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Between the hedges: stories music cooperating teachers tell of their identities as teacher educators

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Dissertation

BETWEEN THE HEDGES:
STORIES MUSIC COOPERATING TEACHERS
TELL OF THEIR IDENTITIES AS TEACHER EDUCATORS

by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family. I am forever grateful for their lifelong inspiration and motivation: my husband Darren, daughter Chloe, son Sean, parents Elden and Wanda Moates, sister Amy Moates Bowers, and brother John Elden Moates.
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This dissertation is the product of several years of heart, soul, and mind and would be far from completion without the support of many individuals. First and foremost, I offer gratitude to Dr. Susan Conkling, my major professor, for her guidance that was instrumental in each stage of obtaining this degree. I am overwhelmed with her patience, love, and work ethic. She has a gift of inspiring others to do their best and always in a very supportive way. Next, I am grateful to Jennifer Greene, my Boston University colleague and research “best friend.” I felt as if she was riding in the passenger seat for the entire drive. I am certain that I would not be where I am today without her collaboration. I am also grateful to Dr. Lee Higgins, my second reader and a member of the relational response community for this dissertation. He has guided me to think beyond this project and to consider possibilities outside of my medium. Enduring thanks to my longtime friend and Boston University colleague, Matt Koperniak who frequently provided support and motivation. Without Matt, my entire experience at Boston University would not have been so successful.

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Tonya Millsap, Dion Muldrow, Dr. Dwight Satterwhite, and Rudy Wilson. Your interest in me and your support of my research made the completion of this dissertation possible. More importantly, you are a big part of why I enjoy my career.

Finally, nothing I say can adequately describe the gratitude I have for my family. My mother and father are exemplary parents and compassionate educators who made a profound impact on my career choice. My sister, Amy Moates Bowers, has been an inspiration and motivation throughout the completion of my doctoral degree, and my brother John E. Moates, provided humor and encouragement at the times when I needed it the most. My children, Chloe and Sean, were the inspirations to always continue pursuing my dream of attaining a doctoral degree. And with the utmost sincerity, I must thank my wonderful husband, Darren, for being my rock, and my cheerleader, always supporting and encouraging me on the path to becoming a scholar.
A plethora of literature on cooperating teachers exists, but it is written from university researchers’ perspectives, leaving cooperating teachers’ voices silenced. Most researchers discuss what cooperating teachers do rather than who cooperating teachers say they are, particularly when they speak of themselves as teacher educators. The focus of this study was specifically on music cooperating teachers, and its purpose was to investigate their identities as narrative constructions. I employed Connelly and Clandinin’s (1999) *stories to live by*, Bruner’s (1987; 1991; 2002) *self-making*, and Ricoeur’s *ipse-identity* and *idem-identity* to suggest that identity stories were multiple, mobile, and contingent. Still, human beings sought continuity in their identity stories over time, and such stories were shaped in social and institutional contexts.

Using touchstones of narrative inquiry (see Clandinin & Caine, 2013), I held six planned conversations with two other music cooperating
teachers, which first generated field texts, and then, led to many follow-up conversations. The participants and I engaged in an eight-month process of co-constructing interim research texts. Clandinin acknowledged that, because identity stories were works in progress, standard research texts often were ineffective vehicles used to convey narrative identity. Therefore, I implemented a novella, an emotional story relying on character development, to present the final research text, and I entitled it “Between the Hedges.”

Within my interpretations and reflections on “Between the Hedges,” I discussed how, when considering ourselves as music teacher educators, we told public and private stories of family and school, further situated as children, students, and parents. Parents and music teachers were highly influential figures, and not always in positive ways. Although the situated identity stories were multiple, each cooperating teacher wove a thread of sameness between his or her stories as they were retold and relived. I concluded that the sameness in each story was key to understanding rationales for cooperating teachers’ practices of mentoring student teachers.
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## List of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AACTE</td>
<td>American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>edTPA</td>
<td>Education Teacher Performance Assessment</td>
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<td>UGA</td>
<td>University of Georgia</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

There is one voice that remains silenced in this research: cooperating teachers within the school system. These are the teachers who work with students during their teaching practicum and whose influence looms large in the experiences of pre-service educators. More research is needed which prizes their narratives of musical history and encourages examination of their professional practice. (Robbins, 2012, pp. 315–316)

Narrative Beginnings

I am currently in my twelfth year as a high school band director and have served in the same capacity in the same school for all those years. After my fifth year of teaching, I was invited and agreed to serve as a cooperating teacher for an area university. My assignment was to supervise a student teacher in instrumental music for a ten-week period. My appointed responsibilities to the student teacher were to provide as much hands-on experience as possible, prepare for two observations by the university supervisor, and provide a midterm and a final evaluation. The university supervisor set several assignments for the student teacher, including making daily notes on each class and developing written lesson plans. I wanted to provide the best possible opportunities for my student teacher and I took my responsibilities seriously, but I was never provided any documents such as a handbook with guidelines for my student teacher, or research on best practices in student teacher supervision. Because this was my first student teacher, I had no other
reference than my own personal experience as a student teacher and input from a few colleagues who had served as cooperating teachers.

By the time I finished supervising a fourth student teacher, my practices of mentoring had evolved considerably. The first two days of the placement were set aside for observation and logistical needs. I had learned that too much observation time could diminish a student teacher’s engagement. Further, I had come to view music teaching as complex, with many challenges arising simultaneously, so by giving a student teacher many opportunities to teach, she could focus on one facet at a time until she became more comfortable with the multiple challenges.

After my fifth student teacher’s short observation period, she began teaching sectionals on her primary instrument, as well as sectionals on other instruments with which she felt comfortable. She began as a meek, and unsure teacher, but she quickly adopted a more positive and confident demeanor in front of the high school students. I was pleased and excited to see how much she had grown just in the first week.

Around the third week of her placement, I asked her to begin journaling her experiences. I read her journal, and I began writing my comments from observing her in the journal as well as questions for us to reflect on together. The journal offered a mechanism for documenting
what she was doing well, what she needed to improve, and it also helped us plan her teaching in advance. We called it our “Student Teaching Bible.” The journaling also prompted me to be more self-disclosing in our reflections together. We discussed emotions and life in addition to teaching strategies—more than I had ever discussed with previous student teachers. Our relationship began to blossom and the trust between us strengthened.

By the eighth week of her placement, she was designing lessons using methods other than those she had observed in my classroom—she was bringing her own creativity to teaching, and students were reacting well. “Bell to bell” learning finally started to take place while she was teaching, and everyone was having fun in the process. By the end of her placement, she was conducting all four concert band classes, preparing two pieces to perform for the Large Group Performance Evaluation, teaching new warm up techniques, bringing technology into the classroom, and offering help sessions for interested students outside of class. It was the first time that one of my student teachers was so invested in my students.

On the last day of her placement, she delivered a letter. I still have that letter and often pull it out to read, especially if I’ve had a bad day. She expressed her appreciation for my passion for teaching, my compassion for students, and my support and patience during her
student teaching. She had gained confidence and was leaving this placement feeling a major sense of accomplishment. Her desire to become a professional musician had diminished and she had started to think of herself as a teacher. She wrote that I was the main influence in that decision and that my personality was perfect for serving as a cooperating teacher.

My first thought after reading the letter was how I could recreate a similar relationship of trust and sense of accomplishment with future student teachers. I recognized how engaged I had become as a cooperating teacher. I saw myself for the first time as a music teacher educator, and I wondered if other cooperating teachers went through a similar developmental process. Do other cooperating teachers identify as teacher educators? Who do they say they are?

**Background**

In most teacher preparation programs in the United States, a student teaching internship is required to achieve licensure and is considered one of the most important events in the undergraduate preparation for teaching (Rideout & Feldman, 2002). In the internship, a student teacher gains extended field experience under the supervision of a cooperating teacher and a university supervisor. This requirement provides student teachers an opportunity to put theory into practice, experience a variety of teaching methods and assessment tools, and
implement classroom management techniques and strategies (Mecca, 2010). The student teaching experience serves as a “prime opportunity for pre-service teachers to develop personal practical knowledge about the work of teaching” (Butler & Cuenca, 2012, p. 296).

Because of the design and placement of student teaching as the capstone of undergraduate preparation, beginning teachers often identify the student teaching experience as the most valuable part of their preparation, and they rank cooperating teachers as the most influential participants in that experience (Butler & Cuenca, 2012; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Weiss & Weiss, 2001). Furthermore, cooperating teachers themselves consider their role to be an important one in shaping the teaching profession (AACTE, 1990; Murray & Male, 2005). According to Draves (2008), many cooperating teachers value the personal relationship that develops between themselves and their student teachers, and they feel responsible for providing a positive learning environment. Influential cooperating teachers show “an affinity for developing a relationship based on respect, sharing, and mutual learning” (p. 8) with their student teachers.

Given the importance of cooperating teachers to novice teachers’ professional growth and the development of educational practice, it is essential to know more about their work. Clarke, Triggs, and Nielsen (2014) reviewed sixty years of research on North American cooperating
teachers’ roles. Describing their methods for reviewing the research, the authors drew upon Cornbleth and Ellsworth (1994) to recognize the period between 1960 and 1980 as one in which knowledge was presumed to come from scientific research and then was applied in practice. The literature from this period, therefore, showed “separation of university research and theory on one side and classroom practice on the other” (Cornbleth and Ellsworth, 1994, p. 59). Clarke et al. acknowledged that, during the 1980s, the “wisdom of [cooperating teachers’] practice” (p. 172) became evident as the university teacher education and schools associated more closely. Particularly due to the movement toward professional development schools (Holmes Group, 1986), schools were recognized as “places to inquire about how student teachers learn to teach” (Clarke et al., p. 172).

**Participation in Teacher Education**

Although they initially attempted to write their literature review chronologically, Clarke et al. (2014) eventually took a more pragmatic approach. Their thematic analysis included 11 different categories “that suggest[ed] the variety of ways that cooperating teachers participate in teacher education” (p. 174). Categories, according to the authors, were “situated practices that represent[ed] distinct forms of engagement with defined foci” (p. 174). In this section, I have included a summary of each category.
According to Clarke et al. (2014), examples of research featuring cooperating teachers as *providers of feedback* were pervasive. Although the literature suggested that cooperating teachers provided plentiful feedback, the information was often technical and narrow, and included closed-ended questions rather than open-ended ones. “Feedback that promote[d] deep and substantive reflection on practice by student teachers [was] rare” (p. 175).

In contrast, the authors were surprised to find few instances in the literature of cooperating teachers as *gatekeepers of the profession* who were responsible for the summative evaluation and grading of student teachers. They reported cooperating teachers’ apparent frustration because of a lack of direction for summative evaluation. Further, they suggested that Likert-type scales were most frequently used in summative evaluations, but they drew on Phelps, Schmitz, and Wade (1986) to express skepticism about the efficacy of such instruments, due to halo and leniency effects (Clarke et al., p. 176).

Clarke et al. (2014) proposed that modeling was one of the main mentoring strategies featured in the research literature on cooperating teachers. As *modelers of practice*, cooperating teachers expected their student teachers to observe their practices, but concerns arose “when the modeling of practice exists as the modus operandi in the absence of other practices” (pp. 177–178) to guide the student teacher’s growth.
The authors gleaned from research that the ideal cooperating teacher would model at the beginning of the practicum and then move towards other, more reflective mentoring practices.

Consequently, cooperating teachers also saw themselves as *supporters of reflection*, which was important in the literature because the cooperating teacher not only “broaden[ed] her or his impact on the student teacher” but also simultaneously enriched “his or her own learning” (pp. 178–179). Clarke et al. (2014) credited the work of Schön (1983, 1987) for a shift toward emphasis on reflective practice in teacher education. The authors suggested that this shift was a response “to educators’ earlier concerns about the technical, custodial, and managerial dimensions of teaching” (p. 178).

Clarke et al. (2014) claimed that the research literature portrayed schooling as a set of interconnected systems, and as *purveyors of context* for student teachers, cooperating teachers helped the student teacher sift through the complexities of those systems in order to keep the practicum experience from becoming overwhelming. By revealing the varied contexts gradually, depending on the needs of the student teacher, cooperating teachers allowed more learning opportunities. The authors reiterated that “flexibility and an ecological view of the practicum” (p. 179) were essential to this role.
Along with revealing the contexts of schooling, the cooperating teacher also acted as a *convener of relationship*, first between the student teacher and himself or herself, and then with others in the school setting. Clarke et al. (2014) drew on Haigh, Pinder, and McDonald (2006) to suggest that the cooperating teacher’s “strong relationship with the student teacher [w]as the key enabler for student teacher learning” (p. 180). The researchers further reported that a positive relationship between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher went beyond the day-to-day logistics of information sharing toward promoting relationships between the student teachers and pupils, parents, administrators, other teachers, and school staff.

In some cases according to Clarke et al. (2014), the cooperating teacher underestimate their powerful influence on the student teacher, yet the literature was replete with studies suggesting that cooperating teachers were the main *agents of socializing the student teachers into the profession*, affecting not only student teachers’ routines, but also their dispositions toward teaching. Further, cooperating teachers socialized student teachers through both explicit and implicit messages. Some studies, such as Huffman, Holifield, and Holifield (2003), suggested that cooperating teachers socialized the students in more conservative and bureaucratic ways than did the university.
In spite of emphases in the research literature on more abstract ideas such as reflection, context, and socialization, the literature suggested that cooperating teachers’ primary contribution to the student teaching practicum was daily hands-on experience. Clarke et al. (2014) claimed that the literature portrayed cooperating teachers excelling as advocates of the practical. Aspects of teaching such as lesson planning, classroom management, pacing, were clearly the domain of the cooperating teacher, but some researchers cautioned that a singular emphasis on the practical was detrimental because of its generality. Ideally, cooperating teachers would couple practicality with a reflective approach.

According to Clarke et al. (2014), much of the literature suggested that cooperating teachers volunteered as mentors to become better teachers themselves. As gleaners of knowledge, cooperating teachers used their service as a professional development opportunity. The authors claimed that cooperating teachers “place[d] a high value on their engagement with the university as a result of working with student teachers” (p. 184), and that they might not otherwise have been prompted to be so engaged. Clarke et al. pointed out that the literature on professional development schools made a strong case for cooperating teachers’ learning in the context of the practicum, as well as their relationship with the university.
The research literature revealed many hidden dimensions of mentoring student teachers, including interruption of class routines and displacement from one’s own classroom. Further, the literature revealed the cooperating teachers’ concealed emotions, including the expectation that they withhold judgment of the student teacher and consistently maintain a positive attitude. The authors indicated that a majority of cooperating teachers acted as *abiders of change* “without fuss or fanfare despite the impact it may have on them” (Clarke et al., p. 184); however, abiding change sometimes “mask[ed] the real impact (emotional and otherwise) of having a student teacher in one’s classroom” (p. 185).

There was no surprise in the final category of participation; “Cooperating teachers are first and foremost *teachers of children*” (Clarke et al., p. 185). However, the authors placed cooperating teachers’ commitment to their own students in tension with their commitment to the education profession. They enumerated findings from several studies in which cooperating teachers’ affiliation as teacher educators provided support for student learning, but they discovered other researchers who showed that when mentoring a student teacher conflicted with students’ learning, cooperating teachers were likely to avoid serving in the future. Clarke et al. suggested that acknowledging the cooperating teacher’s dedication to his or her own students’ was an important step to consider when inviting teachers to serve as mentors (p. 186).
Research Problem: Who are Cooperating Teachers?

Clarke et al. (2014) provide a robust thematic analysis of 60 years of research literature, and their categories of participation in teacher education help readers understand the multifaceted nature of cooperating teachers’ work. The authors go on, however, to discuss the nature of cooperating teachers participation in relation to the authority of the university, underscoring that “classroom teachers who supervise student teachers on practicum are regarded as cooperating with the university” (p. 187, italics in original). Clarke et al. conceptualize the nature of cooperating teachers’ participation through Gaventa’s (2007) typology of participation. There are three elements to Gaventa’s typology: a closed element, where an authoritative partner makes all the decisions about how others will participate; an invited element, where participation is negotiated; and a claimed element, where others decide independently how to participate. Clarke et al. place their 11 categories of participation on a continuum from closed to claimed: “Provision of Feedback, Gatekeepers of the Profession, and Modeling of Practice [are] normative expectations established by universities. . . . rarely open to discussion or negotiation” (pp. 188–189). At the other end of the continuum, Agents of Socialization, Advocates of the Practical, Gleaners of Knowledge, and Abiders of Change “are more strongly claimed by the cooperating
teachers” (p. 190), and Teachers of Children “is the most strongly claimed by cooperating teachers of all the 11 categories” (p. 190).

For purposes of their review, Clarke et al. (2014) are concerned with preserving the authority of the university for student teacher preparation, but in doing so, they focus readers’ attention on what cooperating teachers do, rather than on who cooperating teachers are. Although their claimed categories of participation offer some clues about cooperating teachers’ identities, Clarke et al. are uninterested in the question: who do cooperating teachers say they are?

Because of my work as a music cooperating teacher and the lack of guidance I received from the university, my identity as a teacher educator has developed through experience, and often through trial and error. I have consulted informally with others who also served as cooperating teachers, and I have read scholarship, becoming knowledgeable about teacher education research. With Clarke et al. (2014), I acknowledge that my role in teacher education is one of cooperating with the university, but the stories I tell about myself as a teacher educator seldom include university faculty, except when I describe the opportunities I had as an undergraduate. Given my personal experience, I am interested in understanding how other music cooperating teachers tell stories of themselves as teacher educators.
Who are they in these stories? Which persons and contexts influence their identity stories?

**Teachers’ Storied Identities**

Connelly and Clandinin “became fascinated with trying to understand teachers as knowers: knowers of themselves, of their situations, of children, of subject matter, of teaching, of learning” (1999, p. 1). In their earliest research, Connelly and Clandinin (1988) coined the term, *personal practical knowledge*, which they defined as:

> A term designed to capture the idea of experience in a way that allows us to talk about teachers as knowledgeable and knowing persons. Personal practical knowledge is in the teacher’s past experience, in the teacher’s present mind and body, and in the future plans and actions. Personal practical knowledge is found in the teacher’s practice. (p. 25)

Important to the authors’ early work was situating personal practical knowledge temporally, with a “reconstructed past,” a present practice, and “intention of the future” (p. 25).

As their research continued, Connelly and Clandinin moved towards thinking of teachers’ knowledge as a *professional knowledge landscape*, which was not only by personal in nature, but also social. The authors characterized a professional knowledge landscape as comprising the in-classroom place and the out-of-classroom place. The out-of-classroom place was described as “a place filled with knowledge funneled into the school system for the purpose of altering teachers’ and
children’s classroom lives. . . . It [was] a place filled with other people’s visions about what is right for children” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1996, p. 25). In contrast, in-classroom places were:

For the most part, safe places, generally free from scrutiny, where teachers are free to live stories of practice. These lived stories are essentially secret ones. Furthermore, when these secret lived stories are told, they are, for the most part, told to other teachers in other secret places. (p. 25)

Connelly and Clandinin perceived tensions between the in-classroom space and out-of-classroom space on the professional knowledge landscape. They found that, when teachers moved from the in to the out-of-classroom space, they often told “cover stories, stories in which they portray[ed] themselves as experts, certain characters whose teacher stories fit within the acceptable range of the story of school being lived in the school” (p. 25). The researchers viewed cover stories as “necessary deceptions” in light of education researchers’ and policy makers’ “sacred stories,” which teachers were supposed to receive as curricular prescription (p. 28).

Consequently, Connelly and Clandinin (1996) turned their exploration to the question, “How is teacher knowledge shaped by the professional knowledge landscape in which teachers work?” (p. 29), but they noticed that teachers were asking subtly different questions:
In teacher inquiry groups, and in research meetings, teachers were more inclined to ask questions along the lines of “Who am I in this situation?” . . . Teachers seemed more concerned to ask questions of who they are than of what they know. (Connelly and Clandinin, 1999, p. 3)

Teachers were asking identity questions. So, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) puzzled about how to link knowledge, context, and identity. They developed one further term to describe their puzzling, which was “stories to live by” (p. 4). This term indicated a turn towards thinking of teachers’ identities as narrative constructions.

That take shape as life unfolds, and that may . . . solidify into a fixed entity . . . or they may continue to grow and change. They may even be, indeed, almost certainly are, multiple depending on the situations in which one finds oneself . . . Different facets, different identities, can show up, be reshaped and take on new life in different landscape settings. (p. 95)

**Narrative Identity Theorized**

Clandinin and Caine (2012) noted that the concept of stories to live by was, in part, grounded in the work of Bruner (1987; 1991; 2002), who claimed that stories were the building blocks of human experience and were the ingredients that make up “self.” The creation of self, Bruner argued, was one of the most intricate and impressive things that humans produced. “For we create not just one self-making story but many of them . . . The job is to get them all into one identity, and to get them lined up over time” (Bruner, 2002, p. 14). Bruner suggested:
There is no such thing as an intuitively obvious and essential self to know, one that just sits there ready to be portrayed in words. Rather, we constantly construct and reconstruct ourselves to meet the needs of the situation we encounter, and we do so with the guidance of our memories of the past and our hopes and fears of the future. (p. 64)

Self-making was constructed from both the inside and outside, according to Bruner. The inside included feelings, beliefs, and memories. Self-making from the outside, however, was based on the views and perceptions of others as well as the expectations of the culture in which the person was situated (Bruner, 2002, p. 65). These self-making stories accumulated and changed over time and in accordance with circumstances. According to Bruner (2002) “telling others about ourselves is, then, no simple matter. It depends on what we think they think we ought to be like” (p. 66, italics in original).

Bruner drew on Ricoeur for several ideas about narrative identity. In 1986, Ricoeur delivered lectures at the University of Edinburgh entitled *On Selfhood: The Question of Personal Identity*, and the compilation of lectures was eventually published as *Oneself as Another* (1992). Ricoeur distinguished between two aspects of identity: *ipse* and *idem*. *Ipse* literally means self and Ricoeur referred to *ipse*-identity as selfhood, or individuality—an identity that was situated. It was the answer to the question, *who am I in these circumstances?* *Idem* literally means same, and Ricoeur referred to *idem*-identity as sameness or
character. Although an identity story might highlight varied qualities or capacities when it was a situated story, *idem*-identity was the sameness or constant character that identified the self. It was the answer to the question, *what am I?* Ricoeur (1992) puzzled between these two aspects of identity: “it is with the question of permanence in time that the confrontation between our two versions of identity becomes a genuine problem” (p. 116).

Narrative identity, then, was the mediator between selfhood and sameness. Narrative allowed humans to understand their identities like a story plot; it drew seemingly unrelated elements, such as aims, projects, and actions into a coherent whole. According to Ricoeur, “the narrative constructs the identity of the character, what can be called his or her narrative identity, in constructing that of the story told. It is the identity of the story that makes the identity of the character” (1992, pp. 147–148). Similar to Bruner, Ricoeur viewed narrative identity as contingent and always open to revision.

In *Oneself as Another*, however, Ricoeur (1992) took up the relationship between self and other. In narrative, the recognition of self referred to not only itself, but to other. Ricoeur explained that narrative self-identities were intertwined with others’ narrative identities; others appeared as characters in our narratives, as we appeared in theirs, and not always in a preferred way. Furthermore, through interactions with
others, we took part in authoring their narratives, as they took part in authoring ours.

The complicated relationships among and between self-identity and other-identities prompted Ricoeur to highlight the ethical dimension of narrative identity. He suggested that the unity of one’s narrative was brought about through recognition of and responsiveness toward others, and in later writing (1996), he suggested three models for integration of narratives. First, Ricoeur suggested that translation of others’ stories into our own terms was a gesture of “linguistic hospitality” (p. 5). Through translation, we would not only recognize the other, but we would also open up possibilities for our own narratives to be realized differently. Second, Ricoeur suggested integration of narratives by way of “the exchange of memories,” such as when our parents share stories of what we were like as young children. Sharing in such a way might legitimize narratives or might refashion them (p. 7). Finally, Ricoeur recommended going beyond sharing memories to an interaction of forgiveness. When we forgive, we free the other’s character from debts of the past that have, perhaps, been a constant reminder of unfulfilled promise. “Forgiveness” offers the gift of new possibility for the other’s narrative (p. 10).

conception of teachers’ stories to live by? Furthermore, how can these theories be brought to bear in an examination of cooperating teacher identity? First, in all three theories, identities are narrative constructions; that is, identities are structured as stories with characters and a plot. Second, the theorists suggest that identities, as narratives, are multiple, situated, and contingent constructions, yet in these theories, narratives bring past, present, and future together. Stories told in a present moment recall and sometimes reconstruct past experiences in order to anticipate the future. Finally, all suggest that narrative identities are constructed not only through individual self-reflection and memory, but also are shaped through interactions with others. Connelly and Clandinin posit that influence of others results in particular story-types, such as “sacred stories,” “secret stories,” and “cover stories.” In contrast, Ricoeur theorizes interaction with the other as an ethical encounter whereby identity may be freed and re-imagined.

**Need for the Study**

I have served as a cooperating teacher for music student teachers throughout the past seven years, and as a gleaner of knowledge, I have wondered about other cooperating teachers’ practices and identities as teacher educators. Although Clarke et al. (2014) offer strong evidence of cooperating teachers’ participation in teacher education, their framework positions the university as the authority for the student teaching
practicum. The stories I tell of myself as a teacher educator seldom include the university. Thus, the personal justification for this inquiry is that I am challenged to see myself in the research literature.

Clarke et al. (2014) reviewed 60 years of research on cooperating teachers, but within this large body of research, only two studies were focused upon music cooperating teachers (Draves, 2008; Stegman, 2007). Clandinin and Caine (2012) claim that studies of cooperating teachers exist in a teacher education research “borderland” (p. 174), and if their claim is true, studies of music cooperating teachers are distanced even further. The practical justification thus is similar to the personal justification. It seems likely that few music cooperating teachers have an opportunity to see themselves in the research literature, yet the research literature shows that cooperating teachers may be the most important influence on student teachers, and consequently, they have a substantial influence on classroom practices.

Within the vast body of research on cooperating teachers, only a small number of researchers have been interested in the stories that cooperating teachers tell to make sense of themselves in their roles as teacher educators, how those stories are shaped through time and through interaction with others, and which interactions seem to influence the teacher educator identities of cooperating teachers. This study is theoretically justified by acknowledging Bruner’s (2002) self-
making, Connelly and Clandinin’s (1999) stories to live by, and Ricoeur’s (1992; 1996) narrative identity, all of which include claims that identity stories are situated, mobile, and contingent. By gathering evidence of music cooperating teachers’ narrative identities, I can provide a model of research from the cooperating teacher’s perspective, from which other teacher educators can learn and enrich the contexts of music teacher education.

**Purpose and Guiding Questions**

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the identities of music cooperating teachers as narrative constructions, and to examine the social and institutional contexts in which those narratives are shaped. The following questions guided the study:

- What kinds of stories do music cooperating teachers tell to make sense of themselves as teacher educators?
- Who are the music cooperating teachers in these stories?
- How are the past, present and future of the music cooperating teachers related in the stories?
- How are music cooperating teachers’ stories related to others’ stories?
  - Who are others in the stories?
  - Who is absent from the stories?
How do music cooperating teachers describe interactions with influential others?

**Orientation to the Study**

In this chapter, I have shared the beginning of my own story as a cooperating teacher, used a review of literature (Clarke et al., 2014) on cooperating teachers to claim that the authority of the university for student teacher preparation has been preserved in what we know about cooperating teachers as teacher educators. I suggested that there is a need to understand who music cooperating teachers say they are when they speak of themselves as music teacher educators, and I recommended a narrative identity framework by which such understanding could be developed. In the following chapter, I review literature associated with who becomes a cooperating teacher, practices of cooperating teachers, what defines successful mentoring of student teachers, roles of cooperating teachers, and identities of cooperating teachers. Finally in this chapter, I review the small number of studies on music cooperating teachers. In Chapter 3, I provide a detailed account of methods of narrative inquiry employed in this study, emphasizing the co-construction of research texts. Chapter 4 begins with an acknowledgement that identity stories are works in progress and therefore challenging to present in standard research forms. Consequently, I use a novella to depict music cooperating teachers’
narrative identities. In Chapter 5, I interpret and reflect on the novella in terms of the research questions, and in Chapter 6 suggest the implications of this narrative inquiry for future research and music teacher education practice.
Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Introduction

My aim in the current study is to highlight the voices of music cooperating teachers as I explore their narrative identities as teacher educators. Zeichner (2010) is among several researchers who have described a disconnect between the university and the school classroom, pointing out that cooperating teachers seldom know what their student teachers learn in foundations and methods courses, and that cooperating teachers rarely are compensated for taking on the responsibilities of teacher education in addition to classroom teaching. Such a disconnection, Zeichner reasons, leads cooperating teachers to sense acutely the “valorization of academic knowledge as the authoritative source of knowledge for learning about teaching” (p. 92). Not surprisingly, the disconnection also results in silencing cooperating teachers’ perspectives and voices in the teacher education research literature.

Although there were no studies that served specifically as precedent for my research, there were ways to narrow the research I reviewed. Zeichner (2010) referred to “a growing consensus that much of what teachers need to learn must be learned in and from practice” (p. 91), and he cited authors such as Ball and Cohen (1999) for practice-
based conceptions of learning to teach. I was interested in research on cooperating teachers from the period where this consensus on practice-based teaching grew, so I reviewed studies published from 1995 to present. Like Clarke et al. (2014), I was interested in North American conceptions of the student teaching practicum and the well-established influence of the cooperating teacher on practicum experiences. I eliminated from consideration all studies on the student teaching triad (student teacher-cooperating teacher-university supervisor), and concentrated my attention on research where a significant portion was devoted exclusively to the cooperating teacher. Specifically, I was interested in who becomes a cooperating teacher, what cooperating teachers do in the practice of mentoring student teachers, conceptions of successful mentoring, if they existed, and roles that might influence cooperating teacher identities. The practices and identities of music cooperating teachers were most closely related to the current study, but only a few researchers have examined music cooperating teachers and their practices specifically. I reviewed those studies separately from other literature.

Who Becomes a Cooperating Teacher?

Although there are some instances of research about the criteria that universities use to select cooperating teachers, there was only one example in the literature referring to who might choose to become a
cooperating teacher. The study categorized cooperating teachers in terms of those who were advocates for teacher education or for specific university programs, those who were detractors from teacher education or specific university programs, and those who wanted to receive something tangible out of the experience, such as monetary reward or professional development. These categories were framed from an outsider's perspective; they offered no information about self-described identities of teachers who became mentors, and little insight into the intrinsic satisfaction or difficulties associated with mentoring.

Because so little evidence had been uncovered about the kinds of teachers who choose to mentor student teachers, Sinclair, Dowson, and Thistleton-Martin (2006) investigated the motivations of cooperating teachers and questioned why they volunteered to mentor. The researchers argued, “knowing something about the present status of teachers who take practicum students, and why they do so, is an important starting point for identifying new practicum teachers” (p. 273). Analysis of practicing teachers’ responses to a questionnaire helped the researchers categorize respondents as a booster, guzzler, or enticer.

Boosters were those who agreed to mentor student teachers. Their primary motivation was to ensure better quality beginning teachers, so they viewed themselves as helping preservice teachers experience the real world of teaching, sharing their knowledge of teaching, and enabling
student teachers to put their learning from university classes into practice. Boosters also chose to be mentors because they believed the experience would benefit their own professional development and because they received payment.

In contrast, guzzlers avoided mentoring student teachers, primarily because they were ineligible to mentor a student teacher or they were too busy. Other reasons guzzlers avoided student teachers were: (a) they believed student teachers were generally unprepared for the practicum experience, (b) they had previously hosted a student teacher and wanted a break, or (c) they had not been asked to mentor a student teacher. Some also believed that they should wait to accept a student teacher until universities produced better guidelines or expectations for student teachers.

Enticers were looking for awards, such as: (a) more time to work with a student teacher, (b) greater payment for mentoring, (c) additional teaching experience, (d) additional mentor training, (e) release from responsibilities at school, or (f) a specific, higher quality student teacher. Sinclair et al. expressed, “the enticers may provide the framework within which teachers’ boosters are maximised and their guzzlers minimised” (p. 273).
Practices of Cooperating Teachers

Within the parameters of the research literature reviewed for this study, the majority of studies were formulated to investigate mentoring practices. Becoming reflective, fostering student teachers’ reflective practice, and relationship building were central themes found within the literature; however few studies offered insights into how cooperating teachers initially acquired practices, or how their practices evolved over time. Most of the research was conducted by university faculty looking in on and making judgments about cooperating teachers’ practice, and one study examined university faculty member teaching a specific practice of student teacher supervision. Nevertheless, among the studies was one collaborative self-study where cooperating teachers attempted to make their practices, and the critical thinking underlying those practices, visible.

As part of a larger Learning to Teach Mathematics (LTTM) study that examined processes of learning to teach from student teacher, cooperating teacher, and university perspectives, Borko and Mayfield (1995) examined nine conferences between mathematics student teachers and their cooperating teachers. In each case, the student teacher had complained that the cooperating teacher did not give much feedback. All student teachers were placed in a school district that
followed the Hunter Mastery Teaching model (1982; 1991), and three of the cooperating teachers discussed the extent to which student teachers were incorporating the model. Classroom management also was discussed in three conferences. In each of the nine conferences the cooperating teacher and student teacher discussed students, especially students who were misbehaving. Mathematics-specific pedagogy also was discussed in each of the nine conferences, mainly including general strategies such as flashcards; however one conference was more detailed, where the cooperating teacher offered specific strategies to the student teacher. Borko and Mayfield pointed out that cooperating teacher and student teacher rarely “discussed students’ understanding or possible misunderstanding of particular topics” (p. 506).

Borko and Mayfield continued by surveying the cooperating teachers about how a person learns to teach. Most responded that, to teach children, one needs experience. The researchers also asked about the conferences and the cooperating teachers’ relationships with their student teachers. Whereas several of the cooperating teachers expressed that it was their responsibility to play an active role in the student teacher’s growth and learning, others did not consider their feedback to be an important element of learning to teach. The researchers surmised that those cooperating teachers who were more in-depth, specific, and were engaged in speaking for a longer amount of time in their
conferences also felt they were influential on the student teachers’ learning.

Kent (2001) was the teacher of a graduate course designed for experienced classroom teachers who wanted to supervise a student teacher. In that course, students learned a specific model of clinical supervision, involving (a) cooperating teachers’ reflection on their own practice with the goal of helping student teachers do the same; (b) enhancing cooperating teachers’ ability to establish relationships of trust with student teachers; and (c) developing cooperating teachers’ proficiency with the cycle of pre-observation conference, observation, and post-observation conference. During the graduate course, cooperating teachers practiced recording observations while watching videos of classroom instruction. They also watched video of successful and unsuccessful mentoring conferences and role-played supervision conferences.

Kent then followed 16 of the teachers during the quarter in which they supervised a student teacher. At the end of the quarter, Kent interviewed each of the cooperating teachers asking how closely their supervision resembled their plans at the end of the graduate course, and what they would change for their next student teachers. The results of the study revealed that the participants were enthusiastic about implementing clinical supervision; however, they were surprised that
they did not implement clinical supervision cycles as often as they had planned. If a cooperating teacher previously had been evaluated by a supervisor or principal who used clinical supervision techniques, they were more favorable toward implementing clinical supervision and completed a greater number of clinical cycles than those cooperating teachers who had never experienced clinical supervision. Participants also noted fewer clinical cycles as the practicum progressed due to the gradual improvement and confidence of the student teacher.

One advantage to clinical supervision, as perceived by the participants, was that they felt less judgmental in supervision. Furthermore, clinical supervision assisted the student teachers in recognizing ineffective behaviors before they became major problems. Finally, the cooperating teacher gained insights about their students from their written observations of student teachers’ lessons. Disadvantages included the time-consuming nature of clinical supervision, and spending energy on areas of improvement that did not require clinical supervision. Teachers were frustrated by having to refrain from direct intervention when student teachers were having difficulty, and remaining objective in their written observations. Participants in this study, after participating in clinical supervision, were reminded of the need for student teachers to learn from their own mistakes. Ultimately, cooperating teachers found clinical supervision to
be valuable to the student teaching experience, yet they found it difficult to arrange the time necessary to implement.

Through the method of collaborative self-study, Montecinos et al. (2001), a group of mentor teachers, attempted to make their practices more visible. This was one of a small number of studies where cooperating teachers described and analyzed their own practices, and they self-consciously revealed the critical reasoning underlying such practices. Several themes emerged from the self-study: the mentor teachers recognized that they should attend to the learning expectations of the student teacher without imposing their own expectations, at least in the initial stages of the student teaching experience. They also deliberated about how they could recognize each student teacher’s unique values and beliefs without becoming too involved in their personal lives. Several of the mentors found it easy to provide technical advice, but they were less secure about how to provide emotional support necessary for the student teachers to develop self-confidence. Some mentors recognized that, in their conferences with student teachers, they tended to provide solutions, rather than helping the student teacher raise questions that fostered the student teacher’s self-reflection. Finally, the mentors collaboratively generated a protocol for weekly meetings with student teachers to help their conversation move from anecdote to deeper pedagogical abstractions and generalization. The
authors postulated that mentoring student teachers is a multidimensional task, and they recommended collaborative self-study as a way to become “more purposeful” in “pedagogical decisions” (p. 792).

Examining critical teaching incidents, or unanticipated incidents of student teaching, Post (2007) found that cooperating teachers responded to student teachers in one of six ways: (a) ignore, (b) intervene, (c) interject, (d) interact, (e) interrupt, and (d) intercept. Cooperating teachers ignored critical incidents in order to provide a sense of authority for the student teacher. Students in the class were more likely to believe that the student teacher was in charge. Intervening during a critical incident was a means for the cooperating teacher to help with an event that the student teacher overlooked, without disrupting the pace or flow of the lesson. An interjection provided an opportunity for the cooperating teacher to jump quickly in or out of the flow of the lesson to support the student teacher. Interaction was the most common method of response to the student teacher and involved either verbally or non-verbally focusing the student teacher’s attention on a distinct event. An interruption disrupted the flow of the lesson and was intended to gain the attention of the student teacher as well as the students. For instance, an interruption might be used to discuss an important point or rule that was of high importance in the moment. Finally, when a cooperating teacher intercepted, the intention was to take over the lesson.
for the remainder of the class. Post found that, although interception might occur for a variety of reasons, it often left the student teacher feeling disappointed and incompetent.

**Reflective practice.** As a specific form of cooperating teacher practice, Clarke (2006) was interested in the reflective practices that cooperating teachers utilized during advisory meetings. The author used a modified stimulated recall approach to viewing video recordings of the cooperating teachers’ advisory practices. The approach allowed cooperating teachers to “frame and reframe what was significant about their practice[s]” (p. 911) while they watched a video of a post-lesson conference with a student teacher. The author found that the most common topic discussed as cooperating teachers reflected was feedback as a type of advisory process. Garry, one of the participants, based his feedback on active listening. He refrained from intervening as his student teachers reflected on their experiences. He expressed that this procedure allowed his student teachers to develop their own teaching style. At the same time, Garry noticed that active listening procedures masked his personality. Sensing the limitations to his practice, Garry reframed active listening as a loss of his voice in the student teaching process, and he decided that it was necessary to make and share judgments about his student teacher’s work (pp. 913–914). The other type of framing and reframing that occurred in the study was making
sense of the student teachers’ teaching practices, such as their attempts to establish a teacher presence or their choice of an ‘academic’ approach to teaching. This study was part of a larger study that compared student teachers’ reflective practice with cooperating teachers’ reflective practice, and Clarke found that “the study support[ed] the contention that reflection [was] often born of incidents but [was] thematic in nature” (p. 920).

**What Makes Mentoring Effective or Successful?**

Although only three studies were included in this section, there were stark differences in the researchers’ approaches. Kahn (2001) and Fairbanks, Freedman, and Kahn (2000) sought to define “success” and “effectiveness” from the perspective of the cooperating teacher in order to provide models for future student teaching practicum. Their assumption was that the success of mentoring was located in a relationship between cooperating teacher and student teacher. Glenn (2006), in contrast, looked for successful qualities within the person of the cooperating teacher. The researcher’s intent was to help universities choose the most qualified individuals to serve in the role of cooperating teacher.

Kahn (2001) interviewed 20 secondary-level teachers who had served as cooperating teachers for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign across several academic subject areas and with varied backgrounds. Analyzing interview data, Kahn reported that cooperating
teachers considered the student teaching experience a success when a mutual learning relationship between themselves and the student teacher was established. Several of the cooperating teachers in the study expressed that they were team teaching with their student teachers by the conclusion of their placements. Kahn claimed, however, that “the university or those representing the university” (p. 54) were absent from comments about success, although he found that cooperating teachers hoped for greater collaboration with universities. In particular, cooperating teachers “wanted to be more informed about methods course content and they wanted to act as a consultant to the methods instructors” (p. 55). Like many other studies from this teacher education reform period, Kahn suggested that hearing more from cooperating teachers would lead to a better understanding of the student teaching experience and greater collaboration between universities and schools.

Fairbanks, Freedman, and Kahn (2000) conducted a study of the Effective Mentoring in English Education project, where 15 experienced teachers and their student teachers documented and shared their experiences of effective mentoring. Data included dialogue journals, interviews, video of a mentoring conference for each pair, and artifacts. Analyzing the data, researchers deduced three kinds of support that mentors provided for student teachers: First, the student teachers initially were overwhelmed with the complexities of teaching, yet the
mentor teachers welcomed student teachers into their classrooms, introduced them to other school personnel and offered advice about balancing their duties. Through these gestures, the mentors helped student teachers move from a sense of barely surviving to a sense of themselves as professionals. Second, although mentor teachers initially struggled, they all eventually provided student teachers with access to the reasoning underlying their classroom practices. Practices ranged from a multicultural approach to literature to classroom management. The researchers wrote that mentor teachers wanted to foster student teachers’ professional growth, but they had to maintain a “delicate balance between leading, following, supporting, and challenging.” (p. 108). Third, as the student teaching placement progressed, the cooperating teachers and student teachers moved into collaborative relationships. They built upon one another’s lesson plans, teaching units jointly, and cooperating teachers came to believe that they could learn something from their student teachers. Fairbanks et al. concluded, “effective mentors become companions on new teachers’ journeys.” (p. 111).

In contrast, Glenn (2006) sought to deduce the qualities of an effective cooperating teacher, rather than determine successful or effective mentoring practices. After analyzing data from field notes of observations, interviews with cooperating teachers and student teachers,
and artifacts from the student teaching placements, Glenn found that “effective mentors collaborate rather than dictate, relinquish an appropriate level of control, allow for personal relationships, share constructive feedback, and accept differences” (p. 88). Glenn revealed that both cooperating teacher-student teacher pairs worked as a team in supportive relationships, but establishing those relationships was not always easy or direct. Both cooperating teachers struggled with relinquishing appropriate control, in that they seldom left the room. Cindy often allowed her student teacher primary authority while teaching, but she jumped in when necessary. Joan developed an elaborate system of eye signals to let her student teacher know when she was on track. Joan’s presence always was known, and she never fully relinquished control. Cindy enjoyed developing a friendship with her student teacher and even commented that she had “gained a daughter” (p. 91). Joan mentioned that she and her student teacher were “friendly but not friends” (p. 91), and they maintained a more distant relationship. Finally, Glenn found that “constructive feedback must be honest feedback” (p. 91), and both cooperating teachers excelled at providing immediate verbal feedback, as well as written feedback to their student teachers. Notably, both student teachers commented that their future classrooms would not be like their cooperating teachers’ classrooms; however, neither student teacher would have changed their placement if
given an opportunity. Glenn surmised that her research might not represent a full picture of effective mentoring, but the qualities she deduced could serve as a guide for selection of cooperating teachers.

**Roles of Cooperating Teachers**

Like studies on the practices of cooperating teachers, there is a substantial amount of research on the roles of cooperating teachers, but researchers adopted both theoretical and practical perspectives on the concept of *role*. Beck and Kosnik (2000) acknowledged two distinct theoretical models, which in turn pointed toward historical divisions between universities and schools concerning student teaching. Although the researchers found that cooperating teachers favored a practical initiation model of student teaching, they nonetheless concluded that many criticisms of that model were unwarranted. Through interviews with 25 cooperating teachers, Graham (2006) categorized cooperating teachers’ roles in two practical ways: as model or as mentor. These two categorizations were similar to Beck and Kosnik’s theoretical conceptions; however, Graham found that either role could be successful within the student teaching practicum. Arnold (2002) and Weasmer and Woods (2003) arrived at similar conclusions about cooperating teachers’ perspectives of themselves as models, mentors, and guides for student teachers. Because Arnold conducted a self-study, she provided some insight into cooperating teachers’ initial fear of taking on such important
roles. Departing from other research, Bullough and Draper (2004) were interested in the emotional landscape of the student teaching internship, and therefore described cooperating teachers’ roles in terms of the emotional support they provided to student teachers.

Finally, Butler and Cuenca (2012) conducted an extensive review of literature on mentoring roles. They took the position that, although the role of the mentor teacher (cooperating teacher) in the student teaching practicum was essential, it had been approached idiosyncratically. The researchers intended to reduce the complexities of mentoring by providing only three conceptualizations of the mentor teacher role. Butler and Cuenca characterized this body of literature accurately when they acknowledged the complexity of the cooperating teacher’s multiple roles; however, in researchers’ attempts to reduce complexity, they often have silenced cooperating teacher voices.

Acknowledging that cooperating teachers were crucial to preservice teacher education, Beck and Kosnik (2000) nonetheless admitted that there was little consensus about their role. Two broad conceptions of the role came to the fore: In the *practical initiation model*, the student teaching placement is conceived as an apprenticeship. There were variations within this approach, with some believing that the master teacher should be sympathetic while others advocate a tougher, ‘sink or swim’ approach. In the *critical interventionist model* the cooperating
teacher’s role was to “encourage student teachers to question current practices and develop more appropriate alternatives” (p. 208). Beck and Kosnik demonstrated that this role brought theory and practice into a dialogic relationship and promoted team teaching between the cooperating teacher and student teacher. The authors conceded that university researchers favored this conception of the cooperating teacher’s role because it was consistent with teacher education reform. However, Beck and Kosnik suggested that the lack of clarity and agreement regarding the role of the cooperating teacher was a practical, rather than a theoretical problem.

So, over a period of two years, Beck and Kosnik conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 cooperating teachers in six partner schools. They did not report all the findings of their research, but instead chose to report “new findings not evident in the research literature” (p. 211). First, cooperating teachers found their role professionally satisfying, they learned from their student teachers, and they believed that pupils in their classrooms learned more when two teachers were available. Second, cooperating teachers approached student teaching in a practical manner; however, this approach was purposeful, intended to reveal the complexities of teaching. Additionally, the cooperating teachers were appreciative of their role because it kept them in touch with current educational theory and terminology. The
researchers suggested that criticism about a purely practical approach might be unwarranted. Third, and in sharp contrast with the research literature, Beck and Kosnik found that cooperating teachers were supportive of their student teachers, and at the same time were directive. Cooperating teachers expected that student teachers would put in more than the number of hours required to derive the most benefit from the experience. Cooperating teachers were in conflict with university supervisors on this point; university supervisors expected student teachers to have more time to observe and reflect and more freedom to explore. Finally, Beck and Kosnik found that cooperating teachers resisted additional professional development that might help them become better teacher educators. Although the cooperating teachers believed that professional development was necessary, they believed that their administrators and school systems would not provide the resources for it. This led the researchers to conclude that the role of cooperating teacher should be recognized and rewarded within school systems and universities. “Selection for the role should be seen as an honor and celebrated” (p. 222).

Graham (2006) interviewed 25 cooperating teachers and learned about their experiences in successful student teaching internships. The author discovered two types of cooperating teachers: maestros and mentors. Maestros “loved teaching” and hoped their student teachers
would also learn to love performance in the classroom. They focused on “readily observable aspects of teaching” and “technical skills” (p. 1126). They viewed their role as providing “a strong model of teaching practice” (p. 1126) and subsequently providing feedback to the student teacher. In other words, maestros “viewed the internship as a time to replicate procedures and ways of thinking” (p. 1126). Mentors, in contrast, viewed teaching as “multidimensional and recursive” and their interactions with student teachers were dialogic. They discussed and analyzed “classroom events and observations with their student interns” (p. 1126). Graham claimed that mentors “understood that transforming content knowledge from college courses into ‘pedagogical content knowledge’ require[d] time and effort” (p. 1127).

In another self-study directly revealing a cooperating teacher’s reflections, Arnold (2002) formed a study group to research the role of cooperating teacher and mentor. The author was anxious about serving as a cooperating teacher, and she initially felt intimidated that she was considered an expert teacher. She revealed that some of her student teacher’s questions were “my own unanswered questions that I wished I had someone to help me with” (p. 126). The five study group participants discussed the roles of a cooperating teacher using words like mentor, model, guide, facilitator, and support. They believed that through serving as a cooperating teacher, they reflected more on their own teaching,
began to consider new ideas, became more prepared to help other student teachers, and experienced a boost in confidence. Becoming a cooperating teacher provided a meaningful opportunity for professional growth and a “purposeful focus for thoughtful reflection” (p. 130). Arnold concluded: “In the long run, being a cooperating teacher wasn’t extra effort; it was a better effort that proved beneficial to the students, my colleagues, and to me” (p. 130).

Weasmer and Woods (2003) investigated cooperating teachers’ perspectives on their roles. The 28 cooperating teachers who participated in the study represented a broad range of disciplines and levels of schooling. Similar to other studies, researchers found that cooperating teachers saw themselves as models, mentors, and guides. Models were those who expected student teachers to imitate their practices. The authors suggested, “In striving to be an effective model an educator becomes more reflective on her or his practices” (p. 175). Mentors intervened in student teaching through observation, taking notes, and setting new goals with student teachers, and guides consistently gave feedback to their student teachers, but they found it unrealistic for the student teacher to duplicate their practices exactly.

Departing from other research on cooperating teachers, Bullough and Draper (2004) were interested in emotions associated with the student teaching internship. They used weekly email questionnaires and
recorded conversations between mentor teachers and intern teachers to investigate “mentors’ experiences of mentoring” (p. 271). The data revealed that mentors highlighted their roles as therapists, coaches, and protectors. As therapists, mentors were aware that interns needed empathy and emotional support; however, sometimes acting empathetically became a burden. Mentors portrayed interns as consistently in crisis, which required a great deal of time for intervention and made “an already busy schedule even busier and more stressful” (p. 279). Bullough and Draper commented that, as coaches, mentor teachers were assumed to be experts; however, “through mentoring, the mentors became increasingly aware of their own inadequacies” (p. 280). Some mentors found it difficult to provide criticism to interns who were not receptive. Furthermore, knowing when to give critical feedback was a challenge; most mentors feared that they would be perceived as “pushy and overbearing” and they struggled with how much “space” to give their interns (pp. 281–282). Finally, formal evaluation figured into the coaching role. Mentors felt that it was necessary to distance themselves from the student teachers in order to provide a fair evaluation. The mentors in the study, much like “mother tigers” (p. 283), protected their interns from unkind parents and administrators; however, the mentors sometimes had to protect the interns from themselves, particularly when
the intern held expectations for himself or herself that were unrealistic or unattainable.

Analyzing the emotions revealed through these mentoring roles, Bullough and Draper discovered that, although mentors found their roles stressful, they enjoyed mentoring “not because mentoring was easy, but because it was difficult” (p. 284). The researchers also found that mentors held onto images of “proper” mentoring, and measured themselves against that image (p. 285). This lead to emotional masking, because the mentors believed that, to be professional, they should be distant and detached from intern supervision. One unanticipated benefit of the study was the development of a mentor support group, where the mentors could reveal their emotional involvement in supervising interns.

In an extensive review of the literature, Butler and Cuenca (2012) described the roles of mentor [cooperating] teachers conceptually. Through analysis of research literature, the authors hoped to develop common language about the roles of mentor teachers, and thus take a “step toward coherence in preservice teacher preparation” (p. 305). Butler and Cuenca surveyed research literature on student teacher mentoring dating from 1995 to 2012, similar to the current study, and they identified three roles: instructional coaches, emotional support systems, and socializing agents.
The authors showed that, as instructional coaches, mentor teachers “observe and evaluate instructional practice and provide constructive feedback aimed at . . . helping pre-service teachers refine practice, deepen collegiality, increase professional dialogue, and think more deeply about their work” (p. 299). Butler and Cuenca noted, “despite the implicit hierarchical assumption that experience equals expertise, instructional coaches often mentor by assisting, and not prescribing, practice” (p. 299). The authors referred to Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1993) who described mentors as “educational companions” (Butler & Cuenca, p. 300) who help preservice teachers reflect on their experiences.

Butler and Cuenca found several studies suggesting that mentor teachers’ support and assist preservice teachers, rather than making judgments about them; the authors described this as an emotional support system. The authors claimed that emotional support was vital for creating mentor-mentee relationships based on trust and collaboration. Finally, Butler and Cuenca showed that, as socializing agents, mentor teachers have a powerful impact on preservice teachers’ practices. The authors suggested that the student teacher often views the mentor teacher as the first individual to make sense of the daily requirements of teaching. Unfortunately, some mentors have seen their responsibility only to socialize the student teacher to the status quo, and
when this has occurred, mentor teachers and university supervisors often experience conflict, and preservice teachers often fall back on conceptions of teaching they held prior to entering their training programs.

**From Practices and Roles toward Identity**

Few researchers have been interested specifically in the identities of cooperating teachers, and studies of identity have not featured cooperating teachers as researchers. While Clarke and Jarvis-Selinger’s (2005) research was on cooperating teachers’ *perspectives*, their construct was similar to the construct of *belief* in other literature, and beliefs have been linked with identity. Nevertheless, Clark and Jarvis-Selinger established categories of cooperating teacher perspective *a priori*, rather than allowing perspectives to emerge from observation and interview. Similarly, Bullough (2005) relied upon Gee’s (2000) conceptions of identity perspectives for his research. Both studies revealed that a nurturing perspective often shaped cooperating teachers’ perspectives and identities. Bullough suggested that this perspective was adopted from a teacher’s work with children in the classroom. The researchers did not discuss multiple sources of cooperating teachers’ identity or how cooperating teachers’ identities were shaped and reshaped over time.
Clarke and Jarvis-Selinger (2005) proposed that teaching perspectives were fundamental beliefs about teaching and learning as well as instructional intentions within teaching contexts. Specifically, they defined a “transmission perspective” as the educator’s belief in subject matter expertise and a “developmental perspective” as the educator’s belief in his or her capacity to insert new knowledge to a learner’s prior knowledge. An “apprenticeship perspective” referred to modeling during instruction and the educator’s belief that imitation was a fundamental source of learning. A “nurturing perspective” was defined as belief in the engagement of both head and heart so that good teaching might occur. Finally, a “social reform perspective” was defined as the educator’s belief in a critical approach emphasizing “that the practice of teaching is inherently political and any discussion of teaching should not be isolated from the social milieu in which it occurs” (p. 67).

Clarke and Jarvis-Selinger (2005) administered two surveys that allowed them to identify and categorize each respondent’s dominant perspective. The researchers found that, of the 301 respondents, 232 had a singularly dominant perspective, 42 had a combination of two dominant perspectives, and 27 had no dominant perspective. A majority of the 232 participants with a singularly dominant perspective took a nurturing perspective. The authors argued that, with a nurturing perspective, an “environment of trust and care increase[d] the possibility
that feedback is both accepted willingly and actively sought out by the
student teacher” (p. 69). However, a more important finding from the
study was that those 27 teachers who approached their student teachers
with a combination of all five perspectives (those teachers without a
single dominant perspective) were more effective in providing a beneficial
student teaching experience.

Further supporting the claim that cooperating teachers’ practices
and roles assist in forming their identity, Bullough (2005) directly
investigated the identity formations of school-based mentor teachers.
The researcher defined identity as “the way one is with and for others; it
is the basis of an individual’s claims both to dignity and to authenticity;
it is a framework for action and the personal grounding of practice” (p.
144). Bullough followed Gee (2000) in labeling identity perspectives: N-
Identities were nature perspectives, or those identities that cannot be
chosen (tall, obese, short, etc). I-Identities were institutional
perspectives, “authorized by institutional authorities” (p. 146). These
identities were linked to a person’s position, such as a teacher or
administrator. D-Identities were discursive perspectives; for example,
Amy is a charming person so you should go speak to her. Amy’s charm
is an individual characteristic, but that characteristic is determined
through the discourse of others. Finally, an A-Identity was an affinity
perspective, or an identity chosen through associating with a particular
group, such as being a fan of a sports team, or choosing to sit with a particular group at faculty meetings.

Based on interview and observation of a mentor teacher and two interns, Bullough found that the mentor was very nurturing like a mother; N and D-Identities shaped her role as a mentor. “Teachers do what they know and mentor as they teach. In effect, mentor identities are subsumed under teacher identities” (p. 153). Bullough recommended integrating cooperating teachers into the “mainstream” of teacher education programs, and in so doing, developing “new forms of affiliation and identity” and offering “opportunities for those who mentor to expand and enrich their senses of self as teacher educators” (p. 154).

**Research on Music Cooperating Teachers**

Research about music cooperating teachers is most closely aligned with the purpose of this study. I found only a small number of studies, and this research was conducted on cooperating teachers, rather than conducted by cooperating teachers. Zemek (2006) was interested in how cooperating teachers were selected and prepared, whereas Stegman (2007) was interested in implementing a process of reflective dialogue between cooperating teachers and student teachers. Berthelotte (2007), Draves (2008), and Hagen (2011) investigated relationships between cooperating teachers and student teachers, and Draves study was most
closely related to the present study, in that she examined identities of cooperating teachers.

Zemek (2006) examined the selection and preparation of music cooperating teachers first by surveying student teaching coordinators from Illinois universities about how cooperating teachers were selected, and then asking cooperating teachers about their experiences. Addressing the question of who influences cooperating teacher selection, Zemek found that established relationships between cooperating teachers and music education faculty or between cooperating teachers and student teacher coordinators were most influential in the selection process. Furthermore, criteria for selection were based on previous positive evaluations of the cooperating teacher, and the cooperating teacher’s years of experience (sometimes associated with tenure in a school system). As to factors most influential for selection of a cooperating teacher, experience as a cooperating teacher and teaching record were considered most influential, followed by interpersonal skills, willingness to volunteer, and teaching style. When cooperating teachers were asked about how they were recruited, 67% reported that they were asked to serve by a music education faculty member. Not surprisingly, they also felt that music education faculty were most influential in the selection process. Cooperating teachers believed that personality and teaching skills should be the most important criteria for selection.
Pertaining to preparation for cooperating teachers, all faculty and student teaching coordinators reported that they created student teaching handbooks; however, only five reported offering a course or in-service day for cooperating teachers. None of the cooperating teachers reported participating in a course or workshop, and although all of the cooperating teachers found handbooks generally valuable, none found that there was specific information contained in them about what they were required to do as cooperating teachers. Several cooperating teachers suggested that it would be useful to have short workshops or on-line courses to further support cooperating teachers. Cooperating teachers were then asked about student teachers’ preparation in the university, and most expressed that student teachers were arriving in their student teaching placements with better skills. Nevertheless, they recognized the disparity of peer teaching in methods courses and teaching children in schools; cooperating teachers thought that student teachers could become overwhelmed. Asked about their contributions to music teacher education curricula, the cooperating teachers uniformly expressed that they had no influence. Their recommendations for change included more time learning secondary instruments, greater familiarity with basal textbooks, and more experience teaching children. Zemek concluded that his descriptive study added to the body of
research about music cooperating teachers, and that as this body of research grew, student teachers ultimately would be the beneficiaries.

Experiences of collaborative, reflective dialogue were highlighted in Stegman’s (2007) study of music cooperating teachers and student teachers. The researcher found that the cooperating teachers assisted student teachers most effectively by offering suggestions of improvement based on their own experience, providing supportive commentary, recommending strategies, discussing issues from individual and group perspectives, validating the importance of proper preparation and lesson planning, and encouraging student performer perspectives. The author found that reflective dialogue between the cooperating teacher and student teacher appeared to increase the likelihood of critical reflection. Stegman recommended that cooperating teachers and university supervisors should “take the time on a regular basis to reflect with student teachers on practice in a structured yet flexible way that includes questioning, guiding, and advising” (p. 79).

Three dissertation studies on music cooperating teachers were completed at Michigan State University in relatively close proximity. Berthelotte (2007) investigated and compared music cooperating teachers’ and student teachers’ expectations of student teaching. Draves (2008) likewise studied relationships between cooperating teachers and student teachers, focusing on power sharing and identity. Finally, Hagen
(2011) examined the impact of a teacher research project on the
development of the cooperating teacher/student teacher relationship.
Taken together, these studies represented how a body of scholarship
could be built in a doctoral program.

Through use of interviews, group interviews, and surveys,
Berthelotte (2007) investigated and compared music cooperating
teachers’ and student teachers’ expectations of student teaching.
Building a learning community was the first theme that emerged from
the data. The researcher found that some cooperating teachers expected
that student teachers should be involved in the full life of the school,
whereas others expressed that student teachers should be exclusively
immersed in the instrumental music classroom. Although student
teachers were concerned with classroom management and their fears of
making mistakes in front of students, many of the cooperating teachers
were frustrated because student teachers lacked awareness of the
“multiple dimensions of the roles of music teachers” (p. 84). In fact,
many cooperating teachers described their roles as music educators
rather than cooperating teachers, leaving Bertholette to question their
capacity for serving as mentor teachers. Cooperating teachers discussed
the difficulties of building a community with their student teachers due
to lack of time, and they often blamed their student teachers for
inadequate classroom management strategies. Ultimately, cooperating
teacher participants in Berthelotte’s study wanted the student teachers to follow their actions and not their words. Finally, most of the cooperating teachers discussed the conflict between their role assisting student teachers and their role in formal evaluation of student teachers.

Draves (2008) found that cooperating teachers and student teachers shared similar perspectives on the important qualities of cooperating teachers, including flexibility, good modeling, and plentiful feedback. Similarly, student teachers and cooperating teachers alike believed that if a cooperating teacher had a controlling personality, the student teaching experience could be negative. Surprisingly, although all were asked about musical characteristics of cooperating teachers, none expounded in detail on such characteristics. The researcher found that cooperating teachers who had a good student teaching experience sought to re-create that experience for their student teacher, and those who had a negative student teaching experience sought to “right the wrongs they experienced” (p. 183). Notably, none of the cooperating teachers had completed any formal training to become a cooperating teacher, so their own student teaching experience influenced their practices.

Cooperating teachers and student teachers also agreed generally about the characteristics of good student teachers. First, all expected that student teachers would be good musicians. Although cooperating teachers wished that their student teachers had greater skill in piano
and singing, they were pleased with their musicianship overall. Nevertheless, as with the cooperating teachers, musical characteristics were less salient than professional characteristics. All agreed that student teachers should be open, willing to learn, and be able to “adapt and adjust” (p. 186). Most student teachers and cooperating teachers desired close relationships, and all saw the value in frequent communication. Because some student teachers had split placements, the goal of frequent communication was not always realized between the student teacher-cooperating teacher pairs in this study.

Power sharing was a major theme of this study, and it occurred between cooperating teachers and student teachers in three areas: teaching, classroom management, and administration (p. 190). Draves claimed that cooperating teachers were sensitive about how much power student teachers could accept, and that elementary general music cooperating teachers were more willing to share power than secondary ensemble teachers. All cooperating teachers who participated in the study were somewhat reluctant to give student teachers complete authority in the classroom. They “wanted students to recognize and respect the student teacher as another teacher in the room, but found it hard not to step in when things might be going poorly” (p. 192). Draves defined power sharing on a continuum, moving from “a student/teacher
relationship, to a team-teaching relationship, to a collaborative partnership” (p. 193).

Finally, Draves focused uniquely on the cooperating teachers and their identities, finding that the cooperating teachers all viewed student teacher supervision as a form of professional development. “They gleaned personal satisfaction from the student teachers’ growth and success” (p. 196). In contrast with other research, cooperating teachers were not interested in seeing student teachers replicate their teaching style; cooperating teachers were eager to see each student teacher grow into his or her unique style. Draves concluded this study by writing, “the potential for an educative experience begins with the characteristics of the people involved. . . . especially the cooperating teachers.”

Hagen (2011) conducted a collective case study examining the impact of a teacher research study on the relationship between cooperating teacher and student teacher. Each of three cooperating teacher-student teacher pairs was asked to complete an action research study within the scope of their authority, and about which they were passionate, the results of which would improve something about music teaching and learning in the classroom. One pair chose to focus on male students’ better understanding of the changing voice, another chose to focus on guided listening in the instrumental classroom, and a third pair focused on students’ increased understanding of music vocabulary.
A first theme emerging through Hagen’s data analysis was of the desire for a close relationship. The cooperating teachers drew on their past experiences to improve the student teaching experience, and their relationships with student teachers. Student teachers, in contrast, were somewhat apprehensive about the potential for a close relationship. Another theme that emerged was the qualities of cooperating teachers deemed crucial for a successful student teaching experience. Participants in Hagen’s research spoke to the importance of providing a welcoming environment, providing leadership, giving feedback, accepting differences, and being intuitive with student teachers. Like other research, cooperating teachers expressed some discomfort with formally evaluating at the same time they were supposed to be supporting student teachers, but the student teachers actually welcomed the evaluation. A third theme suggested qualities of a good student teacher, which included inquisitiveness, taking initiative, and being prepared. Student teachers also believed that expressing gratitude was important.

The teacher research project improved the relationships between cooperating teachers and student teachers in several ways: First the product gave the pair a mutual focus that was about the process, rather than the product of teaching. Second, by doing something new together, both cooperating teacher and student teacher were prompted to use new “outside the box” strategies (p. 98), and they seemed to reflect more on
teaching together. Cooperating teachers and student teachers alike noticed and appreciated that students benefitted from the research projects. The next theme arising from Hagen’s data analysis was one of collaboration to complete the research project. Both cooperating teacher and student teacher believed that the project increased communication between them and the student teachers felt more like equals with their cooperating teachers when they were working on the research projects. The last theme was the personal satisfaction and inspiration that resulted from completing a research project together.

Summary

Given the parameters of this review, it can be surmised that few studies were intended to describe perspectives of cooperating teachers, and even fewer studies were conducted by cooperating teachers’ themselves. There was only one example in the literature referring to who might choose to become a cooperating teacher (Sinclair, Dowson, & Thistlethwaite-Martin, 2006), and that study reduced cooperating teachers to boosters, guzzlers or enticers depending on their level of agreement to serve. A majority of studies I reviewed were formulated to investigate mentoring practices; university faculty who were looking in on and making judgments about cooperating teachers’ practices conducted most of that research. Among the studies, however, was one collaborative self-study (Montecinos et al., 2002) where cooperating teachers described the
multidimensional nature not only of their teaching, but also of their mentoring practices. The cooperating teachers who engaged in this study found that the technical dimensions of teaching were easier to pass on to student teachers than the emotional dimensions of teaching.

Also among the researchers investigating mentoring practices, Fairbanks, Freedman and Kahn (2000) and Kahn (2001) were sympathetic to cooperating teachers, assuming that success of mentoring practice was defined by a relationship between cooperating teacher and student teacher. Notably, Kahn (2001) found that the university, and those associated with the university, did not figure into success stories. Both studies, however, highlighted companionship as an essential mentoring practice, according to cooperating teachers.

A substantial amount of the research I reviewed discussed theoretical and practical conceptions of roles of cooperating teachers. Through their review of literature, Beck and Kosnick (2000) found two general theoretical roles for cooperating teachers: a practical initiation model resulting in student teachers’ replication of cooperating teachers’ practices, and a critical interventionist model where the cooperating teacher urges the student teacher to question and come up with alternative methods. Results showed that cooperating approached mentoring in a practical manner; however Beck and Kosnick determined that criticisms of the model were unwarranted. Graham (2006) revealed
two practical roles: *maestros* and *mentors*, which were closely related to Beck and Kosnick’s theoretical conceptions. Using a self-study approach, Arnold (2002) identified roles of *mentor, model, guide, facilitator*, and *support* as those most frequently mentioned by cooperating teachers, and Weasmer and Woods (2003) had similar findings from their interview study. Interested in the emotional dimensions of student teaching, Bullough and Draper (2004) highlighted cooperating teachers’ roles as *therapists, coaches, and protectors*.

As can be seen through these studies, cooperating teachers have identified with multiple roles. Butler and Cuenca (2012), however, determined that cooperating teacher roles had been approached idiosyncratically in the research literature, so they reduced the roles to three: *instructional coach, emotional support system* and *socializing agent*. Although such a simplification might help other researchers identify the most essential aspects of cooperating teachers’ practice, it is also possible that reduction covers up the complexities of cooperating teachers’ roles as well as the multiple influences on their identities.

Little research has addressed identities of cooperating teachers, and no cooperating teachers served as investigators in studies of identity. Clarke and Jarvis-Selinger (2005) established transmission, developmental, apprenticeship, nurturing, and social reform categories *a priori* to describe the perspectives of most cooperating teachers.
Similarly, Bullough (2005) followed Gee (2000) in his conceptions of identity perspectives. In both studies, researchers acknowledged cooperating teachers’ nurturing perspective, and Bullough suggested that this perspective was most influenced by a teacher’s work with children in the classroom. Nevertheless, Bullough informed the present study with his recommendation that more opportunities should be provided for cooperating teachers to identify themselves as teacher educators.

Research about music cooperating teachers was most closely aligned with the purpose of the current study. Although a limited number of studies were located, the research addressed how cooperating teachers were selected because of existing relationships with university music education faculty or student teaching coordinators, rather than because of their identities or specific practices (Zemek, 2006). Stegman (2007) investigated the implementation of collaborative, reflective dialogue in the relationship between cooperating teacher and student teacher, similar to other studies (Arnold, 2002; Clarke, 2006; Kent, 2007). Finally, several researchers investigated relationships between music cooperating teachers and student teachers. Berthelotte (2007) suggested that cooperating teachers found it difficult to establish a close relationship due to time constraints, as well as the conflict between their roles as mentors and evaluators of student teachers. Hagen (2011) was
interested in the influence of an action research project implemented jointly by cooperating teacher and student teacher. She found that the project increased communication and helped both cooperating teacher and student teacher consider novel teaching strategies. Furthermore, the project helped student teacher and cooperating teacher feel more like equals. The present study was most informed by Draves (2008), who suggested that cooperating teachers either recreated their own positive student teaching experiences or righted the wrongs they experienced during their own student teaching. Unlike other studies, Draves discussed power sharing and identity, and she found that cooperating teachers were not interested in seeing student teachers imitate; instead, cooperating teachers were eager to see each student teacher grow into his or her unique style.

As Zeichner (2010) implied, the university and its academic knowledge have been authoritative in teacher preparation, including the student teaching practicum. Researchers repeatedly have demonstrated the importance of cooperating teachers in the practicum, and therefore in teacher preparation; however, in most research, cooperating teachers’ voices were silenced. One prominent aspect of the silencing occurred as researchers attempted to reduce the complexities of cooperating teaching to a few practices, such as modeling, feedback, and evaluation, or a few roles, such as model, mentor, and guide.
Narrative inquiry takes place through stories, and in light of Bruner’s (2002) self-making, Connelly and Clandinin’s (1999) stories to live by, and Ricoeur’s (1992; 1996) narrative identity, it is reasonable to say that stories are multiple, mobile, and sometimes conflicting. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) suggest, “it is in the tellings and retellings that the entanglements become acute, for it is here that temporal and social, cultural horizons are set and reset” (p. 4). So, my aim with this inquiry is two fold: First, by bringing out the voices of cooperating teachers as they consider their identities as teacher educators, I set this inquiry against previous research. In a related vein, rather than trying to simplify or reduce those stories, I hope to bring out the identity stories in all their complexity and entanglements.
Chapter 3: Methodology

What matters is that lives do not serve as models; only stories do that . . . They may be read, or chanted, or experienced electronically, or come to us, like the murmuring of our mothers, telling us what conventions demand. Whatever their form or medium, these stories have formed us all; they are what we must use to make new fictions, new narratives.

(Heilbrun, 1988, p. 37)

Merriam (2009) describes narrative research as using stories people tell to understand the meaning of an experience, and Clandinin (2006) cautions, “Participants’ stories, inquirers’ stories, social, cultural and institutional stories, are all ongoing as narrative inquiries begin. Being in the field, that is, engaging with participants, is walking into the midst of stories” (p. 47). What makes narrative inquiry suitable for this study is “its alignment with human experience in a complex (and constantly changing) world with needs that are not easily researched using traditional approaches” (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 114). Narrative inquiry has modified the field of qualitative research “through its close attention to experience as narrative phenomena; through the importance of the relational engagement of researchers and participants; and through the attention to relational ethics which are at the heart of the inquiry” (Clandinin & Caine, 2012, p. 166).
What Do Narrative Inquirers Do?

Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) developed a clear explanation for what narrative inquirers do. They “study the individual’s experience in the world, an experience that is storied both in the living and telling and that can be studied by listening, observing, living alongside another, and writing and interpreting texts” (p. 43). Furthermore, according to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), “narrative inquirers make themselves as aware as possible of the many, layered narratives at work in their inquiry space” (p. 70). Interaction, continuity, and situation are combined in a three-dimensional narrative inquiry space with temporality along one dimension, sociality along a second dimension, and place along a third dimension. Any inquiry is “defined by this three-dimensional space: studies have temporal dimensions and address temporal matters; they focus on the personal and the social in a balance appropriate to the inquiry; and they occur in specific places or sequences of places” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50).

Temporality became part of this study as the participants and I reflected on experiences throughout our lives that influenced our present cooperating teacher identities. Sociality, in this study, directed participants’ attention toward influences of others in our lives as cooperating teachers, and how others’ lives were constructed in our own
stories. Finally, place involved intentional recognition not only of where this study took place, in and around public school systems of Georgia, but also of the places where remembered events were experienced.

Unlike some other forms of research, narrative inquiry is highly relational. “It is important to understand narrative inquiry spaces as spaces of belonging for both researchers and participants; spaces that are always marked by ethics and attitudes of openness, mutual vulnerability, reciprocity, and care” (Clandinin & Caine, 2012, p. 169). The narrative inquirer frequently is a member of the community she is exploring, which is how she negotiates relationships with participants and negotiates entry into the field.

I entered the three-dimensional inquiry space in the midst of an ongoing life as a cooperating teacher, with relationships to particular public schools, families, policies, and culture, just as participants were in the midst of their lives within particular institutions, institutional narratives, and social, political, linguistic, and cultural narratives (Clandinin & Caine, pp. 169–170). It was, therefore, imperative that I attended to how my identity was shaped by the inquiry, as well as how participants’ lives were shaped. Clandinin and Caine (2012) encouraged each researcher to inquire into her own experiences prior to entering the inquiry space with participants, a process they called narrative beginnings. According to the authors, narrative beginnings were intended to help the researcher
“understand and . . . name the research puzzle” (p. 171) and direct conversations with the participants. Some of my narrative beginnings were folded into the first chapter of this document and others were included in a series of conversations that were the primary data-generating mechanisms for this study.

The foregoing description of what narrative researchers do helps position researchers as individuals who “are not merely objective inquirers, people on the high road who study a world lesser in quality than our moral temperament would have it, people who study a world [they] did not help create” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 61). Instead, narrative researchers, as Clandinin and Connelly (2000) indicate, are complicit in the world they study (p. 61). I have on-going roles as a music teacher and as a cooperating teacher. Thus, as Clandinin (2013) points out, narrative inquiry “calls me to be attentive to my own unfolding, enfolding, storied life and the lives of those with whom I engage” (p. 23).

**Participants**

Because “the time commitment required makes it [narrative inquiry] unsuitable for work with a large number of participants” (Bell, 2002, p. 210), participation in this study was limited to two experienced cooperating teachers. Participants initially were identified through reputational case sampling, which involved “asking experts from, or
participants in, the community who are familiar with the criteria of interest to the researcher to recommend individuals for participation in the study” (Schensul, Schensul, & LeCompte, 1999, p. 240). A professor in the music education department of the University of Georgia was asked to recommend public school music teachers who had taught music in the state for at least five years and developed a reputation for excellent mentoring. The professor contacted prospective participants on my behalf (See Appendix A). When a cooperating teacher responded, I explained the study parameters, particularly the co-construction of narrative and time commitment involved in this study as well as voluntary nature of participation (See Appendix B). My goal in a conversation with a prospective participant was to ensure that she or he felt able to communicate candidly and participate for the relatively long duration of the study.

**Conversations and Field Texts**

Like all narrative inquiry, conversations were the primary means by which field texts were generated. There were six primary conversations planned for this study, as detailed in Figure 2.1. Conversations took place by phone and in person. The second conversation was prefaced by the inclusion of *autobiographical writing*. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) argued that autobiographical writings were more than isolated journal entries. They revealed image, character,
and cycles or rhythms of life. Thus, such writing was intended to inspire questions and puzzling through research topics during conversation. Each participant also was asked to share at least one video of a student teacher working in his or her music classroom. Similar to autobiographical writing, video was intended to evoke questions about images of music teaching and principles of mentoring. I audio-recorded each conversation and transcribed the conversation within a 72-hour period. Then, inspired by Clandinin and Connelly’s advice that narrative inquiry requires a “back and forthing” (2000, p. 167) involving sharing, reflecting, and revising texts with the participants, I reviewed each conversation with the participants to determine accuracy of its contents.

After editing transcriptions as warranted, I engaged in a further analysis of the conversation transcript: First, I transcribed each full idea, typically a clause or a sentence, on a single line. Then I reviewed the research questions, and coded the transcripts based on the following categories of information:

- Types of stories told
- Character of the cooperating teacher
- Self-identity of the cooperating teacher
- Others in the stories
- Interactions with influential others
- Translations of others’ stories
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conversation Topic</th>
<th>Conversation Preface</th>
<th>Question Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musical background and negotiating relationships</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>What is your major instrument? When did you start playing? Who were/are your teachers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becoming a music teacher</td>
<td>autobiographical writing</td>
<td>Why was that event meaningful to you? How did your life change after that event? What principles do you think you may have internalized from that event?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recollections of your own student teaching experience</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>How many placements did you have? Did you prefer one cooperating teacher over another, and if so, why? What are your memories of feedback you received?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring a student teacher</td>
<td>Video of student teacher</td>
<td>Can you explain what you were thinking when this incident occurred? What were your reasons for interrupting or intervening or staying quiet? What kinds of feedback did you offer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with university music teacher preparation</td>
<td>Gather student teaching guidelines from universities such as handbooks, evaluation forms, training materials.</td>
<td>In what ways were these materials useful? What questions do you still have about mentoring student teachers? What do you think the universities ought to do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>What else would you like to add?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2.1. Primary conversations*

I found several types of stories through this analysis process, which included stories of childhood, schooling, college, student teaching, parenting, and mentoring student teachers. I used poster board to diagram each kind of story, including important terms and individuals
from the transcript analysis underneath each story. I also looked for and highlighted consistency of character, self-identity, and influential others among all the story types. Then, I returned to the participants for new conversations, the purpose of which was to clarify and expound on each type of story. Clandinin and Caine (2012) cautioned that the analysis process frequently “call[ed] forth further experiences to be told” (p. 172), which was certainly the case as the participants and I generated field texts.

During the reiterative process of storytelling and analysis, three important aspects of the stories became evident. First, by including college with public schooling, the story categories could be collapsed into two types: *schooling stories* and *family stories*. Second, for reasons that varied between the participants, family stories and schooling stories were intimately connected. Third, considering those two types of stories, there were *public stories*, which participants frequently told to colleagues, family members, and even strangers. Then there were *private stories*, which the participants had rarely told outside the context of this study. Thus, I began to write an interim research text theorizing about cooperating teachers’ identity as illustrated in Figure 2.2.
I then took the next step in narrative inquiry, which involved creating an interim text. Clandinin and Caine (2012) called the interim text “the beginning place of attending to our research puzzle” (p. 172). The conversations between the participants and myself connected the field texts and highlighted how the dimensions of temporality, sociality, and place could be made visible in an interim text. Clandinin and Caine (2012) called these three dimensions “the fabric of life experience” (p. 172) and advised that, in co-constructing an interim text, it was difficult to understand one dimension without considering the others. For example, in co-constructing family stories, the participants and I discussed our parents’ influence on aspects of our teaching, and we also
discussed how our teaching and mentoring changed after we became parents ourselves. In some cases, a mentor took on the role of parent at a critical moment in a story. So, although parents might normally be considered relative to the social dimension of an interim text, the theme of parenting wound through the temporal and place dimensions as well.

One of the participants described how his mother insisted that the family participate in church, and how he first learned about servanthood at church. When he became an adult, he continued to serve in church by singing in the church choir and teaching Sunday school. However, due to the influence of his student teaching mentor, the participant also served in his school, and he served the state music professional organization by organizing and hosting band festivals and participating on committees. When he was asked to serve as a mentor for student teachers, he never questioned his obligation to do so. In this participant’s story, the sacred obligation of service wound through time, transcended the places of church, school, and professional organization, and linked important figures along the social dimension—his mother, the church, and his student teaching mentor.

According to Conle (2001), in the co-construction of texts, participants and narrative inquirers claimed to be sincere and truthful. Because narratives were constructed from both “then” and “now” perspectives and “mixing of the two [perspectives was] unavoidable” (p.
29), Conle cautioned that memories were seldom completely truthful, because memories changed through “a more informed now perspective” (p. 29). Heeding this caution, the participants and I looked for consistency of terminology and action over time as a marker of narrative validity. By engaging in this act of mutual understanding, we strengthened the internal validity of our analysis.

Bell proposed that, even after texts were co-constructed, narrative inquirers continued to impose meaning on lived experience, so “participants [could] never be quite free of the researcher’s interpretations of their lives” (Bell, 2002, p. 210). As recommended by Clandinin and Caine (2012), I took part in a relational response community of an additional Boston University doctoral student, Jennifer Greene, and professors, Susan Conkling and Lee Higgins. The purposes of this community were to share our work, help one another recognize how our own experiences were shaping our inquiries, and attend to ethical responsibilities toward our participants (p. 173).

Conversations that drove the co-construction of the interim text opened doors for more conversations, and the most difficult decision was when to stop. In truth, the conversations were on-going, even as I composed the final text and interpretations for this dissertation document, and they may continue well into the future.
Chapter 4: Final Text

I engage for a time, over time, with participants, either alongside them in the living of their lives and in their telling of stories. . . . Regardless of the starting point for each narrative inquiry, I know that when I write research texts, I am still in the midst. (Clandinin, 2013, p. 203)

Moving from interim text to final text, I am obligated to relate the stories of cooperating teachers’ identity constructions in truthful, authentic, and ethical ways, but because identity constructions are never finished, I must reveal the stories as works in progress, allowing “the possibility of re-composing and re-storying our experience in new ways” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 205). Clandinin suggests, however, that this is not easily accomplished through use of standard research texts. “In order to find ways to honor the storied lives of both researcher and participants, we are challenged to find [other] forms” (p. 206). Furthermore, Clandinin and Caine (2012) encourage a form that is accessible to nonacademic audiences, even though it is written for an academic purpose. Other narrative inquirers have used forms such as play scripts and photographs for their final texts.

I have written my final research text as a novella, a fictional prose shorter than a novel but longer than a short story. Most often, a novella is an emotional story that relies on character development. Whereas the narratives that form field texts and interim texts are highly personal, the final research text must be a more universal story, one in which readers
might see themselves. Still the researcher must choose a form for the final text that “shows the ways social, institutional, familial, and cultural narratives” influence personal stories (Clandinin, 2013, p. 207). The novella takes place in a familiar setting, the University of Georgia, as three former “Dawgs” meet for coffee prior to home football games.

The novella is a way for me to present more than the words of the participants. It is a way to allow readers to hear speech rhythms and see facial expressions. Writing the novella also was “a kind of further inquiry” (Clandinin, 2013, p. 206), a way to uncover subtle aspects of participants’ stories and make connections I had not previously found.
Between the Hedges

Scene 1: Kick Off

Fall Saturdays bring the faithful to Athens, hoping they’ll watch the Dawgs battle toward SEC triumph in December. Some of the most ardent fans are those who marched in the Redcoat Band and occupied a sideline seat in Sanford Stadium for four years. And they did not occupy just any seat—they had a seat between the hedges. The privet hedges have encircled the field since Georgia’s first game against Yale in 1929, replanted only once in 1996. Standing or performing between the hedges is an honor.

Traveling to the Classic City brings more than simply cheering at a football game. It is also a time to meet old friends, like Hershel and Dooley. The three of us are Redcoat alums, long-time friends and band director-colleagues in Georgia public schools. I volunteered for a project about mentoring student teachers for the Georgia Music Education Association, and I dragged Hershel and Dooley into working on the project with me. We decided to make some fun out of it, so we’re having our first meeting at Broad Street Coffee, right across from the arch in
downtown Athens. It’s a familiar and cozy atmosphere where we can talk.

Today is the opening home game and the Dawgs are hosting the Clemson Tigers. Red and black can be seen everywhere (with a spattering of orange) and downtown is buzzing with fans young and old. They are gearing up for another intense match up between the hedges and the first of 2014! The end of August means high humidity and already warm temperatures at 9:00 am. I arrive first and stake out a table in the front of the coffee shop with a direct view of the arch. I’m decked out in UGA gear, and I’ve heard at least seven accounts of “GO DAWGS” since I walked in the door—it’s such a satisfying feeling to be back home again. I look up just in time to see Dooley crossing the street—he sees me, too and makes a beeline towards the table, smiling and arms open wide. Dooley gives me a big hug and an extra pat on the back.

“Hey Dooley! There goes that ‘band director pat,’ as my husband calls it.”

Dooley chuckles and says, “Hey Georgia! How are you?”

“Good,” I respond excitedly. “I’m so glad the three of us decided to meet up before these home games. It sure gives me something to look forward to during the week.”
“Yeah, me too,” Dooley agrees.

About that time, Herschel enters the coffee shop grinning from ear to ear. Herschel has such a contagious smile—it was no wonder that he was a popular teacher. As expected, Herschel held out his arms to greet Dooley and I. We all exchange hugs and band director pats before getting in line for coffee and pastry.

“So, what do you guys think about the Dawgs today? Do you think the offense has it in them?” I ask, knowing that we have to talk about the most important subject first.

Dooley obviously has been sizing up the competition: “I think we have a chance after looking at Clemson’s defensive line up. They aren’t as strong as they have been in the past.”

Herschel’s commentary goes like this: “I just want to point out that you never know how it will turn out when these two teams meet up. I’m just hoping for a good game.” Herschel is the most opinionated of the three of us, and although Dooley and I try to stifle it, we suddenly burst out laughing at his pretense of tact. Let’s face it—the man bleeds red and black.
The barista looks like she must be a UGA student.

"Welcome to Broad Street Coffee, my name is Amy, may I help you?"

Buying coffee is the least I can do for friends who are helping me with this project, so I order for everyone:

"Hi, Amy, we would like 1 medium dark roast coffee with cream and 2 splendas, 1 medium dark roast coffee with soy milk, 1 large dark roast coffee with a shot of espresso, and three cinnamon sugar coffee cakes."

"Is that for here?" asked Amy.

I, nod, pay Amy, and escort everyone to the table.

"Wow, you didn’t have to do that, Georgia, but I will take it" Herschel comments as we settle into our window seats. "Can you believe the weather? I don’t remember it being so hot!"

"I know! I’m always afraid if it keeps getting worse that my marching band will start to melt away," I reply.

Dooley chimes in, “Um, Georgia, you have a long way before your marching band dwindles away. I mean you have like 250 out there? Can’t you spare a few as it is? There are other band directors who would kill to have those kinds of numbers.”
“Really funny, Dooley. You of all people know my saying: Bigger band means bigger problems.” Dooley leads the band program at the middle school that feeds my high school band program, so he is well aware of my tendency towards sarcasm, but I tease him anyway.

I try to kick off the conversation: “Well, we’re here to talk about mentoring student teachers so we can put together this project for GMEA. I don’t know about you, but I feel like I am struggling a bit right now as a cooperating teacher. I currently have a part-time student teacher that is with me on Tuesdays and Thursdays for half a day, and a full-time student teacher that will be with me for the next five weeks. I love serving as a cooperating teacher but having both at the same time is pretty intense.”

“I know what you mean,” Dooley responds. “I have had two before and it is tough. It’s just so hard to say no! My classroom can be a laboratory for future music educators, so I typically say yes whenever anyone asks me to take a student teacher.” As someone who has worked with Dooley for many years, I know that his feelings about being called to serve permeate every aspect of his life. He serves at his church and he serves our professional
organization. Whenever GMEA needs someone for a committee, they call on Dooley.

Dooley hands the conversation over to me: “So, tell us about your practices, Georgia.”

I talk to them about how I have my student teachers keep a dialogue journal. “While they’re teaching, I write comments on their lesson as well as reflections, notes, and questions for our future discussion. Not only has this helped me keep things organized, but it also has provided an open forum for communication for the student teachers. This year, since I have two student teachers, I try to raise similar questions in their journals so they can talk to and learn from one another.” I mention that I have a regular sequence with student teachers where they move from observing me to teaching sectionals, to building warm-up routines for the beginning of ensemble rehearsals, to conducting and rehearsing full ensembles. I expect student teachers to engage with the full life of my school, to be at everything from staff meetings to marching band competitions, before and after school and on weekends.

“Have you had a lot of student teachers?” asked Herschel.
“Well, yes I guess I have had a lot. This is my 12th year of teaching and this is my 10th student teacher. You know, in the beginning I think many students asked to student teach with me because I was a UGA drum major. Although I was young, I developed a reputation as a strong female who was working with a very large band program. I also believe there’s a general sentiment in the college programs that greater numbers of students involved in the music program translates into more opportunities for student teachers.” Although I discussed my strong, professional image out loud, in my heart I knew that my identity and outlook shifted after I became a mother. Now, I find myself more interested in the how and why of learning to teach, and I recognize that the same process doesn’t work for every student teacher. I think that the university supervisors have sensed these changes in my pedagogy as well. They are placing student teachers with me who may need extra motivation, inspiration, or greater development of their basic leadership skills. The longer I serve as a cooperating teacher, the more I might prefer those types of student teachers who need the most help.

“Wow, Georgia, it’s so interesting. We have similarities in our approach to student teachers,” Herschel
reflects. “I don’t have them keep a journal, but recently I started a google document for each student teacher. This way I can go in at any time and make comments for them or maybe assign what they will do the next day.”

“That’s cool!” Dooley chimes in. This conversation is already helping Dooley make his student teacher mentoring more efficient.

“Yeah,” says Herschel “it’s working out well. To be honest, it is nice to be recognized as a strong and influential teacher. Maybe that comes from my competitive nature. But I’m starting to realize that I take student teachers mainly to improve my own teaching. I suppose it is like killing two birds with one stone. I’m more reflective about my teaching because we’re reflecting together on the student teacher’s work.” Herschel went on to describe how mentoring student teachers was about building relationships. He worried that Dooley and I might think he was a little too personal with student teachers—he mentioned that student teachers frequently ate meals at his house and joined his family for activities. But it was clear, at least to me, that Herschel thought of his student teachers as family. “In the end,” Herschel explained, “I feel like I need to work with a student teacher until she
or he gets a job, at least, and if we have a strong relationship then I’m willing to continue as a mentor.”

“I’m not surprised at all,” I commented. Herschel and I have known one another since college, and I really admire his attitude. “So, what about you, Dooley?”

“You know, I don’t keep a journal or provide documents like the two of you do. Maybe I should, but I’ve never really wanted a paper trail. Basically, I want my student teachers engaged with the bands. I am all about giving them the podium time and letting them work. They will learn methods that they can use and methods that they may not want to use. I try not to make anything mandatory, but instead to give them a lot of experience and I stay out of their way while they’re learning.” Dooley went on to explain that he was one of those cooperating teachers who threw student teachers ‘in the deep end.’ They weren’t allowed many observation days before they needed to get to work. Although Dooley was conscientious about having student teachers reflect on their lessons, it was important to him that the student teachers initiated the questions. Dooley was confident that, in the end, the student teachers would learn more about themselves as teachers if they had greater input into how the student teaching experience was
organized and which aspects of teaching were emphasized. Dooley also tried to give his student teachers the experience of conducting an ensemble at Large Group Performance Evaluation—he thought it was a great way for them to get feedback from others. “If the group gets a superior, then the student teacher is part of the superior. If the group gets an excellent, then the student teacher is part of the excellent,” he explained. “Unlike my own student teaching, I really want all my student teachers to get a variety of experience.”

The conversation continued to bounce around between the three of us. Our strategies were somewhat different, but our goals were similar. From our previous mentoring, we believed that whatever we did—or didn’t do—during the student teaching placement could be highly influential not only on the student teacher, but also on music education in our state. We considered how the student teachers who were in our classrooms this semester might be teaching Herschel’s children or my children someday, so we wanted them to have the best experience we could provide—and we were honored to stand with them between their university methods courses and their first year of employment.
I asked Dooley: “You have had the most experience mentoring student teachers out of all of us. Do you think your student teachers have changed over the years?”

Dooley paused to reflect. “Well, that’s a good question. I guess I would say there was a time when the student teachers were more prepared. In the early 2000s, student teachers were coming out really ready to teach, and maybe during the past two years I have had comparable student teachers.” He went on to explain his perception of a period of time when student teachers’ lessons weren’t prepared, and they didn’t have control of student discipline. They had no idea of how to create flow in rehearsal because they didn’t have a good knowledge of the score or how to conduct it. Dooley blamed it on college students using music education as a stepping-stone for music performance or another degree. The frustration in his voice was obvious when he said, “Three of my student teachers in a row graduated with a music education degree, but then went into different careers.”

Dooley continued, “I really don’t think they were getting enough practical field experience before their student teaching. I was excited to hear you had a part
time student teacher, Georgia. I wish all of the universities did it that way."

I agreed: “Yes, it is good to get them going, but at the same time, it is difficult to plan ahead when they are with you only two days a week. They miss a lot in between times with them only being part time. I guess there are challenges no matter what.”

“That’s right on, Georgia,” says Herschel. “My student teachers who were rock solid were either naturally gifted or came from amazing high school band programs. But many student teachers were not prepared pedagogically for what a band rehearsal would be like—it seems like they never made the connection between their methods class and what it would really be like in the classroom.” Herschel agreed with Dooley that hands-on teaching experience was needed throughout undergraduate teacher preparation in order to make those connections, and especially before the capstone student teaching experience. He also believed that the university supervisors needed to observe student teachers more and promote better communication with both the student teacher and the cooperating teacher. He emphasized that his high school was very close to a university that usually requested student teacher
placements with him, but he rarely saw the university faculty in his classroom.

“Are we ready to move on to talking about what influences our practices as cooperating teachers?” I ask.

Dooley responded, “In a way, we’ve been talking about that already, Georgia. I mentioned how I really want my student teachers to have a different experience than I had while I was student teaching, for instance. But I think we’re going to have to pick up this conversation next time—we really need to walk over to the stadium.”

Herschel jumps in, “Yeah, I would like to catch both the Tate Show and the Dawg Walk since I missed all of them last year. But we should bring our families next time. The kids would love to run around North Campus and spend time playing in the fountain.”

“Let’s just plan on it for next Saturday” says Dooley “and, actually, why don’t we do a tailgate rather than meeting here for coffee?”

It was a good thing I hadn’t planned to get any more done on our project this week, but I was pleased that Herschel and Dooley were enthusiastic about getting together again and bringing their families along. “Sounds like a plan to me. I think kickoff is at 3:30 pm so let’s
meet at 12:30 pm on the quad. I’ll bring the fried chicken!”

“Perfect,” Dooley concurs. “I’ll bring some sides and Herschel, you can bring a dessert.” Dooley clears off the table, putting the cups and plates in the trash. I gather my purse and off to Sanford Stadium we go.
Scene 2 — Tailgating

It’s another warm day with the temperatures expected to reach the mid 90s. The Dawgs are playing the South Carolina Gamecocks. We know it is going to be a fierce match up and are hoping to claim the win for the fourth year in a row. North Campus is filled with fans setting up for their tailgates. Frisbees and footballs are flying and the scent of freshly cut grass and grilled meats is everywhere. The Dawg Nation is ready!

Around 11:30 am my family pulls up in the parking lot, and there are Dooley and his wife Catherine waiting for us.

Getting out of our car, I holler, “Hey Dooley! Hey Catherine! I know we live down the road from each other but I haven’t talked to you in forever!” I start getting my kids out of their car seats—my daughter Elizabeth is so excited to play with the big kids, she is squirming.

Catherine and her kids have walked over to our car. “It has been a while, Georgia. I’ll take a hug!” Catherine and I exchange hugs and smiles. We begin discussing the high school football team and their lack of energy this season. “I can’t believe our head coach is retiring. I wonder who they will bring in?”
Catherine works for our county human resources department. “I don’t know,” she says “but I’m really glad that I’m not the one doing the hiring. The things principals sign up for!”

My husband, Aaron, shakes hands with Dooley and the two of them start talking football as their long strides take them ahead of us. All of us soon reach the middle of the quad where we find tables and chairs that Dooley has set up for us, under a big oak tree. As we begin unpacking the coolers, loud cries can be heard coming from where the kids are playing. Aaron and I quickly recognize that the screams are coming from our son and we run over to see what has happened.

“Mommy, mommy, Andrew fell!” Elizabeth screams. Andrew’s knee is scraped and bleeding a little, but Andrew is crying uncontrollably. “It’s ok” I soothe him. “Calm down, take a deep breath and lets go get some ice and bandage it up. Elizabeth, how did he fall?”

“He tripped, poor baby,” she responds in a sweet and caring way. She really does love to be the big sister. As we make our way back to the table to get some ice, Andrew stops crying. It seems the scrape wasn’t quite so bad after all.
I want to keep Andrew’s mind off his accident, so I continue to hold him, but I talk with the adults. “Wow, Dooley, what time did you get here to set all of this up?” I was impressed that everything was ready to go.

“We got here about eight—you know, all kinds of folks want this prime real estate,” Dooley joked. “We have been throwing the football and Frisbee, and some of us have even been rolling around in the grass.” Dooley looks over at his two oldest kids and laughs at the grass stains on their shorts.

“That’s awesome!” I respond, so grateful that I didn’t have to get our family up and out the door so early. “You are always taking good care of us!”

Just as the last of the food is placed on the table, Herschel and his family make an appearance carrying homemade pound cake, whipped cream, strawberries, and a few more folding chairs. “GO DAWGS!” yells Herschel.

Everyone, even the kids, stops what they are doing and hollers, “GO DAWGS!” in response. The excitement from the other kids catches Andrew’s attention and I put him down so that he can run off and continue playing.

I greet Herschel’s wife, Rebecca, “I haven’t seen you in forever!” Rebecca majored in music at UGA, and she was
in a few classes and ensembles with Herschel and me. She was now a music specialist at an elementary school nearby.

“It has been a while, Georgia. I think the last time might have been at the GMEA Conference about three years ago. Elizabeth wasn’t even a year old at the time. Look at her now! She is so big,” Rebecca says while smiling from ear to ear.

“Yes, I think you are right—and now we have Andrew. He had his first birthday just last week. It’s good to see your girls, too. They are just as pretty as their momma,” I add.

Herschel was out of breath. “Sorry we are a little bit late. The parking is at a minimum. We had to do some hiking to get here.”

“Don’t worry about it,” I reassured him. “We got everything unpacked and have enjoyed playing outside.”

“Wow, look at your kids, Dooley” says Rebecca “How old are they now?”

Dooley introduced his children: Evan, a sophomore in college; Alicia, a junior in high school, and the twins, Taylor and Kelsey, who are freshman in high school. “Catherine did a great job didn’t she?”
I laugh, “Way to give your wife all the credit, Dooley!”

Catherine shakes her head and smirks, “Just look at them. Doesn’t take a big stretch of the imagination to know Dooley had something to do with it. Now, who’s hungry?” Catherine asks.

“Meeeeeep!” scream all of the kids simultaneously.

Herschel takes charge and instructs everyone: “Ok, the line starts here. We will let the kids start first, but make sure you guys are careful and throw your trash away once you are done.”

Dooley’s twins are looking after the little ones, so I start talking about how grateful I am to have graduated from this university. “Growing up with my band-director parents, I learned to love being around the marching band, and I especially admired the student leaders of my parents’ bands. I thought they must be the most popular kids in the whole school.” Although I’m very satisfied in my career, I often wonder if I would have chosen the life of a high school band director without my parents. I suppose I will never know. “What about you, Herschel?” I ask.

Herschel’s eyes widen “That’s a great question, Georgia. I believe my mentor, Mr. Leach, had the greatest
influence on my choices. He fulfilled many roles in my life: private teacher, chamber coach, high school band director, a big-brother figure, not to mention the most talented musician I knew. I didn’t really have the most positive role models at home, and I learned later that Mr. Leach was the one making sure I stayed on track in school. You know, I chose UGA because Mr. Leach told me my senior year that I should apply. I just said ok.”

“So, you just decided to become a band director because your high school director said to?” asked Dooley.

Herschel stopped to think. “Well, I kind of fell into band in middle school because all of my friends were doing it. Honestly, I had no idea what it was about. By the time I was in high school, I needed a way to escape from my home life, so I stayed at school and practiced. I guess I got pretty good.”

“Wait, what do you mean your home life?” I probed.

“That’s a topic for another day, Georgia.”

I could see that Herschel was serious, and I thought that he might be a little uncomfortable talking about his home life around the kids, so I decided to let it be.

Herschel continued with the previous conversation. “Anyway, in high school I got hooked. I loved being in a
brass quintet, going to summer music camps, and being in all state band. That is probably what sealed the deal!”

Dooley confidently chimed in, “I knew early on that I wanted to be a band director. I was in the 9th grade, and I made district band and all-state band that year. I remember just coming out and telling Mr. Swanson that I was going to be a band director when I grew up. I had a lot of respect for Mr. Swanson and I think he felt the same about me. He even asked me to play bari sax, just as he had done in middle school. I was pretty flattered, and I remember feeling special.”

By this time, all the adults had found a place to sit, and in between bites, Herschel said, “You know, I made it sound like band was the best thing, but thinking back, there were both good times and bad times.”

“Now you have everybody curious, honey,” Rebecca said. “Tell the whole story.”

“One of my high school band directors was very competitive and somewhat intimidating. One year we took 2nd place at a competition, and I overheard my director say, ‘I knew they couldn’t do it.’ Then we got home, and he hung up our scores so we would have to stare at them every day. That made such a negative impact on me that it took a few
years before I wanted to take my bands to competition.”
There is a pause in the conversation, and I catch Herschel looking over at our kids as they play under the tree. His words come out measured and firm: “Nothing is worth the emotional well being of a child. There is no amount of win, no superior rating. Nothing. I think about my band today. If they got second place, we would rush the field in excitement!”

“So, why do you compete?” Dooley asks. “Although everyone seems to do it, I don’t think any of us are forced to compete.”

Herschel responds, “Well, I’m still learning how to do competition— I think it can be healthy if presented in the right way.” Herschel seemed to be of two minds on this subject. He thought that competition was good when it helped demonstrate benchmarks to students—benchmarks they had the potential to achieve. “You can maintain a standard and not destroy the child, so I always want competition to be positive. Kids need goals, and I think attending a competition helps them learn to set goals and figure out what they need to do to achieve the goals. But they also need to know that it is much more than taking home a trophy and being the best on one day.”
Just then, I glance up at the kids, who have been tossing a football back and forth. I see the football flying through the air and I also see that Rachel, Herschel’s oldest daughter, has her mind on something else. It is like seeing everything move in slow motion, but before I can yell to catch Rachel’s attention, the ball comes down and hits her right in the face.

“Oh no!” I cry. Herschel looks up and notices what has happened and takes off to help his daughter. By the time he gets there, the other kids are hovering over Rachel, comforting her, and apologizing for letting the football hit her in the face.

“Gosh, Rachel, are you ok?” asks Herschel.

Wimpering a bit, Rachel answers, “Yeah, dad, I’m ok. My nose hurts a little though.”

“I can see why,” Herschel sympathizes. He helps her up and escorts her to where all of us are hanging out.

“Why don’t you just hang out here with the adults for a little bit?”

Herschel restarted the conversation. “Where were we? Oh, competition. And intimidation. You know, my students at school say that I am intimidating, and that being scared of me is like being scared of their dads.” It was hard to
believe that the man who had just acted so tenderly towards his daughter could be intimidating to his band members.

Dooley disagreed: “There wasn’t a lot of intimidation going on when I was in middle school and high school band. And our groups were still successful.”

“Well I think a little goes a long way,” responds Herschel, defending his position. “I try to start out the school year tough and then finally crack a smile in December and start having fun once they realize how I work.”

I told everyone that I remembered being intimidated by my dad both at home and in school. More than anything, my siblings and I wanted his approval. He wasn’t one to hand out compliments, so when you got one, you held on to it! I can see how that has shaped my drive to teach really well.

Herschel turns the subject to football: “Well, speaking of intimidation, I’m hoping the defense is a little more intimidating this week against South Carolina!”

Dooley is nervous for the team: “I’m so thankful that we are playing them at home. I’m crossing my fingers, because it is going to be an intense game!”
“Ok, kids, who wants dessert?” my husband yells, and he starts cutting up the pound cake.
Scene 3 – It’s Game Time

It’s the first weekend of October, so the leaves are starting to turn yellow, orange, and red, and some are already falling off the trees. Downtown Athens is teeming with Dawg fans all gearing up for another fierce SEC matchup against the Tennessee Volunteers. The television networks have fought over the chance to broadcast the game and ESPN has won, choosing the 3:30 matchup as their game of the week. This is the annual “black out” game, so every Dawg fan you see, whether they are attending the game or not, is dressed head to toe in black.

I arrive at Broad Street Coffee at noon and find Dooley waiting for me. Unlike last time, the coffee shop is packed with people. Dooley has the advantage of being taller than me, so he can see that one table in the far corner is about to finish up and leave. He moves in on the group, getting ready to claim the table so all of us can sit and visit. Just as we sit down, Herschel walks in the door, so Dooley stands up and waves to get his attention. Herschel sends over a friendly smile and makes his way over to us. Everyone exchanges hugs, band director pats, and handshakes before sitting down again.
Dooley notices that Amy, our barista, is visiting the tables to gather orders so we don’t have to stand in line. He motions for her for assistance.

Amy arrives at the table and asks “How may I help you?”

Dooley orders first: “I would like a cinnamon spiced hot chocolate with whipped cream and drizzled with caramel and a bagel toasted with cream cheese please. Also add whatever these two would like. I am covering this one!”

“Oh, Dooley, you don’t have to do that!” Herschel exclaims.

“No, I want to, please!” Herschel and I proceed to order. I order my usual, and Herschel orders a large iced coffee and a breakfast sandwich.

“Ok, I will be right back!” says Amy.

As we wait for our order, Dooley reflects on last week’s win against South Carolina. “You know, I still believe no matter the match up, we will always have a difficult time winning at their stadium. We seem to always come away with a win at home and a loss on the road. I just can’t pin down what the problem is.”

I knew exactly what he meant. “Yeah, I always hated traveling to South Carolina. That stadium looks like a
cockroach. It is so loud and they are great at positioning the Georgia fans in a place where they can’t be heard. I remember when I was a drum major, their fans threw food at us—I was so mad.”

“I remember that game,” Herschel says. If he hadn’t been marching with that big sousaphone, he probably would have thrown the food right back. “Didn’t we go into that game thinking we had a chance to win and leaving feeling like it was a butt whooping?”

About that time Amy arrives with our orders. “Ok, here you go. Does anybody need anything?”

Looking around Dooley responded, “No, I think we got it all! Thanks!”

“Go Dawgs!” Amy smiles and makes her way to the next table.

We have more work to do on our project, so I launch into our discussion. “Last time, we started to talk about the influences on how we mentor student teachers. For me, one of those influences was my own student teaching. I felt like I had amazing opportunities.” I went on to comment about how my parents made recommendations about band programs that would give me the most opportunity. “I ended up getting the chance to conduct and perform five
different pieces between both of my student teaching placements. And during my ten-week placement, I was allowed to take over all the planning, teaching, and assessment for one of the sixth grade classes. There were a hundred and fifty kids in that class—it was a ‘real world’ experience!”

“I have a different take on my student teaching experience,” Herschel comments. “You know, it seemed that everybody that was anybody was able to choose their student teaching placements, but I didn’t get those kinds of choices. But, I will say that having three cooperating teachers, two at the middle school level and one at the high school level, was great.”

I responded, “I actually had four cooperating teachers, two at the middle school level and two at the high school.” I knew that I could still count on all of them for guidance today.

“I did my student teaching long before you two did,” Dooley remarked, “and I only had one cooperating teacher. He was also my high school band director.”

Herschel and I were confused. When we were in college, student teachers were never allowed to move back home. “How did that work?” I probed.
“By the time I was ready to do my student teaching, Mr. Swanson had changed jobs, so when it came time to put in for student teaching placements, I thought it made the most sense to go with him.” Dooley explained. “You know, he was a good man, but I think he was pretty burned out on teaching by the time I got there. I ended up doing a lot of logistical things for the bands, and I really don’t think I had enough podium time. I’ve always regretted my decision and wished I could have learned new things from different mentors.”

“I got a lot of podium time, so that was a positive aspect of my student teaching” Herschel reflected. “My high school cooperating teacher was absent a lot—that’s how I got so much podium time. I remember that I was mainly concerned with ‘fancy conducting’ and whether the student liked me. No doubt that was the wrong outlook!”

By then, Dooley and I were giggling at the thought of Herschel and his ‘fancy conducting.’ “So, if your cooperating teacher was absent, you didn’t get much feedback, did you?” I questioned.

“That’s right,” says Herschel “I really didn’t, especially in my high school placement. My favorite cooperating teacher was Mr. Layson who was one of my middle
school cooperating teachers. He would explain what he was teaching and how he chose repertoire, and he always helped correct the things I was doing wrong. He helped me learn to reflect and analyze my teaching, and I appreciated that."

I thought about what Herschel had said regarding feedback, and I said, “Herschel, you’re always learning something, aren’t you?”

“Yes,” he replied with no hesitation. “That’s exactly why I agreed to help you with this project, Georgia. I knew I would learn something.”

“Well, I’m still learning from my cooperating teachers mistakes,” says Dooley. “I guess I mean that in two ways. On one hand, what someone else is doing might not work for you. So, you might be asked to teach in ways that are unnatural to you—that you would never incorporate into your own teaching. But, on a more personal level, I say that because, again, I just didn’t get a lot of podium time when I student taught. I made copies, printed letters, did instrument tryouts, rehearsed a few sectionals, that sort of thing. I knew then that I should be getting more time in front of the kids. I guess that is why my student teachers are on the podium so much!”
I could tell by Dooley’s tone that it really bothered him that he didn’t get a lot of experience teaching. I respond, “So you think that a big part of student teaching is learning maybe what not to do?”

“Yeah, no doubt” replies Dooley. “It is only human to make mistakes. It is a part of life, but I think as a teacher that it is important to learn how to refrain from making the mistake again.”

“That’s so true,” Herschel responded, “and in fact I think I am going to steal that if you don’t mind.”

“By all means!” laughs Dooley.

“You know, I think my cooperating teachers felt like I already knew what I was doing. That’s probably why I was on the podium so much. I’m not sure if it was because I was a band director’s kid or if it was because I had been drum major for three years and served as a conductor of the concert bands during that time.” I wondered aloud whether I might have had a totally different student teaching experience had I not participated in all those activities before I reached my student teaching semester. I’m sure my student teaching mentors all trusted me, and that was evident in the amount of time they let me on the podium as
well as all of the other opportunities they provided for me.

"Well, I think my cooperating teacher trusted me," Dooley interjected. "I think he was used to doing things on his own, didn’t have too many student teachers before me, and ultimately didn’t think about how to incorporate me into his daily routine."

Herschel concurred, "I can see that. I know that when I’m focused on my students and the success of the band program, it is sometimes hard to think about how to include the student teachers. Am I a music educator or a music teacher educator? Sometimes you get caught in between."

Pretty soon, it became obvious that Dooley was feeling badly about making everyone think that he had a miserable student teaching experience. "You know," he admitted, "Mr. Swanson encouraged me never to complain and to always volunteer for duties outside of the classroom as. Although that advice is sometimes tough to heed, there’s a lot of wisdom in it. It’s advice I ended up taking to heart, and I try to remember on a daily basis."

"Um, yeah," I interrupted "I love volunteering outside of band but I often feel beaten down when I have so many duties. Mr. Swanson was right. I shouldn’t complain but
it is hard not to." We all understood that our cafeteria
duty, bus duty, or service on school committees could
enhance relationships between the band program and other
school programs.

"After watching Mr. Swanson in action, I noticed that
the school faculty and staff loved him. They would do
anything he needed and in the end would be the biggest
supporters of the band program." Dooley replied with pride.

I try to keep the conversation moving: "So, let’s talk
about what would make an ideal student teaching
experience."

"Well," says Dooley "I would say a placement where
there are varieties of experiences offered—a lot of podium
time, assist with logistics, teach sectional rehearsals.
And a lot of feedback from the cooperating teacher on all
those things."

Herschel interrupts, "Like Dooley said, learn how to
form relationships with the principal, secretary,
custodian, and other teachers in the school, participate in
cafeteria duty or bus duty. I, too, remember thinking ‘I
will never be doing those things at my school.’ Man, was I
wrong!"
We all chuckled again at Herschel’s honesty. I added, “and I would think a placement where you felt nurtured.” I knew that was one very important aspect of my student teaching, and I try to help my student teachers feel secure and nurtured as well.

“Yes, that’s a good one,” says Dooley.

About that time I felt a hand on my shoulder. As I turned around, I was surprised and elated to see one of my former students, standing there. “Oh my goodness, Erica, how are you?”

“I’m doing great! But my worlds are definitely colliding seeing all of you sitting here,” she responded. We all knew what she meant. Erica had been a student at my high school, and she had gone on to UGA to major in music education. Last spring, she completed her student teaching assignments—ten weeks with Dooley, and then five weeks with Herschel. Erica circled around the table giving everyone hugs.

“Funny you are here,” Dooley interjected. “We have been meeting to talk about how we serve as cooperating teachers. No doubt you could write this presentation for us.”
Blushing, Erica says, “Well, I don’t know about that, but I know I couldn’t do anything in music without all of you.” Erica told us about her first few weeks at her new job. “I love being with the kids. They are so awesome. I’m really starting to figure out how I want to maintain classroom discipline. I remember all of you telling me that it is one of the hardest things to accomplish during the first year, but I’m starting to feel really good about it.” She pauses, and we can see in Erica’s face that she is choosing her words carefully: “But... how in the world did you guys make it this long having to deal with some of the parents?”

This made all of us burst out in laughter. Little did Erica know, we had still not solved that problem!

“I appreciate them and love the support... I mean they are volunteers, but I feel like they will turn on me in a heartbeat,” Erica admits.

“Well, it sounds like you are in your fifth year of teaching, Erica,” says Herschel. “Welcome to the profession!”

Even though she has the struggles of every first year teacher, I can’t help but hear the excitement in Erica’s voice, and I feel a sense of pride in her accomplishments.
"You were one of the best," says Herschel. "It’s easy mentoring student teachers like you." Herschel smiles and gives her thumbs up.

I knew it was getting close to game time. "Erica, are you going to the game? Do you want to walk down with us?"

"Thanks for the offer" Erica responds, "but I’m meeting some friends here before the game. It’s so good to see all of you! I’ll be in touch!"

"Great seeing you!" I meant it. Erica helped bring some realism to our conversation today. "Ok we better start making our way down to the stadium. We wouldn’t want to miss pregame!" I started gathering the trash from the table and placing it in the garbage can by the door.

On our way out the door, Dooley asks, "Is everyone going to be here in two weeks for Homecoming?"

"Oh, yeah, I will be there!" I respond enthusiastically, "I haven’t missed one yet! What about you Herschel?"

"Actually, I will be there this year, can you believe it?" says Herschel "I actually don’t have a band competition that weekend."
Scene 4 – Homecoming

It’s another beautiful day in Athens. The Dawgs are currently undefeated, so tickets for the game are hard to find. Luckily, Dooley, Herschel, and I have already purchased our tickets through the Redcoat Band Alumni Association. The board has asked that each alumni check in at registration by 7:30 am so that the downbeat of the rehearsal can begin right at 8:00 am. I am an alumni drum major, Dooley is an alumni alto saxophone player and Herschel is an alumni sousaphone player. All three of us are checked in and on the field by 7:55 am. We are excited about playing some of the traditional pieces as well as getting the chance to hear and see the current Redcoats perform their show up close. The rehearsal for pregame goes smoothly. After about an hour of reviewing for the game, all of the alumni gather on the hill to watch the Redcoat Band perform their half time show. It is a proud moment for everyone, but especially for Dooley, Herschel, and myself. It just so happens that many of our former students are either in the current band or are now Redcoat Band Alumni themselves. Once everyone is dismissed from the field, we all decide to go to the UGA Student Learning
Center to grab a cup of coffee and sit and talk before heading to the stadium for their performance.

Once inside the building, we immediately see a coffee shop. Herschel and Dooley begin placing all of our orders while I grab a table by the window for the three of us to sit. I want to dive right into our discussion so we can finish up this GMEA project, so I start talking about my desire to be a great teacher and mentor: “I really enjoy being a band director and I feel like I am starting to really understand what the students need from me. Let’s just say we all know it isn’t always how to play the right notes.” I chuckled thinking about the truth in my own statement.

“Now, there is a word that I mentioned in class a lot yesterday.” said Herschel, suddenly turning serious.

“What word?” I asked.

“Understand,” he replied. “I was trying to help my kids recognize that we all come from different backgrounds and that we should not judge or criticize without knowing each individual’s situation. That is so difficult for students to grasp.” Herschel went on to describe how he was seeing more students at his high school that lived in unstable home environments—single parent families, and even
some kids in foster care. Herschel felt that he often had to be a parental figure for his students. In many ways, the way he parents influences his teaching, and vice versa. “Their lives sometimes make me sad,” he expressed, “but I’m glad that they know they can come to me for support.”

Trying to lighten up the conversation a bit, I turned to Herschel and said, “You have always been my hero.”

But Herschel continued his seriousness: “I am no hero, Georgia, but if anyone knows and understands the need for love and attention it is me.”

Dooley was always the wise one in our conversations, and he sensed that Herschel needed to say something important, so he probed, “What do you mean?” I, too, knew that Herschel had some things on his mind that he wanted to talk about. I remembered him alluding to some family issues when we were at our tailgate.

Herschel began discussing his childhood, describing how he had a good relationship with his mom until he was about nine years old. “That’s when she started being mean to me and my siblings–she would jump on us for no reason. My parents also started fighting, when they had never fought before.” His mother had an anxiety attack, started hearing voices, claimed that she was having hallucinations,
and ended up in a mental facility. The doctors diagnosed her with schizophrenia, and she was given medication that made her tired so she slept a lot. Herschel was so young; he couldn’t have understood fully what schizophrenia really meant, or why his mother needed to be medicated. To him, the illness meant he could no longer be close to his mother. The stress of his mother’s mental illness ultimately became too much for Herschel’s father, and his parents divorced. “The only way I knew to deal with everything was to stay away from my house. That’s when I threw myself into practicing tuba—music was my escape.”

“Oh goodness, Herschel, I had no idea!” It was all I could do to keep from crying. I had known Herschel since our college years, and he never let on.

“Yeah, that kind of family dysfunction isn’t something you go around talking about to your college classmates. Anyway, by the time I went to college, I was just hoping to start a new life,” Herschel rationalized.

Dooley responded empathetically, “I don’t know if I ever told you guys, but I lost both of my parents when I was younger.” He went on to tell us about his devoted, stay-at-home mother who always made her children feel safe and cared for. The only non-negotiable aspect of Dooley’s
life was church. “We went to church whether we wanted to or not. It was what my mother expected us to do.” Dooley’s mom was the constant in his life and church was the constant in hers. It wasn’t hard to guess why Dooley’s faith was so important to him.

Dooley’s mother died just before his senior year in high school. His aunts and his church helped in any way they could—they got Dooley through his high school graduation and his first couple of years at UGA. The death was hardest on Dooley’s dad, who struggled emotionally and financially. “Any little thing reminded him of mom,” Dooley continued. “He was such a basket case and it was difficult for him to hold down a job. I really hated watching him struggle.” Just before Dooley’s junior year in college, his father was found dead from a gunshot wound. It was ruled suicide. “You know, even today I believe it was accidental.” Dooley’s voice trailed off and we all sat silent.

“I am at a loss for words, Dooley, just completely shocked. You and I have worked together for years, but I would have never guessed you went through all of that,” I said, breaking the quiet.
“You know, if you sit and reflect on your past, you start realizing why you are the way you are,” Herschel pointed out. “We all know how you got here, Georgia. With your parents, you had no choice but to turn out the way you did.” I felt a little guilty because I have led a fairy-tale life compared to Herschel and Dooley. Everyone in Georgia music education knows my parents pretty well. They spent 30 years as the middle school and high school band directors in a small rural town, so they were constantly together. I’m sure that helped their marriage. Throughout their careers, they became award-winning band directors, leaders in our state music organization, and mentors to many current teachers, including me. I have always been proud of their accomplishments in the classroom, and I can say honestly that all the structure, safety, and care they provided for their students they also provided to my siblings and me at home. I look around the table at my colleagues gratefully, “Thanks,” I say. “I appreciate that, and I’m sure my parents would, too. I’m really thankful for them and their values. The only times I remember stress in our house were the times my dad locked himself in the basement to write drill. I still remember hearing the cries upstairs and asking mom why dad was
crying. I think she had a smirk on her face when she told me that he was putting dots on a page.” Everybody laughed and nodded in agreement. We had all been there!

I continued, “As much as I appreciated growing up in that type of atmosphere, I think it is sometimes hard for me to understand and deal with the situations that are opposite. When I hear some of the stories that my students at school tell me, my first reaction is to think they are making things up to get some attention from me. That’s a terrible feeling and one that really makes me feel guilty.” I sat with my head tilted and lips drawn. Staring off in space, I began thinking about one of my students who was having difficulties at home.

“I can tell you,” advised Herschel, “that my students are constantly telling me those types of stories. It’s sad, really sad, especially since they are true stories.”

Dooley paused, “You know, parents do the best they can under their circumstances.” Herschel and I had to listen to that kind of wisdom from a man who had raised four children—God knows, they tried their father’s patience on more than one occasion. But Dooley believed in second chances, just as long as kids learn from their mistakes.
“Speaking of parenting, do you think your teaching has changed since becoming a mother, Georgia?” asks Herschel.

“There is no doubt that my teaching has changed after becoming a mother. I think that I consider the emotional state of students a lot more than I did before having kids,” I speculated. “I have also noticed that my tone of voice has changed when talking to students. In fact, the other day my husband overheard me talking to one of my high school students and said ‘wow, it was like you were talking to Elizabeth!’ I was embarrassed at first but then I realized he was right. I think I gain credibility with the kids just by being a mom, and I’m able to persuade them to make better choices because they don’t want to disappoint me.”

“That’s interesting, Georgia. Do you mentor your student teachers with the same mindset?” Dooley inquired.

I thought for a minute. “Hmmm. I guess I do. I’m always questioning them, trying to get them to see the consequences of their actions, and helping them make better choices. I mean, my student teachers don’t see me as a mother, I suppose. They probably see me as a leader. I mean, I hope they see me as a leader.” I recognized that I
did do a lot of “mothering” with my student teachers, but for heaven’s sake—I was not old enough to be their mother!

“Well, I definitely mentor my student teachers with a father mentality,” Herschel claimed. He related how, with several of his student teachers, he taught them how to put together a monthly budget, or brought them into his home where they learned to cook. Herschel felt strongly that these kinds of activities helped build trusting relationships with student teachers. Once that trust was developed, the student teachers were willing to accept feedback and mentoring.

I asked Dooley, “What about you? Has your teaching changed after having children?”

Dooley approached the question thoughtfully: “I began my career as a “yeller,” and as I recognized what my yelling was doing to my own kids, I decreased the amount of yelling I did in the classroom. Other than that, I don’t think that anything else about becoming a parent has influenced my teaching.” Dooley paused a bit and then started again, “My own children are no longer in my bands—they’re in Georgia’s band now, and Evan has graduated high school—so I have become a little more detached from my middle school students.”
In a way, it makes me sad to hear Dooley describe his relationship with students as detached. I suppose it’s a natural evolution, especially when your own kids and their friends are enrolled in the band program. I care about my own students so much that it’s hard for me to imagine I will ever feel detached from them, but I wonder if it will happen to me, too, after Elizabeth and Andrew graduate high school.

That thought leaves me as I glance at the clock and realize we need to get down to the field with the Alumni Band. “We have to be ready for pregame in 15 minutes!”

“I feel like I might have derailed our conversation today,” Herschel admits. “Do we have another chance to get together?”

Dooley reassures Herschel, “Your thoughts were really helpful to me. You made me think about how it isn’t just our experiences in school and college that have shaped our teaching. It’s sometimes hard for me to admit those things.”

I concur, “And we have a chance to get together before the Georgia Tech game, right after Thanksgiving. Do you want to meet at Broad Street Coffee before the game?” I ask.
Both men nod enthusiastically. “Absolutely!"

Initially, I felt I was twisting their arms to participate in this project, and I’m gratified to see that they are now invested in it.
Scene 5 – Coaches Corner

It is a cold, brisk morning in Athens. Dawg fans are anxious about their long-standing rivalry with Georgia Tech. Whoever wins the game can claim the state title, and we Dawg fans are hoping that it will be us for the eighth year in a row. With the colder temperatures, Broad Street Coffee is packed as expected. It is 10:00 am and I’m the first to arrive again. I grab the table next to the window, the very table that the three of us used during our first meeting. As soon as I settle in, I see Herschel and Dooley walking in the front door together. We are all smiles and excited to see each other again. After exchanging hugs, band director pats, and hand shakes Herschel insists that he purchase the final round of coffee and pastries and motions for Amy to place our order. Our goal for today is to finalize our project for GMEA, and settle on the most important points we will include about our practices of mentoring student teachers.

“On my drive up this morning, I started thinking about all of our conversations that we have had the past few months,” I began. “We talked about what we do when we
mentor student teachers, but we also discussed who influenced what we do."

Herschel jumps into the conversation: “You know, I wasn’t so surprised that our own student teaching experiences shaped a lot of what we do—or in Dooley’s case, what we don’t do—but I was surprised at how much our families influence the way we mentor our student teachers.” Herschel had crystallized the “in-between-ness” of family and teaching that we had been discussing.

“Maybe we weren’t so surprised about Georgia,” Dooley added thoughtfully, “After all, her parents are prominent mentors in our profession.”

“That’s kind of you to acknowledge, Dooley,” I respond, “But I also was surprised at how much we spoke about our families last time. I had never really thought about how much our parenthood influences what we do.” I went on to say how I had long thought about how the students in my parents’ bands looked up to them, didn’t want to disappoint them, and felt very proud to be members of their ‘band family.’ You would have thought my parents were celebrities every time they ran to the grocery store! But I hadn’t considered how that might be reciprocal—how my parents must have cared very much about their students and
concerned for their welfare outside of band. Likewise, they must have cared about the many student teachers they mentored over the years.

“Right on, Georgia,” Herschel replies. “Our conversations made me realize that I think of the whole band as a family, and how important it is that we trust one another. Whenever I have a student teacher like Erica, I want to be sure she feels included in the family as well.”

Just then, Dooley stepped into the conversation: “Yes, but it’s also important that we demonstrate to student teachers that we are trustworthy.”

The statement seemed profound, but I wasn’t sure exactly what Dooley meant. “Could you say more?” I asked.

Dooley went on to say that whenever we have student teachers that they need to know we are providing them with many experiences, and those experiences are not ‘busy work,’ or things that we prefer not to do, like lunch duty. Instead, every experience we offer them is part of the real life of a music teacher, and the student teacher can learn something important from the experience—something that will inform his or her teaching in the future. Dooley concluded, “Our student teachers need to believe that we are being honest with our feedback, telling them the truth.
so they can become great teachers for their own students. They need to leave their student teaching placements with no regrets.”

By that time, Herschel and I are both nodding.
“Honest feedback is so important,” Herschel agrees.

I began summing up, “So far, I have written these things down: giving student teachers lots of different experiences, including bus or cafeteria duty, is essential. Their growth depends upon us communicating with them honestly and frequently. Cooperating teachers should model care and concern for students, not just as members of the band, but also as human beings. I know I’ve left some things out. What else?”

“Don’t forget that we need to allow student teachers to learn from their mistakes, just as they need to allow their students to learn from mistakes,” Dooley added.

“That’s a good one,” Herschel confirms. “Also, our obligation to mentoring doesn’t stop when they leave the student teaching placement. Hopefully we are building lifelong relationships.”

“Interesting that you should bring that up, Herschel,” I commented. “Just this past week I had a former student teacher come back to observe and chat.” I explained how I
was work working with a freshman clarinet student at the time, and within a span of thirty minutes, we worked on producing a better tone and fixed some minor articulation issues. We discussed time management and some ways that she could attend to her academic work and still find time to practice. The student told me that she was failing two of her classes, but when I asked a few more questions, I learned that her parents were going through a divorce and she was trying to stay with her friends rather than going home. “After the student left, my former student teacher asked, ‘where did you learn to do all that at once?’ At this point in my career, it just seems natural, but talking with him, I recognized that I had lots of great models, and many experiences to draw from.”

“It’s good that he saw all that nurturing, Georgia” says Dooley. “That is a major reason your students trust you so much.”

I smiled at Dooley and thanked him for the compliment. “If you want to be a great band director, you have to be willing to teach more than the right notes.”

With a big smile on his face, Herschel responds, “Well, I’d like the right notes, too, if you don’t mind.”
We all knew Herschel and his sense of humor—we couldn’t help but laugh.

I was really starting to get excited about GMEA. “I think we have some fantastic topics for our project. Now all we need to do is figure out how we are going to introduce it.”

Herschel interjects “You know, Georgia, I see this as merely the introduction of the many chapters to be written on music cooperating teacher’s stories.”

“I hope so, Herschel! That is pretty exciting!” I respond.

“So, are we going to figure out the introduction by conference call?” asks Dooley.

“Yes, let’s do that,” I reply. “I’ll initiate the call. In the meantime let’s all make some notes about the introduction and order of presentation.”

“Awesome,” Herschel replies. “Now let’s get down to the stadium. I’m really hoping the Dawgs can pull this one out.”
Feeling a little emotional that this is our last gathering, I pick up my purse and follow Dooley and Herschel out the door, down to the stadium to stand and cheer between the hedges.
Chapter 5: Interpretations and Reflections

Thinking about stories conceives of narrative as an object. Thinking with stories is a process in which we as thinkers do not so much work on narrative as of allowing narrative to work on us. (Morris, 2002, p. 196)

The novella is a fiction, but its plot and characters reveal the truths of three selves who are music cooperating teachers. As Bruner (2002) suggests, self-making is one of the most impressive things that humans accomplish. There are many stories we tell to make sense of who we are in a given situation. Furthermore, we retell and weave these stories into a coherent identity over time. Although our conversations for this study were nominally about our practices as cooperating teachers, we told stories of ourselves as children at home and in school, stories about our own student teaching, stories about ourselves as parents, and finally stories of ourselves as music teacher educators. By utilizing Ricoeur’s (1992) concept of ipse-identity, I recognized who we were in specific contexts, and by utilizing the concept of idem-identity, I gained a better understanding of the sameness that tied our identity stories together through time.

In this chapter, I address the research questions, first utilizing Clandinin and Connelly’s concept of stories to live by to describe the kinds of stories that are revealed through our conversations: stories of family, stories of schooling, private stories and public stores. Utilizing Clandinin and Connelly’s concept of multiple stories, Bruner’s self-
making stories, and Ricoeur’s *ipse* identities, I then address who we are in the circumstances of childhood, school, student-teaching, parenting, and teaching.

In theorizing narrative identity, Bruner (2002) and Ricoeur (1992) indicate that others not only appear in our stories, but they also influence the authorship of our narrative identities. Therefore, I address not only the parents and teachers whose presence actively influenced how we author our narratives, but also those whose loss or absence profoundly influenced our self-making. Finally, I use Ricoeur’s (1979) concept of repetition and returning to address our *idem*-identities, or sameness, and I propose that this thread of sameness over time provides the rationale for our practices as music teacher educators.

**What Kinds of Stories Did We Tell?**

In developing their conception of stories to live by, Connelly and Clandinin (1999) found that the professional knowledge landscape created conditions whereby teachers told different kinds of stories about themselves: secret stories that they only told within their own classrooms, and cover stories that they told in out-of-classroom spaces. Although they did not assume these kinds of stories would be told in all teaching situations, Connelly and Clandinin suggested that different kinds of stories might be told. In this study as we shared our cooperating teacher practices, each of us told stories of family and
schooling. Family stories were stories about our upbringing and memories of childhood. They were also stories about becoming parents and how parenting has affected our teaching and mentoring. Schooling stories were those of being a student in middle school and high school band programs; we all agree that these were the stories that directly led to imagining ourselves as music teachers. Also included were stories of ourselves as college students and especially our experiences as student teachers. Furthermore, in both family and schooling stories, we told public stories, which were those we have told for many years to friends, colleagues, and students. Yet we also told private stories, usually revealed only to our closest family members, although some of these stories were insights we gained for the first time as we were participating in this research.

**Family stories.** I told two public family stories and no private family stories as our conversations progressed: First, I was open about my adoration and respect for my parents—they offered love, emotional guidance, educational guidance, and a stable, supportive home. My parents were band directors and mentors to many student teachers throughout their careers, and I am aware that they are the primary influence on my identity as a cooperating teacher. I told a second public story about how becoming a mother changed my music teaching and also my mentoring of student teachers. Since becoming a parent, I am
more nurturing toward my student teachers, and also more firm and structured with my expectations. As a result, I sense that student teachers see me as a leader.

Dooley told of his love and adoration for his mother as a public story. In particular, he credited her with making him attend church, where he developed Christian faith, including belief in forgiveness and second chances. Through his mother and the church, Dooley also developed a keen sense of service, which has become a central facet of his identity. Dooley’s private family story was always intertwined with his public story. He described how, after his mother died, his father had trouble holding down a job due to the stresses from losing his wife. It was much more than Dooley’s dad could handle, and it created emotional and financial strain on the whole family. As things got worse, Dooley’s father was found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot; the fact that the death was ruled a suicide added to the private nature of the story. Dooley was a college student when he became an orphan, and he acknowledged that his church congregation was an essential source of strength and support during this period of great loss. In some sense, the church became Dooley’s parent in his stories, so it was no surprise its lessons of forgiveness and service figured prominently into Dooley’s identity.
Like Dooley, Herschel’s private family story was intimately intertwined with his public story. When Herschel was only nine years old, his mother began exhibiting signs of schizophrenia and was institutionalized. It was impossible for Herschel to understand his mother’s condition at such a young age—he knew only that he had lost his mother. He also had few friendships because of the chaotic state of his household. As a result of his mother’s illness, his mother and father fought a lot and eventually divorced. For many years, Herschel was very angry with his father for destroying their family.

Herschel’s only public family story can be viewed, then, as a reaction against this private story. He is proud to be a caring father and involved in his children’s lives. Since becoming a parent, Herschel views his band program as an extension of family, in part because he sees that his students have dysfunctional family relationships, just as Hershel had in his childhood. He even calls his music students “step-children.” This sense of family extends to student teachers as well, because Herschel takes interest in their lives outside the classroom, such as whether they are ready to live on their own and manage a household budget.

**Schooling stories.** My public schooling stories are very close to my public family stories because my parents also were my band directors, and I had many opportunities to learn how to be a great
musician, teacher, and mentor from them. Their attention to and support for all their students are characteristics that I try to emulate every day. I am so proud that former students, student teachers, and colleagues all hold my parents in such high esteem, so in many ways, I feel that my parent’s successes are also my successes. This sense of family pride is obvious in my standard of conduct as a student, teacher, and mother.

Becoming a drum major at the University of Georgia was a very positive experience in my life. It seemed to be the institution’s “stamp of approval” on my musicianship, teaching ability, leadership qualities, and character. After becoming drum major, I was asked to conduct one of the concert bands at UGA, and then I was given the opportunity to choose my student teaching placement. Now I am invited frequently to serve as a cooperating teacher, so I feel as if proving myself capable as a drum major opened up many other opportunities.

I am also public about the positive experiences I had during student teaching with all four cooperating teachers. I was able to participate in many facets of both beginning and high school band programs, including sectional rehearsals, conducting large ensembles, choosing repertoire, and administering programs. I was even allowed to rehearse and perform with a sixth grade band on my own, which seldom occurred for other student teachers. I always was confident that I
received a ‘real world’ experience during student teaching. My cooperating teachers trusted me, probably because I came in with so much background and experience—I was a band director’s daughter as well as a former drum major for the UGA marching band. At the same time, I felt nurtured by all four cooperating teachers. This is a quality I try to emulate in my own mentoring.

Mr. Swanson was the person who urged Dooley to try the baritone saxophone, and Dooley didn’t want to let Mr. Swanson down, so he practiced hard and became very good at his instrument. Mr. Swanson encouraged Dooley and was an important influence on his decision to become a band director. Dooley figured that Mr. Swanson probably saw a little of himself in Dooley.

Although Dooley was public about his respect and love for Mr. Swanson, he was extremely private about the reasons he chose to student teach with Mr. Swanson. By that time, Mr. Swanson was teaching in a new school, and Dooley was longing for familiarity after losing both of his parents. It was a natural choice to work with Mr. Swanson, but Dooley often has regretted that choice. The public part of Dooley’s story was his feeling that, during student teaching, he did not get much podium time with the large ensemble, and he often was left to do only the logistical work, such as making copies or organizing the music library. In retrospect, Dooley has come to believe that Mr.
Swanson was an inexperienced mentor, so he was unsure of how to incorporate Dooley into the daily life of the band program.

Dooley’s mentoring should be viewed as a reaction against his own student teaching experience—he is careful to provide student teachers with as much experience rehearsing and conducting as possible. Because of his deep reflection over time, Dooley has become public with his story of appreciation for Mr. Swanson’s example. Mr. Swanson taught him to refrain from complaining about duties outside of teaching, and to always volunteer for school committees in order to interact with colleagues outside of music, as well as school staff and administration, and consequently gain the support for the band program.

As with his family stories, Herschel’s private schooling stories were predominant. When he was young, Herschel’s friends encouraged him to join band, so he decided that he wanted to play the tenor sax. His grandfather took him to the store to buy the instrument, but they left with a trombone. Herschel was angry and frustrated because no one was there to help him purchase the instrument he wanted to play. He had a chip on his shoulder and ended up failing band that semester.

Later on in school, Herschel began playing the tuba, and he started staying after school for extra help and practice. In fact, he practiced nearly every day. One might believe music and practicing would comprise a public story for a music teacher, but for Herschel,
practicing was a private story, an escape from all of the arguing between his parents, not to mention an escape from his mother’s schizophrenia.

Herschel’s most private schooling story was about how his high school teacher resorted to intimidation to motivate students toward a better contest score and to bring home a trophy. Herschel and his friends felt unnecessary pressure and stress from such intimidation. But by this point in his life, Herschel was using band as an escape from the dysfunction of his home, so perhaps Herschel’s anger was intensified because he suddenly felt there was no longer an escape from dysfunctional relationships. Whatever the explanation, Herschel’s anger and frustration were still intense when he retold this story.

In contrast, Herschel publicly admired Mr. Leach, his tuba teacher and chamber coach, who provided mentorship and support and guided Herschel to become a music major in college. Herschel respected Mr. Leach so much that when Mr. Leach mentioned that Herschel ought to enroll in the University of Georgia, Herschel simply said “ok.” There was not a question in his mind. Considering all the dysfunctional relationships in Herschel’s stories, his trust in Mr. Leach was a strikingly different relationship.

Herschel had one private and one public story from his student teaching experience. In his high school placement, Herschel’s experience was broad and varied, but he felt that he received very little feedback. In
his own practice as a cooperating teacher, Herschel has reacted against his high school student teaching by providing constant feedback to student teachers. In contrast, Herschel was public about his respect for Mr. Layson, one of his middle school cooperating teachers. Not only did Mr. Layson help correct Herschel’s mistakes, but he also reflected with Herschel on his teaching, ultimately enabling Herschel to analyze on his own.

**Who are the Cooperating Teachers in These Stories?**

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) described stories to live by as “multiple depending on the situations in which one finds oneself. . . . Different facets, different identities, can show up, be reshaped and take on new life in different landscape settings” (p. 95). Bruner (2002) admonished, “we create not just one self-making story but many of them” (p. 14). “We constantly construct and reconstruct ourselves to meet the needs of the situation we encounter, and we do so with the guidance of our memories of the past and our hopes and fears of the future” (p. 64). Similarly, Ricoeur (1992) described *ipse*-identity as selfhood, or individuality. It was the answer to the question, “Who am I in these circumstances?” Within the public and private contexts of our family and schooling stories were the situated circumstances of our lives. We told stories of ourselves as children, students, student teachers, parents, and music teachers.
**Children.** We often spoke about ourselves as children, particularly in relationship to our parents. I felt loved and nurtured throughout childhood. Structure was an important aspect of nurture—a firm sense of right and wrong, of what was acceptable and unacceptable. My practices as a music teacher and cooperating teacher are most influenced by childhood memories of my parents providing the same nurture and structure in their bands as they provided at home. Dooley also had a happy childhood, and he especially recalled his mother’s involvement in his life. Because of his mother, Dooley appears to have been more involved than Herschel or myself in activities outside music, such as church and sports; however, because his mother was a person of Christian faith, the church was the centerpiece of Dooley’s childhood. Its lessons of forgiveness and service became the structure for Dooley’s life and his practices as a cooperating teacher. Herschel had a very different childhood than Dooley and I. His mother’s illness was his most vivid memory, although he did not understand it at the time. Herschel described his childhood as dysfunctional and chaotic, and he felt that he had to fight for love and attention. The sense that his childhood was lacking essential parental love and support has influenced many of Herschel’s decisions as a band director and a cooperating teacher.

**Students.** My parents also were my music teachers, so my story of being a child is inseparable from my story of being a student. As a
band director, my father had high expectations and he did not hand out compliments to students easily. If my father praised my musicality at all, I hung onto the compliment, and many of his students felt similarly. As a student, I consistently sought my parents’ approval. Dooley was a people-pleaser—rarely confrontational, and never complaining. This was undoubtedly a quality he learned from his experiences in church, and also from his mother. He was proud that his band teacher, Mr. Swanson, encouraged him to play the bari sax and go into music teaching, so he worked hard for Mr. Swanson and did everything that was asked of him. As a student, Herschel craved attention. There was nothing he wanted more than to be cared for, guided, and included. Finally, during his high school years, Mr. Leach mentored Herschel and worked hard to keep him productively engaged in music. Although Herschel admits to practicing tuba mainly to avoid his home life, he discovered his talents and became an excellent musician. Although he believes he fell into music, Herschel’s trusting relationship with Mr. Leach led him to major in music at the University of Georgia.

**Student teachers.** All of us found our own student teaching experience to be influential on our cooperating teacher practices; however, I strive to emulate my student teaching experience, where Dooley and Herschel react against their student teaching experiences. Even as a student teacher, I was not apart from the influence of my
parents. They recommended placements where I worked with four excellent cooperating teachers who provided a variety of experiences, even allowing me to take over a sixth grade band. In contrast, Dooley has regretted his lack of experience directing and rehearsing large ensembles when he was a student teacher. Nevertheless, his cooperating teacher, Mr. Swanson, reinforced the notion of servanthood for Dooley, advising him never to complain about school duties or committee assignments, and instead to use those opportunities to build support within the school community for the band program. This is advice that Dooley still follows today. Much like his story of childhood, Herschel believed that he missed out on something essential as a student teacher. He had a variety of experiences, but his cooperating teachers often were absent, and Herschel was disappointed with the amount of feedback he received.

**Parents.** I chose to become a parent because I had such a stable and loving childhood, and I try to provide my two children with the same loving, nurturing and structured environment I experienced as a child. I love being a mother and feel that having children has added more purpose to my life. Dooley views himself as most like his mother. He is very involved in the lives of his children, driving them to and from school, church, and other activities. Like his mother, Dooley models his values rather than simply talking about them. He has high expectations for his
children, yet at the same time, he knows they will often make mistakes, and he most often models the values of forgiveness and second chances. In contrast to Dooley and myself, Herschel resists the parenting that his mother and father demonstrated. He is determined to build loving and tender relationships with his children and provide them with a stable home.

**Teachers.** Similar to becoming a parent, I became a teacher because I constantly observed my parents enjoyment in their lives as teachers. I attempt to be the teacher that my parents were for me, not only teaching the right notes, but also nurturing and guiding students. My teaching typically is very structured, never leaving learning to chance but always having a plan. I always try to find ways to improve my teaching, because I have high expectations for myself and I love to learn. Dooley has known since the age of 14 that he wanted to be a teacher and he never considered another career. For many years, he tried to emulate Mr. Swanson’s teaching, but in most ways that was not a good decision. Through experience, Dooley found strategies that worked for him, but he continued to emulate Mr. Swanson in one respect—never turning down an opportunity to serve his school and his profession. Herschel believes that he is teaching today mainly because of Mr. Leach’s suggestion. He sees many of his students coming from dysfunctional families, similar to his own, and he strives to be the “big brother” or “father” that many of
his students lack. Herschel’s approach to teaching is complicated—although he acknowledges the anger and frustration he experienced when his high school teacher tried intimidation as a motivation tool, Herschel still claims that intimidating students often keeps them from making poor decisions and enables them to develop a stronger work ethic.

**Who are Others in Our Stories?**

According to Bruner (2002) telling stories about ourselves is no simple matter. From the inside, we tell stories based on experience and memory, but from the outside, we tell stories based on the views and perceptions of others (p. 65). Ricoeur similarly indicates that the appearance of others in our stories means they take some part in authorship—not always in a preferred way. In our stories, the most influential others were parents, teachers, and cooperating teachers. They appeared as protagonists and antagonists in our stories, but in most cases, our relationships with them were highly complex.

My parents also were my teachers, and I have acknowledged that my identity is intimately entwined with theirs. Even when I became a student teacher, my parents influenced my selection of placements. I felt the same kinds of nurturing and high expectations from my cooperating teachers that I experienced from my parents, so I look back on my student teaching fondly. I still speak with my parents nearly every day,
and I hope to emulate their example as I raise my two children. They are never far away from my parenting practices, teaching practices, or my mentoring of student teachers.

During childhood, Dooley’s mother was the constant in Dooley’s life, setting the schedule, and modeling Christian values. When both of Dooley’s parents passed away, however, their church became Dooley’s parent. Dooley also was influenced by his teacher, Mr. Swanson, and because of his influence decided to enroll in a music education degree program. Dooley lost both parents before he completed college, so he sought out someone familiar for the capstone experience of his undergraduate years—his student teaching placement. Sadly, Mr. Swanson fell short of Dooley’s expectations as a mentor during student teaching, which made Dooley regret his choice for student teaching. Many of Dooley’s mentoring practices, therefore, have been established to make up for what he missed during his own student teaching.

His mother’s mental illness and its effects on family life are Herschel’s predominant memories of childhood. He remembers conflict and loneliness, as well as fighting for love and attention; consequently, Herschel acknowledges that Mr. Leach entered his life at a critical time. Not only was he a tuba instructor and chamber coach, Mr. Leach also provided emotional support and kept Herschel on track in school. Mr. Leach helped Herschel attend summer camps and gain other experience
that eventually qualified Herschel to become a music major in college. When Mr. Leach recommended that Herschel should attend the University of Georgia, Herschel simply complied—he always trusted that Mr. Leach was steering him in a good direction. When it came time for student teaching, however, Herschel once again felt absence of important figures—this time, his cooperating teachers were absent. The familiar feeling of fighting for attention returned. One cooperating teacher at the middle school, Mr. Layson, taught Herschel to reflect on and analyze his teaching in order to improve. Although Herschel looks back with gratitude for Mr. Layson’s example, it is the absence of important figures in his life that has most influenced Herschel’s choices to be deeply involved and build trusting relationships with his own children. In turn, becoming a good father has caused Herschel to develop an extended family atmosphere in his band and to build trusting relationships with his student teachers.

As we understand both *ipse* identities and how others figure into stories we can begin to see the sameness or *idem* across time and situations. Ricoeur (1979) indicates that “even the humblest narrative is always more than a chronological series of events” (p. 24). Using the *Odyssey* as an example, Ricoeur discusses the function of repetition in narrative: Ulysses’ voyage toward Ithaca was also a voyage of returning to home—to himself. Although Ricoeur acknowledges possible objections
that the kinds of repetition and returning found in the *Odyssey* are possible only in fiction, he nevertheless proposes that each person’s narrative utilizes repetition and returns to make the main figure—the self—memorable, and to help construct the experience of time (pp. 31–33). “By telling stories,” Ricoeur argues, “we provide ‘shape’ to what remains chaotic, obscure, and mute.”

So what is the sameness towards which our narratives return? I chose to adopt the nurturing that my parents modeled for me at the same time I adopted their high expectations. Because my parents were also my teachers, my nurturing identity and high expectations are the same in my stories, regardless of whether I am parenting, teaching, or mentoring student teachers. I believe this juxtaposition of characteristics adds interest and complexity to my stories; whereas love and nurture are always my first thoughts, I acknowledge also that I am driven to improve through my high expectations. I express that my teaching and mentoring changed after I became a mother, in that I am more likely to consider the emotional state of students and student teachers and more likely to recognize and celebrate the individual accomplishments of students. Still, my high expectations have not changed. I admit to using my “motherly” nature to help persuade students—and student teachers—to make better choices, like following through on promises, maintaining self-discipline, and demonstrating
appreciation for others. I believe that my students respond to this persuasion for the same reasons I respond to my parents: because they do not want to disappoint me or be disrespectful towards me.

Dooley’s mother was influential on his involvement in the church, and the church became a substitute parent after both of Dooley’s parents died. The church taught Dooley the importance of service, whether that meant singing in the church choir, teaching Sunday School, or serving on a committee. Mr. Swanson reinforced this lesson during Dooley’s student teaching experience when he advised Dooley never to complain about school committee assignments or extra duties because it was a way to get to know the school community and build support for the band. Dooley has taken Mr. Swanson’s advice well beyond its original context—he has served the state music educators association in many capacities, building support for public school music education. Dooley also considers mentoring student teachers to be a form of service, and he has only once turned down a request for a student teacher placement. A servant often is considered humble and hard-working, yet a servant also is considered to be lower class and people often take advantage of servants. Dooley agrees that both sides of servanthood are the sameness that runs through all of his stories.

A second lesson that Dooley learned from the church was one of forgiveness. This lesson can be seen most profoundly when examining
Dooley’s own student teaching experience: Although he has many regrets about his student teaching experience because he was not able to conduct and rehearse large ensembles, Dooley recognized in hindsight that Mr. Swanson had little experience as a mentor and probably did not know how to provide the best and broadest experience for a student teacher. Dooley has come to understand that he need not be defined by his student teaching experience, so he has sought out other strategies for his own teaching and mentoring. He has forgiven Mr. Swanson, but in reflection, he has also forgiven himself for the lack of experience he received while student teaching. Now, in the spirit of second chances, he is committed to offering his own children, his students, and his student teachers many experiences; for example, he wants his children to be involved in church, music, sports, and other extra-curricular activities, and he wants his student teachers to be involved in directing large ensembles, leading sectional rehearsals, providing extra-curricular support, and attending music festivals and adjudications. Dooley understands that, with all of these activities going on, his children, students, and student teachers are likely to make mistakes—sometimes they are overwhelming mistakes. He hopes that they will be observant and learn from their mistakes, and he admits that his patience is tried only when they fail to learn from mistakes. Forgiveness for and learning from mistakes is a sameness that winds through all of Dooley’s stories.
Due to Herschel’s dysfunctional childhood, he characterized himself as a fighter for love and attention. That fighting spirit permeates Herschel’s stories of being a child, being a student, and being a student teacher—he has always believed that he is lacking something that others have received. Nevertheless, being a fighter has helped Herschel become a loving and involved parent because he doesn’t want his own children to experience family dysfunction. Similarly, Herschel is keenly sensitive to his students. Many of his students live with one parent, or perhaps with another family member, and they do not have structure and support at home. Herschel consequently fights to create a secure sense of family in his band. Furthermore, as a mentor, Herschel sees himself as a “big brother,” and he stresses the importance of building trusting relationships between himself and his student teachers that lasts well beyond a five- or ten-week student teaching placement.

Just as there is another side to Dooley’s servanthood, there is another side to Herschel’s fighting spirit. One of Herschel’s most private stories is of his high school band director using intimidation as motivation. Herschel feels strongly that he and his friends suffered unnecessarily because his director’s objective was not musical, social, or emotional growth, but instead was merely a trophy. Still, Herschel acknowledges his competitive nature, and he believes that a certain amount of intimidation can be productive, such as when children are
striving not to disappoint a parent. Herschel admits that “healthy intimidation” figures into his teaching and mentoring.

In these descriptions, the idem-identity, or sameness of each cooperating teacher is revealed: I am a maternal nurturer who nevertheless is driven by high expectations for my students and myself. Dooley is a servant to his family, school, and profession. He forgives anyone’s faults, but he wants everyone to learn from experience and mistakes. Herschel is a fighter and competitor, but since he became a parent, his energy is devoted to fighting for secure relationships with his family, his band students, and his student teachers.

**Our Narrative Identities as Music Teacher Educators**

Narrative identity, according to Ricoeur, reconciles selfhood, or *ipse*-identity, and sameness or *idem*-identity. Examining our *ipse*-identities as music teacher educators, then, we should find the threads of our sameness that have linked our other identity stories. Like Ulysses, our odyssey should return each of us through music teacher education to Ithaca. As we conversed throughout this study, the three cooperating teachers discussed what we do when we mentor student teachers. The practices themselves align with many of the categories of participation in teacher education that Clarke et al. (2014) enumerate. Nevertheless, the more interesting part of our conversations focused
upon how we rationalized our practices, and through those rationales, the threads of our identity stories appeared.

**Georgia as a music teacher educator.** For instance, I ask student teachers to observe a few days, then gradually add teaching activities such as sectionals, warm ups, and rehearsing repertoire. By adding on activities, I help aim a student teacher toward teaching an ensemble for a full class period, but because I see teaching as a complex activity, I do not want to overwhelm novice teachers. Since I have become a parent, I feel I am more sensitive to student teachers’ emotional states and more aware when they are becoming frustrated and overwhelmed. I am always determined that they will not fail.

At the same time, I admit to very high expectations for my student teachers. They must come into my classroom prepared and ready to learn. My assumption is that all student teachers want to become professionals, and they should desire the same high expectations for themselves as I establish for myself. I am certain that the expectations I have for myself are those that my parents modeled for and expected from me.

Third, I urge my student teachers to develop reflective practice through the use of a dialogue journal. When I respond to the student teacher in the dialogue journal, I write down many open-ended questions, hoping to provide more than technical information about
teaching. I also try to model reflection—I have always depended upon reflection with my colleagues to become a better teacher, and when I began mentoring student teachers, I would not have known what to do without collegial reflection. Throughout my childhood, my parents modeled open discussion of their choices at home and in school—I suspect they reflected with one another before they had children. There was no such thing as a quiet dinner because my parents expected the children to talk about their choices as well. As a result, my siblings and I are reflective in our professions. My sister, for example, chose a career as a school psychologist, and reflection is her *forte*.

Clarke et al. (2014) would categorize me as a provider of feedback, a modeler of practice, a supporter of reflection, a purveyor of context, and a socializing agent into the profession. Perhaps they also would categorize me as a gleaner of knowledge, because I love to learn something from every student teacher mentoring experience. Their research suggests, however, that these practices are derived from my cooperation with the university. To the contrary, the university is largely absent from my narratives; it can be seen that my practices are derived from who I am as a music teacher educator.

My identity as a music teacher educator ignites the practices I employ. I have had no professional training to learn that teaching can be overwhelming for novices, but as a maternal nurturer, I am sensitive to
the needs of student teachers. I have high expectations for my student teachers because I have high expectations for myself. I strive always to improve my teaching, and I believe that is the nature of professionalism. Reflective practice is the main source of my capacity for improvement, and I reflect with my student teachers not because I read about it in a handbook, but because reflective practice is who I am, and it has been part of my identity from childhood onward.

**Dooley as a music teacher educator.** The first notable aspect of Dooley’s practice is that he opens his classroom to any and all student teachers who want to enter. He helps student teachers become immersed in every aspect of the band program and, in particular, he arranges for them to rehearse with the full ensembles as frequently as possible. Student teachers also have the opportunity to conduct a selection for the state’s large group performance evaluation, and Dooley insists that they take ownership for that performance. Dooley views mentoring student teachers as a form of service to his profession; however, in our conversations, Dooley expressed concern that universities were not preparing student teachers as well as they once did. He based this opinion on recent student teachers’ lack of lesson planning, good flow in rehearsal, and control of student discipline. As a servant often experiences, Dooley sensed that he was being taken advantage of—that some student teachers didn’t intend to have a
professional teaching career. Nevertheless, Dooley’s sense of forgiveness ultimately prevailed and he continues to serve as a music teacher educator.

Dooley typically makes a conscious choice to stay out of the way, because he believes that experience is the best teacher. Still, Dooley anticipates that his student teachers will make mistakes. Forgiving student teachers and urging them to analyze and learn from their mistakes is standard in Dooley’s practice. Finally, Dooley encourages his student teachers to get to know the school outside the band room, building relationships with the school secretaries, janitors, other teachers, and administrators. Dooley learned from Mr. Swanson how to “cultivate people,” and by doing so, builds support in the school community for the band program. This lesson from Mr. Swanson was perfectly aligned with the lessons of service that Dooley learned from his church, and he believes this philosophy ought to be passed on to his own student teachers.

According to Clarke et al. (2014), Dooley participates in music teacher education as a purveyor of context, a convener of relationship, a socializing agent into the profession, and an abider of change. How did Dooley learn to participate in this way? During all our conversations, he never mentioned taking a course on mentoring student teachers, and all of us agreed that we had received little written information from the
universities about how to mentor. By examining Dooley’s narratives, however, it can be seen that his practices derive from involvement in his church, and that the church has been a strong influence in Dooley’s life since he was a young child. Because of his sense of Christian service, Dooley agrees to open his classroom for student teachers, and he chooses to build relationships with others in his school community and larger professional community. Because of his faith, Dooley has experienced forgiveness, so he forgives abundantly, and he believes that both he and his student teachers will learn from their mistakes. Dooley never proselytizes his students or student teachers, but service and forgiveness infuse his actions, and he leads by example.

**Herschel as a music teacher educator.** The most important aspect of the practicum, according to Herschel, is the feedback that student teachers receive. Herschel organizes the practicum through a google document that he shares with a student teacher. They can plan future lessons together by using the document, and Herschel can use the document to offer written feedback. However, Herschel’s experience has taught him that not all student teachers are immediately receptive to feedback. Therefore, Herschel attempts to build relationships with his student teachers by inviting them into his home and interacting with them through family activities.
Herschel expresses genuine concern for his student teachers: do they know how to live on their own? Do they have experience making a household budget? Do they have a plan in mind for their job applications? Herschel believes that by expressing such concern, he and his student teacher can build a trusting relationship, and the more trust they can establish, the more successful the student teaching practicum will be. Among the three cooperating teachers, Herschel was most adamant that the relationship between the student teacher and cooperating teacher is key to the student teacher’s success, and Herschel believes it ought to extend well beyond the placement and into the first years of a student teacher’s career.

Because close relationships were largely absent from Herschel’s childhood and schooling experiences, and because feedback was missing from much of his student teaching experience, it is paradoxical that Clarke et al. (2014) would categorize Herschel as a convener of relationship and a provider of feedback. In addition, Herschel would be categorized as an agent of socialization into the profession due the length of his commitment to student teachers. Yet to categorize Herschel’s participation in music teacher education this way ignores entirely the wellspring of identity from which the practices flow. Herschel’s identity as a music teacher educator flows from a fight to construct the close and trusting relationships that he lacked at home and in school.
Additionally, Herschel recalls how Mr. Leach never gave up on him, which makes the stream of identity flow even more strongly. An interesting aspect of Herschel’s fighting and competitive nature was shown in this study as colleagues and former student teachers positively recognized his leadership and mentorship. Herschel turned that recognition into a drive to become an even better music teacher and music teacher educator. He admitted to taking on new student teachers in order to improve his teaching.

**Narrative New Beginnings**

Reflecting on my initial plan of research, I recall that I wanted to investigate cooperating teachers’ understanding of practice, as well as how practices changed through years of mentoring experience. I thought it might be simple and straightforward research, but like Connelly and Clandinin (1999), I learned that teachers were “more concerned to ask questions of who they are than of what they know” (p. 3). I also learned that, while our practices might be labeled “participation in teacher education,” as Clarke et al. (2014) observed, participation does not account for the rationale in the underlying practice. Instead, our rationales for practice are based on who we say we are.

In fact, practices may look similar on the surface, but the rationale for those practices might be quite different. Both Dooley and I could be categorized as conveners of relationship, and it is true that we both
believe that our student teachers should become acquainted with our schools beyond the band room. For me, becoming acquainted with the school is part of understanding music teaching as a complex process. As a nurturer, I carefully layer this experience towards the end of student teaching, after the student teacher has become comfortable with lesson planning, sectional teaching, and large ensemble directing. At that point I try to help student teachers connect music education to other aspects of the school curriculum. As a servant, Dooley is interested that his student teachers should know how to cultivate relationships with other school personnel, which will in turn cultivate support for the music program. For Dooley, the nudge to student teachers to cultivate relationships beyond the band room begins on the first day of the student teaching placement. Dooley and I approach the practice of convening relationships with different rationales. One rationale is not better or more beneficial than the other, but both rationales are grounded in who we say we are—they are grounded in the sameness that ties our identity stories together.

Clandinin (2013) wrote that there were four key terms for narrative inquiry: *living, telling, retelling, and reliving*:

As we retell our stories. . . we move beyond regarding stories as fixed entities. . . . [and] we may begin to relive the retold stories. We restory ourselves and perhaps begin to shift the institutional, social, and cultural narratives in which we are embedded. (p. 34)
Ricoeur (1996) proposed that this type of restorying occurred through integrating others’ stories into our own stories, and that the integration occurred in three ways: through “linguistic hospitality” (p. 5), through the exchange of memories, and through forgiveness. As the three cooperating teachers restoried our experience and relived our retold stories, we came to experience these kinds of integration.

During this study, I became aware that I was not only exchanging stories with other participants, I also was exchanging memories (Ricoeur, 1996, p. 7) with my parents. “Oh, you are Elden and Wanda’s daughter,” my colleagues used to say. I always was proud, but through telling and retelling my stories in the context of this study, I became aware of how central my mother and father were to my parenting, teaching, and supervising student teachers. Now, I intentionally seek not only my parents’ advice, but also their stories. I am more aware, too, that I play a part in my own children’s identity stories, and I think about who they will be as students, and as parents themselves.

Because Dooley and I have worked closely together for a number of years, we appeared in one another’s stories. Consequently, I learned from his stories as we exchanged memories during the course of this study. As a nurturer, I normally try to catch students before they fall, whereas Dooley wants student teachers to learn from experience and mistakes. As I mentored a student teacher this fall, I tried to be more
like Dooley and although his practices were not yet part of my identity, I could begin to see the possibilities for incorporating learning from mistakes into a nurturer’s identity.

Although Dooley’s practices changed little as a result of the conversations for this study, he often would say to me, “I had never really thought about it until you asked.” Dooley claimed authorship of his music teacher educator identity as a result of our conversations. Dooley’s most influential other was his mother—she expected Dooley to be engaged with music, sports, and particularly with the church, and she remained involved in Dooley’s activities as long as she was alive. Christian forgiveness and service are highlighted in Dooley’s memory not necessarily because of his mother’s words, but instead because of her actions and unspoken expectations. Although not as influential as Dooley’s mother, Mr. Swanson also was an important other—because of Mr. Swanson, Dooley became a music teacher. After the loss of his parents, Dooley turned to Mr. Swanson because he was searching for a stable influence and a student teaching mentor. This time, Mr. Swanson was not the other that Dooley expected, and for many years, Dooley regretted his choices for the student teaching practicum. He might have lived only with regret, but through “linguistic hospitality” (Ricoeur, 1996, p. 5) Dooley translated Mr. Swanson’s story of “cultivating those you
need to cultivate” into a story of servanthood. By doing so, Dooley integrated Mr. Swanson more fully into his identity story.

The sameness that runs through Herschel’s identity stories is his fighting spirit, but that fighting spirit began in stories of loss and absence—absence of a relationship with his mother, absence of nurturing and guidance from a stable home, and absence of friendships in childhood. Although it did not happen during the course of this study, Herschel told his father that he was sorry for all the tension between them and the anger he was holding. During our conversations, Herschel acknowledged that an ideal resolution to his identity story was to receive an apology from his father, but he felt that was unlikely to happen. So Herschel decided to approach his father so he could move on with his life and create a better future for his children. Forgiveness meant that Herschel was able to free his parents from debts of the past, and by forgiving, Herschel was able to imagine new possibilities for his own future. Herschel also acknowledged toward the end of our conversations that retelling the story of apologizing to his father helped him relive that story. This allowed him to retain his identity as a fighter, but he fights for his band students because he recognizes that many of them come from dysfunctional families, and he wants to help provide structure and stability in their lives. He also now characterizes himself as fighting to become a better mentor to his student teachers, so they
leave their placements with “the best all-around experience,” and ready to teach.

I entitled the novella “Between the Hedges” and I related how it is considered an honor for a University of Georgia Redcoat Band member to stand between the hedges to support not only the football team, but also the spirit of the university. The three of us in this study feel honored to stand between music teaching and music teacher education, helping children learn at the same time we help student teachers learn to teach—none of us would forgo the opportunity to stand in this position.

Nevertheless, the greatest honor for me has been the opportunity to serve as a narrative inquirer, standing in the midst of cooperating teachers’ stories. Before beginning this research, I claimed that I knew the other cooperating teachers well; however, through this process, I have learned much more about our teaching and our relationships, but also how our identity stories are connected. We are in the midst, and our stories will change. I look forward to the changes that will occur for us in the future, but because of this inquiry, our stories are forever woven together.
Chapter 6: Implications for Research and Practice

With the realization that we were writing our own lives as knowing people came a sense of the need to give voice to our experiences and to find places where we could begin to figure out what it was that each of us knew as teachers. (Clandinin, 1993, p.1)

Music cooperating teachers have stories to tell, and when we listen carefully, those stories not only reveal the practices they utilize when they mentor student teachers, but also the rationale for those practices. In turn, the rationale for mentoring practices develops through time, not merely from cooperating teachers’ experiences associated with the student teaching practicum, but also from their experiences as children, students, parents, and friends. Furthermore, the others in stories—both those absent and those present—influence the identity stories that cooperating teachers tell and retell. Sometimes, through retelling stories, cooperating teachers have opportunity to relive that story and uncover a new aspect of identity. As a result, they may claim their music teacher education practices in a new way. Telling, retelling, and reliving stories, then, may have practical benefits for music cooperating teachers, and the construction and interpretation of their stories may add to the literature on music teacher education.

In this chapter, I begin with a discussion of how replication of the present study is necessary to add to the research on cooperating teachers conducted by cooperating teachers; however, I also acknowledge
current complexities of teaching that make it challenging for cooperating
teachers to conduct research. I then recognize the practical benefits of
telling and retelling stories, and I suggest that telling stories need not be
limited to cooperating teachers. Finally, by incorporating a colleague’s
inquiry into narrative authority and knowledge communities, I discuss
collaborative inquiry designed to gain insight into the stories of
cooperating teachers, student teachers, and university supervisors.

**Replication of This Study**

Connelly and Clandinin (1999) conclude their volume, *Shaping a
Professional Identity: Stories of Educational Practice* by describing
teachers’ identity stories:

Teacher identities not only take the form of romantic tales of a
“calling” of a most noble profession, of helping the needy. They
may also take the form of tales of service, and servant, of doing
one’s public duty, and of obeying, or not, orders from above. There
may well be other such tales. (p. 172)

Likewise, there may be other cooperating teacher tales to tell. As I noted
in Chapter 2, although the research on cooperating teachers is plentiful,
there are few studies constructed by cooperating teachers, so it is
imperative that this study is replicated by other groups of cooperating
teachers and that their voices continue to be heard. As I concluded in
the previous chapter, cooperating teacher practices may look similar, but
the sameness that provides coherence for their identity stories over time
reveals the rationale behind those practices. Toward the goal of better
understanding the sameness constructing cooperating teachers’ rations for practice, it would be interesting to compare *ipse*-identities and *idem*-identities across academic content areas. For example, a music teacher figured prominently into each of our identity stories in the present studies, and I wonder if math teachers figure into math cooperating teachers’ stories, science teachers into science cooperating teachers’ stories and so forth. Furthermore, the university figured little, if at all, into the identity stories retold during the present study. Would this hold true for all cooperating teachers?

For cooperating teachers there are pragmatic challenges associated with conducting research. The most obvious is finding time. Cooperating teachers already take on two jobs by teaching students and mentoring student teachers. Furthermore, in the current climate of educational accountability, teachers’ effectiveness is being measured, at least in part, on their students’ end-of-course and standardized test scores. These conditions tend to distract teachers from reflective practices and focus their attention on the immediacy of maintaining their employment by increasing student test scores. Nevertheless, I wonder whether teacher research, especially research by cooperating teachers on the twin practices of teaching and mentoring, might be a more appropriate path, preferable to current value-added measures, for the
most experienced teachers to demonstrate their accountability for student learning and effectiveness as teachers and mentors.

**Practical Benefits of Telling and Retelling Stories**

Herschel claimed that the practices of telling and retelling stories during this study helped him out of a “professional funk” and restored his self-confidence about mentoring student teachers. Subsequently, each of the participants in the current study began to feel that such practices could be beneficial for everyone involved in the student teaching triad. Conversations among cooperating teachers and university music teacher educators might reveal common threads of identity weaving through stories. Furthermore, sharing stories could offer new possibilities for preparing future teachers.

Clandinin (1993) discussed efforts at her institution toward forming an “Alternative Program” (p. 5) for learning to teach. A plan was presented to the institution only after university faculty and cooperating teachers conversed extensively about the types of experience they hoped student teachers would acquire, and the relationships they hoped university faculty and cooperating teachers would have with student teachers. Clandinin explained that the alternative program not only was a way to imagine human relationships differently, but also to imagine the relationship between theory and practice differently. “Rather than beginning with the theory and methods of instruction” the program
began with practice, after which “various theoretical readings” were introduced (p. 6). I gather from Clandinin that it is imperative for future student teachers, teachers, and teacher educators to see practice as the starting point of learning to teach, with theory infused as it is useful and as it helps student teachers construct personal practical knowledge.

Most of us learned the theories associated with teaching while in college, but the practice during our student teaching placement. By envisioning conversations—story telling and retelling—occurring between cooperating teachers and university supervisors, a new relationship between theory and practice can also be imagined, one in which cooperating teachers have more ownership.

Similarly, what would a student teaching placement be like if the cooperating teacher and the student teacher shared identity stories well before the practicum began? As I was completing this study, I took part in a roundtable discussion at my state’s in-service conference, presenting a portion of my dissertation topic on the stories and identities of cooperating teachers. I was surprised to meet a college sophomore there, because I expected a majority of the round table to include university supervisors and cooperating teachers. This student actively and intelligently participated in the discussion with teacher educators who were older and more experienced than she was. Sometime after the session, she read my biography on my high school band’s website, and
followed up with an email request to observe my band program and my teaching, and she wondered if there might be a possibility to be placed with me for student teaching after she completed two more years of college. This request made me consider that, if we had a two-year relationship before student teaching, we would know a lot about one another. Each of us would have lived, told, retold, and relived numerous identity stories prior to the student teaching practicum. We would have seen the sameness that has tied our individual stories together over time, we would have observed the common identity threads, and observed where we might be able to learn and grow from one another's unique stories. We would have developed a deep sense of trust. Imagine the possibilities and opportunities afforded if cooperating teachers could hear and share in the stories of student teachers themselves.

In the current climate of educational accountability, preservice teachers’ readiness to teach is now subject to evaluation similar to edTPA, a portfolio examination that includes a reflective component (edTPA, 2015). Although the edTPA and other similar examinations are administered as summative assessments, what if preservice teachers collected and reflected on the development of their practices in a formative way? Music preservice teachers could include video artifacts from a conducting course and peer-teaching from a methods course, a recital or performance jury video, and a video of an ensemble
performance. Each artifact could be accompanied by a narrative identity story or stories. This practice might help prospective music teachers retell and relive their stories, gradually helping them become more aware of who they say they are. Including narrative identity stories in the portfolio might also help preservice teachers begin a reflective dialogue with their professors and cooperating teachers. At the same time, the process would serve as preparation for their portfolio assessment. An argument could be made that this type of portfolio evidence would reveal experience, self-awareness, and most importantly, growth over time.

Considering these relatively small changes to the practice of mentoring student teachers offers opportunity to challenge language associated with the student teaching triad. Why do we use the titles university supervisor and cooperating teacher when these titles maintain the hierarchy of the university over the school? What if, instead, we formed a roundtable including representatives from the university and the school to discuss and determine the optimal professional path for each student teacher? What if the student teacher had an equal voice at this roundtable and could advocate for himself or herself throughout preservice experiences? If the roundtable began at the inception of undergraduate preparation, I could imagine that the roundtable might eventually lead toward foundations and methods courses being co-taught and taught in the field. There would be more opportunities for student
teachers to teach children (rather than peer teaching) prior to the student teaching practicum, and more time for members of the roundtable to conduct research on teaching together.

I imagine that we could not reshape music teacher education suddenly. It would be important to take time to tell and retell stories with one another, possibly on more neutral topics, before beginning to imagine an individual student teacher’s professional path. Such conversation would assist in building trusting relationships among everyone who has a stake in the student teaching roundtable. Stories could yield to plentiful and rich discussions on how each stakeholder previously has experienced student teaching, as well as dreams and hopes for the music education profession. Imagine how thoughtful teacher preparation could become, and imagine how comfortable a novice teacher would be navigating the music classroom if we could rename and subsequently reshape music teacher preparation through story telling.

As conceived by Craig (1995; 1999; 2007; Craig & Olson, 2001) these experiences of telling and retelling stories that I have described—for all stakeholders in teacher preparation—are designed to take place in knowledge communities. These are safe spaces where those involved share a similar interpretive perspective on the experiences of teaching and learning to teach. Considering how music educators and music teacher educators convene at state, regional, and national conferences, it
would seem that, in addition to universities and schools, our professional associations could help establish and nurture the kinds of knowledge communities I have described previously.

**Collaborative Inquiry**

Jennifer Greene, a member of the relational response community for this project, pursued an inquiry on knowledge communities. She was interested in how cooperating teachers claimed narrative authority for their personal practical knowledge as music teacher educators in such communities. I believe it would be productive to combine our research efforts, first to inquire into the relationships between narrative authority and narrative identity as they are revealed in knowledge communities of cooperating teachers. Then, there are questions raised in the literature on cooperating teachers that might be addressed productively with narrative inquiry, utilizing concepts associated with knowledge communities, narrative identity and narrative authority.

First, there is little research on who becomes a cooperating teacher, and no studies told from the cooperating teacher’s perspective. Sinclair, Dowson, and Thistleton-Martin (2006) called those who volunteer “boosters” because their motivations were to advocate for the education profession and ensure the quality of beginning teachers. Taking into account my research on narrative identity and Greene’s research on the personal practical knowledge and narrative authority of
cooperating teachers, I wonder if there are patterns among the identity stories or personal practical knowledge of those who become cooperating teachers. If veteran teachers have participated in a knowledge community are they more aware of the sameness that connects their identity stories? Have they developed a sense of narrative authority for their personal practical knowledge? How does that sense of narrative authority manifest in practice? In contemporary schooling, with its focus on time-consuming teacher evaluation, teachers can be dissuaded from volunteering to mentor student teachers. Would the kinds of narrative identity awareness and narrative authority built in knowledge communities encourage veteran teachers to keep volunteering? Zemek’s (2006) dissertation research examined how a university selected music cooperating teachers to serve, and he found that previous positive evaluations in addition to the teacher’s willingness to serve were primary factors in selection. It would seem that intentionally formed knowledge communities might be practically beneficial to maintaining the quality of cooperating teacher mentoring as well as maintaining sites for continued research on narrative identity and narrative authority.

Next, Montecinos et al. (2002) conducted a collaborative self-study of their practices of student teacher mentoring. One recommendation they made as a result of the study was that cooperating teachers should not become involved in the personal lives of their student teachers. In
the present study, however, Herschel believed that such personal involvement was key to developing a trusting relationship between the cooperating teacher and the student teacher, that the student teacher’s professional growth and self-confidence depended upon a trusting relationship, and that the relationship should last well beyond the practicum and into the student teachers first years of employment. Are both approaches effective with student teachers? Are there particular cooperating teacher narrative identities that lend themselves to mentoring a student teacher in a more involved manner? Are there other identity stories that lend themselves to a more distant approach? Similarly, what kinds of claims must a cooperating teacher make on his or her personal practical knowledge in order to commit to either approach? Considering Herschel’s story, it seems impossible that he would agree to mentor student teachers if he was prevented from developing personal relationships with them.

Similarly, several researchers categorized cooperating teachers as models or mentors (Arnold, 2002; Graham, 2006; Weasmer & Woods, 2003). Models were those who expected student teachers to imitate their practices, whereas mentors gave plentiful feedback and intervened in student teachers’ practices, but they did not expect the student teacher to duplicate their practices. I am interested to discover the relationships
between modeling, with its expectation of duplicating practice, and specific narrative identities of cooperating teachers.

Clarke (2006) studied the reflective practices that cooperating teachers used during their advisory meetings with student teachers, and he found some cases where cooperating teachers utilized specific reflective techniques that masked their personality, were inauthentic, were unresponsive to the student teacher’s circumstances, or promoted routinized teaching. The cooperating teachers needed to reframe these uncomfortable or ineffective practices. Clarke consequently challenged an assumption prevalent in the literature, that one incident of reflection could accurately portray a cooperating teacher’s entire reflective practice. Clarke concluded that reflection “was born of incidents but thematic in nature. That is, there is a substantive temporal nature to reflection in which the elements . . . emerge over time” (p. 919, emphasis in original). Clarke did not use the concept of narrative identity to frame his study, but there exists a similarity in the temporal nature of framing and reframing reflective practice to Ricoeur’s (1992) uses of ipse-identity and idem-identity. In the present study, well-developed reflective practices were featured in Herschel’s and my stories of interaction with student teachers. We identified dialogue journals, google documents, and frequent discussions as common ways we provided feedback on a student teacher’s performance and promoted reflection alongside a
student teacher. In contrast, Dooley was more likely to offer feedback in passing. I wonder how our identities are related to our reflective practices and how our reflective practices have developed in conjunction with awareness of our sameness over time. Because reflective practice is so central to the research on teaching and teacher education, this question seems pertinent for continued inquiry.

Draves’s (2008) dissertation was highly influential on my decisions to pursue this line of narrative inquiry. Cooperating teachers who participated in her study viewed student teacher mentoring as a form of professional development. Those who participated in the current study agreed that being a cooperating teacher was a natural form of professional development. Herschel specifically admitted that he served as a cooperating teacher in order to become more reflective and improve his teaching. How might sharing identity stories in intentionally formed knowledge communities enhance professional development practice? Documenting the benefits of intentionally formed cooperating teacher knowledge communities might help justify such communities as a relevant form of professional development.

As a result of her study, Draves (2008) defined power sharing on a continuum, showing that pairs of student teachers and cooperating teachers moved from “a student/teacher relationship, to a team-teaching relationship, to a collaborative partnership” (p. 93). What if intentionally
formed knowledge communities included student teachers and cooperating teachers telling identity stories together in a safe space? Perhaps the pairs would be moved more quickly to collaborative partnerships, and similar to the relationships Herschel hoped for, perhaps the collaboration would last beyond the practicum.

Finally, the results of this narrative inquiry raise questions about whether cooperating teachers and university teachers all have the same ideas in mind when they speak about readiness to teach—whether student teachers are ready to begin a teaching career not only with knowledge of appropriate methods and theories of teaching, but also the personal practical knowledge (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000) to conquer the multiple (and often simultaneous) demands of teaching. Would a faculty member in a university describe readiness differently than a cooperating teacher? Would their descriptions be different than student teachers’ descriptions?

Considering the many possible conceptions, I envision a knowledge community where university supervisors and cooperating teachers could compare their experiences of learning to teach and discuss how their stories inform their current practices. They might also discuss the tensions between their conceptions and government policies for teacher readiness. In that same vein, I would be interested to examine whether student teachers describe themselves as feeling ready to teach, and I
would also compare their stories to the discussions of the university supervisors and cooperating teachers. Documenting and reflecting on conversations of such knowledge communities has potential to improve music teacher preparation, including communicating the content of foundations and methods courses to cooperating teachers, sharing practices and rationales of student teacher mentoring between cooperating teachers and university faculty, and critically examining practices in the context of local, state and federal policies.

**Passing Through the Arch**

All University of Georgia alumni are aware of the tradition associated with passing through the arch. Before graduation, students must walk around the arch, but immediately afterward, graduates parade through it. In many ways, the arch symbolizes the gateway from the university to the world. Perhaps bits and pieces of identity stories were shared among cooperating teachers, and some stories made their way into published research. Yet, until now, the three-dimensional narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) of music cooperating teachers as teacher educators has not passed from a protected space into the world. The identity stories of teacher educators are abundant, and the parade passing through the arch should continue.
Appendix A: Recruitment email

Dear (Prospective Participant),

University of Georgia alumna, Laura Moates Stanley, is pursuing her doctoral research through Boston University, entitled *Narrative Constructions of Music Cooperating Teacher Identity*. Because you have been a consistent and dependable cooperating teacher for our institution, I thought you would make an excellent candidate for this study. If you are interested and/or have further questions about participation in this study please contact Mrs. Stanley directly:

Laura.moates.stanley@gmail.com - email
(706) 207-1961 – cell
(770) 279-2099 - home

Thank you for your time and consideration,

(University of Georgia Music Education Professor)
Appendix B

Narrative Constructions of Music Cooperating Teacher Identity
Laura Moates Stanley
Doctor of Musical Arts Candidate, Boston University

The following information is intended to acquaint you with my doctoral research through Boston University. If any of the statements or words in this form are unclear, please let me know. After you read this information, I would like to discuss the study with you, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

The purpose of the study is to investigate the identities of music cooperating teachers and critically examine the social and institutional contexts in which those narratives are shaped. I am asking you to take part in this study because you have developed an excellent reputation serving as a cooperating teacher for at least 5 years.

What can you expect?
If you decide to take part this narrative inquiry study, you will be one of 2 participants with similar profiles that taking part in this dissertation research, sponsored by Boston University. You can expect to write an autobiographical writing based on your life from becoming a music teacher to your current practices of supervising student teachers. The autobiography will serve as a guide to generate conversations, the main source of data collection for this research. Similarly you can expect to supply one video recording of a student teacher that you are supervising. We will watch the video together and converse about the mentoring process. Finally, you can expect to bring materials you have received from universities that are intended to help guide the student teaching supervision process. We will use those to carry on a conversation about the relationship of universities and schools in the preparation of new music teachers.

You should know that narrative inquiry does not happen in a linear fashion like other types of research. There are six conversations planned at the outset of this study, each of which will take no more than two hours. I will audio record each of those conversations. Immediately after each conversation, I will transcribe the recording and identify what I believe to be the main themes of that conversation; however, I will share the transcription and my thoughts with you, and we will compose the
research text together. Each of these meetings in which we co-compose the research text will last 1–2 hours.

During the process of co-composing research texts, we may decide that there is a need for follow-up conversation about an issue or theme that we uncover. This is normal and to be expected in narrative inquiry, and we will follow the same procedures as for the planned conversations.

You can expect to be involved in this research study for a total of 6 months. Although you will not be involved every day, narrative inquiry requires a higher degree of engagement from participants than other types of research. Because of the depth of engagement, however, you have a greater degree of control in the information included in the final text. Although there are no direct benefits to you from taking part in this research, there will be benefits to the field of music education as we learn more about how master teachers become cooperating teachers and music teacher educators.

Participating in this study is your choice. You are free not to take part or to withdraw at any time for any reason. No matter what you decide, there will be no penalty. If you decide to withdraw from this study, the information that you have already provided will be kept confidential. I will keep the records of this study confidential by storing all recorded and transcribed data on a password protected hard drive in a locked office. I will return all artifacts to you (e.g. your autobiography or video) as soon as we have finished using them as prompts for our conversation.

After our conversation today, you can call me at any time with concerns or questions. I can be reached at phone 706-207-1961 or email (laura.moates.stanley@gmail.com). My faculty advisor is Dr. Susan Wharton Conkling. She can be reached by email (drc@bu.edu) or phone 617-353-5093. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or want to speak with someone independent of the research team, you may contact the Boston University IRB directly at 617-358-6115.

Thank you for considering participation in my dissertation research.

Laura Moates Stanley
References


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Vita

Laura Moates Stanley is currently Director of Bands and is in her twelfth year at Brookwood High School in Snellville, Georgia. A native of Blue Ridge, Georgia, she is a 2001 honor graduate of The University of Georgia where she received her BMUS in Music Education. She also graduated from the same institution in 2003 where she received an MM in Wind Conducting.

Mrs. Stanley served as the Drum Major, Assistant Band Captain, and Band Captain of the UGA Redcoat Band from 1998–2001 and was a member of the UGA Wind Ensemble from 1997–2003 where she performed as principal clarinetist during the ensembles appearance at CBDNA in Denton, TX. She is currently a clarinetist with the Northwinds Community Band. She is an active clinician, serving as conductor of the Georgia Music Educators Association District I, District VII, District IX, and District XIII Clinic/Honor Bands.

Under her leadership, the Brookwood High School Symphonic Winds was chosen to perform as a guest band at the 2005 University of Georgia January Festival, the 2007 Honor Bands of Georgia Clinic at Columbus State University, the 2008 University of Alabama Honor Band Festival, the 2008 Georgia Music Educators Association In-Service Conference, and the 2010 University of Georgia January Festival.
Mrs. Stanley received the 2004 Class Act Teacher award from Channel 11 Alive, was Brookwood High School’s STAR Teacher in 2007, was selected as the Region IIIA STAR Teacher, and was a Georgia State Finalist STAR Teacher in 2007. In 2012–2013, she was chosen as Brookwood High School’s Teacher of the Year as well as one of 25 Semi-Finalists for Gwinnett County’s Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Stanley has also received the National Band Association Citation of Excellence on three separate occasions. She was elected in 2009 to the Phi Beta Mu International Bandmaster’s Fraternity. Mrs. Stanley served for three years as Associate Conductor of the Metropolitan Atlanta Youth Wind Ensemble (MAYWE) who performed at the prestigious Carnegie Hall in 2009. She resides in Lilburn, GA with her husband, Darren, a freelance musician, and children Chloe and Sean.