

1989

## **A Survey of Alabama Band Directors Regarding Marching Band Competitions and Music Performance Achievement.**

Byron Leroy Dawes

*Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College*

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**A survey of Alabama band directors regarding marching band  
competitions and music performance achievement**

Dawes, Byron LeRoy, Ph.D.

The Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Col., 1989

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A SURVEY OF ALABAMA BAND DIRECTORS REGARDING  
MARCHING BAND COMPETITIONS AND  
MUSIC PERFORMANCE ACHIEVEMENT

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The School of Music

by

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to survey Alabama band directors regarding marching band competition involvement and music performance achievement of high school concert band students as measured by concert competition ratings at the district and state level. The study was a descriptive survey which involved a mailed questionnaire sent to Alabama public high school band directors. Concert band ratings were obtained from the state bandmaster's association which sponsors the concert competitions.

Results indicated that although certain aspects of band program related to marching competition involvement appeared to have some relationship to concert band, marching competition involvement apparently neither enhanced nor diminished music performance achievement as measured by concert competition ratings. It was found that less experienced band directors were involved in marching competition activity to a greater degree than directors with more teaching experience. Larger schools had higher mean ratings in concert competitions than smaller schools. Marching bands

that did not attend marching competitions played more arrangements on the field during the year than competitive marching bands. Concert bands that received high sightreading ratings played more arrangements on the field during marching season than bands that received lower sightreading ratings. Bands that participated in three or more marching competitions had higher percentages of brass and percussion players in the concert band than those reporting fewer marching competitions. Concert bands that did not attend concert competitions had higher percentages of brass and percussion players than those that attended concert competitions.

## CHAPTER 1

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The marching band is probably the most popular outdoor musical organization in the United States today. Traditionally, marching bands primarily have performed at school football games and parades. Because of this widely recognized association with such school and community events, the marching band has found a secure place in most high school music education programs.

Since the early 1970s, marching band activities have increased (Rockefeller, 1982) and bands have enjoyed widespread support (Elam, 1978). One major reason for this trend is an increase in the number of high school bands participating in marching band competitions (Rockefeller, 1982). Many situations exist in which the students, parents, school administration and community expect the band to enter marching band competitions and judge the success of the total band program (and band director) by the ratings, rankings, or trophies received at these events (Copenhaver, 1984; Naff, 1980).

Band directors disagree concerning the value of the marching band competition as an evaluative and

educational tool (Band Leadership Planning Conference, 1981). Music educators who support marching band contest activity point to the benefits to students attending these events. The opportunity to be evaluated by knowledgeable judges, seeing other groups perform, and certain extramusical benefits such as the encouragement of discipline, teamwork, responsibility, and motivation are a few of the values highlighted by contest proponents (Mason, 1985; Rockefeller, 1982). There is evidence, however, that many music educators do not value the contests as a vehicle for music learning. In a study by Rogers (1982), high school band directors were asked to rate the value of several aspects of marching band contests. Overall, the directors rated the musical aspect lowest.

The debate over marching competitions, however, is not confined to music educators. An article on marching bands and competition involvement appeared in the January 1982 National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin.

When called to account, it is the number one rating, the trophy, the "best of show" recognition that guarantee them [band directors] their jobs. Unfortunately, these things are not necessarily evidence of good music or good music education. (Pennington, 1982)

Although the controversy over the educational value of marching competitions is an active and

unresolved issue, these events have already become a prominent part of many high school instrumental programs (Croft, 1984; Greenstone, 1983). Rogers (1982) reported that 62% of the bands in his nationwide sample participated in marching band contests. In 1982, 1,111,000 students were enrolled in secondary school band programs in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 1984). Although no exact figures for current competition involvement are available, it is certain that a large number of students are participating in marching band contests--perhaps as many as 62% of the 1,111,000 band students enrolled in 1982. It is the responsibility of each high school band director to decide to what extent marching band competitions may be used to enhance the music achievement of band students.

At a time when every subject must demonstrate that it can make important contributions to the quality of children's lives, justifications for a large, expensive, time and energy consuming performance program had better be at a high level of educational respectability. (Reimer, 1970)

#### The Single Show Concept

One of the greatest influences on the growing popularity of marching band competitions has been the drum and bugle corps contests held each summer throughout the United States and Canada. The contest

performances of the corps are adjudicated by several judges who are responsible for specific areas of the show such as music performance, marching and maneuvering, and general effect or overall appeal. Because these "captions" are examined in minute detail, the corps must learn and rehearse a single show for several months to be successful in the contests (Greenstone, 1983).

Since many marching band contests have adopted corps-style adjudication standards and procedures (Greenstone, 1983), music educators frequently criticize the band competitions for contributing to the acceptance of the single show concept among high school bands. Typically, non-competitive bands prepare several shows per season. Directors of many competitive bands, however, follow the example of drum and bugle corps and teach one show per year and rehearse the same music and marching drill each week to enhance the band's chances of obtaining high ratings or rankings at marching competitions. Some bands present the same halftime show for up to four years (Moore, 1983).

Several arguments have been made in favor of rehearsing the same music over an extended period of time. Croft (1984) and Rockefeller (1982) reported that some proponents of the single show concept suggest



that rehearsing one show per year allows time for perfecting music performance and marching maneuvers. Opponents of the single show concept state that the students' sightreading ability and musical education in general suffer due to the lack of exposure to a variety and quantity of music (Bencriscutto, 1986; Snapp, 1980).

#### Brass and Percussion Emphasis

The fact that drum and bugle corps, by definition, do not include woodwind instruments has also had an effect on marching bands. Arrangers and composers of marching band music recently have been writing more challenging brass and percussion parts in an effort to imitate the powerful and popular sound of drum and bugle corps arrangements. Woodwind parts in these arrangements, however, are often technically simple and musically inconsequential (Anderson, 1982; Bencriscutto, 1986). Because of the lessened importance of woodwind parts in the corps-style band sound, the woodwind players are often recruited for the flag and rifle lines or are placed on the extreme side or "backstage" areas of formations to fill in or complete the designs (Anderson, 1982). Since these woodwind sections are rarely heard and the music written for them is not essential to the overall sound

of the ensemble, they are no longer a top priority when directors establish their marching band instrumentation.

The procedures described above may result in smaller and fundamentally weaker woodwind sections in some concert bands as well. Most band programs, especially in smaller schools, use the same personnel for marching and concert bands. Therefore, substandard woodwind performance and instrumentation imbalance in the marching band may cause serious problems in the overall instrumental music program.

Questions that arise here relate to over-emphasis on brass and denial of woodwinds in corps-style marching bands...and the general loss of sensitivity to sophisticated, classical-contemporary repertoire. Contests which require preparation that denies students' opportunities to cover varied literature, basics of music, and skill development must be questioned. (Bencriscutto, 1986)

#### Purpose of the Study

During the 1983 conference of the Southern Division of MENC, the Band Committee and Research Committee co-sponsored a session on "Attitudes toward Marching Band Competition." Following the presentation of research papers on the topic, participants agreed that marching competitions can be positive experiences as a part of a balanced band program, but overemphasis on competition can be detrimental. In addition,

further research was recommended "to determine the effects of competition . . . on development of musical skills" (Burnsed & Sochinski, 1983, p. 27).

This study sought to survey Alabama band directors regarding the relationship between marching competition involvement and music performance achievement of band students. In this investigation, music performance achievement was operationally defined as band concert competition ratings. Concert band ratings were chosen as indicators of music achievement because success in performing groups is usually measured in terms of the performance skills being taught such as tone quality, intonation, technique, musicality, and sightreading ability. Most standardized tests of music achievement, while valid and reliable measures of music reading and listening skills, in fact do not measure performance skills, which are the focus of most instrumental music teaching. Concert competition ratings are based on these performance skills and therefore were considered representative measures of musical achievement. In addition, two studies (Jarrell, 1971; West, 1985) have shown a significant positive relationship between concert competition ratings and music achievement test scores of band students.

Several research questions were developed in connection with the primary purpose of the study:

1. Is there a relationship between marching competition involvement of bands and certain attributes of their band directors?
2. Is there a relationship between music performance achievement of band students and certain attributes of their band directors?
3. Is there a relationship between marching competition involvement of bands and school enrollment?
4. Is there a relationship between music performance achievement of band students and school enrollment?
5. Is there a relationship between marching competition involvement of bands and the number of musical selections performed by the marching band?
6. Is there a relationship between music performance achievement of band students and the number of musical selections performed by the marching band?
7. Is there a relationship between marching competition involvement of bands and the instrumentation of the top concert band?

8. Is there a relationship between music performance achievement of band students and the instrumentation of the top concert band?

#### Definition of Terms

##### Marching band competition:

An event in which a marching band performs a field show to earn a rating (I, II, III, IV, or V) or to be ranked in relation to other bands. Parade and/or street drill competitions were not included in this study.

##### Corps-style marching band:

A band patterned after drum and bugle corps. The instrumentation of corps-style bands emphasizes brass instruments (usually bell-front for maximum sound projection) and expanded percussion sections which include mallet instruments, multiple pitched bass and tenor drums, and a variety of specialty percussion equipment as needed. Corps-style bands typically use soloists, small ensembles, and directional playing to produce contrasts in texture and dynamics.

Corps-style bands use highly sophisticated and precise drill transitions to move from one formation to another. The visual part of the show is stressed, with flag and rifle units adding color and movement to formations designed to mirror the music being played.

Auxiliaries:

The flag and rifle units of a corps-style band.  
Other groups such as twirlers, dancers, or drill teams  
may also be categorized as auxiliaries.

## CHAPTER 2

### RELATED RESEARCH

Although the educational value of marching band competitions continues to be debated, most of the arguments and opinions expressed by music educators and published in professional periodicals are not based on systematic research. Little research has been conducted to determine whether or not a relationship exists between marching competition involvement and music performance achievement of band students. In addition to examining marching band competition evaluation procedures and certain aspects of marching competition involvement, the literature reviewed in this chapter primarily deals with attitudinal studies and research concerning the relationship between musical achievement and music competition.

Oakley (1972) conducted a survey of adjudication forms used in evaluating marching band competition performances to determine the emphases of these events and their effectiveness as evaluative tools. The study consisted of an examination of the categories listed on the rating sheets obtained from marching competitions throughout the United States and Canada. A comparison was made of the percentages of total score assigned to

each of three categories: music performance, marching and maneuvering, and general effect or overall impact of the show.

Of the 24 adjudication sheets examined in Oakley's study, 12 assigned the music category less than 50% of the total score. Only two forms allotted more than 50% of the final score to music performance. In the marching category, Oakley found that marching precision (including alignment, uniformity, carriage, and step size) was responsible for 20% to 40% of the final score. The general effect category, including such subdivisions as variety, showmanship, audience appeal, and show design, was found to account for 10% to 40% of the final score, with 25% being the average weight assigned. Oakley concluded that all types of rating forms used in the evaluation of marching band performances allow for so much freedom in scoring that a band which receives low scores in the music caption could receive high ratings or rankings by excelling in non-musical categories.

The amount of rehearsal time needed to produce highly rated or winning band performances at marching competitions seems to have an effect on the number of shows that a band is able to perform in a season. Laib (1984) investigated the marching competition involvement of bands in north Georgia. For each band



in the study, the number of marching competition performances was compared with the number of different marching shows learned by the group during the school year. Of the bands in the sample, 76% participated in at least one marching competition during the school year studied. Results showed an inverse relationship between the number of competition performances and the number of different shows performed during the year. This relationship was consistent except at the point where the number of competitions decreased from one to zero. In this area, the number of shows declined.

Directors who participated in the Laib survey were also asked to classify their band programs as traditional-style, corps-style, or a mixture of the two. If the director described the style of his/her band as a mixture of corps and traditional, s/he was asked to check a percentage category that best described the marching band program. Sixty-three percent of the directors in the sample described their marching bands as at least 75% corps-style.

Laib concluded that: (a) the decline in number of shows reported as the number of competitions decreased from one to zero may be a result of non-competitive small or inexperienced groups which are not capable of performing several shows per year, (b) corps-style bands seem to be favored in marching competition

adjudication procedures, and (c) to be successful in competitions, bands are adopting the complex show design concepts and time-consuming rehearsal techniques of the drum and bugle corps, focusing on one show per year and allowing less time to teach new music and drill during the season.

#### Attitudinal Studies

Several research studies have investigated the attitudes and perceptions of various groups of people toward music competition. Franklin (1979) surveyed the attitudes of school administrators, band directors, and band students concerning various activities of school band programs. The activities selected for the study were concert band, football band, jazz band, all-state band, concert festival, marching festival, solo and ensemble festival, civic parades, sectional rehearsal, and summer band camp. Franklin found that all three groups viewed all activities as important parts of the total band program. Band directors' attitude ratings toward the activities were significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) than those of the administration or band students. Band students' attitude ratings toward the activities were significantly lower ( $p < .05$ ) than the ratings given by administrators and directors.

A study conducted by Head (1983) investigated attitudes toward musical activities of high school students in bands with directors using varying teaching emphases. The teaching emphases used in the study were described as: (a) contest or competition emphasis, (b) marching band emphasis, (c) emphasis on teaching basic musical skills, and (d) equal emphasis on marching and concert band activities. Head found no significant differences in attitude ratings among students in the four teaching emphasis groups. No significant difference was found in attitudes of students in bands with directors of varying age groups. However, there were significant differences in attitude ratings of students in bands whose directors differed in years of teaching experience and musical preference.

LaRue (1986) investigated the opinions that high school band members, directors, and members of parent booster groups hold regarding the value of competitive elements in the band program. Fifteen band programs with a major contest emphasis (students involved in six or more contests per year) and 15 bands with a minor contest emphasis (two or fewer contests per year) were randomly selected to serve as the sample. All schools were Illinois high schools with enrollments between 500 and 1500 students. A questionnaire was designed to obtain opinions from the students, parents, and

directors regarding outcomes of band participation and competition. The investigator concluded that although the degree of contest emphasis is not significantly related to the opinions of band directors regarding desired outcomes of band participation, band members and parents from major contest emphasis programs valued extrinsic outcomes more than did members and parents from minor contest emphasis programs. Band members from minor contest emphasis groups placed significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) value ratings on the development of broader musical skills and appreciations than students from major contest emphasis programs. LaRue found that the directors in the study, regardless of degree of contest emphasis, valued competitive elements as tools of motivation and esprit de corps and for the upgrading and maintenance of performance standards. Band students from minor contest emphasis programs placed significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) value ratings on the use of competitions to motivate band members to maintain performance standards than did students from major contest emphasis programs.

Fleming (1975) asked high school administrators and college- and high school-level band directors to respond to a survey concerning instrumental contests and festivals. The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of the three groups regarding

the musical and educational values and emphases of music competitions. Fleming found that bands in the southeastern United States emphasized music contests more than any other geographical region. Many of the college band directors surveyed felt that the contest show was usually the focus of the high school marching band season, and concert festival music was often the focus of concert band season. However, 85% of the high school directors responding stated that they did not focus on the marching contest show, and 91% indicated that they did not emphasize only concert festival music during concert band season. Fleming also reported that over 80% of high school directors in his nationwide survey indicated that all music competition ratings were of secondary importance when compared with maintaining the quality of the overall band program. Although the study suggested that most groups enter instrumental music competitions for sound educational reasons, the southeastern region reported more performing groups entering contests for the purpose of winning trophies than other regions.

Three studies were examined that dealt specifically with attitudes toward marching band contests. Burnsed, Sochinski, and Hinkle (1983a) investigated the attitudes of college band students toward their high school marching band competition

experiences. Results of the study suggest that college band students have a neutral attitude toward their high school marching competition experiences. Student attitude scores were positively correlated with the number of contests entered annually and the size of the student's band. A decline in attitude scores was found from freshmen to graduate students, suggesting that as students mature, their attitudes toward marching band competition become less positive. Percussionists and members of auxiliary units scored significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) attitude scores than brass and woodwind players. The researchers concluded that since percussion and auxiliary units are often judged separately from the band in most competitions, they tend to place higher value ratings on the contests.

In another study, Burnsed, Sochinski, and Hinkle (1983b) surveyed the attitudes of high school band students toward marching band competitions. The researchers found the students to have generally positive attitudes toward the contests. The number of contests entered annually and the size of the band were not correlated with the students' attitudes.

In a nationwide survey, Rogers (1982) investigated the attitudes of band directors, band members, parents, and principals toward marching band contests. Rogers found a significant ( $p < .05$ ) positive relationship

between attitude ratings and number of contests attended by the band. Positive correlations were also found between attitude ratings and school size and number of awards won at competitions. The band parents surveyed rated contests more valuable than did the students, and, in most categories, principals gave higher ratings to the events than did the band directors. When asked to rate the value of six aspects of marching contests, band directors rated the musical aspect lowest. Extramusical benefits such as discipline, self-esteem, and responsibility were given the highest ratings by the directors. When asked to give reasons for liking or disliking the contests, students gave almost entirely non-musical reasons. Rogers concluded that low musical value ratings and the scarcity of responses related to musical aspects of contests indicate that marching band competitions are not perceived as primarily musical events.

In addition to the nationwide survey, the Rogers study included a closer examination of certain aspects of contest-active bands. Rogers found a negative relationship between the number of contests attended and the number of different marching shows prepared. Band directors interviewed agreed that preparing one show per season was necessary if the band was to be successful in competitions. Some directors expressed

concern that the single show concept limited the amount of literature performed and hampered the development of sightreading skills of the students. Rogers also found that band programs categorized as moderately contest-active (three or four contests per year) seemed to be more balanced than programs reporting low contest involvement (one or two contests) or high contest involvement (five or more contests). Moderately contest-active bands reported the highest number of concert band performances each year. Also, students in these bands were more involved in other music classes and private lessons than students in bands categorized as less competitive or more highly competitive.

#### Musical Achievement and Contests

The evaluation of musical performance through auditions and contests is a topic of interest at this point in the review of literature. Since the present study used performance ratings as measures of musical achievement, two studies which investigated performance evaluation reliability were reviewed.

Fiske (1975) recorded performances of high school trumpet players auditioning for an all-state band. Brass and non-brass specialists were asked to evaluate each performance giving separate grades for intonation, rhythm, technique, interpretation, and one overall



rating. The judges were then reassigned as wind and non-wind specialists and asked to evaluate the performances again. Fiske reported that there appears to be little relationship between judge consistency and area of specialization. Research results also suggested that overall ratings are the most reliable evaluations given by the judges.

Burnsed, Hinkle, and King (1985) investigated performance evaluation at three district concert festivals. Adjudicators at the events used the Concert Band and Orchestra Adjudication Form available from the Music Educators National Conference. Evaluation captions included tone, intonation, technique, balance, interpretation, musical effect, and other factors. An overall final rating represented by a Roman numeral was given to each ensemble. Results showed the internal consistency of the form to be very good. Although there were some judge disagreements on captions of the rating form, no significant disagreements occurred among judges on final ratings. The researchers concluded that most judges rate ensembles by the overall effect of the performance, and the use of an overall effect rating is the most reliable and efficient procedure for evaluating concert band performances.

Three dissertations investigated the relationship between musical achievement and competition involvement of high school band students. Although the studies did not deal specifically with marching band contests, the findings are of importance to the present study.

Temple (1973) compared the musical achievement scores and sightreading ability of band students in outstanding competitive bands with the achievement scores and ability of students in outstanding non-competitive bands. Results indicated no significant differences between the competitive and non-competitive bands when comparing sightreading scores of the students. When comparing the musical achievement scores of the two groups, students in non-competitive bands scored significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) on the Colwell MAT than students in competitive bands. The researcher concluded that competition involvement did not enhance students' musical achievement. Temple also found that directors with more extensive educational backgrounds had students with higher sightreading scores. Results also indicated a significant ( $p < .05$ ) relationship between the teaching experience of the director and the music achievement scores of band students. The size of the school did not significantly affect the test scores.

West (1985) studied the effect of performance success on the musical achievement of band students. The Long-Hoffer Musicianship Test was used to measure achievement, and performance success was measured by ratings given at concert band competitions and solo and ensemble festivals. West found significant ( $p < .05$ ) differences in the music achievement test scores of students in bands receiving different concert competition ratings. Students in bands achieving higher concert competition ratings generally scored higher than students in bands receiving lower ratings. West also found significant ( $p < .05$ ) differences in musical achievement test scores among students in differing levels of participation and success in solo and ensemble festivals. The researcher concluded that performance success appears to have a substantial effect on musical achievement.

A study by Jarrell (1971) investigated the musical achievement scores of band students with relationship to teacher methods and student activities. Jarrell used a test of aural discrimination to determine musical achievement. Results indicated that students from bands receiving higher district concert contest ratings scored significantly higher ( $p < .01$ ) on the test than students from bands receiving lower concert contest ratings. Significant ( $p < .01$ ) positive

relationships were also found between musical achievement and the following variables: (a) sightreading ratings at competitions, (b) a greater amount of rehearsal time devoted to sightreading, and (c) all-state band participation. Significant ( $p < .01$ ) negative relationships were found between musical achievement and: (a) number of weeks devoted to concert contest preparation, (b) number of weeks devoted to marching band activities, and (c) number of marching band performances.

A study by Hales (1961) investigated music reading programs and performance activities of high school choruses. Since competitive marching bands place great emphasis on performing, this study is relevant to the present research. Results indicated that few choral directors considered music reading instruction to be an important part of daily rehearsals. Hales concluded that overemphasis on performance is a major factor in limiting the amount of rehearsal time devoted to music reading instruction.

#### Summary

As far as can be determined, the relationship between marching band competition involvement and music performance achievement of band students has not been investigated directly. However, much information

related to the topic can be gathered from the research discussed in this chapter. Briefly summarized, the preceding research reveals: (a) there is an emphasis on non-musical aspects of performance at marching band competitions (Oakley), (b) many bands have adopted corps-style innovations and the single show concept to ensure success at marching band competitions (Laib), (c) various groups of people have different opinions of the musical and educational values of marching band contests (Franklin, Head, LaRue, Fleming, Burnsed et al., Rogers), (d) overall ratings appear to be reliable evaluations of band and individual performances (Fiske, Burnsed et al.), (e) conflicting research exists concerning music competition involvement and music achievement of band students (Temple, West, Jarrell), and (f) overemphasis on performance is a major factor in limiting the amount of rehearsal time spent on music reading activities (Hales).

The studies by Fiske and Burnsed et al., mentioned above, are noteworthy in that they support the use of concert contest ratings as a reliable measure of group performance skill and music achievement, as defined in Chapter 1. The findings of West (1985) are likewise particularly relevant in that they reveal a positive relationship between standardized music achievement test scores and concert competition ratings. This

further supports the use of concert competition ratings  
as indicators of musical achievement.

## CHAPTER 3

### DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The study was a descriptive survey which involved a mailed questionnaire sent to high school band directors and concert competition ratings obtained from the state bandmaster's association. Alabama public high schools were chosen as the population for the study. The number and variety of marching band competitions held throughout the state each fall provide ample opportunities for marching bands to compete. Most marching competitions in Alabama are sponsored by band booster organizations as fund raising activities, or by colleges and university band departments as public relations and recruiting endeavors. No marching competitions are sponsored by state music education organizations.

Like other states throughout the South, Alabama has district- and state-level concert band competition festivals. These events are sponsored by the Alabama Bandmaster's Association, which is an affiliate of the Music Educators National Conference. The state is divided into eight districts, with each district sponsoring a concert competition festival. Bands attending these competition festivals are given a

divisional rating by each of the three adjudicators and a single "overall" divisional rating based on the ratings given by each adjudicator. Only bands receiving an overall rating of "I" (one) at the district festival are recommended to the state competition festival. Bands at the state festival are given divisional ratings by each of the three adjudicators for the prepared program, and a single divisional rating for sightreading is given by a fourth adjudicator. An overall divisional rating based on the four single ratings is then assigned.

Although the band programs and competition activities in Alabama are not atypical of those found in other areas of the South, the results of this study are not intended to be generalized to band programs throughout the United States.

#### Procedure

The study investigated attributes of band directors and characteristics of schools and band programs in Alabama. The name and address of each public high school with a band program was obtained from the Alabama Department of Education. A brief questionnaire, constructed in consultation with members of the research committee, was mailed with a stamped addressed return envelope to each of the 330 schools on



the address list. The questionnaires were mailed on March 20, 1986, and within four weeks, 182 (55%) of the band directors had completed and returned the forms. In order to increase the percentage of returns, 148 questionnaires were mailed to those subjects who did not return the initial questionnaire. Additional return envelopes, postage, and questionnaires were included with a follow-up letter. Returns from the second mailing resulted in a total return of 238 questionnaires, which is a response rate of 72%. Questionnaires and cover letters are reproduced in Appendix A.

District concert competition festival ratings and state concert competition festival ratings were obtained directly from the Alabama Bandmaster's Association.

The data collected for this study involved primarily the 1985-1986 academic year.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to survey Alabama band directors regarding the relationship between marching band competition involvement and music performance achievement of high school concert band students. A questionnaire completed by each band director provided information about the director, school, band program, and the number and type of marching band competitions attended. Information about district- and state-level concert competition ratings was provided by the Alabama Bandmaster's Association. Data obtained from the questionnaire and concert competition reports were summarized and comparisons were made to determine whether or not aspects of marching band competition involvement had any relationship to music performance achievement of concert band students.

As was reported in the previous chapter, the survey of public high school band directors in Alabama elicited responses from 238 of the 330 high schools listed by the Alabama Department of Education as having band programs. All percentages reported are adjusted so that missing values resulting from incomplete questionnaire responses are not included.

Every Alabama Bandmaster's Association district was represented.

School enrollment was reported according to the categories used by the Alabama Bandmaster's Association. The frequencies and percentages of participating schools in each category are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF QUESTIONNAIRE  
RESPONSES BY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

ENROLLMENT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
0-299	72	30.25
300-499	60	25.21
500-749	39	16.39
750-999	24	10.08
1000-1499	33	13.87
1500+	10	4.20

### Description of Band Directors and Band Programs

Of the band directors responding, 86.3% were male and 13.7% were female. The ages of the respondents ranged from 22 to 56, with 34 being the average age. Directors reported an average of 10.8 years experience in teaching high school band. Few directors had earned doctoral (.8%) or specialist (6.7%) degrees, while 48.8% listed the masters degree and 43.7% listed only the bachelors degree. Most directors (66%) indicated a brass instrument as their major instrument, 27% listed a woodwind instrument, 5% listed percussion, and the remaining 2% listed keyboards, strings, or voice. The major instruments most frequently listed were trumpet (30.4%), trombone (16%), clarinet (11.4%), and saxophone (10.6%). Few directors (10.1%) reported any playing, teaching, or administrative experiences with drum and bugle corps.

Band directors reported that the number of instrumentalists involved in marching band ranged from 15 to 245 with a mean of 71 players. The number of instrumentalists in the top concert band ranged from 15 to 164, with a mean of 61. Ninety-seven percent of the directors reported that all students who played in the top concert band also participated in the marching band. Band directors reported that

the number of musical arrangements performed on the field during the entire football season ranged from 3 to 32, with a mean of 7.8.

Table 2

FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF SCHOOLS ATTENDING  
MARCHING COMPETITIONS

NUMBER OF CONTESTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
0	32	13.1
1	46	19.4
2	70	29.5
3	54	22.8
4	28	11.8
5	4	1.7
6	3	1.3
7	1	0.4

Directors reported that 86.9% of high school bands attended marching competitions during the 1985-1986 school year. The number of marching competitions attended ranged from zero to seven with an average of 2.1. Table 2 contains the numbers and percentages of schools reporting levels of competition involvement.

The total number of ranking-type marching contests attended ranged from zero to six, with a mean of .8. Directors reported an average of 2.12 marching competitions attended during the 1984-1985 school year and a mean of 2.14 marching competitions during the 1983-1984 year.

Of the bands involved in this survey, 167 (70.6%) attended district concert competition festival, and 73 (30.7%) attended state concert competition festival. Numbers and percentages of schools receiving ratings at district- and state-level concert competitions are reported in Table 3.

Table 3  
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF CONCERT COMPETITION  
RATINGS

OVERALL RATINGS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
District Concert Competition		
I	98	58.3
non-I	69	41.7
State Concert Competition		
I	21	28.8
II	42	57.5
III	10	13.7
Sightreading		
I	17	23.3
II	36	49.3
III	20	27.4

Note. Ratings for district concert competition were reported by the Alabama Bandmaster's Association as first division (I - recommended to state) and second division and below (non-I - not recommended to state). Ratings for state competition, including sightreading, were reported as I (superior), II (excellent), III (good), and IV (fair). No overall division IV ratings were given at the festivals during the year of this particular study.

### Marching Competition Involvement and Music Achievement

The primary purpose of this study was to determine whether or not there is a relationship between marching competition involvement and music performance achievement of band students. Concert band competition ratings at the district and state level were used as indicators of music performance achievement.

At the district level concert competition, scores were reported as I (one--recommended to state competition), or non-I (non-one--not recommended to state competition). Of the 238 schools that participated in the study, 167 attended district concert competition, with 98 receiving ratings of "I" and 69 receiving "non-I" ratings. District competition results were then compared with the number of marching band competitions reported by the directors on the questionnaires (Table 4). Only slight differences were found among the groups. Bands receiving division I ratings at district concert competition reported a slightly higher mean number of marching competitions (2.23) than bands receiving non-I ratings (2.13) and those that did not attend concert competitions (2.00). A higher



percentage of bands that reported three or more marching competitions attended concert competitions than bands reporting lower levels of marching competition involvement.

Seventy-three bands in the study that were eligible and attended state concert competition were compared regarding their level of marching competition involvement and state competition ratings (Table 4). Bands in the division I rating group reported a lower level of marching competition involvement than bands receiving division II or division III ratings. Bands in the division II rating group reported the highest level of marching competition involvement.

The sightreading ratings of the bands that attended state concert competition were then compared with their marching competition levels (Table 4). Overall, bands receiving division I sightreading ratings attended fewer marching band competitions than bands receiving division II ratings. However, bands in the division III rating group in sightreading reported the lowest level of marching band competition involvement.

Table 4

FREQUENCIES AND MEANS OF MARCHING COMPETITIONS BY  
CONCERT BAND RATINGS

MARCHING COMPETITIONS	0	1	2	3	4+	MEAN
DISTRICT						
I	10	18	28	27	15	2.23
Non-I	12	13	16	16	12	2.13
Did not attend	10	15	26	11	9	2.00
% attended						
District	68.75	67.4	62.9	79.6	75.0	
STATE						
I	2	7	7	4	1	1.76
II	3	5	13	14	7	2.40
III	3	1	2	1	3	2.00
SIGHTREADING						
I	2	5	4	4	2	1.94
II	1	5	13	11	6	2.44
III	5	3	5	4	3	1.85

### Attributes of Directors

Data were examined to determine if a relationship existed between certain attributes of band directors (gender, college degrees, major instrument family, age, and teaching experience) and the number of marching band competitions attended (Table 5). Only a slight difference in means of marching band competitions attended was noted when male and female band directors were compared (2.14 and 2.06 respectively). Directors who listed bachelors or specialist degrees as highest degrees attained reported slightly higher levels of marching competition involvement than directors listing masters or doctoral degrees. Of the directors who responded, those who listed a brass instrument as their major instrument reported more marching competition involvement than directors who listed majors in other instrument families. The mean age and mean teaching experience level of directors who reported no marching competition involvement were found to be higher than directors who attended marching competitions. The lowest means in age and experience were found in the categories of directors who reported three or four or more marching competitions.

Table 5

FREQUENCIES AND MEANS OF MARCHING BAND COMPETITIONS  
BY BAND DIRECTOR ATTRIBUTES

MARCHING COMPETITIONS	0	1	2	3	4+	MEAN
SEX						
M	27	41	58	46	33	2.14
F	5	5	12	7	3	2.06
DEGREE						
Bachelors	12	23	28	19	22	2.25
Masters	18	19	38	30	11	2.01
Specialist	2	3	3	5	3	2.31
Doctorate	0	1	1	0	0	1.50
INSTRUMENT FAMILY						
Brass	19	32	39	38	27	2.21
Woodwind	12	9	23	13	8	2.00
Percussion	1	3	5	2	1	1.92
Other	0	2	2	1	0	1.80
MEAN AGE OF DIRECTOR						
	37.41	34.14	35.01	32.92	33.33	
MEAN EXPERIENCE OF DIRECTOR						
	13.00	10.57	10.94	9.99	10.06	

When comparisons were made between director attributes and district concert band ratings (Table 6), very little difference was found between the male and female groups. However, a relationship was found between the college degree level of the directors and district rating. Bands whose directors reported masters and doctoral degrees as highest degrees earned had higher mean ratings at the district level than bands whose directors reported bachelors or specialist degrees as highest degrees earned. Thirty-seven percent of the directors reporting the bachelors degree as the highest level of education did not attend concert band competitions, while directors who listed masters, specialist, and doctoral degrees had lower percentages of non-attendance (24%, 25%, and 0% respectively). Bands whose directors reported a brass instrument as their major instrument had a higher mean rating at district concert competition (1.37) than woodwind majors (1.49), percussion majors (1.57), or directors listing other instruments (1.67). The mean age and mean experience level of directors of bands that received non-I ratings at district concert competition were lower than directors in the division I rating group and directors who did not attend concert competition.

When attributes of band directors were compared regarding state concert competition and sightreading mean ratings (Table 6, continued), little difference was found between male and female directors (male = 1.84, female = 1.90, state; male = 2.05, female = 2.00, sightreading). At the state level, mean concert and sightreading ratings were highest for bands whose directors had doctoral degrees. Lowest mean state and sightreading ratings were reported for bands whose directors listed the specialist degree as highest degree attained. Bands whose directors listed a brass instrument as their major instrument had higher mean state competition and sightreading ratings than bands whose directors listed woodwind, percussion, or other instruments. The mean age and experience level of directors of bands that received division II ratings in state concert competition and sightreading were lower than directors in the division I and division III groups.

Table 6

FREQUENCIES AND MEANS OF CONCERT COMPETITION RATINGS  
BY BAND DIRECTOR ATTRIBUTES

DISTRICT COMPETITION	I	NON-I *	DID NOT ATTEND	MEAN
SEX				
M	86	57	62	1.40
F	12	11	9	1.48
DEGREES				
Bachelors	29	36	39	1.55
Masters	61	27	28	1.31
Specialist	6	6	4	1.50
Doctorate	2	0	0	1.00
INSTRUMENT FAMILY				
Brass	70	40	45	1.37
Woodwind	24	23	18	1.49
Percussion	3	4	5	1.57
Other	1	2	2	1.67
MEAN AGE OF DIRECTOR				
	35.29	32.15	35.44	
MEAN EXPERIENCE OF DIRECTOR				
	11.83	8.85	11.18	

\* Non-I ratings at the District level were assigned a value of "2" for calculating purposes.

Table 6 continued  
 FREQUENCIES AND MEANS OF CONCERT COMPETITION RATINGS  
 BY BAND DIRECTOR ATTRIBUTES

	STATE RATINGS				SIGHTREADING			
	1	2	3	MEAN	1	2	3	MEAN
SEX								
M	20	33	10	1.84	15	30	18	2.05
F	1	9	0	1.90	2	6	2	2.00
DEGREE								
Bachelors	6	11	3	1.85	3	12	5	2.10
Masters	12	29	6	1.87	13	21	13	2.00
Specialist	1	2	1	2.00	0	2	2	2.50
Doctorate	2	0	0	1.00	1	1	0	1.50
INSTRUMENT FAMILY								
Brass	19	27	5	1.73	15	26	10	1.90
Woodwind	1	14	4	2.16	2	9	8	2.32
Percussion	1	0	1	2.00	0	1	1	2.50
Other	0	1	0	2.00	0	0	1	3.00
MEAN AGE OF DIRECTOR								
	36.00	34.33	35.60		36.00	33.33	37.10	
MEAN EXPERIENCE OF DIRECTOR								
	12.79	10.36	12.00		13.09	9.89	12.25	



### School Enrollment

Data were examined to determine if a relationship existed between school size and the number of marching band competitions attended. School size was labeled as S (small--0-299 students), M (medium--300-749 students), and L (large--750+ students). Frequencies and means of contest involvement by school size are found in Table 7.

In each school enrollment category, 87% of bands in the study attended at least one marching competition. Although bands from large schools reported a slightly lower mean number of marching competitions attended, the mean number of marching competitions was little more than two for all three categories.

District, state, and sightreading ratings are reported by school size in Table 8. Eighty-two percent of bands in the large high school category participated in concert competitions, compared with 70% of bands in the medium enrollment category and 60% of bands in the small enrollment category. A comparison of mean concert competition ratings indicated that bands from large schools received higher ratings (district = 1.27, state = 1.59, sightreading = 1.86) than bands from medium (district

= 1.48, state = 2.07, sightreading = 2.18) or small schools (district = 1.50, state = 1.94, sightreading = 2.13).

Table 7

FREQUENCIES AND MEANS OF MARCHING COMPETITION  
INVOLVEMENT BY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT CATEGORIES

-----			
- - - - -			
SCHOOL			
ENROLLMENT	S (0-299)	M (300-749)	L (750+)
- - - - -			
MARCHING			
COMPETITIONS			
0	9	13	9
1	12	18	15
2	22	28	20
3	18	24	12
4+	10	15	11
- - - - -			
MEANS	2.10	2.08	2.01
- - - - -			
-----			

Table 8

FREQUENCIES AND MEANS OF CONCERT COMPETITION RATINGS  
BY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT CATEGORIES

-----			
-----			
SCHOOL			
ENROLLMENT	S (0-299)	M (300-749)	L (750+)
-----			
DISTRICT			
I	22	36	40
Non-I	21	33	15
Did not attend	29	30	12
-----			
MEAN RATINGS	1.50	1.48	1.27
-----			
-----			
STATE			
I	2	6	13
II	13	14	15
III	1	8	1
-----			
MEAN RATINGS	1.94	2.07	1.59
-----			
-----			
SIGHTREADING			
I	2	6	9
II	10	11	15
III	4	11	5
-----			
MEAN RATINGS	2.13	2.18	1.86
-----			
-----			

# Number of Musical Selections Performed on the Field

Means were computed to determine whether or not differences existed among bands reporting various degrees of marching competition activity with regard to the total number of musical selections performed on the field during the marching season (Table 9). Bands that did not attend marching competitions averaged a higher number of selections played on the field (11.10) than bands reporting marching competition involvement. Bands that attended one or two marching competitions played an average of almost eight selections during the season while bands that reported higher levels of marching competition involvement averaged almost seven selections.

Table 9

## MEAN NUMBER OF MUSICAL SELECTIONS PERFORMED ON THE FIELD DURING MARCHING SEASON BY CATEGORIES OF MARCHING COMPETITION INVOLVEMENT

MARCHING COMPETITIONS	N	MEAN NUMBER OF SELECTIONS PERFORMED
0	32	11.10
1	46	7.80
2	70	7.76
3	54	6.78
4+	36	6.86

When concert ratings were compared with the number of selections performed on the field (Table 10), only slight differences were observed at the district level. At the state level concert competition, bands in the division III rating group had a higher mean number of musical selections performed (8.80) than did bands in the other rating groups (I = 8.10, II = 7.83). In the sightreading ratings, however, bands in the division I rating group averaged more selections performed on the field during the marching season (8.71) than bands that received lower ratings (II = 7.86, III = 7.80).

Table 10

MEAN NUMBER OF MUSICAL SELECTIONS PERFORMED ON THE  
FIELD BY CONCERT COMPETITION RATINGS

CONCERT RATINGS	N	MEAN NUMBER OF SELECTIONS PERFORMED
DISTRICT		
I	98	7.85
Non-I	69	7.90
Did Not Attend	71	7.79
STATE		
I	21	8.10
II	42	7.83
III	10	8.80
SIGHTREADING		
I	17	8.71
II	36	7.86
III	20	7.80

### Concert Band Instrumentation

Since competitive marching bands often emphasize brass and percussion instruments, this study sought to determine whether or not the top concert band instrumentation reflected this emphasis. For each band, the number of concert band students who play brass or percussion instruments was totaled and a percentage was calculated. Each category of marching competition involvement was compared regarding the percentages of brass and percussion players in the top concert band (Table 11). Overall, bands participating in three or more marching competitions had higher percentages of brass and percussion players in the top concert band (over 50% brass + percussion) than did bands reporting lower marching competition involvement (under 50% brass + percussion)

Table 11

MEAN PERCENTAGES OF BRASS AND PERCUSSION PLAYERS IN  
THE CONCERT BAND BY MARCHING COMPETITION CATEGORIES

MARCHING COMPETITIONS	N	MEAN PERCENTAGE OF BRASS AND PERCUSSION PLAYERS
0	32	46.25
1	46	48.24
2	70	47.71
3	53	51.23
4+	36	50.81

The percentages of brass and percussion players in the concert band were compared with concert competition ratings to determine if a relationship existed between instrumentation and concert ratings (Table 12). It was found that bands that did not attend district concert competition had higher percentages of brass and percussion players than bands that attended.

When state concert competition ratings were compared, bands receiving a rating of III had lower percentages of brass and percussion players than bands receiving higher ratings. A comparison of sightreading ratings and percentages of brass and percussion players revealed that lower rating groups reported lower means of brass and percussion players.



Table 12

MEAN PERCENTAGES OF BRASS AND PERCUSSION PLAYERS IN  
THE CONCERT BAND BY CONCERT COMPETITION RATINGS

CONCERT RATINGS	N	MEAN PERCENTAGES OF BRASS AND PERCUSSION PLAYERS
DISTRICT		
I	98	47.38
Non-I	69	48.09
Did Not Attend	71	51.69
STATE		
I	21	46.38
II	42	49.14
III	10	42.80
SIGHTREADING		
I	17	49.41
II	36	47.50
III	20	45.80

### Summary

In summary, it was found that bands that received division I ratings at district concert competition reported a slightly higher level of marching competition involvement than bands that received non-I ratings and bands that did not attend concert competitions. However, bands that earned division I ratings in state concert competition averaged fewer marching competitions than bands that received lower ratings. Although bands that received division I sightreading ratings reported lower marching competition involvement than bands in the division II category, bands that received division III ratings in sightreading reported the lowest level of marching competition involvement.

A comparison of certain director attributes and marching band competition involvement revealed that directors who reported bachelors or specialist degrees as highest degrees attained attended more marching competitions than those in the masters and doctoral degree categories. Band directors who listed a brass instrument major reported a higher level of marching band competition involvement than those who listed major instruments in other instrument families. Directors who attended no marching competitions had the highest mean age and

teaching experience level, while the lowest mean age and experience level was reported by directors who attended three or more marching competitions.

Mean district concert competition and sightreading ratings were lower for bands whose directors reported bachelors or specialist degrees as highest degrees earned than bands with directors in the masters and doctoral degree categories. Directors who listed a brass instrument as their major instrument had higher district concert competition, state concert competition, and sightreading mean ratings than directors who reported major instruments in other instrument families. Younger and less experienced directors averaged more non-I ratings at district concert competition than older directors and those with more years of teaching experience. The mean age and experience level of directors in the division II categories in state competition and sightreading were lower than directors in the division I and division III rating groups.

Bands in different school enrollment categories reported similar levels of marching competition involvement. However, bands from large schools received higher concert competition and sightreading

ratings than bands from schools with smaller enrollments.

Comparisons made by level of marching competition involvement indicated that bands that did not attend marching competitions generally performed more selections on the field than bands that attended marching competitions. Similar means were reported by bands when district ratings were compared regarding the number of selections performed by the marching band. When state concert competition ratings were compared, bands in the division III rating group reported more musical selections performed on the field than bands that received higher ratings. In sightreading, bands in the division I rating group averaged more selections played on the field than bands that received lower ratings.

In comparing the percentages of brass and percussion players in the concert band by level of marching competition involvement, it was found that bands that participated in three or more marching competitions had higher percentages of brass and percussion players in the top concert band than did bands that reported lower levels of marching competition involvement. Concert bands that did not attend district concert competition had higher

percentages of brass and percussion players than bands that attended district. Bands receiving division III ratings at state concert competition had lower percentages of brass and percussion players in the top concert band than bands receiving division I and division II ratings. A comparison of sightreading ratings revealed that lower rating groups reported lower mean percentages of brass and percussion players.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The effects of marching competitions, corps-style innovations, and the single show concept on the music performance achievement of band students has been debated for several years in professional publications and at music education conferences. However, no apparent relationships were found between marching competition involvement and concert band ratings. Results from this study indicated that although similar means were reported by bands in division I and non-I rating categories at district concert competition regarding the number of marching competitions attended, bands receiving division I "superior" ratings at state competition reported less marching competition involvement than bands receiving lower ratings.

A possible explanation for the differences in results between the district and state levels may be found by examining the rating systems for district and state competitions. A band at the district level is assigned a rating of I if the adjudicators feel that the band should be recommended to state level competition. Ratings at state concert competition are assigned as follows: I (one) = superior, II

(two) = excellent, III (three) = good, IV (four) = fair. Because of this difference in rating systems, adjudication standards are considered higher at state concert competition than at district level competition. A performance receiving a division I rating at state competition is considered to be at a higher level than a performance receiving a division I rating at the district level. Therefore, it is possible that directors who thoroughly rehearsed one marching show and attended several marching competitions may have rehearsed three concert band pieces exclusively to a performance level just high enough to be recommended to state concert competition.

Because of the amount of rehearsal time spent on perfecting the marching contest show, opponents of marching competition involvement have expressed concern over the sightreading ability of students involved in contest-active marching bands. Results of this study indicated no consistent relationship between sightreading ratings and marching competition involvement of bands. Although bands in the division I sightreading category reported fewer marching competitions than bands in the division II category, the lowest level of marching competition involvement was reported by bands that received division III

sightreading ratings. The absence of a consistent increase or decrease among rating levels at state competition and sightreading in the degree of marching competition involvement suggests that in this study, marching competition involvement had no relationship to concert competition and sightreading ratings. The present study supports the research of Temple (1973) in which no significant differences were found between competitive and non-competitive bands when comparing the sightreading scores of students.

In interpreting these results, several factors were considered in connection with the primary research question. Other aspects of the band programs were examined to determine possible relationships with marching competition involvement and/or concert competition ratings.

#### Attributes of Directors

In the present study it was found that similar means were found for male and female directors regarding the number of marching competitions attended. When the educational levels reported by the band directors were compared, it was found that the mean number of marching competitions decreased at higher education levels with the exception of the



specialist degree level. It is possible to assume that because no consistent increase or decrease was found among the groups that the education level of the directors did not affect marching competition involvement. Another possibility is that the inconsistency can be explained by the fact that of the 16 directors that listed the specialist degree as highest degree attained, eight reported nonmusic specialist degrees. There is no existing literature to support or dispute these assumptions.

Directors who listed a brass instrument as their major instrument in college reported higher levels of marching competition involvement than directors who reported nonbrass major instruments. Since corps-style marching bands emphasize brass and percussion instruments, it seems logical that brass players would be more involved in marching competition activity than nonbrass players. An interesting finding is the relatively low level of marching competition involvement reported by percussion majors. Further investigation revealed that directors who listed percussion as their major instrument also reported the lowest concert competition activity.

When categories of marching competition involvement were compared regarding the age and

teaching experience of band directors, it was found that the mean age and experience level of directors who reported no marching competition involvement were higher than those directors who attended marching competitions. The lowest means in age and experience were reported in the categories of three or four or more marching competitions attended. These findings suggest that younger and less experienced band directors are involved in marching competition activity to a greater degree than older and more experienced directors. Although no literature exists to support or contradict this finding, one possible explanation for this could be that older and more experienced directors have found other less time consuming ways to motivate students and justify their programs.

When comparing male and female band directors, similar mean ratings were found in district, state, and sightreading competitions. Bands whose directors indicated a brass instrument as their major instrument received higher mean district, state, and sightreading ratings and had a higher percentage of attendance at concert competitions than bands whose directors reported major instruments in other instrument families. A possible explanation for this finding may be that since directors in the brass

instrument major category were found to be more contest active with their marching bands, competition success was stressed in their concert band programs as well.

When comparing district, state, and sightreading competition ratings with regard to the teaching experience of directors, results indicated that the mean teaching experience (in years) of directors in the division I category was higher than the other rating categories. Research by Temple (1973) is somewhat supportive of this finding, in that a significant relationship was found to exist between the teaching experience of directors and the music achievement scores of band students. In the same study, Temple also found that directors with more extensive educational backgrounds had students with higher sightreading scores. Results of the present study do not support this finding. Care must be used in comparing these results, however, due to the fact that in the present study sightreading scores were given at the state level only. Bands are allowed to attend state level concert competition only if they receive a division I rating at district competition. The selectivity of the bands receiving sightreading scores may have influenced the results.

In the present study, directors who had earned masters or doctoral degrees had higher percentages of division I ratings at district concert competition than directors who had earned bachelors or specialist degrees. This would seem to suggest that higher levels of education helped directors to prepare their bands for competition more adequately. However, only slight differences in mean ratings were found in state level competition and sightreading. Again, the selectivity of the bands that were eligible to attend state and sightreading competition may have influenced the results. An interesting finding is that the directors who reported specialist degrees produced lower mean ratings at district, state, and sightreading competition than directors who reported only masters degrees. A possible explanation for this may be that only 16 directors reported specialist degrees as highest degree attained, and eight of those degrees were in administration rather than music.

#### School Enrollment

An examination of the frequencies and means of marching competition involvement by school enrollment categories in Table 7 indicated that the number of competitions attended by bands was not affected by

school enrollment. This finding suggests the widespread acceptance of marching competitions among bands regardless of school size. A possible explanation for this is that most marching band competitions are structured so that bands compete in different classifications based on school enrollments, thus allowing each band to be judged "fairly" along with other bands in the same school enrollment categories.

When comparing school enrollment categories with concert competition ratings, results indicated that bands from schools with enrollments of 750 or more students received higher ratings overall at district and state concert competitions and in sightreading than bands from smaller schools. A possible explanation for these findings may be that bands from larger schools can be more select in choosing members for the top concert band than bands from schools with smaller enrollments. It is also possible that larger bands can "hide" the playing problems of less advanced students.

#### Number of Musical Selections Performed on the Field

Results indicated that marching bands reporting no marching competition involvement averaged a higher number of arrangements played on the field during

football season than bands reporting marching competition activity. This supports the findings of a study in which an inverse relationship was found between the number of marching competition performances and the number of different shows performed during the year (Laib, 1984). These findings suggest that competitive marching bands spend rehearsal time and performances perfecting the "contest show" rather than learning and performing new music and drill. Rogers (1982) reported that band directors who participated in his study agreed that doing a single show each year was necessary for bands to compete successfully in marching competitions. Findings of the present study seem to contradict statements made by directors reported in a study by Fleming (1975) in which 85% of band directors responding indicated that they did not focus on the contest show during marching season.

Music educators who oppose the single show concept often cite students' lack of exposure to a variety and quantity of music as detrimental to the development of sightreading skills. Results of the present study support this theory in that bands that received division I sightreading ratings averaged a higher number of selections performed on the field than bands that received lower sightreading scores.

Results indicated no consistent increase or decrease among district and state concert competition rating levels regarding the quantity of music performed by the marching band.

#### Concert Band Instrumentation

It was found that bands that attended three or more marching competitions had higher percentages of brass and percussion players in the top concert band than bands that reported fewer marching competitions. Although there is no existing research to support this finding, music educators have questioned the possible effects of the brass and percussion emphasis found in most competitive marching bands on the instrumentation of the concert band (Anderson, 1982; Bencriscutto, 1986). Several band methods textbooks include concert band instrumentation guidelines based on suggestions made by prominent wind conductors and committee reports of professional organizations such as the American School Band Directors Association and the College Band Directors National Association. These guidelines usually suggest that approximately 44-47% of the total number of concert band members should be brass and percussion players (Bollinger, 1979; House, 1965).

Because of the widespread popularity of corps-style marching bands and adjudication procedures (drum and bugle corps, by definition, include no woodwind instruments), band directors may have found that a higher percentage of brass and percussion players enhances a band's chances for success at marching competitions. Also, marching band music recently has been brass and percussion oriented, with woodwind parts becoming less important and less challenging (Anderson, 1982).

When concert competition ratings were compared regarding percentages of brass and percussion players in concert bands, data indicated that bands that did not attend concert competitions had higher percentages of brass and percussion players than bands that attended district and/or state competitions. A possible explanation for these findings is that band directors who do not attend concert competitions may not feel compelled to have balanced instrumentation in the concert band. Therefore, those directors may not attempt to "walk the fine line" between a powerful marching band sound and a well-balanced concert band instrumentation.



### Conclusions

Based on the results of the present study, it can be concluded that marching band competition involvement had no relationship to concert band competition ratings. Band directors in Alabama should be aware that marching competition involvement apparently neither enhances nor diminishes concert band performance ratings. It seems that the age, teaching experience, major instrument, and level of education of the band director had some effect on concert competition ratings.

Although marching competition involvement was not found to have a relationship to concert competition ratings, several findings related to marching competition involvement should be considered by band directors. Bands from schools in Alabama with larger enrollments received higher mean ratings at district and state concert competitions, possibly because larger enrollments enabled the directors to eliminate weaker players from the top concert band. In smaller schools where marching and concert band personnel were often the same, mean ratings were lower. Students in non-competitive marching bands were exposed to more music during marching season than students in competitive marching bands. Bands

that received division I ratings in sightreading played more arrangements on the field during marching season than bands that received lower sightreading ratings. Higher levels of marching competition involvement influenced concert band instrumentation. Bands involved in three or more marching competitions during the year had higher percentages of brass and percussion players in the top concert band than bands that attended two or fewer marching competitions. Bands that did not participate in concert band competitions reported higher percentages of brass and percussion players than bands that did attend concert competitions.

#### Implications for Future Research

Research is needed to investigate sightreading ability and music achievement of individual marching band students in bands of differing levels of marching competition involvement. A test such as the Watkins-Farnum Performance Scale should be administered to individual students in highly competitive and less competitive marching bands to objectively measure sightreading skills.

In the area of woodwind performance, studies need to be conducted investigating the level of skill development of woodwind players in competitive and

non-competitive marching bands. Information should be included in this research that would indicate whether or not woodwind players in competitive marching bands play their instruments or are moved to auxiliary units or brass and percussion instruments for marching season.

There is a need to study the goals and philosophies of band directors regarding the importance of marching band competitions and concert band competitions in the total band program. Directors should be surveyed to determine why more experienced directors are less involved in marching competition activity than less experienced directors. Research should be conducted to determine the reasons for low-level marching and concert competition involvement of band directors who report percussion as their major instrument.

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## APPENDIX

# QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SEX: M \_\_\_\_\_ F \_\_\_\_\_ AGE: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

## TEACHER PROFILE

1. Please complete the appropriate areas of the chart below.

DEGREE	MAJOR	COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	STATE	YEAR EARNED
Bachelor's				
Master's				
Specialist				
Doctorate				

2. What was your major instrument in college? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Have you ever been a member of a drum and bugle corps?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No If yes, number of years \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are you currently involved with a drum and bugle corps  
 (instructor, administrative personnel, etc.)?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No
5. Including this year, how many years have you taught  
 high school band? \_\_\_\_\_

## SCHOOL INFORMATION

1. What is the approximate enrollment of your high school?  
 Please DO NOT include middle school or junior high  
 grades in the total.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 0-299                  \_\_\_\_\_ 500-749                  \_\_\_\_\_ 1000-1499  
 \_\_\_\_\_ 300-499                  \_\_\_\_\_ 750-999                  \_\_\_\_\_ 1500 and over
2. What is the lowest grade in your high school?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Ninth \_\_\_\_\_ Tenth

(OVER)



THE BAND PROGRAM

77

1. What is the total number of instrumentalists in your marching band? Please DO NOT include auxiliary members.\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the total number of instrumentalists in your top concert band?\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do the students who are members of your top concert group also participate in marching band activities?  
\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No
4. After each instrument listed below, please write the number of students you have playing that instrument in your top concert band.

Flute/Piccolo\_\_\_\_\_

Tenor Saxophone\_\_\_\_\_

Oboe\_\_\_\_\_

Baritone Saxophone\_\_\_\_\_

Bassoon\_\_\_\_\_

Trumpet/Cornet\_\_\_\_\_

Bb Clarinet\_\_\_\_\_

French Horn\_\_\_\_\_

Alto Clarinet\_\_\_\_\_

Trombone\_\_\_\_\_

Bass Clarinet\_\_\_\_\_

Euphonium/Baritone\_\_\_\_\_

Contra-Bass Clarinet\_\_\_\_\_

Tuba\_\_\_\_\_

Alto Saxophone\_\_\_\_\_

Percussion\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many different musical arrangements did your marching band perform on the field this year?\_\_\_\_\_
6. How many adjudicated marching contests or festivals did your band participate in this school year? Please include in this total all field show marching events in which your band performed for ratings or ranking.\_\_\_\_\_

Of this total, how many events were ranking-type contests in which bands receive a numerical score and are ranked from first place to last place?\_\_\_\_\_

7. If known, please list the number of adjudicated marching events in which this band participated during the past two school years.

1983-84\_\_\_\_\_

1984-85\_\_\_\_\_



March 20, 1986

Dear Colleague:

Enclosed is a questionnaire that has been sent to every public high school band program in Alabama. The information obtained from this survey will be used in a study that I am conducting at Louisiana State University concerning certain aspects of band programs in the South. The information that you provide on this questionnaire will be considered highly confidential and will be coded to assure anonymity.

Having been a band director in the state of Alabama, I realize how busy you are. Every effort has been made to make your participation in this survey as convenient for you as possible. Since your contribution is so important to this study, I hope that you will take the five minutes necessary to complete both sides of the short questionnaire and return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.

Thank you for your time. Best wishes for success with your band program.

Sincerely,

Byron L. Dawes  
enclosures



*School of Music*  
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AND AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGE  
BATON ROUGE · LOUISIANA · 70803-2504  
504 388-3261

April 25, 1986

Dear Colleague:

A few weeks ago I mailed a questionnaire to high school band directors in Alabama. Most of the forms have been completed and returned, but I have not yet received any information pertaining to your program.

Having been a band director for several years, I realize that you are quite busy and the questionnaire may have come at an inconvenient time. I hope that this mailing comes at a more opportune time for you. Since your participation in this study is so important, I have enclosed another questionnaire and a self-addressed stamped envelope. The form requires very little writing and takes about five minutes to complete.

Your help will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Byron L. Dawes

enclosures

## VITA

Name: Byron LeRoy Dawes

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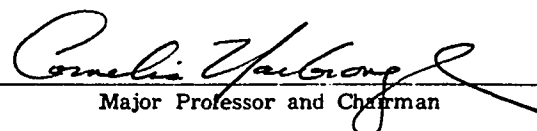
## DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Byron L. Dawes

Major Field: Music Education

Title of Dissertation: A Survey of Alabama Band Directors Regarding Marching Band Competitions and Music Performance Achievement

Approved:

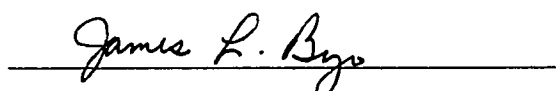
  
Major Professor and Chairman

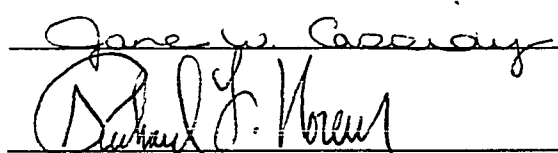
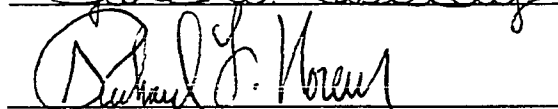
  
Dean of the Graduate School

### EXAMINING COMMITTEE:







Date of Examination: November 13, 1989