

The First Women Instrumentalists in the Penn State Marching Blue Band After the Enactment of Title IX

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Abstract

Women at higher education institutions across the United States were granted equal rights for academic and athletic opportunities on their college campuses through the passage of Title IX in 1972. Although most consistently associated with women in sport, Title IX had lasting effects for music education and women's participation in collegiate marching bands across the United States. Title IX prompted the Association of Women Students at Penn State University to lobby successfully on behalf of women instrumentalists' right to audition and join the previously all-male instrumentalists of the Penn State Marching Blue Band in the fall of 1973. The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the experiences of the first women instrumentalists to participate in the Penn State Marching Blue Band after the enactment of Title IX. Participants addressed attempts to assimilate in a coeducational marching band, the influence of prior performance in high school marching band, conflicting reactions toward media coverage, and positive reflections of their director. Findings paralleled Title IX's history in higher education with its emphasis on historical pockets of hostility and exclusion on co-educational college campuses and the importance of student-based advocacy for the advancement of women's rights.

Keywords: women in band, college marching band, Title IX

With the enactment of Title IX of the Omnibus Education Act in 1972, women at higher education institutions across the United States were granted legal equal rights for academic and athletic opportunities on their college campuses (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). While the majority of research and popular conception surrounding the history and enforcement of Title IX highlighted the rights of women to participate equally in sports, a less frequently researched effect of this legislation applied to music education and college marching band programs. It was most often the case prior to the passage of Title IX in 1972 that college and military band membership was segregated into either all-male or all-female ensembles (Sullivan, 2008). Title IX served as the catalyst during the early 1970s for the admission and integration of women as instrumentalists in previously all-male marching bands at numerous large colleges and universities, including the Penn State University (Range & Smith, 1999; Sullivan, 2008).

George H. Deike established the first six-member drum and bugle corps in 1899 on the campus of the Farmer's High School, later to be renamed The Pennsylvania State University, or more commonly, Penn State (The Pennsylvania State University Marching Blue Band, n.d.). In the years that followed, the band evolved into what became known as the "Blue Band" with blue uniforms and full marching band instrumentation and band front. Other than the few women instrumentalists who substituted for men serving in the military during World War II, the 1972-1973 marching season was the first time in Penn State Blue Band history in which women were included on the roster as full-time and permanent members of the band. These inaugural women members served in the band front as the first majorettes in the band's history (Range & Smith, 1999).

The inclusion of the first women of the majorette squad was historic for the directors and members of the band. With this addition of women in the band front, the question of women

auditioning for instrumentalist positions was proposed for the following 1973-1974 season. The implementation of the federal legislation of Title IX in conjunction with the previously admitted women in the band front prompted Penn State's Association of Women Students to lobby on behalf of women instrumentalists' right to audition for the band. After the Association of Women Students became involved and publicly brought to light the lack of women participating in the band as instrumentalists, the decision to open the instrumental auditions for the Blue Band to both men and women on campus was made and accepted, albeit reluctantly by some (AWS Gets Results, 1973). With this newly afforded opportunity, eight women auditioned and five were successfully admitted as instrumentalists, in addition to the existing majorettes, for the 1973-1974 marching season (Range & Smith, 1999).

Purpose

A substantial amount of research is dedicated to the effects of the implementation of Title IX on women's collegiate athletics, including historical document analysis and first-hand accounts from participants. However, a paucity of research exists in how Title IX affected the marching band community, especially from the prospective of the women of the 1970s. The purpose of this qualitative research was to investigate the experiences of the first women instrumentalists to participate in a collegiate marching band after the enactment of Title IX.

Specifically, the following research questions were posed:

1. How do participants perceive their experiences as the first women instrumentalists to participate in a collegiate marching band with men at Penn State University?
2. How do participant narratives correspond to the investigated public historical information of the inclusion of women instrumentalists in the Penn State University marching band during the 1973-1974 season?

3. What was the media's influence on the participants' perception of their experiences and how did it parallel with the media's portrayal of Title IX in higher education?

Literature Review

Women in Band

The socialized femininity and masculinity of playing a particular instrument was noticeably prominent during the 1920s. "Girls who want to be musicians should stick to instruments such as piano, violin, harp, or even accordion – any instrument the playing of which doesn't detract from their feminine appeal" (Cugat, 1959, p. 13). Handy (1981) reported that it was acceptable for women to play the harp, violin, and piano as they were instruments in which no air was needed that might detract from their feminine facial features. Further, corset tightness prohibited the air flow needed from the diaphragm for women to properly play wind instruments at the time. However, a need arose for women who played both wind and percussion instruments, from school band movement, World War I, and the rise of all-women orchestras in the 1920s. By 1930, Clay Smith, a journalist writing about his experience as a high school adjudicator for state and district band contests throughout the country, noted:

When I was a boy it was considered...out of place for a girl to take up a wind instrument. She was sort of classed with a "Whistling girl," and everyone knows that a girl was considered coarse and rude, and very much a tomboy, if she whistled in public. But, Oh! How the world has changed! (Handy, 1981, p. 23)

Acceptance of women playing wind and percussion instruments occurred slowly. At the start of the school band movement in the 1910s, school band was viewed as an activity for character development, citizenship, and providing the experience necessary for becoming professional musicians for young boys (Mark & Gary, 2007). Young girls, while still

participating in vocal music classes in schools, were not the primary targets for the teaching of wind and percussion instruments in schools. School bands attracted young boys by ability to “capitalize the irresistible appeal which bands, especially in uniform, make to the adolescent boy, and thus turn it into educational channels” (Birge, 1928, p. 181-82).

Music during World War I was viewed as a vital force in national life and band instruments were given enormous prestige after the war through their role in performing for military training camps and regiments (Birge, 1928). This distinction during World War I also served as a catalyst for women wind and percussion players during the 1920s and 1930s. The foundations set for instrumental music in public schools during the pre-World War I 1910s was energized by the war efforts and set into motion a spark for the growth of bands into the 1920s for both men and women.

Many music historians treated World War II as the historical turning point when women instrumentalists emerged from the shadows and were permitted to perform in bands as replacements for men when they were called to war (Pendle, 2004; Sullivan, 2008). When the United States joined the war efforts, women were needed to not only fill men’s places in factories at home, but also in the arts both at home and abroad. On the home front, women were needed to fill the roles of men in bands and orchestras in order to perform for political rallies and nationalistic events centered on fundraising supporting the war efforts abroad. Women instrumentalists also filled in for men at the college level, playing in collegiate bands while their male peers served overseas. The passage of President Roosevelt’s legislation to allow for all-female military units sparked the necessity to form all-female military bands to serve these newly formed units (Sullivan, 2008).

During World War II, eight all-female bands were formed to serve female troops (Sullivan, 2008). The first branch of the military to accept women was the Army, forming the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1942. Following suit shortly thereafter was the Navy and the Coast Guard (Sullivan, 2006). The Marines were the last branch of the United States military to allow women to enlist in their ranks in 1943. Despite its late acceptance of women, the Marines produced the largest all-female military band, the Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band, started by members of the "President's Own" U.S. Marine Band (Sullivan, 2006). The Marines attempted to recruit strong, independent women, as evident in a typical advertisement:

Women of America, release a Marine to man that gun, drive that tank, down that plane.

In every corner of this earth, Marines are fighting and helping to win this war. You can be part of this invincible fight. You will actually be a Marine. You will have the privileges and obligations of men of corresponding rank. (Sullivan, 2006, p. 9)

Sullivan (2006) described the women of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band consisted of educated women, all of whom were required to have had graduated high school prior to enlisting. Nine of these women were college graduates and seven of which were classically-trained undergraduate music majors (Sullivan, 2006). Historians highlight its elite training led by musicians and conductors of the "President's Own" as well as its strict education requirements for women as the distinguishing factor of the Marine Corps Women's Reserve Band in comparison to its contemporary bands in the other branches of the military (Sullivan, 2006).

While the women's military bands of World War II are highlighted for their effects on women musicians, there were other ensembles at home also affected by the war. Major symphony orchestras throughout the United States permitted previously banned women to perform alongside the remaining men in mixed-gender performing orchestras (Neuls-Bates,

1986). College marching bands also filled in their ranks with women when men went off to war. These marching bands were either dominated by women during the war, as was the case with the Mansfield Teacher's College of Pennsylvania, or allowed women to participate alongside men to fill out needed instrumentation, as was the case with both The Ohio State University and Penn State University (Range & Smith, 1999; Sullivan, 2006). In addition to college bands, popular swing bands, originating in the 1930s, also relied on women to fill the places of men during World War II (Sullivan, 2008).

At the conclusion of World War II, men returned to the United States and resumed many of their previously held positions in both bands and orchestras. The women's military units were defunct after the war and many of the male college band members resumed their playing positions, however Pendle (2004) reported that women in orchestras retained much of their gain after the war. In 1947, only 8% of the players with major American symphonies were women (Pendle, 2004).

Many women lost their opportunities to perform with their college bands or in the Women's Military Corps after World War II, but some opportunities did present themselves for trained women musicians in "all-girl" bands sponsored by major companies across the United States. One of the most notable opportunities for women in these "all-girl" company bands was the Hormel Girls. The Hormel Girls "were not organized for worker recreation, but to provide employment for women veterans and eventually to expand into a long-term marketing strategy for the company" (Sullivan & Keck, 2007, p. 286). This ensemble provided women an opportunity to continue to perform on their wind and percussion instruments after the war. However, as soon as she became married or pregnant, a Hormel Girl was fired. Sullivan & Keck

(2007) wrote, “A wedding ring is the equivalent of an honorable discharge. The company has ruled that matrimony creates too many personal problems in an all-female atmosphere” (p. 289).

The Media’s Influence on the Perception of Title IX in Higher Education

With the enactment of Title IX, all women were granted equal rights according to the law. Enacted in 1972, Title IX stated:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (20 U.S.C. § 1681 (a))

The enactment of Title IX brought with it both an influx of opinions in the media and literature on how to handle these new implications in higher education. Negative concerns were voiced by media journalists with regard to the financial obligations, the true definition of equality, and unfavorable media publicity that surfaced with Title IX implementation (Amdur, 1974). Since the majority of sports journalists of the time being primarily men, some of the resistance toward the implementation of Title IX in sports stemmed from the negative gender inequalities. It was reported that “feminist sports media scholars have pointed to journalists’ resistance toward Title IX” to explain the gender inequalities still seen today in sports (Antunovic, 2017, p. 205). As the years have passed since the enactment of the law, the majority of journalists have reflected and now view the implementation of Title IX in a positive light, despite their early resistance towards its enactment (Antunovic, 2017; Lane, 2016).

In reaction to negative media attention and colleges and universities’ growing fears of being fined for non-compliance with Title IX’s requirements, numerous journal articles and compliance documents were published to assist in the transition and changing of legislation. Aquila’s (1981) *Title IX: Implications for Education of Women* was intended to “review the

regulations of Title IX and provide interpretations that hopefully will help educators in securing educational equity in their schools” (p. 9). In addition, the Association of American Colleges produced a handbook to distribute to its members. It was “designed to help institutions understand the restoration of Title IX and changes resulting from the Civil Rights Restoration Act [of 1987]” (p. 1). Within this booklet, sections include a summary of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which institutions were covered, what exemptions were made at the time, affirmative and remedial actions, an overview of discrimination and employee treatment, a partial list of institutional actions, single-sex organizations and program regulations, and a section on athletics specifically.

Despite all of the media attention, institutional dialogue, and information produced regarding Title IX and its new regulations at higher institutions, a lawsuit was filed in federal court for a Title IX infraction relating to college marching band against the “Aggie” Marching Band at Texas A&M University in 1979. The suit brought forth the allegation that the “Aggie” Marching Band was not allowing female members to audition for the band for no other reason “other than a desire to keep the Aggie band all-male” (Texas A&M First Title IX Target, 1979, p. C2). While this was one of the first legal cases citing Title IX infractions in an area outside of women’s sports, it did show that not only were athletics being directly affected by its implementation, but other academic areas, including marching bands, were also in the mix of organizations fighting tumultuous change during the 1970s.

Method

This qualitative study drew from narrative inquiry and historical research methods. Pathways to narrative research methodology guided the interview process, transcription, and data analysis (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Stauffer, 2014). Lee (2013) supported the importance of

drawing from primary source materials, historiography and theories, and the inclusion of individual narratives in rigorous historical research. Ethical considerations related to this study highlighted the importance of the participants lived experience during this historical time (Nichols, 2016).

Data Collection and Participants

The participants in this study were three of the first five women instrumentalists who auditioned successfully and participated as co-educational members of the 1973-1974 Blue Band. Only three of Penn State's first women instrumentalists were interviewed because one potential participant had passed away prior to the study and another did not respond to the researcher's interview requests. Each participant was interviewed either in person or on the phone using a semi-structured interview protocol. This semi-structured interview protocol was framed by analysis of primary historical documents relating to the inclusion of women in the Penn State Blue Band and previous research of parallel Title IX oral histories. The interview questions included inquiries into the participants' first year experiences in the Penn State Blue Band relating to auditions, practices, and performances, their interactions with both male and female directors, staff, and students, their exposure to local media outlets, and their overall perceptions of their integration into a previously all-male college marching band. Interviews lasted between 45 to 60 minutes. All interviews were audio recorded for later transcription by the researcher and coded by the researcher for emergent themes (Creswell, 2015).

Historical documents were also obtained and analyzed. Archival data was attained through the Penn State University Special Collections Library and the Penn State Blue Band archives. The researcher analyzed documents including local newspaper articles, Blue Band student scrapbooks, photographs, cards, and performance programs from the 1973-1974

academic year. In addition, a historical publication written specifically about the Penn State Blue Band's history was available and utilized (Range & Smith, 1999).

Trustworthiness and Validity

To strengthen the reliability and validity of the narrative interviews, participants' individual stories were analyzed and compared in conjunction with existing archival data (Lee, 2013). Participants were given the opportunity to member-check the transcripts of their interviews in order to ensure that their narratives were represented in the light in which they were intended (Creswell, 2015). Continuous memoing and conceptual mapping was used by the primary researcher to limit researcher bias. Triangulation was accomplished by the researcher through the analysis of the interview transcripts, member checking, and the archival historical materials available.

The First Women Instrumentalists in the Penn State Blue Band 1973-1974

With great change comes great challenges, opposition, and the continuous battle for equality. The men enrolled in the 1973-1974 Penn State Blue Band shared mixed feelings when the passage of Title IX legally granted women the right to march in the band. The women who were selected as the first female instrumentalists to perform in the Penn State Blue Band discussed their perspectives and shared their excitement.

The External Voices of the 1973-1974 Season

In 1973, when women began marching at Penn State, the director, Dr. James Dunlop, balanced numerous opinions regarding the inclusion of women in the band. Dunlop had, for many years, worked with women instrumentalists in his Concert Blue Band prior to Title IX. An article in the Penn State college-wide newspaper, *The Collegian*, quoted Dunlop as saying, "I've said all along that women can try out." But later in the article, Dunlop contradicted himself and

brought a great deal of controversy when he stated, “I’m not saying that women can’t play horns or march. We have a good thing going. Why change it?” (Range & Smith, 1999, p. 132). At the start of the fall semester in 1973, Dunlop did eventually agree to allow women to audition for the band during the same official fall auditions as the men. Dunlop was reported as stating that women would be added, not integrated, to the band in addition to the men (Band to Audition Women, 1973). In other words, no man would lose their position in the band to a woman, even if she performed better than he. While the AWS still felt that additions, instead of integration, was discrimination, Dunlop’s approval to uphold these women’s rights under Title IX was a victory.

Eight women auditioned that fall of 1973 and five women were admitted to the band as instrumentalists. The first women instrumentalists to successfully join the Penn State Blue Band were Linda Hall, Kathryn Murphey, Carol Gabler, Susan Nowlin, and Debbie Frisbie (Range & Smith, 1999). These five trailblazers in the Blue Band had hurdles to overcome. The men of the band had mixed feelings toward their new women bandmates. These mixed reactions ranged from full support by some, including the president of the band, to strong opposition about the women’s abilities and the lack of a uniform look by including women bandsmen (Chaplick, 1973). The five women pioneers persisted. By the end of the season, the women felt as though they were accepted by their male peers. One participant was documented stating that after a trip to Annapolis with the band that “from that time on, it seemed we girls were just part of the Blue Band gang” (Range & Smith, 1999, p. 133).

The following season, and every season since, women were included in instrumental auditions for the Blue Band. However, the following year, 1974-1975, was not without controversy when it came to women instrumentalists. A first-year woman wrote a letter to the editor in the college newspaper, *The Collegian*, hinting at continued discrimination toward women by the staff

of the Blue Band (Weissman, 1974). The student author of this letter was initially named as an alternate for the 1974-1975 season. Once it became time to fit her for a uniform, there were no uniforms left in her needed smaller size. Her initial editorial went on to state that she felt discriminated against by the staff due to being a woman and was not provided the appropriate size uniform on purpose. In response to this editorial, Susan Nowlin, one of the five original women instrumentalists from the previous season, supported the staff's decision and explained the uniform fitting protocol for all instrumentalists of the band. Nowlin (1974) went as far as to state that the previous year there was discrimination toward the women in the uniform fitting procedures, but that it worked in their favor. Those initial five women were fitted first due to their smaller frames so that they would be able to participate fully with properly fitted uniforms for their body. This publication in the local newspaper brought gender issues back into the spotlight the remainder of the season.

Participant Narratives

After the completion and analysis of the interview transcripts from the first women who participated as instrumentalists in the 1973-1974 Penn State Blue Band, four emergent themes appeared in the participants' stories. The participants addressed their attempts to assimilate in a coeducational marching band, the influence of their prior performance in high school marching band, conflicting reactions toward media portrayals of their experiences, and positive reflections of their director.

An emergent theme that was shared by all participants was their recollection of acting with the intent of assimilation into a coeducational activity. The women participants shared their desires at the time to 'just be one of the guys' when they were performing with the band and

participating in band activities. One participant recalled (Participant 1, personal communication, January 2019):

You went along with a lot of stuff that in today's age women may not put up with. And if it were happening to me today I probably wouldn't put up with it. But there were jokes and what, today would really be called sexual harassment, left and right, that happened a lot. But it wasn't even, at least for me... I've been the only female drummer in an all-male drum line my entire life. And so, I got it all the time. In high school too. They would make all these horrible jokes and the guys would be really gross. But you just put up with it because you wanted to be there so badly. And it got to, even in the Blue Band, that I went along with it, and I joked along with them too to some extent. Because you needed to be part of the group. And you didn't feel like you should complain, it wasn't like today, especially with #MeToo and all of that, that if it were happening today, I probably would have said, 'Oh my god, stop this!' But back then, you didn't. So yes, there was harassment, but it was never personal, and I think that was what made it different.

The participant highlighted the shifting of the perspective of her experiences over a lifetime and how life-changing events prompted the shift. Now a mother of daughters of her own, she reflected upon this narrative and admitted she would never have tolerated her own behavior at the time today. She also emphasized that due to her life experience, she would never have allowed her daughters to tolerate the atmosphere recalled in her historical narrative, but admitted that it was, in her words, a "different time" (Participant 1, personal communication, January 2019).

The participants also noted that their prior experience of performing in their respective high school marching bands played a major role in their decision to audition for the Penn State Blue Band. All three women participated in some form of co-educational high school marching band during their high school experience. Two women participated in marching bands that performed at football games and community events such as parades while one participant's high school experience only consisted of parade bands. As one participant recalled (Participant 2, personal communication, January 2019):

It was really a natural thing to audition [for the Blue Band] because it was such a big part of my life growing up...I came from a small school but because I came from a small school, it was almost like boys and girls were kind of treated equally. We were so small, we didn't have any girls sports team, well maybe we had a girls soccer team at that time, but part of the things we didn't have, I thought of, was because we were so small. And because we were so small, yes, you could kind of do whatever you wanted to do, so it didn't occur to me that there wouldn't be women in the band. And when I went for the audition, I kind of noticed it was all guys, but again I wasn't really phased by it and it wasn't until I went to the first practice and one of the guys told me, 'You know this is the first year that there are girls in the band?' I said, oh? Ok. He goes, 'Yeah, you know there's only like four or five of you.' Oh yeah, I guess so, ok. Basically I was very naïve.

One difference of note in comparing women in marching band to women in sport at this time was that while the opportunities for women to compete in scholastic-sponsored athletics prior to 1972 was minimal at best, the opportunities for women to participate in coeducational high school marching bands were readily available and accessible to the participants.

A prominent emergent theme discussed by all participants was the influence of the local media on their lives during their first year participating in the band. The participants reported that their director determined that the women would not be permitted to speak to the media about their experiences in the band (Participant 1, personal communication, January 2019; Participant 3, personal communication, February 2019). While the women were prohibited from interacting with the media by this decision, when asked, the participants all recalled agreeing with the decision. In particular, Participant 3 (personal communication, February 2019) recalled:

He [Dr. Dunlop] called over the women and he basically said, ‘There are going to be media people here. I don’t want you talking to them.’ And we agreed with that because we didn’t want to be singled out as something different. We were all part of the band. We wanted to be part of the band. We didn’t want to be viewed as separate or anything like that. At least that was my view and I think that was how the other women felt too. We were fine. We weren’t going to talk to the media.

Despite the media’s lack of direct access to interview the first women members of the Blue Band, local newspapers still printed stories and articles. The media’s portrayal of the participants starkly contrasted the narratives from the participants in this study and their director from the time. While newspapers and other student groups tended to portray the director negatively regarding his desire to integrate women into the band, the women participants spoke of highly positive historical recollections of their director. One participant reported a time in which she experienced a bit of negativity from her male counterparts in the band after a performance. She recalled going to her director for advice and, in her recollection, was kind and almost fatherly in his response (Participant 2, personal communication, January 2019):

[Dr. Dunlop] asked, ‘Do you still want to be in this band?’ And I said, ‘Absolutely. Yes, this is the only thing I’ve really ever wanted to do.’ And he said, ‘Just keep your chin up and keep working at it.’

Another participant recalled, “I loved that man [Dr. Dunlop]. I would have done anything for him...I still remember playing for his funeral and how emotional I was” (Participant 3, personal communication, February 2019).

Discussion

This study aimed to discover participants’ perceptions as the first women instrumentalists to participate in a collegiate marching band with men, how their narratives corresponded to the investigated public historical information of the inclusion of women instrumentalists in the Penn State University marching band during the 1973-1974 season, and the media’s influence on the participants’ perception of their experiences in relationship to Title IX. Participant attempts to assimilate in a coeducational marching band, the influence of their prior performance in high school marching band, conflicting reactions toward media portrayals of experiences, and positive participant reflections of their director were discovered through the analysis of primary source materials as well as participant interviews in this study. Findings supported previously investigated historical parallels such as the pockets of hostility and exclusion on co-educational college campuses (Poulson & Miller-Bernal, 2004), the importance of student-based advocacy for the advancement of women’s rights (AWS Gets Results, 1973; Belanger, 2016), and the implications of inaccurate historical information due to biases present in the media’s coverage of women concurrent with the implementation of Title IX (Lane, 2016).

Poulson and Miller-Bernal (2004) reported specific spaces of hostility and exclusion on coeducational college campuses during the height of sex integration in the 1960s and 1970s. In

particular, elite spaces controlled by gatekeepers, such as Fraternities on college campuses, the eating clubs of Princeton, and the secret societies of Yale, highlighted the overwhelming desire to keep women separated from many traditionally male-only college groups and activities. This too was true in the case of the Penn State Blue Band, as the first women instrumentalists had their own struggles with entrance into the traditionally all-male ensemble. As one participant noted, “Traditions are good, generally, but when they only serve to perpetuate an injustice, they need to be ended” (Participant 1, personal communication, January 2019).

The crucial role played by student-based advocacy for the advancement of women’s rights on college campuses was a prominent factor in the progression towards women being permitted to audition as instrumentalists in 1973 for the Penn State Blue Band. Penn State’s Association of Women Students’ plight to persuade the director of the Penn State Blue Band to comply with the newly passed Title IX implications that permitted women’s participation in the band was a key historical factor. In addition to the Association of Women Students’ advocacy for women to participate in the Penn State Blue Band, individual students anonymously wrote letters to the editor in the local newspapers in order to campaign for their right to audition for the group. One participant in the study recalled her written letter to the editor in 1972 as a passionate plea to be permitted to participate. Student-based advocacy groups for the advancement of women’s rights on college campuses were also noted in women in sport, particularly in the case of Michigan State women athletes. Belanger (2016) reported similar parallels to the influence of student-based advocacy groups advancing women’s rights at Michigan State University in 1979 from grass roots approaches. Similar student-based activism for women in sport was proving successful at other universities throughout the country concurrently, including Minnesota, UCLA, and Vanderbilt (Belanger, 2016).

With the historical implications of the accuracy of the media's coverage around Title IX in mind, the following question is posed: if the media coverage was limited by direct participants' refusal to contribute to media interviews, how much bias existed in the media's portrayal of these women? The participants discussed the directive of "media silence" during their first season as members of the coeducational Penn State Blue Band. According to the participants' narratives, the media's lack of access to the direct source of information regarding these first women created stories that differed at times from the actual events that took place. Lane (2016) researched similar questions regarding the biases that could be occurring due to a lack of direct access to primary sources of women during this time in their analysis of New York Times and Washington Post articles handling Title IX coverage by sports journalists during the 1970s. This study's results implicated biased reporting skewing the public view towards women in sport at the hand of the NCAA. If this occurred not only at Penn State in a non-athletic setting, and also occurred on a national level with women in sport, how did the disjointed nature of the media's primary source access and what occurred affect others perceptions of coeducational activities across other college campuses?

It is important to relate this historical study to current literature and continuing trends in music education regarding the gendered nature of band. Elpus and Abril (2019) studied the demographic profile of high school music ensemble participation and reported that 52% of high school students who participated in high school band identified as male and 48% of students identified as female. Despite the efforts of more than 140 years of women's bands in America and the current data only showing a slightly higher male participation in band than female participation (Elpus & Abril, 2019), the contemporary band is still stereotyped as primarily masculine in nature (Sullivan, 2016). Despite the passage of Title IX's landmark legislation more

than 45 years ago, bands, particularly those at the post-secondary level, are still dominated by a culture of what Gould (2012) terms “hyper-masculinity.” According to Gould (2012), “hyper-masculinity...describes masculinity that is virtual, which is to say, not actual but nevertheless real” (p. 103). Today, the majority of band conductors in American bands are male, a gendered stereotyping and segregation is still prominent in the selection of band instruments, and a widely accepted “natural order” of masculine and feminine roles in relation to music and, in particular bands, still exists. (Gould, 2012, p. 101-103).

The masculine culture of band was apparent in the participants’ narratives during this study as evidenced by their desire to assimilate into the masculine culture of the Blue Band in 1973 and their almost desperate desire to “just be one of the guys.” However, current trends in music education research and literature support the implication that these cultural pockets of exclusion in the band world still exist for women today (Gould, 2012; Sullivan, 2016). The importance of connecting historical research regarding women in band to current music education research is paramount in understanding how we can move forward as a profession towards creating a culture of gender equality that is supported by narrative as well as quantitative data.

Conclusion and Implications for Future Research

This study examined the experiences of the first women instrumentalists to participate in the Penn State Blue Band after the enactment of Title IX in 1972. Emerging from examining the participants’ narratives in conjunction with historical archives, the participant’s assimilation in a coeducational marching band, the influence of their prior performance in high school marching band, conflicting reactions toward media portrayals of their experiences, and positive reflections of their director were key factors in their recollection of historical events during their first year as

a female member of a traditionally all-male musical organization. With the discussion topics of previously investigated historical parallels and the implications of inaccurate historical information due to biases present in the media's coverage of women at the time, further research is suggested to include the expansion of this study to other colleges and universities in order to compare and contrast experiences of women in the post-Title IX era. In addition, more comprehensive future research should include not only women's voices and narratives from the Title IX era, but also men's collegiate marching band narratives. In light of the participants' self-reflection of changing perceptions based on their own life experiences, the investigation of the longitudinal effects of Title IX on collegiate marching bands today would also be important to document.

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