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An index of all the issues of the *MJRME* is available on the journal's website as a downloadable Excel file, and PDF versions of all issues are also available there. As a service to the profession, MMEA provides all these documents for free, with no login required and no publication lag (https://mmea.net/missouri-journal-of-research-in-music-education/). We will continue to publicize the publication of new editions via email and social media.

We fully expect to continue to publish yearly in the future, and hope researchers will continue to support the *MJRME* by submitting manuscripts for consideration for publication, and by citing articles that appear in the journal to help increase visibility. You will find the Instructions to Contributors on the last page of this issue, and on the website. The free access should make this an attractive option for authors as well as readers.

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Perceived Marching Band Director Credibility and Student Affect as a Function of Directors' Music Arranging and Drill Writing Frequency

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In large music ensembles, such as marching bands, directors often teach self-created content. Many music educators recognize that teaching such content helps strengthen the rapport between directors and students, enhancing the learning process. However, empirical evidence is needed to validate this concept and support its impact on teaching effectiveness. This study was designed to examine the impact of marching band directors' drill writing and music arranging frequency on perceived director credibility and student affect. Participants (N = 165) were high school marching band students who read vignettes and responded to questionnaire items. Results indicated that participants rated directors who created at least some drill or music for their band more competent than directors who never created such content. Results also showed a significant positive correlation between student affect based on directors' drill writing and music arranging frequency. We recommend that directors maintain a readiness to create original content in order to reinforce authentic and meaningful connections with students. Additional recommendations, limitations to this study, and suggestions for continued research are also discussed.

   Effective music teachers align elements of musical learning to curricular content (Concina, 2015). In large instrumental ensembles, such as wind ensembles, symphony orchestras, and marching bands, elements of learning often come from the practical application of repertoire studied in rehearsals and performances (Rotjan, 2021). In fact, many wind ensemble and orchestra directors consider repertoire as the foremost source of curricular content (Reynolds, 2000). This perspective may be reflected in marching bands, where the curriculum

includes the distinct element of drill movements. It is through this lens that we will investigate the curriculum of high school marching bands: music arrangements and drill movements.

Music researchers have estimated that marching bands are one of the largest and most common types of instrumental ensembles in the United States, with many high schools offering marching bands as part of a comprehensive music program (Elpus & Abril, 2019; National Association for Music Education, 2023). Marching bands often perform field shows at football games and adjudicated contests (Davis, 2000). Field shows often contain a combination of drill movements (choreographed marching formations and physical movements) and music arrangements purchased from a publishing company or custom-designed by a band director or a professional consultant (Hewitt, 2000). Although mass-produced (i.e. stock) shows are cost-effective and can be quickly obtained from publishers, custom shows offer the potential to align more closely with a band's unique strengths, such as featuring standout musicians or skilled marchers.

Prior researchers have investigated band directors' creation of custom music and drill. In a survey of Ohio high school marching band directors, Williamson (2009) found that 85% of directors wrote drill for their band, but only 49.8% personally arranged music for their band. In a national survey of high school marching band directors, Hewitt (2000) reported that most directors had other professionals write drill and music for their bands, due to general time constraints and directors' limited skill sets. Consequently, in a study of experienced high school band directors, Williamson (2009) suggested that more thorough training in drill writing and music arranging skills was needed in university music teacher preparation programs. These findings have been supported by other researchers who have found that in-service marching band directors had inadequate training in these areas (Ammann, 1989; Smith, 1985; Tracz, 1987; Williamson, 2009). These training limitations emphasize a significant gap between university preparation programs and the practical demands of teaching, particularly in the creation of musical content.

Teacher-created content, defined by Fitria (2022) as content that is "compiled, reconstructed, or designed by the teachers" (p. 123), has been researched in music education, such as elementary general music lessons (Bernhard, 2004; McAnally, 2011) and high school concert band warm-up routines (Ward & Hancock, 2016), but the impact of such content specifically in marching bands has not been studied extensively. In a related study of elementary music teachers' beliefs about their classroom teaching environments, Bernard (2004) found that music teachers believed that they gained credibility with students when they demonstrated an ability to create and perform music. Marching band students may similarly value band directors who write drill or arrange music. More research in this area is needed. Therefore, we will examine

marching bands and the impact of director-created content on two important instructional outcomes: teacher credibility and student affect.

Teacher Credibility

Teacher credibility enhances teacher effectiveness and plays a meaningful role in facilitating student learning (Finn et al., 2009; Ramos et al., 2019). In a study of university communication course instructors, Myers (2001) suggested that teacher credibility was an essential factor in positive teacher-student relationships. Education researchers have written that credible teachers facilitate students' cognitive learning and strongly influence the creation of understanding (Pogue & Ah Yun, 2006). Taken together, these findings support the notion that teachers who are more credible increase the chances of student learning.

Research centered on teacher credibility is based on source credibility theory (Hovland et al., 1953), which postulates that credibility is subjective and in the eye of the beholder. Credibility is based on three dimensions: (a) competence, (b) trustworthiness, and (c) caring (McCroskey & Young, 1981; Teven & McCroskey, 1997). Competence is based on an instructor's perceived knowledge or expertise in a subject matter (McCroskey, 1998), trustworthiness refers to the ''goodness'' (i.e., honesty and character) of an instructor (Frymier & Thompson, 1992), and caring focuses on whether an instructor expresses concern about students' welfare (McCroskey, 1998). Collectively, this research indicates that many factors can influence students' perceptions of teacher credibility, and these factors may change depending on the context.

Teacher credibility has been studied in a variety of educational settings. In a study of university early childhood education majors, Froment and Gutiérrez (2022) reported positive relationships between teacher credibility and student engagement, satisfaction, and motivation. Similar results have been reported in high school physical education programs (Ramos & McCullick, 2015), English language classes (Fernandes, 2019), and university communication courses (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018; Thweatt & McCroskey, 1988). In a study of college students, Witt et al. (2014) found that perceptions of instructor credibility were positively associated with students' intent to persist in future class attendance in university courses. Hence, credible teachers may exert a tremendous amount of influence on students' affect.

Student Affect

Student affect has been defined as the "attitudes, interests, and values that students exhibit and acquire in school" (Popham, 2009, p. 85). Often related to teacher effectiveness (and interwoven with teacher credibility), student affect is mediated by student attitudes and emotions towards curricular content and

teachers (Andersen, 1979; McCroskey et al., 1985; Mottet & Beebe, 2006; Popham, 2009). Further, student affect is related to student appreciation and respect for the instructor (Mottet & Beebe, 2006). As Bolkan (2015) suggested, student affect "may be the central mediator linking teaching behaviors to students' reports of cognitive learning" (p. 503). Researchers have shown that positive student affect is empirically linked to intellectual stimulation (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2010), intrinsic motivation (Goodboy & Bolkan, 2009; Zhang & Oetzel, 2006), and creative problem solving (Isen et al., 1987; Pekrun et al., 2009). Conversely, negative affect can lead to boredom (Muldner et al., 2015; Pekrun et al., 2010), reduced motivation (Goodboy et al., 2010), and an increase in off-task behaviors (Baker et al., 2010).

Positive and negative affect are influenced by the actions and behaviors of teachers. Positive teacher behaviors, such as dynamic instruction (Banfield et al., 2006), caring about students (Teven, 2007), and competency (Martin & Valencic, 2001), can lead to positive student affect toward the teacher and the class, whereas negative teacher behaviors such as low knowledge of subject matter (Banfield et al., 2006) and unpreparedness (Alkurdi & Alghazo, 2021; Broeckelman-Post et al., 2016; Kearney et al., 1991), can lead to negative affect. Teven (2007) suggested that teachers maintain appropriate classroom behaviors to preserve credibility and positive student affect. Consequently, teachers may be viewed as competent and trustworthy, which would result in positive student affect for course content.

Need for Study

An extensive body of literature in general education has shown that teacher credibility can increase students' academic achievement (Burleson & Picard, 2004; Goleman, 1996) and continued class enrollment (Witt et al., 2014). Additionally, positive student affect has been linked to intellectual stimulation (Bolkan & Goodboy, 2010) and motivation (Goodboy & Bolkan, 2009). While many researchers in music education have examined topics related to credibility, such as teacher effectiveness (Brand, 2009), teacher magnitude (Yarbrough, 1975), pacing (Nápoles & Silveira, 2020; Silveira, 2014; Small, 1979), conductors' nonverbal behaviors (Byo, 1990; Cumberledge et al., 2021; Running, 2011; Silvey & Koerner, 2016), and expertise (Wieman, 2019), few researchers have directly investigated teacher credibility in music education as it relates to student affect, particularly in marching bands. Such research may be helpful for band directors seeking to employ the most effective teaching practices.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore possible relationships between students' perceptions of band director credibility and affective experiences in marching bands based on directors' frequency in creating curricular content. The following research questions were addressed:

- Does perceived director credibility (i.e., competence, trustworthiness, and caring) and students' affective experience (i.e., perceived director caring and general affect towards directors) in marching band depend on the type of curricular content (i.e., drill or music arrangements) created by the director?
- Does the frequency of director drill writing and music arranging activity interact to predict (a) perceived director credibility and (b) students' affective experience in marching band?

Method

Participants

Participants ($N = 165$) were students participating in two high school marching bands in the southern United States. The high schools were selected for inclusion through convenience sampling. One school had a competitive marching band program ($n = 80$) that often performed at competitive and adjudicated events. The director of the first of the two bands in this study had been employed for over ten years at that school and was considered in the community as "successful." Similar to other researchers that investigated superior characteristics of band directors (Juchniewicz et al., 2014), we defined a successful band director as a person who had led a band program to regular superior ratings at concert band assessments, prepared students to actively participate in solo and ensemble assessments, and established a positive band culture over many years. The other school band ($n = 85$) primarily performed non-competitive halftime shows during football games. The director of the second band included in this study had been employed for over 30 years at that school and was considered in the community as "successful." Both band programs had approximately 100 students enrolled. Director involvement with content creation was varied. The band directors at the two schools did not write all the drill for their bands, however, one director did arrange some of the music and another wrote some of the drill. The institutional review board at the host institution of the study granted research approval.

Participant responses were anonymous; student names were not collected, and no identifiable data could be traced back to the high schools. Data was collected following marching band season in January. Participants identified themselves as senior ($n = 63$, 38.2%), junior ($n = 42$, 25.5%), sophomore ($n = 23$, 13.9%), and freshman ($n = 37$, 22.4%) students. The divisions of respondents by gender identity were male ($n = 90$, 54.5%), female ($n = 64$, 38.8%), non-binary ($n = 6$, 3.6%), and genderfluid ($n = 1$, 0.6%). Four participants chose not to provide their gender identity. When categorizing race/ethnicity, respondents who indicated more than one race/ethnicity were identified by a multiracial category to acknowledge their perspectives as opposed to those from a single racial/ethnic

background. Resulting breakdowns of race/ethnicity were as follows: Asian ($n = 3$, 1.8%), Black or African American ($n = 3$, 1.8%), Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish ($n = 5$, 3%), White ($n = 141$, 85.4%), Multiracial ($n = 12$, 7.2%), and Other ($n = 1$, 0.6%).

Participant data were included in the study only when a specific criterion was met: participants had to have been a member of their high school marching band. Final data analysis included participants who responded yes ($N = 165$). One student who completed the questionnaire indicated they did not participate in their marching band and their data were not included in the analysis.

Questionnaire

Data were collected via a paper questionnaire that was divided into three sections: (a) demographic questions, (b) director credibility measures, and (c) student affect measures (see Appendix A). The questionnaire was distributed by the primary researcher to prospective participants during regularly scheduled band rehearsals. Part 1 of the questionnaire contained several questions that were primarily designed to collect self-reported demographic data, including gender identity, race/ethnicity, year in school, and marching band experience.

Vignettes

Following the completion of questions designed to collect demographic data, participants read a brief hypothetical scenario about a high school marching band program. Construction of the scenario followed vignettes used by previous researchers (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018), with a modification to alter the band director's music arranging and drill writing skills in each vignette. A vignette is a brief description of a situation that includes important factors, often about judgment-making processes of individuals, to which research participants respond (Alexander & Becker, 1978). Hughes and Huby (2002) wrote that vignettes can be very useful research tools yielding valuable data when studying people's attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs. Additionally, Atzmüller and Steiner (2010) stated that vignettes can be used in experimental studies by systematically varying the levels of theoretically important characteristics. Researchers that have employed vignettes in this manner have reported consistent reliability and validity (Bellizzi, 1995; Guhde, 2011; Laczniak et al., 1981; Ledbetter & Finn, 2018; Mengüç, 1998; Ohan et al., 2011; Schrodt & Witt, 2006; Witt & Schrodt, 2006). This extensive research lineage lends credence to the use of vignettes in our study.

Skilling and Stylianides (2020) drew upon this line of vignette research and proposed a vignette framework with three key elements: conception, design, and administration. We adhered to these key elements in our own methodology. Our study employed a 3 (Drill Writing: *never*, *occasionally*, and *frequently*) X 3 (Music Arranging: *never*, *occasionally*, and *frequently*) between-subjects design,

with random participant assignment to each of the nine resulting conditions. The condition labels (*never*, *occasionally*, and *frequently*) were chosen for inclusion based on established precedence by prior researchers (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). Across all conditions, the scenario began as follows:

> *You are a member of a high school marching band directed by a male band director. On the first day of class, while covering the band handbook, the director informs you about the music and drill for the season.*

The instructor's gender was kept consistent because previous research using similar methodologies (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018; Turman & Schrodt, 2005) found no significant effects of these variables on student outcomes. In line with the approach of Ledbetter and Finn (2018), our study featured a male director, as previous studies have shown no substantial influence of instructor gender on the results, making this choice consistent with established practices in the field. Through these choices, we also wished to control for gender and racial bias. The next sentence performed the marching band drill frequency vignette alteration:

> *Drill—Never: "He explains that he never writes marching band drill, instead he hires someone else to write drill for the band."*
> *Drill—Occasionally: "He explains that he occasionally writes some of the drill for the band."*
> *Drill—Frequently: "He explains that he frequently writes marching band drill for the band."*

The final sentence then included the music arrangement frequency alteration:

> *Music Arrangements—Never: "Additionally, the band director indicates he never writes his own music arrangements and that all of the music for the band is purchased from stores or written by someone else."*
> *Music Arrangements—Occasionally: "Additionally, the band director indicates he occasionally writes his own music arrangements and that some of the music for the band is purchased from stores."*
> *Music Arrangements—Frequently: "Additionally, the band director indicates he frequently writes his own music arrangements and that little of the music for the band is purchased from stores."*

Immediately after reading the scenario, participants completed two alteration check items. To evaluate the effectiveness of the drill vignette alterations, participants responded to the question "How frequently would this instructor write his own drill for the marching band?" on a 5-point Likert-type scale (0 = *Never*,

5 = *Very Frequently*). A two-tailed ANOVA demonstrated that this alteration check item differed across drill conditions, $F(2,162) = 317.96$, $p < .01$, $\eta2 = 0.33$. Tukey post-hoc tests indicated that all three conditions significantly differed from each other, with perceived drill writing increasing across each condition (Never, $M = 1.31$, $SD = 0.67$; Occasionally $M = 3.08$, $SD = 0.68$; Frequently, $M = 3.98$, $SD = 0.24$). Thus, the marching band drill vignette alteration appeared to be successful.

A second check evaluated the music arrangement alterations. Participants responded using the same 5-point Likert-type scale used for the drill alteration check. When evaluating how often the director would arrange music for the band, a one-tailed one-way ANOVA revealed a significant effect, $F(2,162) = 91.91$, $p < .01$, $\eta2 = 0.55$. According to Tukey post-hoc testing, all three conditions significantly differed from each other, with perceived music arranging increasing across each condition (Never, $M = 1.23$, $SD = 0.85$; Occasionally $M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.60$; Frequently, $M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.76$). The music vignette alteration appeared to be successful.

Director Credibility Measures

After reading the vignettes, participants indicated their perceived credibility for the band director using the 18-item Source Credibility Measure (SCM) developed by McCroskey and Teven (1999) and the Perceived Caring Scale (PCS) designed by Teven and McCroskey (1997). Justification for inclusion of the credibility measures is based on a definition of the three dimensions of credibility by McCroskey and Young (1981): competence, trustworthiness, and caring. We selected the SCM to measure the first two dimensions, while the third dimension caring was measured through the PCS. An extended rationale for measuring director credibility is contained later in the Limitations section of this manuscript.

Responses for the SCM were solicited using a 7-point semantic differential scale that contained bipolar adjectives. Six items assessed perceived director competence (e.g., "Intelligent/Unintelligent"), director goodwill (e.g., "Insensitive/Sensitive"), and director trustworthiness (e.g., "Honest/Dishonest"). Prior researchers have shown that these director characteristics, such as goodwill, honesty, sensitivity, etc., are related and interwoven with student affect (McCroskey et al., 1985; Mottet & Beebe, 2006; Popham, 2009). Following the practice of Finn et al. (2009) and Ledbetter and Finn (2018), all three categories were treated as separate rather than collapsing them into one scale. All three categories exhibited acceptable estimates of internal reliability as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha (competence = .86, goodwill = .82, trustworthiness = .85). These levels of internal reliability have been deemed acceptable and fit for purpose in education studies (Taber, 2018).

The PCS employed a semantic differential measure that assessed perceptions of caring (e.g., "Has my interest at heart/Doesn't have my interests at heart"). For methodological brevity, the PCS was utilized as a one-dimensional scale that measured perceived caring, a practice that aligned with Ledbetter and Finn (2018). The reliability of the PCS construct was .87, resulting in a score that is considered a good to excellent level of reliability (George & Mallery, 2003).

Student Affect Measure

Participants reported their perceived affect after reading the marching band scenario through a modified version of McCroskey's (1994) Affective Learning Measure (ALM). The ALM is a 16-item instrument that measures participants' affect towards learning and towards the teacher. In the present study, 8 items were used to measure students' affect towards the instructor. This measure consisted of four bipolar, seven-step items directed toward participants' general attitude toward the teacher and four bipolar, seven-step items directed toward students' willingness to take a course with this teacher. This two-factor measure evaluating the teacher was analyzed both separately and as a combined, overall affect score. Previous reliability coefficients ranged from .89 to .98 (Frymier, 1994; Kearney, 1994; McCroskey et al., 1996; Richmond, 1990; Sidelinger & McCroskey, 1997). In this study, the alpha reliability for the combined measure was .92.

Content Validity

To establish content validity, two experts (a college music education professor and a college band director) ensured the structure and usability of the measurement scales in the local context. The experts were tasked with determining if the questionnaire items contained a good representation of the targeted content and was appropriate for the chosen population. The content validity check resulted in a minor change in the questionnaire instructions. Further validity was conceptualized through drawing upon a wide-ranging list of extant literature with similar methodologies (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018; Sheringham et al., 2021; Turman & Schrodt, 2005). As written by Erfanian et al. (2020), vignettes methodologies can provide supplementary and complementary data during a research process. Using this technique, researchers can collect data which is not accessible through other sources. In the present study, the vignettes were complementary to the director credibility and student affect measures. Finally, a pilot study was conducted with undergraduate music majors ($N = 5$). Results of the pilot test indicated that the questionnaire could be completed in less than 10 minutes with no need for further adjustments.

Data Analysis

Participants were high school students enrolled in two different high schools. Results of an independent-samples t test revealed that participant responses from each of the two schools did not differ significantly from each other in a random sample of five question categories ($p > .05$), so all responses were combined together ($N = 165$) for data analysis.

In line with previous researchers, we contemplated adopting Witt and Schrodt's (2006) data analytic approach by employing ANOVAs to test the study hypotheses. However, ANOVA assumes that predictor variables are categorical. Since the vignette alterations in our study were ordinal (i.e., representing increasing frequency across conditions) we opted to use linear regression to accommodate the ordinal alterations in the questionnaire (Cohen et al., 2003). This choice of data analysis followed the practice of Ledbetter and Finn (2018). Two contrast codes were created for each alteration before being input into the regression model, with one contrast code representing the linear effect and the other representing the curvilinear effect. We chose to use both means of relationship analysis in order to maximize exploration of possible complex interactions. More specifically, the linear effects of the drill writing and music arrangement vignette alterations were coded as −1, 0, and +1 and the curvilinear effects were coded as -1, +1, -1 (for the never, occasionally, and frequently conditions, respectively). The interaction between the two conditions was represented through four product terms that crossed the linear and curvilinear components of the interaction (i.e., $Music_{linear} \times Drill_{linear}$, $Music_{linear} \times Drill_{curvilinear}$, $Music_{curvilinear} \times Drill_{linear}$, $Music_{curvilinear} \times Drill_{curvilinear}$).

Results

Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and Pearson product-moment correlations for all variables included in the study, appear in Table 1. At the outset of this study, we hypothesized that director drill writing and music arranging frequency may or may not predict students' perceptions of credibility and affect. Thus, we tested for both linear and curvilinear effects.

Table 2 summarizes the data analyses across the six outcomes of interest. For the outcome variable of credibility, drill and music conditions emerged as significant positive indicators. Thus, in our vignettes, when it was indicated that directors would write their own drill and arrange their own music frequently, students perceived the director as competent and anticipated positive affect for the course. Further analyses revealed a complex effect for the credibility dimensions of director goodwill and caring, with the linear effect of drill significantly moderating the linear effect of music across both dimensions. Analysis of affect revealed that the linear and curvilinear effects of the drill condition were significant predictors of anticipated student affect for the course.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations Among Variables (N = 165)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Drill Condition, linear	-0.06	0.82	--								
Drill Condition, curvilinear	-0.36	0.93	0.05	--							
Music Condition, linear	0.03	0.81	-0.01	0.01	--						
Music Condition, curvilinear	-0.33	0.94	0.02	-0.01	-0.03	--					
Credibility: Competence	5.09	1.06	0.26**	0.10	0.16*	-0.01	--				
Credibility: Goodwill	4.49	0.96	0.10	0.07	-0.06	0.03	0.63**	--			
Credibility: Trustworthiness	4.68	1.00	0.09	0.08	-0.01	0.06	0.63**	0.67**	--		
Perceived Caring	4.47	0.94	0.10	0.07	-0.05	0.09	0.66**	0.96**	0.70**	--	
Affect: Director	4.94	1.22	0.17**	0.14*	0.08	0.02	0.76**	0.75**	0.73**	0.78**	--
Affect: Course	5.15	1.48	0.22**	0.19**	0.02	0.07	0.60**	0.57**	0.60**	0.57**	0.66**

Note. One asterisk denotes significance at the $p = <.05$ level. Two asterisks denote significance at the $p = <.01$ level.

Table 2

Summary of Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Teacher Credibility, Perceived Caring, and Affective Experience

Predictors	Cred. Competence B (β)	Cred. Goodwill B (β)	Cred. Trust B (β)	Perceived Caring B (β)	Affect Director B (β)	Affect Course B (β)
Drill: Linear	0.31(.24)**	0.06(.05)	0.11(.09)	0.06(.05)	0.21(-.14)	0.33(.18)*
Drill: Curvilinear	0.07(.06)	0.06(.06)	0.10(.09)	0.05(.05)	0.14(.11)	0.29(.18)*
Music: Linear	0.20(.15)*	-0.08(-.07)	-0.05(-.04)	-0.08(-.07)	0.12(-.08)	0.04(.02)
Music: Curvilinear	-0.05(-.04)	0.02(.02)	0.08(.07)	0.07(.07)	0.01(.01)	0.11(.07)
Drill: Linear X Music: Linear	-0.18(-.11)	-0.32(-.23)**	-0.21(-.14)	-0.32(-.23)**	-0.25(-.14)	-0.04(-.02)
Drill: Linear X Music: Curv.	-0.08(-.06)	-0.15(-.13)	0.01(.01)	-0.16(-.14)	-0.14(-.10)	-0.13(-.07)
Drill: Curv. X Music: Linear	0.01(.01)	0.03(.03)	-0.09(-.07)	-0.01(.01)	0.03(.02)	0.01(.01)
Drill: Curv. X Music: Curv.	-0.07(-.06)	0.01(.01)	0.04(.04)	-0.02(.02)	-0.05(-.04)	0.01(.01)
Variance Explained	$R^2 = .13$**	$R^2 = .08$	$R^2 = .04$	$R^2 = .09$*	$R^2 = .08$	$R^2 = .09$*

Note. One asterisk denotes significance at the $p = <.05$ level. Two asterisks denote significance at the $p = <.01$ level.

Figures 1–4 present a visualization of the significant interaction effects. In the "never" drill condition, participants rated perceptions of director competence lower than participants in the "frequently" condition, regardless of the director's level of music arranging. When vignette language indicated that directors would write drill occasionally, music condition influenced participants' judgements of competence, such that overall competence increased with more frequent drill writing. Judgments of director competence were lowest when vignette language indicated that directors never wrote their own drill or arranged their own music.

Figure 1

Interactions Between Drill and Music Conditions as Predictors of Director Competence
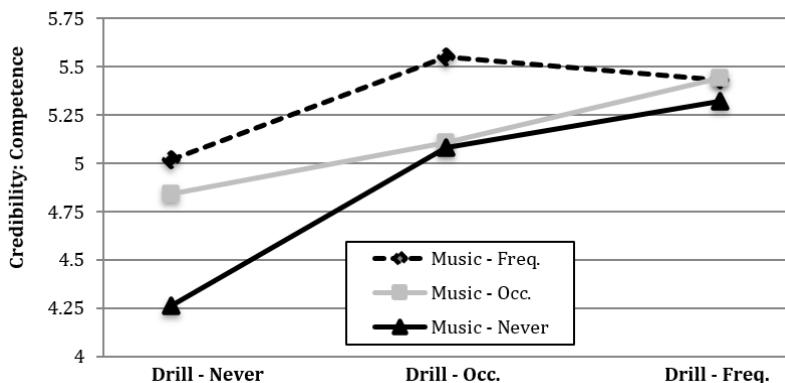
Note. As drill frequency increased in the vignettes, students' perceptions of director competence increased, with the exception of the "frequent" music arranging condition.

Figure 2

Interactions Between Drill and Music Conditions as Predictors of Director Goodwill
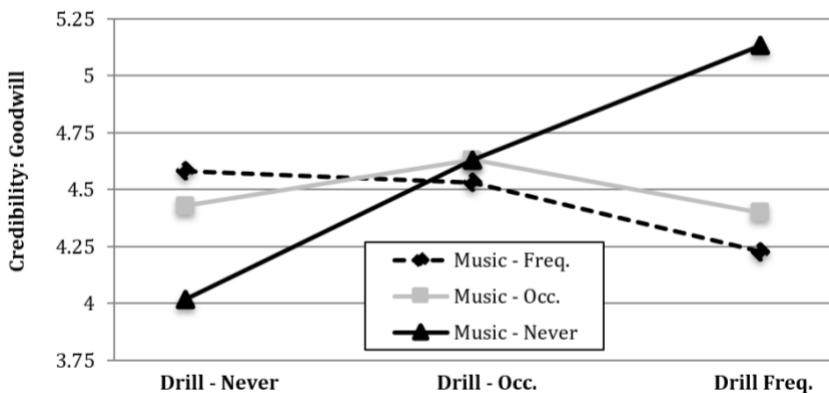
Note. A linear effect for the Credibility dimension of Goodwill occurred for the "never" music condition as drill writing frequency increased.

Analysis of the credibility outcomes for goodwill and caring yielded patterns similar to each other, as perceptions for both outcomes were particularly low when vignette language stated that directors would never write drill and never arrange music. However, as drill writing frequency increased, perceptions of both dimensions slightly decreased for the music "occasionally" and "frequently" conditions, while perceptions significantly increased for the music "never" conduction. Thus, a linear effect occurred for the "never" music condition as drill writing increased.

Finally, for the outcome of anticipated student affect for the course (i.e., marching band), a curvilinear effect emerged, such that affect was highest in the drill "occasionally" condition. Similar to the other analyses, perceptions for the outcome of affect were exceptionally low when vignette statements indicated that directors did not write drill, regardless of music arrangement frequency. Results also showed a significant positive correlation between student affect and drill and music frequency. It appears that ratings of student affect increased as directors' creation of drill and music increased in the vignette statements.

Figure 3

Interactions Between Drill and Music Conditions as Predictors of Affect for Course
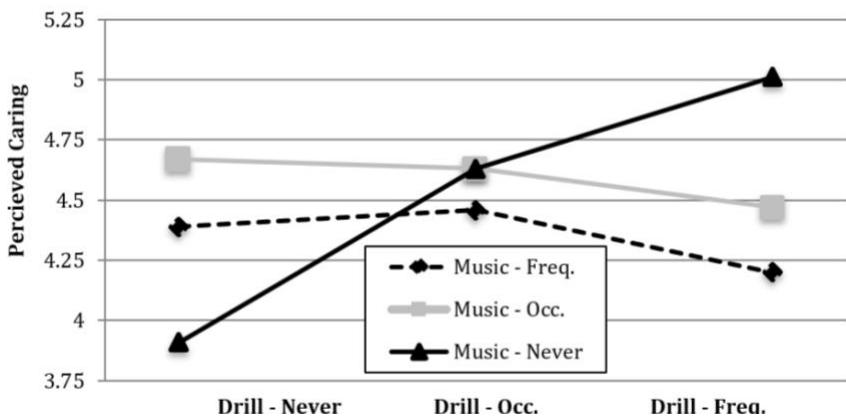
Note. A linear effect for the dimension of Perceived Caring occurred for the "never" music condition as drill writing frequency increased. Regarding Credibility, Perceived Caring is a related but separate construct.

Figure 4

Interactions Between Drill and Music Conditions as Predictors of Affect for Course
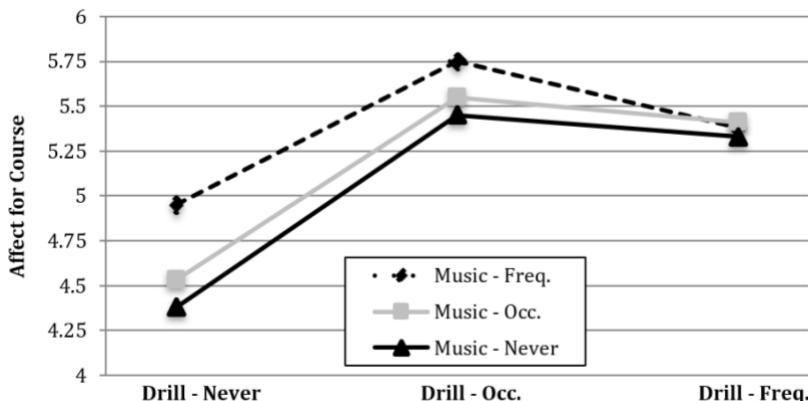
Note. Students' perceptions for course affect were lowest when directors did not write drill, regardless of music arrangement frequency in the vignettes.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine students' perceptions of band director credibility and affective experiences in marching bands. The research questions guiding this investigation sought to examine the impact of directors' drill writing and music arranging frequency (or lack thereof) on perceived credibility, perceived caring, and students' affective experience. Specifically, we examined directors' drill writing and music arranging frequency through alterations across vignettes experimentally assigned to participants. Results indicated a linear effect for the competence dimension of director credibility when the conditions of drill writing and music arranging were minimal or absent. In contrast, frequent occurrences of both conditions yielded high evaluations of director credibility.

We believe that the measures of competence, trustworthiness, and caring are directly related to the director-student relationship in marching bands, where such groups spend hundreds of hours together each season. First, directors who write their own drill may be regarded as competent. Certainly, the quality of the drill is an important variable that can be investigated in future studies. Additionally, directors who teach their own drill may command trust, build rapport, and strengthen group affect by teaching content that is self-created. Finally, directors may demonstrate that they care about their band through the time investment needed to create original content. We do not suggest that directors who do not write drill are not competent or that they do not care about their band program. Band directors' time can often be taken up by other teaching and administrative tasks that can sometimes make content creation impossible.

While our study does provide empirical support for the benefits of directors writing their own content, we caution that high school students may or may not have developed an appreciation for drill or music writing based on their band experiences or be aware of whether their band director writes drill or music for their band. Thus, the participants in our study may have a less clearly defined reference point when it comes to band directors who write their own drill or arrange their own music compared to the presentation and communication techniques of instructors in a related study (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). In that prior study, the participants were likely exposed to more specific examples of instructors' use of communication techniques, which would have provided a clearer benchmark or reference for evaluating the role and impact of the instructors. However, in our study, there is a greater degree of variability in how participants perceive or interact with directors who write their own drill or music, leading to a less standardized frame of reference. We suggest that band directors

should be aware of these variances of student focus regarding marching band show design.

Given the essential role that show design plays in successful marching band instruction, it is important to address the gap in training that may face band directors. We recommend that music teacher educators include opportunities for preservice music teachers to develop proficient drill writing and music arranging skills, particularly when such skills may be key to increasing credibility among students. This recommendation aligns with the findings of previous researchers who discovered that in-service marching band directors lacked training in show design (Ammann, 1989; Smith, 1985; Tracz, 1987; Williamson, 2009). Such opportunities can include curricular units in marching band methods classes, semester-long drill writing courses, or directed individual studies with university marching band directors.

According to extant research, teacher credibility enhances teacher effectiveness and plays a meaningful role in facilitating student learning (Ramos et al., 2019). Researchers have stated that credible teachers facilitate students' cognitive learning and strongly influence the creation of understanding (Finn et al., 2009; Pogue & Ah Yun, 2006). Additionally, band directors who create such content for students are developing a teacher identity that fosters student learning and growth in band programs. Developing a teacher identity is important, particularly for novice teachers (Ballantyne et al., 2012). If writing drill and music can increase directors' perceived credibility, then that in turn, may aid the development of self-efficacy.

Prior researchers have reported that high perceived teacher credibility may positively influence student retention rates in general education classes. Witt et al. (2014) found that college students' intent to persist in a communication course was positively related to perceptions of teacher credibility. As such, we postulate that high credibility scores of band directors may be reflected in high retention and persistence rates among students. If so, band programs would be well-served to have directors that create original drill and music arrangements for their marching bands. Additionally, band directors can engage students through the creation of original warmup routines and reflection activities, which can foster credibility beyond drill writing or arranging music.

The final outcome studied in our research was student affect. A positive correlation was found between students' affect towards the director and marching band based on drill writing and music arranging frequency. Affect was rated lowest when directors never wrote drill or music and rated higher as drill writing and music arranging increased. This finding aligns with previous research that found student affect was related to students' appreciation and respect for the instructor and the knowledge that they are acquiring (Mottet & Beebe, 2006). It seems that participants in our study held appreciation and respect for directors

who created their own drill and music arrangements. While writing drill or arranging music for an entire show may not be feasible, it is recommended that band directors write at least some drill and/or music for their marching band. Similar to the effects of general teacher credibility, students who experience high affect in band may be more likely to continue participation (Cownie, 2019; Markle & O'Banion, 2014).

Limitations and Suggestions for Continued Research

There were several limitations in our study. Results were based on perceptions, which could differ from actual lived experiences. Our study served as an initial foray into this topic. Future research could move beyond a vignette scenario and be designed to explore real world situations. One of the limitations of this study is the caution required when generalizing the findings due to the small sample size and the lack of randomization, which stem from the use of convenience sampling. Because participants were not randomly selected, there is a significant risk that the sample may not be representative of the broader population being studied. Further, the understanding of what it means for a band director to be both a drill writer and music arranger may be more fluid and less consistent across participants, which could have impacted how they interpreted or evaluated the influence of the directors. The ambiguity surrounding students' awareness of teaching methods in band programs may be addressed in future studies.

We did not include performance quality as part of the vignette language. Further research could include expanded vignettes that reference the band's performance quality as a result of the amount of content created by the band director. Although high school students might not accurately predict the factors that ultimately influence their affect and perceptions of band directors, it is helpful to gain an understanding of students' thoughts. One strength of our study was an experimental design that provided inferences of causation through vignettes, as interpreted by the research participants. However, the data were collected at only one point in time, whereas perceptions of directors may develop and change over time (Christophel & Gorham, 1995; Ledbetter & Finn, 2018). Other methodological approaches, such as qualitative interviews, focus groups, or ethnographic observations, could further develop an understanding of this topic. A mixed-method approach could enhance the robustness of this line of research through qualitative exploration.

We did not alter director gender or race based upon research with similar methodology that showed null results in regard to those variables (Ledbetter & Finn, 2018; Turman & Schrodt, 2005), especially given how it would complicate the data analysis. We also wished to control for gender and racial bias.

Researchers may want to include additional demographic variables in data analysis for directors and participants, such as gender identity and race/ethnicity.

We investigated perceptions of directors who wrote drill and music specifically for their own band. We do not intend readers to assume that band directors who do not create content are poor teachers. Instead, we posit that directors who do have the means, both in time and economic affordability, to create content are doing so with the likelihood of making a positive contribution to their band program. Perhaps writing drill and music for other bands, and simply demonstrating those skills in general, would be enough to garner positive ratings for the outcomes in question. Band directors can increase student affect and their own credibility by building strong, supportive relationships, and fostering a positive and inclusive environment. Additionally, setting high expectations, selecting meaningful music that connects with students, and maintaining clear communication may contribute to greater student engagement and director credibility. The importance of teacher credibility is well documented (Frymier & Thompson, 1992) and our study provides direct examples of how marching band directors can build credibility and increase student affect. Continued research centered on teacher credibility and student affect is needed.

Summary

The findings of this study show that marching band directors who create content for their own bands, whether drill or music arrangements, were rated more competent than directors who never write drill or music by high school band students considering hypothetical vignettes. Teacher competency is a key aspect of teacher credibility, which is an important variable affecting student learning, student engagement, and motivation. Additionally, when marching band directors write drill and arrange music frequently, students rate their affective experience positively. As such, competent directors should be well-versed in the creation of content for field shows through a foundation of adequate training in university music education programs. We contend that directors who maintain a readiness to write original drill and custom music arrangements are making themselves credible and are creating authentic and meaningful connections with students. Through the creation of field show content, marching band directors can be perceived as credible while also increasing the overall affective experience for their students.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire Copy

Section 1

1. What is your gender identity?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your race/ethnicity? (Select all that apply)
   - a. White
   - b. Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
   - c. Black or African American
   - d. Asian
   - e. Native American
   - f. Middle Eastern or North African
   - g. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
   - h. Other: _____

4. What is your year in school? (Please circle)
Freshman   Sophomore   Junior   Senior

5. DO you currently or have you EVER participated in your school's marching band?
Yes   No

Section 2
You are a member of a high school marching band directed by a male band director. On the first day of class, while covering the band handbook, the director informs you about the music and drill for the season.

He explains that he never writes marching band drill, instead he hires someone else to write drill for the band. Additionally, the band director indicates he never writes his own music arrangements and that all of the music for the band is purchased from stores or written by someone else.

Directions: Please answer the following questions based upon the information above:

6. How frequently would this band director write drill for the marching band?
         1   2   3   4   5
      Never   Rarely   Occasionally   Frequently   Very Frequently

7. How frequently would this band director arrange music for the marching band?
         1   2   3   4   5
      Never   Rarely   Occasionally   Frequently   Very Frequently

8. *Directions: Please indicate your impression of the band director described above by circling the appropriate number between the pairs of adjectives below. The closer the number is to an adjective, the more certain you are of your evaluation.*

<u>Competence</u>

Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unintelligent
Untrained	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Trained
Inexpert	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Expert
Informed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Uninformed
Incompetent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Competent
Smart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not Smart

<u>Goodwill</u>

Cares about me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Doesn't care about me
Has my interests at heart	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Doesn't have my interests at heart
Self-centered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not self-centered
Concerned with me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Unconcerned with me
Insensitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Sensitive
Not understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Understanding

<u>Trustworthiness</u>

Honest	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Dishonest
Untrustworthy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Trustworthy
Honorable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Dishonorable
Moral	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Immoral
Unethical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Ethical
Phony	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Genuine

<u>Perceived Caring</u>

Unresponsive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Responsive
Understands how I feel	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Doesn't understand how I feel
Doesn't understand how I think	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Understands how I think

Section 3

9. *Directions: Please indicate your impression of the band director described above by circling the appropriate number between the pairs of adjectives below. The closer the number is to an adjective, the more certain you are of your evaluation.*

My overall impression of the band director described above:

Bad	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Good
Valuable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Worthless
Unfair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Fair
Positive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Negative

Were I to have the opportunity, my likelihood of participating in marching band with the band director as described above would be:

Unlikely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Likely
Possible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Impossible
Improbable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Probable
Would	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Would not

Note: Some items within the Perceived Caring were also items that appeared in other measures. For brevity, they were not duplicated in the questionnaire.

An Exploratory History of Pride Marching Bands in the United States

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University of Nevada

This exploratory historical study investigated the origins and development of pride marching bands in the United States, focusing on their inclusion in Pride Parades throughout the United States. Marching bands have been a part of the American culture since the Revolutionary War. Pride Parades, in celebration of the LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning) community, have become popular events across the United States in recent years. Pride marching bands have become one integral component of those parades. This study traces the formation and development of 23 pride marching bands throughout the United States. As an exploratory effort, it seeks to highlight founding stories and community impacts rather than offer a comprehensive or exhaustive history. The findings are intended to inform and inspire individuals and communities interested in establishing pride marching bands in their own regions, while contributing to the broader understanding of LGBTQ+ cultural history.

Keywords: pride parade, pride band, gay, lesbian, transgender

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Bands have been a part of the American culture since the Revolutionary War (Hansen, 2005). Wind bands in America have a well-documented history and have taken on several forms, such as community bands, military bands, dance and jazz bands, and marching bands (Battisti, 2002; Cox & Stevens, 2010; Hansen, 2005; Leglar & Smith, 2010). Bands have served not only as a source of music education, but to also entertain attendees at civic and social events, eulogize the living and the dead, to inspire our nation's military troops, to instill patriotism in citizens both during times of war and peace, and to rally communities for social causes (Dale, 2018).

Pride parades, in celebration of the LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning) community, have become popular events across the United States in recent years (Bruce, 2016). Pride marching bands have become one innovative component of those parades, bringing excitement and energy to the festivities. Although many musicians participate in these ensembles in communities across the US, I could find no research addressing this

phenomenon in the music education or band literature. The findings of this study may be useful to music educators and other community members wishing to establish or conduct pride marching bands and to understand and support their members.

Background

This project actually originated with my quest to learn more about these bands, because I intended to create a youth pride marching band in Northern Nevada. My vision for this first arose after reading reports indicating the alarming trends among Nevada youth who identified with the LGBTQ+ community. The Nevada Current reported in 2024 that nearly 80% of LGBTQ+ students had reported discrimination at school (Lyle,2024). The Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network (GLSEN), in its 2021 Nevada School Climate survey, found that 95% of LGBTQ+ students continued to hear anti-LGBTQ+ remarks and 62% of LGBTQ+ students had experienced verbal harassment based upon their sexual orientation (GLSEN, 2021).

Data from the Nevada High School Youth Risk Behavior Surveys of 2019, 2021, and 2023 indicated additional trends among Nevada LGBTQ+. The 2019 survey indicated that 17.5 percent of LGBTQ+ students did not feel safe in Nevada public schools (YRBS, 2019). That number decreased only slightly to 8.6 percent in the 2021 report (YRBS, 2021) but increased to 9.6 percent in the 2023 report (YRBS, 2023). The percentages of LGBTQ+ students who have considered attempting suicide were larger - 38.9% in 2019 and 23.6% in 2021. The Trevor Project added that this number great to 44% in its 2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health - Nevada (Trevor, 2022).

Disturbing trends were also found when examining the challenges faced by adult members of the LGBTQ+ community. The Center for American Progress (2022) reported that adult members of the LGBTQ+ community experienced higher rates of discrimination than non-LGBTQ+ individuals. Fifty percent of those surveyed, including 70 percent of those identifying as transgender, indicated some form of discrimination or harassment at their workplace due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Seventy-eight percent of LGBTQ+ adults, including 90 percent of transgender respondents, disclosed that they had taken at least one action in order to avoid discrimination, including hiding relationships and changing their manner of dress. More than half expressed mental health issues and a general feeling of being unsafe, due in large part to the introduction of over 300 bills by various state lawmakers during this time period targeting the rights of LGBTQ+ people (Medina & Mahowald, 2022).

Recognizing the many issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community, specifically those of students of Washoe County who identified as LGBTQ+, I saw the need for some form of positive activity for students to become involved with to combat

being bullied, hopeless, feeling unsafe at school, or even of thinking about suicide. Providing support for LGBTQ youth is one of the most important actions that an educator can take (Delphin-Rittmon, 2022). Varner, (2017) found that membership in band provided an environment where students build their strongest support system as well as positive emotional support through their relationships with peers.

Considering the popularity of school marching bands in Northern Nevada, and the finding that students in marching band can find positive and lasting relationships through the common theme of acceptance and a feeling of belonging (Carver, 2019), developing a youth pride marching band was my ensemble of choice. Thus, the creation of the Northern Nevada Youth Pride Band was set in motion. Before proceeding, however, I felt it necessary to research pride marching bands in the United States, which lead to this research project.

Research Problem and Method

This study employed an exploratory historical approach to trace the formation and development of pride marching bands in the United States (Davies, 2006), in an effort to derive insights into the historical, cultural, and social factors that contributed to the emergence of these bands. The exploratory nature of the study allowed for a broad examination of how and why pride marching bands became and remain a part of LGBTQ+ community celebrations across the country. Specifically, four research questions guided this inquiry:

1. What is the history and status of pride marching bands?
2. How many pride marching bands are in existence and what was the motivation for their formation?
3. Are these pride bands limited to marching or do they take on other ensemble formats and activities?
4. What motivates members to join? Are they looking for social interaction and a sense of belonging or do they simply want to continue making music and advance their musical and intellectual skills in their adult life?

I began with an internet search for pride bands. I discovered that there were many pride bands in existence and most of them belong to a network known as the Pride Bands Alliance. This organization was founded in 1982 and was originally known as the Lesbian and Gay Bands of America (LGBA) and provided support for its member organizations through communications, conferences, and other LGBTQ+ events (Pride Bands Alliance, n.d.). LGBA also provides a roster of all of its current member bands and has contact information available. Contacts were made to representatives of all 31 pride bands listed through e-mail or direct phone communication attempts. Only a limited number of responses were

obtained. Thus, I expanded this research by searching news articles and other publications, such as OUT, The Advocate, LGBTQ Nation, and Gay Times.

In the sections that follow, documentation for the beginning of the pride parade movement is provided to give context for the establishment of pride bands Then, I provide information on 23 pride bands from which information was obtainable. These are presented chronologically according to the order of their dates of formation, beginning in 1978.

Beginning in the 1970s

The 1970s witnessed the start of the negative stigma surrounding the LGBTQ+ community. Decriminalization laws were passed in several cities and states. Openly gay politicians began being elected to public office. Homosexuality was removed from the American Psychiatric Association's list of psychiatric disorders. The decade also witnessed the rise of both anti-gay rights campaigns and national gay-rights marches (Barclay, et al, 2009).

The first Pride parade occurred on June 28, 1970, in New York City (Bruce, 2016). This event commemorated the first anniversary of the uprising at the Stonewall Inn, located in New York's Greenwich Village. In the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar and recreational tavern in Greenwich Village, arresting 13 people. News of the raid spread quickly and angry patrons, tired of police harassment and social discrimination, began congregating in protest. The riot grew rapidly and within minutes, several hundred protestors had assembled (History, 2017).

Prior to Stonewall, there had been incidents between the LGBTQ+ community and police at gay-friendly establishments. Among these were Dewey's Restaurant in Philadelphia (1956), Cooper's Donuts (1959), Black Night (1961) in Milwaukee, San Francisco's 1966 Compton's Cafeteria raid, and the Black Cat Tavern (1967) in Los Angeles (Pitman, 2019). Gay nightclubs and bars historically served as venues of social support for members of the LGBTQ+ community as they began navigating their identity formation, or in other words began to "come out" (McKirman & Peterson, 1989). These locations contributed to a disproportionate rate of substance abuse and high-risk sexual behaviors that frequently plagued the LGBTQ+ community (Cabaj, 2002; Pitman, 2019). The events at Stonewall served as the catalyst for a movement demanding freedom, respect, and equal justice under the law for the LGBTQ+ community. The gathering in New York City on June 28, 1970, served as a remembrance about the tragic events of one year prior, to honor those brave rioters, and to bring a unified mission of an awareness of the LGBTQ+ community to the nation (Carter, 2010; Pilkington, 2019).

In the years following the Stonewall incident, pride parades slowly began to appear across the country, with leaders insisting upon equality for the LBGTQ+

community. These parades evolved into a platform for political activism, serving to call attention to social injustices and other concerns of LGBTQ+ people as well as a celebration of lifestyle (Bruce, 2016). As they grew in number and popularity, pride parades expanded to not only celebrate the gay culture, but to also include straight people, businesses, and politicians who support and fight for the rights of LGBTQ+ citizens.

The San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band (1978)

The San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band was founded in 1978 by Jon Reed Sims. It was originally known as the San Francisco Gay Freedom Marching Band and Twirling Corps and was the first openly gay musical organization in the world (Fink, 2022). The band's inaugural performance occurred during the height the "Save the Children" anti-gay crusade led by celebrity singer Anita Bryant. Bryant felt that as a Christian, current pro-gay laws threatened her right to teach her children biblical morality. The "Save the Children" crusade was the first organized opposition campaign organized by Christian Fundamentalists to combat gay rights and sought to overturn Florida legislation banning discrimination in the areas of housing, public accommodations, and employment based upon sexual orientation (Fejes, 2008). The band took to Market Street and proudly marched behind Harvey Milk's convertible and rallied around his political success. Milk had become the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in the state of California (Cone, 1978). When political candidates and/or leaders in government demonstrate support for a cause, organizations tend to rally for change (Coley & Das, 2020; Johnston, 2011; McAdams, 1982). And it was from this moment that the San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Band became a strong advocate for lesbian/gay equality.

The band continued to appear at numerous rallies and other Pride events throughout the California Bay area as well as national events, including both Presidential Inaugurals of President Bill Clinton (sfprideband, 2008). McAdams (1982) noted that activist groups often rise in support of a given cause when they become convinced that their mobilization will succeed in the given political environment (Edwards & McCarthy, 2004; Johnston, 2011; McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Thus it was with the San Francisco Lesbian Gay Freedom Band, with the band continuing today to promote LGBTQ+ visibility and further the vision of founder Jon Sims who wrote that "our message is music" (Fink, 2022).

The Great American Yankee Freedom Gay Band (1978)

Another Pride Band, The Great American Yankee Freedom Gay Band of Los Angeles, was also founded in 1978. The band was created with the purpose of leading Los Angeles' annual Gay Pride Parade. In its beginning, the use of the phrase "Great American Yankee" allowed the band to perform at various events

without being recognized as an LGBTQ+ organization. However, as the drumhead of the bass drum passed by with the acronym "G-A-Y" printed vertically on it, the parade audience became fully aware that this was indeed an LGBTQ+ marching band (GBFLA, n.d.).

The Great American Yankee Freedom Gay Band continued to perform locally, nationally, and even internationally at various street fairs and for various community service organizations. It would later become known as the Gay Freedom Band of Los Angeles. At its peak membership, the band was invited to perform at the first Presidential Inauguration of Bill Clinton. In 2013, the band again changed its name to the current one: Gay Freedom Band of Los Angeles, following the formation of the non-profit Freedom Band Foundation of Los Angeles in 2002. The social interaction element of bands, in this case community bands, brings together individuals who are like-minded, creative, and socially active for the purpose of making music and finding an intimate group of comrades (Taylor, 2012). The Gay Freedom Band certainly strives to not only provide support for the musicians of the LGBTQ+ community, but also to provide quality live concerts for the public in promotion of acceptance (GBFLA, n.d.).

The Houston Pride Band (1978)

The Houston Pride Band was formed in 1978 under the original name of the Montrose Activity Center Band. Later in 1979, they changed their name to the Montrose Marching Band, Montrose being the local gay district (C. Foster, personal communication, July 3, 2024). The purpose of the band was to provide an opportunity for members of the LGBTQ+ community to make new friends as well as provide entertainment for Houston's gay and lesbian community. These social connections with other LGBTQ band members serve to provide a welcoming and safe place where musicians can inspire musical interest in a community band setting (Houston Pride Band, n.d.).

The band re-organized in 1981 and became the Montrose Symphonic Concert Band with regular rehearsals and performances. The band went through difficult times around 1982, losing several members due to the AIDS epidemic. From 1987-1995, the group was known as the Lone Star Symphonic Band and hosted the 1991 Lesbian Gay Band Alliance Conference. In 1995, the group adopted the name of Houston Pride Band and became a non-profit 501C3. Membership struggled through the second half of the 1990s, but around 2003 everything turned around. A 25th anniversary concert was held, and the group has grown exponentially since that time performing four concerts each year (C. Foster, personal communication, July 3, 2024).

The Queer Big Apple Corps Marching Band (1979)

The fourth pride band in the United States was the Lesbian and Gay Big Apple Corps of New York City, founded in 1979. Ten years had passed since the Stonewall riots, and Washington, D.C. was preparing for a national march. It was at this time that two gay musicians, Nancy Corporon and Bob Wolff, dreamed of creating a band much after the model of Jon Sims in San Francisco. They began in earnest to encourage musicians to dust off their dormant instruments and join their ranks. Their hard work paid off and one year later, the band became the first gay and lesbian bands to perform at Lincoln Center. Now known as the Queer Big Apple Corps Marching Band, the unit has grown to over 250 musicians, aides, and color guard members and was featured in the 2022 Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. The organization plans to provide quality musical performances both in parades and in the concert hall for decades to come (Pride Bands Alliance: The Queer Big Apple Corps, n.d.).

Into the 1980s

The 80s were a time of increasing activism for the LGBTQ+ community. The decade was defined by the AIDS crisis, an epidemic closely aligned with the gay community. Homophobia was on the rise with discrimination being felt in employment, social settings, housing, and health care. Far right political movements as well as religious ideologies took aim at LGBTQ+ rights. However, toward the end of the 80s, LGBTQ rights were beginning to gain traction on both the social and political fronts (Gayinthecle, 2024).

The Oak Lawn Band (1980)

The Oak Lawn Band began in the summer of 1980, as six gay men met to discuss the upcoming Dallas Pride Parade. This was a significant event for the Dallas area, as it was only the second Pride event to occur, the first parade having occurred in 1972, three years after the Stonewall Riots. As word of the band spread, the ensemble grew to approximately 40 musicians, eight color guard members, four baton twirlers, and two banner carriers (Oak Lawn Band, n.d.). The band became an official organization in 1981 with Steve Boykin serving as artistic director.

Since then, the Oak Lawn Band has made numerous performances throughout Texas and the United States. Notably, the ensemble performed at the Hollywood Bowl in 1984 and marched in the 1986 Gay Games in San Francisco. The Gay Games are the largest LGBTQ+ sporting event in the world and the ten-day event is held once every four years (Gay Games, n.d.). The band teamed up with the Houston Montrose Band (now the Houston Pride Band) for a performance in the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights

Parade in 1987. The band has since performed in numerous Pride parades and events not only in Texas but also in Oklahoma City and Kansas City. The Oak Lawn Symphonic Band continues to contribute to Dallas' community arts (Oak Lawn Band, n.d.).

The Twin Cities Pride Band (1982)

In Minnesota, during the 1982 Twin Cities Pride Parade, Tom Valach and several of his friends were walking the route when one of them observed that there was no marching band. In response to this, a recruitment ad was run by Tim Campbell, of the *GLC Voice* in an effort to determine local interest in forming a Pride marching band. As a result, almost a dozen people met at Tom Valach's apartment to organize a band committee and schedule a rehearsal date. The band's first concert was held on December 12, 1982, at Wiley Hall on the campus of the University of Minnesota (Hewetson, 2013). A year later, in 1983, the band led the Twin Cities Pride Festival Parade. Since that first performance, the band has thrived and has become an important historic part of Twin Cities Pride Parade. The band also performs for the annual Duluth and Mankato Pride Parades and has performed in three Presidential Inaugural Parades (Marching Band: Marching with Pride, n.d.).

The Portland Oregon Lesbian and Gay Community Band (1982)

Like the Twin Cities Pride Band, the Portland Oregon Lesbian and Gay Community Band was also formed in 1982. This was a difficult time in our nation's history as the LGBTQ+ community faced severe discrimination in response to the AIDS epidemic (Yuna, 2022) Members of the band proudly marched that year in Portland's Gay Pride Parade. In 1990, the ensemble changed its name to the Rose City Gay Freedom Band. The organization has expanded to include not only the Rose City Marching Band, but the Rose City Wind Symphony and the Rose City Swing Band. The Rose City Bands serves the Greater Portland area and performs for over 20,000 people annually and has become a major LGBTQ+ ally to the community (Rose City Pride Bands, n.d.).

The Mile High Freedom Band (1984)

In the mid-1980s, Robert Brown had the vision to create a band in the Denver area that could provide a musical venue for people of all backgrounds to create and perform music together. He also wanted a group that would educate the community on LGBTQ+ issues. In April 1984, he brought a group together under the name of the Denver Gay and Lesbian Community Band. A few months later, the band's name was changed to the Mile High Freedom Band. Since that time, the Mile High Freedom Band has served as an accepting ensemble of both LGBTQ+ musicians and allies. In recent years, the band has performed in support

of the Federation of Gay Games, at Presidential Inaugurations, and in 2018 performed at the Lesbian Gay Band Alliance Southwest Regional Conference. The Mile High Freedom Band has grown to approximately 250 members and presents over 40 performances each year, the Mile High Freedom Band continues to make a positive impact on the LGBTQ+ community and allies (Mile High Freedom Band, n.d.).

The Philadelphia Pride Band (1988)

Philadelphia Pride Band was formed in 1988. The band's reputation grew rapidly and both 1992 and 1996, the band made appearances in the Presidential Inaugural Parade. The band went dormant in 1997, largely due to the loss of several members during the AIDS epidemic (G. Scarborough, personal communication, June 26, 2024). The band resumed rehearsals in 2008 and has experienced consistent growth (G. Scarborough, personal communication, June 26, 2024). At present, the organization consists of a marching band of 30-50 members, a Concert Band of 70-90 members, and a Studio Jazz Band of 30 musicians.

The Philadelphia Pride marching Band has numerous performances during the months of June, September and November. They not only perform in Philadelphia Pride, but other Pride events in the surrounding area. During the fall, they also perform at various other community events, such as the Memorial Day Parade and the Thanksgiving Parade (G. Scarborough, personal communication, June 26, 2024)

The Rainbow City Band (1989)

Seeing the opportunity for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender musicians to have a 'safe space' in which to contribute to Seattle's community scene, Jo-Ann Christen and Scott Lewis formed the Rainbow City Band in 1989. The band began with 27 musicians, and that summer made its first performance in the Seattle Pride Parade. Following that performance, indoor rehearsals and performances were continued as the group decided to become a year-round ensemble where musicians could perform openly as members of the LGBTQ+ community. A color guard was added in 2009, and membership grew to between 60-70 members (D. Hall, personal communication, July 3, 2024). As the years progressed, the organization changed its name to the Rainbow City Performing Arts and added additional performing groups. In 2012, Seattle Reign, a professional Women's Soccer team was formed in Seattle. The Rainbow City band started playing at their matches around 2015. This group formed into Rainbow Riot - 70-member pep band designed to just play for Reign.

In 2019, the band's mission was modified to focus more on diversity and inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community; to bring awareness to these groups and to

provide them with exposure to the community. The marching band, concert band, and drum line became separate ensembles. Following COVID, membership in the ensembles has grown at a rapid rate to approximately 300 participants. The marching band has about 50 members, with drum line and color guard providing 25 members each. The Riot has 75 members, and the revived orchestra has 55. The jazz band has 18 members (D. Hall, personal communication, July 3, 2024).

The Rainbow City Performing Arts continues to provide a welcoming environment for LGBTQ+ musicians and allies. The bands strive to improve individual and ensemble performing skills through music that provides empowerment and represents the LGBTQ+ community in the greater Puget Sound area (Rainbow City Performing Arts, n.d.).

Through the 1990s

The 90s saw a major shift in attitude toward the LGBTQ+ community. Although still treated unequally, the realization that equal rights extended to the LGBTQ+ community began to take hold. Activism and gay-rights marches continued to increase. The policy "Don' Ask, Don't Tell" was instituted in the U.S. military, permitting members of the gay community to serve, but banned homosexual activity. The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) which was made law in 1996, defining marriage as only between one man and one woman. However, some states began passing laws to outlaw discrimination and recognizing same-sex couples (Howard University, 2023).

Rebrand: The Rose City Gay Freedom Bands (1990)

In 1990, the Portland Oregon Lesbian and Gay Community Band rebranded itself as the Rose City Gay Freedom Bands in an effort to become more equitable and inclusive. The group became a non-profit organization with the goal of bringing all members of a diverse community together to perform wind band literature. The organization now consists of a variety of separate ensembles that provide a place for LGBTQ+ musicians and friends to play, perform, and participate in Portland's musical community. These groups include the Rose City Pride Marching Band, the Rose City Wind Symphony, Rose City Swing, and a variety of miscellaneous small ensembles. The Rose City Pride Marching Band performs annually for over 20,000 people at a variety of community outreach events (Rose City Price Bands, n.d.).

The Atlanta Freedom Bands (1993)

During the Atlanta Gay and Lesbian Pride celebration in 1993, Walter L. "Buz" Carr observed that there was no marching band. He commented that "every parade should have a band" (Carr, 1994, p. 19) and set out to create a band that

would represent Atlanta's growing LGBTQ+ population. The Atlanta Freedom Marching Band was formed in 1994 and has since evolved into the Atlanta Freedom Bands, which includes the Concert Band, the MetroGnomes Stage Band, and the Color Guard. The band's founding values continue today, and include regular attendance, developing individual musicianship, valuing the individuality of all band personnel, having a good attitude, promoting social connections, and having a good time making music.

BandTogether (1997)

BandTogether of St. Louis, Missouri was founded in 1997 with the goal performing in the St. Louis Pride Parade that June. Its beginnings were humble, as it consisted of only 10 band members. The ensemble has since grown to include over 100 musicians and performers. BandTogether now exists as several ensembles, including a concert band (both wind and string instruments), a marching band for the annual Pride Parade, and a Color Guard (consisting of twirling batons, rifles, flags, and various types of visual equipment (Band Together, n.d.).

The Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles (1997)

The Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles of Chicago were founded in 1997. This organization is composed of four major ensembles: the Marching Band, the Symphonic Band, the Jazz Orchestra, and a Pops Ensemble. The Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles of Chicago provide the opportunity for adult musicians of any background, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender identification to express themselves through their love of music. The Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles serve to provide a variety of musical experiences not only for the LGBTQ+ community, but the City of Chicago as well (Lakeside Pride Music Ensembles, 2010).

Advances in the 2000s

The 2000s witnessed a rise in positive visibility for the LGBTQ+ community. The Defense of Marriage Act was ruled unconstitutional and Same-Sex marriages were proclaimed legal by the U.S. Supreme Court. More positive narratives were seen in the media as a result of both openly gay and straight actors, singers, and politicians celebrating the lifestyle of the LGBTQ+ community (*Medium,* 2025).

The Mid-America Freedom Band (2002)

The Mid-America Freedom Band of Kansas City, Missouri was formed and held its first rehearsal on April 18, 2002, at Kansas City's Lesbian and Gay Community Center with only four members. The vision for the formation of this

group occurred in 2001 when Alan Day and Zachary Parker discussed plans to form a senior Drum and Bugle Corps in the area. They later amended their plans to focus on a performance group that would serve Kansas City's Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Transgender, and Ally community. The band's first concert was held on November 15, 2003, under the leadership of Zachary Parker (Mid-America Freedom Band, n.d.). The group has since grown to just under 100 members and serves the Kansas City area through three ensembles: a marching band, a concert band, and a jazz ensemble (L. Hartman, personal communication, July 9, 2024).

The Columbus Pride Band (2003)

The 2003 Columbus, Ohio Pride Parade featured the addition of the Columbus Pride Band. This group began in 1999, when a solo trumpet player performed at the Ban-N-Rouge annual softball charity event sponsored by the Columbus Lesbian and Gay Softball Association. Joining ranks with the FDS Hygiene Cheerleaders, the trumpeter led the crowd in cheers including "Charge" and "Eat 'em Up." The following year, a 13-member pep band was formed to perform at the event. A big hit, the group had grown to a membership of over 25 by 2002 and began additional performances at various pep rallies held in local bars with the crowds joining together for a grand entrance into the stadium (Columbus Pride Bands, n.d.). In 2003, the group made the bold move to perform in the local Pride Parade. Since then, the band has grown to over 100 musicians and, in addition to the Pride Parade, the Columbus Pride Concert band presents two concerts a year (Columbus Pride Bands, n.d.).

The Blazing River Freedom Band (2003)

In September 2003, the Blazing River Freedom Band was formed in Cleveland, Ohio. Originally known as the Cleveland Lesbian/Gay/Allies Concert/Marching Band, the band had a small beginning with approximately 20 members (B. Speck, personal communication, June 25, 2024). The band's initial performances began in 2004 and included the Cleveland Pride Parade, other area Pride Parades, and local concerts. In March of 2007, the band was re-named the Blazing River Freedom Band. This name change was in reference to the story of the Cuyahoga River fire, which caught fire in June 1969, caused in part due to an oil slick from decades of industrial waste pollution (Rotman, 2023).

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the band resumed with under 20 members. By the end of 2022, the band had 30 members. 2023 marked the band's 20th celebration and again they rebranded, this time as the Cleveland Pride Band. Under this new name, the band started 2023 with 30 members and by the end of the year had grown to 75. Now entering its 22nd year, the band now has over 100 members and includes marching band, studio jazz band, and one concert band

with the expectation of adding a second concert band soon (Blazing River Freedom Band, n.d.).

The Pride of Indy (2005)

For years, there were no safe places in Indianapolis, Indiana for the LGBTQ+ community to congregate (Indy Pride, n.d.). However, as the decade of the 1980s progressed, local LGBTQ+ events began to "come out". Justice, Inc., a local service organization, began having 'public' events, starting with luncheons and banquets. The Greater Indianapolis Gay Business Association hosted a Labor Day Picnic in Westlake Park in 1982, drawing a crowd of over 500 people. In 1990, Justice, Inc. held the first Celebration on Monument Circle, an event that was open to the public. Drawing a crowd of over 3,000 people, this became the largest local event to date to be centered around the LGBTQ+ community (Conrad, 2022; Indy Pride, n.d.). In 2003, under the leadership of Gary Brackett, Indy Pride Inc. combined with the Celebration on Monument Circle and moved the entire celebration to University Park. In 2004, the first Pride Parade was held, lasting 15 minutes. The following year the "Pride of Indy" marching band was launched. By 2012, the parade had grown to an audience of over 80,000 (Indy Pride, n.d.).

The Charlotte Pride Band (2010)

The Charlotte, North Carolina Pride Band was founded in 2010 with the objective of promoting greater respect for the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people in the Charlotte metropolitan area. The Charlotte Pride Band provides musical performances through community events in both Charlotte and the surrounding metropolitan area. The band strives to provide an inviting environment for both LGBTQ+ musicians and allies regardless of their level of musicianship (Charlotte Pride Band, n.d.).

The Pride of San Antonio Showband (2013)

In the spring of 2013 in San Antonio, Texas, a group of LGBTQ+ musicians came together with the purpose of organizing a marching band that would appear in the 2014 San Antonio Pride Parade. The band was an outgrowth of another band already in existence, the Alamo City Marching Band. This group had been organized shortly after the September 11th attack on the United States with the purpose of performing traditional patriotic band selections (R. Echavarri, personal communication, July 8 2024). Word of the band's formation spread fast, and before long, there were between 40-50 members who wanted to perform. Those who expressed interest quickly adjusted their schedules and within a few weeks, the Pride of San Antonio Showband took to the streets performing one year ahead of schedule in the 2013 San Antonio Pride Parade (Pride of San Antonio Showband, n.d.).

As with most other Pride bands, the group collapsed during the COVID epidemic but was re-organized in late 2021. The band now holds regular rehearsals once a week and has grown to a consistent participation of 50-60 musicians. The band performs four concerts each year and participates in both the San Antonio Pride parade and the King William Parade - part of the San Antonio *Fiesta Celebration.* Most notably in 2024, the band teamed up with the Dallas Oaklawn band and had a Pride parade performance of 90 participants 68 musicians, 13 color guard and nine auxiliary volunteers (R. Echavarri, personal communication, July 8, 2024).

The Tampa Bay Pride Band (2014)

The Tampa Bay Pride Band started its rehearsals at the Honeypot, a local gay in 2014. The band's first performance was around the same time that Tampa Pride began organizing a Pride parade. They marched in the first Tampa Pride parade and expanded their performances to include the St. Pete Pride parade in St. Petersburg. They met with local musical colleagues and began advertising for membership. Over the next few years, rehearsals moved from the bar to a library, to a church, and finally to the Hillsborough Community College where it currently rehearses. The band organized an official band board, gained college performers, and became a 501c3 designation.

Having surpassed over a decade of existence, the band has hosted the Lesbian Gay Band Alliance Conference, performed at the Association of Concert Bands Regional Conference and are applying for a performance at the Florida Bandmasters Conference. The marching band began with approximately 20 members and now has 45 winds, 7 percussion, and 10 color guard (D. Triplett-Risa, personal communication, July 3, 2024). The Tampa Bay Pride Band continues to serve the Tampa Bay area, presenting and promoting high quality music (Tampa Bay Pride, n.d.).

The San Diego Pride Youth Marching Band (2015)

At the 2014 San Diego Pride Parade, several band directors were watching the event and observed that there was no marching band. Among these was Russ Sperling, who served as the Director of Visual Performing Arts for the San Diego Unified School District. He and his colleagues observed "we could do a band of high school students from throughout the area, put the word out, and put a group out on the street and it would be amazing, it would be great for kids, and we would have a great time doing it." (R. Sperling, personal communication, December 27, 2023). They communicated with area high schools and colleges and premiered the San Diego Pride Youth Marching Band in 2015.

In the beginning, the main focus was to get the band ready and performing. As the group has grown in popularity, the focus has now shifted to the human

connection, the students, and their stories. The staff wants the students to realize that band is a good place for them (R. Sperling, personal communication, December 27, 2023). They can have connections with their peers as well as adults, they can see the adult leadership as examples and role models, and that the students have support and are okay. The band's performances have now expanded to include a San Diego Padres baseball game as well as opening and closing for the annual Stonewall Rally (San Diego Pride, 2019).

The Queen City Freedom Band (2018)

The Queen City Freedom Band was organized in 2018. The band was an original idea of Jon Noworyta (current artistic director) and Russell Zokaites (now at Fresno State) while both were doctoral students at the University of Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. They felt that with Cincinnati being such an arts-rich community, an LGBTQ+ band would be in order. (J. Noworyta, personal communication, July 1, 2024). The band promotes the visibility of the LGBTQ+ community by providing for the education and musical development of both members and community at large.

The Northern Nevada Youth Pride Band (2022)

In the summer of 2022, the Northern Nevada Youth Pride Band (NNYPB) was formed in Reno, Nevada. The mission of the NNYPB was to provide a safe environment and performance venue for LGBTQ+ students and allies in the Northern Nevada area (Eubanks, 2022). The band's premiere performance was on July 23. 2022 in the Northern Nevada Pride parade with a membership of 38. In 2023, the NNYPB grew to a membership of 50 and performed for the opening ceremony of the 2023 Northern Nevada Pride celebration.

Conclusions

This exploratory research project was the outgrowth of the a desire to explore the development of Pride marching bands. My research questions revolved around how many Pride bands existed, when and why they had been formed, and their current status.

I found there were 23 pride bands operating in the United States, as of April 2025. Findings indicated that beginning in the decade of the 1970s, pride marching bands began to form across the country. That expansion persists to this day as pride marching bands continue to organize and expand into other ensembles. Pride parades began and continue to serve as a platform of political activism and a celebration of a genuine identity. They have further evolved into a celebration of the gay lifestyle and membership now also includes straight people,

gay-friendly businesses, civic leaders, and politicians who support and advocate for the rights of the LGTBQ+ community.

As awareness of and appreciation for the LGBTQ+ community continues to grow, so does the number of, and contributions made by, pride bands. Membership in these groups may serve as a means of activism through community visibility and involvement. Participants may find a sense of fulfillment, belonging and fellowship in a group of fellow like-minded citizens and musicians. As these members are marching down the street, they are demonstrating to the onlookers that they can make a positive contribution to their community and world. Membership in pride bands also serve musical purposes, as participants continue the development of their music skills and interests.

I found that several pride bands that began as only a marching unit, consisting of winds, percussion, and color guard, had since expanded into other ensembles. Many of these pride music organizations now include a wind ensemble, concert band or orchestra. Others have also added some type of jazz band, sports/pep band, or chamber groups.

I was interested in learning the impact these bands had on the participants and to the LGBTQ+ community, given the time and effort put into these organizations, but did not find much about that other than anecdotal comments. I wanted to find out if pride marching bands served as a vehicle through which LGBTQ+ members made friends and identified with a group, received emotional support, and simply enjoyed making music together (Dale, 2018). Furthermore, I had hoped to discover if pride marching bands fostered within their members the desire to navigate issues such as cultural acceptance, discrimination, and social justice (Bruce, 2016; Soenynum, 2019). Finally, I was hoping to ascertain if the presence of pride marching bands led to better community understanding and promotion of LGBTQ+ members (Bilodeau & Ren, 2005). Future research to investigate and develop a better understanding of participants' motivations and the personal and/or societal outcomes of pride marching bands or other ensembles seems warranted.

This study was limited to instrumental music, but studying the phenomenon of LGBTQ+ choral ensembles should also be of interest to music educators. Given that many individuals are engaged in pride-related musical activities across this country, learning more about all types of ensembles and the benefits to their members could be informative for individuals seeking to begin, lead, or join a pride-based musical organization.

Armed with information gleaned from studying existing pride marching bands, I began the process of bringing my dream to life. I first met with the Director of the School of Music, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and the Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion at my university to ascertain if there was administrative support for creating the pride band. This was followed by

determining how to handle legal issues including student participation, background checks for staff and copyright for t-shirt design. Finally, the Reno Pride Parade was selected as our inaugural performance venue. Once staff was selected, I put together a rehearsal schedule, secured rehearsal facilities, and selected music. My next step was to visit all local high schools and distribute information flyers. I also made a presentation to all band directors at the Nevada All-State Music Convention. Because the Reno Pride Parade was held in the summer, all rehearsals were set on Saturday mornings, beginning three weeks prior to the actual parade. The first performance of the Northern Nevada Youth Pride Band was July 23, 2022 with a membership of 38. My dream had come true, resulting in what became the 23rd pride band in the country.

Author's Note:

As stated in the article, in the beginning this project was an outgrowth of my vision to create a pride marching band to serve the youth of Northern Nevada.

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MISSOURI STUDENT ABSTRACTS

Eyes on the Conductor: Understanding Musicians' Visual Focus of Attention While Viewing a Conductor

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Spring 2025
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Abstract:

   This paper explores the relationship between ensemble musicians and conductors, focusing on the visual attention and cognitive processes involved in interpreting conducting gestures. Through a review of existing literature, we establish a foundational understanding of how musicians allocate attention and process visual cues from a conductor in real-time performance. Chapter 1 discusses the perceptual demands placed on musicians, emphasizing the importance of attentional resources needed to accurately respond to a conductor's gestures. Chapter 2 presents a study on the visual focus of ensemble musicians during a live rehearsal, revealing how musicians engage with the conductor's face, hands, and baton to track tempo, expressivity, and musical coordination. Chapter 3 details a pilot study that laid the groundwork for investigating musicians' visual attention patterns when viewing conductors through eye-tracking technology, providing insights into the effectiveness of controlled experimental setups. Chapter 4 expands the pilot study by examining how musicians allocate attention to various focal points of the conductor, finding that the face and torso are prioritized in the interpretation of conducting gestures, with the baton receiving comparatively less focus. Collectively, the findings highlight the complex, goal-directed nature of visual engagement in ensemble performance, offering valuable insights into how musicians navigate the conductor-performer interaction to achieve synchronization and expressive performance.

Bridging the Gap: Fostering Emotional Expression Through Teaching Strategies in the Middle School Choral Classroom

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Abstract:
   This study investigates the impact of teacher-elicited expression strategies (i.e. emotionally evocative metaphor, technical elements through modeling, body of the conductor, understanding the emotional content) on the emotional expressivity of my middle school choral students. Using a mixed method approach, data was collected through surveys of students' self-evaluations of the expression strategies, and their overall value of expression before and after learning processes that emphasized emotional expressivity. I found that each teacher-elicited expression strategies impacted student expressivity positively. Concrete strategies (i.e., body of the conductor and technical elements through modeling) were highly effective, particularly in my beginner and intermediate choirs, while abstract strategies (i.e., emotionally evocative metaphor and understanding the emotional content) were beneficial but were influenced by individual interpretations. Through these learning processes, my students' value of expressivity did not significantly change, but qualitative insight indicated shifts in their perception of performance expression.

Making a Way Out of No Way: Exploring Black Music Teacher Agency Through the Lens of Critical Consciousness

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Abstract:

The purpose of this collective case study was to explore the ways in which Black secondary music teachers teaching predominantly Black populations exercise their professional agency to empower themselves and their programs. Five Black secondary music teachers who taught in predominantly Black schools participated in two rounds of semi-structured interviews in which they critically reflected on how their agency was shaped by their shared cultural identities with their predominantly Black students. I applied Varelas and colleagues' (2015) conceptualization of agency as "a person's capacity to engage with cultural schemas and mobilize resources in ways that did not exist before, creating new contexts and practices" (p. 1). Critical consciousness (Freire, 1973) provided a theoretical grounding by urging participants to examine the marginalization of their students and urban teaching contexts and the actions they took to improve their conditions. Findings showed that the participants possessed (1) highly developed interpersonal skills and (2) professional fearlessness. The participants demonstrated agency through leveraging and accommodating shared cultural identities with students, acknowledging the interdependence of schools and community institutions as a means of self-determination, and engaging in code-switching as a means of survival. They further enacted agency by communicating their needs through self-advocacy, disrupting the status quo of music teaching through their professional decision making, and resisting norms that conflicted with their beliefs through positive insubordination. To facilitate the development of agency, preservice music teacher programs might incorporate intersectional frameworks into curricula to increase preservice music teachers' capacities to innovate practices rather than reproduce professional norms.

Learning Disguised as Play: A Historical Inquiry into Childhood Music Engagement in Terezín

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Abstract:

Music engagement is a person's involvement in performing, creating, responding to, observing, or connecting to music, both by oneself and with others. Music engagement practices can be divided into three categories: formal, nonformal, and informal. Individuals engage with music in diverse and multifaceted ways, which underscores the importance of recognizing multiple forms of music engagement to more fully understand musical identity and experience.

Scholars and practitioners within the fields of music education, general education, and Holocaust history may benefit from studying childhood music engagement in Terezín. By examining the nature of music engagement in Terezín we may better understand the daily lives of young people in the ghetto, the creation of educational infrastructures in unstable circumstances, and the rationale and practices of music education under perilous conditions. Although researchers have detailed the musical activities and performances of adults in the Terezín, there is little scholarship about the musical experiences of children in the ghetto. In an attempt to fill this gap, I utilized a small-scale, humanistic historical inquiry approach supported by qualitative evidence analysis procedures to gain an in-depth understanding of childhood music engagement in Terezín.

The purpose of this study was to examine the nature of children's music engagement while imprisoned in the Terezín (Theresienstadt) ghetto during the Holocaust between 1941 and 1945. Specifically, I sought to elucidate the ways children engaged with music in Terezín, and to categorize those experiences into formal, nonformal, and informal music engagement practices. I began evidence collection by examining personal writings and diaries from children in Terezín, and proceeded by consulting oral histories, memoirs, and secondary sources regarding childhood experience and musical structures in Terezín.

Findings of evidence analysis were organized according to the music engagement categories: formal, nonformal, and informal music engagement practices. Children in Terezín formally engaged with music by attending

music classes within the secret education system called "The Program," participating in large ensembles, and taking private lessons. Children's nonformal music engagement in Terezín included participation in extracurricular ensembles, including adult ensembles and productions, as formal, nowell as musical and theatrical productions, the most famous example of which was Hans Krása's children's opera Brundibár. Informal childhood music engagement in Terezín included the use of music as a means of play and passing time, attending performances, music-making at informal gatherings, religious music performances, ambient encounters with music as part of the ghetto's soundscape, and the composition of children's songs. Inequity of access to formal, and informal music engagement practices for children in Terezín was an additional prominent result of thematic analysis.

Findings indicated that the music engagement practices of children in Terezín were consistent with previous research related to music learning and participation practices, as well as adult access and practices of music engagement in Terezín. Other major themes regarding Access and Equity and the Importance of the Learning Environment in Terezín were consistent with previous literature. Future research into children's responses to music engagement in Terezín, children's motivations to engage with music in Terezín, additional oral history documentation of childhood music engagement in Terezín, replication with other sites in the Nazi KZ (Konzentrationslager) system, and current practices in historical music education research methodology is recommended.

Teaching the Collegiate Non-Music Major Student in the Applied String Studio: A Phenomenological Study

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to explore the essence of the string professors' experience of teaching collegiate non-music major (NMM) students in the applied studio. Four full time string faculty from a large US mid-western university volunteered to participate in the interviews. Findings indicate that teaching the collegiate NMM student in the applied string studio is experienced (a) in a process of becoming a professor, when the performer turns into teaching; (b) by being understanding, knowing who the NMM is and accepting their varied music expectations; (c) by balancing formal string learning with the student's commitment limitations. Learning about these professors' experience is relevant for institutions aiming to improve the experience of their non-professionally oriented students in the applied string studio specifically, with the possibility of transfer to other applied music studios. These findings also may inform to the private teacher of other instruments who have students not seeking music professionally. This study adds to the literature of string pedagogy, which needs more research to investigate pedagogical approaches.

Teaching Effective Practice Strategies Through Metacognition Logs in the Private Voice Studio

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Abstract:

The purpose of this case study was to explore the short-term impact of metacognition instruction on the practice of a single voice student in a private studio. Over four lessons, the student received explicit instruction in metacognitive strategies and applied them through guided practice logs supporting planning, monitoring, adjusting, and reflecting. Each lesson began with a review and discussion of the practice logs. The teacher-researcher recorded these discussions to capture student thinking and kept a journal to document observations, instructional decisions and reflections. Data analysis was primarily qualitative, focusing on reflections, discussions, and practice logs. Quantitative measures, such as survey statistics and pre/posttest comparisons, supplemented the analysis to track changes in metacognitive skills usage. Findings indicate that integrating metacognitive instruction into private lessons may enhance student autonomy and practice quality, offering a practical model for voice teachers seeking to foster independent, reflective musicianship. The study also points to future research on adapting metacognitive frameworks for ensemble settings or extending them over longer periods to deepen their impact.

"I've just got to survive right now." A Phenomenological Study of First Year Middle School Choral Educators

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Abstract:

First-year music educators often lack confidence in their abilities and feel unprepared to begin their first year of teaching. The development of each novice teacher's sense of identity, efficacy, classroom practices, and teaching pedagogies has been well documented. There is not much research about the very beginning experiences of first year music educators. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the lived experiences of beginning middle school choral music educators during the first nine weeks of their careers. Participants were five first-year middle school choral educators in Missouri. They discussed their classroom experiences in five semi-structured interviews during the first nine weeks of the 2023-2024 academic year. In addition to the interviews, I collected data in the forms of daily journals and lesson plans.

I analyzed the qualitative interview data using interpretative phenomenological analysis. IPA is an approach to qualitative research "committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences" (Smith et al., 2022, p. 1). I selected this analytical method as it centers around both understanding experience at the individual case level and in its own terms. Four themes emerged from the data: Developing My Self-Trust, Putting Pedagogy into Practice, the Learning is Overwhelming, and Leaving Work at Work. Based on these findings, I suggested implications for music educator curricula including additional field experiences to provide opportunities to build self-trust and apply pedagogy, an extension of the student teaching semester, and further exploration of the work and life separation. Future researchers might consider examining the experiences of teachers during the beginning of their teaching careers and the transition between student teaching and the beginning of a music teacher's career.

Building Rhythmic Independence in Beginning Band Students

Caroline Williams
Missouri State University
Master of Music
Summer 2025
Committee Chairperson: Dr. Daniel Hellman

Abstract:
    The purpose of this study was to design and implement a unit of instruction based upon three common approaches to teaching rhythm in the beginning band setting and to examine their effect on the rhythmic understanding, confidence, and independence of students in my sixth grade beginning band class. Students received instruction that was traditionally-based, aurally-based, and movement-based for one week each, respectively. An analysis of my teaching was provided by the notes I took that detailed what my students and I did throughout the study. Through my instruction, my students were able to increase their interactions with rhythm. Students were able to count using traditional methods, developed aural awareness and audiation skills using aural methods, and created and performed body percussion movements for rhythmic passages. In my observations, I saw that while engagement was high, students experienced various levels of success with the traditional-based strategies. Students enjoyed the almost immediate success they experienced with aural strategies, after an initial hesitation to participate fully. I observed that students were more off-task during the movement-based portion of the study. Based on these results, I offer implications for my future teaching. Meaningful instruction follows a sequence. The sequence suggested in this study follows Bruner's sequence of building knowledge beginning with enactive experiences, moving to iconic experiences, and culminating with symbolic experiences. Students should gain physical experiences in rhythm, such as through the use of movement or aural strategies, before they are asked to read or notate it.

Navigating Dual Genres: A Case Study on Vocal Techniques and Health in Classical and Gospel Singing

Ronnie C. Wilson, PhD
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PhD in Music Education
Summer 2025
Committee Chairperson: Dr. Wendy L. Sims

Abstract:

This qualitative, instrumental single-case study investigated the vocal techniques, strategies, and health practices employed by a professional vocalist navigating performances across two vocally demanding and stylistically distinct genres: Western European classical and gospel music. Utilizing a thematic analysis of comprehensive data collected through semi-structured interviews, video-recorded and live observations, daily hydration and voice use logs, and analysis of artifacts, this research illuminates how the bimusical vocalist effectively manages genre-specific technical demands and maintains vocal health.

Findings reveal that for this artist, effective crossover singing required deliberate adjustments in breathing patterns, laryngeal positioning, vocal resonance placement, dynamics, and articulation. Distinctive technical approaches emerged, notably diaphragmatic breathing for classical singing to facilitate controlled phrasing and full resonance, contrasted by higher, clavicular breathing in gospel singing, supporting its expressive and dynamic requirements.

Based on the participant's beliefs and experiences, the findings highlight the critical role of proactive vocal health strategies, including hydration, vocal rest, warm-ups, and cool-downs, as essential for preventing vocal strain and sustaining vocal performance longevity. The integration of intentional practice strategies, emotional and mental preparedness, and pedagogical insights also contributed to the successful management of vocal challenges inherent in this musician's dual-genre performance career.

This research addresses a gap in the literature concerning practical techniques for vocal adaptability, offering valuable insights for performers, educators, and voice researchers dedicated to understanding and enhancing vocal versatility and health across diverse musical traditions.

Call for Papers - Research Poster Presentation
2026 MMEA State Conference

Missouri historically has had one of the most successful research sessions of any state conference. The poster format allows for a number of researchers to present their work in an informal setting, where participants can engage in conversation with the researcher. Researchers whose reports are chosen for presentation will prepare a poster describing their research. Details will be provided upon acceptance.

Those who wish to submit a report for consideration should comply with the following guidelines for a) completed master's theses or doctoral dissertations; b) reports of original research studies, and c) student non-degree research projects:

Master's or doctoral research: Submit a copy of the abstract, a copy of the document's title page, and a copy of the scanned signature page which indicates that the paper was accepted in partial fulfillment of degree requirements. The name of the degree-granting institution should appear on one of these pages, or must be included with the submission, as well as the author's full name and e-mail. If all the above-mentioned items are included, the completed thesis or dissertation will be guaranteed acceptance for presentation.

Report of an original research project: E-mail a copy of the paper, including an abstract, in Word or RTF format. The project should demonstrate sound research practices and writing style, and should be completed. Small-scale studies, including action research, are appropriate for this forum. The author's name, address, e-mail, and current school affiliation should appear only on a separate page from the abstract and/or manuscript.

Student non-degree research projects: Projects must be submitted by college or university faculty. Faculty members should contact Wendy Sims at the address below for further information.

Note that posters presented at conferences other than previous MMEA state conferences are permitted (and encouraged) as long as this is clearly indicated in a statement included with the submission.

Submissions must arrive at the address below by December 24, 2025. Authors will be apprised of the results of the selection process via e-mail, by the end of December. Address submissions (or questions) to: Wendy L. Sims, MMEA Research Chair, at simsw@missouri.edu.

Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education

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The *Missouri Journal of Music Education* is an online publication devoted to the needs and interests of the school and college music teachers of Missouri and of the nation (https://mmea.net/missouri-journal-of-research-in-music-education/). The editorial committee of the journal encourages submissions of original research pertinent to instruction in music of a philosophical, historical, quantitative or qualitative nature. In addition, reviews of literature that include a rationale/purpose, as well as conclusions and/or implications for research and/or practice, and suggestions for future research, will be considered.

Submission Procedures. Authors are invited to submit an abstract of 150–200 words and complete manuscript in a single .doc or .docx attachment to the editor, Wendy Sims, at simsw@missouri.edu. Please submit the cover page attached to the same email message but as a separate document. Authors are requested to remove all identifying personal data from submitted articles and include that information in their email submission message. Manuscripts submitted for review must not be previously published or under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Style. Manuscripts should conform to the most recent style requirements set forth in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA, seventh edition). Authors of non-quantitative papers may alternatively choose to adhere to *The Chicago Manual of Style*, or *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Turabian). Styles should not be mixed within the submission. The text should be double-spaced and use a 12-point font. All figures and tables should be submitted camera-ready within the manuscript and designed so that they will fit with the page space of the journal (approximately 4.5 inches wide by 7.5 inches high) and use an 8-point or larger font size. To assure anonymity during the review process, no identifying information should be included in the submission.

Review Procedures. Three editorial committee members review submissions in a blind review process. Authors will normally be notified of the status of the review within two months. The editorial committee adheres to the Research Publication/Presentation Code of Ethics of the Music Education Research Council of NAfME: National Association for Music Education and of the American Psychological Association.