

TURNING POINTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CLASSICAL MUSICIANS

Elena Gabor
Bradley University

This qualitative study investigated the vocational socialization turning points in families of classical musicians. I sampled and interviewed 20 parent-child dyads, for a total of 46 interviews. Data analysis revealed that classical musicians' experiences were marked by 11 turning points that affected their identification with the occupation: being introduced to music, finding the right mentor, informal recognition of skill, formal recognition of skill, embracing the work ethic, losing/excusing the mentor, choosing a major, getting cold feet, crystallization of career decision, finding one's sound, and losing one's sound. Overall, the fact that many of these work socialization experiences took place in childhood led to an early identification with this occupation and less time to investigate other careers. In addition, the children musicians brought evidence of early investment in intense work, which qualified as career.