Capital, Hard Work, and Luck: How Part-Time Instrumental Music Educators in Arizona Continue to Work Despite the COVID-19 Pandemic

by

Tabitha Ann Branson

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

David Fossum, Chair
Catherine Saucier
Ted Solís

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ABSTRACT

In Arizona part-time instrumental music educators often spend more time per week with high school students than full-time core subject teachers. Members of the gig economy and heavily involved in the marching arts, these part-time teachers make the conscious choice to seek multiple gig positions to piece together a full-time income void of traditional employee benefits. The COVID-19 pandemic is changing the American workforce, prompting employers to hire more gig workers than standard salaried employees across all industries. However, some part-time workers who rely on social interactions for income are struggling to maintain a career throughout the health crisis. Although unable to see their students in person and prepare for competitions like a normal season, part-time instrumental music educators are continuing to work and teach. Whether each teacher is explicitly aware of it or not, the entire part-time teaching community relies on the accrual and mobilization of social capital to secure and maintain gigs and, by extension, a living.

In this thesis, I employ Pierre Bourdieu's theory of capital to investigate how part-time instrumental music educators are adapting to virtual remote teaching prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic and why they have not experienced job loss to the same extent as many other Americans in this arduous time. Through participant-observer ethnography and direct interviews with 12 active part-time instrumental marching music teachers I analyze not only the social mechanisms that lead to career success but also how each teacher conceptualizes their own vocational narrative. Unlike the idealized "American

Dream" narrative of hard work and pulling yourself up by your bootstraps, part-time teachers attribute their success to social relationships and luck. As Arizona prepares for a harsh decline in music student enrollment over the next five years due to the pandemic part-time music educators must be aware of how to encourage their students to become the next generation of teachers and how they can work to overcome the daunting privilege gap in musical ensemble participation.

I dedicate this thesis to four different parties. First, to the techs and educators that took time out of their schedules to tell me about themselves and their work. This thesis quite literally would not have been possible without you all, and I am ever grateful for your friendship, guidance, and time. Second, to all of our students. None of this work would be possible without dedicated kiddos like yourselves that continuously strive to improve. Third, to my parents and grandparents who have been supporting me unconditionally throughout the very unexpected pandemic graduate school. I love you all very much! And finally, to my partner who supports and loves me every single day and always understands when school takes priority. I appreciate you more than you know.

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Finally, I would like to recognize the wonderful band directors throughout the state that permitted me to interview their carefully chosen staff. I appreciate your trust in me as a researcher and I hope that this research benefits you, your staff, and your students in the future.

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"I've just opened myself up to the possibility of being a really different kind of teacher, and not necessarily thinking, well, I design, or anything like that. It's just like, well, we're all kind of trying to make it through, and if the students have a need, the need has changed, and maybe temporarily—medium term or long term—my primary responsibility is to adjust my skill set and adjust my schedule to meet that need more than anything else." - Eric, part-time instrumental music educator, November 1, 2020.[1]

Introduction

For most American public school students, the most consistent and influential teacher that they see on a daily basis does not have a teaching degree, or in some cases any college degree at all, and only works part-time for stipend pay on a semesterly basis. Thousands of music students in Arizona public schools have the same full-time band director every year while their core subject teachers rotate yearly. However, many full-time music teachers do not do their job alone. Most schools hire part-time instrumental music educators, with or without a college degree, to work with their students to a particular instructional end. In other words, each job is a specific gig. More often than not, these part-time educators spend more time face-to-face with students than their core subject teachers do during the school day. These instructors are especially prevalent in public high school competitive music ensembles, often in the marching idiom, but are rarely recognized outside of their particular niche job field.

Unfortunately, there is very little, if any, scholarly literature about these part-time instrumental music educators in Arizona, although they spend a significant number of hours with students in public schools. In fact, nearly all music education scholarship

[1] The names of all educators in this document have been changed for the sake of interlocutor anonymity.

focuses solely on full-time band, vocal, orchestra, and guitar teachers with traditional employment circumstances. In the business field, literature is primarily focused on gig economy workers with professions such as ride-share drivers and temporary office workers. Finally, ethnomusicologists have yet to explore part-time teachers' intriguing career choices. Academic gig-work style positions are often overlooked in educational and business literature despite the large number of assistants, coaches, and other part-time workers in K-12 schools. In the bigger picture, Arizona is experiencing a teacher shortage while the country is experiencing drastic growth in the gig economy.[2] Part-time instrumental music educators, although typically not full-time teachers at a public school during the regular school day, provide invaluable instruction to students on their individual instruments, and are sometimes the reason that a high school student can go on to study music at a college or university. An ethnographic look at this group of educators would be very beneficial for both students and teachers. Through ethnographic interviews and fieldwork, part-time teachers can elucidate their choices to work multiple part-time

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[2] Laura Elizondo and Justin Wing, "Severe Teacher Shortage in Arizona Continues," *AZ Ed News - Arizona School Personnel Administrators Association*, last modified September 19, 2019, https://azednews.com/severe-teacher-shortage-in-arizona-continues-2/; "How the COVID-19 Pandemic Has Disrupted Demand in the Gig Economy," *University of Chicago News*, last modified August 19, 2020, 2020, https://news.uchicago.edu/story/how-covid-19-pandemic-has-disrupted-demand-gig-economy; John Griffin, "The Future of the Gig Economy | IBISWorld Industry Insider," *IBISWorld*, last modified October 12, 2020, https://www.ibisworld.com/industry-insider/analyst-insights/the-future-of-the-gig-economy/; Kate Conger, Adam Satariano, and Mike Isaac, "Pandemic Erodes Gig Economy Work," *The New York Times*, March 18, 2020, Technology, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/technology/gig-economy-pandemic.html; Matthew Lavietes and McCoy Michael, "Waiting for Work: Pandemic Leaves U.S. Gig Workers Clamoring for Jobs," *Reuters*, October 19, 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-biggerpicture-health-coronavirus-gigw-idUSKBN2741DM.

jobs in place of a traditional full-time position, their adaptations to the global health crisis, and how they continue to be successful in their unique niche of the academic gig economy.

By nature, the job market for part-time instrumental music educators is uniquely specialized and, in some cases, completely unknown or unreachable to outsiders. Most of the public not associated with scholastic music programs are unaware of this group of teachers entirely. Even those who do know about it sometimes struggle to enter the community and secure a job. Although on the surface it might appear that some educators have a full-time, typical employment situation, nearly all positions within this particular market are paid as projects, or gigs, that are renewed semesterly or yearly based on performance. Open positions are rarely posted on school district sites. Rather, nearly all part-time teaching positions are communicated via word-of-mouth within the community or posted online on closed community pages.[3] Inherently this requires part-time music educators to already be established members of the community to be alerted of job opportunities. For this reason among others, all active part-time instrumental music teachers whom I interviewed report relying heavily on accrued social capital to both acquire and maintain their teaching positions, especially now during the novel coronavirus pandemic. Rather than depicting themselves as entrepreneurs of the self that work hard every day to secure their own success in a precarious gig economy during a

[3] For example, there are various private groups on Facebook where current part-time instrumental music educators post upcoming job openings on which current teachers can comment if they are interested.

pandemic, as many researchers might hypothesize, I argue that the part-time teaching community's prerequisite for accrued social capital allows educators to piece together a living in this line of work. This same social capital allows them to weather the challenges posed by the pandemic and remote learning, even as other gig workers such as ride-share drivers struggle.

In this thesis I highlight part-time instrumental music educators' unique working conditions, career choices, and pandemic adaptations through ethnography. Too often the research "field" is separated from the final publication that describes what the researcher learned in the field. Ethnomusicologist Deborah Wong addresses this issue in depth, arguing that "ethnomusicologists know that experience is important, but they also intuit that the epistemological problem of reflecting on music in another medium *besides* music involves multiple translative shifts."[4] Fieldwork experiences and music lose vibrancy and transparency with every translation from the field to the final writing. Although the field will always be separated by nature from an academic document *about* it, I endeavor in this thesis to create a space for my interlocutors' voices to be heard as they originally intended and avoid as many translative shifts as possible. To reach this end, I will introduce the population of interest in further depth and describe my personal position within the community. I will then provide necessary context about the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on schools, gig work, and educators. Finally, I will provide

[4] Deborah Wong, "Moving: From Performance to Performative Ethnography and Back Again," in *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology*, eds. Gregory F. Barz and Timothy J. Cooley (Cary: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2008), 81.

introductions to the gig economy in the United States, evaluate how accrued forms of capital interact with securing gig jobs, and explore common narratives of job acquisition. I interviewed 12 part-time music educators in Arizona and their voices will interact with the text throughout to bring lived experiences into what would otherwise be theoretical discussion.

Introduction of Population

The title "part-time instrumental music educator" is very broad and could apply to a number of job positions and working adults. For the sake of scope for this thesis, I interviewed those that work part-time with instrumental competitive marching ensembles at a variety of skill levels. According to the educators, these ensembles include high school Fall semester marching bands, high school and independent winter indoor percussion ensembles from Regional A class through World class (through the Winter Guard International competitive circuit), and Drum Corps International Open and World class groups. I chose to only research those involved with the marching arts for this thesis for the sake of scope and specificity. There are numerous other part-time positions, both teaching and performing, for musicians in the state of Arizona that all utilize similar social mechanisms for job maintenance and acquisition. However, with each subcategory of employment comes slightly different social expectations, interactions, and networks. To ensure the utmost accuracy and clarity for this research, I focused on part-time teachers in the marching arts. In these positions, part-time educators work directly with

students, often before and/or after regular school hours, teaching instrumental performance, marching skills, visual skills, how to successfully be part of an ensemble, individual responsibility, interpersonal relationship skills, and various other academically tangential life skills. Parallel to working directly with the students as a teacher, these part-time educators also spend their time composing and arranging for their ensembles, writing and designing drill, visuals, electronics, and choreography, performing instrument maintenance and repair, consulting on music and design, working as clinicians, studying scores, taking classes on new related skills, and more as needed. Tangential to education, some educators even perform in their own professional music ensembles of various styles. Each work item listed is itself a part-time gig; collectively, these part-time gigs could equate to much more than a full-time position.

All of the interviewed educators reported that they take some part in all of the above listed duties. Two of the educators who participated in an interview hold a full-time job teaching middle school band in addition to their work as part-time instrumental music educators outside of regular school hours. Unlike many working Americans, part-time music educators piece together many gigs to create a non-traditional "full-time" position. Each task is paid individually to a predetermined stipend amount that is often fixed regardless of the number of hours spent working towards that task. Therefore, taking multiple gigs adds up to the equivalent of a full-time job in terms of hours spent working and net pay. Of course, as is often the case, independent organizations and some school districts do not take taxes out of their paychecks, let alone provide benefits, leaving part-

time music educators to do their taxes independently each year. This consideration must always be in the back of educators' minds, especially those who rely solely on this style of gig work as their career.

The educators who I interviewed vary in age from 20 years old to mid-50's. To ensure anonymity and safety I will not specify any particular educators' age, but I will briefly address the most common age range for this work. Most of the educators in this thesis range from 28 to 35 years old. Through observations, participation, and interviews, I find that most part-time music educators are in their 20's or 30's. After that, some part-time teachers choose to leave the profession to pursue full-time employment with benefits and family matters. Others choose to keep part-time teaching throughout their working ages. Although, younger teachers still in the height of their involvement with the activity do not often report that they see a reason to change professions. As part-time teachers age, some can rely on spousal benefits for their family and others feel compelled to find a new career entirely. There definitely are fewer part-time educators in the marching arts past the age of 40 and 50 than there are ages 20 to 40, but age alone does not discount ability or efficacy.

My Position Within the Part-Time Instrumental Music Educators' Community

I would be remiss to not address my participant-observer status within this particular community. I have worked as a part-time percussion educator and part-time assistant band coach since 2015, which at the time of this writing equates to six years of

experience. I have only worked in this capacity at the public high school level, but did participate in an independent ensemble as a performer where I observed the dynamics and responsibilities of the educators. This part-time career at multiple schools provided me the opportunity to form and foster relationships with my colleagues, all of whom have very different "patchworks of experience" in their own lives.[5]

My own patchwork of experience certainly led me towards this thesis topic. I am a strong advocate for K-12 music education in the public schools and I believe that an ethnomusicological approach to understanding the mechanisms that drive and encourage music education is one of the keys to understanding how to continue and improve the subject for students. Additionally, I know from experience that part-time instrumental music educators spend more time face-to-face with students than their respective core subject teachers do throughout the entire week, but are essentially ignored when parents and administration consider influential educators who positively impact students and their futures. The key factor in this community is the nature of interpersonal relationships that the educators form, such as those between me and other educators, educators and their students, and between educators themselves.

[5] I take the term "patchwork of experience" from ethnomusicologist Anne Rasmussen. She coined the term to refer to each individuals' life experiences, circumstances, and choices that led them to where they are and what they are doing now. Each person has a different patchwork of experience and therefore different, valuable perspectives and wisdom. Anne Rasmussen, "Bilateral Negotiations in Bimusicality: Insiders, Outsiders, and the 'Real Version' in Middle Eastern Music Performance," in *Performing Ethnomusicology: Paths and Practices*, ed. Ted Solís (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 182.

Ethnomusicologist Deborah Wong introduced her 2008 contribution to *Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology* with an anecdote about taiko playing and self-reflection on her role as a taiko player and an ethnomusicologist concurrently. She expressed that she is asking the reader "to trust me as a representative taiko player, though that's theoretically risky in all kinds of ways."[6] Essentially, I am asking this of my audience as well, to trust that I will include contextual information from my personal experience as a part-time instrumental music educator when it is necessary to supplement my interlocutors, but I will keep my interlocutors' voices in the forefront. Wong also quips that she is trying "to do justice to an unruly group of loosely connected people who love what they're doing and agree on some things but not on a lot of other things."[7] Although the part-time teacher community is more closely knit than taiko players in San Jose, California, I also do everything in my power to adequately represent this community that shares similarities and differences in opinions, justifications, and pedagogy. The writing consists of data collected from 12 educators with whom I had the privilege to speak. My relationships with others in the community were and still are based upon the people whom I know closely—those with whom I have worked, and those with whom I keep in contact—and people whom I know of through my close relationships. In an effort to always recognize and work through my inherent bias, I did not focus solely on my inner social circle for interviews, but rather reached out to

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[6] Wong, 77.

[7] Ibid.

educators with a variety of work experience who would all contribute a different viewpoint for this writing.

Methodology

My primary interest in this topic came from my experience as a working part-time music educator. Going forward, I first determined that I would interview active members of the part-time instrumental music educator community and acquired an Institutional Review Board exemption to conduct interviews.[8] For the sake of scope, time, and relevance, I did not post a public call for interviews to social media forums. Rather, I began by interviewing educators whom I knew, and from them took referrals to their colleagues. Additionally, I searched online public postings of staff members at various groups and personal webpages to invite more teachers to participate in an interview via online messaging formats.

Approximately 75% of the educators who I approached contacted me and participated in an interview, culminating in a total of 12 interlocutors. All of the interviews happened via online video chat, with all but one being over the program *Zoom*. To the best of my knowledge, all interviews took place both in my home and the participants' homes. Every educator who took time to talk with me holds one or more gig jobs as described in the "Introduction of Population" section. On average, each interview

[8] Institutional Review Board approval can be found in Appendix A.

lasted one hour. Some interviews were shorter, and some were longer, with no one interview exceeding one and a half hours.

Although I prepared a series of 13 questions for the interviews I made the decision to structure the interaction as a guided conversation rather than as a structured interview with a fixed set of questions. Therefore, some participants guided the conversation in a different direction than others and focused on slightly different aspects of their work. This highlighted the different experiences of being a part-time instrumental music educator that are important to each individual. Of course, I only interviewed 12 educators, so this writing is not a comprehensive account of all of the part-time instrumental music educators in the state of Arizona, but still accounts for a wide variety of possible gigs and experiences. Finally, all names and titles in this document have been changed to ensure participant anonymity and safety.

Pandemic

It is impossible to consider and discuss anything from the years 2020 and 2021 without addressing the impacts of the SARS-CoV-2 COVID-19 global pandemic.[9] COVID-19 disrupted income sources for many Americans who work within and depend

[9] Originally, the virus was titled COVID-19 by the World Health Organization, and then retitled SARS-CoV-2 by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses. For the remainder of this document I will be using COVID-19, the term most often found in literature about the pandemic from the United States. Kit-San Yuen et al., "SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19: The Most Important Research Questions," *Cell & Bioscience* 10 (March 16, 2020), https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7074995/.

on the gig economy.[10] However, many of the part-time instrumental music educators in Arizona, most of whom piece together a full-time income through part-time teaching and performance gigs, have managed to continue their work and maintain their teaching positions despite the pandemic. The pandemic was officially declared a global health emergency in January 2020 by the World Health Organization and subsequently a pandemic on March 11, 2020.[11] The United States quickly followed suit declaring the pandemic a national emergency two days later.[12] Finally, individual states issued stay-at-home orders to mitigate the spread of the virus.[13] These stay-at-home orders, while necessary for public health, negatively impacted gig economy workers across the country.[14]

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[10] Kate Conger, Adam Satariano, and Mike Isaac, "Pandemic Erodes Gig Economy Work," *The New York Times*, March 18, 2020, Technology, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/18/technology/gig-economy-pandemic.html; Matthew Lavietes and Michael McCoy, "Waiting for Work: Pandemic Leaves U.S. Gig Workers Clamoring for Jobs," *Reuters*, October 19, 2020, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-biggerpicture-health-coronavirus-gigw-idUSKBN2741DM; "How the COVID-19 Pandemic Has Disrupted Demand in the Gig Economy." *University of Chicago News*. Last modified August 19, 2020. https://news.uchicago.edu/story/how-covid-19-pandemic-has-disrupted-demand-gig-economy.

[11] Yuen et. al., "SARS-COV-2 and COVID-19"; "A Timeline of COVID-19 Developments in 2020," *The American Journal of Managed Care*, last modified January 1, 2021, https://www.ajmc.com/view/a-timeline-of-covid19-developments-in-2020.

[12] The American Journal of Managed Care, "A Timeline of COVID-19."

[13] Amanda Moreland, "Timing of State and Territorial COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Orders and Changes in Population Movement — United States, March 1–May 31, 2020," *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 69 (2020), https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6935a2.htm.

[14] Moreland, "Timing of State and Territorial COVID-19 Stay-at-Home Orders."

Unfortunately for part-time educators, various sources report that music is the most negatively impacted subject in schools since the first pandemic safety shutdown.[15] Hoffman and Miller detailed the impacts of school closures on young children parallel to the necessity to continue closures for the sake of public health.[16] Children often act as "vectors, spreading [the virus] throughout the community to people who are at higher risk for serious health outcomes," thus necessitating virtual and remote schooling for K-12 students, regardless of the difficulties presented to students, parents, and educators.[17]

In-person classroom experiences are key to mental and social growth, especially for younger students.[18] For instrumental music students, learning an instrument is exceedingly difficult at home without a teacher to demonstrate and adjust physical and

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[15] Abigail Manila, "Music Education Amidst a Pandemic," *The Advocate*, October 8, 2020, https://cccadvocate.com/12143/opinion/music-education-amidst-a-pandemic/; Emilee Lindner, "How COVID Changed The Look Of Music Education | GRAMMY.Com," *Recording Academy Grammy Awards*, last modified September 21, 2020, https://www.grammy.com/grammys/news/puppy-pads-and-slit-masks-how-covid-changed-look-music-education; Emily Ambriz, "Music Education During COVID-19," *Music For All*, last modified November 11, 2020, https://www.musicforall.org/music-education-during-covid-19; Valerie Strauss, "Perspective | Covid-19 School Closures 'Devastating' for Students Who Rely on Music Classes 'to Get Them through the School Day'," *Washington Post*, April 26, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2020/04/26/covid-19-school-closures-devastating-students-who-rely-music-classes-to-get-them-through-school-day/.

[16] Jessica A. Hoffman and Edward A. Miller, "Addressing the Consequences of School Closure Due to COVID−19 on Children's Physical and Mental Well−Being," *World Medical & Health Policy* (August 20, 2020), https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7461306/.

[17] Hoffman and Miller, "Addressing the Consequences."

[18] "Your Health: Deciding How to Go Back to School," *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, last modified January 5, 2021, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/decision-tool.html.

aural skills.[19] This hardship is decreasing music class enrollment during the pandemic. Maddy Shaw Roberts reports that over two-thirds of elementary schools and over one-third of high schools in the United Kingdom decreased or eliminated music education classes during virtual instruction.[20] Statistics are similar in the United States. Seventy percent of music educators surveyed by Wenger in partnership with Music for All reported that their ensemble rehearsals resumed for the Fall 2020 semester with safety modifications, but approximately half of the school districts had no plan for whether or not performances would be permitted.[21] Arizona school districts have not released enrollment statistics, but part-time instrumental music educators tell similar disheartening accounts of the decline of music education during COVID-19.

Schools' reactions to the pandemic shutdown was one of the primary foci of my interviews with educators. Heartwarming news stories tell of teachers dropping off school supplies to each individual student's house, school districts providing breakfast and lunch to students despite remote learning, and resolving issues of internet access to students in

[19] Manila, "Music Education Amidst a Pandemic."

[20] Maddy Shaw Roberts, "Nearly 70 Percent of Primary Schools Have Reduced Music Teaching Because of COVID-19," *Classic FM*, last modified December 7, 2020, https://www.classicfm.com/music-news/coronavirus/music-disappearing-schools-amid-pandemic-ism-report/; "Ofsted Confirms Damage to Music Education from Covid-19," News, *The Strad*, last modified December 16, 2020, https://www.thestrad.com/news/ofsted-confirms-damage-to-music-education-from-covid-19/11582.article.

[21] Ambriz, "Music Education During COVID-19."

need of technological devices.[22] However, these news stories are not the full reality. All interviewed teachers are associated with public school districts for at least one of their part-time positions, and all have valuable insight into how the pandemic affected both music classes and schools as a whole. The consistent variables for all of my interlocutors are a transition to virtual learning and a decline in music class enrollment. Compared to numbers prior to the pandemic, every single interviewee reported decreased enrollment in some capacity. Not everyone provided specific numbers or percentages of students lost, but those who were comfortable doing so reported numbers alarmingly similar to the statistics reported by Maddy Shaw Roberts and Ofsted from the UK.[23] All twelve music educators, as of March 2020, saw their students only through virtual video call platforms. Up through March 2021 some are still exclusively teaching virtually and others have

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[22] Lily Altavena, "Arizona Students Need 100,000 Laptops and Internet Access. Here's How to Help," *The Arizona Republic*, last modified April 8, 2020, https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona-education/2020/04/08/arizona-students-need-100000-laptops-and-internet-access-how-help-doug-ducey-kathy-hoffman/2973866001/; Lisa Irish, "School Meals: A Lifeline for Many during COVID-19," *AZEdNews*, September 16, 2020, https://azednews.com/school-meals-a-lifeline-for-many-during-covid-19/; "Texas Teachers Drop off Supplies and Goodies to Students," *KGNS.tv*, last modified April 6, 2020, https://www.kgns.tv/content/news/Texas-teachers-drop-off-supplies-and-goodies-to-students-569407301.html.

[23] See note 20 on page 12 for original discussion and citation; Emma reported that her band enrollment declined from 80 to 25 students, nearly a 70% decrease. Hector describes how the school day band class is now pull-out only by instrumental section, meaning classes of 1-3 students, which decreased enrollment in his extracurricular ensembles significantly. Josh reports that one of his schools has lost 10-15% enrollment and the other 40%. He also adds that no new students joined in Fall 2020. Trevor has fortunately lost very little enrollment, as his school is one of the few in the area that adapted to online music learning very quickly. Wesley just started his ensembles this year, so his enrollment of 10 students is a record high, albeit fewer students than expected.

transitioned back from only virtual to some in-person teaching. For the two full-time band directors, their normal daily music classes shifted to optional extracurricular classes taught outside of the regular school day, parallel to the decline in music education seen throughout the country.

The educators also described that the state is using a metrics system to determine if, and when, it is safe to return to modified in-person schooling. The Arizona Department of Education, in partnership with the Arizona Department of Health Services, published a 21-page report detailing three benchmark metrics in three categories related to COVID-19 for Arizona school districts to determine their primary instructional delivery method. In a controversial move, the Arizona Department of Health Services modified the metrics and their subsequent instructional suggestions effective on October 29, 2020.[24] In summary, the suggestions for returning to in-person learning are significantly less strict under the newly published benchmarks and will likely prompt students and teachers to return to the classroom sooner than the original benchmarks would have allowed. In accordance with the public position taken by Arizona Superintendent of Public Education Kathy Hoffman, four educators who participated in interviews expressed concerned that the newly published benchmarks could endanger students, families, and school staff by allowing schools to open prematurely in relation to the

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[24] Nicole Grigg, Claudia Rupcich, and Danielle Lerner, "State Leaders in Arizona Have Quietly Changed School Metrics as COVID-19 Cases Rise," *KNXV*, last modified October 28, 2020, https://www.abc15.com/news/state/state-leaders-in-arizona-have-quietly-changed-school-metrics-as-covid-19-cases-rise.; *Safely Returning to In-Person Instruction* (Arizona Department of Health Services, October 29, 2020).

number of COVID-19 cases in the state.[25] Music education and music ensembles, especially those that are competitive like those in the marching band idiom, are, at their core, physically participatory and social. Music educators are forced during the pandemic to consider health and safety, the survival of their competitive ensembles, and the security of their jobs and hence, their paychecks.

Although the competitive instrumental ensemble circuits in Arizona all cancelled their events due to COVID-19, very few part-time instrumental music educators found themselves without at least some of their gigs.[26] Madeline, Trevor, Wesley, Michael, and Hector did not gain or lose any job positions. Rather, they had the opportunity to

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[25] In a post on her public social media account on Twitter, Superintendent Kathy Hoffman wrote, "The Arizona Department of Education did not request or recommend any changes to the @AZDHS [Arizona Department of Health Services] school benchmarks." In other words, Hoffman did not request or approve the benchmark changes that will allow in-person school with a higher risk of COVID-19 transmission. This Tweet prompted educators and non-educators alike to criticize the new benchmarks out of concern for the safety of students, families, and school staff. Conversely, some individuals praised the Arizona Department of Health Services for their move against the Department of Education to allow students back in the classroom. Generally, I noted that most working educators cautiously agreed with Hoffman. Kathy Hoffman, Twitter post, October 29, 2020, 1:18 p.m., https://twitter.com/Supt_Hoffman/status/1321909343827103744.

[26] The competitive circuits include: Arizona Marching Band Association (AzMBA), Arizona Band and Orchestra Directors Association (ABODA), Winter Guard International (WGI), Winter Guard Arizona (WGAZ), and Bands Of America (BOA). "Music for All Statement on 2020 Bands of America Championships," accessed January 7, 2021, https://www.musicforall.org/music-for-all-statement-on-2020-bands-of-america-championships; "WGAZ Corona Virus Information - Winter Guard Arizona," *WGAZ Performing Arts*, last modified March 12, 2020, http://wgaz.org/WGAZ-Corona-Virus-Information; "WGI Statement on Remaining 2020 Events," *WGI*, March 12, 2020, https://www.wgi.org/wgi-statement-on-remaining-2020-events/; "2020 Season Update – Arizona Marching Band Association," accessed January 7, 2021, https://azmba.org/2020-season-update/.

transition online and continue non-competitive music education. Brandon, Eric, Abel, Emma, Daniel, Henry, and Josh all experienced some negative effects of the pandemic on their gigs. For example, Brandon, Josh, and Eric are no longer writing and arranging music for their ensembles, but are still teaching non-competitive musical skills to their students both online and in-person.[27] In Emma's and Daniel's case, they have a full-time music teaching job at a public school. Their music classes are now after regular school hours, so they are not necessarily experiencing any negative side effects of not working with their high school marching bands part-time this year. Adjusting a fully in-person instrumental ensemble to remote virtual learning involves a drastic increase in workload for full-time and part-time instrumental music educators, especially considering that they manage multiple gig jobs at the same time.

All 12 educators, regardless of their gig positions, spent a lot of time in their interviews sharing their thoughts and feelings about the value and hardships of remote music education for all styles of ensembles. Advocating to keep music and art in students' lives was a common theme among all teachers. Many educators will relate to the sentiment that they are "in some respect, guardians of these young men and women," and besides content delivery, it is their job to teach young adults how to be successful human beings.[28] Emma describes how music teachers form a unique bond with their students because, unlike the case of some core subjects such as English and math, students typically see the same music teacher each year. Students who participate in

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[27] Teaching online and in-person as of January 2021.

[28] Interview with Eric, November 1, 2020.

extracurricular competitive music ensembles spend even more time with their music instructors—both full-time and part-time—most mornings or evenings before and after school. It is therefore a pressing concern to part-time music educators that districts across the country are completely eliminating arts programs, either all at once or little by little.[29]

Overall, part-time instrumental music educators illuminated five key conclusions in their interviews in terms of working during the pandemic. First, the arts are being cut at a rapid pace despite the fact that the unique personal connection music teachers of all sorts have with their students contributes to the students' positive socio-emotional growth. Second, part-time music educators are adapting to virtual remote learning just as rapidly and successfully as full-time employed music educators, and express very similar concerns and hardships despite being part-time. Third, it is abundantly clear that student safety is the top priority and music teachers are willing to yield competition and some instructional content to ensure student safety and mental health. Fourth, it is unclear when schools will open for in-person learning, and in what capacity music making will be permitted to continue when that happens.[30] Finally, part-time instrumental music educators are surprisingly not experiencing as many negative consequences of the impact

[29] Lindner, "How COVID Changed The Look of Music Education."

[30] Lindner offers wonderful suggestions and insight into the current environment for music educators as of May and September 2020. She describes the importance of marching band for some high school students and to what lengths band teachers will go to continue to provide their students with adequate musical and emotional learning. Emilee Lindner, "How School Marching Bands Are Coping With COVID-19 | GRAMMY.Com," *Recording Academy Grammy Awards*, last modified May 26, 2020, https://www.grammy.com/grammys/news/marching-six-feet-apart-how-high-school-marching-bands-are-coping-pandemic; Lindner, "How COVID Changed The Look of Music Education."

of COVID-19 on the gig economy as others. Some non-educational gig workers are financially struggling due to loss of work, but all 12 of the interviewed part-time music educators are still working and making an adequate paycheck, primarily due to their unique position within the American gig economy.[31]

The Gig Economy

Unlike gig teachers, the majority of gig economy workers faced a novel set of hardships in 2020. Towards the end of the year, after many working adults were forced to adapt to new economic and social conditions due to the ongoing pandemic, the number of adults working in the gig economy for their own personal income is expected to grow rapidly.[32] In 2014, an estimated 20% of the United States workforce was in the gig economy.[33] However, in the Western Mountain region of the United States, up to 43% of

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[31] Conger, Satariano, and Isaac, "Pandemic"; Lavietes and McCoy, "Waiting for Work"; University of Chicago News, "How the COVID-19 Pandemic Has Disrupted Demand."

[32] Conger, Satariano, and Isaac, "Pandemic"; Karen Kosanovich, "A Look At Contingent Workers," *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Spotlight on Statistics* (September 2018): 15, https://www.bls.gov/spotlight/2018/contingent-workers/pdf/contingent-workers.pdf.; Lavietes and McCoy, "Waiting for Work."

[33] Douglas Holtz-Eakin, Ben Gitis, and Will Rinehart, "The Gig Economy: Research and Policy Implications of Regional, Economic, and Demographics Trends," *The Aspen Institute Future of Work Initiative and American Action Forum* (January 2017): 3, https://www.aspeninstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Regional-and-Industry-Gig-Trends-2017.pdf.

all workers are employed in the gig economy.[34] From 2002 to 2014, the total number of gig workers in the country increased by approximately 9-15%.[35] Specifically, the Western Mountain region saw the most growth in gig economy workers, whose numbers increased between 93% and 160%, with the majority of the expansion taking place from 2010-2014.[36] It is quite apparent, then, that although part-time instrumental music educators who participate in the gig economy are often told that they do not work a "real job," the gig economy is absolutely flourishing in Arizona.[37]

Gig work is synonymous with various other titles for the style of work done by part-time temporarily contracted employees. Oftentimes in business literature the term "contingent worker" is used rather than "gig worker."[38] Nonetheless, in this thesis I use the term "gig economy" to parallel how music educators and performers typically refer to

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[34] According to Holtz-Eakin et. al., the Western region includes Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico. Holtz-Eakin, Gitis, and Rinehart, 5; This 2014 statistic also cited in Rebecca Henderson, "How COVID-19 Has Transformed The Gig Economy," *Forbes*, last modified December 10, 2020, https://www.forbes.com/sites/rebeccahenderson/2020/12/10/how-covid-19-has-transformed-the-gig-economy/; Although I will not explore the following avenue further in this thesis, it is worth noting that five of the above states in the Western Mountain Region are "Right-to-Work" states, meaning that the states can determine if workers are required to unionize to work or if they can work without union membership. Those five states are Arizona, Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah. "Right to Work Laws," *National Conference of State Legislatures*, accessed March 15, 2021, https://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/right-to-work-laws-and-bills.aspx.

[35] Percentage range given in original document. Holtz-Eakin, Gitis, and Rinehart, 2.

[36] Figures greater than 100% indicate that work positions that were previously non-contingent were replaced with gig or contingent work. Holtz-Eakin, Gitis, and Rinehart, 5.

[37] Interview with Eric, November 1, 2020.

[38] Kosanovich, 1.

their work. According to Karen Kosanovich with the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics,

> Contingent workers are people who do not expect their jobs to last or who report that their jobs are temporary. They do not have an implicit or explicit contract for continuing employment. People who do not expect their jobs to continue for personal reasons, such as retirement or returning to school, are not considered contingent workers.[39]

Put simply, a contingent or gig position is a temporary job with a clear end goal and conclusion to the work, usually within a short period of time. Kosanovich makes sure to clarify that those whose jobs end of their own personal accord are not considered gig workers. Additionally, Lavietes and McCoy succinctly summarize the definition when they write "gig workers are independent contractors who perform on-demand services."[40] Common examples of contingent work include ride-share driving, delivery services, and childcare.[41] Therefore, the gig economy is the economy or labor market of and for gig work and workers. This concept presents itself frequently in all levels of education, but is not often explicitly discussed or noted.

Part-time instrumental music educators do not necessarily hold a typical part-time job with schools. Rather, they are hired to perform a variety of projects on a monthly or semesterly basis. All of the interlocutors for this document work with various high school

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[39] Kosanovich, 1.

[40] Lavietes and McCoy, "Waiting for Work."

[41] Conger, Satariano, and Isaac, "Pandemic"; Lavietes and McCoy, "Waiting for Work"; Steven Vallas and Juliet B. Schor, "What Do Platforms Do? Understanding the Gig Economy," *Annual Review of Sociology* 46, no. 1 (July 30, 2020): 273–294, https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev-soc-121919-054857, 275.; University of Chicago News, "How the COVID-19 Pandemic Has Disrupted Demand."

marching ensembles in both the Fall and Spring academic semesters. Each job that they complete is paid separately per semester. For example, Brandon receives separate stipends to teach an ensemble for the semester and to arrange the music for that ensemble; both of these activities achieve a specific goal within a specific time frame. Henry is paid through both a high school and an independent competitive marching ensemble to teach for the Spring 2021 semester. As a final example, Josh holds multiple gig positions—teaching competitive marching ensembles at two different high schools, arranging music for one group, composing new music for the other, and designing electronic sound at both schools (both aurally in the music and mechanically with the sound equipment).[42] All of these positions often overlap for each educator, but each is considered a separate time-constrained, singular goal-oriented project for which they are paid separately. Combined, each of these paychecks comes together to form a full-time livable wage for these educational specialists, albeit without any standard employee benefits.[43]

The popularity and growth of the gig economy during the COVID-19 pandemic is no accident. Originally, the gig economy thrived during the 2008 financial crisis in the United States when companies preferred hiring contingent workers rather than full-time

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[42] All information obtained through my interviews with these educators. Brandon, October 17, 2020; Henry, December 5, 2020; Josh, October 30, 2020.

[43] Standard employee benefits include, but are not limited to, healthcare, retirement plans, life insurance, and disability. Gig music educators do not receive these benefits from their employers in their career.

employees due to the financial instability that was a defining factor of the time.[44] Holtz-Eakin et. al. goes so far as to suggest that the financial crisis and recovery period in 2008 are indicative of the cyclical nature of the popularity of gig work. Essentially, many companies are more likely to hire part-time, non-committal gig workers rather than full-time employees with benefits during times of crisis to ensure that they will not overspend on payroll when finances and profits are unstable.[45] However, for some particular professions within the gig economy, demand for service has drastically decreased, leaving workers uncertain about their financial future.

Health concerns regarding COVID-19 negatively impacted gig workers that provide contact services, such as ride-share drivers and task-based service providers.[46] With stay-at-home orders across the country, fewer people need ride-share services, and even fewer feel safe entering a stranger's vehicle and sitting in close proximity for an extended period of time. Similarly, an increasing number of adults do not feel comfortable allowing a task-based service provider to enter their home to fix something,

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[44] In business literature, the 2008 financial crisis is often referred to as the "Great Recession." Additionally, Holtz-Eakin, Gitis, and Rinehart, p. 4, gives examples of various companies that started in 2008 in reaction to the recession and organizes statistics from 2002-2008 and 2009-2014, which essentially categorizes by before and after the Great Recession; Vallas and Schor, "What Do Platforms Do?" 274; Holtz-Eakin, Gitis, and Rinehart, 2; Griffin, "The Future"; John Frazer, "How The Gig Economy Is Reshaping Careers For The Next Generation," *Forbes*, last modified February 15, 2019, https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnfrazer1/2019/02/15/how-the-gig-economy-is-reshaping-careers-for-the-next-generation/.

[45] Holtz-Eakin, Gitis, and Rinehart, 8.

[46] Conger, Satariano, and Isaac, "Pandemic"; Griffin, "The Future"; Lavietes and McCoy, "Waiting for Work"; University of Chicago News, "How the COVID-19 Pandemic Has Disrupted Demand."

citing health and viral spread concerns, not to mention possible financial strain brought on by loss of employment due to the pandemic.[47] This highlights another factor associated with continued employment for educators. For most teachers, their work has shifted to a virtual platform and they are not required to have in-person interactions with students and families. Fortunately for those workers who are losing income, Griffin claims that larger companies that did not previously spend on gig work are expected to create thousands of gig positions to keep up with new customer demand and lessen the strain of hiring full-time employees. Such work might include temporarily filling online shopping orders to ship to remote customers, for example.[48] This prediction is the perfect example of the crisis cycle suggested by Holtz-Eakin et. al. As businesses are mandated to shut down and operate remotely, a significant number of full-time employees are temporarily furloughed or laid off entirely. Further, each company must adapt their operations and job positions to, for example, fulfill online orders rather than maintain a storefront. Consequently, as a reaction to the ongoing crisis, the company will create temporary part-time positions for gig workers to fulfill or deliver orders. This is only one example of the cycle, but it demonstrates the process that drives the gig economy in crisis.

Fortunately for part-time educators, the academic gig economy cycle looks similar but does not inherently imply job loss. Across the world in Iran, Payam Yousefi

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[47] Conger, Satariano, and Isaac, "Pandemic"; Griffin, "The Future"; Lavietes and McCoy, "Waiting for Work"; University of Chicago News, "How the COVID-19 Pandemic Has Disrupted Demand."

[48] Griffin, "The Future."

discusses how classical Persian music masters in Iran quickly and completely adapted their teaching to virtual platforms and emulated the traditional call-and-response processes in Persian music to live social media musical collaborations.[49] American music teachers in Arizona were required to do something very similar, albeit using different online platforms. First, however, it is critical to understand how teachers fit into the academic gig economy.

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, in September 2018, one third of all gig workers in the country were employed in either healthcare or education.[50] At the time, the Bureau reported that six million Americans were part of the gig economy, indicating that two million Americans were providing contingent services in education and health.[51] Within education, Robert Gardner, assistant professor of music education at the Penn State School of Music, found that K-12 music teachers are significantly more likely than any other teachers to hold part-time and contingent work only or in addition to a full-time job. Only 63% of music teachers held a full-time job, compared to over 93% of other teachers. Additionally, music teachers were over 30%

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[49] In particular, Yousefi focused on the use of Instagram Live to teach and perform collaboratively. Payam Yousefi, "Notes from the Field: Social Distancing, Virtual Performance, and Labor of Compassion in Iran," *SEM Newsletter* 54, no. 3 (Summer 2020): 10-12.

[50] Kosanovich, 8.

[51] Ibid.

more likely than other teachers to work part-time gig positions.[52] Arnett and Lachs argue that the demand for gig teachers is increasing at all levels (K-12 and higher education) as education becomes more specialized, personalized, and virtual.[53] In fact, according to Arnett, 73% of the American professoriate is contingent and not on track to receive tenure.[54] In K-12 education, small group, individual, specialized, and virtual learning allow the teacher to circumvent what Robert Gardner found in his study to be the top factor that encourages full-time music teachers to leave the profession. Full-time educators in all subjects face administrative pressure, observations, or interventions in their classrooms at some point every year. By nature of the subject, music classrooms have significantly different structures and needs than a core subject, a fact that administrators from outside of music sometimes do not understand well. Consequently, a lack of administrative support is the number one factor that leads to music educator

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[52] Robert D. Gardner, "Should I Stay or Should I Go? Factors That Influence the Retention, Turnover, and Attrition of K–12 Music Teachers in the United States," *Arts Education Policy Review* 111, no. 3 (April 16, 2010): 115, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10632910903458896.

[53] Autumn Arnett, "The Gig Economy Is Making Waves in Education," *Higher Ed Dive*, last modified August 4, 2016, https://www.highereddive.com/news/the-gig-economy-is-making-waves-in-education/423791/?referrer_site=www.educationdive.com; Jennifer Lachs, "How the Gig Economy Is Impacting Education," *InformED*, last modified March 5, 2017, https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/features/gig-economy-impacting-education/.

[54] Arnett, "The Gig Economy Is Making Waves."

attrition.[55] Those working as a part-time gig educators avoid this problem completely.[56] However, especially in higher education, gig work is not without its drawbacks.

Colleen Flaherty reported on an interview that she conducted with Adrianna Kezar, author of *The Gig Academy: Mapping Labor in the Neoliberal University*. Kezar is a professor at the University of Southern California and director of its Higher Education Center and she takes a critical stance against what she calls the "adjunctification" of higher education.[57] She fears that "giggifying" academia will deprofessionalize universities and ultimately cheapen the educational experience, both metaphorically and literally. Adjunct and contingent faculty are often paid subpar wages

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[55] Gardner, 116.

[56] The specific line of work that I investigate throughout this thesis is not subject to any administrative interaction. The few interlocutors who work as full-time traditional music educators during the day interact with their administrators often in that position, but part-time educators in the competitive instrumental idiom only work with their band director and other instrumental music staff. Before or upon hiring, the district and schools require proof of IVP fingerprint clearance (also called Level I clearance, the highest level in Arizona) and, sometimes, proof of liability insurance. Beyond that, gig teachers are under the supervision of their band director.

[57] Colleen Flaherty, "You've Heard of the Gig Economy, but What about the 'Gig Academy'?," *Inside Higher Ed*, last modified October 10, 2019, https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/10/10/you%E2%80%99ve-heard-gig-economy-what-about-gig-academy.

and do not have the option to be tenure-track.[58] Contrary to Kezar's fears, Rossol-Allison and Beyers conducted a study to determine if college student learning outcomes were negatively affected by having part-time faculty as opposed to a full-time tenured professor. Ultimately they found that professors' employment status had no effect on student learning outcomes. Rather, other factors such as students' intrinsic motivation and academic intent are the primary determinants of success.[59] Unfortunately no such studies have been conducted with K-12 students and part-time educators, but for the purposes of instrumental, often competitive music education, my interlocutors all report that the results of Rossol-Allison and Beyer's study parallel their experiences and observations in their own classes. However, it is noteworthy that the circumstances are different. The

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[58] Adrianna Kezar, quoted in Flaherty, "You've Heard."; Contemporary ethnomusicologist Julie Strand is a great example of the giggification of academia. In an interview with Ted Solís she explained, "I moved to Boston in the fall of 2007 and had one class on African American music at Tufts University. In the spring of 2008 I gave courses at Brandeis University ('World Music Survey'), Northeastern University ('World Music'), and Tufts ('History of Rock and Roll'). I was also tutoring for SATs throughout this time. In the summer of 2008 I taught 'World Music' at Tufts. The next academic year, 2008-09, I taught two classes per semester at Tufts and felt like a grownup for the first time because I actually had benefits! I also taught a course at Northeastern . . . in the spring of 2009. I was essentially for hire; people would e-mail me and ask, 'Can you teach this or that course?' . . . In 2009-10 I taught at MIT . . . I had benefits there and taught 'Into the World Music' for two semesters and 'Popular Musics of the World.' I also had one class at Boston University during the fall of 2009 . . . The problem with all this teaching is that I've had no time to publish. I didn't even manage to finish my dissertation and graduate until May 2009. . . . I was way too busy preparing courses and looking for the next gig." Margaret Sarkissian and Ted Solís, *Living Ethnomusicology: Paths and Practices* (Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois Press, 2019), 283-284.

[59] Patrick M. Rossol-Allison and Natalie J. Alleman Beyers, "The Role of Full-Time and Part-Time Faculty in Student Learning Outcomes," *Association for Institutional Research Forum* (2011), 14.

part-time or adjunct professoriate manage and teach their classes on their own. In contrast, part-time music educators are lending assistance to the full-time teacher and managing ensembles and rehearsals outside of normal school time. Therefore, student learning outcomes might be unhindered, but the processes for adjunct faculty and part-time music educators are very different. Furthermore, Jennifer Lachs adds that part-time educators in the K-12 classroom will actually positively impact our students in non-traditional ways, such as preparing students for the modern job force.

It is undeniable that the American workforce and economy are undergoing drastic changes right now, some of which will be permanent. Although primarily flourishing during the Great Recession of 2008 and the current 2020-2021 COVID-19 pandemic, the gig economy continued to grow in the interim. Thus, current K-12 students will enter a job market that is very different from the traditional market for which most schools prepare their students. Lachs asserts that gig teachers, who often work project-to-project, will instill in our nation's children a new type of work ethic that is centered around the ever-expanding gig economy. Children will become accustomed to working virtually and in a project-centered environment rather than on quarterly or semesterly grades and goals.[60] Additionally, Lachs lists various non-content skills that gig teachers can teach students, including "self-directed learning, effective communication, critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and project management."[61] This is not to imply that full-time traditional teachers do not effectively teach these skills to students regularly, but

[60] Lachs, "How the Gig Economy."

[61] Ibid.

rather to highlight the valuable soft skills that part-time educators embody, demonstrate, and teach students by example. In short, full-time traditional employment is not an indicator of an educators' effectiveness. Full-time employment does include insurance and retirement benefits, though. And yet, gig music educators consciously choose a piecemeal career. This then implies the same question that most of my interlocutors encounter when describing their work to others—why? Naturally, the answer to this question is significantly more complicated than most might presume and involves various aspects of personal preference and the current state of education in Arizona. As Gardner discovered, and as many music educators know from experience, there are a variety of factors that encourage or discourage being a full-time band director.[62]

But Why Not Work Full-Time?

"Arizona is experiencing a teacher shortage!"[63] This is a phrase that many students, teachers, school staff, and parents hear quite often in the state. However, as is often the case, there are two different perspectives on this narrative. It is true that, overall, Arizona is experiencing a massive teacher shortage. Of all teaching positions in every subject and grade level from kindergarten through high school, over 73% were either

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[62] I use "band director" in place of "music educator" in this case because all of my interlocutors for this document work in the band idiom. Hence, being a band director is the full-time traditional employment equivalent. Two teachers, Emma and Daniel, are full-time band directors *in addition to* being part-time workers. Details about their stance on full-time band directing from their interviews are included in the upcoming section when referencing interlocutors' beliefs and attitudes.

[63] This exclamation is generalized based upon the different variations that I and my interlocutors have heard for many years and is not a direct quote from any source.

unfilled or filled by an individual who does not meet the requirements for a standard teaching license.[64] Justin Wing details educational conditions that contribute to such shocking statistics, citing health concerns related to COVID-19 and that Arizona has some of the lowest pay and highest class size ratios in the country.[65] However, a comprehensive study like the one done by the ASPAA has not been conducted on music teachers only. In her interview, Emma presented a contradictory perspective about the band idiom in particular when recounting how she originally secured her full-time band teaching position:

> Because band jobs—they talk about this shortage, and there's this weird juxtaposition of the, "Yes, there's a teacher shortage, but not for band." There's a shortage of band helpers and techs and qualified music teachers to be coaches, but there's one [band director] at every program doing just fine and not going anywhere, so it's very difficult.[66]

Josh also addressed this perspective. Although he does not teach full-time like Emma, he agrees that there is "no real teacher shortage for music."[67] His reasoning, in summary, is that public schools and school districts often cut music programs entirely rather than only dismissing or losing the educator. Not only does this leave certified music educators

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[64] This data was collected from 200 school districts and charter schools in December 2020 by the Arizona School Personnel Administrators Association (ASPAA). The data collection survey included new sections related to the impacts of COVID-19 on teaching positions. Separately, 26.6% of teaching positions were unfilled and 46.5% were filled by an underqualified professional. The results were then published by AZ Ed News. Justin Wing, "AZ's Severe Teacher Shortage Continues.," *AZEdNews*, January 5, 2021, https://azednews.com/azs-severe-teacher-shortage-continues-as-spring-semester-starts/.

[65] Wing, "AZ's Severe Teacher Shortage."

[66] Interview with Emma, November 5, 2020.

[67] Interview with Josh, October 30, 2020.

without a job, it also narrows the job field and openings for positions. The displaced full-time band directors must then find a school that still has a program and also has an opening, which presents the difficulty that Emma addressed. Finally, in Josh's and Emma's opinions, there is a shortage of qualified part-time instrumental music educators to assist band directors in their programs. Rather, in their experience, directors have no option but to hire individuals with less experience and/or fewer qualifications in an effort to save money.[68] Therefore, highly qualified and experienced part-time music educators also cannot necessarily find openings in the state. This, however, might change because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both Josh and Eric addressed the possibility that some part-time instrumental music educators are voluntarily leaving this particular niche of the educational gig economy during the pandemic. This possibility is reflected in Emma's and Daniel's career circumstances. They both describe how the high schools with which they hold part-time instrumental music teaching positions did not require their direct services for the 2020-2021 school year, but plan to keep them on staff for upcoming seasons. This was not necessarily by choice for either individual, but both actually express feeling positively about the circumstances due to the increase in stress and workload in their full-time music teaching jobs. Emma, particularly, also works part-time with a world class drum and bugle corps in addition to teaching full-time and, until the pandemic, part-time

[68] Most programs for which directors would hire an assistant are competitive and expensive. Costs include, but are not limited to, uniforms, transportation, competition entrance fees, music composition or arrangements, rights to music and scores, drill, instrument maintenance, instrument purchases, and finally staff.

with a high school marching band.[69] In our interview, she proposed the possibility of retiring from gig teaching, saying, “I keep wanting to retire from teaching marching band. I have to say, being able to just do one full-time job, and one full-time thing instead of more like, part-time… just have the one thing, what a concept!” Emma did not lose any long term employment during the pandemic, but found that her lessened gig workload had a positive effect on her mental health considering the increased stress in her full-time position. This is driving her to consider voluntarily retiring from gig work altogether and focusing on her one full-time position. On the contrary, Hector, who recently completed his student teaching experience to earn his Bachelor’s degree in Music Education, is actively seeking a new part-time instrumental teaching opportunity. Similarly, though, he reported that it is difficult to find a position during the pandemic. These two educators differ from each other in their plans to continue to gig teach, but both exemplify the unique circumstances in the K-12 music teaching field compared to the statewide teacher shortage. The possible reasoning for this dichotomy could lie squarely on the shoulders of part-time instrumental music educators, though, in their work with large competitive ensembles.

As previously discussed, Gardner found in his 2010 study that full-time music teachers leave their stations because of “dissatisfaction with workplace conditions . . . [and seeking] better salary or benefits.”[70] Additionally, “music teachers’ perceived level

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[69] This ensemble is affiliated with Drum Corps International. For more information about this activity, visit dci.org.

[70] Gardner, 112.

of administrative support had the most prominent influence on both music teacher satisfaction and retention."[71] John Scheib also wrote about four factors that encouraged music teachers to leave their positions in 2004 that reflected Gardner's claims. The primary factor according to Scheib is "difficult working conditions" characterized by feeling overworked.[72] This feeling of being overworked is significantly lessened by having assistants. Part-time instrumental music educators assist band directors with various projects, therefore lessening the burden for the individual director and sharing the responsibilities. As Emma said,

> I think marching technicians are valuable because just as one human being, I've done seasons where I've been one human being leading rehearsal and cleaning the drill and listening to music. It is too much for any one person. If you have a small band of 20, you need someone else there with you who has a qualified ear… for what… you're looking for, for the qualities of movement and sound that you need to be successful. . . . Or if you have like, 180 people, you need other people there. It is a sport. The football coach does not lead the whole football team all by himself. They've got assistance. You know, most sports have assistant coaches, so you cannot expect a band director, no matter how spectacular she or he or they may be, to do it all by themselves.

Not surprisingly, five other educators that participated in an interview all shared similar answers when asked why they choose to hold multiple part-time teaching gigs instead of one full-time teaching job.

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[71] Gardner, 112.

[72] John W. Scheib, "Why Band Directors Leave: From the Mouths of Maestros," *Music Educators Journal* 91, no. 1 (2004): 54, http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/62136814?accountid=4485.

Brandon used to be a full-time band director in a different part of Arizona from where he currently lives and teaches, and equates his current collection of gig jobs to being a traditional music educator, but more enjoyable. He explained in his interview that while he was a traditional band director he was not only responsible for band, but also, "maybe the orchestra, maybe the choir, maybe mixed ensemble . . . a steel drum class, you're teaching guitar class." In his current part-time medley, Brandon is teaching just as many skills and classes as he was when he was teaching full-time, but each gig is significantly more specific to his percussion ensembles.[73] Hector was originally interested in becoming a full-time high school band director until he experienced the true extent of responsibilities during student teaching, after which he determined that he would either like to work with a middle school band program or continue to work with a high school marching band, or both.[74] Josh stated that he would rather continue working gigs because he does not "want to deal with administration, that's really what it comes down to." Eric recounted a detailed story that is slightly different than other interviewees' stories. He was studying both philosophy and music composition in college after being profoundly drawn to the arts in high school. His goal was to share the narrative that every student has the capacity for art inside of them, but for some students, they need help tapping into it as he did in his adolescence. Ultimately, however, he realized that "a lot of the people who need to hear those things the most wouldn't necessarily be knocking on the door of a philosophy classroom to hear it." Eventually, with that realization and

[73] Interview with Brandon, October 17, 2020.

[74] Interview with Hector, November 1, 2020.

various other life events that fell into place, Eric chose to work gigs with over 10 different high schools and world class independent groups in multiple states in the marching arts to share his narrative and help students find their inner artist. Finally, Abel shared an informative short story explaining why he chooses to continue to find gigs:

> Part of that is a lot of people go into college, and specifically toward music education, thinking, oh yeah, I liked my high school band experience, I'm going to be a high school band director because that's how I want to feel all the time. And then they get hit with the wall of, well, this is the administrative side, this is the actual logistics, and all of the different barriers that, I won't say dissuade a lot of people, but… it did that to me as well.[75]

Overall, all of these music educators contribute to the contradictory phenomenon of the over-saturation of band directors during Arizona's teacher shortage crisis. All 12 teachers are happily assisting or have recently assisted their full-time counterparts with large ensembles that absolutely require assistant coaches simply to function. Different people have slightly different reasons for seeking out a collection of gig work to make a living, but each is committed to continuing music education throughout the pandemic and the giggification of education. Each educator is successful in their own career and furthering the education of children in the state of Arizona, although their narratives of entering this job field vary. At the core, though, certain common threads run through each narrative, including unspoken norms of social interaction, capital, and word-of-mouth transmission.

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[75] Interview with Abel, November 5, 2020.

Social Capital and The Narrative of Job Acquisition

Despite performing an essential duty to educate Arizona's youth in the performing arts, these educators are often judged negatively for choosing to work multiple part-time jobs. The justifications for their choices, explored in the previous section, are valid, yet all of the educators that I interviewed reported being told at some point in their career something to the effect of: "That's not a real job!" Madeline, who works part-time with two high school bands and nearly full-time in retail to supplement her income, recalled a conversation that she frequently engages in when trying to explain her career to non-musicians and non-educators:

> So, for the most part, when I tell people I teach kids band or I'm a visual tech, they don't usually understand what a visual tech is and more often than not they'll ask me, "Oh, you're a band director?" I'm like, no, not really. I'm like a part-time teacher—I go and I make the kids look good on the field. I'll usually tell them, choreography you see on the field? That's my job, that's what I give the kids to do, and just make sure that they look good and they're using all the techniques that I need them to. So for the most part, I think that people will understand that, but usually they'll say, "Oh, you're a band director," and I'm like, no. The music side of it doesn't really do so much for me, I'm definitely way more into the visual side of it, plus I'm much more confident in the visual side of it all, so I couldn't imagine trying to do both and be a full-time band director. That's why they have us.[76]

None of the educators that I interviewed implied that the general public's ignorance about part-time music teaching work is malicious or meant to invalidate the teacher. Rather, there is a lack of public information and visibility about their career. Understandably, competitive and/or academic marching music does not often draw a diverse crowd, attract press coverage as traditional sports do, or capture the interest of music scholars. It is

[76] Interview with Madeline, October 15, 2020.

consistently evident that the types of musical ensembles in question—from high school marching band to world class competitive instrumental ensembles—rely on internal community members and participants to thrive rather than external spectators and employees.

According to every one of the twelve educators who participated in an interview, teaching and continuing the activity is extremely difficult during the pandemic. Every educator taught exclusively online for at least a few months, if not the whole time since March 2020, and virtual distance teaching is the most difficult pedagogical challenge that they faced to date. However, regardless of these challenges, they persist and still teach content. In business terms related to the gig economy, John Griffin hypothesizes that online platforms offer gig workers more opportunities to grow their career. Specifically, he writes:

> In many ways, the coronavirus crisis has shone a light on how gig economy workers can increasingly penetrate industries across the economy. A necessitated jump in remote working in line with strict public health restrictions has spurred significant change in business processes over the past few months, and these seem likely to persist to a certain extent in the long term. Proof that productivity within project teams can remain high without the need for face-to-face contact, and in some cases without any prebuilt social capital, adds further value to the argument for a more dynamic staffing model.[77]

He further asserts that the lessened importance of social capital—a relationship network built between groups of gig employees working collaboratively on projects—will widen the geographical barriers previously in place for hiring professionals. Virtual environments allow gig workers who do not already know each other to successfully

[77] Griffin, "The Future."

work together in groups from different parts of the country or world. Griffin emphasizes that gig workers are infiltrating industries through remote work during the pandemic, even without any accrued social capital between different gig employees and between gig workers and their eventual employers. If social familiarity and trust is no longer a requirement for hire, part-time workers who have built that social network and credibility would then be positively differentiated from the rest of the talent pool. Part-time instrumental music educators already rely on mobilizing their prebuilt social capital to work, and are therefore even more advantaged to continue to make a living in the pandemic gig economy.

In referencing social capital, Griffin draws upon sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's influential theory. Bourdieu conceptualizes capital as a whole and also classifies it into three individual subgroups. As a whole, "Capital is accumulated labor . . . which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor."[78] It takes both time and effort to gain any form of capital within any group. Bourdieu relates the concept to a game. Instead of daily life being a game of chance with no expected outcome, capital allows people to hypothesize the outcome of an interaction, a request, or an action.[79] The time and effort previously expended to gain membership and knowledge into and of a group then transfers to create a cycle of expectations. The three subforms of capital in

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[78] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1986), 241.

[79] Bourdieu, 241.

Bourdieu's theory are economic, cultural, and social.[80] Economic capital relates to the traditional definition of economy. It is capital that consists of, or can be transferred to, physical money and used in exchange for goods or services.[81] Cultural capital can be converted into economic capital in some cases, but more often than not is associated with educational prowess, degree of education, physical assets, and embodied personality traits.[82] Finally, social capital refers to social connections, networking, group membership, and credentials.[83] Part-time teachers, with or without knowing the terminology, operate with an understanding of the necessity of social capital for entering the teaching community, acquiring teaching positions, and maintaining jobs.

Across a multitude of industries, most employers are much more likely to hire someone if they are familiar with them personally, recognize their credentials, or trust their references. This rings true even for part-time gig workers. As is the struggle for many young professionals, securing a job requires experience but they cannot get such experience without first having a job. The part-time instrumental music teaching

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[80] Bourdieu, 243.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid; Yosso unpacks cultural capital further using a critical race theory lens. She ultimately suggests a new perspective on cultural capital that she terms community cultural wealth. The focus changes from Bourdieu's emphasis on the lack of cultural capital in some communities to Yosso's assertion that each community maintains its own forms of community cultural wealth, none of which are inherently wrong or less than others. Tara J. Yosso, "Whose Culture Has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8, no. 1 (March 2005): 69–91, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1361332052000341006.

[83] Bourdieu, 249.

community evolved to accommodate this specific dilemma. Rather than require traditional experience in the form of resume items, prospective educators need only participate as a student in their high school musical ensembles, or even independent competitive musical groups. Participation teaches the student about the activity while affording them a chance to observe how their part-time instructors taught, acted, and administrated the group. More importantly, participation in ensembles introduces students to current educators within the part-time instrumental community with whom the student can form a working professional relationship. Therefore, the process of accruing social capital starts with ensemble participation, not teaching, for part-time music educators. Bourdieu specifically defines his three forms of capital as "accumulated labor," which specifies that social capital must be accrued, accumulated, built up over time, or acquired. Further, the original full definition is as follows:

> Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a "credential" which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. These relationships may exist only in the practical state, in material and/or symbolic exchanges which help to maintain them. They may also be socially instituted and guaranteed by the application of a common name (the name of a family, a class, or a tribe or of a school, a party, etc.) and by a whole set of instituting acts designed simultaneously to form and inform those who undergo them; in this case, they are more or less really enacted and so maintained and reinforced, in exchanges. . . . The volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent thus depends on the size of the network of connections he [*sic*] can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his [*sic*] own right by each of those to whom he [*sic*] is connected.[84]

[84] Bourdieu, 248-249.

In fewer words, social capital is the cumulative network of connections that a person builds over time, especially in terms of group membership and personal credentials. Within this particular community of gig educators social capital is extremely abundant, although it might not obviously present itself.

Most traditional jobs require experience. That experience manifests on resumes as job history and education, often devoid of any names or personal connections outside of the section for references. Rather than focusing on *who* they worked with, employers focus on *what* job duties the applicant performed. This is still necessary for part-time instrumental educators, but to a lesser extent than it is for typical employees. Most relevant job experience for instrumental gig teachers focuses on who the prospective teacher learned from and worked with as a student and working professional. As Eric explained it in his interview, "especially within the marching band community there's this attitude that there [are] only a certain number of fountains of knowledge."[85] It does not necessarily matter where a new educator graduated from, what groups they performed with, and what schools and groups they have taught so far. Instead, what does matter most is who a teacher knows and who will vouch for and support them. In other words, what matters is which "fountain of knowledge" the newcomer already knows and if that

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[85] Bourdieu conceptualizes social capital as a credential given by group members. Over time, these group agents can vouch for a prospective group member and ultimately bestow upon them the official title of group member, with all of the privileges and credentials that are entailed. Related specifically to the marching band community, Eric's term "fountains of knowledge" refers to individuals who exemplify the best social dispositions, interpersonal connections, pedagogical skill, and activity-specific knowledge in the whole group. These people are upheld as quasi-celebrities within their community and hold the power to grant credentials to other educators.

person will advocate for them. Place and person are intrinsically weaved together to ultimately determine if a new educator both learned adequate skills from their colleagues to be a part-time educator and if they are so favorable as to be recommended by current teaching community members. That said, experience is not just a resume line item consisting of places worked and job duties specific only to the individual employee. In this line of work, experience translates to an individual educators' social network and social capital built with those with whom they worked over time. Essentially, each place of work only has value based on the people with whom prospective educator worked at that place.

A great applied example of this concept at work is in Trevor's teaching history. After graduating from high school, he went to community college and continued to study music. At the same time, he was also participating in various independent competitive percussion ensembles where he was meeting many of the "fountains of knowledge" within the educator community. At the college, he became a member of a music fraternity that is heavily involved with the marching arts. Soon after beginning there, Trevor quickly formed multiple social relationships with other musicians and educators who were also affiliated with the fraternity. One particular peer, three years Trevor's senior, was primarily a visual instructor in the marching arts. He started teaching at a small private school and realized that he needed help teaching his percussionists. Without a second thought, this peer approached Trevor and offered him the part-time percussion educator position. In the time between meeting each other and receiving the job offer,

Trevor formed a friendship with this person and at some point explained his network of musical connections (his accrued social capital) in addition to his musical specialty.[86] All of this together enabled Trevor to earn his first part-time teaching position without much extra effort in his part. In this case, his social capital is twofold. It consists of his social network from his time participating in competitive independent ensembles and also his singular relationship with the band director. Trevor's credentials combined with a positive relationship with an employer led to his first job, for which he did not even need ask or apply.

Trevor's story clearly exemplifies the mobilization of accrued social capital. He continuously participated in relevant competitive ensembles, started interpersonal relationships with his educators (most of whom were quite notable), and formed a friendship with a musician who would ultimately need his services and become an employer. Trevor wasted no expense in making sure that each social interaction was positive for both parties involved and that he presented himself well as a willing learner and affable participant in the ensembles. If he had fostered negative social interactions, it is less likely that he would have accrued any social capital. Bourdieu emphasizes what is second nature to working part-time music educators:

> Each member of the group is thus instituted as a custodian of the limits of the group . . . The institutionalized delegation, which ensures the concentration of social capital, also has the effect of limiting the consequences of individual lapses by explicitly delimiting responsibilities and authorizing the recognized spokesmen [*sic*]

[86] His speciality happens to be percussion. Interview with Trevor, October 27, 2020.

> to shield the group as a whole from discredit by expelling or excommunicating the embarrassing individuals.[87]

When applied to this community of part-time, gig-working, specialized instrumental music educators, the recognized spokesperson can be any established member of the group that is supporting or recommending another member. In Trevor's story, that could be any of his teachers in the ensembles in which he performed. If he had not demonstrated as a student that he would be a good educator, then his teachers could, and likely would, have spoken ill of his abilities, essentially barring him from being offered teaching positions. Maintaining a stable living with multiple part-time teaching jobs becomes impossible when the community that employers trust has denounced one's credibility. It only takes one agent of the group to speak on behalf of the whole to block one person's entire career path. It is in this respect that acting according to community rules of pedagogical boundaries and effectiveness increases a part-time teacher's social capital and trustworthiness. Parents and employers trust the social capital binding members of the community to a strict code of conduct and can therefore trust their child or children to be in safe, educated hands. Fortunately for Trevor, he acquired his first gig teaching position with ease. As I will explore, the other educators with whom I spoke did not all have the same experience.

[87] Bourdieu, 251.

Routes to Job Acquisition: Capital, Luck, and the Self-Made Man

The very first gig is the most difficult gig to get. Brand new part-time music educators do not have a current employer to recommend them and their expertise to their colleagues. All 12 educators whom I spoke with shared their story of how they "got into doing *this*," this being the multi-gig career in teaching, administrating, and designing competitive instrumental music shows. Surprisingly, 11 out of the 12 anecdotes were similar and seem to oppose the standard "American dream" narrative. Rather than expressing that they worked hard, pulled themselves up by their bootstraps, and became self-made men and women, 11 educators used the terms "lucky," "right place, right time," or both. Upon further analysis, though, these two narratives work together more than they conflict. One current part-time teacher originally followed a traditional path, earning a bachelor's degree in music education and subsequently teaching as a full-time band director for some years before choosing to make the shift away from full-time teaching for the same reasons I explored in the section, "The Gig Economy." Interestingly, when questioned further, each teacher also described how important their knowledge and experience was to even have the chance to be lucky. This created a strange juxtaposition of narratives. The educators feel that they were lucky and in the right place at the right time to get their first part-time teaching position, but that luck was only possible because

of their history participating in the marching idiom and, in some cases, studying music education.[88]

This is when social capital becomes so important for prospective gig teachers. These 11 educators did not have a current employer to vouch for them, so their combined experience and social network had to replace a recommendation.[89] Their future employers relied on judging who the new educators knew, learned from, and worked with during their time as performers. If the new teacher learned from and still maintains a good relationship with a reputable educator in the community, then the new employer feels more comfortable giving a job offer to the prospective teacher. Rather than judging only places worked and job responsibilities, employers are examining *who* an applicant has worked with and who they have a good relationship with. All of these early relationships begin forming when the prospective teacher is still a student participating in ensembles. The educators whom I interviewed all participated in a different combination of middle and high school concert band, high school competitive marching band, high school competitive winter percussion, high school drama and theater, collegiate competitive marching band, independent competitive open and world class winter percussion, and independent open and world class drum and bugle corps. This whole list of competitive activities, especially but not exclusively in reference to high level

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[88] The verb tense here is twofold. Many of the music educators that participated in an interview started teaching while they were still in school, before completing their first college degree. Others, like Brandon, completed their degree prior to teaching.

[89] I will reiterate that I am using "experience" not only to mean activities and skills, but most importantly the people met and relationships formed while participating in said activities and gaining new skills.

independent groups, is often termed "pageantry" in the community.[90] Participating as a student in various ensembles and forming relationships with current part-time educators in pageantry is the beginning of social capital accrual. Teaching pageantry requires some idea of what it is, and there is no better way to understand the activity and the students' perspective than to participate. In my personal experience, I cannot name a single teacher, administrator, or designer who did not participate themselves. It is absolutely necessary for prospective part-time teachers to have participated, at least minimally, in the activity. As I will explore in this section, social capital is the often unacknowledged subtext of experience and job acquisition, but discipline-specific skills and knowledge are still prerequisites to teaching. Many prospective part-time educators have an opportunity to work with a mentor to build their skill sets, but there is still a required level of basic

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[90] In fact, Eric used this term frequently in our interview to collectively refer to competitive instrumental marching activities, both scholastic and independent. Notably, though, pageantry also includes color guard, an activity that is not discussed in this thesis. However, color guard groups, both scholastic and independent, compete in the same circuits as some instrumental programs and work closely with competitive instrumental ensembles. Some part-time music educators, especially those that specialize in design, visual, and choreography, work with both instrumental and non-instrumental groups. According to Winter Guard International (WGI), the international organization that hosts nearly all indoor winter competitive activities in the United States, "Color guard is a combination of the use of flags, saber, mock rifles, and other equipment, as well as dance and other interpretive movement. Winter color guards can be found in high school, middle schools, universities, and other independent organizations, some of which are related to drum corps." Many states host their own chapter of WGI under which they smaller-scale competitions. In Arizona, that organization is WGAZ, or Winter Guard Arizona. "Color Guard," *WGI*, n.d., accessed February 8, 2021, https://www.wgi.org/color-guard/.

knowledge.[91] Beyond that, opportunities to use those skills are offered on the basis of word of mouth recommendation.

Unlike Griffin's claim that other gig economy workers can be successful in the absence of social capital, part-time instrumental music education necessitates the accrual of social capital prior to entering the job field. Experience, which presents itself as the very beginnings of building up necessary social capital, is absolutely required, and was even before the pandemic. Ensemble participation and social relationships are inherently intertwined. Whether it be through high school marching band or an independent percussion group, a performer learns about the activity and forms a professional relationship with their teacher. That teacher, likely a gig educator, also learns about that performer's musical abilities, personality, motivation, interests, strengths and weaknesses, learning style, and overall disposition. It is very common for teachers to discover if their students are interested in pursuing music after high school and in what capacity. Often, that teacher is the impetus for a student's long career in instrumental gig teaching, either through direct mentorship and job offers or through recommendation to other employers. Just as Bourdieu posits that community members uphold values and limits of the group as

[91] The requisite basic knowledge changes depending on the specialty. Color guard and visual staff might not be expected to read music, but are expected to be familiar with the ensembles that they will teach and know how to isolate counts within the music to design choreography. Instrumental staff are expected to read music and know how to play their instruments (woodwind, brass, percussion). If a musician will be teaching marching ensembles, they likely will be expected to have basic knowledge of marching technique. This is a general overview, so it is important to note that different employers and groups may all have slightly different expectations.

a whole and ultimately expel those that violate the code of actions and ethics,[92] gig teachers will not recommend students who they do not believe will be effective educators. Eric, who frequently encourages his students to pursue music education in various manners, warns that the best performer might not always be the best educator. He related his point to his own experience of being a good educator rather than an esteemed performer when he said,

> I don't have a resume as a performer like a lot of others who got into the activity where it's like, "I marched five years at [world class drum and bugle corps (WC DBC)] and I was the center snare," or, "I invented the [WC DBC.]" . . . When I was 21 or 22 years old, I remember thinking I could never do this for a career because I didn't go to the right place, I didn't get a ring with the [WC DBC], I didn't do any of the stuff that would just immediately open a door for me. But the truth is, more than almost anyone else who's running the race of trying to make a life for themselves in music education without necessarily strictly being a credentialed music educator, that it's all of those intangibles that I was talking about. Honestly, right now, no one [cares] where I marched. A lot of people are like, "What years did you march [WC DBC]?" And my response is always, "I actually didn't, I just know how to teach." . . . The truth is it all just comes back down to like, none of us were taught in Drum Corps, none of us were taught in Wind Symphony, none of us were taught in jazz band like—when a student is crying, why are they crying, and what to do besides tell them to be quiet so that they can reset faster. None of the things that really make us educators are touched on in our performance experience, those are the things that you learn on a different level.

Emma, a strong advocate for mentorship in the gig teaching world, mirrors Eric's opinion in fewer words when she explains,

> The issue that we run into is we hire someone who just aged out of drum and bugle corps and has never had any sort of teaching pedagogy lessons or classes, or even child or educational psychology, and they're trying to say hey, we have to do this, and then they're like, why did that suck? Well, run a lap. And that's just not an environment I think anyone deserves. I think some people thrive in that environment, but if we're working with young people who are still learning to use their words and

[92] Bourdieu, 251.

> advocate for themselves, we need to be our best selves, otherwise we can't ask that of them.[93]

Finally, Josh explicitly expressed his opinions and personal practice about recommending his students for job positions in the part-time teaching world that reflect Eric's, Emma's, and other educators' stances:

> For somebody fresh I would be looking more for somebody that has an eagerness to learn how to teach as opposed to showing off that they can play. If someone can play well, that's fine, but if they can't teach then they really don't have much use as an educator. When I've hired in the past . . . if it's one of my students, then I have that "sixth sense" and will be able to realize if a student is able to teach because we all know those kids that can do something but can't explain what they're doing no matter what they do.

Josh went on to recount the only time that he was uncomfortable recommending a student that approached him about acquiring his first gig teaching job. That student "did not have the best attitude in the marching arts realm. . . . It was hard because they had never shown themselves that they wanted to do this until they needed to for an income source or something like that." After that story, I asked Josh what exactly he was looking for in new teachers, especially his own students, and he replied,

> They were the high achievers. So those kids, they are the ones that asked me . . . if I would look at their music and give them comments on something that they had written. Or they would be the ones that were there before and after rehearsal helping a student that might not understand everything. And kids talk. Kids will say, hey, this person did this for me, or kids will say, hey, this person's a jerk. And 9 out of 10 times I'm not going to recommend that kid get to get a job. I hate to say it, but if there's a program that's looking for somebody and they only have 1 or 2 students that this person would be teaching, I might recommend them for that, so that way they're a

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[93] Most drum and bugle corps groups adhere to a strict age limit. Performers who are or turn 22 years old during the season "age out" and are unable to participate again due to their age. A different drum and bugle corps circuit allows participants of all ages but is less widespread and popular than its age-limiting counterpart.

> little more hands-on and they also have somebody overlooking them every step of the way. I'd never recommend them for a giant program where nobody else would be having any interaction with them.

These three teachers are demonstrating how important it is to them for future educators to be knowledgeable in pedagogy rather than be the most skilled performer. They, and the other educators that I spoke with, do not expect high school graduates to have pedagogical skill. Instead, they expect a certain level of social capital, built with them during high school, that aligns with the goals of their teaching program. General pedagogy can be taught through mentorship, but overall disposition, motivation, and interests are unique to each young adult. Therefore, both a performers' learned skills and, more importantly, social capital built with their teachers, determine if they will even have the opportunity for an employer to take a chance on them and instigate a multi-gig teaching career in instrumental competitive music.

Because of this strong emphasis on social capital from the outset the community has continued to thrive relatively unharmed throughout the COVID-19 shutdowns and virtual learning. Each community member already has a basic understanding of what to do, how to do it, and how to adapt their activity to online, non-competitive education. New educators who are entering the community during the pandemic still have almost exactly the same past experiences as established teachers, and possibly even extra knowledge from participating as students in the new wave of online learning. Thus, regardless of the pandemic, prospective part-time teachers have concrete credentials and experience to still secure a new job position when one is available.

Narratives of Success, Hard Work, and Luck

However, there is more to getting the first job than just experience—unfortunately, there is no omnipotent force that suddenly places pageantry alumni in a teaching position. Here is where the luck narrative meets the community's prerequisite for relevant social capital and experience. Economist Robert Frank and scholar Tom Nissley both address the abstraction of the "self-made man," an individual who tirelessly pursues self improvement and personal financial success through nothing but hard work.[94] A common colloquialism of this narrative is that one "pulled themselves up by their bootstraps." However, as much as the self-made man narrative reflects the ideals of the stereotypical American Dream, both Frank and Nissley argue that other factors besides just individualistic hard work are major factors in determining success.[95] Specifically, Frank asserts that hard work and talent can only lead to success through some forms of luck, just like part-time gig instrumental educators experience:

> A few years back I wrote a newspaper column describing how seemingly minor chance events figure much more prominently in life trajectories than most people realize. . . . I was surprised by the intense negative commentary the column generated, most of it from people who insisted that success is explained almost entirely by talent and effort. Those qualities are indeed highly important. But because the contests that mete out society's biggest prizes are so bitterly competitive, talent

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[94] Robert H. Frank, *Success and Luck: Good Fortune and the Myth of Meritocracy* (Princeton, United States: Princeton University Press, 2016), http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/asulib-ebooks/detail.action?docID=4218474; Tom Nissley, *Intimate and Authentic Economies: The American Self-Made Man from Douglass to Chaplin* (Florence, United States: Taylor & Francis Group, 2003), http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/asulib-ebooks/detail.action?docID=182991.

[95] Frank, 3-5; Nissley, 8.

> and effort alone are rarely enough to ensure victory. In almost every case, a substantial measure of luck is also necessary.[96]

He is careful to clarify further that luck is not the *primary* determinant of success; an individual who seeks achievement, often related to employment and income, must still be qualified to work in their position. From that point of being qualified, luck is important to become employed and achieve financial success. Frank summarizes his own ideas well: “In short, even if talent and hard work alone were enough to ensure material success—which they are not—luck would remain an essential part of the story. People with a lot of talent and an inclination to work hard are extremely fortunate.”[97] Hard workers are “fortunate” in more ways than one. Talented hard workers can achieve high levels of success in their career through luck, but it can also mean that hard workers, at some point in their life, were inherently societally privileged. This privilege can manifest as wealth, demographics, gender identity, race, place of residence, and much more.[98] These scholars do not focus on the latter interpretation of the word in their writing, but my interlocutors were all sure to make mention of their personal privilege that aided their eventual hard work and luck.

Oddly enough, part-time instrumental music educators can already be considered marginalized by the nature of their career choices. The jobs that they perform enjoy

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[96] Frank, 3.

[97] Frank, 8.

[98] In fact, as I will explore in an upcoming section, many personal details that are considered part of the hegemonic culture and, thus, privileged, are embodiments of one’s cultural and economic capital (theories presented by Bourdieu 1986; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977).

nearly zero public recognition; most choose to only work various part-time jobs without any benefits, and happily choose to work with young students in the field of music for their entire career. In sum, their work, with which they often deeply identify, is on the fringe. As the interviewer, I did not expect my interlocutors to define themselves as privileged, yet every educator took at least one moment to acknowledge how fortunate they feel they are. The particular narrative of discussing one's personal privilege amidst marginality has not been well investigated, but was impactful and prolific enough throughout the interviews to demand mention.

Social capital and interpersonal skills are significantly more investigated than narratives of addressing privilege. Bonnie Urciuoli addresses social skills and expands Frank's assertion in relation to anthropological studies of neoliberalism.[99] She argues, "As the neoliberal dream has increasingly saturated the new workplace, workers have come to be seen as personally responsible for skills acquisition, to the point of self-commodification. Thus, the value placed on the paradigmatic soft skills of communication, teamwork, and leadership."[100] These soft skills imply the existence of

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[99] In his book *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* David Harvey defines the term as follows: "Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices." David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 2007), http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/asulib-ebooks/detail.action?docID=422896, 2.

[100] Bonnie Urciuoli, "Skills and Selves in the New Workplace," *American Ethnologist* 35, no. 2 (May 2008): 212, http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/j.1548-1425.2008.00031.x.

another person with whom to exercise communication, teamwork, and leadership. Urciuoli's argument that neoliberalism prompted the increased significance of interpersonal skills directly supports the idea that the social capital necessary to be a successful gig workers in the part-time instrumental music educator community is based on positive social interactions mediated by hegemonic cultural capital.

The opening quotation to this thesis is from my interview with Eric.[101] Every single educator whom I interviewed expressed in some way or another that they are always self-improving and making themselves marketable as their students' and schools' needs change, although Eric most explicitly and plainly explained his process. The pandemic eliminated some gigs for part-time teachers in Arizona, simply through the nature of school closures and competition cancellations. Regardless, many of my interlocutors continued to work if they so desired. Because they already built social capital that qualified them for their jobs, educators easily asked their employers the question, "What do you need?" Such willingness to continue to help outside of their original job descriptions arguably fostered their positive relationship with their employer, and possibly helped them build even more unique social capital during the pandemic. However, this does mean that the educators were essentially changing the job

[101] The quote reads, "I've just opened myself up to the possibility of being a really different kind of teacher, and not necessarily thinking, well, I design, or anything like that. It's just like, well, we're all kind of trying to make it through, and if the students have a need, the need has changed, and maybe temporarily—medium term or long term—my primary responsibility is to adjust my skill set and adjust my schedule to meet that need more than anything else."

descriptions that they identify with.[102] Urciuoli acknowledges this phenomenon when she says, "Soft skills represent a blurring of lines between self and work by making one rethink and transform one's self to best fit one's job, which is highly valued in an economy increasingly oriented toward information and service."[103] What gig teachers might just casually regard as a kind thing to do to maintain good friendships and relationships with their employers is actually a highly commodified soft skill in the neoliberal economy. Again, as is consistent throughout this analysis, social capital prevails as the impetus for this valuable behavior. Building, fostering, and mobilizing social capital is ingrained in working part-time instrumental educators in Arizona and motivates teachers to exhibit such valuable behavior as changing their job descriptions to benefit their employer and students and, ultimately, their own income.

First Gig Narratives: Short Vignettes

Every educator provided their story of social capital, hard work, and luck to become a gig teacher. The narratives of the self-made man, luck, and interpersonal skills presented by Frank, Nissley, and Urciuoli do not exist separately from each other but rather overlap in practical life. Frank questions the accuracy of economists' idealistic

[102] I explained previously how basic expected skills changed based upon what kind of teacher each gig worker is, such as a visual coach, percussion coach, electronics designer, or others. Although each job position overlaps quite a bit, each of my interlocutors firmly identifies as a "visual coach," "percussion tech," "assistant marching band director," "brass caption head," etc. Delving into another identity does happen fairly often, but then changes how the individual identifies themselves in relation to work, such as identifying with multiple titles simultaneously.

[103] Urciuoli, 215.

conception of the person, or *homo economicus*, when he writes, "Character assessment makes little sense in the models of human behavior favored by many economists. Those models assume that people are both rational and self-interested (in the narrow sense of the latter term.)"[104] Indeed part-time instrumental educators are interested in their own financial success and security, but especially as mentors to young people, their motivations are much more complicated than just being an entrepreneur of the self. Overall, my interlocutors' stories fall under one of four broad categories that encompass all of the above narratives. The first category is very similar to the traditional method of submitting job applications, but with modifications. Rather than waiting for a position to open and be posted for public applicants, Abel, Wesley, Henry, Michael, and Eric all took the initiative to directly ask employers for a job. Some of the men were given jobs at the same school where they asked, and some were referred to other directors in need. Regardless, approaching directors amicably with a resume of relevant experience and some prebuilt social capital with members of the gig teaching community worked out in all of these cases.

Abel graduated from his undergraduate university into a city that often needs new percussion instructors. Hiring university graduates was already the social norm in the area so he was comfortable approaching band directors and offering his services for any

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[104] Frank, 129; This is a very simple definition of *homo economicus*. Ganti uses the terms "calculating, self-interesting actor" to capture how many economists conceptualize the autonomous agent. Tejaswini Ganti, "Neoliberalism," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 43, no. 1 (October 21, 2014): 95, http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev-anthro-092412-155528.

possible job opening. Over time, he built working relationships with these directors and ensured that his name carried positive associations in his city. Fortunately, that worked out well for him and officially started his career. Wesley started teaching at his high school immediately after graduation upon convincing his band director to let him come back. Strangely enough, Wesley is an accomplished tuba player who only marched bass drum for two seasons, yet he went back specifically to teach the indoor winter percussion ensemble. At the time, the band director was aware that Wesley was planning to pursue his degree in music education, which, combined with his performance background, peer leadership during high school, and relationship with his director, mobilized more than enough relevant social capital to earn his first teaching position. Henry went down a nearly identical path to Wesley. Upon graduating from high school he started college to earn his Bachelor's degree in Music Education and performed in open class indoor winter percussion ensembles. Therefore, he was readily given the opportunity to teach percussion at his alma mater. Michael, upon graduating from high school and completing his years performing with a world class drum and bugle corps, approached his high school band director and asked for guidance related to securing a part-time teaching job. Rather than allowing him to teach at his school, the band director referred him to a sister high school in the district that was in need of another brass instructor for the marching band. There, Michael was mentored by the current brass caption head and the band

director and just completed his third year teaching part-time at that school, now under the title brass caption head.[105]

Finally, Eric's prolific career started very much like Michael's. He originally started teaching at his own high school immediately after graduation, but was very clear when explaining that he does not necessarily consider that his first teaching job. He explains that there was no professional separation between him, his friends, and his band director, so it was not necessarily a part-time teaching gig in his opinion. From that position, another band director in the area "took a chance" on Eric, eventually mentoring him from a "foot tech," to a visual caption head, and ultimately to a lead designer.[106] Each one of these educators clearly stated the names of the band director and school that they credit with starting their career.[107] They may have approached their employer asking

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[105] Each different specialized area of part-time education related to the larger ensemble whole is considered a "caption." In the competitive circuits, bands are judged as a whole and as individual captions, including visual, percussion, general effect, color guard, and music. At the educational level, these captions are broken down further and include percussion (sometimes separated between drumline and front ensemble), brass, woodwinds, color guard or dance, and visual. The "caption head" is an educator that is in charge of teaching and designing for that group of students. Sometimes, the caption heads hire other part-time instructors to help them with their specific caption.

[106] These are both direct quotes from my interview with Eric, November 1, 2020. The term "foot tech" is not necessarily common, but Eric personally uses it to mean a newly employed tech that is trying to find his own pedagogical style while reconciling all he learned from his time performing in high school marching band, college marching band, and drum and bugle corps. While in that role, he did not make design decisions. Rather, it was his job to teach the music and design created by higher caption heads and designers.

[107] When I asked Eric how he started in this job field, without hesitation he responded, "This is an easy one. All roads lead back to [the first band director that hired him after working with his alma mater]." Henry answered just as readily, with the variation, "[This part-time educator] started it all for me." The other 10 teachers were astonishingly just as quick and concise in their responses.

for a job, which demonstrates the aspects of hard work and acting as an entrepreneur of the self, but each still believes that their experience, soft skills— interpersonal relationships, disposition, communication—and great amounts of luck led the directors to take a chance on them.

The second most common narrative is significantly more focused on luck than social capital, with more than one educator actually using the phrases "I got lucky," and "right place, right time." Daniel's journey started a couple of years into his undergraduate degree in music education. He was back at the high school from which he graduated to observe his band director in the classroom. She was familiar with his performance skill and teaching philosophy, and coincidentally she needed a new percussion instructor. Fortunately, percussion is Daniel's specialty. So, one day while he was in the classroom observing, she offered him the position. When recounting this event, Daniel recalled, "I got kind of lucky that it was kind of right place, right time, and just really fortunate that my teacher asked me to do that. So, I spent four years teaching in that program doing percussion instruction." Madeline's first teaching position came as somewhat of a surprise to her, as well. Her husband is the band director at a high school that is very active in the competitive circuits. The first year, he unexpectedly invited her to come to rehearsal as an extra set of eyes and ears, and then she was invited back on a volunteer basis for the remainder of the school year. Her years in high school and college marching band, as well as drum and bugle corps, gave her more than enough experience to help his ensembles. She officially earned a paid position there by the second year, and the third

year is when she received a recommendation from her employer to also teach at another school. After Emma graduated high school, her former marching band director hired her as a part-time instructor at another school and mentored her for a few years there.[108] That instructor realized that Emma knew a significant amount about marching band and instrumental performance but would need mentorship in pedagogy and other logistical aspects of working on a marching band staff. Fortunately for her, that director called upon her and only one other member of her former band to teach with and learn from him. After three or four years in that job, Emma was able to branch out and secure more part-time positions. Finally, she graduated with her Bachelor's degree in Music Education and added a full-time band directing position in the elementary district that corresponds to the high school district in which she already taught part-time.

Trevor's first job offer came after he had more performance experience than any of the above teachers. He had already graduated from high school and continued to perform in various ensembles, including competitive marching groups. Then, a friend who had recently become a full-time band director and knew Trevor's background suggested that he come to work at his school teaching percussion part-time. From that one job, Trevor's career quickly advanced and has since remained fruitful over the last decade. Finally, Josh's first job offer was the most unexpected of all. Throughout high school he was extremely active in his school's performing arts departments of all

[108] Her marching band director was not the same as her full-time everyday band director. It is unclear if this teacher had more than one part-time instrumental teaching position at the time, but he was definitely a part of the scholastic instrumental gig economy.

kinds.[109] He was especially involved with marching band, even composing and arranging for his percussion section. Outside of the school, he was in a local city youth symphony. During one rehearsal while he was in his last semester of high school, Josh was reading an instructional book about marching band when a visiting band director from the audience approached him and offered him a part-time job teaching percussion at a nearby high school. Now, 12 years later, Josh emphatically tells this story as "right place, right time." These five narratives affirm Robert Frank's claim that luck "remain[s] an essential part of the story."[110] Rather than emphasizing what experience, skills, and social capital they already had, these five educators emphasized their good fortune.

The final two narratives are each specific to one educator, respectively, yet resemble each other surprisingly well. Brandon originally earned his Bachelor's degree in Music Education and started down the traditional path of full-time band directing at a high school. He quickly realized that he did not want to continue that career for the rest of his life, so he mobilized his unique experience and expertise as a band director to make himself marketable to other band directors as an assistant. From his past, he had an intimate understanding of every aspect of leading a competitive high school music ensemble, including rules and regulations set by the competitive circuits in which the ensembles perform. This experience is invaluable to directors. In essence, directors who employ Brandon do not have to be as involved in the ensembles since Brandon is already

[109] For him, this meant participating in choir, a cappella, concert band, marching band, open class drum and bugle corps, percussion ensemble, symphony orchestra, and theater (both on stage and behind the scenes).

[110] Frank, 8.

aware of every minute rule that will keep the group from being disqualified in competition. Additionally, although he did not specify his social network during his career transition, Brandon certainly had a working relationship with other band directors in the state. Hector, on the other hand, just recently completed his music education degree and, at the time of this writing, is two months into his very first full-time teaching position as an elementary general music educator. However, Hector learned from his time student teaching that he does not want to be a full-time band director for his career, just like Brandon. He does not currently have as much accrued social capital as Brandon did, though, so he explained that he will approach his mentor teacher and the director at the school that corresponds to his current elementary school in an effort to earn a new part-time teaching position through them.[111] In comparison, Brandon relied mostly on his credentials and experience to start his new career path in a new Arizona city, whereas Hector must rely on his few social connections within the community.

To a point, discussing experience and relevant career knowledge as "social capital" appears to be over-analytical. However, conceptualizing an educators' knowledge base, experience, and social network in terms of capital better describes how the capital is

[111] In this case, mentor teacher refers to the director with whom he student taught. At that school, he worked with various instrumental ensembles, both competitive and non-competitive.

mobilized and utilized.[112] It also maintains the focus on social connections amidst various other narratives. Unlike traditional economic capital, or money, "spending" social capital does not then leave the educator with less than they started with. On the contrary, neglecting social connections and allowing them to atrophy could lead to less accumulated social capital if interpersonal relationships are not fostered and maintained. Therefore, it is possible to conceptualize social capital as the conglomerate personal "patchwork of experience" that an educator built throughout their life, but also to think in terms of mobilizing and utilizing the capital rather than spending it.[113] In all of the stories above, these educators mobilized social capital, consisting of performance history, leadership history, education, and quality social relationships to qualify for their jobs, whether that be a direct qualification, like Brandon, or qualifying them for recommendation or mentorship. That same capital did not then disappear when it was "spent." That person's history still contributes to how they teach and how they work together with other directors and gig workers on a staff. Then, when it is time to acquire yet another job, all of the social capital that originally mobilized is fortified with new experiences, job history, and professional personal connections to build even more capital for that educator. Overall, positive actions within the community contribute to more

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[112] As I noted earlier, Bourdieu (1986) also conceptualizes social capital in practice as a "credential." A person's social connections and membership to a group provide the person with the full weight of the group's aggregate capital, or credential. The three different forms of capital are convertible into each other. It can be argued that some of the capital that creates and maintains the credential is cultural capital, consisting of the accrued cultural knowledge of the community and the activity, as well as social mobility.

[113] Rasmussen, 182.

social wealth and a higher possibility that the educator can continue to collect gig teaching positions and make a composite full-time living if they so choose.

Social relationships and credentials are two of the foci in social capital. Abel explained in his interview that the two most important factors for him to continue his career are to keep teaching with no gaps on his resume, and to make sure that he has positive interactions with everybody that he works with all the time. Then, with time, he asserts that his, or any educator's, name will be out in the community with a positive connotation. In plainer terms, the next possible employer is much more likely to hire him if he has continuously taught and if the director is familiar with his name for good reasons, no matter how casual or vague.[114] Brandon, as a caption head at two schools, makes a point to always take care of his staff of part-time assistants and assure that they are paid, fed, hydrated, and happy. He believes that fostering positive work environments will lead to a positive community and keep both his name and his staff's names in good standing in the state. Madeline happily described the positive social environment that she works in at one of her high schools. More than just being comfortable at work, she is also much more receptive to constructive feedback and suggestions from her fellow staff members because they have a good personal relationship. Learning new things from her

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[114] Understanding the social norms that define a positive social interaction falls under cultural capital, which I will discuss in more detail in the next section. For this example, though, Abel learned and possessed the correct class-specific social knowledge to act accordingly and positively within the community of people in which he intended to work. The necessity to keep gig teaching without any gaps is also an example of a culturally mediated expectation that Abel was able to adhere to. As was the case for many of the gig educators that I spoke with, understanding and having cultural capital was a prerequisite to building social capital.

colleagues broadens Madeline's musical, visual, and pedagogical skills, therefore also making her more employable elsewhere. Finally, Eric spoke at length in his interview about the importance of positive social networking and interactions in this job field:

> For me, I found that it's starting by approaching people and having them take chances on you, and it generally being smaller and lower profile programs, and you start to leapfrog your way up. And the biggest thing for me, climbing whatever ladder of career advancement that I have, has been personal integrity and the kind of bedside manner that you have with your students and fellow teachers, because I can't tell you how many times I've made huge terrible mistakes that have been broadcasted. . . . The prop I designed for [drum and bugle corps group] didn't open up at [the competition], the most important show of the year up until that point. Kids were colliding into it and falling over and I was just like, this a disaster, this is going to be the end of me. And it really kind of wasn't, I mean, first of all, thank God no one was seriously injured, but the only thing that was really standing to get injured in that moment was my ego or my self regard, but that didn't really change the months of education that had happened between me and the students, or the months of collaboration that I had been having between me and the other staff members. So it kind of shifted my perspective to realize that the way I ran my business was a lot more important than the product I put out, and I think I'm okay at design, I think I'm okay at choreography and stuff like that, and there's all these things that I want to improve on. And I feel like the thing that's buying me time to get a chance to improve those things and become a better teacher and become a better designer is that personal integrity and, am I a fun hang? Am I pleasant to work with? And just looking at the demographic of people that we're talking about, like us specialists and professionals who are brought in not as tenured or credentialed teachers in a school district, I think that's the number one thing that I would advise above all else for any sort of career longevity or a sense of financial success is that if you are a person of your word, and if you bring value to your team in an interpersonal way, if you're pleasant in meetings and stuff like that, then it makes up for almost anything else.

Like Urciuoli theorized, Eric's soft skills ultimately kept him employed in the neoliberal academic gig economy and in good standing with his colleagues despite hard skills failures.[115] All of the theoretical concepts of social capital and the gig economy during the pandemic form an important context for part-time educators to be aware of and work

[115] Urciuoli, 215.

with. However, in praxis, all of the social capital, gig work, soft skills commodification, and various job acquisition narratives manifest in hundreds of different ways that can be summarized as continuous self-improvement and positive social connections. Building social capital does not only benefit an educator when it comes time to get a new job. That social capital also fosters positive work environments, lifelong learning, new friends, and, overall, the ability to work multiple part-time instrumental teaching jobs as a full-time career.

Cultural and Economic Capital Before Social Capital

Unfortunately, though, not everybody is on equal ground in this job market. Issues of privilege and socioeconomic status pervade all of pageantry, from being a student to being an educator. Some combination of social capital and a little bit of luck or being in the right place at the right time seem to be enough to get started. However, what goes unspoken is how students can participate in relevant ensembles to build the beginnings of their relevant social capital. After achieving that, a current educator must form a positive relationship with the student, recognize their talent and experience, and then either mentor that student personally or recommend them to a program where they can work and learn. Further, the positive relationship, talent, and requisite experience are all defined by the hegemonic social class. In differentiating between the three forms of capital, Bourdieu writes,

> [C]apital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and be institutionalized in the form

> of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility.[116]

Roy Nash expands on this definition and suggests that the different forms of capital are consistently in competition to convert between real and symbolic capital.[117] Real capital can refer to actual wealth and how that wealth is used to acquire services and goods that then enhance one's symbolic cultural capital. Many of my interlocutors identified cultural and economic barriers to entry into pageantry that students and families face early on in their child's life, most of which involve issues of capital.

Most instrumental musicians begin learning their instruments in middle school or high school. When the child and family commit to this new art, they often must have the economic capital readily available to rent an instrument, and sometimes even pay for private lessons outside of school. Other responsibilities include needing time after school for rehearsals and concerts and needing even more money to purchase appropriate concert attire. The cost of participation for students only increases as they grow older. In high school, those who participate in marching band and/or winter competitive ensembles need approximately ten or more hours every week outside of school to be in rehearsal, weekends free for competitions, and the money to continue renting an instrument, paying for private lessons, buying food and transportation, and perhaps the most daunting hurdle

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[116] Bourdieu, 243, emphasis in the original.

[117] Roy Nash, "Bourdieu on Education and Social and Cultural Reproduction," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 11, no. 4 (December 1990): 432, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0142569900110405.

of all, paying participation fees. High school competitive ensembles are very expensive for the school, and it is nearly unavoidable for directors to charge individual families over $100 per student to be a part of the group.[118] As I established throughout this section, any students who ultimately choose to pursue the part-time teaching path must have accrued social capital primarily through ensemble participation. For those students that do not have the economic capital to be in band classes in school, this job field then becomes completely unavailable. Now, the interplay of economic and cultural capital is much more significant than social capital in terms of bridging the privilege gap.

Cultural capital was originally proposed by Bourdieu alongside his theory of social capital. It manifests as "a disposition of the mind and body; objectives as cultural goods, and in its institutionalized state as, for example, educational qualifications."[119] Cultural capital is almost always referenced in parallel with the theory of cultural reproduction. Essentially, with each generation, society and its values must reproduce.

[118] This is common in many high schools but not all. Title I school districts cannot legally charge their students to participate in any extracurricular activities, including music ensembles. In that case, the money needed to foster a competitive ensemble comes from other sources such as individual fundraising and tax credit.

[119] Nash, 432. He paraphrased this definition directly from Bourdieu, 1986, 243.

The primary vehicle for social education and, therefore, reproduction, is school.[120] Controversially, Bourdieu implied in his 1977 co-authored work that the knowledge, goods, and social standards—cultural capital—embodied by society's middle and upper classes are valuable in a class-divided society.[121] In other words, the middle and upper classes that possess more economic capital have the ability to determine what schools are imparting upon children, and therefore that cultural capital is considered more valuable and those social norms are incessantly reproduced at the expense of the social structures and cultural knowledge of the lower class. Yosso uses the lens of Critical Race theory to suggest strategies for Students of Color to bring their own cultural wealth into the classroom in an effort to acknowledge and strengthen their own non-dominant culture and ultimately revolutionize schooling and cultural reproduction. She explains:

> Bourdieu's theoretical insight about how a hierarchical society reproduces itself has often been interpreted as a way to explain why the academic and social outcomes of People of Color are significantly lower than the outcomes of Whites. The assumption follows that People of Color 'lack' the social and cultural capital required for social mobility. As a result, schools most often work from this assumption in structuring

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[120] Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture* (London: Sage Publications, 1977); Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 1986; Nash "Bourdieu on Education," 1990; also see Ortner 1984 for further analysis of other everyday domestic routines that Bourdieu identifies as furthering social reproduction. Additionally, Ortner provides critiques of various anthropologists' theories of societal reproduction, especially in terms of how reproduction accounts for change. Sherry B. Ortner, "Theory in Anthropology since the Sixties," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 26, no. 1 (January 1984): 126–166, https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/S0010417500010811/type/journal_article.

[121] Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, *Reproduction*; critiqued in modern societal context by Yosso, 2005, "Whose Culture Has Capital?"

> ways to help 'disadvantaged' students whose race and class background has left them lacking necessary knowledge, social skills, abilities and cultural capital.[122]

Cultural reproduction assumes a hegemonic social class that has the privilege and capital, in all forms, to determine what cultural norms and values are correct and should be reproduced to each generation. Accessing education mediated by the dominant culture is, in Bourdieu's theory, the best way for those born into lower classes, and assumed to have less cultural capital, to exercise class mobility.[123] Therefore, access to education should, theoretically, ensure that all students have the assumedly correct cultural capital and access to career opportunities.

Unfortunately, the practical does not reflect the theoretical. As Yosso suggests, it is harmful to assume that there is a singular cultural tradition and social class that is correct and deserves reproduction at the expense of the cultural capital of other social classes. Rather, the dominant classes with more access to economic capital, or the ability to convert cultural and social capital into economic capital, ultimately hold the power to determine what schools teach and reproduce. Further, this social construction bars those with less dominant cultural capital from converting their particular cultural capital into economic and social capital. Multiple current part-time music educators described their personal experiences with this harmful systemic assumption, explaining either their personal privilege that fostered their career or discussing in depth how the educational system is not serving students outside of one particular demographic.

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[122] Yosso, 70.

[123] Bourdieu, 1986, "The Forms of Capital," 243-248; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, *Reproduction*, 1977, viii; Yosso, 70.

In this section I discussed how participating in scholastic ensembles, specifically, is expensive for students and families. Most of my interlocutors also participated in independent ensembles such as summer drum and bugle corps and indoor winter percussion and color guard. These ensembles, independent from schools, bring significantly higher costs than their scholastic counterparts. By all accounts, drum and bugle corps fees often cost up to $3,000 plus significant ancillary costs such as transportation, free weekends for rehearsal camps, and an entire summer off of work to go on a tour of the continental United States. Independent indoor winter percussion and color guard costs are very similar, with fees reportedly costing up to $2,000 in addition to time commitments and transportation costs.[124] Most of these ensembles require instrumental and artistic prowess that can only be achieved through years of learning music in middle and high school. Overall, participating in the competitive marching arts is a costly endeavor for each individual student. Not all students and families can afford either the cost or the time, which disadvantages students who would want to participate and then become instructors. As Josh stated in his interview, "You could be the next big thing in music, but if you can't afford it then we'll never know." In addition to challenging the current demographics in pageantry, Henry, Michael, Eric, and Emma all discussed areas where privilege asserts itself, how current instructors can begin to

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[124] All of this information about the costs of drum and bugle corps and independent indoor winter activities put together from all of my interviews with interlocutors who participated in these activities and/or teach or administer for those groups. However, to be clear, not all groups charge such high costs. These figures are the highest end of the financial spectrum.

challenge that privilege, and the systematic issues that come with challenging the cost of the activity.

Michael very clearly outlined his personal privilege that allows him to teach part-time without the stress of making a full-time income. As a current college student, his one gig teaching post is his only job. Fortunately, he explained:

> I don't depend on this at all. Mostly because I have parents that are very supportive of things, like my college and the degree I'm getting, and they believe some sort of job experience is important, and I do too. So, I wanted to do something that helped out, especially with band because it was so important to me, so I wanted to give back in some sort of way. So the wage really isn't—because I have parents supporting me—the wage really isn't an issue. I'm sure if my parents weren't supporting me in college it would be different, but for the position I'm in it's okay.

For further background, Michael attended a high school in Arizona that is known in the community for its competitive marching band. Additionally, Michael marched drum and bugle corps which served as a large part of his social capital that he mobilized to secure a teaching position where he received mentorship. In her interview, Emma focused heavily on the necessity for mentorship for those teachers who did not attend college for education. However, such mentorship is only possible if the student was part of the requisite ensembles and met all of the right people to either recommend them to somebody for a job and mentorship, or to personally take that student on as a mentee. Essentially, with no relevant social capital built between the student and current educators, teachers in the community will not hire a young person to become part of the educational group. A lack of hegemonic cultural capital in praxis can bar students from

having the chance to accrue the social capital that is foundational to making a full-time income in the academic gig economy.

Henry approached this issue in his interview in a practical manner related to both students and teachers. He explained that the issue of instrument access plagues his mind every day. As a percussion instructor, it is his responsibility to ensure that his students have an instrument to play and practice on for their ensembles. However, with remote virtual learning due to the pandemic, most students did not have the option to take home their percussion instruments that they use at school.[125] Common percussion instruments such as snare and bass drums, drum sets, vibraphones, and marimbas cost hundreds to many thousands of dollars to purchase. They are so expensive, in fact, that the percussion community in the state assumes that very few people can purchase them, rather accessing the instruments through the schools or groups at which they teach. This economic barrier impacts both the students and teachers. Henry joked, but quickly clarified that he was still speaking seriously, that many of his students were asking him where they can get instrument access. Instead of having any advice to give, he asked his students to let him know if they figured out a solution so that he can practice his own musical skills and teach his students with a real instrument. Unfortunately, he is finding that some students who used to be interested and participating in the ensembles that he teaches are choosing

[125] All percussion instruments at a school are owned by the school. Although it did happen in isolated cases, there are very few schools in Arizona that allowed students to take home a large percussion instrument (vibraphone, marimba, drum set, bass drum, etc.) when schools closed and instruction transitioned online. Teachers at the schools that *did* give out instruments were not included in the instrument check-out privileges, and are mostly teaching from home without instruments.

to quit music altogether because they cannot get instrument access. None of my interlocutors were able to conceptualize a good solution to this issue, but echoed Henry's concerns about the cost of the ability to practice a percussion instrument during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, Eric discussed the issue of privilege in pageantry in depth, even enumerating some areas of his career where he can do his part to combat the reproduction of current practices in the community. In his experience, most visual instructors in the state of Arizona fit into a narrow demographic category. As he explains, "you're under the age of 30, you're white, you're about six foot tall, you're in great physical shape, there's a very specific sort of visual tech look."[126] On the drill design side of his career, Eric could only readily name one female drill writer in the entire drum and bugle corps idiom, and emphatically questioned why that was the case. In this anecdote he is self-reflexive, explaining that he has an easier time networking and connecting with other employers in pageantry because he is a six foot tall, straight-passing white male who can easily fit the prescribed visual and gender role that others expect of him. Eric tasked himself with the responsibility of diversifying the job field that he works in and hires for as a caption head and lead designer for so many schools and groups. He openly aired his challenge to the community as a question:

> Are we really supposed to believe that the only kids who have visual designs in their head or choreography in their heart, or music that they can hear, are we really

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[126] This of course is not exhaustive and does not represent every instructor. Eric provided this description in his interview as a generalization to make his point about the dominant demographic.

> supposed to believe that those kids only get born into wealthy districts, that the only kids who have that attitude are the kids that have five grand every summer and then three grand every winter to do world class pageantry the whole time around?

The subtext of this challenge is that of economic and, through extension, cultural capital. Students born into privileged families of the dominant social class are not the only students that can offer talent, ideas, and fantastic pedagogy to the next generation of musicians. Then, the problem becomes that of how the community must shift to ensure inclusion and mitigate the barriers to entry. This is where the solution becomes significantly more complicated for instructors. Eric has a preliminary suggestion about diversifying the part-time staff:

> Think about how many visual techs you've seen just in the state of Arizona. It's been getting more diverse. And I think part of that is because we've been taking these extra steps to find the best dancer in the color guard and be like, join my visual staff next year. [This school] could use a choreographer, or [this school] needs someone who can produce this the way that you've seen things produced in our rehearsals. Giving people permission to know you are creative, you can do this, you can get the check just as much as anyone else, and more importantly, it's like the more diverse that we're thinking, we're not just opening doors for the people who deserve it just as much as anyone else, but we're also enriching the experience of our students because not every kid I'm going to teach is like, a freshly gay white guy that loves all my little cultural references. It's like, there need to be women on my staff, there need to be people of color on my staff because I don't understand everything about the world, and we all become better teachers and the experience for the students educationally is better when the demographics of the teaching and the design team reflect their own experiences as humans.

Current instructors in the state can make conscious efforts to encourage their own students, regardless of demographics, to join their staff or another school's staff. However, this still only reaches students that were able to participate in ensembles and afford the high costs. Lowering the cost of those individual student fees is much trickier.

"Don't get me wrong, there's blood on my hands, because the fact of the matter is there's a paycheck coming to me, and the things that I asked for increase the budgets of these programs."[127] In addition to the previous list of costs incurred by competitive music programs, both scholastic and independent, each program must also pay their staff and account for extra purchases that their staff requests. Visual designers and percussion instructors are often most culpable for asking directors to purchase expensive accessories that raise the cost of the program as a whole, such as specific uniforms, drum heads, sticks, and mallets that add to the overall general effect of the show. The competitive circuits require from the schools either one lump sum payment to compete or payment for each individual competition. And finally, the more part-time instructors are on staff or completing a gig-work style project, the more money the program must give in paychecks. On a theoretical level, all involved in pageantry then must consider the value of the activity to students against the high cost of entry that bars some adolescents from participation. Unfortunately, none of my interlocutors were able to suggest a solution to this issue of privilege and economic impact, rather focusing on unpacking the problems and inherent issues that arise when trying to fix the problems. Essentially, the entire activity might collapse without adequate financial resources. As it stands, every scholastic and independent group relies on their student participants and their families to financially support the majority of the program. Adequate funding is not available

[127] Interview with Eric, November 1, 2020.

elsewhere, even from corporate sponsorships.[128] It is not my objective to solve this systemic issue in this document, but rather to address the problems that face our students to raise awareness within the part-time specialized instrumental music educator community.

Conclusion

Social capital enables part-time music educators to keep their jobs and gain new ones, even during the pandemic that is financially harming other gig economy workers and closing schools. Experience takes on a whole new definition for gig teachers, encapsulating not only skills and job duties but primarily the educators with whom one works and social connections built in the past. New avenues of gig work are flourishing during the pandemic while traditional gig workers, such as task-based service providers, are struggling to make ends meet. The part-time instrumental music educator community required experience and social capital to enter the job field prior to the pandemic, and this requirement is exactly what allowed these musicians to continue to make a living with multiple part-time positions that do not offer benefits. Other factors such as luck staying healthy and proper cultural capital to successfully find independent health insurance account for the lack of employer sponsored benefits. Contrary to the standard concept of the American Dream, job acquisition narratives vary, yet all lean heavily on moments of luck intermixed with hard work and social networking. These educators' soft skills,

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[128] Most corporate sponsorships from instrument and music companies are only given to independent groups, not scholastic programs.

already highly developed to foster a network of social capital, are more commodified and sought after than ever in the neoliberal economic construct. With so many systems in place below the surface, part-time teachers can successfully choose to work a piecemeal part-time career rather than a singular full-time job, which benefits both Arizona's students and overwhelmed band directors.

In the next few years following the COVID-19 school shutdowns music educators will all be tasked with monitoring the effects of virtual learning on music education as a whole in Arizona. Some students did not have access to instruments or adequate technology to learn to their highest potential from home. Every educator who took the time to participate in an interview reported that their enrollment dropped in the past year only because of remote virtual learning. This means, for example, that some seventh-grade students who would normally enroll in high school band two years from now will not be doing so. Both full-time directors and part-time instructors will continue to see the negative effects of pandemic enrollment throughout the next five years or more. With fewer students to participate in ensembles and grow into the next generation of part-time educators it is unclear if the state will see a change in the scholastic and independent competitive music culture. Throughout this unstable time, part-time instructors who make a living in the academic gig economy will need to rely more than ever on their accumulated social capital and work to break down the barriers to entry for students not born into "ideal" cultural capital. Bourdieu posited that education reproduces social divisions and advances the cultural values of the dominant class, but part-time instructors

are already working to change that construct to benefit all students, not just students with a plentitude of capital. Through awareness of privilege gaps and their own place in facilitating student accessibility and participation, part-time teachers can begin to change the culture of competitive music ensembles in the state of Arizona.

I am cognizant of the fact that this thesis may be the first critical ethnographic look at the phenomenon of instrumental music educators that seek out part-time employment assisting overcommitted full-time music teachers. Their commitment to their students and to pageantry is arguably unmatched. Henry even went as far as to say, "I am most alive when I'm in front of my students during the week, that is literally the most I'm alert, and there, and present." Although the other educators did not explicitly echo this sentiment, I know that they would all agree. This heartfelt commitment that part-time educators make to their young students should be matched to the same level with critical research as it is with part-time professors in higher education. Various scholars have conducted research detailing the effects of part-time employment on student learning outcomes in college and university. Unfortunately, part-time instrumental gig teachers in public high schools and outside of the academy have not been considered. As I established at the outset, though, these educators spend more hours per week with students than their core subject teachers do. Even if they are teaching musical content, gig teachers have a profound effect on high school and independent students in the state. Therefore, more research should be conducted to determine how exactly those effects manifest in terms of socio-emotional growth and musical content learning. As of now,

pageantry is still a niche activity, but further investigation into its instructional staff could bring increased attention and, with that, increased funding. External funding has the potential to decrease individual student costs, which is an important step in making pageantry more inclusive and accessible to all students. The COVID-19 pandemic swiftly exacerbated student privilege and class divides with regard to online music learning, and educators, both full-time and part-time, are more aware than ever of the systemic mechanisms in place that discourage some students from ever seeing the inside of a band room.

In closing, I would like to recount a short anecdote that Eric shared with me in our interview. Although the focus of this thesis has been on the educators themselves, the students are always somewhat involved in any conversation about teachers. Competitive music education is facing novel challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic, but students and teachers continue to find the best in any situation. I conclude this thesis with a story about an Arizona high school's first marching band rehearsals after returning to school from virtual learning.

> At [one of Eric's high schools] this last rehearsal, we started working on this drill learning project. So I wrote five sets and it's like, here's a block. First thing we're going to do is we're going to learn how to halt. And now we're going to take the block and we're going to do diagonal rotations so we're going to talk about that. Now we're going to turn it into a curvilinear shape. Now we're going to follow the leader and just doing those five sets of like, you know, the "primary colors" of basic drill design that's not competitive, not necessarily exciting to watch. It was the kind of thing where I had goosebumps on my arms the whole time watching it, and at the end of rehearsal, I just told the kids, I was like well, there you have it, it's like the Pride of the [school] is back on the field, marching drill again. They screamed like I've never heard them scream since winning the state championship. It's like that achievement had the same sense of catharsis that being "the best" had. I don't think that would be

> possible without this forced refocusing of our objectives that the pandemic has caused. Do I miss competition? Absolutely. Do I want it to come back next spring? I want nothing more than to have some sort of external treat to turn on the serotonin tap in my brain, maybe feel good and our students feel good and give us occasion to see all of our beautiful friends and hang out again and get that part of community. But as long as we've all been kind of trapped on our own little islands, some beautiful stuff has been happening. It's allowed me to take pleasure in some things that would only be a nuisance in a usual season.[129]

No student, teacher, or administrator knows when schools will reopen with normal activities, but educators and students alike should remember to rejoice in the small moments that remind everybody involved why they are so dedicated to pageantry, even through crisis. Part-time instrumental music educators in Arizona have shown that they are committed, resilient, and will continue to teach the state's youth no matter what catastrophes might try to hinder them. Many different groups of people and media have taken to thanking educators during COVID-19, and I would like to extend the same thanks to the under-recognized music teachers who have persisted and continued to uplift Arizona's youth.

[129] Interview with Eric, November 1, 2020.

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APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD EXEMPTION APPROVAL

EXEMPTION GRANTED

David Fossum
MDT Music
480/727-3487
dcfossum@asu.edu

Dear David Fossum:

On 10/13/2020 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	An Ethnographic Approach to Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 on Arizona Part-Time Instrumental Music Educators and Performers
Investigator:	David Fossum
IRB ID:	STUDY00012685
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Branson Consent Form, Category: Consent Form; • Branson Interview Questions, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions); • Branson Recruitment Script, Category: Recruitment Materials; • Branson Social Behavioral Protocol, Category: IRB Protocol;

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 10/13/2020.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required.

Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Tabitha Branson
Tabitha Branson
David Fossum