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WOMEN ORCHESTRAL CONDUCTORS: FACTORS AFFECTING CAREER DEVELOPMENT

By

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ABSTRACT

WOMEN ORCHESTRAL CONDUCTORS:
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by

Kay D. Lawson

A historical overview of sociological and educational factors revealed evidence of their influence in the career development of women orchestral conductors in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The study was amplified with questionnaire responses received from professional women conductors: Victoria Bond, Beatrice Brown, Carolyn Hill, Margaret Hillis, Frances Steiner, and Antonia Joy Wilson. These conductors' performances, educations, and careers, in addition to research that encompassed the activities of other women conductors, represented important aspects of the study.

The study concluded that educational opportunities have increased gradually for female conductors since the nineteenth century. However, social institutions revealed less change and presented obstacles to the continuing success of women conductors.

The research neither attempted the inclusion of all women conductors, nor presented a complete investigation of sociological and educational factors that affected the careers of women conductors.

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INTRODUCTION

The musical development of conductors is tied closely to the sociological and educational factors within an historic period. This research presents evidence of the sociological and educational factors as they affected the development of American women conductors. Hence, the purpose of this study was to:

a) present biographical information concerning selected women orchestral conductors in America.

b) present the sociological and educational factors important to the professional development of selected women orchestral conductors, and

c) present these ideas in a historical framework.

The research was limited to the nineteenth century through the present for two reasons: 1) conducting, as it is recognized today, was developed largely in the nineteenth century, and 2) documentation of women's activities in the conducting field was negligible prior to the nineteenth century. Women conductors selected for inclusion within this study either limited their professional[1] pursuits to orchestral conducting, or aspired to attain that goal.

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[1]The term professional designates one who is "engaged in an activity as a means of livelihood or for gain". (from the Random House Collegiate Dictionary, 1969)

The search for primary and secondary sources was extensive. To obtain primary sources, a general search for women conductors was initiated and a list was compiled. Research was conducted to determine the specializations of these women and then narrowed to orchestral conductors.

Professional women conductors were contacted by mail to determine individual interest for participating in the study. When confirmations were received, a questionnaire, which appears as Appendix A, was forwarded. In three instances, a cassette tape was included for recording individual responses.

From among the 13 women contacted, no replies were received from six and Eve Queler declined, citing professional commitments. Of the six who participated, Victoria Bond, Carolyn Hill, and Frances Steiner returned their responses on cassette tapes. Margaret Hillis requested a personal interview for which a trip to Chicago was necessary. Beatrice Brown conveyed her responses over the telephone and Antonia Joy Wilson chose to reply utilizing a written format.[2]

Research concerning information related to the project was completed at the Michigan State University Library, East Lansing and included the historical significance of women's social roles and their educations, American historical periods, the professional aspects of conducting and conductors. Numerous nineteenth century serials were searched at the Rackham Music Library, University of Michigan. Symphonies and orchestras in the United States, known to have

[2]Transcripts of the questionnaire responses are on file with the writer and available upon request.

hired women guest conductors, were contacted for biographical and career information.[3]

Although the contributions of men conductors are researched well, the activities of women conductors are not researched well.[4] Nonetheless, researchers of the past decade indicate that women musicians have made significant contributions to the musical history of the United States, documented by: Block and Neuls-Bates (1978), Women in American Music: A Bibliography of Music and Literature, and Tick (1973) Women as Professional Musicians in America, 1870-1900, which documents the work of women instrumentalists, composers, and teachers. (Additional work by Tick (1978) can be found in her dissertation, Toward a History of Women Composers in the United States Before 1870.) Still, compared with men musicians, women have received little attention. For example, Ammer (1980) states that two extensive surveys of American music were published during the 1970's bicentennial celebration, but the contributions of only one woman were included. Furthermore, she states:

> Several years of research showed that women indeed have been writing and performing music for as long as men have. But, owing to the local climate of earlier times, their work

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[3]A complete list of orchestras appears in the bibliography.

[4]Boult, A.C. Thoughts on conducting. London: J.M. Dent Phoenix House, 1963. Chesterman, R. (Ed.) Conversations with conductors. London: Robson Books Ltd., 1976. Hart, P. Conductors: a new generation. New York: Scribner's Sons, 1979.

> went unnoticed, unpublished, unperformed, and was quickly forgotten.[5]

Many areas of research concerning women musicians remain undocumented. In an effort to encourage research in the area of women musicians, Pool (1978) observed:

> After several years of research, I am still overwhelmed when I consider: 1) how little work has been done and is available on this subject; 2) the multitude of inaccuracies and discrepancies in the material that is available, especially the information to be found in standard musicological research materials, and 3) the magnitude of work that needs to be done.[6]

Women conductors in American musical history constitute a small group, notably during the nineteenth century, when only a few were successful. However, during recent years increasing numbers of women are occupying the podiums of professional American orchestras. Because conducting requires a unique combination of skills, talent, and personality, the field of conducting is difficult and competitive for both men and women. However, these women's successes represent the results of diligent work, and perseverance in a difficult field. Certainly women made significant contributions to the field of music, not the least of which are their own lives as models for success, important to the development of aspiring conductors.

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[5]Ammer, C. Unsung: a history of women in American music. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1980, ix.

[6]Pool, J.G. Women in music history: a research guide. Ansonia Station, NY: J.G. Pool, 1977.

CHAPTER I: THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The individuality and virtuosity of nineteenth century conducting was personified by such conductors as Wagner, Berlioz, and Mahler. The considerable influence of these men helped establish the image of the conductor, characterized by Dorati (1963), as a strong figure, a person who possessed personal power, leadership potential, musical accomplishment, and an educated mind with which to master the score.[1] In short, the nineteenth century conductor - responsible for directing and influencing musical performance - was a central figure, a leader in the musical world.

Portrayed as a leadership role, conducting was viewed as acceptable for men but not for women. Women were not perceived as leaders by the audiences or performers. For most of the nineteenth century, the woman's place was in the home, where she was encouraged to sing or play the harpsichord or piano. In the social realm, it was the woman's responsibility to perform at the keyboard or sing for visitors in the home. Women were not expected to become virtuosos or perform publicly, much less become musical leaders.

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[1]Dorati, A. What is a conductor? Music Journal, Sep. 1963.

During the latter part of the century, restraints on women's musical activities outside the home were lessened. An influential factor was the establishment of colleges and universities for women. Historically, the availability of higher education was limited to men and several decades would elapse before the establishment of coeducational institutions of higher learning. Drinker (1975) cites the church control of higher education for men as a factor which effectively denied women access to colleges.

> Even after the power formerly wielded by the Church began to pass to the university system, every such institution adapted the organization of the Church to further its scholarly, social or political arms. Women had no corresponding institutions. Even many of (men's) monasteries had been dissolved and their revenues diverted to the universities. Not until late in the nineteenth century did it occur to anyone to found colleges for the higher education of women.[2]

Even in the curriculum of women's colleges, music was studied for its social purposes. While men's universities offered studies in mathematics, geography, history, and science, women's colleges faced opposition in their intentions to copy the idea of men's institutions. The prevailing social opinion described women as intellectually inferior to men and less able to withstand the rigors of a university education. However, the curriculum in the early

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[2]Drinker, S. Music and women: the story of women and their relation to music. Washington: Zenger Publishing Co., 1975.

years of women's education was better adapted to training scholars than creative writers, painters, musicians, and other artists.[3] Furthermore, by the end of the nineteenth century, the availability of musical study in women's colleges and the gradual acceptance of public performance by female musicians, led to increased opportunities for women, as noted by Tick (1973), "Between 1870 and 1900 music and music teaching became a major female profession".[4]

An equally important development of the nineteenth century was the establishment of American conservatories. Formerly, European conservatories and schools of music offered the only opportunities for American musicians to study. By 1857, the Peabody and Chicago Conservatories were founded, followed in 1867 by the opening of the New England Conservatory. The establishment of these conservatories marked the first attempts in America to offer a high quality education for serious musicians.

However, large numbers of females were not admitted initially to the conservatories. A few successfully entered and graduated as virtuosos and solo performers. Furthermore, one cannot overlook that women musicians were faced still

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[3]Newcommer, M. A century of higher education for American women. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1959.

[4]Tick, J. Women as professional musicians in America 1870-1900. Yearbook for Inter-American Music Research, 1973.

with social prejudice. Despite this bias, two violinists, Maud Powell and Camilla Urso, and pianist, Julia Rive-King, who were recognized for their virtuosic performances, became models for women performers late in the nineteenth century.[5] These musicians Tick (1973) notes, "established precendents for other women, and advocated equal opportunities for women instrumentalists".[6]

However, the social acceptance of women musicians was not widespread. The factors contributing to society's attitude toward women musicians were diverse. Only girls from wealthy families were encouraged to pursue a musical education. Moreover, the earliest music educators were men who provided the role models. Furthermore, because quality music programs were not part of the elementary and secondary school curriculums, the public did not percieve music as important to society. In addition, public performance was considered unladylike, therefore, girls were not encouraged to follow musical pursuits.

> When families could afford an instrument and the leisure required to play it, girls were taught music much as they were taught embroidery, or French, as one of the social graces.[7]

Yet another factor contributing to society's attitude toward women musicians was the major deficiency that existed

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[5]Ammer, C. Unsung: a history of women in American music. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1980.

[6]Tick, J. Women as professional musicians in America, 99.

[7]Ammer, C. Unsung, 22.

in their training: women were not exposed as completely to a musical environment as men.

> When a Bach or Haydn is discovered to have a voice he immediately becomes a choir boy, and being a boy he knows someday he may become choir master so he observes the effects which may be produced by the organ, or the effects in choir singing - all of which he lays up in his mind and digests as artistic food. Likewise when a Handel or Beethoven plays an instrument ere long he plays in an orchestra, and so has constant opportunity for observing the qualities and capabilities of the instruments, the timbre, the intensity of sound and so on. [8]

Development of Women's Orchestras

During the 1890's, music schools and conservatories were graduating significant numbers of women violinists. Among those who fostered this increase was Julius Eichberg at the Boston Conservatory of Music.[9] He encouraged his female students to perform publicly, playing duets, trios, and quartets. The increase in women violinists led to the formation of women's chamber ensembles and precipitated the organization of women's orchestras.

The formation of women's orchestras was largely a response to the exclusion of women from established orchestras. When women's orchestras were organized, they were modeled after the Vienna Dammen Orchester, which had toured the United

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[8]Clarke, H.A. The nature of music and its relation to the question of women in music. Music, March 1895, 460.

[9]Ammer, C. Unsung.

[10]Neuls-Bates, C. Women as orchestral musicians in the United States, ca. 1925-45. Unpublished paper, 1981.

States during the 1870's.[11] In the fall of 1884 in Chelsea, Massachusetts the first women's orchestra in America was founded by Marion Osgood.[12] Miss Osgood's family was known in Boston musical circles; her father was associated as a teacher, with Lowell Mason, and her mother was an author and composer.

> It is claimed that Miss Osgood's was the first fully organized professional orchestra of the best class, composed exclusively of women, that had done public service in America ... .[12]

The Marion Osgood Ladies Orchestra originally numbered six players, but soon increased to ten.[13] The group accepted engagements during their first season and in the following year augmented their number to twelve. Miss Osgood reported that the Ladies Orchestra was well known in Boston social circles and was engaged actively for ten years.[14] The group played every year for fairs held at Mechanics Hall in Boston and, during their first summer, was engaged to play at Isles of Shoals. After the orchestra increased to 35 musicians, Osgood often conducted it at the old Music Hall in Boston. One reviewer commented on the popularity of the Marion Osgood Orchestra:

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[11]L.E.M. Young women as string instrumentalists. American Art Journal, Dec. 22, 1888, 146.

[12]Willard, F. & Livermore, M.A. A woman of the century. Buffalo, NY: n.n., 1893, 550.

[13]The incomplete accountings of the Marion Osgood Orchestra result from limited resources available to the writer who encourages further research and documentation of the group.

[14]Osgood, M. America's first ladies' orchestra. Etude, Oct. 1940, 713.

> "That orchestra ... consisted of brass and wood-winds and tympani, as well as strings, has won brilliant success, season after season, in social circles and upon the concert platform, and has secured praises from the most exacting metropolitan circles."[15]

In addition to her orchestral duties, Osgood (1940) supplied a string quartet for such affairs as teas and weddings. "We played at the best balls and parties, in and around Boston and in various cities in Connecticut. We gave also a concert for the Lincoln Club in Brookfield, New York".[16] The first violinist in Osgood's quartet was Caroline Nichols, who later achieved recognition for her conducting abilities.

Caroline Nichols

> If playing in an orchestra was a male province, conducting was more so. What more outspoken role of leadership could there be than leading an orchestra. Traditionally such control, especially over an all-male orchestra requires a forcefulness that was encouraged only in men. Even in the late nineteenth century women conductors were extremely rare. [17]

One of these rare women conductors was Caroline Nichols, a student of Julius Eichberg at the Boston Conservatory. Born in Dedham, Massachusetts, Nichols was the daughter of a choir director. She studied violin not only with Eichberg, but also with Leopold Lichtenberg and Charles Loeffler; and pursued the study of theory with Percy Goetschuis and J.B. Claus.[18]

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[15]Willard, F. & Livermore, M.A. A woman of the century, 550.

[16]Osgood, M. America's first ladies' orchestra, 713.

[17]Ammer, C. Unsung, 108.

[18]Ibid.

Nichols founded the Fadette Ladies Orchestra of Boston in an attempt to provide herself an orchestra to conduct and fellow musicians a place to perform.[19] Begun on October 1, 1888, the group initially had six players; by 1890, it numbered 15 performers. The orchestra received its financial support from Nichols' brother-in-law, George Chickering, president of the Chickering Piano Company. In 1895, the group was incorporated in Massachusetts and given a charter with exclusive rights to the name. Three years later, the Fadettes toured the East, West, and South of the United States, and concluded their tour with six weeks of performances in Canada.

Many of the Fadettes' concerts were given in vaudeville theaters. In vaudeville tradition, their performances were interspersed with skits and comedy routines. In addition, they took requests from their repertory which listed 600 selections. During 1902, Keith engaged the Fadettes for a two week try-out at the Boston Theatre. Their appearances met with success and they were invited to remain for the entire season. Later, they joined the Keith winter circuit, and performed in first class vaudeville theaters throughout America.

For a short time the Fadettes played for the silent movies at Roxy's Theater in New York, but their performances were halted by the musicians union. Soon after, Nichols

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[19]The Fadette name was suggested by Osgood's sister who read the story "La Fadette". Osgood, M. America's first ladies' orchestra, Etude, Oct. 1940.

returned to Boston and continued to train new orchestra members until her death in 1939, at the age of 75.

In 1952, nine of the original Fadettes held a reunion. Together they recounted the 1025 concerts the orchestra presented in parks and summer resorts, 3050 concerts in vaudeville theaters and 364 performances in Boston.[20] The Fadettes were unique; they were the only professional women's orchestra of the time to compete with men's ensembles. Nichols displayed her individuality as the peer of conductors John Phillip Sousa, Walter Damrosch, and Victor Herbert.

Because women were continually denied membership in established orchestras, Nichols' efforts on the behalf of women musicians were important. Accordingly, women gained the freedom to study and become musicians, but, invariably they were barred from performing, as Ammer states:

> From a 'lady violinist' to a 'ladies orchestra' would seem to be but a short step, but in reality it was a giant stride and one toward a dead end, at that. That women instrumentalists should have been excluded from conventional orchestras - which might just as well have been called 'gentlemen's orchestras' - is hardly surprising. Despite the increase in women instrumental players, particularly violinists, in the second half of the nineteenth century, despite the growth of music schools and conservatories, despite a spate of articles saying 'Why shouldn't women play instruments?', women were not encouraged to play professionally, either as soloists or in ensembles. [21]

Women's orchestras remained standard fare as entertainment throughout the nineteenth century. Audiences

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[20]Ammer, C. Unsung.

[21]Ibid, 33.

were drawn to concerts performed by women's orchestras but not with expectations for the musical performance. Rather they were attracted by the oddity of women bassists and cornetists, as well as the novelty of women conductors.

In this capacity, women musicians were tolerated, but the idea of professional female performers failed to gather support. Consequently, the economic competition kept women on the periphery and away from direct competition with men. Thus, society would not consider women's orchestras on the same par with the all-male orchestras. Nineteenth century writers supported this judgment, forecasting why women would not achieve success, and further suggested that efforts by Osgood, Nichols, and later Emma Steiner, were at best token examples of women's musical endeavors.

A classic anti-feminist ideology, written by George Upton (1880), defined the position of women in music in the nineteenth century. If music was the art of emotions, then it logically followed, women who were more emotional than men should excel. But Upton believed women were unable to translate emotion into any medium. His rationale stated that music depended upon the ability to think logically and in the abstract; ergo, women were destined to be excluded from the creative arts.

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[22]Upton, G. Women in music. Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1909.

In a widely read periodical, one author (A.L.S., 1900) suggested that women were afforded continuously opportunities to study music, with the result that few achievements were attributed to female musicians. Therefore, it was evident that women had failed in their musical contributions. Furthermore, the author states:

> ... in many departments of mental capacity it must be confessed that women have only lately had fair scope and opportunity. Her limitation has, however, applied rather to the region of science and philosophy than to that of imagination. In regard to her production in prose fiction, in poetry, and in music, we do not wrong by comparing her work to that of a man. In these departments she has certainly not been handicapped. In music she may even be said to have been placed favorably, for at a time when it was rare for a man to receive any musical training whatever, every girl was taught to play the harpsichord or piano. And yet it is in music that woman's record fails most signally. [23]

What was not written was equally important to what did appear in print. It cannot be denied that women were afforded the opportunity to study music. What needs clarification is the extent that restrictions were placed not only on females who studied and performed music, but also on the woman's social role.

> A very special ideology defined women's proper social roles in narrow and restricted ways. Ideas that we may label 'virtuous womanhood' dominated their lives, closing off opportunities, fostering a sex-stereotyping of jobs, and ruling out options. Both in the public and private arena - in the home, in the club, and in

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A.L.S. Women and music. Musical Courier, Aug. 1, 1900, 33.

> the workplace - women's actions had to be consistent with moral sensibility. purity, and maternal affection, and no other code of behavior was acceptable. [24]

Frequently, women were denounced and denied status. Females were expected to accept their station in life and to attain no levels of excellence. In retrospect, women's acceptance of society's restrictions may have contributed to women's loss of self-respect.

> ... the fact of woman's full human consciousness, her full involvement in and commitment to culture's project of transcendence over nature, may ironically explain another of the great puzzles of the 'woman problem' - woman's near universal unquestioning acceptance of her own devaluation. For it would seem that, as a conscious human and member of culture, she has followed out the logic of culture's conclusions along with men. ... In other words, woman's consciousness - her membership, ... in culture - is evidenced in part by the very fact that she accepted her own devaluation and takes culture's point of view. [25]

Emma Steiner

By the turn of the century, another conductor, Emma Steiner was well known. On November 17, 1925 at the Metropolitan Opera House, she was honored on her golden anniversary as a conductor and composer of operas. Ironically, none of her works were ever produced at the Met and she never conducted there. The program included the overture to her opera Fleurette (1879), and scenes from her operas the Man

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[24]Rothman, S.M. Woman's proper place. New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1978, 14.

[25]Rosaldo, M.Z. Woman, culture, and society: a theoretical overview. In Roslado, M.Z. & Lamphere, L. (eds.) Woman, culture, and society. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974, 29.

from Paris (1900) and The "Burra Pundit" (1918). The program ended with Steiner's orchestral song The Flag - Forever May it Wave (1918) dedicated to her grandfather Colonel Stephen Steiner who led the American victory at North Point during the War of 1812

Steiner was born in 1852 in Baltimore, Maryland, the daughter of Colonel Frederick B. Steiner and of a pianist mother. Her musical interests began early, composing simple tunes at age seven and playing the piano by age nine. However, her parents did not encourage her musical interests despite urgings from friends that she be sent to Paris for musical studies. Determined to continue, Steiner began work at age eleven on a grand opera, Aminaide. She also wrote several waltzes and other popular music from which she earned money to finance her musical studies.

It is not known when she broke away from her family, but, as a young adult, Steiner was known to have sung in the choruses of several touring companies.[26] Eventually, she was asked to assist the conductors of these groups.

Early in her career, Steiner worked in diverse capacities as a member of various musical theater companies. By age 21, she left for Chicago to assume the position of assistant music director to Rice, of Rice and Collier "Iolanthe" Company. In addition, she conducted a number of groups which staged performances of Gilbert and Sullivan comic operas. Later, she worked three seasons with George Baker's Company

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[26]Ammer, C. Unsung.

and unspecified periods with the Graw and Fitzgerald and Julius Howe Companies. Her experiences also included one year in New York as musical director under Heinrich Conried who, in 1903, became manager of the Metropolitan Opera.

> It is said of her that Heinrich Conried, for whom she had served as musical director before he became manager of the Metropolitan Opera House in 1903, declared that he would gladly have appointed her conductor at the Metropolitan if only he dared.[27]

During the later years of the nineteenth century, Steiner's reputation as a conductor and composer grew. Her opera Fleurette was produced in 1889 in San Francisco and in New York during 1891, with Steiner as conductor. One reviewer felt that as a conductor, Steiner was "easy, self-contained, and careful".[28] Subsequently, in 1894, Miss Steiner conducted a series of vocal and instrumental concerts with members of the Metropolitan Orchestra, leading them in works of Wagner, Flotov, Liszt, and Meyerbeer.

After 1900, Miss Steiner was troubled with failing eyesight for which her doctor recommended complete rest. Abruptly, Steiner gave up her musical life in New York and traveled to Nome, Alaska carrying provisions and tools. She became the first woman to go to the tin fields 100 miles northwest of Nome. After spending ten years in Alaska prospecting, mining, and traveling, she returned to New York City and gave lectures illustrated by slides of Alaska's

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[27]Petrides, F.J. Women in orchestras. Etude, July 1938, 429.

[28]Ammer, C. Unsung, 168

wilderness.

As a composer and conductor, Steiner led an active life. During her career, she produced seven operas, a number of musical dramas, ballets and many songs and dances. A score of a dance for piano and orchestra Gavotte Menzeli, published in 1914, was marked opus 400. In addition, she conducted 6000 performances of more than 50 different operas and operettas.[29]

Toward the end of her life, Steiner founded a Home for Aged and Infirm Musicians. Work and worry over the Home brought on a nervous collapse followed by a heart condition which ended her life on February 27, 1929.

By the end of the nineteenth century, two events effectively broadened opportunities for women musicians. The establishment of women's colleges provided musical studies beyond the confines of the home. The encouragement toward higher education was an initial factor motivating public performance on a limited basis.

Furthermore, the establishment of women's orchestras was a significant event that focused attention on female musicians. For the first time, women were recognized to possess musical abilities and found public performance acceptable as members of women's orchestras. However, a problem resulted from the public's perception of these ensembles. Because the concert format was fashioned in vaudeville tradition and larger symphonic works were fewer, women's orchestras were not considered seriously

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[29]Ibid.

to equal the artistic level of men's orchestras. Therefore, this conception may have contributed to the assumption that women had insufficient musical ability and were not strong enough to withstand the rigors of professional orchestras.

Consequently, there was no encouragement or support for women conductors. Because males dominated the field, women were not entitled to success as conductors. Their opportunities for educations and professional training were limited and furthermore, they were not permitted to even attempt an appearance with any orchestra. Fundamental to the problems of the woman conductor was the nineteenth century musicians' perception of a musical leader: that being the virtuosic conductor.

Considering the nineteenth century conceptions of the conductor, the accomplishments of Osgood, Nichols, and Steiner were significant. As conductors, their achievements in a male dominated field set a precedent for women in the new century. Furthermore, the efforts of Nichols and Osgood to establish women's orchestras provided models for the successful women's ensembles in the first half of the twentieth century.

CHAPTER II: 1900 - 1950

The advent of the new century brought little change in the position of women in American society. In the years leading up to passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920, an agitation began among progressive factions of American society to diminish the restrictions put on women's spheres of activity. Tick (1973) observed that the social attitude of the nineteenth century prevailed, keeping women from attaining recognition as performers. She further states:

> Without the influence of the women's rights movement, and the pressure resulting from the increasing numbers of professional women in the labor force, women's work in music would have continued to be limited to cultural patronage. [1]

The influence of the women's movement early in the twentieth century was limited. Not all women willingly adopted the new views advocated by the supporters of women's suffrage. Many were slow to assimilate the progressive ideas that encouraged women to seek fulfillment in other ways outside the home. Furthermore, Riegel (1970) observes:

> The vast majority of women continued to center

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[1]Tick, J. Women as professional musicians in America, 1870-1900. Yearbook for Inter-American Music Research, 1973, 107.

> their interests on such traditonal feminine concerns as clothes, cooking, sewing, social manners, love, marriage and child care ... The average girl of 1900, like her predecessors of a century earlier, was saturated in the belief that females were different from males mentally and physically, and that her future meant marriage and retirement to her home, with her prestige depending on the position of her husband and her reputation as wife and mother. [2]

A major influence in changing the woman's role in American society was women's access to higher education. As higher education became more wide spread, increasing numbers of women enrolled in colleges and universities. Riegel states: "... 21% of college students in 1870 were women, by 1920 the percentage had advanced to 47, from which there was to be little change in succeeding years".[3] In addition, conservatories and musical colleges continued to enroll more women than men. For example, "in 1888 ..., the New England Conservatory graduates were: in piano, twenty-five women, three men; in voice, twenty-nine women, three men; organ, four women, three men".[4]

The increasing numbers of graduates from American music schools, however, did not alter the prevailing public opinion that the best musical education was found in Europe. A serious student of music continued her/his

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[2]Riegel, R. American women: a story of social change. Cranbury, NJ: Associated Presses, 1970, 264.

[3]Ibid, 279.

[4]Ammer, C., 228.

studies in Europe and debuted there before returning to the United States.

> Germany was, for most of the nineteenth century, considered by Americans to be the well-spring of good music. The finest musicians, orchestras, conductors, and teachers, it was widely believed, were either German or German trained. The personnel of American orchestras was largely German. Practically all American musicians of note went to Germany to study ..., and, a foreign debut was considered indispensable. [5]

The Germans and other Europeans who dominated American orchestras had a singular attitude regarding women musicians. According to social tradition, women belonged only in the domestic sphere. In Europe, working as an orchestral musician was considered a masculine position. This attitude was a factor which limited the opportunities open to women musicians in the United States.

Female musicians, unable to find encouragement among their male peers, found support in the person of Leopold Stokowski who in 1916 said:

> An incomprehensible blunder is being made in our exclusion of women from symphony orchestras. The particular spirit that women put into music, their kind of enthusiasm, and their devotion to anything they undertake, would be invaluable in the formation of symphony orchestras. In addition to their delight in their work, they are quick to get the meaning of a score, nimble witted in taking in a new idea, and most concientious about appointments, time and practice. When I think of women as I see them in the musical world, what they are capable of doing their fine spirit, excellent technic, I realize what a splendid power we are letting

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[5]Ammer, C., 60.

go to waste in this country and other countries. [6]

Problems encountered by women musicians during the early twentieth century included the social beliefs that women did not possess the strength to play orchestral instruments and playing them was unladylike.[7] Moreover, Neuls-Bates (1978) suggests the probability that women's fashion and lack of physical exercise handicapped the development of women musicians. For example, during the late nineteenth century the bike was an important liberator of women because it led to a change in women's apparel.[8] These beliefs continued to present obstacles even after the turn of the century. Social conventions and the exclusion of women from standard performing institutions were catalysts for organization of women's orchestras from the 1920's through the 1940's.

Women's Orchestras of the 1930's and 1940's

> These women's orchestras are in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, and in other centers from Boston, Massachusetts to Long Beach, and symbolize the American girl's determination to enter and stay in the orchestral field. They are earnest and spirited ventures and represent to an eminent music critic, one of the most important musical movements in recent years. [9]

Several women's orchestras were conducted by women. The emergence of women's orchestras created more opportunities

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[6]Petrides, J.F. Women in orchestras. Etude, July 1938, 430.

[7]Neuls-Bates, C. Women as orchestral musicians, 1981.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Petrides, J.F. , 429.

for women to conduct than offered by standard all-male groups. A complete listing of women's orchestras and their female conductors can be found in recent research by Neuls-Bates (1981) who observes that "the emergence of women as conductors of symphonic and chamber orchestras, ... was a new phenomenon that occured in the 1920's".[10]

For example, the Chicago Women's Symphony completed its fourth season in the spring of 1930 with Ebba Sundstrom as its conductor.

> She is a splendid musician, a violinist of long orchestral training and concert experience, who has tackled the job of being one of the foremost women orchestral conductors, from the ground up. Unlike most aspirants ... she has developed her skill on the basis of a sound and first hand knowledge of the orchestra gained by years in the concert master's seat of various orchestras. [11]

Sundstrom was born in Lindsburg, Kansas. At the age of seven, she began violin studies and at thirteen organized a trio which played in local hotels and theaters. Early in her professional career, she served as organist and choir director at the Grace Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

Sundstrom debuted as the assistant conductor for the Chicago Women's Symphony in 1928 and, in the following year, became its permanent conductor. During its eleventh season (1936), the Women's Symphony and Sundstrom performed a

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[10]Neuls-Bates, C. Women as orchestral musicians, 1. This research indicates that women's orchestras and their women conductors were most active in the 1930's and 1940's.

[11]A.K.C. Woman's Symphony Orchestra of Chicago complete successful season. Musical Courier, May 24, 1930, 16.

concert of predominantly Swedish music which honored Scandanavia and Chicagoans of Scandanavian descent. The concert which included the Chicago Swedish Choral Society and Swedish contralto Gertrude Wettergren was a great success.[12] One reviewer wrote of Sundstrom:

> With long, pendulum-like swings of the arm and huge, rhythmic rockings of her body from the heels up, Conductor Sundstrom carried chorus and orchestra through excerpts from Wagner's Tannhauser, Elgar's King Olaf, and Grieg's Olaf Tryggavson.[13]

In 1932, Joanne Frederique Petrides formed her own women's orchestra, the Orchestrette Classique, which remained active through the 1940's in New York. During its third season, the Orchestrette played a concert of rarely heard and new compositions in Aeolian Hall. One reviewer remarked:

> Under Miss Petrides' clear-cut directions, the little orchestra played with unity, technical smoothness and a grasp of the various compositions.[14]

Petrides[15] who came to the United States in 1923, received her earliest training at home. She was taught violin and music theory by her mother who was active as a pianist, composer, and teacher at the Royal Conservatory

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[12]Swedish night. Time, Nov. 23, 1936, 41.

[13]Ibid.

[14]H.T. Woman's group in recital. New York Times, Nov. 5, 1935, 33.

[15]Neuls-Bates, C. Three musicians recall their careers: Antonia Brico, Frederique Petrides, and Jeannette Scheerer. Unpublished paper, 1981.

of Antwerp during the 1890's. As a child of nine or ten, she performed in Antwerp hospitals for the wounded during World War I.

Later, she studied with Matthieu Crickboom and assisted Eugene Ysaye. As second violinist in Ysaye's quartet, she performed many pieces of chamber music.

After settling in New York, Petrides, unable to find occasions for conducting, taught the violin. To create opportunities for herself, she founded an orchestra at New York University and studied conducting for several summers with a student of Paul Felix Weingartner. Later as a student of Mitropoulos, Petrides attended rehearsals with score in hand. She believed that the "only way to learn to conduct ... (was) to observe a great conductor ...".[16]

In her continued efforts to encourage acceptance of women musicians, Petrides founded, with the help of Julia Smith, the Orchestrette Classique. Her intentions were not for the promotion of women's orchestras, but to provide a training ground for women instrumentalists; a stepping stone to the mixed orchestras.[17] The Orchestrette played five or six concerts a year, charging $1.25 admission per person which did not meet the expenses of the group. The survival of the group depended upon Petrides and her husband, the business manager for the Orchestrette, who underwrote the

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[16]Ibid.

[17]The term mixed in this context refers to orchestras with both male and female members.

operation of the ensemble. Because financing was always difficult, Petrides sought additional support for the orchestra. Despite the Orchestrette's success, she was unable to raise the necessary donations. Potential supporters felt the Orchestrette had done well without them up to that time.

Following 11 years of successful performances, the Orchestrette Classique was disbanded in 1943. Members of the group found positions in orchestras vacated by men called by the draft. After the war, friends of Petrides attempted to persuade her to revive the Orchestrette, but she felt the women's orchestras proved their point, that women were capable as professional musicians.

From 1935 to 1940, Petrides wrote and published the newsletter, Women in Music, whose chief purpose was to report pertinent news regarding women's orchestras and their activities. In addition, it contained news of the Orchestrette Classique and articles that promoted mixed orchestras. Perhaps the most important aspect of Women in Music was its reporting about the achievements of women musicians. During its years of publication, the newsletter was widely distributed to libraries and conductors throughout Europe and the United States.

After the Orchestrette disbanded, Petrides continued to conduct many all-male ensembles as well as a few mixed orchestras in a summer series in New York City. From 1961 to 1977, she was the director of West Side Orchestral

Concerts, Inc.

On the west coast during the 1930's and 1940's, women's orchestras were well known, one in Long Beach and the other in Los Angeles. The Long Beach Women's Symphony, a group of 120 women, was conducted by Eva Anderson. During its fourteenth season in 1939-40, the group played four formal concerts in Long Beach, ten civic events in parks, and eight concerts in other cities. The attendance at these concerts was reported to range from 1500 to 3000.[18]

Under the auspices of E.L. Behymer and conductor Harry Hamilton, the Los Angeles Women's Symphony was organized in 1893. During the 1950's, the group changed its name to the California Women's Symphony. Johnson (1955) remarks that the group enjoyed the distinction as the oldest orchestral organization on the west coast.[19]

Ruth Haroldson became conductor of the California Women's Symphony in 1939, and remained there until 1961. It was said of Haroldson that she was "dynamic and forceful in personality, yet decidingly fascinating and feminine".[20] In addition, Haroldson conducted the Whittier College Community Symphony. In 1933, she joined the faculty where

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[18]Long Beach women's unit has civic backing. Musical Courier, Dec. 1, 1939, 71.

[19]Johnson, H. The California Women's Symphony Orchestra; the story of the orchestra. Etude, Aug. 1955.

[20]Ibid, 48.

she taught violin, the string ensemble, and the chamber ensemble.

Haroldson's family came from Norway to settle in Brookins, South Dakota where she was born on January 11, 1910. She received her early education in her hometown and later, attended South Dakota State College, MacPhail's School of Music in Minneapolis, and received a Bachelor of Music degree from the American Conservatory in Chicago in 1928. Until 1933, she pursued graduate studies with Jacques Gordon, Leo Sowerby, Misha Mishakoff, and Sascha Jacobsen. Later, as a scholarship student, she went to the Juilliard School for violin studies.

Prior to accepting her conducting post, Haroldson found work as a professional musician. She was solo violinist with the Chicago Symphony. In addition to her appearances in Chicago, she performed 30 concerts on the west coast and in the mid-west.

Recognizing the efforts made by women musicians and conductors such as Petrides, Haroldson encouraged more concern for preserving the gains made by women performers in the twentieth century. She observed that:

> ... if women instrumentalists have not convinced mid-twentieth century male conductors of their musical merit and personal stamina, the field might return to one devoted exclusively to men. [21]

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[21]Ibid, 48.

Ethel Leginska

During the 1930's, Ethel Leginska, was well known as a pianist and conductor. Possessing superb musicianship and a vivid personality, Ammer characterized her as "one of the most colorful musicians of her time".[22] Born Ethel Liggins on April 13, 1886 in Hull England, she changed her name to sound more exotic at the urgings of her teacher who believed it would ensure success. Her earliest training as a pianist began in England and continued later at Hock's Conservatory in Frankfort. At age fourteen, Leginska ran away to Vienna to study the piano with Leschetizky and remained there for three years. After her London debut in 1902 under Harry Wood, Leginska performed successfully for over 30 years.

During the years she appeared in the United States, Leginska's personality and performance style made good copy for newspaper headlines. Reviewers were critical of her individualistic treatment of classical works, as well as her manner of dress which was manly in appearance. In 1915, a sensational divorce suit and custody case was printed by the press, as was the story of her broken finger, for which she supplied Musical America the x rays. Leginska became better known in 1925 when she suddenly disappeared on the evening she was to perform as a pianist at Carnegie

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[22]Ammer, C. Unsung, 109.

Hall. The front pages of major newspapers in the United States detailed the disappearance and, later, reappearance of this unpredictable musician.

Because she felt the need for a new career, Leginska began the study of composition, in 1918, with Ernest Block and Ruben Goldmark and during the next few years produced a considerable number of works. Among them are two symphonic poems, Beyond the Fields We Know (1921) and Two Short Poems (1922). In addition, she produced a four-movement suite, Quatre Sujets Babares (1923), Four Poems for string quartet, and Six Nursery Rhymes for soprano and small orchestra (1923).

Five years later, Leginska developed a new interest: conducting. She studied for one year with Eugene Goossens in London and Robert Heger in Munich. In October 1924, Leginska embarked upon her third career - conducting. Her first engagement was guest conducting the Paris Conservatory Orchestra, followed in November by concerts in London, Berlin, and Munich. Returning to the United States in 1925, Leginska became the first woman to conduct the New York Symphony Orchestra in Carnegie Hall. One reviewer wrote of her performance:

> It is perhaps the most difficult thing in the world for another conductor to lead an experienced orchestra through performances of standard works which the musicians have played innumberable times and could negotiate with their eyes shut. Probably Mm. Leginska would not claim to be more than an earnest student of the conductor's art and it is at least to her credit that nothing very serious occured last night to mar the performance for which she so energetically beat time, indicated entrances

and communicated her ideas of expression. [23]

Because she was a controversial and colorful performer, Leginska's performances often received mixed reviews. Audiences and critics frequently were offended by the performance style she adopted. Another reviewer wrote of Leginska's Carnegie Hall appearance:

> Unlike Boulanger's, her podium work was a fiasco. Leginska was an energetic time-beater, but as the Times pointed out, conducting involves problems far more delicate and complicated than fall to any singer or instrumentalist. She simply lacked conductorial technique. [24]

Undaunted by negative reviews, Leginska followed her New York appearance with engagements conducting the People's Symphony of Boston in April 1925 and the Los Angeles Symphony in August. Leginska's appearances with several other orchestras received mixed reviews, and spurred discussion in the press of women's capabilities as conductors. Her performances gave writers the evidence they needed to question the ability of women to conduct.

Leginska continued to conduct, often creating her own opportunities. In 1926, she founded an orchestra of 100 men. Her intentions were to provide good music for the public at reasonable prices. Despite favorable reviews, the group survived only one season.

From 1925 to 1930, Leginska was based in Boston. During

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[23]Mme. Leginska leads New York Symphony, plays Bach concerto. New York Herald Tribune, Jan. 10, 1925, 10.

[24]Schickel, R. The world of Carnegie Hall. New York: Julian Messner, 1960, 226.

her second year there, she organized the Boston Philharmonia Orchestra. In addition, she offered to conduct and train for no fee, the Boston Women's Symphony Orchestra. The group appeared during 1927, frequently playing works by women composers. Throughout its initial season, the 65 member orchestra received mixed notices. During the second season, Leginska took the Women's Symphony on a six-week tour of Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Buffalo, Cleveland, and Washington, for a total of 52 programs in 38 cities. Despite a lack of funds, the Women's Symphony continued to perform through 1929. But soon thereafter, the Boston Women's Symphony Orchestra gave its final performance on January 29, 1930.

In another effort to provide fellow women musicians a place to play, Leginska founded the National Women's Symphony which was based in New York City. The group was well received at its first concert on March 12, 1932, but disbanded later that same year.

In the years following her New York conducting debut, Leginska continued to receive invitations to guest conduct. Often she had to agree to appear as a pianist with an orchestra as well as conduct. When she appeared with the Chicago Women's Symphony in April 1927, she both played and conducted Mozart's Piano Concerto in A Major. Characteristic of her performances, the feat of conducting and playing received many comments and notice from the music critics.

Another musical venture initiated by Leginska was the

organization of the Boston English Opera Company whose purpose was to stage operas in English. On one occasion, she conducted the first English performance of Franz von Suppe's Boccaccio in New York.

> Ethel Leginska who has won an enviable reputation as a pianist and composer in the past was the magnetic conductor of Boccaccio. Through her efforts the piece had a unity and musical coherency that gave the principals (sic) and excellent chorus opportunity for a more successful ensemble than we are accustomed usually to hearing in a performance of light opera. The precision of attack, the intelligent reading, and the nuances of tone and coloring enraptured the hearers. [25]

Continuing her interest in opera, Leginska became the first woman to write and conduct an opera in a major opera house. In 1935, the premiere of Gale, with John Charles Thomas in the title role, was performed at the Chicago City Opera.

After 1935, Leginska's conducting opportunities diminished. Her novelty as a conductor wore off and perhaps, her age was also a factor.[26] Consequently, she settled in Los Angeles and established herself as a piano teacher where she remained until her death on February 26, 1970.

Antonia Brico

Although the nine muses were women, few of

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[25]Leginska enlivens Boccaccio. Musical Courier, Nov. 28, 1931, 5.

[26]Sicherman, B. & Green, C.H. (eds.). Notable American women, the modern period: a biographical dictionary. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1980.

> their progeny have been daughters. Only once in a blue moon is the rule of masculine leadership in the arts broken. [27]

These comments marked the American debut of Antonia Brico as the first woman to conduct the New York Philharmonic in its 96-year history. During the 1930's and 1940's, she distinguished herself as the first American woman to challenge men on their own ground. She had a European education, a foreign debut, and her conducting engagements included appearances with major orchestras throughout Europe and the United States. However, even as her career gained momentum in the 1930's, she was unable to sustain it despite favorable reviews. One reviewer noted: "... a conductor of experience and accomplishment".[28] And another observed: "Miss Brico showed at once that she knew her scores and knew the orchestra".[29] Contos (1971) remarked that "critics called her a superb musician, fanatically energetic, forceful, direct, intense , strong-willed, a music miracle worker ...".[30] However, by the 1940's, she received little notice and remained unknown for 30 years until she appeared in the 1974 film Antonia:

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[27]Antonia Brico's triumph: first of sex to wield baton over New York Philharmonic. Newsweek, Aug. 1, 1938, 21.

[28]Taubman, H. Miss Brico leads women musicians. New York Times, Feb. 19, 1935, 27.

[29]Downes, O. Successful debut by Antonia Brico. New York Times, Jan. 11, 1933, 33.

[30]Contos, C. Brava, maestra! High Fidelity/Musical America, May 5, 1971, MA7.

Portrait of a Woman.[31]

Antonia Brico was born in Rotterdam on June 26, 1902 of Dutch and Italian descent. At the age of six, Brico went to live in California with her foster parents. Soon after, she began piano studies. Originally, Brico's intentions were to become a concert pianist, but she changed her plans when she heard a park concert in San Francisco conducted by Paul Steindorff.[32] Her parents did not understand why she would want to do something as odd as conduct.

In 1923, Brico graduated with honors from the University of California at Berkley. As an assistant conductor, she worked with Paul Steindorff, director of music at Berkley and conductor of the San Francisco Opera. Following graduation, she studied piano in New York City with Sigismund Stojowski.

In 1927, Brico received a scholarship from the University of California at Berkley for European study. As a student at the Berlin State Academy of Music, she was coached by the conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic, Julius Pruwer. After receiving further training in choral conducting from Siegfried Ochs, she became the first American graduate of the school, in 1932.

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[31]Research of the New York Times Index shows that Antonia Brico was a subject heading commencing in 1930. The final entry for Brico occured in 1939 with a renewed subject heading in 1974.

[32]Rothe, Anna (ed.). Current Biography. New York: H.W. Wilson, 1948.

The next five years were spent studying with Karl Muck, conductor of the Hamburg Philharmonic Orchestra and previous musical director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (1913-17). Possessing a letter of introduction, Brico persuaded Muck, who had not taken conducting students before, to be her teacher.

On February 14, 1930, Brico debuted with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducting Dvorak's Symphony in D Minor, Handel's Concerto Grosso, and the Schumann Piano Concerto in A Minor with Valesca Burgstaller as soloist. A review of the concert reported that the orchestra "followed her baton enthusiastically".[33]

Brico intended to remain in Germany, and embark on the path followed by students of conducting, going from opera house to opera house, as coach and pianist, and finally as conductor. Brico told Neuls-Bates (1981): "I am quite sure I could have followed that route if World War II had not intervened".[34] During the 1930's, life under Hitler's rule was difficult, therefore, all foreigners were forced to leave Germany.

As a result of her successful Berlin debut, Brico received several invitations to conduct. Upon her return to the United States, she appeared with the Los Angeles and

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[33] Miss Brico triumphs as Berlin conductor. New York Times, Feb. 15, 1930, 14.

[34] Neuls-Bates, C. Three musicians recall their careers. Unpublished paper, 1981, 3.

San Francisco Symphonies. Subsequently, she returned to Europe, and during the next three years, guest conducted in Germany, Poland, and other European countries. In 1933, she made her New York debut, conducting the Musicians Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. Her performance received encouraging reviews, as one reviewer notes:

> The concert given by the Musicians Symphony Orchestra last night in Carnegie Hall served to introduce to the public a young woman conductor of real acquirements and conspicuous talent. ... The phrasings, most of the tempi, the authoritative treatment of the nuances, ritardando and the like, the feeling for contrast and climax, and control in preparing climaxes, showed that Miss Brico knew what she was doing a good deal better than many a young man who had been tooted and feted and given golden opportunities in this city. [35]

Several conducting engagements followed, including appearances with the Detroit Symphony, the Buffalo Philharmonic, California Symphony Orchestra, and the National Symphony Orchestra during 1934 and 1935. It was reported that she conducted at 70 events from New York to California and 25 concerts in Russia.[36] She was also engaged by the Metropolitan Opera House to conduct a series of 21 concerts. Because a leading baritone at the Met, John Charles Thomas, refused to sing under Brico's direction, her contract was cancelled after the third concert.[37]

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[35]Downes, O. Successful debut by Antonia Brico. New York Times, Jan. 11, 1933, 33.

[36]Juniors to assist Brico Orchestra. New York Times, Feb. 13, 1935.

[37]Ammer, C. Unsung.

As a means of proving the competence of women musicians and provide herself a permanent position, Brico organized the New York Women's Symphony in 1934. Most members of the orchestra made their living as professional musicians in broadcasting or concert work. No salaries were paid until three subscription concerts were sold, after which the members shared the profits equally as payment for their efforts. Pledges of support for its efforts on the behalf of women musicians were received by the orchestra from Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt and the mayor of New York, Fiorello LaGuardia and his wife.

The New York Women's Symphony debuted on February 18, 1935 in Town Hall. The group played Schumann's Symphony No. 1, Handel's Concerto Grosso in D Minor, and Tchaikovsky's Romeo and Juliet Overture. The performance received excellent reviews and was followed by two successful concerts in the spring. Encouraged by their success, the orchestra gave a full schedule of concerts in Carnegie Hall during the 1935-36 season. As the orchestra received favorable notices, Brico's abilities as a conductor also received praise from the critics.

> To Miss Brico's credit, let it be said that there was no break in the curve of her conceptions. Her beat was vigorous and unmistakable, and she knew what she wanted. ... Miss Brico obtained remarkable performances. [38]

The successes realized by women's orchestras, such

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[38]Taubman, H. Miss Brico leads women musicians. New York Times, Feb. 19, 1935, 27.

as the New York Women's Symphony, spurred debates concerning the acceptance of female performers. The general argument was that women lacked the ability to achieve great artistic heights; therefore, the public could not consider, with any seriousness, the achievements of women musicians. This view was supported by the well known concert pianist, Jose Iturbi, who stated that women musicians were:

> physically limited from attaining the standard of men and are limited temperamentally besides. I am glad to have them sing and play, of course, because it gives them a change from their domestic life. I wouldn't have them kept in a cage all the time. But their efforts, while often praiseworthy and occasionally reaching real artistry, never achieve greatness. [39]

Iturbi's statement was read at a luncheon initiating a campaign to raise $65,000 for support of the New York Women's Symphony. In her address before the guests, Brico suggested that prominence for women musicians was dependent on gaining opportunities to demonstrate their talent. She further stated that to guard against prejudices in auditions, the performers play before blindfolded judges.[40]

Brico contimued her campaign for the rights of women musicians through 1938. In May, a meeting was organized in Steinway Hall and the right of women musicians was announced. The main concerns expressed by the group concerned women's rights within the Musicians Union and

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[39]Women indignant at jibe by Iturbi. New York Times, Feb. 5, 1937, 23.

[40]Ibid.

alerting public attention to the problem. Miss Brico, who shared the group's concerns, stated:

> The law, medicine, economics, politics and many other professions are open to women. Why then should not music be equally open to them. There is no lack of opportunity to study, what with tuitionless schools, music colleges, and private teachers. And the union admits us to its ranks. But what after that? Where shall we work, when so many organizations will not only not accept us but not even give us auditions. 41

To emphasize her point, Brico admitted men to the New York Women's Symphony and renamed the group, the Brico Symphony. Because the board of directors felt the group had lost its novelty, the board withdrew its support, causing the Brico Symphony to disband a short time later.

Even as Brico received invitations to conduct, doors remained closed to her. Arthur Judson, a prominent New York impresario, who managed both the New York Philharmonic and Philadelphia Orchestra, refused to manage her career. He maintained that audiences would accept only men on the podium. Consequently, his refusal had a profound effect upon Brico's career with the result that her professional opportunities were diminished.

> I was a novelty at first. A woman who wanted to conduct a symphony orchestra. Imagine. But the big New York managers shied away from me like the plague. Nobody wanted to manage a woman. ... Mr. Judson told me they wanted to see a man conductor, and that was all there was to it. 'Brico', he said, 'you were born 50 years too soon'. 42

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41 Women musicians urge equal rights. New York Times, May 19, 1938, 24.

42 Henahan, D. Antonia Brico, at 72, finds her baton in high demand. New York Times, May 19, 1975,22.

For most of her career, Brico was forced to finance her own concerts and organize groups to conduct, as a result, she faced financial problems most of her life; her love and devotion to music helped her to continually practice her art.

> If a person wants to starve to death and be a musician, let them. If you love it madly you cannot live without it. Whether or not, you make money is not quite as important, because you can do other things to make money. [43]

Disheartened and financially troubled, Brico moved to Denver in 1942. Soon after, she established herself as a piano, voice, and conducting teacher. To satisfy her desire to conduct, Brico founded the Denver Businessmen's Symphony. Later, the group renamed itself the Brico Symphony in honor of its conductor.

Following her move to Denver, Brico did not receive invitations to conduct in the United States. However, at the end of World War II, Brico embarked on a five month tour of Europe, appearing both as a conductor and pianist, in Stockholm, Vienna, Amsterdam, London, Prague, and Zagreb. The high point of the tour was her appearance with the Helsinki Symphony in 1946. She conducted a concert of Sibelius' works at the invitation of the composer. Because she believed that a conductor should adhere to the intentions of the composer, she received a commendation and support for her work from Sibelius.

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[43]Brico: portrait of the raconteur. Music Clubs Magazine, Winter 1975-76, 10.

After her European tour, Brico returned to Denver and for the next 28 years, conducted her community orchestra in five or six concerts a year, and taught piano, voice, and conducting. During this period of time, she received a few invitations to conduct from municipal and community orchestras.

Her relative obscurity was lifted when in 1974, Judy Collins, a student of Brico, produced a film Antonia: Portrait of a Woman which was nominated for an Academy Award. Lichtenstein (1974) said of the movie:

> 'Antonia' ... it tells the story of an indomitable woman musician now living in Denver who has never allowed her regret at failing to become a major orchestral conductor destroy her love of her art. [44]

The film reintroduced a woman who had achieved success during the 1930's and enjoyed the patronage of Bruno Walter, Jean Sibelius, Albert Schweitzer, Arthur Rubenstein and Karl Muck.

> What the film shows essentially is a woman who was good enough to conduct the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra at 28, good enough to make guest appearances at the Metropolitan Opera House, good enough to scare off the reknowned baritone John Charles Thomas (he was afraid of being upstaged), good enough to impress Arthur Rubenstein and Bruno Walter, yet somehow not acceptable enough to have been offered a permanent conductor's job she always wanted. [45]

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[44]Lichtenstein, G.A. A film festival with no stars, or prizes, but lots of innovation. New York Times, Sep. 15, 1974, D-15.

[45]Ibid.

As a result of attention generated by the movie, Brico received considerable recognition late in life. It came as a reward for determination and patience sustained during a period of 30 years.

> ... I wanted desperately to conduct a professional symphony orchestra. ... I continued to study and to practice every day. And I kept thinking, maybe the break will come, and when it does I'll be ready... . No, I've never given up. [46]

Throughout the years between Judson's refusal to manage Brico and her reappearance on the podium at Carnegie Hall (1975), the public's opinion of women conductors became modified. Consequently, there are important points to examine when one considers the social changes that occured during an intervening period of three decades.

In her study, Starr (1974) states that the women's movement in the United States created public awareness for the need to open more professions to women. However, even women have been slow to assimilate this attitude. For example, in the highly competitive field of conducting, few women in the profession does not signify an absence of effort by women. Rather, it is because women, according to Starr, need to be three times better than men to achieve recognition.[47]

Another important consideration is that the role of the

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[46]Henahan, D. Antonia Brico, at 72, 22.

[47]Starr, S. The prejudice against women. Music Journal March 1974, 32 .

conductor does not require special qualities of maleness or femaleness. Krehm (1969) states that the role is that of teacher. Has woman not proved herself the equal of men here?

> The conductor is guided by his native taste and sense of discrimination. Since when can it be maintained with justification that woman's taste is inferior to that of men. [48]

In Brico's (1976) opinion, both men and women should be judged equally. During the 1930's, she spent considerable time proving women were capable musicians.

> The way I see it, you're either born a musician or you're not born a musician. It has nothing to do with gender. ... In fact to my mind, the only sexists in the concert world today are the women in the audience and most of the critics - they want only men on the podium. [49]

Neuls-Bates (1978) states that the woman orchestral musician emerged during the first quarter of the twentieth century, and during the 1930's, found acceptance in all-male orchestras. However, the situation was different for conductors. Their opportunities were limited to conducting women's orchestras. [50]

From the beginning of the century through the 1940's, European musicians had dominated American orchestras (both

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[48] Krehm, I. Why not women conductors? Music Journal, 1969, 27.

[49] Brico, A. Brico. Opera News, Feb. 14, 1976, 14.

[50] Neuls-Bates, C. Sources and resources for women's studies in American music: a report. Notes, Dec. 1978, 35.

in the ranks of the orchestras and on the podiums). During the 1940's, opportunities increased for American musicians, but it was the male conductors who appeared as conductors. Consequently, audiences and critics were willing to accept and encourage men.

However, the situation did not improve as easily for women. Social attitude and opinion appeared least affected by women's suffrage and passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. Therefore, the female conductor remained unacceptable to American audiences. This view was supported by writers of the 1940's who perpetuated the traditional social myths concerning woman's role in American society.

One writer of this decade, Gerhrkens (1943) summarized what he viewed as the actual truth concerning women conductors. He believed, historically men were the leaders and women the followers. Furthermore, he concluded that social proprieties rightfully kept women in the home in the past, when only men were musicians.

> Most symphony players are men, and men don't like to play under a woman conductor - just as men in an office don't like to work under a woman executive ... people generally don't have much faith in a woman conductor as in a man. I feel there will always be more men in both fields because to a man his work is his permanent life; whereas to a woman, in 99 cases out of 100, her professional life is a temporary thing, and she is thinking in terms of eventually becoming a wife and mother. Like alcohol and driving, home-making and leading an orchestra do not go together very well, and I myself am 'old-

> fashioned' enough to feel that this is alright. [51]

Gerhkens accurately characterized the public attitude which prevailed throughout the first half of the twentieth century despite the gains women musicians had achieved. In contrast recognition afforded women conductors was significant, reflecting the increased number of females in the field and the hesitant but growing public acceptance of women leading orchestras. These changes, slow and dramatic provided evidence of women's musical abilities and set a precedent for women to follow twenty years later.

The substantial growth of women's orchestras served as the impetus for the growth of female musicians. The ensembles provided for public performances and drew attention to the talents of female musicians. In particular, the women's orchestras during the first half of the century, exhibited a dramatic change from the ensembles of the nineteenth century; their performances consisted of the serious musical repertoire as played by the male orchestras. Consequently, women's orchestras competed with the standard institutions. More importantly, the women's orchestras provided opportunities for women conductors formerly absent from public attention.

However, these women's orchestras also created a way to segregate women away from men's orchestras and kept them out of direct competition. Furthermore, women's ensembles

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[51]Gehrkens, K.W. Can a woman conduct an orchestra? Etude, Mar., 1943, 168.

kept female musicians in their own sphere and, perhaps was an attempt to assure women's inabilities to sustain excellence and recognition.

More significant was the increased number of women conductors. Their efforts provided encouragement for more women to enter the field decades later and they successfully sustained public recognition of their efforts over a longer period of time. Women such as Brico and Leginska before her, were able to attract attention for all women musicians and treated their position as a cause needing attention.

CHAPTER III: 1950 - 1970

The decade following World War II was characterized by newfound prosperity for Americans and a renewal of economic growth in the United States. As a result, the standard of living was improved, and advances were made in all sectors of American society. Notably, Americans realized a standard of living which provided more than life's necessities. In addition, the business and govenmental sectors expanded and sought areas that required economic attention.

In an effort to capitalize on this situation, constituents interested in the fine arts realized that available funds would provide for improvements in the quality of the arts. They believed that traditions in the arts were noticeably absent from the social fabric. Therefore, available funds were used initially to lay ground work for these traditions and later, were used to support and encourage artistic development in diverse areas. Both public and private funds were directed toward three of these areas: arts foundations, training institutions and funding for public presentation.[1]

One area of the fine arts that benefited from this

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[1]Barresi, A.L. The role of the federal government in support of the arts and music education. Journal of Research in Music Education, Winter 1981, 29.

funding was music. Schools of music, performing organizations, musicians, educators, and researchers were able to extend their musical involvement as a result of the new support. Benefits from this financial support were demonstrated noticeably in the growth of symphony orchestras. Musselman (1979) observed that at the turn of the century, 16 orchestras were in operation. In 1950, 500 orchestras were performing in the United States and by 1966, their numbers were doubled. These etablished orchestras were described variously as "major, metropolitan, urban, and community".[2]

Various reasons are cited by Musselman for the tremendous growth of symphony orchestras. The popularity of high school orchestras in the 1920's and 1930's encouraged more students to pursue a musical education, and later, positions in orchestras. Furthermore, the popularity of good music on the radio and recordings, generated interest within a public unfamiliar with music as it was performed in the concert hall. In addition, the Federal Music Project created more opportunities for musicians to perform and encouraged people to hear them.[3] Hart (1979) further suggested that:

> ... the evolution of the old-style Kappelmeister into the modern charismatic maestro has been a major force in the proliferation of symphony orchestras and opera companies and in arousing wider public interest in serious music. [4]

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[2]Musselman, J.A. Dear people ... Robert Shaw. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1979.

[3]Ibid, 114.

[4]Hart, P. Conductors: a new generation. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1979, xi.

A direct result of economic prosperity during the 1950's was increased access to higher education for men and women. Even prior to the post-World War II period, women demonstrated a steady increase in admissions to institutions of higher learning. Stock (1978) suggested that the woman's suffrage movement and equal access to secondary education generated the growth of women who attended colleges and universities.[5]

However, in 1950, a dramatic decrease in women entering colleges and universities was evident. Stock observed that "the 1920's was the decade of greatest increase for American women in higher education; it has not been equalled since".[6] The pattern of women's enrollment in higher education is demonstrated by Table I.[7]

TABLE I

Year	Women enrolled in higher education
1900	17%
1910	23%
1920	34%
1930	40%
1950	24%
1970	40%

[5]Stock, P. Better than rubies: a history of women's education. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1978.

[6]Ibid, 223.

[7]Ibid, 224-225.

Despite the gains prompted by the Nineteenth Amendment and the unprecedented number of women who replaced men in colleges and the marketplace during World War II, women's achievements and contributions were disregarded. Specifically altered was women's access to higher education. Fine (1946)[8] noted that enrollment in higher education for men prior to World War II was low. However, the post-war figures demonstrate substantial numbers of veterans were denied admission. One solution was to accord the veterans priority in college admissions. However, civilian high school graduates would suffer, especially women.[9] Fine concurred on this point:

> Women students, unfortunately will be the first to suffer. Already colleges and universities are cutting down on the number of women admitted. [10]

The returning veterns were cited also by Stock as a factor in diminishing women's opportunities. These veterans were accorded priority not only in college admissions but also in the marketplace. In addition, the considerable depopulation created an incentive to repopulate the nation. Furthermore, she states that the overrriding factor was the emphasis placed on family living. Considered together, these factors account for the decline of women's enrollment

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[8]Fine, B. Association of Colleges takes steps to deal with an unprecedented rush to enroll. New York Times, Jan. 13, 1946, IV-9.

[9]Colleges in state have room for 50,000 additional students. New York Times, Jan. 4, 1946, 23. Article discusses available openings for single men only; the women's dorms were filled.

[10]Fine, B. Association of Collges, 9.

in higher education.[11]

The factors affecting women's access to higher education significantly altered the social attitude toward women during the 1950's. The return to a home-centered life style and the withdrawal of women from the workplace and economic centers to the home represented a retraction of the gains women achieved during the first half of the twentieth century. These changes in social attitude appeared to guide women toward a traditional sphere. Beauvoir (1952) characterized the life of the woman in American society as being one without freedom and responsibility even for her own life.

> Woman herself recognizes that the world is masculine on the whole; those who fashioned it, ruled it, and still dominate it today are men. As for her, she does not consider herself responsible for it; it is understood that she is inferior and dependent, she has not learned the lessons of violence, she had not stood forth as subject before the other members of the group. Shut up in her flesh, her home, she sees herself as passive before these gods with human faces who set goals and establish values. In this sense there is truth in the saying that makes her the 'eternal child'. Workers, black slaves, colonial natives, have also been called grown up children - as long as they were not feared; that meant that they were to accept without argument the verities and the laws laid down for them by other men. The lot of woman is a respectful obedience. She has no grasp, even in thought, on the reality around her. It is opaque to her eyes. [12]

This prevailing social attitude affected the public

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[11]Stock, P. Better than rubies.

[12]Beauvoir, S. in History of ideas on woman: a source book. Agonito, R. (ed.) New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977.

view of women conductors. Audiences and critics continued to show support for male conductors. Whereas women were acceptable as conductors of women's orchestras, during the 1950's, women were not given the opportunity to conduct at all. Neuls-Bates (1981) stated that women were successful as conductors of women's orchestras but after that, their successes were not frequently recognized. Furthermore, she stated:

> What about the woman conductor, ... who had figured significatly in the late 1920's and 1930's as head of the women's symphonies and elsewhere? During the 1940's, American born and trained men began assuming the directorships of many secondary-level orchestras, while in 1943, Alfred Wallenstein became the first American to head a major orchestra - the Los Angeles Philharmonic. American women did not enjoy a similar career path, and given the loss in popularity of the women's symphony orchestras after the war, opportunities for women conductors diminished until recent years when the new wave of the women's movement focused attention on women conductors once again. [13]

The increased number of orchestras did not result in an equivalent rise in the number of positions for women conductors. Instead, more men were given opportunities to lead American orchestras. For the first time, European conductors were replaced by American men conductors. The post World War II prosperity not only influenced the growth of orchestras, but also encouraged a sizable group of experienced and gifted American conductors. For example, there was Howard Barlow in Baltimore, Victor Alessandro in

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[13]Neuls-Bates, C. Women as orchestral musicians, 21.

San Antonio, Alfred Wallenstein in Los Angeles, Howard Mitchell in Washington, D.C., Walter Hendl in Dallas, Thor Johnson in Cincinnati, Milton Katims in Seattle and Izler Solomon in Buffalo. Later in the 1960's, Robert Shaw became music director of the Atlanta Symphony.

The increased interest in music in addition to the growth of orchestras in the United States during the 1950's and 1960's, encouraged the growth of choral groups. The increased number of choral ensembles was influenced further by public awareness, spurred on by the availability of recorded music. The radio and recording industry supplied the public with immediate access to performances of their favorite music. Through the innovations of radio and recordings, Fred Waring and Robert Shaw, helped establish the amateur singing group in the consciousness of the American public. Successfully, Waring and Shaw presented both serious and popular music to audiences in many sectors of the United States.[14]

Margaret Hillis

As the conductor of her own group during the 1950's, Margaret Hillis was involved in the movement to establish choral organizations in the United States. Through her successes as a choral conductor, she gained the necessary experience to enter the orchestral field. Presently, she accepts engagements to guest conduct choral ensembles, orchestras, or musical works requiring both groups.

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[14]Musselman, J.A. Dear people.

Margaret Hillis[15] was born in Kokomo, Indiana on October 1, 1921. Her earliest musical training included piano study beginning at age five. During her youth, she studied other instruments, including the oboe, French horn, and string bass. Her experiences as an orchestral musician began at age eight and continued through college as a bassist.

Early in her life, Hillis chose conducting as her primary interest. Because she was attracted to the sound of an orchestra, she wanted to conduct. On one occasion she led her high school orchestra in a performance of the Weber Overture Die Freischutz, an experience which confirmed her career choice, conducting.

Following high school, Hillis entered Indiana University as a pianist. Hillis (1962) recalled her educational experiences as follows:

> My primary aim ever since I can remember was to be an orchestral conductor, I think because as a child, I was attracted to the sonority, just with the sheer beauty of the sound. When I went to school at Indiana University, they did not offer a course in conducting. I entered as a piano major and remained three years as a piano major ... and at that time found out that I could not get certain courses in counterpoint and fugue that I wanted very much and felt were very necessary to a conductor. [16]

Because Hillis was unable to enroll in fugue and

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[15]Information regarding Hillis was taken from the text of a personal interview conducted on February 23, 1982 in Chicago.

[16]Margaret Hillis. American Music Teacher, Sep. 1962, 16.

counterpoint courses she changed her major to composition. Later, she interrupted her studies and during World War II, taught flying for the Navy. Two years later, she resumed her musical training and in 1947, received a Bachelor of Arts degree in composition from Indiana University.

Hillis' family was supportive and offered encouragement throughout her career. Especially influential in encouraging her musical interests was Hillis' mother, an organist and pianist. She encouraged the Hillis family to listen regularly to broadcasts of orchestral and operatic performances. Hillis' love for music was developed not only through listening to radio broadcasts, but also by attending live performances. She and her mother were regular concert-goers, sometimes traveling as far as 100 miles. The support of the Hillis family was most important in the early years of Miss Hillis' career. They financed a series in Town Hall for her Concert Choir and Orchestra which launched her professional work.

After receiving her degree from Indiana University, Hillis was encouraged to pursue further composition studies at Yale University with Paul Hindemith. But, she wanted to conduct, and demonstrated her talents in a concert of contemporary choral music. This early decision to pursue her goal as a conductor influenced the direction her professional life would follow. Hillis (1982) observed:

> It's not the same today as when I was coming up. When I graduated from Indiana University with a degree in composition, my composition teacher's

> wife was a cousin of William Steinberg. (They knew from intimate contact how difficult it is for a career as a conductor and how to develop it ...;) His name was Bernard Heiden and he wanted me to study with Hindemith at Yale. I said no. I took composition because I wanted to become a conductor. He looked at me and ... shook his head. A few weeks later, (the first time I ever conducted a chorus), I conducted a chorus for Sigma Alpha Iota's contemporary music. He came back stage afterward and said, 'You are a conductor, but,' he said, 'there is no place for a woman in orchestral conducting'. It never occured to me because I had been brought up, I could do anything ... ride a bicycle, ... swim, and I taught flying for the Navy during the second World War. And there were prejudices; (for example), the first time I went up for my commercial license, the man flunked me. I ... went to the head pilot, and asked 'Why? I didn't make any mistakes.' He said, 'He could not believe a woman could fly an airplane that well. He thought it was a mistake'. I said, 'Well, he better test me again'. Someone else tested me again after the six week mandatory waiting period. I got the commercial license. That sort of thing one ran into more then than now but you still run into it (occasionally). So, he (Heiden) advised me to go into choral conducting. (He said), There a woman is acceptable. Otherwise, you're going to go down the drain'. I almost had a nervous breakdown, almost a complete functional breakdown. All of a sudden my world fell apart, this world I had lived in and had lived for. But, I took his advice and I went to Juilliard (to study) conducting with Bob Shaw and Julius Herford. He said I could probably get in through the back door, then to the orchestral field. So, I always kept watching that back door. [17]

Hillis' decision to enter the field of choral conducting brought with it special problems. Initially, she had no experience singing in a choral group. In addition, her experiences were as an instrumentalist, therefore, she had to learn the techniques of a new performance medium.

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[17]Interview with Margaret Hillis, Chicago, Feb. 23, 1982.

Furthermore, she was required to learn a new repertoire. As a student at the Juilliard School, she endeavored to diminish these deficiencies by studies with Robert Shaw in choral conducting and score analysis with Julius Herford. She also assisted Shaw with his Collegiate Chorale and learned its repertoire. To gain experience as a conductor, Hillis organized the Tanglewood Alumni Chorus in 1950. The group's performances included a full New York season and broadcasts over radio station WNYC.

The Tanglewood Chorus became the basis for a new group Hillis organized in New York during 1951. From her research, she found enough repertoire for chorus and small orchestra to warrant founding such a group. Performances with the ensemble marked the beginning of a long and successful career for Hillis. As conductor of the Concert Choir and Orchestra, she established her reputation and received recognition for her abilities in the field of choral conducting.

Reviewing the early years of her career, Hillis considers her training incomplete; classes with eminent conductors and professional experiences were not enough. The missing factor was a mentor, a person she believes important to sustaining a career in conducting and one who could make a profound difference in the young conductor's development.

> I was able myself to finance a series in Town Hall with the help of my family, got a good bit of the experience I needed, but the other thing at that point was that no master conducting teacher would take a woman as a student ... because she had no hope for a career. He wanted to spend his time with the ... talented men who had a chance for a career and not, no matter how

> talented, with a woman. So, I couldn't get to a master teacher. It wasn't actually until a good many years later (that) I did get to a master teacher, ... Otto Werner Mueller. I learned enormously from him. It was a great liberation. Since then, I'm not scared of orchestras any more. I know what I'm about. The female conductor does not have that to deal with any more. The really talented young woman ... has to be a little more apparent still than a man, but that's not bad. She has to be ... better grounded, ... and that's okay too in order to get ... a master teacher. But, she can and this is very necessary. [18]

As a conductor in New York, Hillis held many positions. She not only founded her own choir with a series in Town Hall during the 1953, 1954, and 1955 seasons, but also did preparation work for the Little Orchestra Society and The American Opera Society. From 1948 to 1951, she conducted the Metropolitan Youth Chorale in Brooklyn which offered two major concerts every year. In addition, she taught conducting at Juilliard from 1951 to 1953 and during the following year was choral director at the Third Street Settlement School. Frequently, Hillis toured with small professional groups and performed many times with a chamber group at the Library of Congress. In 1950, she took a position as conducting instructor at Union Theological Seminary, ending her tenure there in 1960. She continually accepted engagements with the New York City Opera, the Santa Fe Opera, and the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus. In 1954, she founded the American Choral Foundation based in New York, and continues as its director.

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[18] Ibid.

In 1954, Fritz Reiner attended a rehearsal of the Concert Choir of New York. He needed a chorus to sing with the Chicago Symphony in a performance of Verdi's Requiem. Hillis recommended that a group of 120 singers be employed, that her present group of 60 was inadequate. Since it was prohibitively expensive to import New York singers, Hillis suggested that Reiner recruit a chorus in Chicago. He agreed on the condition that she would select and conduct the group.

Establishing a choir of professional quality comparable to that of the Chicago Symphony was a difficult task. Hillis initially had a large group of amateurs who required instruction in vocalizing, professionalism, and rehearsal procedure. Recalling her earlier days at Juilliard, she adopted many of her basic principles of rehearsal procedure and conducting technique from her studies with Robert Shaw. She said of her rehearsal approach:

> I had to refine them myself, and there was a good ten years when I planned and replanned every rehearsal, I don't know how many times. ... Just to get that technique developed to the point where rehearsals would run smoothly, where the discipline of the chorus came out of the music making and not out of a whip being cracked over their heads. [19]

In an effort to instruct non-professionals in the essentials of music making, Hillis holds free classes to teach functional harmony, how to sing in tune, and French,

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[19]Furlong, W.B. Season with Solti. New York: Macmillan Pub. Co., Inc., 1974, 214.

German, or Italian diction. Potential soloists are given insight into lieder, French art song repertory, or selected operatic roles. Through organized rehearsals and classes designed to teach specific aspects of choral singing, Hillis is dedicated to turning out a first rate performance.

Hillis' conducting experiences included appearances on special occasions or at pops concerts, and, if necessary, substitutes for conductors of the Chicago Symphony. One appearance in 1976 can be termed a special occasion. Hillis became the first woman to conduct a regular subscription concert of the Chicago Symphony. The performance was the world premiere of Alan Stout's Passion. As a substitute conductor, she replaced Raphael Kubelik in 1972, conducting Handel's Jeptha. In a noteworthy appearance, she substituted for Sir Georg Solti in a 1977 Chicago Symphony concert. The orchestra was in New York City for a performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 8. With two days study and rehearsal time, she went on to conduct, receiving acclaim from music critics. Henahan (1977) notes:

> ... by the last ecstatic pages she had her forces working for her and Mahler with a burning enthusiasm that radiated a fine glow over the Faustian finale ... she conducted a triumphant performance that (won) her a standing ovation. [20]

In addition to her conducting responsibilities with the Symphony Chorus, Hillis is musical director of the Elgin Symphony. Since 1971, she has worked to develop a high quality of performance by encouraging chamber music performance

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[20]Henahan, D. Fills in for Solti on Mahler, New York Times, Nov. 1, 1977, 1.

among the members, solo appearances and public school concerts.

As a guest conductor, Hillis has appeared with several orchestras. Once a year, she conducts the Chicago Civic Orchestra. Appearances in past seasons have included conducting the Cleveland and Minnesota Orchestras and the National Symphony Orchestra. During 1981-82, she appeared with the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, and the National Symphony.

From 1970 to 1977, Miss Hillis was director of choral activities at Northwestern University and remains a visiting faculty member of Indiana University where she has taught conducting since 1978. As a teacher, Hillis believes she has an important role to fulfill and considers it a valuable part of her career.

Remembering that influential people were helpful throughout the early years of her career, Hillis feels responsible to offer the same. She recognizes her position as a potential role model for women conductors. Because she is well known and successful, she is easily recognized and taken seriously as a conductor. The recognition she has received lends authority to her concerns regarding the career development of young conductors.

One such concern, is the need for women conductors to understand the psychological factors involved in professional conducting. These factors are important since there remains some curiosity regarding women conductors. Regarding the

absence of a role model in her development, Hillis (1982) observed:

> I had no role models - what kind of shoes to wear, what kind of gown do you wear. There are enormous psychological things for the woman, less now than since the liberation of the 60's and 70's. (However), I grew up in a little mid-western town. There was a role a woman was supposed to play. I never played it since I was a small child. I played baseball with the boys and all that sort of thing, but still that was expected of you and you always had to fight that somehow. ... Any woman my age who succeeded in a career of major proportions would tell you the same thing, that those psychological barriers are there. They may be to some degree in the younger ones too. It depends upon the kind of background they came out of. The way I found to cope was to know the score so well, that nothing else got in the way. That took a long time, (and reached) the point, (where) in a sense, that part of me didn't exist when I (stepped) on the podium. [21]

When Hillis (1982) recalls the attitude in the 1950's toward women conductors and compares it to the present, she sees improvement in the social acceptance of women on the podium. The prejudices she initially encountered are not as strong but admits that she faces occasional bias from members of the orchestra. The problem, she stated, is often a question of showing one's authority. Men and women conductors find a solution for working with orchestra members who resent authority in any form.[22]

Another problem encounted by female conductors is the influential group of managers and boards of directors. Hillis (1982) perceives a gradual change over the past three decades and views them as more accepting of women conductors.

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[21]Interview with Margaret Hillis,Feb. 23, 1982.

[22]Ibid.

Consequently, audiences and performers react more positively toward women on the podium.[23]

Since the social acceptance of female conductors is less of a problem in the 1980's, Hillis feels it is important that women consider one important factor, that they view themselves as conductors first and women last. Furthermore, she stated:

> The main thing I have to advise women about, if you make a mistake, don't blame the world for it. You've got to know what you can do. ... You will run up against some prejudice along the line, but you ... (can't) become paranoic and blame the prejudice when its really you; because 99 and 99/100 of what happens in a concert is the conductor's responsibility. If it didn't go well, maybe something happened, a snowstorm and you lost a rehearsal. Okay, that's the other .01%. But, it has to do with your preparation, your abilities. If you can't do it, go home, sit down, try to figure out why, and then try to correct it. As soon as you start blaming the world. ... your growth stops. You have no future, none whatsoever. [24]

Hillis has received many awards during her successful career, among them three Grammy Awards. Each year, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences presents awards for best recordings in specific categories of music. In each instance, the award she received was for "Best Choral Performance": in 1977, for the recording of Verdi's Requiem; 1978, for Beethoven's Missa Solemnis; and in 1979, for Brahms' Ein Deutches Requiem. The Chicago Symphony

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[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid.

and Chorus, under the baton of Sir Georg Solti, produced all three recordings.

In recognition of her achievements in the field of conducting and contributions to music, Hillis has received honorary Doctor of Music degrees from Temple University (1967), Indiana University (1972), Carthage College (1979), and Wartburg College (1981). In addition, she received honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degrees from St. Mary's College (1977) and Lake Forest College (1980).

Beatrice Brown

During the 1960's, one woman became well known as an orchestral conductor. Beatrice Brown was distinguished as the only woman under contract in the East. She was appointed as the Music Director and Conductor of the Scranton Philharmonic in 1963 and remained there until 1970. Subsequent to leaving Scranton, she took a conductor's position with the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic for two years.

Beatrice Brown[25] was born in Leeds, England on May 17, 1918. Her parents were poor and uneducated but they wanted their children to receive the best educations posssible. Therefore, they settled in New York City with their family where Miss Brown, along with her brother and sister, received a proper education. She graduated from the Music School Settlement where she was trained as a violist. Throughout

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[25]Information regarding Beatrice Brown was taken from the text of a telephone interview conducted on May 1, 1982.

her youth, she was a member of numerous orchestras that included the National Orchestra Association and the Educational Alliance Symphony.

In 1937, Brown received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Hunter College and in 1940, she was awarded her Master of Arts degree from New York University. In addition, she has completed coursework toward the Ph.D. in musicology at New York University

During 1953, Brown became the only recipient of a Fullbright and a Rockefeller Grant in conducting. Under the grants' auspices, she became a student of Herman Scherchen. She studied for six years at Scherchen's home in Lugano, Switzerland where he and his family were exiled from Germany.

Brown's training also included studies with Koussevitzky in 1948 and 1949 at the Berkshire Festival and later, in 1964, she was a student of Stokowski. Together, these two men became sponsors for her career.

Brown (1982) considers her associations with these master teachers important to her professional development. She believes the type of training offered by experienced conductors should follow the collegiate experience and recommends that a conducting student study with a first rate teacher such as Scherchen.

> ... you have to be with a teacher like that and completely follow his/her lead. (You must) know what they do professionally and work with them. That means attending all the rehearsals and concerts they participate in plus studying.

> ... An association like that involves not only the teaching and the study of music but (also) involves psychological help and (other areas) as well (that) relate to your future work. [26]

Miss Brown's initial professional experiences were as a violist. She was a member of the RCA Victor Symphony from 1944 to 1956, the Westchester Symphony from 1955 to 1962; and from 1950 to 1962, she performed with the Brooklyn Philharmonia. As assistant principal violist, she performed under Leonard Bernstein as a member of the New York City Symphony from 1946 to 1948. She held the same position with the American Symphony during the 1962-63 season and returned in 1978. Brown's active career as a violist also includes performances with the New York City Ballet and the New York City Opera from 1946 to 1963. Presently, she is a member of the chamber ensemble, Musique Vivante.

As a conductor, Brown began her professional work as an undergraduate. She founded the Hunter College Symphony Orchestra and in addition, the Young America Symphony. She conducted a two year series of Art Music Concerts at the YMHA Kaufman Auditorium in 1952 and 1953. These concerts established Brown as a distinguished conductor in the New York area.[27]

Brown's American conducting debut was in 1953 at Carnegie Hall. She led players of the New York Philharmonic in the

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[26]Ibid.

[27]Additional information concerning Miss Brown was taken from biographical data received in April 1982.

American premiere of Vuataz's arrangement of Bach's Art of the Fugue.

As a guest conductor in 1956 at Radio Lugano in Switzerland, Brown made her first European conducting appearances. A year later, she assisted Scherchen at the San Carlo Opera in Naples and at the Berlin Opera House where she prepared music by Stravinsky, Hindemith, and Milhaud.

Brown has guest conducted extensively throughout Europe and the United States. The Collegium Academium of Geneva invited her in 1977 to conduct their orchestra in a tour featuring American music in the cities of Lausanne, Geneva, and Brussels. During the 1983-84 season, she will return to Switzerland to conduct the Musica Artis in Lausanne and the Collegium Academium in Geneva. Her appearances in the United States have included the Eastern Music Festival in Greensboro, North Carolina and several engagements in New York.

In May 1977, Brown presented the Ridgefield Orchestra at Alice Tully Hall in New York, a group she has conducted since 1970. Recently, she became the conductor of two newly organized ensembles - the Western Connecticut Symphony Orchestra, located in Danbury, Connecticut and the Housatonic Chamber Ensemble. The Connecticut based chamber group presented three concerts during the 1981-82 season.

Miss Brown is the recipient of many awards. Among them is the United Nations Peace Medal for conducting the

Ridgefield Orchestra in the world premiere of Vaclav Nelhybel's Six Fables for All Time for chorus and orchestra commissioned to celebrate the United Nations' 35th anniversary. She is an honorary member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society and was named one of Connecticut's Outstanding Women by Governor Ella Grasso.

Brown (1982) believes the problems that affect the career development of women conductors are faced similarly by men. She concurs with other women conductors that opportunities in the United States are fewer than in Europe. Furthermore, she states that a "lucky break" can be very important and cites the opportunity Leonard Bernstein had when Bruno Walter became ill. Moreover, boards of directors are the most influential group of people in determining the success of a conductor because they make the final selections for appearances with an orchestra. However, she still attributes the few number of women conductors to the prevailing nineteenth century view of women.

> We're still living under the yoke of the nineteenth century impression that conducting is a male job. ... The reason for that is that the orchestra is looked upon as the (place) where the conductor dominates ... . The woman in the position of conductor is still regarded as something of a phenomenon ... . We're a long way from accepting a woman in a major position. That's unfortunate ... but true.[28]

Early in her career, Brown experienced problems of being a female conductor. In 1962, she received the following letter in response to a request to hire a manager:

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[28]Interview with Beatrice Brown, May 1, 1982.

> Dear Miss Brown: Mr. Ronald Wilford asked me to reply to your letter of April 28. For reasons unknown to us, we have never been able to interest managements in women conductors. There seems no logical reason for this but the situation exists nevertheless. We are perfectly certain that many women conductors are far superior to the males but since we have had no luck at all in handling women conductors, it seems useless to encourage you to have any kind of career with us. It may be that one of the smaller managements with a smaller list of artists could promote you better than we could ... .[29]

The manager is a crucial factor in the development of a conductor. The work that he/she does often means the difference between success and failure for the conductor. What Brico encountered during the 1930's, Brown found 30 years later: managerial judgments can make a difference in the conductor's professional development. Concerning the power wielded by the managers, Barzun (1957) observed:

> The managerial circuits handle a limited number of performing animals who must jump through pre-established hoops. Fees, schedules. territory are not only set but irrevocably imposed, so that anything like a material rise in fame or fortune is well-nigh impossible. [30]

The 1960's became known as a period when women realized a renewed need to effectively reduce the discrimination existent in the economic and social domains. By 1970, the women's movement was actively working toward a redefinition of women's roles in American society and their relationship to it. Chafe (1972) in her study of the American

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[29]Jepson, B. American women in conducting. Music Clubs Magazine, Autumn 1976, 13.

[30]Barzun, J. Music in American life. Gloucester, MA: P. Smith, 1958, 28.

woman's changing social and economic roles further stated:

> Although the diffuse structure of the movement encouraged division and controversy, most feminists subscribed to a core set of demands which constituted the essence of their program. All insisted on an end to job discrimination, all supported the repeal of abortion laws, and all urged the creation of twenty-four-hour-a-day child care centers. Most important, all wanted an end to class treatment to the idea that women, because of their sex should automatically be expected to do the housework, act as secretaries at meetings, or rear children. Women were individuals, they claimed, not sex objects or servants and wherever a female was assigned a place on the basis of sex alone ... .[31]

Many women were able to avail themselves of educational and professional opportunities and some achieved recognition for their achievements. Their goal was to demonstrate an ability to manage responsibility for their own well being. In effect, women directed public attention to the inherent problems associated with the traditional woman's role in society. However, Chafe recognized that despite changes in the socio-economic background and marital status of women workers, the percentages of women in the professions has demonstrated little change.

> Much of the reason can be traced to ... overt discrimination, the expectations transmitted through child-rearing patterns, the lack of professional role models, and the discontinuity in the married woman's career life caused by giving birth to one or more children. Perhaps the most subtle reason, however, is the role stress which develops when a woman seeks to combine a career with marriage and a family. During the last three decades, millions of

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[31]Chafe, W.H. The American woman. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972, 238.

> families have struck 'role bargains' which permit wives and mothers to take jobs outside the home while their husbands assume responsibility for a share of the domestic tasks. ... In most cases the bargain is based on the assumption that the woman is an incidental wage-earner, that her primary role is still in the home. A career, in contrast, requires a commitment of energy and spirit which is inconsistent with such an arrangement. [32]

The New York City Commission on Human Rights, concerned with articulating the woman's role, was organized in 1970. They met to discuss, among many topics, woman's position in contemporary society. Participants were asked to present various views regarding the diverse areas of society that reflected an unequal representation of women. Kate Millet (1970), known as an advocate of the women's movement, expressed her views concerning women in relation to the arts. In conclusion, she stated:

> Woman is not in other words, then at the center of our human experience as it is expressed in all our art forms. We are kept at the periphery of it, and therefore it is not surprising that we do not and indeed cannot express ourselves in the art forms of our culture, partly because they are not of our making and do not express our values, and partly because we have simply been prevented all our lives from doing so, either by discrimination, being unable to get a show, or by growing up in the culture and receiving clues every moment that you cannot be one of those great men known as 'artists'. Our humanity is denied meaning and objectification through the arts and further denied through the repression of our creative powers. [33]

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[32] Ibid, 252.

[33] Millet, K. The image of women in arts and letters. In Women's role in contemporary society: the report of the New York City Commission on Human Rights, September 21 - 25, 1970. New York: Avon Books, 1972, 611.

The twenty years prior to 1970 symbolized unprecedented social changes in the United States. The tremendous economic growth established new prioities that included, ironically, a reaffirmation of women's responsibilities in the home. Importantly, the expanding economy provided funding for the arts, a substantial diversion toward a culturally educated society.

Singularly significant for women was the increased access to higher education. By 1970, this factor effectively brought the anticipated changes for women; notably for musicians who acquired the education formerly denied them and which provided the needed education to attain professional status.

Regrettably, research indicates that only one woman successfully conducted an orchestra during this period. However, Brown's activities as a conductor did not expand until the 1970's and her reputation continues to grow. Hillis, unable to enter the orchestral conducting field, gained valuable experience as the conductor of her own ensemble and similarly, gained recognition for her orchestral conducting during the 1970's.

Nineteen-seventy was a turning point for women conductors. Higher education was accessable and the impending women's movement created opportunities for optimism regarding the position of women musicians.

CHAPTER IV: CONTEMPORARY WOMEN CONDUCTORS

The successes of women conductors during the 1970's suggested widened acceptance of female orchestral leaders. Many and varied reasons for the acceptance, some of which included membership in the musicians union, the efforts of civil rights agencies, and the renewed activities of women's groups, urged further endeavors by professional women conductors.

Importantly, women gained the right of equal membership in the American Federation of Musicians. Furthermore, guaranteed equal opportunities for employment and "blind" auditions, resulted in more opportunities for women orchestral musicians. Finally, since the 1960's, music performance in the United States has received greater support in financial assistance and audience attendance. Presumably, these combined factors suggested a climate for a slow social acceptance of women musicians.

Any changes that occured for women instrumentalists mutually affected the status of female conductors. However, the number of women occupying the podiums of American orchestras did not increase conjunctly with the social acceptance of women musicians. Contos (1971) observed:

> The patron saint of music is a woman, St. Cecilia and so are all nine muses. But out of 218 conductors advertised in the 1971 Musical America Directory as being available for guest appearances, only three are women; and of 550 conductors listed

> as having orchestras only 12 are women. Women, in short, have been welcome to a pedestal but not to a podium - particularly not to a podium overlooking a professional, predominantly male symphony orchestra. [1]

Margaret Harris

Margaret Harris, the first black woman to conduct a major symphony orchestra, earned distinction for her conducting abilities. Her successful debut, leading the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1971, was followed by additional invitations to conduct. During 1972, she led the St. Louis Symphony on July 16, the Minnesota Symphony on July 28, the Los Angeles Philharmonic on August 2 in a premiere of her piano concerto, and the San Diego Symphony on August 4. In addition, she still found time to compose 54 pop songs, television show themes, and two concertos for orchestra and rock rhythm section.[2]

Born in 1943, Harris' musical experiences began at age three with the study of the piano. By the age of ten, she debuted as a pianist with the Chicago Symphony and appeared as a soloist in Europe. In 1953, she received a scholarship to attend the Curtis Institute, the youngest of 125 pupils and one of two black students. Later, she entered the Juilliard School and received both Bachelor and Master of Science degrees with honors.

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[1]Contos, C. Brava, maestra! High Fidelity/Musical America, May 5, 1971, MA-7.

[2]Harris, M. Woman in the pit. Composer-Conductor. Newsweek, Aug. 21, 1972.

Harris is one of the few women who became well known as a Broadway conductor. She enjoyed her first success as the conductor of the musical Hair. Before this hit musical closed in 1972, she conducted 800 performances. Following the closing of Hair, Harris moved on to lead performances of Two Gentlemen of Verona. Later, she became the conductor of a third hit musical, Raisin, which opened in 1975.

When asked her views concerning women conductors, Harris replied:

> I think a lot of women could not deal with the intricacies of being a conductor. You have to have a great deal of patience. You have to be human, especially if you're a woman, because there may be people who think a woman shouldn't be up there. You don't lose your temper. You can't scream and cry if you don't have your own way - or if you have to, you've got to do it in the dressing room in the mirror. You've got to have a great deal of foresight and a sense of independence, and a lot of women can't because they were raised as daddy's little girl. [3]

Eve Queler and Sarah Caldwell

Two women conductors became well known for their work in the operatic field - Eve Queler and Sarah Caldwell. Through their work in the operatic field, both women have expanded their conducting experiences into the orchestral area. Queler conducts the Opera Orchestra of New York which performs operas in a concert format. As artistic director of the Opera Company of Boston, Caldwell stages

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[3]Kufelik, A. Woman in the pit. Newsweek, Aug. 2, 1972, 83.

full-scale productions of operas.

Eve Rabin Queler was born on January 1, 1936 in New York City. At age three, she demonstrated qualities of a child prodigy and at age five, won a scholarship to attend a local music school. She also attended Public School 64 and Junior High 112, after which she was ready for piano studies with Isabella Venegrova.[4] She was offered a tuition scholarship to attend the Curtis Institute, but did not have the funds for her living expenses. Nevertheless, she studied at the High School for Music and Art in Manhattan. Following her graduation in 1954, Queler attended City College of New York, the Hebrew Union School of Education and Sacred Music, and the Mannes School of Music.

While attending City College, Rabin met Stanley Queler whom she married on December 26, 1956. She postponed her graduate studies and took various jobs to support the two of them while her husband was in law school. Once her husband's career was launched, Queler returned to the Mannes School to pursue conducting studies with Carl Bamberger and musical analysis with Paul Emerick. In addition, a grant from the Martha Baird Rockefeller Foundation allowed her to study symphonic literature with Joseph Rosenstock of the Metropolitan Opera.

Once her graduate studies were finished Queler found experiences which further developed her musical expertise. From 1958 through 1970, she worked at the Metropolitan Opera

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[4]Venegrova taught piano at the Curtis Institute.

National Company as accompanist and rehearsal coach, as well as assisting Julius Rudel at the New York City Opera. Her conducting skills were developed further as assistant to Rudel at the Caramoor, Long Island, and Boston Arts Festivals.

While at the New York City Opera, Queler was not given an opportunity to conduct. To provide herself a place to conduct, she established her own ensemble. Additionally, she intended to give young performers a chance to perform the standard operatic repertoire.[5] In 1968, this group of non-professionals became known as the Opera Orchestra of New York and in 1972, the ensemble debuted at Carnegie Hall. As the orchestra grew in reputation and the young performers moved on to professional groups, they were replaced by professional singers and instrumentalists. As the repertoire expanded, Queler became recognized for presenting unknown and infrequently performed operas. They included Smetana's Dalibor, Respighi's Belgafor, Meyerbeer's L'Africana, and Verdi's I Lombardi.

Queler's earliest experiences as a conductor's assistant, opera accompanist and rehearsal coach contributed to her successes as a conductor. Her fine musical sense and abilities that characterize her reputation as a successful conductor are summarized by Bob Summers, trumpet player for the Opera Orchestra of New York:

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[5]Ammer, C. Unsung.

> Eve commands respect from us and I'm not just trying to be diplomatic. She always knows the music backward and forward, and she has a clear beat and an excellent ear. There isn't any secret complaining about her, and I think I can speak for all the men in the orchestra. I've played for an awful lot of conductors, and Eve is very good. [6]

Conducting the Opera Orchestra of New York is a full time position but Queler finds time to conduct orchestras in other sections of the United States. In 1970, she was appointed associate director of the Fort Wayne (Indiana) Philharmonic, a Class B metropolitan symphony. She was chosen for the position from among a group of five finalists, the others being men. Because it would mean moving her family and leaving the Opera Orchestra, she stayed only one year and commuted from New York to Fort Wayne for the entire season.

In addition, her guest appearances have included conducting the San Antonia Symphony, the Boston Philharmonia, French National Radio Orchestra in Paris, and the Philadelphia Orchestra at Saratoga. During 1977, Queler led a concert with the Hartford Symphony, Colorado Springs Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony, and the New Jersey Symphony in a series of eight concerts. As one of eight participants at the American Institute of Orchestral Conducting in 1970, she conducted the St. Louis Symphony.

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[6]Micklin, B. Symphony orchestras mostly shun women conductors. Los Angeles Times, Dec. 29, 1972, 10.

Queler's career has developed similarly to any male conductor's career. She started by acquiring a good education and followed it with as many musical experiences as she could find. If she has experienced the problems that can affect the career of a woman conductor, she does not let them concern her.

> I have never felt discriminated against because I was a woman. Young American male conductors have just as hard a time getting established. I know that some orchestra managers when approached to engage me, have turned me down because 'We already have hired our woman guest conductor for the season'. But it doesn't bother me. [7]

In 1972, Queler applied for the position of associate conductor of the Detroit Symphony. Unfortunately, she never received a response to her application or an invitation to appear with the orchestra. Micklin (1972) inquired whether this was a problem faced more often by women conductors. Queler responded:

> It's not a women's lib thing. I mean, I can't fight it on that basis. In music, you have to be up to certain standards. The orchestra managements say that and it's true. Well, I'm willing to try to impress them on a strictly artistic basis. [8]

Frequently, standards other than artistic and musical considerations are used to judge a woman conductor. Contos (1971) observed that boards of directors want conductors with talent sex appeal, and stamina; identified as the "Leonard

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Erickson, R. Eve Queler of the dauntless baton. New York Times, Jan. 7, 1977, C-22.

[9]Micklin, B. Symphony orchestras mostly shun women, 10.

Bernstein syndrome", that the conductor is judged on the sexiness of the silouette on the podium. However, this judgement repeatedly pertains to male conductors, and it can have a reverse effect on women conductors. As a result, an attractive woman who faces this difficulty, is not given serious consideration. Rich (1970) states:

> 'Women have proven themselves to have talent and stamina. And judging from the inabilities of the critics to wrench their minds off sex long enough to judge the music women conductors seem to have that appeal too. In fact, that's what bugs them. 'Bravo for opera's cutest conductor!', shouts one national headline after a performance of Eve Queler's own Opera Orchestra of New York. 'Shapelier than Leopold Stokowski, prettier than Leonard Bernstein and better legs than William Steinberg' writes another of her.[9]

However, the problem of serious consideration affects Sarah Caldwell, conductor and artistic director of the Opera Company of Boston, in another way. Music critics and writers will not only note the obvious, that she is a woman, but moreover, will comment regarding her unconcern for appearance, manner of dress, habit of carrying her belongings in a paper sack, or conjecturing as to whether she actually slept in the aisle of some theater. These facts in no way relate to the fact that her musicianship, artistic abilities, and successes as a conductor, are Caldwell's most remarkable and memorable attributes.

Born in Maryville, Missouri on March 26, 1924, Caldwell grew up in Fayetteville, Arkansas where her step-father

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[9]Contos, C. Eve Queler. High Fidelity/Musical America, May 1971, MA-6.

was a professor at the University of Arkansas. Her mother, educated at Northwestern and the Juilliard School, gave Caldwell her earliest musical training. By the age of five, it became apparent that she was especially gifted in mathematics and music. By the age of 10, she was performing as a violinist in adult chamber groups and graduated from high school at age 14. For a time, Caldwell attended the University of Arkansas as a psychology major and also Hendrix College where she studied violin. In 1943, she received a scholarship to attend the New England Conservatory, studying the violin with Richard Birgin, concertmaster of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and viola with Gorges Fourel.

Following her studies with Birgin, Caldwell was offered a post as violinist with both the Minneapolis and Indianapolis Symphonies. She turned them down and, instead, took an offer to learn opera production as assistant to Boris Goldovsky. Her interest in opera developed while she was studying at the New England Conservatory. As a result, she was given a scholarship to study opera production at Tanglewood. While at Tanglewood, she staged her first full production, Riders to the Sea by Ralph Vaughn Williams. Impressed with her work, Koussevitsky invited her back as a member of the faculty.

The Opera Workshop at Tanglewood was headed by Boris Goldovsky who was also artistic director of the New England Opera Theater. In 1942, Caldwell became his assistant, and for 11 years, held many positions with the New England Opera

Theater; among them, prop girl, librettist, translator, chorus director and orchestra conductor.

In 1952, Caldwell was appointed to direct the Opera Workshop at Boston University. Her responsibilities included developing the Workshop's potential for staging full productions. Under Caldwell, the Opera Workshop's reputation improved, which attracted talented performers. By the time she left in 1957, a full time opera department was established at Boston University.

However, she felt one problem existed, that graduates of Boston Universtiy's Opera Department did not find opportunities for work in established opera companies. This provided Caldwell with the incentive she needed to organize her own opera company. In 1957, she met with friends and colleagues to devise a plan to acquire the necessary funds to establish a permanent opera company. For several years, the group staged successful productions and in 1965, the Boston Opera Group became the Opera Company of Boston, with Sarah Caldwell acting as producer, conductor, administrator, stage director, scenery designer, and publicity manager. Henehan (1975) lists some of the most notable performances of the Opera Company of Boston:

> The first American performance of Schoenberg's Moses and Aaron; the first American Semiramide in living memory, with Joan Sutherland and Marilyne Horne; Sills' first "Lucia" and "Norma"; Sutherland's American stage debut, in I Puritani; the first American Boris Gudnov in Mussorgsky's own orchestration (nine years before the Met); the first complete Les Troyens ever staged in

> this country (two years before the Met); the first five-act Don Carlos in Verdi's original French edition ... .[10]

In January 1976, Caldwell became the first woman ever to conduct at the Metropolitan Opera House.[11] She conducted 11 performances of La Traviata with Beverly Sills in the lead role of Violetta. Reviewers praised Caldwell's attention throughout the performance to the composer's intentions. Porter (1976), in his review stated:

> Until 'La Traviata', the Met season lacked first rate conductors. Miss Caldwell's arrival there - it was her debut in the house - brought a triumph for her and confirmation of her great power to animate a score and reveal its composer's intentions. By the stopwatch, and by tradition, many of her tempi must probably be counted fast - as fast, even as the metronome markings in Verdi's score! But there was no sense of hustle - only Verdia vitality, tension, vigor, dramatic impetus. The singers were not straight jacketed. When a phrase needed to expand, or a syllable to be dwelt on, or an attack to be delayed for an instant, Miss Caldwell was there. She also showed an uncommon (sense) of dramatically stiking timbres and of instrumental balances in support of, not in competition with, the individual voices.[11]

Two years earlier in December, Caldwell made her orchestral conducting debut, appearing with the American Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. Her debut marked the beginning of several invitations each year to conduct orchestras, both in the United States and abroad. Following her successful debut, she appeared with the Milwaukee Symphony

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[10]Henehan, D. Prodigious Sarah. New York Times Magazine, Oct. 5, 1975, 20.

[11]Porter, A. Caldwell debut at the Met. New Yorker, Jan. 26, 1976, 90.

in September 1975. In November she became the second woman to conduct the New York Philharmonic and the first woman to lead a New York Philharmonic concert devoted to music of women composers.[12] Later in 1976, she became the first woman to conduct at the Ravinia Festival in its 41-year history.[13] By the end of 1976, she had led orchestras in Pittsburgh, Syracuse, Atlanta, and Indianapolis. Caldwell's schedule of appearances in 1977 included engagements with the Toronto Symphony, Cleveland Orchestra at the Blossom Festival, Boston Symphony at Tanglewood, Philadelphia Orchestra at Saratoga, Atlanta Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, and the Mexico National Symphony. In 1978, she conducted the Honolulu and Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestras and in 1979, a repeat performance with the St. Louis Symphony.

> Given the age-old history of power of the most powerful, and physically the most imposing, it is not difficult to understand the scarcity of female conductors or the immense difficulty those few have had ascending the podiums of the world's orchestras. Nobody really questions anymore a woman's right to do anything she wants, as long as she is able to do it, and few would deny that conductors like Sarah Caldwell, New York's Eve Queler, Denver's Antonia Brico or the New York City Opera's Judith Somogi are able to do it. The problem faced by a determined woman conductor is simply that of convincing managers and boards of directors that she can really do it. [14]

In 1978, Caldwell received the first annual Award for

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[12]Ewen, D. Musicians since 1900: performers in concert and opera. New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1978.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Jones, R. Walking into the fire. Opera News, Feb. 14, 1976, 11.

Excellence presented by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Arts. Her other awards include honorary Doctor of Music degrees from Harvard University, Simmons College, Boston College, Bates College, and Bowdoin College.

In 1979, she became the first music director at Wolf Trap. The national park is located near Washington, D.C. and is the only one designated for the performing arts. Caldwell is in charge of programming opera, dance, symphonic and chamber music, and conducts a series of orchestral and operatic concerts.

Judith Somogi

Another woman conductor, Judith Somogi, received her early professional training in the operatic field. Similar to Caldwell, she continues her interest in opera in addition to orchestral conducting. Her early training fits the European ideal of training conductors, that is, by experiencing as many aspects of operatic production as possible. As an assistant to Julius Rudel at the New York City Opera, she was in charge of all aspects of the season's repertory which included the position of assistant choir master.

Somogi also assisted Thomas Schippers for three summers at the Festival of Two Worlds in Spoleto, Italy. During Stokowski's last season with the American Symphony Orchestra, Somogi was his assistant, conducting over 30 concerts. She said of her associations with these conductors:

> Stokowski; Thomas Schippers, with whom I worked in Spoleto; Julius Rudel, who was responsible for

> my first big opportunity at the City Opera; and Ernest Fleischman, in Los Angeles, have been instrumental in important changes in my career. I was encouraged by them because I am a good musician, I like to think, not because I am a woman.[15]

Judith Somogi was born in Lynbrook, New York in 1941 and began her earliest musical studies as a violinist. By age eight, her interests turned to the piano. Following her private study at home, she enrolled in the Juilliard School's Preparatory Division and continued as a scholarship student, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree at the Juilliard School.

In addition to piano studies, she also studied the organ. Later, she became the organist and choirmaster at her own church. In addition to playing the organ, she hired soloists and guest organists, presented oratorios and gained valuable conducting experience, all of which were important to her development as a conductor.

Somogi continued to pursue as many opportunities as possible to develop her abilities. While pursuing a Master's Degree, she studied chamber music at the Berkshire Festival. She further developed her technique as music director and conductor for the American Savoyards. Then in 1971, she conducted performances of Amahl and the Night Visitors and Help! Help! The Globolinks for the ANTA Theater.

During the 1973-74 season, Somogi had additional opportunities to display her abilities as a conductor.

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[15]Wielding their batons too. Opera News, Feb. 14, 1976, 10.

In March 1974, she debuted at the New York City Opera, directing the Mikado. The following October, she returned to conduct La Traviata. Other appearances have included conducting the Mozart Marathon during 1973 and the Beethoven Marathon in 1974. She continued her interest in the musical theater field by appearing as the music director at the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre for the 1973-74 season.

Somogi's opportunities to conduct were many and varied, all of which she felt were important in her training and career development. She related:

> I had a summer with the Oberlin Music Theater, working on things as diverse as La Traviata and Trial by Jury. I became one of three assistants to Stokowski at the American Symphony and got to conduct 33 children's concerts. I had a church job as organist and choirmaster. I studied chamber music at Tanglewood. I played for ballet classes. I did Gilbert and Sullivan Off-Broadway. [16]

In 1975, Somogi made her orchestral conducting debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Following her successful debut in Los Angeles, she appeared with the Syracuse Symphony and a return engagement with the Los Angeles Philharmonic. During the 1977-78 season, she became the third woman to conduct the New York Philharmonic. Later in the season she was engaged to lead the Oklahoma City Symphony and the Tulsa Philharmonic and in 1981, the Milwaukee Symphony. Presently, she is the musical director and conductor of the Utica (New York) Symphony.

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[16]Erickson, R. Step forward for a woman conductor. New York Times, May 8, 1977, 17.

Many conductors choose the route of guest conducting and for some, it is a way to get experience until the permanent position comes their way. When asked if she would like her own orchestra, Somogi replied:

> That depends. If I found the right orchestra and we were right for each other, then yes. Building an orchestra, being a community leader, this would involve musical growth and an outlet for leadership abilities that I think are there. I'm not ambitious. I just want to be the best musician possible for me to be, and that means getting opportunities in the best circumstances. [17]

Victoria Bond

Late in the 1970's, the conductor, Victoria Bond achieved recognition. As an Exxon/Arts Endowment conductor with the Pittsburgh Symphony, she became the first woman to be placed with a major orchestra. During her two years in Pittsburgh, her position included responsibilities as the musical director for the Pittsburgh Youth Symphony, as well as attendance at all rehearsals of the Pittsburgh Symphony. During the same period, she held the position of Music Director with the New Amsterdam Symphony in New York. During her tenure with these orchestras, she became well known for her abilities as a conductor.

Victoria Bond[18] was born in Los Angeles on May 6, 1950. She came from a musically talented family that included her musician grandparents, her father, who was a singer, and

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[17]Ibid.

[18]Information regarding Bond comes from a taped response to the questionnaire which appears as Appendix A. The response was received in December 1981.

her mother, a concert pianist. By the age of three, she played the piano and began improvising and composing before receiving any formal schooling.

As a student at the Mannes School in New York, Bond received her earliest training. Later, she entered the University of Southern California where she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree with honors in 1968. While she was at the University of Southern California, Bond studied composition with Ingolf Dahl and Ellis Kohs. In addition, she had opportunities to arrange and orchestrate scores for films and television. Following graduation, she entered the Juilliard School as a scholarship student, and, in 1975 received her Master of Arts degree.

Bond continued her studies as a student of conducting at the Juilliard School, and received a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 1977. While at Juilliard, she led the Juilliard Repertory Orchestra and was assistant conductor of the Juilliard Orchestra and the Contemporary Music Ensemble. In addition, she studied conducting with Sixten Erhling and composition with Roger Sessions and Vincent Persichetti. She also participated in a master class taught by Herbert von Karajan.

Bond's earliest experiences as a composer-conductor were leading her own works. As a composer she successfully completed several songs, orchestral compositions and chamber works. When conducting her own music, she often was dissatisfied with the performances. Bond's decision to study

conducting was influenced by her desire to earn respect from the performers and to present better concerts of her compositions.

Because she experienced success, both as a conductor and a composer, Bond feels composition is an important factor when she conducts, not only when presenting her own music, but also works of other composers. Furthermore, she states:

> ... the Italians have the right idea in that they include a study of composition in their conducting course. And even though it is not expected that all conductors will go on to compose, at least it gives them a working knowledge of what goes into making a piece. You can understand it so much better when you've tried to do it yourself. Now, I am a composer/conductor and I feel that my life is divided equally between the two. ... It puts me in a ... different perspective in that respect, because for me composition was my impetus to involve me in conducting. But nonetheless, I benefit so much from the experience of composition that I think every conductor should have that opportunity. You understand ... more about form and about the decisions a composer has made when you start to make something yourself. [19]

In contrast to Somogi's development as an orchestral conductor, Bond did not gain experience by working in opera houses. Her initial experiences were in the symphonic field which included study under Otto Werner Mueller and Herbert Blomstadt at the Aspen Music Festival in 1973. Her earliest appearances were at the Cabrillo Festival in 1974, and at the White Mountains Festival in 1975. These initial

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[19]Bond, V. Questionnaire response, Dec. 1981.

successes as a conductor were recognized in 1975 when she was awarded the Victor Herbert Conducting Award.

During 1978, Bond appeared not only with the Pittsburgh and New Amsterdam Symphonies, but also with the Colorado Philharmonic. Her appearances in 1979 included engagements with the Houston Symphony and the Buffalo Philharmonic. In 1981, she was engaged to lead the Hudson Valley Philharmonic and the Arkansas Symphony.

Bond's career development included training with experienced conductors who acted as mentors. She gained not only conducting technique, but also the concept of sound and the ability to listen from von Karajan. In addition, Boulez assisted her to get at the complex problems of contemporary music. Furthermore, she included Jean Morel, Paul Glass, Darius Milhaud, Jacob Druckman, and Sixten Erhling as important influences in her career.

Bond believes the path to a successful career depends on mentors or models who can take an active part in the education of an aspiring conductor. She further states:

> First of all, the mentor should be supportative of you in your work. ... (For example), there have been people who I have known who have done everything in their power to persuade me that I had no business conducting. Everybody in the beginning said that to me. And obviously that is not going to make for a great self-confidence. ... One of the things you have to build as a conductor is confidence in your decisions. ... you have to be with somebody who has faith in your talent and wants to help you.[20]

The development of a conductor is affected not only

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[20]Ibid.

by the mentor, but also by the availability of conducting opportunities. In the United States, the openings for an aspiring conductor are limited. This creates a two-fold problem. Since Europe supports more orchestras than does the United States, many conductors find valuable experience abroad. In addition, the problem of where to train is influenced by the number of conducting opportunities. Furthermore, the European system is based upon the master teacher and student relationship. In view of the situation in the United States, the learning climate in Europe has appeal. Bond (1981) concurs and observes that Europe has

> ... far more orchestras and far more opera companies (where) the young conductors get a chance to work with professional groups of people and that's the essence of it. They have a chance to prepare singers in opera houses and conduct off-stage bands and coach and take over rehearsals. They learn things from the ground up. That's really the best way to learn and here we have fewer orchestras and ... don't trust even community orchestras to younger, less experienced conductors even for less than subscription concerts. Consequently, a young conductor doesn't have that much opportunity to conduct. You just can't start out at the top. [21]

The female conductor, faced with the same problems finds the continued male domination in the profession an additional obstacle. Considering past efforts of women conductors, the present decade does not present concrete evidence of women as permanent conductors of major orchestras. Of the 857 orchestras listed by the American Symphony Orchestra League, 25 are conducted by women, thus

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[21]Ibid.

2.9% of these orchestras have women as their permanent conductors. Table II[22] details these findings.

TABLE II

Total number of orchestras	857
Total number conducted by women	25
Percentage of women conductors	2.9

Type of orchestra	Women conductors	Percentage represented
A#	0	
A	1*	4
B	1	4
C	2	8
D	12	48
C/C	9	36

*shared podium

As these statistics indicate, category D has the largest number of orchestras conducted by women, but these are orchestras with the smallest budgets and the shortest concert seasons. Community-college orchestras, the next larger group, are conducted by women for little or no pay. Margaret Hillis shares the podium of the Class A orchestra which she conducts, The Chicago Civic Orchestra (the training orchestra for the Chicago Symphony). Eve Queler conducts the only

[22]Statistics for Table II were taken from The musician's guide: the directory of the world of music (6th ed.), 1980. Refer to Appendix B for orchestra class specifications.

Class B orchestra led by a woman, an organization of her own making.

Bond (1981) finds that prejudice may also exist among the members of the orchestra as well, but states that this cannot be a deterent to the aspiring conductor.

> People do not take women as seriously as they take men. A woman does not start out as a high authority figure. The more feminine she looks, the less likely people are going to take her seriously. ... Most people in the professional orchestras are people in their middle years. Now there are a lot more young people coming into orchestras, but I would say the average orchestral musician is a middle aged person. They're coming from a generation where the status quo of men and women was much more set. You can't expect them to change their spots overnight. Most of them try really hard to be equitable and those who are ... sincere about their music making will judge you only on musical values. But there are those who feel their manhood is being compromised by being told what to do by a woman. ... The best thing you can do is set a good example, ... be serious about your work and focus your energies on it, not on what other people think of you. ... Once people realize you're serious about what you're doing, and that doesn't mean without a sense of humor. That just means that you're sincere and your love of music is very profound. They respect that. [22]

Frances Steiner

Dr. Francis Steiner[23] (1981) cites the lack of acceptance in the field of conducting for women as a factor in her career development. She states:

> It's difficult to be a conductor period and each layer of difficulty you add on to it makes it even

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[22]Bond, V. Questionnaire response, Dec. 1981.

[23]Information regarding Steiner comes from a taped response to the questionnaire which appears as Appendix A. The response was received in December 1981.

> more challenging. Being female adds another obstacle. People find it a novelty but they don't quite believe in it at this point. In terms of my own situation, the age factor is very important. I feel I lost about 10 to 12 years in my career as a conductor simply because I had no expectation and I had no receptivity to the concept of being a woman ... able to conduct an orchestra. For awhile, I conducted choruses just to get some experience conducting because I felt female conductors were a little bit more acceptable in the choral world. But the obstacles were just too great for me to try for awhile ... .[24]

Dr. Steiner, a versatile musician, has many experiences as a performer, conductor, and teacher to her credit. She was born on February 25, 1937 in Portland, Oregon. Both parents were professional musicians: her father was a cellist and conductor, and her mother taught violin and piano.

Steiner received her earliest musical training from her mother. At age three, she was able to play the piano and by age five, was studying the cello. Following high school, she received a full scholarship to attend the Curtis Institute where she studied cello with Gregor Piatigorsky and Leonard Rose. Simultaneously, she pursued a degree at Temple University, majoring in music supervision and also studied conducting with Elaine Brown. In 1956, Steiner received a Bachelor of Music degree from Curtis and a Bachelor of Science degree with honors from Temple University. She went on to Harvard where she studied composition with Walter Piston and Randall Thompson and received her Master of Arts degree in 1958. Ten years later, she was awarded

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[24]Ibid.

her Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Southern California where she studied cello with Gabor Rejto and conducting with Hans Bier and Walter Ducloux.

Dr. Steiner's teaching experiences began in 1956 when she taught music in the public schools of Philadelphia and later, in Massachusetts. This was followed with one year at Fullerton Junior College in California previous to joining the faculty of the California State Univeristy at Dominguez Hills, in 1967, where she is Chairman of the Music Department and Professor of Music. In addition, she conducts the university orchestra as well as numerous musical theater productions.

As a cellist, Steiner's experiences are diverse. Throughout her education, she gave many recitals and was a participant in the Marlboro Music Festival during 1951, 1952, 1958, and 1961. From 1966 through 1975, she appeared with the Steiner-Berfield Trio throughout California. During this same period, she was assistant principal cellist of the California Chamber Symphony but subsequently became principal cellist with the Glendale Symphony Orchestra.

Performing in several organizations gave Steiner the opportunity to observe many conductors, including Alexander Hilsberg, Eugene Ormandy, Leopold Stokowski, Alexander Schneider, Palbo Casals, Roger Wagner, Michael Tilson Thomas, Thomas Schermerhorn, Akika Endo, and Robert Irving. Steiner (1981) believes that observing these conductors represents an important part of her development as a conductor.

Steiner's interest in professional conducting developed while she was at Temple University. However, as previously indicated, the difficluties were too great and she waited several years before pursuing her professional interests. Therefore, her conducting career has developed during the last five years. Since 1977, she has been music director and conductor of the Carson Community Symphony Orchestra. She holds the same position with the Baroque Consortium, Inc. which presents a concert series including works for chamber orchestra, chamber groups, and soloists. In 1978, Dr. Steiner was the winner of the Conductors Guild Prize in the American Conductors Competition sponsored by the Oakland Symphony. Other appearances have included conductor for a series of children's concerts for the Long Beach Symphony in 1977 and in 1978. She was the first woman to conduct at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in the Los Angeles Music Center, where she led the Glendale Symphony Orchestra.

Dr. Steiner has three concerns regarding current practices that affect opportunities for conductors. The first is the emphasis on youthful conductors in the promotional resources used by managers and public relations directors. Secondly, present practices appear to promote a few individuals who travel across the country guest conducting and do not remain with one orchestra. Furthermore she states:

> I'd rather have conductors with a little more experience given greater consideration. ... I think you have a much better orchestral situation if boards of directors and managers

> were more willing to give greater recognition to the mature artist because they are in fact more mature and have more to offer in terms of wealth of experience. ... Having been raised in Philadelphia with the Phildelphia Orchestra and Eugene Ormandy, I can see what can be done with an orchestra if one conductor would stay at home as it were, to 'till his own gardens' for the greater part of the year and do a limited amount of guest conducting. ... I think the present trend is motivated by the money hungriness of a small group of New York managers and not by a desire to create the very best orchestras in the United States. [25]

Steiner's third concern deals with the limited number of orchestras for a young tyro to conduct. Because there are limited opportunities for gaining conducting experience, basic problems can exist for a novice, such as knowing how to run a rehearsal or how to stand in front of an orchestra. Steiner suggests that:

> It would be well worth the conductor's while to pay a fee just to have the opportunity to conduct an orchestra. There's no place where he/she can do that. An insturmentalist gladly spends money to buy an instument. ... But the conductor should realize early in the stages of his/her career, he/she must also pay for the instrument. [26]

In addition she suggests the organization of youth orchestras for the purpose of giving both young conductors and instrumentalists a chance to learn.

Carolyn Hill

Carolyn Hill's[27] earliest musical experiences began

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[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Information regarding Hill comes from her response to the questionnaire which appears as Appendix A. The response was received in March 1982.

at age three when she played the harmonica and sang hymns with her grandfather. Two years later, she began piano studies that continued until her high school graduation. In addition, she had a strong desire to play the violin but her family could not afford further musical studies.

She was born on May 1, 1938 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. She received her education in the public schools which emphasized science and offered few musical studies. However, she ushered at the civic hall events which enabled her to hear the Oklahoma City Symphony nine times a year.

Following her high school graduation, Hill entered the University of Oklahoma as a pre-med student. Two years later, she transferred to music and studied piano with Sylvia Zaremba. Later, she received both Bachelor and Master of Music degrees in music theory. She recalls a particular teacher, Violet Archer (a pupil of Bartok and Hindemith), who strongly influenced her musical ideas and interpretation.

> She was my teacher for two years of counterpoint, analysis of twentieth century music and three years of composition. ... Her assignments were staggering. But, my respect was so great that I did them with the feeling of a 'mission' at hand, which was rather the manner which she taught. I have never seen such respect for every single note, and its relationship to others. I believe she had an enormous impact on me in the sense that I was illuminated. Grades ... became secondary to the real task ... which was just keeping up. I ... began to see music as a function and its parts as functions. ... Quite honestly, I learned most of the basis for which I still examine music today. [28]

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[28]Ibid.

In 1963, Hill moved to New York for additional study at the Juilliard School. She worked at the New York Public Library and studied composition in Juilliard's extension division at night. The course required rehearsals and performances of student compositions. After conducting her own compositions, Hill believed she was a better conductor than composer.

Hill took a teaching position during her second year in New York. She taught grades one through five at a girls' private institution which stressed music. Three years later, while at the Chapin School, she received her first encouragement as a conductor after Charles Turner, former colleague of Leonard Bernstein and Samuel Barber, saw a production of Hindemith's Let's Build a Town which she and her students presented.

A few months later, another event provided encouragement for Hill, the conductor. The New York Times announced the Mitropolous Conducting Award winner of 1967 as Sylvia Caduff. Because a woman had won such a prestigious award, Hill believed she could pursue a conducting career.

Caduff later became a mentor for Hill. When the Swiss conductor arrived in the United States for her year's residency with the New York Philharmonic, Hill became her student. Initially, Caduff attempted to discourage Hill because she believed women conductors faced many difficulties. However, Hill persisted in her request for a teacher and a year of study resulted.

> I worked with her for a full year and developed a very close friendship. In the course of that study and friendship, I had the opportunity to go to the viewing box with the three assistant conductors of the New York Philharmonic. Being with those young conductors was in a sense having three mentors all through that year, and working with them as they learned from their mentor, Mr. Bernstein and William Steinberg, the principal guest conductor that year.[29]

Hill (1982) believes that the experience of studying with a mentor is not as critical to a conductor's development. Perhaps more important is experience. Prior to this, the young conductor should acquire a thorough education. Furthermore, she observes:

> I (prefer) the idea of apprenticeships. I (favor) leaving school with conducting training and (takng charge) of a community orchestra. The next step, going to a Class C orchestra as an assistant conductor. Some experience at that level and watching the conductor work ... for two to four years ... and then a Class C orchestra on one's own. I see it as climbing a ladder as in any other profession. ... There is no substitute for experience.[30]

During the summer of 1968, Hill moved to Munich and entered the International Academy Mozarteum at Salzburg. After two weeks of preparation and conducting Mozart's Symphony No. 29, she was one of seven participants (the only woman and only American) selected to work with the international orchestra under Bruno Maderna.

After completing her European studies, Hill returned to the United States and for three years received no responses to her inquiries concerning conducting positions. As a

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[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid.

result, she organized and financed a chamber orchestra, the New York Music Society. In April 1972, she conducted the group at Town Hall in New York. This event, in conjunction with conducting the summer tour of 1776, brought the necessary recognition for Hill. Consequently, she was appointed music director and conductor of the Livingston Symphony and named head of the performing arts division at the United Nations School.

When considering the problems encountered by women conductors, Hill (1982) cites obstacles in addition to the common problem of too few orchestras. Unfortunately, the European or foreign conductor is favored by audiences. This situation exists because Americans do not recognize the American trained conductor equal to the European. She further states that society emphasizes that men support families and therefore, require higher salaries than women. Hill believes the most influential people in the conductor's career are the boards of directors and the women's committees. Together, they are concerned with the selection of a conductor and how the finances of the orchestra are affected by the choice.

> What results from these women's committees is the treatment of the conductor as a sexual symbol. We like the idea of a 'Madison Avenue' type on the podium, a very good looking figure (to whom) the women in the audience will respond. We see women's committees enlarging and ... more women (than men) in the audience. It's absurd to treat conductors as matinee idols. ... In this country,

> we ... (put) so much emphasis on personality rather than music. Unfortunately, that's ... happened since the age of virtuosos began. ... That's a chief factor that causes the most trouble for women getting jobs as conductors. [31]

The dramatic increase of women conductors was a phenomenon of the 1970's. Significant factors positively affected this growth - the active women's movement and the acceptance of women musicians. Women conductors received widespread recognition for their accomplishments and created attention for gains women achieved. For the first time since Ethel Leginska, the powerful ability of the media to attract attention was realized and may have helped to promote the careers of women conductors. Importantly, women conductors were portrayed as credible and successful.

Not since the 1930's and 1940's had so many women actively conducted. Similarly, women who formerly found no opportunities available to them, established their own groups; for example, Sarah Caldwell, Eve Queler, and Carolyn Hill. Contemporary women conductors share an additional common characteristic, they created many 'firsts': Margaret Harris, the first black woman to conduct a major orchestra; Sarah Caldwell, the first woman to conduct at the Metropolitan Opera House; and Victoria Bond, the first woman to graduate from the Juilliard's School of conducting.

However, these women remain at the periphery of the conducting profession. Each woman may appear once or

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[31] Ibid.

twice each season with a major or metropolitan sized orchestra, but must be content the remainder of the year with a Class D or smaller orchestra. Of the 371 conductors listed in the Musical America Annual Directory Issue (1980), eleven are women.[32] They represent 3.0% of the conductors listed, an increase over the 1.4% registered in 1971. These statistics are representative of the slow growing acceptance of women but do not accurately illustrate the substantial contributions and achievements of women conductors.

The singularly significant contributions made by contemporary women conductors are the role models they represent. Two of these women, Brown and Hillis, cited the absence of role models in their development and the problems they encountered. For example, emulating a male conductor was unacceptable to them and men had an established code of dress when women had none. Therefore, these women either chose no models or selected an admired teacher. Perhaps past women conductors were not effective role models because there were less of them and attention was not afforded them throughout history. Because contemporary women had few role models and more significantly, because they established precedents, it is even more important they remain the focus of attention which will firmly establish these women in history.

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[32]Musical America: Annual Directory Issue. Great Barrington, MA: ABC Leisure Magazines, 1980.

CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUSIONS

Although the study has indicated changes in the social climate and educational opportunities over a period of more than a century, the career development of the woman conductor remains difficult and beset by special problems. Furthermore, educational opportunities became less restricted for women and social institutions remained comparitively intact and unchanged. Therefore, specific conclusions can be drawn from the research.

Beginning in the late 1800's, education became progressively more available to women. Significantly, the availability of a secondary education was an important move toward women having a voice in society. Even more important was higher education's acceptance of women in the middle twentieth century. Coupled with the establishment of conservatories, American women, for the first time, were metophorically afforded the same opportunities as men. Twenty years later, few restrictions kept females from acquiring advanced degrees in music. The women musicians of the 1970's achieved goals that a century before were unthought of and signified important steps towards a socially equal treatment of female musicians.

Access to programs in higher education aided females who entered the conducting field. Contemporary women conductors Bond (1981), Hill (1982), and Brown (1982) concur

that a quality education is important for men as well as women who aspire to a conducting career. Furthermore, assuming Starr (1974) was correct, that women need to be three times better than men, a quality education is significant. For women such as Hillis (1982), mastering the score allows her to disregard the extramusical problems of conducting. Hence, women conductors acquire confidence and security in their profession through valuable educational experiences that enable them to better display their talents and abilities as conductors.

Several of the women stated that a mentor or master teacher was invaluable to their educational and professional development. The mentor may assume a broad role that includes personal as well as career aspects of his/her pupil. Furthermore, the point at which a mentor enters the developmental process of the conductor is individual to each student. An association with a mentor or master teacher may include the teaching of conducting technique or the mentor's position as role model. Importantly, an experienced master teacher has a network of associates who the student makes contact with and observes as well. Furthermore, the mentor has resources at his/her disposal that could create opportunities for a young conductor.

An important aspect of career development for the conductor is finding opportunities for leading orchestras. For women, this factor more often is a greater difficulty to overcome than academic training. The past one hundred

years reveals evidence of limited occasions for women to lead orchestras. From the nineteenth century (when women performed less serious forms of music in vaudeville theaters) to the early 1900's (when female conductors led only women's orchestras) through the 1970's (when the extent of women's professional conducting was guest engagements once a year and leading Class D orchestras), women's opportunities were restricted. Even though women conductors acquire educations, conducting requires the actual practice of leading ensembles to gain competence and grow professionally. The absence of opportunities is further complicated by too few orchestras and opera houses in America to accomodate all who aspire to a conducting career. Together, the women researched cited this as the primary obstacle to success by female conductors, and further stated that since fewer ensembles means limited conducting posts, the possibility is more remote that a woman will be offered the opportunity to lead an orchestra, either as a guest or permanent conductor.

A significant factor in the conductor's development is attention and recognition afforded him/her in the printed and visual media. Importantly, for those singled out in the field of conducting, the recognition may lend credence to their abilities. For example, a recent publication addressed the absence in professional orchestral conducting of an American equal to Leonard Bernstein and the prominence with which he is regarded. Walsh (1982) suggested that if any conductor was to equal Bernstein's prestige, the orchestral leader would come from one of America's secondary

orchestras. Of the five conductors cited, not one was a woman.[1] One assumes then, that no woman is more experienced or qualified than those five and, in addition, that a man will earn the spotlight in professional conducting. Consequently, the media attention is important and powerful. The absence of a woman conductor from a prominent position means delays in recognition and success for those women striving toward professional orchestral conducting and for those women in lower positions.

Therefore, the media assumes an influential role in the careers of contemporary women conductors. The earliest female conductors received only passing notices in the press and their debuts were recognized with little fanfare. For example, Brico's debut in Berlin received two short paragraphs in the New York Times but later, after 40 years of professional conducting, was finally recognized for her achievements. She was among the group of women in the 1970's who were credited as "firsts" in their field. They were recognized initially as an oddity and secondly, for their musical talents. Once the curiosity concerning women conductors was passé, the spotlight was lost and women forfeited an opportunity to sustain attention. In conclusion, female conductors need to achieve recognition for their musical attributes and talents,

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[1]Walsh, M. Five for the future. Time, April 18, 1982, 86-87. The conductors cited were: David Zinman, John Nelson, Leonard Slatkin, Christopher Keene, and Calvin Simmons (deceased since the article was written).

and establish a basis from which younger women could build.

Many sociological factors that affect the careers of women conductors remain deeply entrenched in the American culture and are difficult to define. Although social institutions are part of life since humankind's socialization, this study began its research during the nineteenth century. The Victorian beliefs of the period clearly defined a separation of men's and women's roles. Women assumed the obsequious position in society, accepted domestic responsibilites and centered their lives within the home. Only men participated in the marketplace and made decisions concerned with society's advancement. Ryan (1975) noted the instinctive manner in which men and women assume distinctively different social roles:

> ... the personal characteristics that are approved in a given culture differ for males and females. This mode of sexual differentiation falls into one predominate pattern, taking shape around the familiar poles of male forcefulness and female passivity. No less than 85 percent of the cultures examined by one anthropological survey consciously trained males to be aggressive and females to be supportative. These nomative personality types neatly mesh with proscribed behavior proper to each sex; they cultivate mental and emotional capacities conducive to worldly success in the male and suppress the woman's urge to desert the private and inferior sphere.[2]

Therefore, the roles dictated by society kept women away from leadership positions. They made no decisions nor

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[2] Ryan, M.P. Womanhood in America: from colonial times to the present. New York: New Viewpoints, 1975, 6.

voiced opinions regarding their culture. This aspect of the woman's position most affected women conductors. Even after women gained acceptance as performers, conducting remained closed to them. Their social and educational training did not prepare them to assume a demanding and difficult career. Few changes occured in the past century since Nichols and Osgood conducted. Although educational opportunities gave women the knowledge and tools for professional conducting, their opportunities remain few. The role of musical leader remains reserved for men. Several years of social change revealed imperceptible modifications in the musicians' and audiences' attitudes toward women conductors as Jepson (1976) noted:

> Obviously there remains an ingrained resistance to the idea of a woman leading an orchestra; the image conflicts with the ideas of traditional values and institutions.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the women's movement gained momentum with the result that in 1920, the Nineteenth Amendment was passed. Praised as the law that would reverse social injustices against women, in reality the amendment only gave women voting rights. Consequently, American social institutions were not transformed. Not until the social liberation of the 1960's and 1970's did the woman's position in society begin to expand.

Retrospectively, the movement toward women's rights throughout history was inconsistent. From the nineteenth

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Jepson, B. American women in conducting, 15.

century through the 1980's, women's efforts reveal increases and decreases on a curve that displays few gains. No continual growth and stability signified few changes educationally and socially. Comparatively, the curve of growth and decline was tied to the economic slope. For example, during the 1940's, women worked in many areas of the American marketplace, replacing the men drafted by the war. Particularly, women musicians and conductors found many opportunities for performance. However, during the succeeding decade, returning veterans forced women back into the home and family centered living. Later, during the 1970's, women again entered the marketplace as wage earners responsible for financial support of a family. Simultaneously, female conductors found increased opportunities for performance and short-lived recognition for their efforts.

Along with independence, women acquired new problems. They remain similar for single and married women; that is, social traditions and roles learned since childhood do not disappear nor can be forgotten by both women and society. Conjunctly, married women learn to deal with social traditions and family obligations. Female conductors are forced to seek compromises to equalize their family responsibilities and career opportunities. Antonia Joy Wilson (1982) represents this evolution of feminine concerns.[4] She finds educational

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[4]Information regarding Antonia Joy Wilson was taken from her questionnaire response received March 1982.

opportunities easily attainable and at 23 years old, she expressed concerns that included bearing children at some future time and problems of frequent career relocations. As an Exxon conductor with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Wilson may choose to build upon the role models and precedents established by previous women conductors. A century before, Nichols was limited to conducting only a women's orchestra in vaudeville theaters, 50 years ago, Brico was the first woman to lead the New York Philharmonic, and during the 1970's, several women guest conducted American orchestras. Progress was made slowly, but fewer women conduct orchestras than men do.

Obstacles faced by female conductors throughout the century since the late 1800's remain the same. Although conducting is difficult similarly for men, women struggle against more barriers. Brown (1982), Hill (1982), Bond (1981), and Steiner (1981) concur that the orchestras' boards of directors represent the most influential group that affects the conductor's career. Their selection of a conductor is determined by his/her potential popularity and eventual box office receipts. They further state that more often a male is chosen based on his role as family supporter and the women's committee response to the "matinee idol". Moreover, the least influential are the musicians who are not consulted regarding those leading them. In addition, Steiner believes business mangers possess the potential for employing the best public relations techniques to promote conductors. In conclusion, these frequent obstacles are not musical in nature.

Therefore, the selection of a conductor is based more often upon extramusical concerns and particularly, those that have the most potential for affecting the women conductors' opportunities.

In conclusion, those factors that most affect the development of women conductors are educationally and socially interrelated. The problems are complex, intertwined, and rooted deeply in American culture. Fundamental to the successes of future female conductors is the necessity for changing social institutions. The basis for the obstacles faced by women conductors rests with how males and females are raised, the values that society teaches them, and the social roles that are expected of them. Simplictically, as soon as women and the public perceive females as potential musical leaders, more women will realize success in the conducting profession.

Recommendations

Since the topic chosen for this study encompasses a broad spectrum of research and ideas, it is recommended that specific areas warrant particular scrutiny and consideration for further research.

1. Considering the conductor as a musical leader, research as it relates to women, would reveal the socialization and educational processes of children and young adults as potential leaders, and its ramifications for women conductors.
2. Each woman considered within this study has

contributed to music in America and since the research here is limited, individual women warrant research that will contribute to their recogintion in musical history.

3. One area least publicized but with important consequences for women conductors is the subject of hiring practices used by various agencies. Research into this area may reveal important information for women conductors.
4. The women conductors represented in this study constitute a small group of women involved in professional conducting. Further research may reveal female orchestral conductors active prior to and during the nineteenth, as well as the twentieth century.
5. Since American schools of music offer superior musical educations and training, research may uncover the reasons for the continued dominance by European born and trained conductors who conduct American orchestras.

APPENDIX A

Please fill in the biographical data sheet and return it with the tape.

You may answer the questionnaire using any personal anecdotes, opinions, details or examples which you may feel are appropriate to the question. Any questions which do not pertain to your situation or for which you cannot supply an answer, please feel free to exclude them.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What are the most important characteristics for a conductor to have? Include personal, professional, musical and non-musical qualities. Of these, which are inborn and which are learned?

2. If you were asked to design a college or university course of study for aspiring conductors, what would you include? Is there anything specifically missing in your training which you would include?

3. Is there an appropriate time in one's life to begin the study of conducting? Is there a time when it is too late?

4. Often music schools do not offer opportunities for students to study conducting as a craft until the post-baccalaureate years. How would a young student take advantage of the situation that exists to pursue a career in conducting?

5. How does one search out an experienced conductor to act as a mentor or model and to whom an asiring conductor could be apprenticed? Are there characteristics one should look for in a mentor? What role does a mentor perform in the development of a young conductor's career?

6. Is it possible or advisable for a person to prepare exclusively for a career as a conductor?

7. Are there particular types of musical and conducting experiences which are most important and beneficial to developing a conductor's expertise?

8. Is there an advantage to specializing in the music of one composer or one period in music history?

9. Traditionally, European conservatories have influenced professional conducting on the Continent and in the United States. Does the European education remain influential in the career of an American conductor?

10. What purpose do international competitions play in the conductor's career development? To what extent is the age requirement an influence on the outcome?

11. There are those who advise against a career in conducting. What factors should be considered when deciding to make

a commitment to this career?

12. How important is the lucky break?

13. How does one finance a career which is in the stages of development?

14. In what way do the expectations and opinions of the audience, musicians, boards of directors, managers, and music critics affect the career of a conductor?

15. Are there difficulties to be faced by an American conductor in the United States?

16. Are there factors specific to the female conductor which could affect her career? Please add comments pertinent to your own situation which you feel are important.

17. If you were to relate one experience from which you learned the most and one from which others may learn, what would that be?

18. If you had one thing as it relates to your career, to do over, what would that be?

19. Are there obstacles which must be overcome in the conductor's

career development to insure success?

20. Additional comments, concerns, and experiences which should be included in this study.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Full name

Address

Birthdate

Birthplace

Parental background (interests and occupations)

Siblings (place and position in family)

Early training (schools, teachers, peers, friends)

Earliest musical interests

Post high school education (schools, teachers, peers, friends)

Early career (opportunities for travel and study, awards)

Career difficulties, obstacles, highlights

Career development (publications, recordings, performances guest appearances)

Present career (responsibilities, goals)

Mentors and models (musical and non-musical, admirable charateristics)

Musical activities

Other interests (hobbies, recreation, diversions)

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

The following references to the types of orchestras are designated by the American Symphony Orchestra League.

Class	Title	Annual Budget
A*	Major	Over $2.25 million
A	Regional	$600,000-$2.25 million
B	Metropolitan	$150,000-$600,000
C	Urban	$ 60,000-$150,000
D	Community	under $60,000
C/C	College-Community	

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