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**BETWEEN TWO WORLDS:  
TENSIONS OF PRACTICE ENCOUNTERED BY  
SECONDARY SCHOOL MUSIC TEACHERS IN  
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Education at  
Massey University, Manawatu Campus, New Zealand**

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## **Abstract**

This qualitative study examined the tensions of practice encountered in the daily working lives of secondary school music teachers who hold the responsibility for music in their school. The analysis used data from semi-structured interviews with nineteen participants, including current and former practitioners and music advisors in Aotearoa New Zealand. The participants represent a range of musical traditions, teaching experiences, and demographics. Data were analysed thematically in terms of four research questions: (i) the expectations attached to the role of secondary school music teacher; (ii) the tensions of practice encountered; (iii) the manner in which teachers experienced their working lives; and (iv) their efforts to resolve the tensions they encountered. Major tensions of practice were found to arise from the boundary positions which teachers occupied at the interface of two worlds – the inner world of music and the outer world of the school – and from the complex demands of working in the three different areas of classroom, extra-curricular and itinerant music. Further tensions stemmed from changes brought about by national policy changes from the mid-1990s to a broad, practically-based official curriculum and standards-based assessment in senior secondary school credentials. Within their roles, teachers experienced conflict, ambiguity and overload which had an impact on personal well-being and their identities as musicians. They derived satisfaction from drawing students into the inner life and meaning of music. The study addresses a major gap in the understanding of secondary teachers' work. It contributes to local and international research literature into the lives of teachers, the position of music in schools, and the nature of music education. It has practical and theoretical implications for policy makers, school leaders, teachers and researchers.



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## Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to:

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## Glossary

ANZ	Aotearoa New Zealand	The name for New Zealand which recognises Māori as the people of the land
ANZC	<i>The Arts in the New Zealand Curriculum</i>	Curriculum document for the arts. Published in 2000 and replaced by the NZC in 2007
ANZAAE	The Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Art Educators	The professional association of visual art educators in ANZ
ATCL	Associate of Trinity College of London	A music qualification at diploma level
ERO	Education Review Office	Government body which reports publicly on the quality of education in NZ schools
HOD	Head of Department	A middle management position
HOF	Head of Faculty	A middle management position usually encompassing several departments
IEP	Individual educational plan	A term used in special education but used here by music teachers to indicate individual learning programmes
IRMT	Institute of Registered Music Teachers	Professional organisation of music teachers
ITM	Itinerant teacher of music	Instrumental and vocal teachers who provide lessons to secondary students during the school day
MENZA	Music Education New Zealand Aotearoa	National subject association for music education
MERC	National Centre for Research in Music Education	Partner organisation of MENZA
METANZ	Music Education Trust Aotearoa New Zealand	A charitable trust for music education advocacy

NCEA	National Certificate in Educational Achievement	National qualification for secondary school students with 3 levels
NZ	New Zealand	
NZC	<i>New Zealand Curriculum</i>	Official NZ school curriculum published in 2007 and mandated from 2010
NZCF	New Zealand Choral Federation	National choral network in NZ
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority	Has a range of roles in secondary and tertiary education. Administers NCEA.
NZSME	New Zealand Society for Music Education	National music education society which was replaced from 2004 by MENZA, METANZ and MERC
PPTA	Post Primary Teachers' Association	Secondary teachers' professional association
TIC	Teacher in Charge of Music	An assistant teacher with responsibility for music