



"Girls Don't Play Tuba": A Phenomenological Analysis of Women in Music

Senior Project

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Abstract

This thesis builds off of an independent study in feminist theory in which a research paper discussing the gendering of music and how feminist theory informs it was completed. The current research expands on this topic to discuss the historical gender bias found in music and the implications for women in the professional classical music field. A series of six interviews with female musicians was conducted in order to gauge their perceptions of gender inequalities and explore the realities of being a woman in the traditionally male-dominated field. The role of social movements, such as feminism and #MeToo, in addressing inequalities was also considered. Results of the study reflected gendered patterns in opportunities and gender-specific issues in the world of classical music. Finally, suggestions for change to improve the prospects for women in the field were offered.

Girls Don't Play Tuba: A Phenomenological Analysis of Women in Music

The field of classical music, like many subfields of the arts, is revered for its ability to bring people together and help us find our common humanity, especially in times of turmoil or unrest. However, there is a darker underbelly to the arts that isn't often discussed as thoroughly as it should be, especially in classical music: the lack of representation of women as performers, composers, conductors, and scholars. The current research aims to explore the realities of women in the field and is supplemented by a series of semi-structured, in-depth interviews with women who have found success in the classical music field in some aspect.

Historical Background

Despite women's lack of representation in musical performance and practice, they have been "actively involved in performance, composition, teaching, and patronage from the history of the ancient Greeks to the present" (Jagow 1998). As Scott and Harrassowitz (2004) put it, "the absence of women in the standard music histories is not due to their absence in the musical past" (p. 50).

However, the women mentioned, albeit sparsely, in music history courses are a token of sorts – that is, it is usually the same three to four women mentioned, and they are mentioned in specific sections about women, and then not again. As Kimmel (2017), puts it, tokens are those who are "admitted into an organization but who are recognizably different from the large majority of the members of the organization...they are accepted not despite their minority status but because of it" (p. 294). Tokens are also discouraged from increasing their numbers in the organization. Based on European precedent, women in America were restricted largely to the home environment. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, movements towards women's rights began, but women's involvement in music was a slow process. They were initially

discouraged from professional involvement in music because it was considered inappropriate per societal norms. Sexism also added to the issue – women were considered too weak and unskilled to play instruments besides piano or to make it through long and demanding rehearsal schedules (Jagow 1998). Women were also barred from music due to deficits in education and mentoring, as well as moral codes that “likened women’s musical performance to prostitution” (Scott and Harrassowitz 2004, p. 51).

Before the emergence of opera in the seventeenth century, women performed largely out of the home as entertainment for guests of their husbands. However, history also reflects that women have been playing instruments for centuries – there were all-female orchestras in eighteenth century Venice, and women’s music clubs were organized in the early twentieth century for those who were musically trained but having trouble practicing music professionally. Historically, women have not been employed by orchestras because of the sexist beliefs surrounding their presumed lack of talent and commitment. Therefore, several groups took it upon themselves to found all-female orchestras, including the Vienna Ladies Orchestra, the Fadette Women’s Orchestra of Boston, the Los Angeles Women’s Symphony, and the Philadelphia Women’s Symphony Orchestra. In 1903, the Musical Union in New York merged with the American Federation of Labor, which meant that qualified women could be accepted as members. There was a fair amount of backlash over this decision, comparing integrated orchestras with mixing “oil and water.” The conductor of the New York Symphony even admitted in 1916 that any woman he hired would have to not only meet playing standards, but outperform the men applying for the same position (Jagow 1998).

Despite this decision, it was not until the introduction of blind auditions in the mid-twentieth century that a substantial increase in female hires occurred. The reigning sexism

resulted in the continuation and growth of female orchestras. These orchestras eventually dissipated as WWII allowed women to move into the workforce, and when the war ended, women began demanding entrance into male-dominated orchestras as well (Jagow 1998).

Bias in Education

Music education has long embodied a paradox in gender biases: that is, girls are encouraged to excel in music, while boys shy away from it in order to avoid being labeled as “feminine”, but it is these young men who are later pushed to strive for prestigious careers while women are discouraged (Pucciani 1983). Pucciani (1983) reviewed elementary school music materials and found that “elementary music classes, songbook series, classroom musical dramas and games, and teacher behaviors still assign passive, emotional, or domestic roles to females and active, nonnurturing roles to males, reinforcing narrow stereotypes” (p. 49). Though this study is over thirty years old, many of the findings are still applicable in today’s music classrooms and music education curriculum. Somewhere along the line, boys go from avoiding musical involvement at risk of being effeminate to men who dominate music at the professional level, and it begins with music education.

Studies have documented gender association with instruments and show that it seems to be a critical factor in regard to which instrument a child chooses to learn. This becomes increasingly evident when realizing the high numbers of males and females in upper-level band and orchestra programs, respectively (Pucciani 1983). Interestingly enough, stereotypes about instruments may originate, at least in part, with children’s literature, particularly books about musical instruments. The way that instruments are explained and illustrated implies that their characteristics apply to the players as well (Lipton 2001). Thus, if a tuba is characterized as

stern, masculine, and imposing, it makes sense that girls, who are socialized to be just the opposite of those traits, would shy away from choosing to play it.

Much of the curriculum at the elementary level does not revolve around instrument choice, however. General music is much more common, with emphasis on vocal training (it is easier and more cost-effective than training children, who often haven't fully developed fine motor skills, on instruments). Children learn songs to illustrate musical concepts (learning through song and games). These songs, however, are not as fun and harmless as they may seem on the surface: instead, they perpetuate gender role stereotypes, especially those that say women are passive, nurturing, and have life goals of obtaining a husband and having a family. Though these songs and other small, micro-level behaviors seem simple and harmless, the effects of perpetuating and sending these messages are very real and become much larger as children develop their musical skills. Making a few relatively easy changes can drastically change the field of music education. To name a few: do not separate children whose voices have not yet changed by gender, illustrate no preconceived notions about instrument appropriateness by gender (or race, etc.), do not presume the sex of an anonymous composer, and modify language in traditional songs or explain and discount the stereotypes (Pucciani 1983).

It is important to note that sex-stereotyping in music education is two-dimensional: that is, it discriminates against boys and girls. However, the effects are more severe for girls, and even boys who pursue "feminine" choices in instrument or career face few social implications at the higher, more prestigious levels. As stated in previous research, "because gender associations exist outside the music classroom, reinforcement of reducing them must be done quite often until selections of instruments are made at a young age. Even then, rejection of gender-based stereotypes is important in the retention of student musicians, especially for those who break the

norms with their choices” (Brinson 2017, p. 5). It seems that the root issue in representation lies in music education. The curriculum is largely male, whether in the composers and artists covered, hidden curriculum of song choices and activities, or music played. This eventually culminates in men dominating the arena. When the canon is largely white and male, over half the population is no longer represented fairly, and it sends a message that it is white males whose works will be represented and who will find the highest level of success in the music field.

Even at the collegiate level, women discussed in history are limited and tend to be the same figures over and over. Teachers themselves can be a key player in the journey towards equality in the arts – as discussed below, one of the women interviewed mentioned that it was her teachers who introduced works by females to her, and another said that she requires all her students to find and play at least one piece written by a female composer. Making small changes at the structural level can have much larger implications overall.

Sociologists often refer to making the familiar strange – that is, analyzing aspects of social life as if they were new. Adopting this attitude with sex stereotypes in music education, whether in instrument choice, curriculum, or problematic lyrics, can help address the issues that occur as young musicians mature.

The Current Study

The method used to collect data for this project was in-depth, semi-structured interviews. This research was largely phenomenological, which refers to research for the purpose of understanding the experience of those studied and analyzing it from an objective standpoint, and interviews seemed the most appropriate method for doing so. A series of six interviews with various female professional musicians was conducted. Open-ended questions about their instrument choice, educational background, perception (if any) of gendered patterns, and opinion

of social movements were asked, as well as potential suggestions for change in reference to any issues that they discussed. The sample of women for these interviews was chosen using what could best be referred to as snowball sampling: the professional music field is highly connected, and many of them, I knew already. Those I did not know personally, I connected to through the others that had agreed to be interviewed. Future research could allow for more recruitment, but for the sake of time, it was simpler to work with the women who were mostly directly available. An IRB application was submitted and approved to protect the rights of the human subjects involved in this research.

The majority of the women interviewed for this research were white, middle-class professionals with college-level teaching and performing experience. Several of them had strong performance backgrounds as well as experience with teaching in the public-school setting. Only one of the women interviewed was nonwhite, but she was still from a middle-class background. Their roles ranged from college professor to artistic director to graduate student, but the common factor linking all of them is their classical training and participation in the classical music field.

The following sections outline the experiences of women in various sectors of the professional classical music field according to background research and the research findings of the present study. The names mentioned are pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality of those involved in the research.

Women in the Professional Music Field

Performers

“In terms of research on women performers, the literature is relatively scarce: descriptions and references to women performing on musical instruments are rare in the published written works about music” (Brinson 2017, p. 9). As previously established, orchestras

were all male until just over 100 years ago, but equality is still slow to catch up. The Vienna Philharmonic did not admit their first female member until 1997, just over 20 years ago, and most professional orchestras are still male-dominated. Before that, the home environment was a key element in women's ability and opportunities to perform on instruments. Even in the modern climate, the higher the status of the ensemble, the fewer women there are. Most community or lower-level orchestras are majority women, but female instrumentalists are sparse in the most revered orchestras nationwide (Brinson 2017).

Furthermore, gender biases affect the way that performances are judged, but only the performances of women. Men receive consistent scores overall, even when playing "feminine" instruments such as flute or violin (Brinson 2017). This reflects a double standard closely tied to prominent patriarchal beliefs: even when participating in "feminine" activities, men enjoy the benefit of remaining unmarked, while this same advantage is not offered to women. This can even affect how women's musical abilities are perceived. According to Kari¹, women in the world of music are often thought of as unable to play as loud or as fast, and are considered gentler performers. Maintaining this unfair stereotype limits the scope of opportunities afforded to women.

Another issue surrounding performance is the importance of networking: as Sharon put it, there are few positions "solely reliant on playing." This, according to Kari, is a flaw because it can become a method to "cut women out all along the way." She elaborates, saying that orchestras are unionized, and women are often not invited to the "collective bargaining table", which means that men get to make the decisions. In fact, Kari was let go for speaking out against the lewd comments and inappropriate behavior of the male conductor of an orchestra she'd played with for some time. The orchestra, in informing her of her termination, based their

¹ Names changed to protect confidentiality

decision on “artistic differences.” However, she understood the underlying issue: “it’s like I was maligning myself with his power.” In situations like this, “networking” becomes more about perpetuating the patriarchy than about creating opportunities for players.

Conductors

Women have had better luck becoming performers and composers than conductors. It was easier for women to receive the training for musical performance and composition than for conducting, and the art of conducting usually requires stronger attributes that women were not thought to possess. Ironically, women who did possess these characteristics were thought of as unfeminine and were scorned (Jagow 1998). The role of a conductor is laced with traditionally “masculine” traits, which means that women must subscribe to these traits to some extent in order to find success. However, making masculine the norm paints women as having a problem that needs solving, while male conductors find themselves in a “neutral” system (Brinson 2017).

Several pioneers in female conducting in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including Caroline Nichols, Antonia Brico, and Frédérique Petrides, opened the doors for contemporary women. There has been an increase in women who pursue conducting, albeit a slow one (Jagow 1998). The first woman to earn a doctoral degree in conducting from the Juilliard School, Victoria Bond, did so only forty years ago – a relatively short time in comparison to men’s history of conducting (Brinson 2017).

Conducting, by nature, is highly subjective and extremely competitive, but unspoken gender biases added into the mix serve to continuously disadvantage women.

Teachers

Gould (1992) points out that on some level, all musicians are educators – “it is our students and purposes that vary” (p. 10). Many women involved in music at the professional

level are educators, especially at the elementary level. There is also a perception of music educators in the music world as “non-musicians” who are somehow “lesser than.” This correlation is not coincidental. “Music educators...historically tend to share the social characteristics of teachers” (Gould 1992, p. 13). Teaching, a profession that was originally male-dominated, has become “feminized” as more women have moved into the field. When professions become feminized, the status and pay of the job lowers (Kimmel 2017). The most prestigious of music educators (instrumental, secondary, and college professors) tend to be men, most notably at the postsecondary level (Gould 1992). Again, women are far outnumbered as the status and pay of the job increases, as it becomes more “masculine.” There are gender ideologies related to the roles of men and women in work – as Kimmel (2017) states, women are “unsexed by success” (p. 266), meaning that to be competent, aggressive, and ambitious (traits usually necessary for success) requires women to dissociate with their gender. Occupational sex segregation, which refers to the concentration of men and women in different areas of work, and gender discrimination, taking actions to exclude a person based on gender, are also evident in many ways (Kimmel 2017, pp. 270-273). There are certain positions that women are expected to fill, usually those that complement or are subordinate to men’s positions, and they are far outnumbered in positions of leadership, such as conductors, principal orchestral musicians, and tenured college professors. Gender discrimination is subtler, but occurs with seemingly innocent actions like not hiring women because of the assumption that they will have children and have to leave, asking women how they will balance job responsibilities with having a family, etc. – all of which were mentioned by the women interviewed.

Many of the women interviewed for this research are teachers of some kind, mostly at the collegiate level. All seem to enjoy the combination of teaching and performing that the position

allows them but do recognize that they are often outnumbered by their male counterparts. Catherine said that teaching is “much more rewarding.” However, as Jocelyn put it, “[participation in the music field is] not about who’s the best.” The industry is highly competitive, but women are thought of as hard to work with because they are a) societally perceived as emotional and sensitive and b) unreliable – they may want a family, meaning that they will no longer be able to conform to the demanding schedule required of musicians. The concept of the glass ceiling refers to barriers put in place to prevent upward mobility in the workplace, and it predominantly affects women (Kimmel 2017, p. 287). Lack of family-based workplace policies adds to this issue – the women I spoke to are either childless or did not have children until their careers were well established and secure enough that they could take a brief hiatus after childbirth. Teaching at the collegiate level has been an effective way for several of these women to combine their love for music with their desire to teach, but it is certainly not immune to the gendered patterns in work and family.

Gender-Specific Issues

Overall, female representation is low because the leadership is overwhelmingly male. The top orchestras are often linked to the top schools, so the power continues to be perpetuated. As Kari put it, “there is no fairness – it’s just a club.” Jocelyn keenly stated that coping skills should be emphasized. She pointed out that we often encourage women to go for great things in the name of equality without giving enough credit to just how draining and challenging it can be in a male-dominated environment where women are starkly in the minority.

The orchestral world, in the words of Sharon, is “very behind” in female representation: composers, performers, arrangers, etc. On a brighter note, there has been an increase in female composers in chamber works, which tend to be modern. These, however, are rarely performed by

high-level symphonic orchestras. The works are still overwhelmingly male, and those by women are a “special piece”, presented as a separate class from the traditional canon.

Women rarely form gender-exclusive relationships with instruments: even “feminine” musical instruments can be played by men with few social implications, especially at the professional level (Brinson 2017). Additionally, in many ways, men “set the standard” for performance: regardless of musical ability, there are some slight physiological differences between men and women that may make it easier for men to play certain instruments, especially those like flute or tuba that require a lot of air. Sharon, a flutist, pointed out that when one man plays a famous passage in one breath, suddenly, that is where the standard lies, even for women who may be physically unable to do so. This is not intended to echo the old sexist arguments that women are “too weak” to play instruments, but rather to assert that we should celebrate differences in musical interpretation and performance rather than expect everyone to conform to a masculine standard. According to Jocelyn, “there’s a sense that you need certain skills, and those skills are gendered – anything done to absolute perfection is masculine.”

Furthermore, some evidence points out that the self-promotion necessary for making connections in the musical world may be difficult for some women. According to a study done by Scharff (2015), several women said that they found it easy to promote other people’s work, but not their own. That is, they do not lack the necessary skills for musicianship, but struggle to promote their own achievements. “Self-promotion is problematic for women because it violates female prescriptions to be helpful, supportive, and other-oriented” (Scharff 2015, p. 103). This, again, serves to illustrate the way that gender socialization and roles perpetuate themselves in ways that aren’t readily apparent, but become clearer when analyzing women’s participation in a supposedly gender-neutral field.

Jobs in the field of music, especially classical music, are notorious for their lack of benefits – performing is hardly a 9 to 5 job, and time off, medical needs, or family planning often put musicians out of commission. In terms of family planning, women often carry the brunt of the load. As previously established, the women interviewed are either parents who waited until a later age to have children or have chosen not to have children for the sake of their careers. Even teaching as a college professor does not include benefits unless the person is tenure track or full-time, and those positions are rare, which makes having a family difficult. It comes back to the age-old question (at least, the question is as old as the feminist movement) of “career or family?” Catherine joked, “I’m giving birth to this doctorate!”

According to Jocelyn, women with children who are also full professors are almost nonexistent, which reflects the intersectionality of gender and class. A successful, tenured professor for over a decade, Jocelyn stated that she is somewhat fearful of having people know that she is a single mother because she is aware of what that stigma does to opportunities. As an avid performer, she didn’t want her opportunities to play, travel, teach masterclasses, or give lectures to be affected by the fact that she is also a mother; she went on to acknowledge her privilege in being able to afford childcare so that she can balance her career and parenthood: “I would have never been able to do that without my level of income.” Laura, pregnant during a job interview at a college, was asked how she would balance her job requirements and childcare needs. Though this could certainly be considered offensive and unprofessional, she confessed that “it’s more challenging to be a good mother and do what I already do” – that is, the responsibilities associated with being a performer and teacher had become somewhat second-nature after years in the field, but learning to find the time to be an available parent was what truly posed the challenge. In any career, balancing work and family is difficult, but in the

unpredictable and demanding world of music, it becomes even more challenging, and the gendered expectations surrounding parenting serve to create an additional obstacle for women.

Even though there are women, like several of those interviewed, enjoying successful careers with modest incomes, there is still a wage gap between women and men, even when they play for the same groups for the same amount of time. A prominent and recent example is that of Elizabeth Rowe, a flutist in the Boston Symphony, which is one of the most renowned groups in the world. Hired as principal flutist in 2004, she has performed as a soloist with the group nearly 30 times since, which is more than any other principal musician in the BSO. However, she is paid approximately seventy-five percent of what her closest male colleague, principal oboist John Ferrillo, earns, a difference costing her approximately \$70,000 per year. Ferrillo has played with Rowe in the 14 years since she was hired and was also on the hiring committee that appointed her. He was quoted calling Rowe his absolute equal after hearing her perform; since her hiring, the two share highly similar responsibilities and both are members of the Boston Symphony Chamber Players. In the most prestigious orchestras in America, the principal flutist and oboist tend to be among the highest-paid players. Rowe claims to have met repeatedly with BSO administration in hopes of resolving the wage gap between herself and Ferrillo, but to no avail; she is currently suing the orchestra for more than \$200,000 in unpaid wages from the last fourteen years (Tsioulcas 2018). Though Rowe's case is likely the most prominent in addressing this issue, it once more calls attention to the pay inequity that has been pointed out by women for several decades now and makes it apparent that even women who find success in the most prestigious musical ensembles are not immune to discrimination.

There is another, darker side to being a woman in the classical music field that has not been adequately addressed until recently: sexual harassment and assault in private study. Sexual

assault has often been brushed under the rug in more areas than just music, but the amount of alone time that music students spend with professors can be a breeding ground for trouble. What's more, the definition of sexual assault or harassment is very subjective, creating somewhat of a "gray area." As Catherine pointed out, "the desire to get your foot in the door can overpower the ability to defend yourself."

One of the most famous examples in recent months of the abuse that private teachers can perpetuate is that of Bradley Garner, longtime flute professor at the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. Garner famously resigned after multiple allegations arose regarding his abusive, predatory behaviors that spanned more than twenty years. Former students and those who knew him came forward to say that they had either been directly affected by or had heard of his sexual misconduct, yet many still chose to study with him. Garner, despite his reputation for misbehavior, is renowned in the world of flutists: he was the first person to earn a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) in flute performance from the Juilliard School, has performed with revered groups around the world, and held the power to influence futures of students in his hands. Students who studied with him reported feeling uncomfortable, tense, or anxious, but Garner held enough power that they were afraid to speak out, and for good reason – those who protested or asked to switch studios would often find themselves removed from a part in orchestra pieces or shunned in some other form. Part of being a good musician requires the ability to become vulnerable and impressionable, willing to accept criticism in order to grow, but Garner took advantage of this to maintain control over his students, silently enjoying his power and ability to abuse them. Because of the willingness of two students to come forward and break the pattern, Garner is no longer employed there and will likely be remembered from now on mainly for his actions. However, he was never fired – he resigned; this reflects the privilege on his part of

having dozens of students accuse him of misconduct and still being a paid employee of the university until his resignation, before a hearing ever occurred (Murphy 2018).

Garner's case, like many other, less prominent cases, serves to illustrate the power and influence a private teacher can hold over students, especially those trying to make a name for themselves. Laura is herself a former student of Garner's, and mentioned that she has taken him off her resume completely because she doesn't want his tarnished reputation associated with her accomplishments. However, there are students who are not lucky enough to have other names on their resumes, making the power held by their teachers even more prominent. Recent social movements, however, are beginning to change this.

The Power of Social Movements

One of the most prominent movements in addressing gender inequalities that are interwoven into our society has been the feminist movement, and in many ways, women have made leaps and bounds towards equality. However, there have still been issues among women, namely in sexual harassment. The movement that, in recent months, has emerged in response to the perpetual issue is known as #MeToo, which refers to the fact that sexual harassment and assault is so common that it has happened to "me, too" as attested by thousands of women on social media and other platforms. Jaffe (2018) sums it up eloquently: "this is how we got to the moment when sexual harassment stories are big news. The structures of the legal system and the workplace did not change. Instead, tens of thousands of women said yes, me too. Then, rather than wait for men to absorb that knowledge and decide whether to change or not, they started naming names. And making lists. And talking to each other" (p. 81). As Jocelyn stated, movements such #MeToo helps those affected realize just how common sexual harassment and assault is.

Jaffe (2018) points out that “the common denominator has been...part of what it means to be a powerful man is to have unfettered access to women’s bodies, or the bodies of others who are less powerful” (p. 81). Basically, #MeToo rejects one of the core ideologies of the patriarchy (control over women’s bodies) and allows us to imagine a society without it. There are social constructs around sexual harassment, and private study is a “built-in danger” of being a music student, as Sharon refers to it. The #MeToo movement was what brought it to the point of being said aloud. Sharon worries that the legality of the issue may never catch up to the realities that women face. These worries are not unfounded; as Jocelyn points out, a career ender for women is often nothing but a minor obstacle for men – that is, scandalous behavior that is often brushed under the rug for men would cause a woman to lose her job. However, hope lies in the dozens of men in positions of power who have faced investigations or lost their jobs after being accused of misconduct. As Jaffe (2018) asserts, men benefit from having the power of “not being required to learn to read the people around them” (p. 84). With the rise of the #MeToo movement and others like it, that is changing. Kari best summed up the value of these social movements and their ability to increase equality in music: “Of course feminism has a place in music – why wouldn’t you want a stronger feminine perspective?”

Conclusion

Every single woman interviewed mentioned gendered patterns of some sort, whether in the music education curriculum, performance practice, demographics of orchestras, or representation of female composers and conductors. Though their backgrounds, educational experience, and work history varied somewhat, they were all aware of the role that their gender played in their participation in the field; this was even more pronounced in those who played traditionally “masculine” instruments such as tuba. Several of them mentioned the lack of

representation of women in high-level, professional orchestras as players and conductors, and even pointed out that the traditional canon is centered around white, male, European composers: very few women and minorities are represented in the lineup of composers whose works are played, and when they are, it is more of a special piece, an “other” to the “traditional” works.

Beyond the basic lack of female representation on various levels, however, is a more disturbing pattern: the manifestation of gender and power. Professional orchestras are often unionized, and many of the people in power for decision-making are men. When those in power are not reflective of the population they represent, it is logical to assume that some portion of the population will be underserved; in this case, it was the women. Men holding a majority of the power positions in orchestras may not seem like a prominent issue, but it can have very real implications for women who speak out against injustices, such as sexual harassment. What’s worse, all the women interviewed seemed to either have stories of their own or knew someone personally who had been affected by sexual harassment or assault within the field. This was one of the more disturbing patterns uncovered through the current research. Overall, representation and opportunity matters: when a group is systematically excluded from a profession on various levels, it sends a message that they are “lesser than” – hopefully, research endeavors like this one will soon begin to change this.

Suggestions for Change

Though the overall status of women has drastically changed in the last century, a reflective change in attitudes regarding women in the classical music field has been slow to follow (Jagow 1998). Scott and Harrassowitz (2004) sum up the importance of including women in the classical music canon: “when we integrate women into the curriculum, we have the opportunity not only to add their names to the existing canon, but also to help our students

engage in critical thinking about how music is related to issues of sexism (and racism, classism, and ethnocentrism) within and outside the field, across cultures, and over time” (p. 50). Several suggestions for implementing changes for women’s involvement in music are outlined below.

Though a “gender-blind” approach sounds like a plausible solution, it overlooks how important music can be in the everyday lives of women, especially those women who are a part of cultures that silence them in other ways (Scott and Harrassowitz 2004). This research focuses mainly on American women, but access and inclusion in music is just as, if not more, crucial in other parts of the world. Additionally, “teaching women’s music is a fruitful and rewarding way to address music in relation to history and culture” (Scott and Harrassowitz 2004, p. 55). Intersectionality should also be considered – gender is an important social factor to address in music, but so are race and class. Further research could explore the effects of race and class in shaping musical opportunities.

There is always progress to be made, especially within the current political climate, but Catherine took a positive approach to her outlook on the potential for progress within the classical music field: she believes that music creates a more supportive environment because musicians are more “like-minded”, connected by their artists’ souls.

Each interview conducted was concluded with asking about their ideas for solutions to the gender inequalities that they spoke of. There were a range of responses, including:

1. Make a concerted effort to put more women in positions of power – train them to be leaders and “place them at the table.”
2. Give access and opportunity – this is important for recruiting diverse players.
3. Bring inequality to the attention of those with a platform to create change: “everyone in the field needs to help.” This includes men; it’s not just a “women’s issue.”

4. Discuss it even when it's uncomfortable.
5. Educate teachers on how to create diverse syllabi in music courses
6. Talk about consent among teachers, especially private instructors, and change the stigma around power dynamics; furthermore, educate professors on body functioning to avoid uncomfortable situations.
7. "Stages should be representative of our population" – this refers to gender as well as race and socioeconomic status.
8. Have "women in music" conferences and advertise works by women, even arrangements of classic works.
9. Equality and equity are not the same – give women the chance to try on equal terms.
10. Most importantly, continue to have these conversations!

The women interviewed gave very insightful summaries of the issues they have observed or faced themselves, and yet were hopeful for the future. The general consensus seemed to be that ignorance is no longer a valid excuse: as Sharon said, "I can't think of something more important [to raise awareness about] than consent." Kari, in a more valiant spirit, said "Don't be afraid to ask for it," referring to her belief that it is important for women to be willing to speak up for their own rights. Ultimately, however, the fight for equality in representation, access, and opportunity can be best summed up in the words of Jocelyn: "You're either maintaining or breaking the hierarchy with everything you do – there is no neutral...if not me, then who?"

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Appendix A – Interview Questions

Tell me a bit about yourself – how old were you when you became involved in music?

What inspired you to play the instrument that you chose?

Where did you attend school?

What made you decide to pursue music as a career?

How supportive was your family when you decided to do so?

How competitive would you say the music industry is?

How important is networking in the field of music?

Do you find your career to be fulfilling and satisfying? If not, what frustrates you?

Women are sorely underrepresented in many areas of music – have you seen evidence of this in your own experience as a musician?

In what ways (if any) do you see gender roles being perpetuated in the music industry?

How do social factors influence music?

Tell me about your perspective on feminism.

Do you think that feminism has a place in music?

Are instruments gendered?

What are some situations women in the music industry may have to deal with that their male counterparts do not?

How often do you perform works written by women?

How often do you teach or hear about women in music history?

How do you think social movements such as #MeToo have affected conversations surrounding sexism in your career?

Do you consider yourself a feminist?

Is there still progress to be made in the musical world for women?

What do you think we can do to solve these problems?