding, or of a student who took a joke too far. When I asked him if he could give me an example of a conflict in which he intervened, he had a tough time trying to think of one. Students had a difficult time identifying conflicts, as well. Only two serious conflicts were noted by students, one of which – the story of Cosima’s bullying – did not occur at Ibis High School. The other is a story that Serena recalled about a boy who had a habit of sexually harassing girls in the class. She noted that everyone in the orchestra agreed that he took statements too far that originally started out as tasteless jokes. However, Serena explained that even though he was a “terrible person”, the orchestra members did not alienate him.

Collective identity. Throughout their interviews, the participants described the orchestra by making general statements about its members. These stereotypical statements helped to illustrate the orchestra's collective identity. For example, Hazel explained that, among her teachers, the orchestra has a reputation for being comprised of high-achieving students with fewer behavioral problems. She imagined that teachers made judgments about what type of student she is based on her membership in the orchestra, relating the hard work it takes to practice an instrument with the hard work she would be willing to put into an English or math class. Other participants, like Mr. Kimble, Valencia and Serena, pointed out that members of the orchestra are often involved in multiple co-curricular and extra-curricular activities like drama, baseball, student council, Tri-M Music Honors society, and the local youth orchestra. Serena summarized this idea by saying, "We're all just so different... no one comes to school just for orchestra."

Although the Ibis High School orchestra students generally think of themselves as "tight-knit" (Hazel) and "interconnected" (Valencia), this does not necessarily translate into a cohesive collective identity outside of the orchestra classroom. Despite the socialization and friendships that orchestra can ignite, it is not seen as a distinct group with a unique identity like the band. The students and director alike speculated that this lack of cohesion is because the orchestra students do not spend as much time together as the band students. Mr. Kimble cited the band's numerous after school rehearsals and their summers spent together learning drill for marching band. Hazel brought up the harsh temperatures and enduring the struggle of band camp together, and Mica mentioned the fact that the band students have more band electives to take, so they are able to spend

more time together. Karina's comparison between the band and orchestra at Ibis with the band and orchestra at her old magnet school supports the idea that the amount of time spent bonding is a key factor in fostering a collective identity. In her old school, Karina spent two hours per day rehearsing with the orchestra. When she was not rehearsing with the orchestra, she was attending classes with other students from the arts magnet program, including the orchestra and band students. Karina made a statement that remarkably encapsulates the issue of collective identity, and contextualizes it by comparing it to her experience in the arts program at her old magnet school: "Yeah the band kids, the orchestra kids, but [at Ibis High School], being in orchestra doesn't make you an orchestra kid. It just makes you *in* orchestra..."

This lack of identity also created the opportunity for students outside of the orchestra to confuse the orchestra with band, which seemed to be the ensemble that is more familiar to the larger school community. Cosima explained her frustration with the general school population, saying, "Anyone who doesn't know the difference between a cello and a clarinet, so, people who aren't into, like, music will call you a band geek, and it's like, 'no, I play strings! I don't use my mouth to make music...'" Unlike Cosima, Valencia was more amused by the conflation than she was irritated by it. She admitted to occasionally playing along with her peers who mistakenly label her as a "band geek."

While there is literature that aids in our understanding of the collective identity of high school band (Abril, 2013; Adderley, 2009; Laine, 2007), there is scant literature on the collective identity of high school orchestra. What little exists is quantitative and reveals nothing about the social aspect of the ensemble (Gillespie & Hamann, 1998), or it is a slight mention in a larger study about the social aspect of public school music

programs (Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz, 2003; Campbell, Connell, and Beegle, 2007). For example, Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz report that band and choir students had been given derogatory names like “choir geek” and “band dork” (p.197) by the rest of the high school, but that orchestra students did not report such labels. No space was devoted to unraveling this mystery of the orchestra’s lack of collective identity. Furthermore, based on statements made by both the students and the director, the collective identity of Ibis High School’s band is not also reflected within the orchestra; the programs are too different, so the results of the studies that helped to describe the collective identity of bands and choirs cannot necessarily be extrapolated to this particular orchestra. The two ensembles vary widely in the amount of time they spend together, and in the types of activities members do together. Although the students in the orchestra do bond, Mr. Kimble notes that this takes place much slower and over a longer period of time than the band students.

Research Question Two

What is the nature of social stratification in a high school orchestra, and in what ways does the social stratification of a high school’s orchestra align with prior research on social stratification? Social stratification came up explicitly throughout my conversations with the participants. Students mentioned the formation of cliques within the orchestra, and were able to describe how those cliques form. Beyond cliques, the role of leadership in perpetuating or minimizing social stratification is not well-defined and seems to vary by student.

Cliques. Clique formation was discussed explicitly throughout the interviews. Participants identified three main ways that cliques form between students in the

orchestra: 1) by age or grade level, 2) by instrument or section, and 3) by their involvement with activities outside of the orchestra. For example, Cosima identified a “senioritis” clique, a sports clique, and a youth orchestra clique. The first clique she mentioned is based on being close to finishing high school and the resulting mindset, which can breed apathy and chattiness among seniors who are excited to be finished with this chapter in their lives. Students with this similar mindset will tend to stick together, especially if the same students are reprimanded by the director for the same infractions. The second and third cliques are based on outside activities. Hazel observed that the previous year in orchestra had a lot of cliques, and cited that the violas were all very close to one another, as were the cellos. She noted that this year there are many more freshmen in the orchestra, so, she speculates, they have formed their own clique as a way of coping with the new experience of being in high school. These same observations are echoed by other students and the director, who noticed that grade level tends to influence friendship groups. Mica confirmed that even the director began acknowledging the senior clique. However, participants emphasized that cliques are not exclusive, and many did not seem to like the word clique. Hazel and the director, for example, felt more comfortable using terms like “friendship groups” and “groups of friends.” Rudolph did not care to discuss cliques at all. He maintained that, although he had closer friends in the orchestra, that he is friendly with everyone.

These results differ from findings by Adler & Adler (1998) who described several exclusionary tactics that children consciously used to preserve order and power within their group. Because the position of concertmaster is appointed by the director, Hazel did not need to engage in any of the tactics described by Adler & Adler. However, even the

students who felt that they had informal positions of power as a result of their seniority, which is not formally appointed by the director, did not describe any instances in which they needed to assert their power over the younger students. Serena, for example, talked about a freshman violist who was overstepping her boundaries by asking the director for extra explanations regarding theory. While this was seen as a mildly irritating threat to the senior's authority, nothing was done to address the threat. Seniors did not discuss conscious efforts to exclude this violist, nor did they talk about bullying her. It is possible that this is because the orchestra consists of so many underclassmen during the year this study took place. It might be easier for upperclassmen to get away with excluding younger students that they "disapprove of" (Serena) if there were more seniors. However, seniors and upperclassmen in this context run the risk of being excluded *by* the underclassmen if they choose to disrupt social order by actively imposing their power upon them.

The nature of social stratification within Ibis high school's orchestra also does not align with findings from Abril's (2013) study, in which the band students explicitly placed a heavy emphasis on musical ability, musical achievement, or involvement with the band to describe stratification within the band. Only one student, Cosima, mentioned that she did not prefer to associate with the first chair students, but then contradicted her statement by discussing her friendship with Hazel, the concertmaster. Although proximity was cited as one of the main reasons for socialization with some orchestra members over others, participants did not mention a problem with befriending students from various stands in their section or in the orchestra as a whole. Some seemed to mingle with players

of many different levels. I observed Hazel, for example, chatting with cellists sitting beyond the first stand, who also mingled with each other regardless of chair number.

Furthermore, unlike Abril's (2013) study, the ensemble stratification noted by participants was not necessarily perceived to be hierarchical in nature. While the seniors felt that they were due respect because of their seniority, what they expected from younger students was ill-defined and did not prevent them from mixing with one another. Seniors also acknowledged the leadership of younger students, as well. Hazel, a junior, was noted by nearly every senior for her remarkable leadership and musicianship. Karina, Mica, and Serena also acknowledged the musical independence of the freshmen and sophomores. As a senior, Karina considers herself a leader, but explained that this role involves more mentoring with general high school issues than it does imposing her authority or helping the freshmen with music.

Leadership. Students had many differing ideas about leadership in the orchestra, and the extent to which leadership contributed to, or interacted with social stratification was ambiguous and varied by student according to their interviews. In general, most leadership roles were considered to be fluid by both the director and the students. Officer positions like orchestra manager, uniform manager, equipment manager, librarian, and director's assistant are formal roles appointed by the director, but students did not necessarily characterize these as leadership positions. For example, Karina admitted, "...he made up orchestra manager, and that means I do paper work, and I'm supposed to be a leader in the orchestra, but I don't really do anything." Section leaders, however, were considered leadership positions that are very fluid, and are not necessarily held by the student who officially occupies the first chair. Hazel, for example, shared that an

observer can tell who the real section leader is by finding the person in the section that everyone looks toward for cues and exemplary musicality. Musical leadership was also expressed as situational. For example, Karina explained that during sight-reading, the younger students play timidly and apprehensively, but she plays “loudly and obnoxiously” to lead the section during those times.

Additionally, leadership was also characterized as a collective responsibility by Hazel, who observed that the cellos often switched leaders based on who had rehearsed which piece most thoroughly that day. The concept of a *collective* responsibility suggests a lack of stratification because all students are responsible for leading at the appropriate time. In addition, participants like Mica and Rudolph repeatedly expressed that people could obtain leadership positions simply by taking initiative, and by playing well. Although, seniority appears to be a mitigating factor for initiative, given that many students also emphasized seniority as a necessary prerequisite for leadership. Finally, some students either did not appear to know that they were engaging in leadership behavior, or simply did not consider their behavior to be representative of a leader. Rudolph, for instance, was heavily relied upon for musical guidance by his stand-partner, Maurice. However, Rudolph did not seem to even be aware of this, and did not consider himself to be a leader or to have any other responsibilities beyond playing his music correctly. Yet, I observed Rudolph helping Maurice with his music, which is most certainly a responsibility beyond performing his music correctly. The extent to which these views on leadership promote or eliminate social stratification is not clear and appears to vary by student, section, and situation.

Research Question Three

Do the director's perceptions of the social culture of the orchestra align with the perceptions of students from different places within that ensemble? Many of the director's perceptions of the social culture of the orchestra do align with those of the students. Regarding cliques and social stratification, the director and the students alike viewed cliques and friendship groups as a natural aspect of the social culture that occurs without malicious intent. Students discussed the tendency for this to happen during free days. Serena, for example, observed that she did not notice until after the fact that most of the underclassmen were sitting together and that most of the upperclassmen were sitting together. Karina, a violist, noted that it is easier to socialize with the lower string players because she sits around them, and does not exclude the violinists to be rude or hurtful toward them.

The director and the students also aligned in their view that leadership within the orchestra is flexible. Both the director and the students acknowledged that some section leaders simply play their parts correctly, but do not display the type of behaviors that truly define a leader. In this case, a student can emerge as a musical leader whether he or she is as technically proficient as the section leader or not. Mr. Kimble and nearly every other participant identified Hazel as this type of leader. Hazel, too, admits that her stand-partner is likely as technically proficient as she is. However, she and the rest of the participants, including Mr. Kimble, viewed her cuing, gestures, musicality, and attention to the ensemble as characteristic of an effective leader.

While the director's *perceptions* of the social culture may align well with the perceptions of the students, their *values* do not always align, and this was evident in the interviews. When discussing why the students value orchestra, Mr. Kimble cited passion

for music, desire for performing, and a love of the instrument. In general, Mr. Kimble viewed socializing and making friends as detrimental to what *he* values, which is achieving musical goals. This was evident in the way he dismissed student bonding as “a lot of sitting around, talking,” but in the same breath added, “Some kids gravitate toward the piano” suggesting that this type of sociomusical experience is not something he values. Although the students cited their love for music and the instrument, as well as academic and personal values, nearly every participant cited orchestra as valuable to them for social reasons as well. Mica, for example, explained that he enjoys how orchestra enables him to be close to people who share the same passion that he does. Further, Karina, who admitted to joining Ibis’s orchestra to make friends at her new school, may be the most compelling evidence for this value. While Mr. Kimble acknowledged student interest in socializing and friendships, he did not necessarily view these values as positive. Rather, he made statements that indicated friendships and socializing get in the way of the musical goals rather than enrich the musical experience.

Limitations and Implications

Ibis High School orchestra’s social climate cannot be generalized to every high school orchestra. This report was able to provide an overview of the major themes of each of the student interviews, the director’s interview, and with my own observations in the field to validate. However, the data I collected are very rich, and much more analysis can be done that was beyond the scope of this particular study. A focus that shifts from a broad overview to a deep examination of one of the various themes such as collective identity, for example, was beyond the scope of this study, but would be helpful and is lacking in current social research in music education.

Nevertheless, the results of this study provide a deeper understanding of the nature of the high school orchestra and build upon prior research on school ensembles. Students make friends in these classes and enjoy bonding over several years of membership. Many music teachers, including the director of this study, are understandably cautious about embracing the social aspect of their ensembles because they view it as a possible hindrance to musical progress. Allsup and Benedict (2009) frame this attitude as one that is created and maintained by a culture of music teaching that values efficiency above everything else. Through teachers' own experiences in ensembles, the teacher training they receive in undergraduate music education programs, as well as professional development opportunities that focus on classroom management, music ensemble teachers are constantly met with suggestions and demands to keep classroom talking and socializing to a bare minimum in order to focus on raising the musical level of the ensemble. It can be difficult to get work done when students are constantly chatting and not paying attention. However, somewhat counterintuitively, the social dimension of music ensembles seems to enhance the experience for many students. Teachers may want to consider embracing activities like chamber music or informal musical activities within smaller group settings because this provides time for students to bond through their musical experiences.

Regarding collective identity, students did not particularly like the idea of committing as much time to the orchestra as band students commit to the band, but they still desired the unique orchestra identity. Their decreased work/bonding time is a trade-off for a solid identity. However, orchestra teachers may be able to nurture a more unique collective identity desired by the students by hosting musically-driven social functions.

For example, students might enjoy a campfire in which they all bring their instruments, or others like they to play, such as guitar and ukulele, to make music together and have s'mores around a campfire. This is not like the "work" band students endure together during their summer band camps, but it may be more attractive for orchestra students because it provides an opportunity for them to bond together through music in a less structured way than in orchestra class. Further, students like Hazel, Karina, Mica, and Rudolph noted that they enjoy playing other instruments with their classmates, and that sometimes these instruments come out during free days. A social function that involves informal music-making validates their desire to play music together outside of the classical orchestra tradition.

Suggestions for Future Research

While this study examined the student and director perceptions of the social culture of high school orchestras within the context of a comprehensive high school, it would be beneficial to examine and compare the social culture of orchestras within a different context. Our environment can shape and reinforce how we view the world, so it is important to examine these social issues in other contexts which may reinforce different values and ideas. For example, it would be helpful to conduct this study within an arts magnet school, given that comprehensive school and magnet schools serve students with different needs. It may be possible that among the differing academic needs that there are differing social needs as well, particularly the degree to which the students socialize and create their identity around the program. Other contextual factors are region and socioeconomic status of the school. This study took place in a suburban high school in an affluent neighborhood in South Florida. Examining the same issues in a small, rural town with a more pronounced football culture, for example, may yield different results,

especially when comparisons are made between the orchestra and band, the latter of which may be seen as a staple for football games, and therefore a staple for the school. Different results are also possible when examining these questions within a large urban school. Furthermore, youth orchestra programs outside of the school are worth investigating. For example, youth orchestras within summer music camps are a unique experience; large groups of students interact in musical settings for several hours per day. In some cases, these camps can be very intensive and may be similar to the type of bonding that marching band students experience before the beginning of the school year together.

Another issue that came up repeatedly in the study was that of collective identity. Many students felt that the general population of the high school was mostly ignorant to the fact that an orchestra program exists there. Attempts to define the orchestra's identity were difficult for the participants, and required comparisons with the band, choir, or drama program. Students needed to define the orchestra based on what it is *not* (i.e. "We are *not* the band!"). The concept of collective identity should be further explored and done so more widely than a single case study. It is possible that posing these questions to students enrolled in arts magnet programs could produce significantly different ideas about identity than students in comprehensive high schools.

Additionally, some social issues such as bullying within the orchestra still remain unclear. Although the students at Ibis High School seem to value unity within their ensemble and have expressed reservations about alienating members even if those members are not viewed favorably, these healthy attitudes representing a value of kindness and respect may not be the case at every school and in every program. Cosima's

unsettling story of the bullying she experienced at the hands of an older student in her previous orchestra program suggests that the orchestra is not immune to these types of issues. Bullying and hazing have been documented in the band (Carter, 2013). Bullying within the orchestra should be further explored so that it can be understood and prevented. The time constraints on this study made a more frequent immersion into the orchestra culture extremely difficult, but spending more time in the field may have uncovered some hypocrisies regarding the treatment of fellow orchestra members.

Furthermore, due to a number of variables, enrollment in orchestra at the middle and high school level can fluctuate profoundly by age or class standing. For example, both the director and the participants noted that their orchestra was made up of a higher percentage of freshmen and sophomores than they had in previous years. An orchestra made up primarily of younger members can certainly impact the social culture. For example, if the majority of the ensemble consists of freshmen, the seniors in the minority may not feel comfortable attempting to enforce their place of power in the social pecking order. A longitudinal study that followed members of all four grades throughout their high school orchestra experience may be helpful in uncovering the social nuances and power dynamics within a younger orchestra versus an older orchestra.

The music ensemble classroom is a distinct social setting that, for many students, is more similar to a club or an extended family than it is to the social environment typical of a traditional classroom. It is important for ensemble directors to be aware of this distinctive social space so that they can make instructional decisions designed to allow their students' values of socialization and community to enhance their musical experiences. This study was able to offer a glimpse into the social culture of one

orchestra and add a perspective to the body of literature that has examined the sociomusical dimensions of school music ensembles.

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APPENDIX A: STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Student

Demographic

1. How long have you been playing your instrument?
2. How long have you played in an ensemble? (What grade did you start playing?)
3. Do you take private lessons? If so, for how long?
4. Can you describe your practice routine for me? What do you do? How often?

Identity

1. Talk to me about your role(s) in the orchestra. Describe them. (official or unofficial) (jobs, responsibilities, roles in your instrument section)
2. Why do you participate in the orchestra? Why is it meaningful to you?
3. Do you think that you define the orchestra, or does the orchestra define you, or is it a little of both? Explain.

Affect/Feelings

1. What feeling do you get when you walk into the orchestra classroom? How does that feeling compare to the feeling you get from other classrooms in school?
2. What are the best parts about being in the orchestra? What about the worst parts?
3. What do you feel is the most important contribution you make to the orchestra?

Ensemble

Group Identity

1. What word would you use to describe the orchestra class? (probe if necessary: more like a class, a club, a family, something else?)
2. Who do you think are the most important people in the orchestra, the ones who make the orchestra what it is, those who **define** the orchestra?
3. What does it mean to be a leader in the orchestra?
 - a. Who are the leaders of your orchestra? How do you become a leader?
 - b. Explain for me the role of the leaders in your orchestra.
4. How do older orchestra members prepare the younger members to be part of the orchestra?

Typical Day

1. Imagine you are talking to an 8th grader from (Palmetto Middle School) who is thinking about joining the orchestra here next year. How would you describe a typical day in the orchestra for them? How about a typical year? What would you want to make sure that they know? (good things, and maybe not-so-good things?)
2. What if the orchestra director gave your class a “free day”? How would you spend your free orchestra class period? (probe, if necessary: making music? Socializing? Doing homework?)

Travel

1. Many orchestras travel for festivals, competitions, and other performances. Do you guys do that? Can you share with me your most memorable experience traveling with the orchestra? What are your favorite parts of those experiences?

Social

1. What are the benefits to being in the orchestra? What do you get out of it socially? Academically? Musically?
2. Where do most of your friends come from? (a club, a sport, a class, a grade level)
 - a. How do you guys stay connected? (texting, social media)
3. Does your orchestra have cliques? What seems to define the cliques?

Music

1. In the orchestra, we play in one large group conducted by the teacher. Do you ever play music with a smaller group of people? When and how? Was it planned or spontaneous? Who played with you? What did you guys play and how was it decided? How did you resolve conflicts if they ever arose? Give me a story.
 - a. Does it feel different to play in a large group versus a small group? How so?

Director

1. How would you describe your orchestra director to someone who has never played in an ensemble before?

2. Imagine that you're the orchestra director at a school like this one. What would you do differently? (different music, chairs, seating, auditions, more opportunities to socialize) What would you keep doing the same?

Challenges

1. Is there anything challenging or difficult about being in the orchestra? (socially, academically, musically)
 - a. How have you managed to stick with orchestra for all of these years?

School

From Outside the Orchestra

1. What do your school friends who are outside the orchestra think about your participation in the orchestra?
 - a. What about your other teachers or your principal?
2. You know how some groups in school are given labels like preps and goths, and jocks? Is the orchestra seen as a group like that?
 - a. What do they call you? How do you feel about that?

Is there anything else that you would like to share with me that you think would help me better understand your orchestra experience?

APPENDIX B: DIRECTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The Director

1. How long have you been teaching orchestra?
2. Refresh my memory on what else you teach besides orchestra. (AP Theory, Guitar, and...?)
3. Have you ever taught band? Besides the instruments, what are the main differences you noticed between band and orchestra, particularly with the students? How about with the organizational/ensemble culture?
4. How has your background in composition shaped how you approach teaching orchestra?

The Orchestra

Student Demographics

1. How many of your students study privately? What differences do you notice about their interaction with their fellow ensemble members? How is their contribution different? (or is it?)
2. How do you think the population of the orchestra compares to the school population as a whole? (Or is it a special population? i.e., all the AP students, all college-prep, all same SES...)

Roles and Leadership

1. Who are the leaders in the orchestra and in what ways do they lead? What roles do the leaders play? Are they all assigned, or do some tend to just emerge? Describe for me what you have seen them do. Do they do anything behind the scenes?

2. Refresh my memory on the officers and special jobs that you have in the orchestra. How are they chosen and what types of tasks are required of them?
 - a. Do students aspire to hold any particular office?
 - b. Do some students seem to hold other titles or roles that are unofficial? (class clown, tuning police, token jazz enthusiast, teacher's pet, the bluegrass fiddler, etc?)
3. How do you determine seating in the orchestra?
4. How do you think the section leaders are viewed by the orchestra?
 - a. How do you think the rest of the orchestra is viewed by the section leaders?

Music

1. Refresh my memory on your yearly performances. I remember a fall preview concert, a winter concert, holiday caroling, etc. What other performances?
 - a. Do you have extra rehearsals or sectionals for these? If so, do you notice patterns in student attendance? (i.e., some students consistently miss rehearsals, others never miss?)
2. Talk to me about student involvement with solo and ensemble. (Is it required for advanced orchestra students to do solo and ensemble)
 - a. How do students choose their groups? Does age, ability level, or instrument tend to unite those groups?
3. What led you to require participation in solo and ensemble?
4. Do your students ever teach each other? Describe for me an interaction like this that you have witnessed.

- a. Who were the students? What were they learning or teaching? How often do you see this?

Group Identity

1. What word would you use to describe the orchestra as a group? (If necessary: family, class, club, something else?)
2. Other than ability level, what are the main differences you notice between your intermediate orchestra and your advanced orchestra? (I want to see if he notes anything about group cohesion, collective identity, etc.)
3. Is there anything about your orchestra that you see as being totally unique to Miami Palmetto, that few (or no) other orchestras do or have?

Social Climate

1. Does the orchestra have cliques? What seems to define the cliques? (Ability, age, something else?)
2. If you gave your orchestra a free period how do you think they would use it? (Socializing, making music, doing homework, reading, something else?)
3. Do you ever have to resolve conflicts between students in the orchestra? What types of conflicts and how were they resolved?
4. Has there ever been an instance of bullying in the orchestra? If so, what happened and how did you deal with it?
5. Imagine the county has decided to provide free transportation for your orchestra to see a New World Symphony Wallcast and enjoy an evening of music together. Which students would decide to attend? Who would not? Why do you think so?

6. Does your orchestra take trips/travel anywhere besides MPA?

Motivation and Meaning

1. Regarding the students who take orchestra through their junior and senior years, why do you think they stick with it for so long?
 - a. Why do other students quit?
 - b. Do other ensembles in your school face those same issues to the same degree?
2. Why do students aspire to be in your top orchestra?

The School

1. Can you characterize your relationship with the other teachers in your department?
 - a. What about the other teachers outside of music?
2. Can you characterize your relationship with the administrators in your school?
3. How do you think the orchestra is viewed by the rest of the student population in the school?