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# Musical Experience and Career Path in the Trinity College Alumni Community

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**Musical Experience and Career Path in the  
Trinity College Alumni Community**

**An Undergraduate Thesis by  
Brett Jackson  
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**Trinity College  
Hartford, Connecticut**

I would like to thank the entire Trinity College Music Department for their support and assistance, especially Professors Eric Galm, Gerald Moshell, Douglas Johnson and John Platoff, as well as Lucy Ferriss for her invaluable advice.

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# Chapter I

## Introduction

Trinity College, a small liberal arts college in the northeastern United States, has produced a surprisingly large number of illustrious musicians and music professionals, especially considering that it does not have a performance-oriented degree. After speaking with professors from the music department, I was able to construct a list of 74 alumni working or studying in music-related fields. As of 2008, Trinity's most popular majors were Economics, History and Political Science. In fact, only 5% of Trinity's graduates held degrees in the Fine and Performing Arts (Trinity College 2009). Thus, such a robust list of musicians and music professionals was more than I had expected.

In order to gather information about the graduate population and draw conclusions about the college's alumni community, I interviewed a diverse group of eight alumni with a wide range of careers. My aim was not to assemble a set of case studies that were proportionately representative of the entire graduate population of Trinity's music department, but to explore the widest range of alumni possible. Since Trinity's alumni community is geographically and experientially disparate, it cannot be understood as a cultural entity in the way that an ethnic or religious group can. However, patterns can be identified

and information can be gleaned that is relevant to the undergraduate experience at Trinity College for students interested in music.

Of the eight that I interviewed, six are professionals in music-related fields, one other is a formerly professional performer, and the other performs outside of his “day job.” Of the six current professionals, only two were Music majors. Two are professional performers, of whom one was a Music major. Of the list of 74 that I compiled, fewer than half were music majors. In fact, even those who held music degrees say that many of the technical skills they use in their professions were developed through student-led performance activities, rather than through classroom learning.

Trinity’s formal Music department was initially developed from a partnership in 1975 with the Hartford Conservatory, and it has grown into a major that can be fulfilled entirely on-campus (Trinity College 1975). There is a diverse set of extra-curricular musical activities at Trinity, currently including five student-led A Cappella groups, two faculty-led choirs (one for credit, one for pay), a jazz band, a Brazilian Samba ensemble, instrumental ensembles, musical theater productions and numerous student bands. This list is incomplete and constantly changing, however, and students frequently start individualized projects and customize their performance experiences. There are a number of student performance activities that were prevalent among the alumni I interviewed. Six of the eight participants had participated in the Trinity College Concert Choir, a for-credit choral ensemble. Four were members of the Trinity

Pipes, Trinity's oldest A Cappella Group, and four had participated in musical theater productions. Two had been members of the Trinity College Chapel Singers, Trinity's oldest student organization.

These organizations played a wide range of roles in their participants' educations. Many felt they had learned technical, musical skills from their involvement in these groups, by virtue of the practice of music on a regular basis. Most also felt that they learned vital social and professional skills based on their interactions in a musical context, and felt that these skills serve them well in their professions. One participant said that the music department's performance activities taught her to disagree respectfully with a director, and says that that skill has directly impacted her current career. A common thread among social skills that participants felt they learned was learning to deal with the "pecking order" that develops within a musical organization.

The fact that musical activity has played such a large role in Trinity alumni's paths to professionalism in music illustrates the importance of such activities in an educational context. Many of the participants expressed not only having learned from the activities they participated in, but that these groups dominated their social lives. Music is a powerful social and cultural force, and several of the alumni I interviewed said that their musical experiences at Trinity have shaped the way they remember Trinity and interact with other alumni. One said that she had never attended one of the 'official' alumni reunions at Trinity, but had attended a reunion planned specifically for musical theater

participants. For many of those who participated, musical performance activity dominated their experience and shaped their views of Trinity as an institution.

The difficulty in characterizing Trinity's music programs is the diversity of students' expectations. Some of the participants in my project came to Trinity with the intention of pursuing a musical career, and some didn't discover musical performance until later. Some felt that they needed to augment the music program with more customized experiences, such as opera classes for an opera singer, or counterpoint classes for a musical arranger, and some later felt that they were overqualified for their careers. Each person that I interviewed was able to find an activity in which they were able to learn and grow, however, and which combined with the course offerings available to form a more complete curriculum than classroom learning can offer.

These results demonstrate the importance of extra-curricular performance activity as a part of a larger music curriculum. Each of the alumni I interviewed received opportunities to regularly perform, compose and interact in a musical context. Many of them say that it was their student-led performance activities that were most influential in their current careers.

Evidence that performance activity is educational and even necessary to a complete musical education is not evidence that classroom-based learning is any less important. Many students felt that most of the technical musical knowledge they learned was in performance activity. However, several of them also valued the music theory they learned. The number of students who major in music and

other arts is small, and within the limitations of a small academic department without a performance-oriented degree, the level to which students can “customize” their experiences is high. Within the available course offerings, the students I interviewed were able to accomplish very specific objectives while being exposed to a wide variety of musical experiences.

Although childhood musical experiences are extremely important in one’s potential career in a music-related field, college experiences can make or break the decision to follow one career or another. Trinity advertises its academic programs as flexible and encouraging of exploration. Trinity’s viewbook for prospective students quotes Diane Zannoni, Professor of Economics: “I always tell my students, it doesn’t matter what you major in. What matters is what excites you. What do you have a passion for? It is all about finding your passion” (Trinity College 2002). This spirit of exploration and discovery can entirely change the trajectory of a student’s intended career, and the right combination of different styles of learning, in the classroom and out, can be the essential catalyst in a student’s musical life.

## Chapter II The Nields

This chapter examines the career of professional folk musician Katryna Nields, a Religion major, and her husband, David Chalfant, an English major, who also produces her recordings. Katryna co-founded a singer-songwriter duo called “The Nields” in 1991 with her sister, Nerissa. They record music, write music and prose, play shows, sing children’s songs and teach children music. In 1994, the band expanded to include Chalfant, a bassist, and drummer David Hower, class of 1989, and in 2001 The Nields was pared down to its current iteration, in which Nerissa and Katryna sing together, accompanied by Nerissa on the guitar. According to Nields, the group currently plays mostly folk festivals and outdoor venues during the summer, and clubs during the rest of the year. Their website’s ‘Tour’ page lists concerts at coffee houses, churches, middle schools, clubs, fairs and arts centers (Nields 2009d).

In an interview, Chalfant described the group’s genre as “folk-rock” (Chalfant2009a). According to The Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, the term “Folkrock” was coined in the 1960s to refer to groups with rock instrumentation that reinterpreted folk music. The term was soon used as a marketing epithet referring to any group using vocal harmonies and acoustic

instrumentation (Laing, 2009). In any case, strict definitions of genre are problematic for The Nields: “We were definitely too folky for the rock world to consider us anything other than folk music, and often too rocky for the folk world to consider us anything other than rock music, so we were in kind of a funny area” (Nields 2009b). The Nields forged their own path based on their unique backgrounds in song.

Chalfant reflects on his experience playing in what was then a relatively popular rock band in a very positive way. He is proud to have been able to support himself as a professional musician, something he recognizes as a formidable task. He reflects on the same problems of genre that Nields does: “We gave it a real line as like an alternative rock band... for a couple of years, based in a really serious songwriting... when we were in the thick of it, we were all thinking, ‘let’s write a big pop song’” (Chalfant2009a). He sees the Nields, as a larger band, as having been caught between Folk-Rock, Alternative Rock and aspirations to popular success.

No major scholarly music resource (Oxford, Grove, American Popular Music) has an entry for ‘Alternative Rock.’ *AllMusic.com*, an advertisement-driven music website compiled primarily for popular music fans, defines ‘Alternative Rock’ “as a catch-all term for post-punk bands from the mid-'80s to the mid-'90s. Though there is a variety of musical styles within Alternative Rock, they are all tied together since they existed outside of the mainstream” (“Alternative Pop/Rock” 2009). “Outside of the mainstream” is an accurate

descriptor for The Nields, even during their more Rock oriented days. So, however, are the “vocal harmonies and acoustic instrumentation” of Folk-Rock. The Nields’s style exposes the problem of terminology and classification among the musicians outside of the Rock mainstream.

In the Nields’ 2000 album, “If You Lived Here, You’d be Home by Now,” songs vary greatly in their influence and genre. From the decidedly rock opening, “Jeremy Newborn Street,” to the more acoustic tracks such as “I’m So Lonesome I Could Cry,” The Nields’s melodies sound like folk melodies, and the plucked guitar on “Keys to the Kingdom” (accompanying CD, Track 1) sounds almost like country music (Nields 2000). Even in the era of a more rock-oriented sound, The Nields included folk elements in their music. The Nields’s latest album, “Sister Holler,” is more explicitly influenced by folk (Nields 2007). In a concert on May 13<sup>th</sup> 2009, Katryna and Nerissa explained that “Sister Holler” is a revision of traditional folk songs. “We’ll Plant an Oak,” for example, was written because The Nields were asked to play the Irish folk tune “The Water is Wide” (accompanying CD, Track 2) at weddings, and they felt that the lyrics were inappropriate for weddings due to their pessimism about love’s decay, so they rewrote the song to be wedding-appropriate (Nields 2009c).

**The Lyrics to “The Water is Wide”:**

The water is wide, I cannot get oer  
Neither have I wings to fly  
Give me a boat that can carry two  
And both shall row, my love and I

A ship there is and she sails the sea  
She's loaded deep as deep can be  
But not so deep as the love I'm in  
I know not if I sink or swim

I leaned my back against an oak  
Thinking it was a trusty tree  
But first it bent and then it broke  
So did my love prove false to me

I reached my finger into some soft bush  
Thinking the fairest flower to find  
I pricked my finger to the bone  
And left the fairest flower behind

Oh love be handsome and love be kind  
Gay as a jewel when first it is new  
But love grows old and waxes cold  
And fades away like the morning dew

Must I go bound while you go free  
Must I love a man who doesn't love me  
Must I be born with so little art  
As to love a man who'll break my heart

When cockle shells turn silver bells  
Then will my love come back to me  
When roses bloom in winter's gloom  
Then will my love return to me  
(“The Water is Wide” 2009).

**The Lyrics to “We’ll Plant an Oak”:**

The water is wide and we cannot cross  
over, it’s a little late to get your pilot’s  
license now  
Here is a boat; we can take turns at  
rowing, to float the river with you is all  
I want anyhow

I saw your face and I learned about  
knowing, I heard your voice and I  
learned how to hear  
We’ll plant an oak, in my palm, here’s  
an acorn, we’ll watch it grow to shelter  
our home year by year

Oh yes, the leaves will fall and the  
boughs may break, but that doesn’t  
mean that love’s a big mistake

For love is funny, love is hard,  
sometimes love is fragile, when it’s  
young it keeps you sleepless, burning  
like a star  
Love gets old and you think it’s cold,  
wait another season, it comes back to  
meet your open arms wherever you are

Oh yes, the leaves will fall and the  
boughs may break, but that doesn’t  
mean that love’s a big mistake

For love is gentle, love is kind, love’s a  
great big puzzle, we’ve been looking  
for it from the moment we were born  
Love gets old and you think it’s cold,  
looking in the wrong direction  
Anyone can tell you love’s only real,  
when you’ve been worn  
(Niels 2007).

“The Water is Wide” is about love falling apart. The Niels’s reaction to this message is one of revision, reimagining the song as one about making a relationship work. This revision of the folk traditions they are influenced by represents the individual mark The Niels make through their music – they seek to personalize existing traditions. The song’s harmonization, Katryna’s fast vibrato and her big vocal jumps from chest tone to falsetto are all characteristic of the Niels’s vocal style.

Nerissa and Katryna, as children, experienced music as a community-building activity, which has impacted the way they interact with others. Music was transmitted by their parents as a part of a social process, and became an integral part of their conceptions of community. Katryna attended an elementary school at which folk music was used to teach music to children. “Folk music is developmentally a really appropriate music to teach to elementary aged kids. It’s simple, it often has great historical richness... it can sort of tell the story of a culture” (Niels 2009b). She learned Appalachian and English folk tunes, and learned to play music via the Orff method, developed by German composer Carl Orff. According to the American Orff-Schulwerk Association,

The special Orff melody instruments include wooden xylophones and metal glockenspiels that offer good sound immediately. Played together as in a small orchestra, their use helps children become sensitive listeners and considerate participants (“What is Orff Schulwerk?” 2009).

Nields was encouraged to experiment and improvise musically during her childhood, by playing and actively listening, which has been valuable to her adult musical life. Their teachers had studied the work of Jack Langstaff, who had background in English folk music, and they were subsequently steeped in that tradition, which directly impacted their current career as folk musicians (Nields 2009a).

Musical activity was from the very beginning a part of life in the Nields household. “When we were sitting around singing as a family, my father played guitar. My sister got a guitar in, I think, sixth grade... we’d go over to a friend’s house as a family and we’d always... end up sitting around the living room after dinner singing”(Nields 2009b). This experience continues through Nields to others. She makes music with children, at home and in her side career as a music educator, and this reflects the deep impact her family’s music making and her early education had on her. “I do think that there’s an incredible value in communities coming together to sing... certainly that notion of community has a lot to do with why I became a musician” (Nields 2009b). Nields considers childhood community music-making a gift that she shares with her children and the children she teaches.

Katryna Nields’s college experience was an important catalysis of her musical education. Nields says that the courses she took in college, especially her religion classes, inform her beliefs and therefore her musical style. However,

most of the technical musical skills she learned were in musical performance activities. She was a member of the Trinity Pipes, a co-ed a cappella group, and participated in several for-credit performance activities, such as musical theater productions and the Trinity College Concert Choir, a co-ed choral group. Nields considers the performance activities to be the most technically helpful to her current career. It was practice for what she does today as a folk singer (Nields 2009b).

The only formal music classes that Nields took in college were ethnomusicology classes from Professor Helen Myers, whom she served as a teacher's assistant. Her musical experiences at Trinity were dominated by activities such as the Pipes, where she says she learned "technical, musical harmonic skills" (Nields 2009b). She claims her greatest musical influences, in fact, as some of the friends with whom she had performed in the Trinity Pipes. These friendships were prominent in the development of her musical identity.

Although Katryna Nields strongly identified with music as an important part of her life, making the decision to become a professional singer was a difficult one. Her initial college plan was to attend law school after graduation, but an experience that took place while studying abroad in Nepal changed her trajectory.

I was having my final language exam... and they were asking me questions in Nepali... the teacher asked me what work I wanted to do when I graduated from college, and I said, "How do you say 'Lawyer?'" And he looked at me like I was crazy and said, "Why do

you want to do that? Aren't you going to be a singer?" And that was it... I didn't take [the] LSATs! (Niels 2009b)

A big decision came down to a relatively momentary experience. It was not until an external entity, her Nepali teacher, validated music as a profession that she was able to reconcile herself to it. Her decision was also based on an organization of priorities. Niels realized that community music-making was important to her and she saw that she could serve her community in that way.

Part of my realization I think was that I don't have to be the best singer in the world... I just have to feel like I'm better at folk singing than I am at most other things... what's important is figuring out how I can serve best in this life (Niels 2009b).

Niels considers it important to share one's gifts with the world, and for her that means being a folk singer. Contributing to her community is high on her list of values. She made this connection because folk music was such an important part of her childhood and as a result, her musical identity was developed around that element of her life. Her career takes a number of forms, including singing for children and adults and teaching music to children (Niels 2009b). In his article "Literature as Equipment for Living," Kenneth Burke explained his sociological criticism of literature. He used the simile in the title to explain the purpose of literature in societies – as tools that help us understand and operate in the world around us (Burke 109). This simile can be extended to Niels's use of music as a tool to understand her place in her community, and as a means to understand her contribution to the world.

Nields has found it necessary to branch out as a professional in order to deal with the uncertainties of the present economic climate for musicians. She not only plays shows and makes albums but considers educating and performing children's music parts of her career as well. Nields attributes this to the state of the music industry today.

The music business is so bizarre, both because the whole economy is bizarre, but because the music business itself is confused as to what it's supposed to do next. Right now, it's really hard to figure out how musicians are going to get paid for their work (Nields 2009b).

She says that this difficulty is the reason that she has developed multiple faces to her career, and that a musician must diversify the investment of their time in order to ensure economic stability.

As mentioned previously, Nields's husband, David Chalfant produces the Nields's and other artists' albums. Chalfant played with the Nields regularly from 1994 to 2001, which helped lead to his marriage with Katryna in 1999. "I joined as a bass player, and I'd play a bunch of instruments, I added a bigger sound, and then we added a drummer and then became sort of a de facto rock band...sometimes we were ten months on the road without ever going home" (Chalfant 2009a). During their days as a rock band, "We started out playing coffee houses and church basements and clubs and things, and we expanded it and were playing folk festivals to twenty thousand people... filling sizeable clubs of fans" (Chalfant 2009a).

Chalfant, like Niels, grew up singing with his family. His father would play music to him, and he started playing guitar at age nine. They would listen to music together and eventually his father gave Chalfant his record collection (Chalfant 2009a). Chalfant's and Niels's musical experiences with their fathers and in their families were important to their musical educations. Chalfant majored in English Literature as opposed to Music. He was involved in a number of performance-based activities, including the Trinity Pipes, the Jazz Band and a number of student bands. The activities from which he took the most, however, were in collaboration with the Theater and Dance department at the college. Chalfant scored and performed music for dance performances, in collaboration with Andre Gribou, a piano teacher at the college. "I learned a lot of improvisation... a lot of being a musician is just about listening and expressing the thoughts you have in your musical mind in the actual world, and any opportunity you get is the most valuable thing" (Chalfant 2009a).

Unlike Niels, Chalfant took a number of formal music classes in college. He took three theory classes and two formal jazz classes. "It certainly opens your options up... you have many tools at your disposal if you want to pursue other channels" (Chalfant 2009b). He describes them as options that he could pursue if he wanted to, but which he doesn't necessarily use with frequency. The information he learned in these classes is incidental to his musical career. It is equipment for living - he developed useful tools, but secondary ones to his career.

Chalfant attributes many of the practical skills he learned to his experiences as a member of the Trinity Pipes and his other performative activities.

You learn how to communicate musically... when I'd write a score...there's a lot that you learn about how to get the most out of the performers and how to explain your ideas... the extracurricular activities were really in a lot of ways what made my Trinity experience (Chalfant2009a).

The practicality of student-led performance activity was very educational for Chalfant. Many of the relationships developed during his college experience continue to affect his post-graduate career (Chalfant 2009a). Chalfant is currently recording music with an alumnus with whom he played in a band while an undergraduate, and he has collaborated musically with several of his classmates since his graduation.

Katryna Nields and David Chalfant both had very positive experiences singing and making music with their families and at school, and have recreated and passed this experience on to others. The folk traditions Katryna and Nerissa learned from their teachers led directly to the folk traditions they sing today. Variety and versatility characterize their, and Chalfant's, musical style and performance contexts, making categorization problematic. The skills they use regularly as musicians were built in their roles as members of largely student-run extra-curricular activities at Trinity College, and the formal music classes they took are largely incidental to their careers.

## Chapter III The Business

Christopher Saranec, Trinity Class of 1986, and Gregory Rubin, Trinity Class of 2003, are Trinity alumni who have established careers in the music industry. Neither was a Music major, but both were involved in A Cappella performance while students at Trinity. Each composes as a side job but works primarily in the 'business' of music: Saranec licenses music and Rubin markets music. They each acknowledge the distance of the music business from the life of a musical performer, and I examine their paths in order to include a perspective that, although separate and distant from that of a professional performer, is relevant to the study of musical communities.

Saranec describes himself as "A music professional and a composer." He received his Bachelor's degree from Trinity in Economics and Computer Coordinate Economics in 1986, and his Master's degree in Economics from Trinity, in 1991. Saranec believes that his profession as composer and his job as a music licensor have almost nothing to do with each other. In fact, he says that the music business has very little to do with music itself. He sees the two entities as entirely separate - the music industry brokers and trades music, but this process doesn't require experience in musical performance. He says that music

is “just kind of the asset that just happens to be this football that’s batted around.” Music and the property rights thereof are considered a financial asset that is bought and sold by professionals who are separate from the world in which it is produced.

Saranec obtained his current position by responding to a bulletin board posting at the University of Southern California music school. After graduation, he held a job at the American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers (ASCAP), an organization that protects copyright, and this was helpful in finding the job he currently holds (“American Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers”). His experience in copyright protection made him an appropriate candidate for a job in music licensing, for which the most important factor was professional experience. He says, “I was a shoo-in because I already had some of the fundamental building blocks that they were looking for in this activity” (Saranec).

Saranec also took courses in film scoring at the University of Southern California’s Thornton School of Music. The decision to pursue professional musical activity and further education was an easier decision for Saranec than it was for Nields (See Chapter II). Saranec grew up in New Haven, Connecticut, a city with a vibrant musical life that has produced a number of composers. “There was always the notion that if [film composers] Alfred Newman and... Dominic Frontiere came from New Haven, that being a composer for film or television was a viable career choice and a possibility.” The decision to pursue

film scoring was based upon the perceived viability of such a career within his extended community, who recognized the accomplishments of such composers as Newman and Frontiere.

Saranec experienced a unique path towards admission to the Thornton School of Music. The program was chaired at the time by a composer named Dr. Norman “Buddy” Baker, one of approximately 200 people designated “Disney Legends” for their contributions to Disney’s success (“Disney Legends - Buddy Baker”). Saranec met with Baker to discuss the program, and brought a cassette of one of his compositions with him. Baker listened to the cassette and offered Saranec a place in the program on the spot, instead of going through the normal application process (Saranec). Saranec gained admission to this reputable school of music composition primarily by networking and personal accomplishments.

In his current role as a composer, he sees himself as an “independent contractor,” since he produces works for hire, and the resulting music becomes the property of his clients. He says that in the 1970s, film composers were frequently on staff at a production company, but that the climate is decidedly more independent today. CDBaby.com, an independent music vendor that features his music, describes his style as “Enlightened Jazz Rock with a movie score twist” (CD Baby: Chris Saranec: Soundtrck Sampler). “Dark Crusade,” however (Accompanying CD, Track 3), is far more influenced by classical musics. The marketing-oriented characterization used by CDBaby.com places Saranec’s musical compositions in an area not clearly defined by a specific genre.

Saranec's musical experiences can be traced to his childhood. "My family business was an organ and piano retailership down in New Haven... I have to admit to being the spoiled kid that had his choice of about fifty pianos!" He learned to play the piano from some excellent teachers, including one who had studied with notable French composer Nadia Boulanger. He also learned "enough guitar to be vaguely convincing" (Saranec) from a neighborhood music school. These two distinct experiences would combine to influence his compositional style.

At Trinity, Saranec auditioned for the Trinity Pipes, but had only performed in all-male singing groups, so he found a better fit with After Dark, a men's A Cappella group. He led rehearsals for the group. He says that in this group he learned sight-reading skills, and technical musical skills. He believes that singing practice helps develop a muscle memory that is helpful in performance, and that its importance is often overlooked. "There's very definitely muscle memory that occurs where you are on the scale in pitch and... it might not be fully recognized but I think that we use that as singers all the time."

He also attributes a number of important social skills to his experiences in After Dark and in the Trinity College Concert Choir, a for-credit, faculty-led choir that is part of the formal curriculum. He feels that having been a part of a group with its own complex set of political negotiations taught him how to deal with the complicated set of relations in a corporate structure. "A choir is sort of

the music team in a way, and I would say in that construct there is a pecking order, or there's some political jockeying where who's going to get the solo... you have to know when to yield" (Saranec). He found it valuable to experience the social environment of choral music and to develop skills relating to others in that context.

Saranec took some music theory courses as an undergraduate at Trinity. He felt that the music theory classes had application to vocal performance, in that they helped students have a better understanding of the material they were performing. Saranec had already experienced much of the material he was learning in music theory classes in high school, and after he graduated from Trinity, at the Thornton School of Music. He says that through the process of learning it multiple times, he was enabled to further assimilate and personalize the material in a way that made him even more comfortable with music theory, thus allowing him to concentrate further on the concepts that were most relevant to his own composition (Saranec email to author).

Saranec has continued to make music with his classmates on a limited basis. Liesl Odenweller, class of 1988, recently premiered a piece by Saranec. "We reconnected, and she was kind enough to sing a piece of mine that recently got published on the strength of her giving it a try. So that was a really positive thing." In this instance, two alumni provided professional support through the network they had built at Trinity. They found a mutually beneficial connection that led to professional advancement. Saranec casually played rock music with

one of his classmates as well. He does not consider these connections to be a major part of his life, however. When asked if he had made music with anyone from Trinity since he had graduated, he elaborated, but his initial response was “Not to speak of” (Saranec). The connections he has formed, although fruitful, are not a major part of the identity he has built as a “music professional and composer.”

Saranec has also continued to make music outside of his professional life. He participates in a Catholic church choir, as well as a men’s choir. He considers Christmastime to be the busiest season for performance, and he participates in a holiday caroling tradition.

Gregory Rubin, class of 2003, mirrors Saranec’s pattern of working as a professional in the music industry and composing and performing music on the side. Rubin is the Assistant Director of Digital Marketing at Jive Records, a division of Sony Music Entertainment. Rubin also arranges music as a side business and is involved in a number of non-professional musical activities.

I run a little side business doing A Cappella arrangements for whoever pays me. I play music still, and I direct an A Cappella group here in [New York] city...when you go out into the “real world” and you work a lot, you spend a ton of time doing what ends up being fairly boring stuff and I pretty quickly felt a need for some sort of creative outlet (Rubin).

Rubin’s approach to working in the music business reflects a fundamental separation of “the music business” from “the process of making music.” The fact that he uses music as a creative outlet distinct from his career, illustrates

Saranec's claims that the music industry has very little to do with music itself. Rubin's job is to "make sure that all of the online and digital properties that we own are working towards either selling an artist's album or creating buzz around an upcoming artist, or creating a great fan experience" (Rubin). His job entails marketing, and has little to do with the actual music.

Prior to working at Sony, Rubin worked at a consulting firm, through which he occasionally worked for Sony. He drew from his networking contacts at Sony, as opposed to going through a conventional job application process. Rubin believes that he uses very little knowledge from his Psychology degree at Trinity, which has limited implications for marketing. Moreover, since he primarily markets online, interpersonal relationships are difficult: he never interacts personally with his customers. As a result, he derives information from data that help him to determine if his marketing strategies are effective.

Rubin also experienced a strong musical education early in his life, taking piano lessons. He learned Jazz piano, and block chords for pop songs so that he could improvise more easily, as opposed to learning to read music and play scales. He auditioned for an A Cappella group in high school, but became too nervous for the second round of auditions, so he wasn't involved in A Cappella performance until he came to Trinity College, where he sang in the Trinity Pipes and the Trinity College Chapel Singers, Trinity's oldest student organization, which is a for-pay choir that has provided music for Trinity's chapel services since 1824.

Rubin directed the Pipes, and says he learned a lot from that experience. He says that he learned how to manage people and keep them motivated about a commitment that was not grade bearing and how to attain funding for a student program. He also finds this experience useful in online marketing – as director of the pipes, he had to figure out what his audience wanted to hear, and balance that with what was fun to sing and with how they could make money. Rubin finds this balance applicable to promoting artists for Jive records.

Rubin’s music classes at Trinity included music theory, as well as Jazz theory, which built on his Jazz piano background. He also pursued an independent study in counterpoint, which helped him arrange music for the Trinity Pipes and gave him a grounding that prepared him for his part-time career creating A Cappella arrangements. Although Rubin did not study content that relates directly to his current vocation, he was able to develop his own trajectory, which became very important to his activity in college and beyond.

Rubin still keeps in contact with many of the friends he made in The Pipes. Like Saranec, Rubin cites winter as the time of year with the highest concentration of activity. “The older generation pipes kind of rally the troops and we go caroling every year in Brooklyn.” Among alumni of Trinity College, a subculture has emerged in which even members of older generations of members of the Trinity Pipes have developed relationships with younger alumni of this organization. The cultural entity of the Pipes has persisted and even expanded beyond graduation “We had our Pipes reunion last year and all but

two people from my senior year group came back” (Rubin). Clearly, members’ loyalties to The Pipes run strong. The group has been very influential in the way that its alumni perceive their experiences at Trinity.

Gregory Rubin had a varied and self-directed academic career at Trinity. He was able to pursue multiple interests, both within and outside of the formal curriculum. He was able to direct an A Cappella group, an opportunity that built many of his social and organizational skills, but which also made him a part of a dedicated body of alumni. He has largely taken charge of his own career, which, like Saranec’s, is in a field largely unrelated to his studies at Trinity. Their part-time compositional careers supplement their jobs that are grounded in the business side of the music industry.

## Chapter IV Issues of Profession

Ann Brown and Joseph Tucker, both Class of 1983, have pursued strikingly different musical paths. Brown worked for several years as a professional musical theater actress, and has recently returned to school to become a speech pathologist. Tucker has never worked professionally as a musician, but performs regularly outside his profession as a reference librarian. Although the two have backgrounds in strikingly different musical styles, the relationships between their current professions and their musical lives are complex and are pertinent to a discussion of their respective musical lives. Brown says that, since she began working as a professional musician, she has not been able to participate in amateur music making, while Tucker decided that music would remain avocational. The question of whether or not musical performance will turn into a career is a difficult one, and one which alumni have answered in very different ways.

When Ann Brown graduated from Trinity, she almost immediately hired an agent and began working as a professional actress and singer. This was the realization of her childhood dream to pursue music as a vocation. However, several years ago, Brown was feeling exhausted and decided to take a year off

from working to spend more time with her family. After that year she decided to become certified as a speech pathologist. She now works as “a speech pathologist in a brand new school for kids on the artistic spectrum” (Brown).

Brown’s first musical training was on the piano, in private lessons in her hometown of Leonia, New Jersey. She started acting in school shows, singing and doing some recording and performing work outside of school. She now describes the singing she was doing as “screaming.” She says that, “I studied voice as a child with a retired New York City Opera singer who heard me sing in school and was concerned that I would damage my voice unless I had some sort of voice training.” Brown’s teacher believed that, even at an early age, one can “ruin the instrument before it’s developed” by singing without proper training (Brown). Brown continued to receive voice lessons through high school and college, and into her professional career.

Teachers encouraged Brown from an early age. When she was about nine years old, a teacher pulled her aside to give her a particularly difficult vocal part and to tell her that she thought Brown had perfect pitch. This encouragement, and opportunities to perform at an early age, helped her realize that she was interested in pursuing singing.

Ann Brown was an English major who was heavily involved in musical theater activities, the Trinity Pipes, and the Concert Choir. She also took voice lessons at the Hartt School of Music. She lists musical theater specialist Professor Gerald Moshell as her greatest influence at Trinity: “I would say that he’s the

single most positive influence I had coming out of that school, as opposed to the professors I had in [other courses]" (Brown).

There is a clear distinction between the skills Brown learned in her voice lessons at Hartt and those she learned in other activities. She says that the lessons taught her to maintain her voice and to use it consistently in intensive rehearsal schedules. She rehearsed five nights per week with the Trinity Pipes, and she developed essential, technical skills in her voice lessons.

In the Pipes and musical theater productions, however, Brown feels she learned more social skills, such as "how to get along with people how to mediate when problems arose... the pecking order stuff that goes on in any theater group... I would say all people stuff. It put me in very good stead in the business later on." The two activities combined to provide a comprehensive preparation for her career. The accessibility of performance also played an important role. "I had the confidence in my ability, a lot of it gained at Trinity, because I was a big fish in a little pond, and there's a lot to be said for that" (Brown).

Brown says that, unlike many professional actors and singers, it was easy for her to hire an agent. A professor in the Theater and Dance department sent her to auditions for a summer theater program at the New London Bar & Playhouse. A director there introduced her to a woman who would be her agent for twenty-five years. This relationship, built through networking and the support of a professor, was invaluable for her professional life.

While Brown was working as a professional actress and singer, she had little time for anything else. "I had just come out of doing three long running shows on Broadway, and during the day was doing a lot of commercial work and recording work and I had two young kids, and I just needed a break" (Brown). The effort that she had put forth to continue working in the performing arts was enormous, and left her exhausted. She decided to take some time off and decide what she wanted to do, eventually deciding on speech pathology as her next career.

According to Brown, she did not miss amateur musical activity while working professionally. She says that she got "Plenty of it, and I think once you take that step over into professional life with it, it's very hard to tolerate certain non-professional attitudes towards that stuff... because you don't have the energy for it" (Brown). For Brown, professionalism in music is a state of being that one either embodies or one doesn't. Once one is a professional, there is little time available for non-professional musical activities.

Brown had been studying with Joan Lader, a very famous voice teacher in New York. Lader had training as a speech pathologist, and got Brown in touch with the head of the Communications Disorders department at William Paterson University, who thought that Brown would make an ideal candidate for a degree in communications disorders. "From my perspective it was an absolute slam dunk. She said, 'Not often do we have people coming from someplace like Trinity.'" Brown's broad background in the Liberal Arts, combined with her

unique experience as a performing artist prepared her well for her certification as a speech pathologist. She believes that both her experience as a musician and her background in the liberal arts were equally influential in her graduate degree.

Ann Brown's current career is the result of an amalgam of a wide range of experiences. Encouragement from her teachers, as a child and at Trinity, helped boost her confidence level. This combined with technical, musical learning in the voice lessons she took and with the social skills she developed in the Trinity Pipes and in the Musical Theater program to prepare her extremely well for her career in the performing arts. This career combined with a diverse background at Trinity to prepare her for her second career in Speech Pathology. This chain of events was catalyzed by the variety of skills she developed in college.

Joseph (Joe) Tucker, also class of 1983, is a reference librarian at Bennington College in Bennington, Vermont. He is not a professional musician, but performs regularly in his spare time. Musical performance has been a part of his life from the time he was nine years old in a choir school to his current performances. Tucker, unlike Brown, was a Music major, with a double-major in Classics, although he has never worked full-time as a musician. Tucker's musical life outside of Trinity's music department was full of activity that contributed greatly to his current musical life. The example of Joe Tucker, a Music major but not a professional musician, provides contrast to Ann Brown, who was not a Music major, but was for a time a professional musician.

Tucker says that some of his earliest musical memories involve his older siblings listening to the Beatles. He says that their interest in the popular music of the 1960s influenced him heavily. This helped to develop his childhood desire to become a disc jockey, a desire that was fulfilled at Trinity's radio station, WRTC. Tucker also says that his grandmother was an accomplished pianist and organist who had played piano for silent movies. She died before Tucker was born, but he believes that he inherited a certain amount of her musicality. A piano and a pump organ were part of his childhood home, so there were plenty of opportunities for him to make music at home.

Formal musical activity began for Tucker at Choir School at nine years old in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Here, he was immersed in church music, singing in daily masses and learning about liturgical music and chant. He was occasionally given big performance opportunities, such as performances with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. It was at this school where Tucker says he first felt the need to perform. He went from this school to the local abbey high school, where he began to learn music other than that of the Church. He learned to play guitar and bass guitar, and played some pop and folk music on his own.

At Trinity, Tucker immediately became involved with WRTC. He served as a disc jockey, and his programming originally centered around Jazz, and in fact Tucker acted in a leadership position in the Jazz department of WRTC. His programming eventually settled on Rock.

The involvement at WRTC fulfilled Tucker's longtime desire to be a disc jockey, although his musical impulses soon turned to performance. He joined Trinity College Concert Choir, under Professor Gerald Moshell, where he believes that he gained an appreciation of the rehearsal process. "In some ways, the performance of a piece is really kind of a byproduct. The work of rehearsing a piece is where you really get into the nuts and bolts of it, and you come to a deeper appreciation of it by working its component parts" (Tucker). Tucker's interest in appreciating music spoke more loudly to him than the desire to perform and to be in the spotlight.

Tucker played in student bands with his friends at Trinity as well, outside of the Music Department. Tucker acted as the Best man at the wedding of one of his bandmates, Dirk Kuyk III (class of 1981). Tucker had many friends who were student musicians, but who performed outside of the context of the music department and majored in other disciplines. There was only one other Music major in his class, and both were double-majors in Music and Classics. One of these friends was a saxophonist. "He was sort of astounded that I had a hard time telling the difference between an alto and a tenor saxophone in terms of the timbre, and he was also amazed that I could do some ear training stuff and theory stuff that escaped him" (Tucker). This interaction illustrates the disparity of skill between two students, each of whom had completed the standard three music theory classes offered by the Music department - Tucker and his friend

had skills based more closely on their experiences and previous areas of expertise than on their shared experience.

After he graduated, Tucker tried working as a professional musician, but that it was too difficult to make a living, so he got what he calls a “day job.” His enjoys his career as a librarian, and occasionally performs when gigs are available to him. He says that he doesn’t actively pursue performance work, but continues to perform as much as he can.

In the 1990s, Tucker played with friends more in the past, and performed choral music more than he does now, but he says that he prefers solo shows, in which he sings, plays guitar and piano. He describes his style as somewhere on the acoustic side of Classic Rock, a term defined by the Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians as “commonly used to describe a body of songs whose popularity and frequent playing have made them a standard part of rock repertory” (Classic Rock (i)). His performance of these standards, with his own twists, reflect the impact of his older siblings’ interest in what was then popular music, but which became what we call “Classic Rock.”

Tucker also says he performs some Irish music in his shows, and likes to play music “off the beaten path” when possible, and that even when he plays a show within a given genre, he tries to play some music outside of that genre as well. He considers every performance an opportunity to play something new and keep his show fresh. These various interests reflect the diversity of his musical background. He describes his audience as a “rural intelligentsia...

pockets of upper middle class white liberals. That and college students” (Tucker). He perceives his audience as educated, and appreciative of what he considers intelligent, eclectic music.

The biggest lesson that Tucker learned at Trinity and found applicable to his performance career was one he learned during a Concert Choir performance. The Concert Choir was performing Brahms’s *Requiem* with musicians from Connecticut College, and he made a bad entrance:

During intermission, Gerry was going “Who was that, who made that mistake?” I sort of sheepishly was like “that was me.” He shook my hand and said [something like], “you did that with conviction... if you’re going to make a mistake, make a whopping good one” (Tucker).

In this instance, he learned to ‘own’ his music and not be afraid to make a mistake in the name of confident, intentional music. He learned to be a more secure performer and, in that moment and in his regular musical performance, learned practical musical skills that he uses to this day.

Although Joe Tucker never developed a career as a full-time professional musician, he is dedicated to his performative life, and says that it represents “more than money” for him. He has an eclectic background, from his choral experience at the age of nine, to his Jazz show on WRTC and his current performances of Classic Rock and Irish music. The diversity of his experiences is reflected in the variety of his musical performance styles and desire to continuously change the content of his shows. The performance activities he participated in at Trinity directly impacted his current career, although he says

that by now the classes he took at Trinity don't have much crossover with either his career as a librarian or with his performances of Classic Rock or Irish music.

Tucker, like Ann Brown, does however attribute a level of confidence and tenacity to his performance activities at Trinity. Because each of them found contexts in which they could perform and explore, their Pre-Trinity experiences were catalyzed in their performance activities.

Joe Tucker felt that he couldn't support himself financially by making the kind of music he was making, so he found a "day job" and continues to make the music he wants to in his spare time. Brown, by contrast, found it challenging to make a career by performing in musical theater, so she threw herself completely into the job, making a successful career but exhausting herself in the process and developing an intolerance for non-professional performance attitudes. In retiring from the stage, she found a new career for which she was ideally suited.

## Chapter V Career Choices

When they were to graduate from Trinity, Liesl Odenweller '88 and Ann Brown '99 each were faced with the issue of whether or not they would pursue careers as professional musicians. Each was involved in musical performance activity as a child and at Trinity, and although Odenweller, a professional opera singer, knew early on that she would pursue a career in opera, Brown was not so certain. Brown did not consider herself a virtuosic performer, so she says she didn't want to take the risk of trying to 'make it' as a performer. Even so, she says she built confidence at Trinity, and this has helped her in her current career as a music therapist. Their separate paths, one towards performance and one toward a musical career that is not oriented toward concert performance, have bearing on a conversation of musical profession.

Liesl Odenweller, a Music major, is accomplished as a professional opera singer. She lives in Venice, and says she works a lot, even though the economic climate for Opera Singers is quite difficult at the moment. She was involved with the Trinity College Chapel Singers while in college, as well as the Concert Choir, and musical theater. Her experience at Trinity was highly customized, including personal voice instruction as well as a number of classes specifically oriented

towards a career in Opera. She says she learned an enormous amount of social and technical skills in the performance groups in which she participated.

Odenweller says she was performing music before she could even read. She sang in a church choir as a child. She says that she has perfect pitch, and that this gave her a good ear for the Piano as well as for singing, so she took lessons from approximately the age of six. She played music and sang with her family frequently. Her first solos in church were at the age of fourteen, and she was soon involved in musical theater productions at her high school, as well as a madrigal group she describes as “elite.”

At Trinity, Odenweller knew what she wanted and went for it – she took classes she knew would be useful in a career as an opera singer at the Hartt School of Music, including one about the history of opera. She designed an interdisciplinary major about opera, including acting and language classes. Odenweller never fully implemented this interdisciplinary major, because there were what she called “differences of opinion” in regards to the structure of the major (Odenweller 2009).

Given the context of the conversation, I understood that these differences of opinion were in regards to the music theory elements of the Music major at Trinity. Odenweller feels that the theory she learned was far more than she needs as a professional performer. She says that in her profession she uses one tenth of the music theory she learned, and that in anticipation of this fact, her

proposed interdisciplinary major included slightly less theory than the music major.

Odenweller augmented the Music major with other classes that were relevant to a career as a musician. She customized her experience beyond what Trinity offers, and beyond what is expected of a music student at Trinity. She was able to prepare herself more thoroughly for her current career through classes taken off-campus and through her performance activities. Odenweller says that for a period of time during the 1980s, Trinity didn't have any general education or distribution requirements beyond major requirements, so the requirements she had to fulfill were of fairly singular discipline, as opposed to being broad-based, in the liberal arts.

Odenweller was involved in a number of performance activities at Trinity, including a number of musical theater productions, musical revues, and two choirs. She says that she auditioned to perform in opera productions at Hartt, the school at which she took some opera classes, but she says that her commitments to performance activity at Trinity precluded her from committing to performing at Hartt.

According to Odenweller, she learned a lot of important skills from the performance activities she did at Trinity. She says that language skills, social skills, and tools for dealing with difficult colleagues are the most notable of the things she learned in these groups. These are practical skills for survival in a career as a professional performer. One thing she says was especially important

was learning how to assert herself to people she respected and needed to show deference to, and how to express a difference of opinion tempered with respect. She says that language skills and acting skills are particularly important to working in opera, and that she was able to develop these skills by using them regularly at Trinity.

When she was at Trinity, Odenweller says that the community of people who were involved in musical performance activities was larger than the group of people who took music classes. She says that when it came time to audition for performances, people would “pop up out of the woodwork.” She was consistently surprised by the number of people who were interested in performing, especially with musical theater performances. The subculture of musically involved students at Trinity, according to Odenweller, was not easy to quantify.

Reflecting on her time in these performance groups, Odenweller has a lot of positive things to say. “The experience of having someone like John Rose playing the organ and be[ing] in charge of Chapel Singers was just incredible” (Odenweller). She says she has a lot of positive memories of these activities, especially of the diversity of opportunities she had. For example, Odenweller says that her first year at Trinity, she performed in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, an opera by Mozart, which was performed by professional singers and a student chorus. Odenweller says that the experiences she had at Trinity were all

beneficial. “You always learn something from every experience, even if it’s what not to do. I learned so much from my Trinity years” (Odenweller).

Odenweller’s musical life has continued to be connected to Trinity College. She has performed with a number of alumni, notably at the celebration of John Rose’s thirtieth anniversary at Trinity, along with Floyd Higgins, Trinity class of 1985. She also performs recitals for Trinity’s Elderhostel program, a cultural educational program that Trinity operates in Italy. The continued connection Odenweller has to Trinity represents the positivity and productivity of her relationship to her college.

When she graduated, Odenweller had expectations of simply hiring an agent and starting her career. She says that this expectation had been reinforced by mentors, but that it oversimplified the process. She says that finding an agent was easy, but that the agencies she has used have not necessarily been helpful in finding jobs. She says that most of the jobs she has found have been through networking or by personal “hounding” of theaters and opera houses. Starting her career was not a simple process, but took great persistence. When asked what has motivated her persistence, she attributed it to pride, stubbornness and optimism.

Becoming an opera singer, according to Odenweller, is a long-term learning process. She compares it to being a professional athlete: your muscles are constantly training and developing, and she is still learning ways to more effectively use her voice. She says some of the biggest challenges are in language

skills and acting. If she isn't comfortable in the language of the piece she's singing, she says that it quickly becomes obvious. Many of the challenges of her career aren't possible to overcome immediately, and must be met by a long process of professional improvement.

Odenweller also says that her musical life outside her profession is limited. She simply does not have time to perform or make music at home or with friends, given her professional schedule. She, like Ann Brown, says that she gets enough of music at work, so that when she gets home she never feels like singing.

Liesl Odenweller knew from the beginning of her career at Trinity what she wanted to do. This allowed her to customize her experience to a great degree, augmenting the curriculum with performance activities and other classes, even off campus, that were appropriate to her future career. She was able to delve into a career that required her to network and to find jobs on her own, using skills that she developed across a broad spectrum of activities at Trinity. She is in a continuous process of learning and career development, and reflects very positively on her time at Trinity.

Michelle Russell, Trinity class of 1999, chose a much different path than Odenweller did. She, like Odenweller, was a Music major, and was involved in many of the same activities that Odenweller was. She went to graduate school directly from Trinity, earning a degree in Music therapy and diving into a career. Although Russell was heavily involved in performance activity at Trinity, this

has not completely carried over to her current career: although she uses some of the musical skills she developed, she is not a professional performer. Her career is mostly administrative, but she also spends much of her time teaching music to people in nursing homes.

Russell's musical life began in second grade, when a music teacher became impressed with Russell's performance, and approached her mother. The teacher told Russell's mother that her daughter was talented, and that they should explore performance activities for Russell to be involved in. She attended a day camp during the summer, and further developed her facility for repeating a musical idea by voice.

Russell took instrumental lessons throughout her years at home. There was a piano in her house, and she took lessons on it from fourth grade through twelfth. She also played the viola, and was in a choir during high school. She describes her mother as musically inclined and says that she would sing a lot at home.

At Trinity, Russell's social life centered on musical performance groups. She performed in musical theater productions throughout her time in college, as well as performing for two years in Concert Choir and taking private voice lessons. In contrast to Odenweller's reflections, she says that the community around the music department was small but well defined. She says that there were no more than five music majors in any of the classes she saw graduate, and says that one always knew who the musicians were. Odenweller's and Russell's

disagreement on the cohesiveness of the music department community illustrates Odenweller's belief that there were many participants who rarely participated but were nonetheless talented – their membership in a given community may not have been completely obvious.

Russell feels that her sight-reading skills got much better, not only from practical use, but from the classes she took. She believes that her musical comprehension increased during her time at Trinity but, unlike Odenweller, felt that the theory classes she took helped her understand the music she was performing, and believes it had practical applications.

According to Russell, her ability to work as a member of a team also owes a great deal to the activities she was involved in at Trinity. She says that she became more patient and self-confident, among other things, because she was able to participate and perform regularly. She reflects upon Trinity as “a confidence builder,” for a lot of reasons. She says that she was able to “put [her]self out there”, and says that there is no hiding in Trinity classrooms – she was confident and well-spoken by necessity, and she says that these characteristics served her very well in graduate school and in her profession.

Russell says that she continues to keep in touch with many of the friends she made through musical activity at Trinity. When asked about the connections she has retained with classmates, she had no trouble giving examples, such as a wedding she recently attended of a friend she met in musical theater.

Even though Russell was enthusiastic about musical theater performance at Trinity, she decided not to pursue a career in musical theater performance. She says that she is “not a virtuoso at all,” although she has always found a certain level of success in music. She studied Music formally simply because she found something she was interested in and decided that she would rather have been studying music than anything else. She says that she didn’t want to go through the enormous challenge of going to New York and working side jobs while she waited for her performance career to take off.

Russell says that she hadn’t heard of music therapy until her senior year at Trinity. She did a lot of research into the profession, and applied to a number of programs, eventually settling on Lesley University in Massachusetts, which has a Master’s program in Expressive Therapies. She graduated from this program, and now works as a music therapist in a nursing home.

Russell’s job exists under the umbrella of “therapeutic recreation,” which is a required element of nursing home programming. After she earned her master’s degree, she entered a position in New York in which she had sixty residents who were entirely her responsibility. Her job entailed keeping documentation and planning recreation for her residents. She worked at this home for approximately five years, at the end of which about half of her programming was musical.

Russell says that she is very lucky that the home at which she first worked was open to hiring a full-time creative arts therapist. She says that not many

people know what therapeutic recreation is, and she is never sure how to explain it to people. She was able to move up the ladder at this home, however, and gain some experience in a role of responsibility. Today, she works at a different nursing home in Connecticut, as the director of the therapeutic recreation department. She says that because she has a staff under her, she has the liberty of performing exclusively musical programming. Her career dominates her musical life: she says that she does not participate in any musical activity outside of her profession, and that she wishes she could.

Michelle Russell's career is and has been incredibly diverse. In her first job after earning her master's degree, she performed a number of therapeutic activities in the arts, besides music. Many of her current duties are directorial, as opposed to musical. Her position draws on a diverse body of skills, some of which she learned at Trinity and some of which she learned at Lesley University. After an enormous amount of background in singing, piano and musical theater, she made the decision to pursue a career that was unique but in which her success was more secure.

Liesl Odenweller and Michelle Russell were each music majors with background in voice performance. Odenweller decided to pursue a career as an opera singer, which required an enormous amount of persistence, and which required her to continually learn and develop her skills. Russell chose not to pursue a career as a performing musician, but pursued an advanced degree that

allowed her to use some of her musical skills, but which utilizes many of the social skills she developed in activities at Trinity.

## Chapter VI Conclusion

Trinity College is a diverse community with a wide range of liberal arts experiences available. For students interested in studying music, or for those interested in performing in a context outside the classroom, there are many options available for learning. Some students come to Trinity knowing exactly what they would like their career to be, and many are surprised by a sparked interest in a discipline different than their intended major. Many students' careers, although highly shaped by the experiences and skills that they built before they came to Trinity, were just as highly shaped by experiences they had in college.

Participants in this project, selected to represent as diverse a group as possible based on data I collected from music professors, presented a variety of valuations in regards to their musical performance activities and academic careers. Many thought that the most valuable learning they achieved was as a part of musical performance activities, to the ends of technical musical skills and also of social skills that they find valuable in their current careers.

Trinity College's musical community cannot be understood on the same terms as an ethnologically based music-culture. Trinity is not cohesive cultural

unit but a place in which transformational experiences take place. The information gleaned through interviewing these eight alumni illustrates the directness of impact that musical activity has on individual students' careers.

To this end, two other student projects have examined Trinity's musical micro-cultures. Katherine Lawlor, Class of 2010, has interviewed a number of current students and discussed their musical backgrounds and planned careers (Lawlor). Austin Waldecker, also class of 2010, has examined the community of student musicians who are active outside of the music department and the A Cappella groups on campus.

If similar research to mine were performed at other small liberal arts colleges, as well as at conservatories and at schools with undergraduate performance degrees, the compared results of these studies would yield important data about the way that students experience music in an educational setting. Such a comparative study could expose the differences between a liberal arts setting and a performance-oriented setting, and could examine the characteristics of individual programs.

Each of the case studies I have examined has developed a unique career by unique means. Their interactions with other student musicians and with professors, on- and off-campus and inside and outside of the classroom have helped them to define what part music plays in their life and what the relationship is between their vocation and their avocation.



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