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An Oral History of Marching Band Traditions at Historically Black Colleges and Universities

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**An Oral History of Marching Band Traditions at Historically Black Colleges and
Universities**

A Thesis

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
Master of Music

in

The School of Music

by
Claire Ellen Milburn
B.A., Jackson State University, 2017
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This thesis is dedicated to all band directors at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

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Abstract

This study investigated the development of marching band traditions at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), as told through the rivalry between Southern University (SU) and Jackson State University (JSU). Marching bands at HBCUs developed a distinct style where pageantry is a priority. These bands have similar pre- and post- game traditions, and an overall spirit of fierce competition. This study is an oral history account taken from interviews with influential band directors from these programs. Band directors from JSU include Dowell Taylor, Paul Adams, Lewis Liddell, and Lowell Hollinger. These band directors all have established reputations as innovators and men with a storehouse of knowledge about the “Sonic Boom of the South” marching band. Band directors from SU include Paul Adams (taught at both universities), Lawrence Jackson, Nathan Haymer, and Kedric Taylor, for similar reasons.

This study includes brief histories of each band, including lesser-known insights from directors. Interviews reveal combinations of happenstance and careful planning that birthed traditions such as the famed pre-game “zero quarter” and post-game “fifth quarter” rituals that are now commonplace at HBCU football games. I triangulated stories through multiple accounts, and patterns emerged surrounding the intense rivalry between the programs at JSU and SU. I also investigated stylistic differences between bands in the Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC) and Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC), as well as the reasons behind these differences. Geographic positioning and cultural differences appeared to be the most relevant causes. Finally, I explored trends from the advent of YouTube and social media. Participants expressed both joy and frustration about these technologies, much of which relates to the uniquely fan-based and competitive world of HBCU marching bands. These stories inform modern music educators about the important role of competition.

Chapter 1. Introduction

Personal Vignette- “The game has not even started yet.”

The date is October 15, 2016, and I am about to march into the concrete behemoth that is Veteran’s Memorial Stadium for my last “Boombox Classic.” (See Appendix A: item 1) It is a warm, clear day, and fresh air fills my lungs as I stretch and adjust my thick wool uniform. The game today is the Super Bowl of the Southwestern Athletic Conference (SWAC), but not for the football teams—for the bands! The name itself “Boom-box” is a tribute to the nicknames of each marching band (Jackson State University’s “Sonic Boom of the South” and Southern University’s “Human Jukebox”). As the smoky smell of barbecue billows from the nearby parking lot, tailgaters scope out the scene. There is still over an hour before kickoff, but we, the Sonic Boom of the South, have arrived.

We arrived early to prevent what happened at this game in 2014 when our biggest rival band, the “Human Jukebox” of Southern University, set up in our stadium before we did. Visiting bands often strive to arrive before the Boom because the “away band” section of the bleachers puts them in position to play down towards the ramp while the home band marches by. Bands over the years have strived to overpower our drum cadences and throw us out of step as we march in. The thrill in the air is thick as the drum major blows his whistle, signaling our band to prepare to march in. Members check gloves, spats, and plume-topped hats before falling into position. With two tweets of the whistle, we respond “J-S-U, hey,” moving in sync to attention. It’s showtime.

Marching into the stadium, I see fans cheering us on and getting into place, with cell phones ready to record. We “swing and sway” to the tune of the Temptations’ “Get Ready,” per tradition of decades past. A signature tuba introduction announces Dowell Taylor’s arrangement of the song. From my position in the middle of the band, I hear the trombones on the front line, punctuating the stadium with chords. Space is cramped, and my shoulder brushes up against thick bushes as I belt out high Cs during the outro. Coming to the center of the horseshoe stadium, we cut down to single-file. The journey up the ramp and into the stands carries certain expectations. I don my “funk face” and kick my marching into high gear, as I strut up the ramp, performing a choreographed “ramp kick” at every turn. At the top of the ramp, my steps cut to a half time sway, as I journey past hundreds of Sonic Boom enthusiasts. As tradition dictates, approving alumni show their satisfaction with the band by lawlessly pelting us with blue and white pom-poms (See Appendix A: item 2). I hear people calling my name every step of the way, but I do not dare smile and ruin the illusion of the show. Once the band has filed into the proper places, I sit, remove my hat, and prepare for the battle ahead. The bleachers across from us are bare. My section leader turns to us, “See . . . they were too scared to show up early this year!” As customary in Sonic Boom tradition, we warm up with a few marches, including the quick “Barnum and Bailey’s Favorite,” infamous “Them Basses,” and familiar “Stars and Stripes Forever.” Finally, Southern University’s “Human Jukebox” enters the stadium.

First, the ladies known as the “dancing dolls” enter in white, sequined, two-piece leotards and white gloves, gracefully stepping to the beat of the drums. Then comes Southern’s drum line, known as the funk factory. The rest of the band follows,

showcasing the well-known “Jaguar Rock” marching style. The mere sight of the giant “S” on the chests of band members ignites fierce energy in the crowd on the Jackson side. As the band comes closer, our director Roderick Little brings our horns up. It’s wartime. My hands shift, gripping my weapon of choice—mellophone—and preparing for battle. As the Human Jukebox begins their ascent up the ramp into the stands, Mr. Little calls up Chaunte Moore’s “Who Do I Turn To,” which is a bold choice as Southern’s band is well known for their own arrangement of the tune. The song choice alone is an outright challenge, letting them know that we are declaring the first strike in this battle.

As we shower the stadium with sound, everyone in attendance goes crazy. The introduction packs a punch, with all brass sections playing above the “practical range” of the horn, producing a sublime symphony of strength and power. My section has been rehearsing syncing up our high D’s all week, and we let them fly. On both sides of me, faithful fans of the Jackson State crowd pump pom-poms to the beat of the song. On Southern’s side, fans laud their band for maintaining their marching tempo despite the invasion of sound from the Sonic Boom. As soon as we have finished “Who Do I Turn To,” Mr. Little calls off a current rap song, Drake’s “Summer Sixteen.” This tune is a band favorite, designed for “cranking”—a playing style that transcends dynamic contrast and calls for pure brass-induced wattage. The Human Jukebox is still filing in the stands, chanting “aye-oh” all the way, and striving to maintain composure. We send every ounce of energy into “Summer Sixteen,” and I can see the crowd is swept up in it. Built for cranking, our rap tune has scattered tuba and drum breaks. During the tuba breaks, my section mates and I hold up our horns, provoking Southern’s mellophone section. Other brass sections do the same, intermixed with dancing and rocking to the beat.

Finally, the Human Jukebox is set up and ready to answer our call. The head director, Nathan Haymer, holds his hands out, prompting a chorus of “ooohhh” from the band that can be heard all through the stadium. As his hands come together and then up, the band answers “ready,” and “up.” Four chordal punches rip through the stadium. Haymer has called off Snoop Dogg’s “Those Girls,” a powerful, though expected tune already in the Jukebox’s repository. The battle has officially begun, and a sea of 30,000 fans descends upon the stadium. Musicians and non-musicians alike in the crowd dole out impassioned critiques of song selection and execution. From my position just right of the center of the band, I hear a drunk fan sing along to Southern’s tune and a high school student inspecting the type of mouthpiece our section plays on, likely with a goal of emulating our sound.

We continue like this, trading songs back and forth, for several rounds. I think to myself that there is just nothing like the sound produced by these two bands. I know that both the Boom and the Jukebox can gracefully croon a ballad and crisply execute a geometrically thrilling halftime show. But this pre-game tradition, this so-called “zero quarter,” . . . is about power! Many bandsmen would quickly tire in a battle like this, but we train for it, with rehearsals routinely running six hours a day during the fall. Mr. Little knows that he has trained warriors. When Southern’s band brings shimmering golden horns up, ready to answer us, Little beats them to the punch by bringing in our staple tune, “Big Ballin,” before Southern can utter a note. While dancing during our tuba break, I can hear that Southern has started up their staple song, “IDGAF.” Not to be overpowered, our director brings the rest of the band back in earlier than normal to combat Southern playing on top of us. The silver bell of my horn moves in sync with my

section on every breath. Electric energy is all around me. We are all pushing to drown out the band seventy yards opposite us, and they are pushing back in kind.

Southern cuts out before we finish, and I swell with pride as our sound alone fills the stadium. After the cut-off, Southern hurls another song entitled “And Then What” at us, a slightly unexpected throwback tune. Southern showers us with sounds punctuated by gut-wrenching baritone leaps and trumpet screams. As I look down the metal bleachers, our drum majors are whispering among themselves, consulting with the band director about our next song selection. While I am trying to decipher what the decision is, I see heads turn to look at me, and I know. This is going to be the debut of my arrangement of Rick Ross’ “Purple Lamborghini.” Nearby bandsmen pat me on the shoulder or give me a fist bump, genuinely happy for me in this moment. Southern’s director Kedric Taylor cuts off the last note of “And Then What,” and Little quickly calls out an adagio “one, two, ready, NOW!” . . . The first Bb minor chord cuts through the air, and goosebumps speckle my arms. The crowd turns curiously towards us, anxious to evaluate the new addition to our book. During the tuba break, faces light up, and I know it’s well received. I groove to the beat of the tuba break with my band family, preparing for the final push. Our sound ignites the stadium.

As soon as Mr. Little cuts us off, Southern emphatically responds with Travis Scott’s “Tourist,” one of their most popular rap tunes from this season. However, referees are heading to the center of the field, and as Southern cuts off I hear an announcer over the loud speaker, “We ask both bands to hold their playing...” and we begrudgingly pause the battle so that the football game can begin. Southern may have gotten the last tune in, but this battle is far from over.

This is the college band experience at a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) football game. It is heated, electrifying, and spectacular. However, the game has not even started yet. Each time-out will be filled with melodies crafted to put the crowd on their feet, catering to young and old alike. Halftime draws fans *to* their seats, saving snack breaks for later. Each band has a signature entrance and has cultivated distinct nuances in marching style. Halftime shows seek to strike a balance between maintaining tradition and giving the crowd something new to watch. There is pageantry, elegance, and humor involved, and each performance will be posted online as soon as the band leaves the field. The rivalry is so pervasive that the third quarter is a time for instrument sections to battle it out independently. Battles get so intense that sections must be careful to adhere to NCAA rules about noise while the ball is in play. When the game seems to be over, thousands of fans know to stick around for the “fifth quarter,” an encapsulating showcase of musicianship and power involving both bands. The fifth quarter may last well into the night, as exiting the stadium first is taken as an admission of defeat. These traditions have formed over decades, influenced by distinguished directors of the past and present. In this paper, I uncover unreported origins of the unparalleled pageantry of HBCU marching bands, with a focus on the intense rivalry between the bands of Southern University and Jackson State University.

Chapter 2. Review of Literature

The following literature review is organized chronologically into the following sections:

a) post-Civil War rise of bands, b) wartime, c) Florida A&M University (FAMU) and William P. Foster, d) the public arena, and e) the 1960s onward. Much of this literature review is based on information about William P. Foster and his marching band program at FAMU. The lack of coverage and diversity in the literature surrounding this subject is evident in this review and indicates further study is needed.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 defines HBCUs as “institutions of higher learning established before 1964, whose principal mission was then, as is now, the higher education of Black Americans.” (McDonald, 2009, p. 7) The reconstruction period (approximately 1863-1877) is when many of these schools were founded. Notably, a few universities (Cheney, Lincoln, and Wilberforce Universities) were founded before the Civil War, offering education to freed black men and women in the North (Albritton, 2012). During the reconstruction period, a number of different organizations such as the Freedman’s Bureau, missionaries, philanthropies, churches, and various government initiatives established HBCUs (Walker, 2014).

Post-Civil War Rise of Bands

In American history, the end of war frequently coincides with an upswing in instrumental musicians (Lewis, 2003). Military groups build bands, and once a war has ended many of their instruments are available to non-military musicians. During the Civil War, black regiments formed bands and used them for recruiting. These bands turned New Orleans into “a hotbed of fine black brass bands” (Lewis, 2003, p. 21) during the reconstruction era. Lewis goes on to say that in this music scene, “one band would literally play another off the streets by playing louder or more brilliantly or with sweeter tones, much to the delights of the crowds” (Lewis, 2003, p.

21). Many black musicians from New Orleans moved to other parts of the country spreading the budding traditions of brass bands. This spurred interest and shift in the marching band traditions in America that had been slowly maturing since the Revolutionary War. Marching bands, primarily military-style, had been thoroughly incorporated into American society by the turn of the twentieth century (Lewis, 2003). McDonald states that during the late nineteenth century, “early college bands existed sporadically and a) were often associated with some military activity or b) operated as a social organization.” (McDonald, 2009, p. 12)

Wartime

World War I saw a boom for military musicians. During the war, the 369th Regiment, an all-black military band nicknamed the “Harlem Hellfighters,” was under the direction of Lieutenant J.R. Europe. The band gained much notoriety abroad, especially in France, for superb performances. When the musicians returned home, they typically toured with civilian bands and various road shows that had become popular during the vaudeville and minstrel eras. During the first quarter of the twentieth century, brass bands were well-liked, black military trained musicians were available, and wars brought an abundance of cheap instruments (Lewis, 2003). Primarily for these reasons, the marching band tradition began to flourish in African American communities. Black universities soon followed and recruited many musicians from popular groups. W. C. Handy joined the music faculty at Alabama A&M University (AAMU) in its early years. Handy’s autobiography notes that he composed music for his students that mixed classical and minstrel musical elements in order to appeal to white audiences while maintaining a distinct style (Rowley, 2013). Another important band during the early twentieth century was the program at FAMU. The program has attracted attention in the academic world, with two dissertations published in the last five years about their famous director, William P Foster. This

stands in stark contrast to the general lack of academic writings about American wind band directors of color (Rowley, 2013; McDonald, 2009; Walker, 2014; Malone, 1990; Thomas, 2001). One reason for this dearth could be because many African-American music students who lived in the South were only able to attend graduate schools in the North, requiring travel and additional monetary means (Walker, 2014).

In its early years, the FAMU's jazz band was its largest ensemble and nurtured legends such as Julian "Cannonball" Adderly and Nat Adderly. Leander Kirksey took over the program in 1930 and established one of the first scholarship programs for black college bands. Kirksey established relationships with local Florida schools that did not have music programs. He laid the foundation for nurturing and hiring FAMU band students in a pipeline that set music education for black students in Florida a step above many others of the time (Thomas, 2001).

Bands across America suffered a dramatic drop in enrollment during World War II due to the large droves of college-aged men sent to war (Thomas, 2001). At Tennessee State University (TnSU), there was a complete halt in band activities. However, some black veterans who fought in World War II were able to attend college through GI bill funds. Though the government denied benefits to many eligible black veterans, some still credit the GI bill with providing a foundation for the black middle class before the civil rights movement. Overall, enrollment at HBCUs increased during the decades before the civil rights movement. (McDonald, 2009).

The decades immediately following World War II represent the birth of the HBCU style of marching band. This is when the relatively young band programs of TnSU, FAMU, and JSU gained legendary and long-tenure band directors Frank T. Greer (21 years at TnSU), William P. Foster (52 years at FAMU), and William W. Davis (23 years at JSU) (McDonald, 2009; Walker, 2014). These figures took the time to nurture band identities. For example, William W. Davis

served as the arranger for the Cab Calloway big band immediately preceding his tenure at JSU. He frequently arranged for his marching band, cultivating a distinct sound (Bandmaster Chronology, n.d.). Frank T. Greer also contributed to the development of a distinct HBCU band sound with his arrangements for TnSu's band. McDonald notes that:

Music was scored in the upper ranges of the brass instruments in combination with a harmonic structure that produced a brilliant sound: a concept which seemed to evolve from Greer's experiences playing and arranging for big band jazz orchestras. (McDonald, 2009)

FAMU & William P. Foster

William P. Foster's obituary leads with asserting that any readers who watched any marching bands that weekend had probably seen a technique developed or inspired by Foster. He adopted a band of sixteen members in 1946, which grew to 100 members by 1950, and at its height had over 420 members (Kelderman, 2010). It should be noted that while the 100 member enrollment in 1950 is the reason the FAMU band was nicknamed "The Marching 100," many other bands, such as TnSU, were also called the "Marching 100" during this era. One hundred members was a standard, desired set up (McDonald, 2009). In Foster's 52 years at FAMU, he underwrote the cultivation of the distinct visual style of HBCU marching bands. His Marching 100 became known for animated drills, such as shooting a basketball through a hoop (Rowley, 2009). Some of these ideas were inherited from marching bands at predominantly white institutions, but Foster's exceptionality is verified in the following quote:

'While some of the marching bands in the Big Ten Conference used a high-stepping style,' Mr. Reid (Florida high school band director) said, 'Foster took it to the next level: making the musicians' step a little higher, the arc that they hung their horns a little wider.' (Kelderman, 2010)

Foster stated he believed bands should, "embody educational and cultural values which have meaning for the band members as well as spectators" (Walker, 2014, p. 23). His audience

was all black. In Jim Crow era America, mainstream society only mockingly displayed elements of black culture in dramatized, caustic blackface performances. William P. Foster himself was not allowed to participate in the band program of his alma mater, the University of Kansas. While Foster imitated bands like the University of Michigan, his innovation transformed the craft into something relevant to his audience (Walker, 2014).

Foster is recognized as one of the first band directors to incorporate dance into halftime shows (Lewis, 2003). He said his first contributions to the Marching 100's dance repository, "were simple crossovers while band members moved their instruments either 30, 45, 90, or 180 degrees" (Rowley, 2013, p. 47). The repertoire would grow over the next few decades, adapting to popular dance moves. Jacqui Malone says:

FAMU's dance repertory consists primarily of authentic jazz movements drawn from the rich storehouse of black-American vernacular dance. In the bands' routines we catch glimpses of the Charleston, Birdland, boomerang, mashed potatoes, Shorty George, monkey, chicken hop (from rhythm tap), twist, shimmy, and the famous Temptations' Walk. These dances flourished from the 1920's through the sixties (Malone, 1990).

Contrary to this, Foster maintained a program unmistakably born out of the symphonic band tradition. For example, FAMU has never had a separate dance group or majorettes, much to the contradiction of traditions that developed in other HBCU band programs (Malone, 1990).

Foster was a big fan of the sound maintained by the band at the University of Michigan, and particularly their arranger, Jerry Bilick (Rowley, 2013). Richard Powers, a former student of Bilick, was therefore hired as FAMU's chief arranger. Foster gives Powers much credit with creating the FAMU sound, which combined many of Bilick's techniques along with pieces of textural style from Wagner. Wagner's "Elsa's Procession into the Cathedral" became a favorite signature tune. Foster made his final conducting appearance leading the FAMU symphonic band in this piece four months before his death (Rowley, 2013).

The Public Arena

HBCU band programs gained recognition in white society through performing halftime shows for nationally televised National Football League (NFL) games in the 1950s and 1960s. Greer's band at TnSU was the first all-black marching band shown on television, during the 1955 halftime of the Los Angeles Rams versus the Chicago Bears game in Chicago. TnSU's band performed for three NFL halftime shows before any other HBCU bands, with performances in 1956 and 1960 as well. Dr. Edward L. Graves was inspired to study music education at TnSU when he viewed the 1956 halftime show on television. He went on to serve as director of bands at TnSU from 1979-2014. Graves attended TnSU for his undergraduate career, and "became one of many African American music educators who earned undergraduate degrees at African American colleges, but were forced to attend graduate schools in the North because they were prohibited by state law to attend major Universities in the South" (McDonald, 200, p. 57). This trend could explain gaps in the literature about African American band directors. Dr. Reginald McDonald, whose dissertation provided this information, followed Graves as director of bands in 2014. It was around this time (records indicate 1958-1960) that a sportscaster spontaneously called TnSU the "Aristocrat of Bands," which is the current nickname of the band. It is presumed that the sportscaster deemed them such because the band played both classical and pop music.

Greer made an effort to maintain a broad repertoire, recollecting:

I took TnSu's marching band down to Disney World and somebody made the comment, 'You know what those bands play.' So I made sure we could play (challenging) pieces. I wanted those people to know that our bands could play the same type of music they play. (McDonald, 2009, p. 66)

Greer's group was also invited to march in the 1961 presidential inaugural parade. They were the first HBCU band to do so (McDonald, 2009).

By the 1960s, the FAMU marching band had adopted the following major elements: 1) elaborate entrances with fanfares, 2) multi-precision drills, 3) animated picture formations, 4) concert formations (where they would play a top Billboard ballad), and 5) dance routines (Rowley, 2013). William P. Foster and his band were also finally becoming recognized through televised NFL halftime show performances. FAMU's 1963 performance at the Orange Bowl was a pivotal moment because the Marching 100 was showcased and lauded by the white majority (Lewis, 2003; Rowley, 2013; Walker, 2014). In the sixties, FAMU gained a national reputation through six nationally televised NFL halftime performances (Rowley, 2013; Walker, 2014).

The 1960s Onward

McDonald (2009) presents the acceptance of HBCU bands as parallel to the civil rights movement and cultural renaissance of the 1960s and 70s. For example, Grambling State University's marching band performed the halftime show for the inaugural Super Bowl in 1967 (Aiello, 2010). The Civil Rights Movement also increased access to GI Bill funds for black veterans, which in turn increased enrollment at HBCUs.

Bands made many changes after the Civil Rights period. Lewis notes that "Marching bands at HBCUs vary little in their essential components: Dramatic procession to and from the field, sectional battles, half-time field shows, and a fifth quarter competition" (Lewis, 2003, p. 17). However, academic literature elsewhere makes no mention of the fifth quarter competitions, sectional battles, or dramatic processions, and Lewis does not give the history behind any of these traditions. Lewis also did not mention: a) "zero quarter" competitions, b) the apparent distinction in styles between HBCU bands in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference and the South West Athletic Conference, or c) the impact of video sharing through Youtube, all of which I have noticed in my own experience with HBCU marching band programs.

There is a dearth in the literature compared to band programs at predominantly white institutions, undoubtedly influenced by segregation and racial biases. For hundreds of years, universities denied admission to African Americans. When HBCUs were in their infancy, few offered masters or doctoral degrees. Due to decades of segregation, generations of highly acclaimed black band directors were limited to pursuing advanced degrees in the North, far away from most of the HBCUs they were allowed to work at (McDonald, 2009). William P. Foster earned his doctorate in the North, and instilled a passion for research in his program, as evidenced by his former students who went on to write dissertations about him (Rowley, 2013; Walker, 2014). Perhaps FAMU is also frequently written about in scholarly publications (Rowley, 2013; Thomas, 2001; Kelderman, 2010; Walker, 2014; Malone, 1990) because it has a long list of accomplishments that are relevant to a larger, whiter society. In 1985 FAMU was awarded the coveted Sudler trophy, and is still the only HBCU band to have been given this award (Rowley 2013; Walker, 2014). In 1989, the French government paid 500,000 dollars for the Marching 100 to perform in the Bastille Day festivities in Paris. FAMU performed in the presidential inaugural parades of 1993 and 1997. These are all testaments to FAMU's incredible musicianship and showmanship, but the lack of acknowledgment of other laudable HBCU band programs is striking. There are dozens of important HBCU band programs that are not mentioned in academic literature at all.

Academic literature also makes few mentions of the most unique and distinguishing aspects of HBCU marching bands—intense band rivalries that extend to pre- and post-game traditions. There are clear distinctions between conferences and individual bands, but the scope of literature on this subject is too small to illustrate this fact. Gaps in the literature raise the questions: (1) How did pre-and post-game traditions develop?, (2) How have HBCU marching

bands changed over the last fifty years?, and (3) Which remarkable and important stories in this tradition are not told in academic literature?

Chapter 3. Method

Overview

In the previous chapter, I defined a void in the literature on HBCU marching band programs. In order to help fill this gap, in this study I conducted an oral history study (Leavy, 2011). Through interviews, I investigated the history of various HBCU marching band traditions. I interviewed band directors, primarily hailing from Jackson State University (JSU: Jackson, MS) and Southern University (SU: Baton Rouge, LA). Interview answers provide information about historical events, and these accounts are chronicled in tandem with thick descriptions of video footage and band events where applicable. The stories of these events were corroborated through triangulation when possible.

Researcher Identity and Perspective

As a very recent participant of an HBCU marching band, I have a perspective that undoubtedly influenced my research. Creswell (2013) defines the relationship between the researcher and subject as reflexivity. He asserts that all qualitative research is subject to the researcher's personal relationship to the subject. I participated in the marching band programs at Norfolk State University and Jackson State University, allowing me to experience the current marching band customs of the MEAC and SWAC conferences first-hand. My interview participant list is comprised of band directors that I have admired for years. This connection gives me a deeper understanding of these traditions, while also presenting the possibility of bias towards my own programs or era of participation. One of my aims is to celebrate the monumental developments in HBCU band traditions, but I took care not to withhold blemishes deliberately. While I am a product of an HBCU environment, as a white female I am also an extreme minority in the world of HBCU bands. Each of my interview participants is a black

male, and I am both an insider and an outsider to their milieu. One of the only substantial articles featuring HBCU marching bands in a mainstream, scholarly music education publication is narrow in scope and negative in lens. The article focuses on the ostracization of gay band members in these programs and underlines the pervasive nature of hazing (Carter, 2013). Both because of my race and my position as a researcher I expected band directors who did not already know me to be initially wary of formal interviews with me. I utilized my HBCU alumni relationships and reputation with other band directors to help establish rapport and ensure fruitful interviews. Overall, I did not feel that my interview responses were significantly impeded by these differences.

Design

I took oral accounts of history through interviews, in keeping with the process McDonald (2009), Rowley (2013), Lewis (2003), and Walker (2014) employed. Each participant had one interview for this study. These interviews were semi-structured (Berg, 2001) and focused on the oral history elements of the participants: a) personal experiences, b) memories of events, c) attitudes, beliefs, and opinions, d) and perspectives (Leavy, 2011). I repeated some questions with many participants (e.g., what was your first experience with the fifth quarter?) for triangulation of data through multiple accounts. As is customary with oral history studies, each interview was unique (Leavy, 2011). Whenever possible interviewees received a list of the primary interview questions at least one day before the interview to help engage memories that have been stowed away over the years.

In this research, I was guided by specific research questions, but the literature on oral histories suggested that some significant developments and stories could not be predicted. I discovered many unpredicted stories and trends. As is appropriate for oral history research

methodologies, I allowed my participants to guide the direction of the interview more than they would in standard semi-structured interviews (Leavy, 2011, p.9). This was also in line with the emerging design of qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). My interview questions changed throughout the study as new themes and events emerged. My final list of questions is in Appendix D.

Whenever possible interviews were conducted in person, but some interviews were conducted by telephone due to geographical constraints. Berg (2001) emphasizes that telephone interviews are limiting because they “lack face-to-face nonverbal cues” (Berg, 2001, p. 82). Three participants in required telephone interviews. While video conferencing can provide facial cues, I decided that the familiarity and ease of telephone interviews made my participants more comfortable. Berg (2001) conceded that telephone interviews are sometimes the only viable method. He goes on to advocate that researchers can best conduct telephone interviews “with whom they have developed rapport during fieldwork,” (Berg, 2001, p. 83) which I did.

Consent

Louisiana State University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed a proposal for this study and exempted it from IRB oversight because participants were not subjected to any significant risk. Participants could stop the interview at any time and were informed of this at the beginning of the interview. I recorded interviews via digital voice recorder (Google Voice software in the case of the phone interviews) and obtained verbal consent to start the recording. In order to establish credibility and maintain cohesiveness, interview responses were not anonymous in the final paper. I told each participant at the beginning of the interview that anything he said in the interview would not be anonymous, and recorded verbal consent to present the responses in my final document.

Participants

Interviews were conducted primarily with band directors from JSU and SU. Band directors from JSU included Dowell Taylor, Paul Adams, Dr. Lewis Liddell, and Lowell Hollinger. These band directors have established reputations as innovators and men with a storehouse of knowledge about the Sonic Boom of the South. Band directors from SU included Paul Adams, Lawrence Jackson, Nathan Haymer, and Kedric Taylor, for similar reasons. It should be noted that Paul Adams served as an assistant director at both universities. Paul Adams has also acted as a director at universities in the MEAC, most notably Norfolk State University, and provided a broad perspective and comparative notes. I interviewed Dr. Julian White, retired director of bands at Florida A&M University, to offer a perspective from the most prominent HBCU band in academic literature. Additionally, I interviewed Dr. David Ware, author of *Interviews with Sixteen Band Directors at Historically Black Colleges: Their Attitudes, Opinions, and Methods* (Ware, 2008). I selected Ware because he interviewed two of the previously mentioned band directors (Liddell and White), along with other directors from universities this paper will mention. His book peers into the minds of HBCU band directors. An editorial in JRME (2010) says of this book, “A sequel is needed!” (Fonder, p. 74), echoing the need for further study in this area. Below is an illustration of the band director lineage from each school. It should be noted that this graphic only includes the directors I interviewed, and two of the directors (Paul Adams and Lowell Hollinger) did not serve as Director of Bands at these institutions, though they were essential members of band staff.

Table 1.1- Participants from JSU and SU

JSU

Paul Adams

Image retrieved from: websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom/ on 2/21/2019



Dowell Taylor

Image retrieved from: websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom/ on 2/21/2019



Lewis Liddell

Image retrieved from: facebook.com/spots on 2/21/2019



Lowell Hollinger

Image retrieved from: websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom/ on 2/21/2019



SU

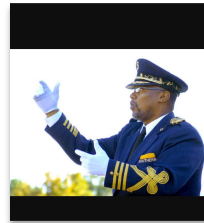
Paul Adams

Image retrieved from: websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom/ on 2/21/2019



Lawrence Jackson

Image retrieved from: facebook.com/humanjukebox on 2/21/2019



Nathan Haymer

Image retrieved from: facebook.com/humanjukebox on 2/21/2019



Kedric Taylor

Image retrieved from: humanjukeboxonline.com on 2/21/2019



Rationale for JSU vs. SU Rivalry

In my informal collection of data via the network of HBCU marching band enthusiasts, JSU and SU emerged as consistently and universally praised programs. Each band also maintains a website with brief histories of the bands and directors, suggesting that history plays an imperative role in the cultures of each band today. Despite this, neither program is referred to in academic literature in a substantial way other than Ware's *Interviews with Sixteen Band Directors at Historically Black Colleges: Their Attitudes, Opinions, and Methods* (Ware, 2008). A preliminary theme of this study based on literature, video footage, and my own experience, was the element of competition. Informal data collection and personal experience indicated that rivalries are fiercest in the SWAC. The annual football game between Southern University and Jackson State University is colloquially referred to as the "Boombox Classic," paying tribute to JSU's "Sonic Boom of the South" marching band and SU's "Human Jukebox." Though many HBCU football matches bear the title "classic" (formally or informally), this is the only game named for the marching bands, a testament to the influence of these organizations. For these reasons, I focused on these two programs and their directors.

Rationale for the Time Period

The 1960s onward included many shifts that further cultivated the distinct style of many college marching bands. Patzig (1983) notes that "marching band programs and philosophies have changed considerably since the early 1960s," (Patzig, 1983, p. x) in his study of marching bands in the SEC. The SEC overlaps geographically with the largest cluster of HBCUs. Many changes made over the last fifty years can be unearthed in conversation with band directors and alumni who are still passionately tied to this tradition (Rowley, 2013). For these reasons, my study primarily focused on developments in HBCU bands from the 1960s onward. It was also

important to take advantage of the opportunity to interview these legendary directors while they are alive and well.

Analysis and Trustworthiness

I triangulated data a) between multiple participant interviews, b) via existing literature and c) through video evidence whenever possible. The last question of each interview was: “If you were writing this paper, what would you really not want to be left out?” encouraging participants to contribute stories and thoughts that were not necessarily prompted by my topic questions. This tactic is in line with epistemological oral history design, which “places the researcher and participant in a collaborative relationship” (Leavy, 2011, p. 9). I analyzed my data by coding interview transcripts. I employed the constant comparative method to analyze themes and stories between transcripts (Boeije, 2002). Within each theme, content is organized chronologically.


Chapter 4. Historical Frame

Personnel in both JSU’s Sonic Boom of the South and SU’s Human Jukebox treasure the history of their programs. This section contains a brief overview of each band’s history as told by the directors I interviewed, with a few accompanying sources.

“It Was Like a Human Jukebox”

Jukes—those who have marched in the Southern University “Human Jukebox” marching band—hold their band history in high esteem. I asked Lawrence Jackson, retired director of bands, to briefly summarize the history of his band program. Jackson has an in-depth perspective because he served as a student musician at Southern as a section leader, arranger, assistant band director, and as the director of bands. He began by delineating the following genealogy of conductors:

Table 2: Southern University Directors

T. Leroy Davis	1947-1964
Ludwig Freeman	1964-1969
Isaac Greggs  <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Image retrieved from humanjukeboxonline.com on 02/21/2019</p>	1969-2005

(Table cont’d.)

<p>Lawrence Jackson</p>  <p>Image retrieved from facebook.com/SUBand on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>2006-2014</p>
<p>Nathan Haymer</p>  <p>Image retrieved from facebook.com/SUBand on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>2014-2018</p>
<p>Kedric Taylor</p>  <p>Image retrieved from humanjukeboxonline.com on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>2018- present</p>

Jackson mentioned some of Southern University's (SU) high profile performances, such as eight Super Bowl performances. He reported SU is the only band that has performed four times at the Sugar Bowl without a competing football team. The Human Jukebox played in three presidential inauguration parades, in addition to music video performances with Michael Jackson and the Jonas Brothers. In telling me about the band's illustrious history, Jackson mentioned that the Human Jukebox had performed a halftime show at a New Orleans Saints' game for the last 49 years, 2017 being the only exception. Another local highlight was a parade with LSU in 2004. That year, LSU's football team won the national championship, and SU's football team won the HBCU national championship. There was a parade for both institutions in downtown Baton Rouge. Jackson said, "Coach Nick Saban (LSU) and Coach Pete Richardson (SU) (were) on the same platform... Professor Wickes (LSU) and Dr. Greggs (SU) were standing side to side." He said that Dr. Greggs conducted both bands in the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner and, "that was a history-making moment."

1947-1969- T. Leroy Davis and Ludwig Freeman

The first band ensemble at SU was led by Ella Amacker-Patty, and the first marching band was led by J.O.B. Mosely. These two set the stage for the next era of band, led by T. Leroy Davis, who is credited with bringing a pageantry drill concept to SU (About, n.d.). I interviewed Paul Adams, retired band director from both SU and Jackson State University (JSU). He came to SU as a freshman in 1961 under the direction of Davis and started arranging for the band during his time as a student. Davis was the band director at the SU lab school prior to his tenure at SU and taught his successor Ludwig Freeman, who became director of bands in 1964. Adams said, of the Freeman era,

We played lots of marches, and we had dance routines. We marched fast quite like the University of Michigan, and if you will, Fam's band (Florida A&M University- FAMU).

We had some great shows, I thought. They were well organized and thematically-referenced.

Adams remarked that the band played many Broadway tunes under Freeman. He added, “Freeman was a very progressive director, and he did play some popular style music, but he really wasn’t into R&B.” Songs on the playlist included “St. Louis Blues,” “Mint Julip,” and “Walk on the Wild Side.” Adams described song selections as “more of a jazz-oriented, pop music. Today you all would call a lot of that fusion.” He added that under Freeman, “the band took on a beautiful quality.” Adams graduated in the summer of 1965 and was immediately hired as chief arranger and low brass instructor, which was rare and a testament to Adams’ superb musicianship. This meant he was Jackson’s applied tuba instructor when he came to SU in 1965. Adams was drafted into the Army in 1966 during the Vietnam War, but still arranged for SU when he was stationed in New Orleans.

According to Adams, “(the band staff) wanted me there in tune and in touch with the popular music.” He told a story about when he arranged a version of “Red Sails in the Sunset” for the band. Bobby Powell, a popular local musician, had redone the song. The performance featured Bobby Powell and, “just tore the house up.” Despite the popularity of this show, most of the Human Jukebox’s repertoire at the time was not popular music.

In 1969, Dr. Isaac Greggs was hired to direct the band program at the SU lab school. Adams said that in retrospect, he realized this was actually to put him in position to take over as director of bands at SU. Greggs was friends with Dr. Hill Perkins, the chair of the music department at SU. Over the summer Freeman had an obvious disagreement with Perkins, which may have been the plan all along, and Freeman left to pursue his doctorate at the University of Pittsburgh.

In 1969 on the other side of the country, Adams was out of the military and touring as a trombone player with Bobby Blue Bland. Adams was unhappy with the drug and alcohol atmosphere he was exposed to as a road musician. He said,

I participated, from an alcohol perspective, and I saw where that was headed. And I chose to withdraw. And so I left and came back to Louisiana to get my job at Southern. When I got back, Isaac Greggs was the director of bands and... I wasn't really that excited about it, but I knew that I wanted to be with my family.

Adams debated whether he should go back on the road, teach high school, or attempt to get his job back at SU. He had the "Right to Work" law working in his favor, which meant, "They (SU) had to hire me back, if no more than one day, and fire me." When Adams came to campus to get his job back, Greggs was on the phone with a man he was about to hire as the chief arranger. The prospect of hiring Adams made Greggs change his mind in an instant. Adams described to me that, "He (Greggs) told the guy, 'Look, I'll call you back.' (laughs) He jumps up, on the desk, and dances in front of me and my wife... So I came back to Southern."

Greggs had a much more boisterous personality than Freeman, but the band's music selections remained similar at the beginning of his tenure. Adams narrated the game that changed that.

We had been playing Alcorn (Alcorn State University)...Alcorn came, and they got on the field...They played this tune 'It's Your Thing,' that's what it was. 'Do what you wanna with it.' And that thing... everybody went crazy! Well... (sighs) Isaac had this show that had 'Hey Look Me Over' in it...LSU used it as a fight song for a long time ... So the audience at Southern didn't know the significance of the tune, because they really couldn't care because they associated it with what- LSU. We weren't trying to be LSU we were trying to be Southern. So the band got booed. So the next thing that comes out after that we got the girls dance routine, they played this thing (hums) crowd booed, ok? Now, I'm trying to remember what the band danced to... but it wasn't good. And that was the first time in the history of the Southern University band that the band *walked* back to the band room. They were embarrassed... And Isaac came back to the room, he was determined now, all of a sudden; he was upset. He said, 'We're going to do something different.'

The staff put together a show that included more popular music to thrill the crowd for the upcoming game against Tennessee State University (TnSU). This included the first time SU attempted their famed circle drill. Part of this drill is pictured below.



(Image retrieved from HBCUSports.com on 01/20/2019)

Adams confessed, “Isaac Greggs had seen Oklahoma (University of Oklahoma) do the circle drill... so he had always wanted to do that... He came back wanting to do it but didn’t have a clue as to how to do it. And most people don’t know this, but I worked out the geometry to how the circles were presented on the field.” He added, “so that was a major hit,” which is an understatement about one of SU’s most recognized drills today. Adams continued the story, humming through the fanfare and naming the chords from his vivid memory of this day. He said,

That show was the turning point, and from that point on the shows took on a strong R&B bass, percussion thing... Now, in retrospect, when Ludwig was there I was writing some James Brown stuff for the band, so we obviously were doing some dance routine... but there wasn’t a preponderance of it... but Isaac, once we had that big crash, and we came out and played that show the audience went crazy. And the band never looked back.

1969- present Isaac Greggs and beyond

Isaac Greggs was director of bands at SU for thirty-six years, and many call him the most influential director in the history of the SU Human Jukebox. Under his direction, the band

garnered more local appeal. Greggs incorporated Mardi Gras traditions and other parts of New Orleans culture.

In the early seventies, Adams changed SU's seating arrangement in a way that most HBCU bands have now adopted. Prior to that time, tubas were seated in the back of the band, and according to Adams, "it would block the view of the spectators, to say the least... the tuba sound was distant, and the drums would be right in front of them and that... disturbed me."

Adams split the tubas along either side of the band in vertical lines and kept the percussion in the back.

Adams told me his strategy:

I thought that the bass sound should be pretty much equally distributed among the band...it brought the sound to the front and throughout the band. And we left the percussion in the back because most percussionists at the time, they wanted to play loud and... be seen. And so putting them higher created a situation where the sound would float over the band and the competing bands across the way... could get a good view of each other. And the members of each band...could look back and cheer them on. Another reason was, by having the percussion in the rear of the band, it created more room for the woodwinds to be heard. Because I wanted the woodwind sound to have some significance with the band....So, in other words, it was an experiment that seemed to work the first time through and uh that arrangement to this day is still a part of the Southern University stand set up, with the tubas in the corridors, or in the stairwell.

Pictured below is a 2018 photograph of the Human Jukebox in this stand formation:



(Image retrieved from facebook.com/SUBand on 01/20/2019)

This formation is popular still because of the reasons Adams stated. This allows the audience and band to see the percussion and brings the tuba sound forward. This set up worked better for R&B music, and under Greggs this became a major part of the Human Jukebox's repository. Adams was the chief arranger during this time, and a trendsetter for HBCU bands. Nathan Haymer, director of bands at SU from 2014-2018, said, "Paul Adams is the architect... he designed what we do, as far as the blueprint of arrangements... he designed what's called the Southern sound." Jackson gushed to me about SU's "brilliant brassy sound." He added, "We take pride in our arrangements. We have always had very good arrangers to be a part of the SU band program."

The Jukebox's visual style is also spectacular. Jackson described the band's signature marching style, the Jaguar Rock, as "a jazzy marching with a high knee lift." The band is also known for forming the current game score during their halftime field show. K. Taylor, current director of bands, credits SU with doing that first (see Appendix A: item 13).

SU's marching band is well known as a beacon of excellence in the HBCU band world. Knowing some of the important moments from its storied history provides an important basis for this study. The Human Jukebox incorporated R&B as a major staple of its repertoire, and this precipitated changes in arranging style and band seating that many other HBCU bands adopted.


At the end of my interview with Haymer, he told me that I forgot something. He then proceeded to tell me how SU's band received its nickname after a game against Alcorn State University (Alcorn) in the early seventies. He mentioned, "We played songs at that time from every genre. The (Southern University)'Digest' writer said 'It was just like a human jukebox, they played everything. All you had to do was put a quarter in it,' and the Human Jukebox stuck. It was like a Human Jukebox."

“Fine tune your sensory apparatus for the quintessence of contemporary sounds and maneuvers, the summa cum laude of bands, the Sonic Boom of the South.”




The Jackson State University Sonic Boom of the South marching band is legendary. The band has performed at many high profile events, including halftime shows for the Atlanta Falcons, New Orleans Saints, Cincinnati Bengals, and Detroit Lions. When JSU’s football team is invited to play out of conference games, the other school frequently asks the entire band to come along and will pay more money for this to happen. The Sonic Boom is integral to the HBCU game-day experience, but also an important part of the school, city, and state.

Each director of bands at JSU helped shape the band into what it is today, as with SU. When I interviewed people associated with JSU about the history of the program, the directors leading during that time framed different eras of the band. Below is a visual representation of each full-time director’s tenure:

Table 3: Jackson State University Directors

<p style="text-align: center;">William W. Davis</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Image retrieved from websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom on 02/21/2019</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1948-1971</p>
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(Table cont’d.)

<p>Harold Haughton</p>  <p>Image retrieved from websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>1971-1984</p>
<p>Dowell Taylor</p>  <p>Image retrieved from websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>1984-1992</p>
<p>Lewis Liddell</p>  <p>Image retrieved from facebook.com/jsusbots on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>1992-2009</p>

(Table con'd.)

<p>Renardo Murray</p>  <p>Image retrieved from: facebook.com/alcornstate.sod on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>2009-2011</p>
<p>Lewis Liddell</p>  <p>Image retrieved from facebook.com/jsusbots on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>2011-2012</p>
<p>Dowell Taylor</p>  <p>Image retrieved from websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>2012-2015</p>

(Table Cont'd.)

<p>O'Neil Sanford</p>  <p>Image retrieved from websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>2015-2017</p>
<p>Dowell Taylor</p>  <p>Image retrieved from websites.one.jsums.edu/sonicboom on 02/21/2019</p>	<p>2017-present</p>

The history of JSU's Sonic Boom of the South marching band begins with Kermit Holley Sr. in 1940. Lewis Liddell, retired director of bands, told me, "Jackson State had something like a conservatory before then. They had an orchestra before they had a band." The orchestra was led by Frederick Douglass Hall. Lowell Hollinger, current assistant band director, expanded on what was going on during this time: "The upper echelons of African Americans came here in music, and he was very much responsible for that... It was kind of like a one-man show." After

F.D. Hall started the orchestra, Holley started the band at JSU while he was also the high school director at nearby Lanier High School. Holley also started the band program at Alcorn State University. Liddell said, “Kermit Holley started just about every black band in Mississippi” despite the fact that Holley’s main instrument was the violin.

1948-1984 William W. Davis and Harold Haughton

William W. Davis, JSU’s first full-time band director, wrote or arranged many tunes that the band still plays today, such as the alma mater (“Jackson Fair”), the “Star-Spangled Banner,” and “God Be With You Till We Meet Again.” The band program really took off under Davis and his assistant Dollye M. E. Robinson. The band was small, Liddell said: “Twenty-nine members. I understand at one point they got almost down to eight.” In 1952, the band offered scholarships to members, and the band grew. It was soon known for its distinct jazz flavor. Liddell came to JSU in 1963 as a freshman, and said during that time, “we played just about all jazz.” The entire band program developed under Davis’ leadership, and in 1965 he took the Symphonic Wind Ensemble to the World’s Fair in New York. This was the first time an HBCU band performed at a World’s Fair.

Harold Haughton became director of bands in 1971, and Hollinger, current assistant band director, credits him for putting the entire present format into place:

He (Haughton) is really given credit for the marching style and the drills that we even today still do... He is responsible for the Tiger Run On, under his tenure with the band program is when the name Sonic Boom of the South got started, that’s when the J-Settes got their name... They initially started as majorettes, twirling batons, and then they wanted to put down the batons and just dance. So everything we know about the Sonic Boom today, as it relates to drilling, as it relates to the J-Settes and everything happened under Harold Haughton’s era.

The Tiger Run On (see Appendix A: item 10) is JSU’s signature halftime entrance. It begins with an adagio strut, then the band lifts one knee up, standing as statues for a suspenseful

eight counts. This is followed by a slow march that moves into what announcers describe as the “combined thousand-steps per second” run onto the field. Harold Haughton focused on giving the band an identity and held a contest to name the band. “Sonic Boom of the South” was a student suggestion, and the name stuck.

1984- present: Dowell Taylor and beyond

In 1984, Dowell Taylor became director of bands at JSU. D. Taylor arranged many of the Sonic Boom’s legendary song selections, such as “Get Ready” and “Spirit.” Hollinger said D. Taylor cultivated an entertainment package that worked almost anywhere:

(D. Taylor is) really given credit for... the showmanship of the band. The band went to Motown [for the 1990 Motown 30th Anniversary performance]. They were in Ebony and Jet magazine, and it was based off of the showmanship of the band. That was when bands dancing became a big thing, and Jackson State was forerunners when it came to bands dancing. And it really being a big show.

In 1992, Lewis Liddell became director of bands. According to Hollinger, “Lewis Liddell was really, in my opinion, responsible for refining the sound of the Sonic Boom of the South.” Hollinger added that the marches Liddell introduced played a big role in that, because “before that, we didn’t really play marches regularly.” Liddell set a standard of seven marches per marching season. Hollinger went on,

And he said when he first got here it was hard for him to get the band staff to really buy into that. And it wasn’t until the marine band, who does tours to different colleges, you know... and they were coming in town, and they had their concert here on campus. And apparently, after every piece they played, they played a march. They played a piece, then they played a march; then they played a piece, and they played a march. And it was at that point, because the band was there, and it was at that point that he was able to get the band directors, the other staff members, to buy into him wanting to do these marches, and he did it... Every day we played seven marches.

Liddell believed strongly in playing marches because it improved the skill level and quality of the band. D. Taylor increased the national notoriety and showmanship of the band, and then Liddell raised the musical standards of membership. He held the symphonic program in

high esteem and thought, “if you couldn’t make that concert band you couldn’t be on the football field.” Liddell also raised academic requirements. He raised the scholarship GPA requirement to 2.75, and the participation requirement to 2.0. When he first did this, he told me, “I ended up with about 60 people.” So Liddell gave his band members another semester to raise their grades. After that, “I wiped out just about the entire band and brought in 154 freshmen. That changed the Sonic Boom. It was a change we needed.”

Liddell expressed pride in increasing the exposure of the Sonic Boom. Under his leadership, the band performed at the 2003 NAACP Image Awards, and a 2004 Memphis Grizzlies game. A deep love for his Alma Mater showed when Liddell told me, “I taught just about every band director at Jackson State.” The current staff is made up of four JSU graduates, and three of those four, Lowell Hollinger, Roderick Little, and Kevan Johnson, all marched in the Sonic Boom as students during Liddell’s 1992-2009 tenure. Liddell said that “these close connections... that’s good and bad.” Hollinger added that nearly every director of bands at JSU has been a JSU graduate. He said,

That’s kind of been one of the hallmarks of our program... only a few programs can say that, us, Fam (FAMU) and Southern are the only three HBCUs that I’m aware of that have stuck with that vein of having the directors, or at least the director of bands being a graduate of that program. Now... I think some people will say that it could possibly hurt the program from a growth perspective, because when you have different ideas and ideologies about band... that helps growth happen. And if everyone came from the same place then there’s an argument from a growth perspective on, how can you grow? But I think the majority of us that are in that situation will say it helps us keep our traditions alive and flourishing. But one thing I will say about Jackson State, compared to other institutions, this is the first time that we have literally had an all-JSU band staff.

Hollinger added that non-JSU alumni assistant directors such as Edward Duplessis (1970-2000) and Paul Adams (1984-2000) were very influential. Both of those men, as well as O’Neil Sanford, director of bands from 2015-2017, were SU graduates. Hollinger mentioned that the

“dichotomy of another group, especially like a Southern, who from a marching band perspective is definitely well-respected,” helped JSU have a “unique identity.”

Duplessis and Adams are both considered legendary icons in the history of the Sonic Boom, and despite his short time in the program Sanford also made an impact. The balance of these perspectives undoubtedly had a positive impact on the program, along with a fierce loyalty evident in JSU alumni directors. Dowell Taylor, current director of bands, has returned to that demanding job twice since his retirement in 1992. He was director of bands from 1984-1992, then from 2012-2015, and returned for the third time in 2017. D. Taylor accepted his most recent appointment, “out of a profound, deep, and abiding love for his alma mater.” (Bandmaster Chronology, n.d.)

“There’s a lot of people that turn their nose up at HBCU bands:” The Impact of Segregation

As mentioned in the literature review, Historically Black Colleges and Universities are a product of segregation. There would be no HBCU bands without segregation because without segregation there would have been no black colleges. These colleges carried the “historically” tag after 1964 and were officially integrated institutions, but they were not immediately made the same as non-HBCU’s or Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). Perhaps the most obvious factor was the severe deficit in funding that had gone on for many decades. In an America that had enslaved African Americans just 100 years prior, there were many disparities in higher education funding when the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964.

This paper focuses on band programs at HBCUs in the decades immediately following the Civil Rights Act. The racial barriers HBCU band programs have faced is a sizeable topic that will not be covered in depth within the scope of this paper, but it is impossible to appropriately frame these stories without some information and testimony from these directors about

segregation and racial barriers. Paul Adams and Lewis Liddell entered SU and JSU, respectively, prior to 1964 and witnessed the passage of the Civil Rights Act as college students. Protests during that time played a deciding role in sending Liddell to JSU. He said,

I was going to Tennessee State, but I was involved in the Civil Rights Movement, and I was in jail and could not go to band camp on time. And so when I got out... my mother said, 'Do you still have that letter from Jackson State?' (laughs) She said, 'Boy you get that letter back, and you go over to Jackson State.'

Fate played a role that summer that set Liddell on a path to become one of the most influential band directors that JSU has ever had.

Race relations also played an important role in sending Adams to work at SU. Adams worked at SU for one year before he was drafted for the Vietnam War. He served in the Army for three years, and upon his return he joined the Bobby Blue Band as a road musician. After some time he decided to go back to Louisiana. He told the story of this change,

I left that band in the summer of 69 in Newark, New Jersey. And that was during the riots, I remember that. Newark had just been rioted from the racial tension and things like that. The black riots. And um, I invited my homeboy, Alfred Thomas, who was a trombonist, to come and participate in that band and we exchanged positions. He was a high school teacher in ...Amite, Louisiana. He was an assistant director, and Al had been demoted.

The school system's new arrangement combined schools, automatically making the white band director the head director and the black band director the assistant. Because Alfred Thomas was a black assistant director, his position was eliminated entirely. Adams invited Thomas to take his position on the tour, and Adams "came back to Louisiana to get my job at Southern."

The Influence of PWIs

Even though colleges were not permitted to deny admission based on race at this time, that was what nearly all Universities in the South did, especially at the graduate level. This meant that many black band directors in the South were not able to earn advanced degrees. Those who

were able to earn advanced degrees attended prestigious programs in the Big Ten Conference, and that is where many traditions at JSU and SU came from. Liddell said,

A lot of the HBCU traditions came from bands up north, from the Big Ten. Ohio State, Michigan. You can look at them now, Michigan and Ohio, and see traces or remnants of what the bands in the South are doing... We had band directors go to school up north; they couldn't go to school down south during that time to get a masters... At Southern, that drum major? That has all the trappings of Ohio State and Michigan.

K. Taylor agreed that many traditions came from Big Ten schools, the University of Michigan in particular: "Most of the big ten schools started doing corps band. But we adopted the (traditional) style, and we kept it and its evolving even more now."

Many of Southern's signature drill moves came from marching bands at PWIs. JSU's drill style is mostly derived from Bill Moffit's (former director of bands at Purdue University and University of Houston) famed concepts presented in his book "Patterns of Motion." These concepts were adopted by Harold Haughton, and he introduced major drill concepts to JSU that are still used today.

HBCU bands added a little extra movement to the "Big Ten" marching style, evident in SU's "Jaguar Rock" and JSU's "Swing and Sway," while most PWI bands have now gone in a radically different direction and adopted a marching style modeled after modern drum and bugle corps. Haymer said, "There's a lot of people that turn their nose up at HBCU bands," and Liddell and Ware confirmed that lack of exposure to full HBCU band performances is a major factor in this phenomenon. Many PWI band directors, members, and fans cast HBCU marching bands in a derogatory "dance band" category. Some PWI bands that see HBCU bands regularly have adopted a few HBCU tunes. Haymer illustrated his thoughts about why bands today do what they do,

If you're not entertaining in whatever way then you're just a waste of time. Don't even go on the field... there's a reason why LSU band started playing 'Talkin' Out the Side of

your Neck.’ (HBCU band classic tune; See Appendix A: Item 12)...People wanna hear what they know on the radio. There’s a reason why Southern’s band started playing Bon Jovi and all this other stuff...If you’re not entertaining your crowd everything you’re doing is in vain. It’s all about entertainment.

Haymer emphasized that one key to entertaining is catering to the audience and community. When Southern performs in their home stadium, the playlist will mostly include things catering to their local community such as second line songs, rap tunes, popular R&B ballads, and gospel selections. However, when the Human Jukebox traveled to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in 2009, they played Bon Jovi’s “Livin’ on a Prayer,” a tune tailored to a mostly white audience (see Appendix A: item 11).

I asked Liddell, “How do you feel your program is unique compared to your PWI counterparts?” and he said,

Well, of course we have much in common... I think Jackson state has more in common than most African American schools...When people look at Jackson State on the TV, all they show is the dance routine. And then when they see us they be shocked out of their britches! Southern Mississippi (University of Southern Mississippi, USM) fell into that trap (referring to 2002 game). They thought oh, its just gonna be dancing. (laughing) They didn’t know what was coming.

Liddell felt like many people have underestimated JSU’s band program, and this was a common thread in my interviews. In Ware’s book, *Sixteen Interviews with Band Directors at Historically Black Colleges and Universities*, Ware writes that he started that project with the intention of bringing more notice to HBCU band directors that had been overlooked. This thought occurred to him when he saw a retiring white band director honored at the College Band Director’s National Association (CBDNA) conference, while a retiring HBCU band director of equal measure sat in the audience unrecognized (Ware, 2008). Ware published his book in 2008, ten years before I interviewed him. I said to him, “You mentioned in your forward that HBCU

band directors are often not recognized by large band organizations,” and asked, “Ten years later, do you think much has changed, and why or why not?” He replied,

No. I wish it was different these days... but no. I don't think much has changed. Unfortunately, HBCU band directors, you know we really have a long way to go to be nationally and internationally recognized for our contributions and also be recognized for our band programs. I don't know if you know this or not, but the only HBCU band program at least that I know of that's been officially recognized by a large organization is Florida A&M. That's the only one.

Ware was referring to the John Philip Sousa Foundation's annual Sudler trophy, which was awarded to FAMU in 1985. The Sudler trophy's purpose is, “to identify and recognize collegiate marching bands of particular excellence that have made outstanding contributions to the way of American life.” (The Sudler Trophy, n.d.) This is a laudable achievement, and many outstanding bands have been recognized. Ware added,

But you could argue that Bethune Cookman University has made a significant impact... Grambling State University has made a significant impact on American society. And even Jackson State, for that matter, has done the same thing. But none of those schools have won that particular award. And that's considered the Super Bowl of awards given to collegiate marching bands.

As mentioned in the literature review, FAMU stands out as an HBCU marching band that was recognized in mainstream society. Ware said:

They just had a very, very good band program. They've been on commercials, you know, so they've gotten a lot of notoriety in that way... I think mainly, it was Dr. Foster's intent to get that band program exposed to as many different groups and audiences as possible... They got their name out there... And I think that's really the only way to get your program recognized.

HBCU band programs hold their own events, such as the Honda Battle of the Bands marching band showcase and the HBCU National Band Director's Consortium for concert band programs. However, it is rare to see HBCUs represented in mainstream events, perhaps because they were segregated (formally and informally) for so long that there is no longer a desire to step into other arenas. Liddell expressed reverence for top-rated marching bands at PWIs. He said,

Ohio State's supposed to be the top band in the country. I know why they're supposed to be at the top- I've looked at them, and they're damn good... They execute well. They have uniformity of step, uniformity of instrument carriage, and when they're marching their heads don't move. I like that; they just float on that field. And they do graphics on the field. Things that people understand, Superman and stuff like that.

Liddell also revealed a confidence that JSU could compete against a program such as Ohio State.

He continued,

But I'll tell you what. They'd have a problem with Jackson State. Superman would get knocked out of the air at Jackson State... All the bands look good when you look at them by themselves. All of them look good. But if you put them on the field with Jackson State they'd start breaking down.

“Everything just has a love. It's like gumbo, you just cook it with love and its just good”- The Influence of Local Music Cultures

As previously mentioned, HBCU bands have worked over the years to entertain the community around them. Much of this has involved incorporating music from the surrounding communities. Directors from SU frequently mentioned that the brass band traditions of New Orleans played a role in developing the sound of the Human Jukebox. It makes sense, given the culture of the community and the information about brass bands in the literature that this would occur. Adams provided some more specific background about when SU adopted these traditions.

He said,

The Southern band really brought it home about Mardi Gras. Because once Isaac Greggs really understood the marketability... and the international relationship that New Orleans and the Mardi Gras had, he took on the New Orleans scene. Unlike Ludwig Freeman had the vision to see.

Isaac Greggs became the band director at SU in 1969, so that would have been the era Adams was talking about. I asked Haymer what role Mardi Gras and New Orleans traditions and culture had played in developing the Human Jukebox's identity, and Haymer answered,

It played a large role because... half the band comes from New Orleans. New Orleans, the traditions of New Orleans, the brass bands, and the things that we do. The culture. (To me) I don't know how long you've been in Louisiana, it's not the best state to live in. But

what we do better than anybody else- party. Food. And music. Can't nobody touch us on those three categories...Everything just has a love. Its like gumbo, you just cook it with love and its just *good*. And it's just engrained in our culture. You have a kid... he's three years old and already has a horn in his hand...Southern is a (second line-style) brass band, we have woodwinds but we're brass heavy. All that comes from New Orleans culture.

These statements exemplify the heavy role that the culture of New Orleans has played in developing the identity of the Human Jukebox, and the band program at SU overall. SU was one of the first universities to have an official jazz program, established by Alvin Batiste (Cartwright, 2007). As mentioned in the above response from Haymer, SU's marching band plays several second line tunes. Some of their frequent selections include "Do What You Wanna" and "Let Your Mind Be Free." These tunes are so popular that it would be difficult to find football games over the last twenty years where the Human Jukebox did not play at least one of those songs.

Mississippi also has a rich musical history that is evident in the traditions of JSU's marching band. Clarksdale, MS is known colloquially as the birthplace of the Blues and the Sonic Boom of the South plays many tunes today that have jazz and blues elements. These traditions were incorporated by an influential band director, much like Isaac Greggs did at SU. William W. Davis became JSU's first full-time band director in 1948, and brought jazz influence into the program through his arrangements and playing concepts. Hollinger said, of Davis,

He came to JSU to start this program and he was the most influential person in this program, or at least in its inception because at that time it was called the 'little band with the big band sound' and a lot of that was, you know, because of his jazz band influence... He (arranged) 'God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again,' that we've been playing since the '40s at commencement... And then he wrote the music to the Alma Mater ("Jackson Fair"). So he's been very influential with the band program and with Jackson State in general.

Many of the pieces Davis either arranged or composed are still staples of JSU's repertoire.

Liddell, a student of Davis, said similar things about the lasting jazz influence Davis brought to the program. He said,

William W Davis came from the jazz community. He was Cab Calloway's arranger. And first chair trumpet player for Cab Calloway. He also, in World War Two, played in the service band and the big jazz bands. Prof Davis did what he was exposed to. We played Duke Ellington, 'Satin Doll,' Count Basie; that's what he was exposed to. And I remember we, as young people, we wanted him to do more current stuff. So we wanted him to write a pop tune. He wrote the pop tune, and we hated it because it sounded just like jazz. I said, 'Ah, Lord have mercy.'... But that's what he was.

Chapter 5. Pre- and Post-Game Traditions

“It’s an event within itself”-The Fifth Quarter

There are numerous video clips on YouTube from HBCU football games with the tagline “fifth quarter,” referring to an intense playing session after a football game. Nathan Haymer, former director of bands at Southern University, says “If you look at the fifth quarter today and what it’s grown to... (for a big rivalry) We have 55-60 thousand people at the game, maybe 30-35 (thousand) are going to be at the fifth quarter. So it’s an event within itself.”

The fifth quarter is a phenomenon that takes place at virtually every HBCU football game that has two bands, after the game. Having two bands is necessary because the fifth quarter is essentially a battle. It continues the competition with little regard for which football team just won the match. As soon as alma maters have been played, each band is pitted against the other in a showcase.

In this study, I wanted to uncover the origins of this battle. Directors concurred that for a long time bands had been playing a few selections after the game, but this did not have the same atmosphere. Bands played as the crowd left the stadium, but at some point, this became a highly anticipated competition. Julian White said, of his first experience with the fifth quarter,

Uhh my first experience with it was during my early days at Florida A&M. I’d say about 1985...at some point we started this exchange, and I don’t remember exactly how it started, but...it just continued to grow with the competition being so intense and really the enjoyment of the rivalry between the schools on a musical level was so exciting that it just expanded until it was given the name- the fifth quarter.

At some point, the tides turned and it became a competitive event. Multiple accounts brought up a game between Alcorn State University and Southern University as the answer to this question. Interviews did not produce an exact date, but the following responses point to the early 70s, and probably 1972. My interviews provided multiple perspectives of the same event.

Haymer, who has been told of this event over the years, says, “It was before my time, but what I was told was that the first fifth quarter was between Alcorn and Southern University. In 1970-ish, 70 or 71, one of them.”

Lawrence Jackson was a student in Southern’s band during this famous game. He marched at SU between the years of 1971 and 1975. Adams was an assistant director at SU at the game, and he held that position from 1969-1973. The game took place in Lorman, MS, and a newspaper account indicated that SU traveled to Lorman for the 1972 game, but not the 1971 or 1973 games. So our story brought us to the early 70s, likely October 21st, 1972 (“Jags, Braves Clash Today,” 1972). Haymer continued with his description of what happened,

Now what would happen, the band would always stay and play the alma mater. And it just so happened that Southern wanted to play a song, but prior to that when the game was over everybody leaves. But Alcorn responded, and southern responded. It was this big battle.

Adams told his story, which expanded on this narrative,

The rationale was... it happened by accident, quite frankly. What happened is when we would go to Alcorn, we knew that it was going to be a significant audience. And the entryway to Alcorn, at both entrances, the traffic would be significant. So we got there early enough to get the busses close to the stadium and as anticipated, it was a packed house. We also knew there was no reason to leave the stadium to go sit on the bus and wait. So my thinking was if we’re going to be in the stadium, if we’re going to have to wait. Why not stay in the stadium and practice the music for the next show? Because we always had music coming. So we sat down as usual after the game, and we played a few pieces for the audience. Because everybody there knew that everybody couldn’t leave at once. So we played a piece, Alcorn played a piece. We traded pieces like that and didn’t think anything of it, which felt pretty good.

As White stated, playing pieces like this was usual. However, the bands kept playing. Adams continued,

And then as the crowd thinned, the band kept playing. And all of a sudden the stadium was empty, and the bands kept playing. And they would play a tune, and we would play a tune. And it became so ridiculous that we were there and nobody was in the stadium except the bands and the band heads (band fans)... (the band heads) remained in the

stadium on the field just like you see them today. And of course, instigating and encouraging both bands to play.

One of the defining characteristics of Southern's marching band, then and now, is a long and comprehensive list of tunes. This set is referred to as the "book" throughout these interviews. Jackson said during this time, "Southern University had an extraordinary book. We had repertoire, and during the 70s we would have about forty full selections." Jackson distinguished the forty full selections from the shortened tunes many bands play today. Southern's book played a large role in what happened next. According to Adams,

We had a very deep book. And the Alcorn band... ran out of music. So they sent kids to the library to get music, to come back. They refused to leave us in the stadium. So they came back, and it was so bad that they were playing the introductions to tunes. And we would play the entire tune. And they continued, it got all the way down to scales. It got all the way down to one note.

Jackson corroborated, through laughter, the key point in the story,

And Alcorn ran out of music and they sent someone to the band room, and they were passing music out while we were playing. So that was funny. And that was the first time we had a very long, extended version where it had gotten dark because Alcorn during the 70s and a lot of years, didn't have lights. So that game was always at one o'clock, and we stayed until it got dark playing.

Before long, word got around about these events, and HBCU bands were creating a post-game tradition. The event did not have its oxymoronic title, fifth quarter, just yet. It was in its infant state and driven by adaptations to NCAA rules about noise violations. Adams went on to say,

In terms of playing tunes after the game- what you guys now call the fifth quarter- I don't know what we called it then we just called it the 'band battle' and audiences eventually started staying because they heard about it... Audiences stayed longer than normal to listen to the bands play. Because, you know, during the games the bands didn't get a chance to play as much because of the rules.

Adams continued with a statement about the current status of a band's ability to play during the game, "They weren't as strict as they are now, but you could actually get a chance to hear the bands play and it was...great for both bands to get to hear each other."

Liddell supported this driving idea behind the cause, “Before long it (the fifth quarter) became a big deal because we could not play during the game, just little short snippets of tunes.”

HBCU band programs were growing during this time and developing identities. Before long, this post-game tradition became tied up in the identity of Southern’s Human Jukebox. Jackson described his time in the band, “No one at that time could match our book. So we would pride ourselves on making the home band leave the stadium first when we were the visiting band. We would pride ourselves on that.”

This showcase took on a spectacular tone with rivals like JSU. Kedric Taylor, current director of bands at SU, has a sister who marched at JSU. K. Taylor recalled memories from his childhood when the post-game tradition between SU and JSU was intensifying.

Well, I can go back... they didn’t call it that (the fifth quarter) back in the day it was just ... playing after the game. That was in the 80s and close to 90s, my sister marched for Jackson State, and they used to play all night. Like they played till they cut the sprinklers on and turned the lights off, and just till whoever ran out of songs...they’d just play *all* night. And people would be leaving; the bands are still playing! And that was my first experience. I know I was a kid; I was ready to go home! I was like, ‘ok, this is enough.’

The essence of this story rang true again and again throughout my interviews. Taylor said through laughter, “But it got to the point where they started playing scales! Nobody wanted to go home!”

As this rivalry grew, JSU set out on a mission in the mid-90s that resulted in what multiple directors referred to as the longest fifth quarter they had ever experienced (see Appendix A: item 4). Adams, who was now an assistant director at JSU, said,

The bands anticipated this playoff if you will, this fifth quarter as you call it. We were ready for the Southern band because we knew they had a deep book. The Jackson band wanted to be able to say, ‘you’re not running us out of our stadium.’ This was during the time of Lewis Liddell. And we played I think until about two o’ clock in the morning, they turned the lights out in the stadium...But that was the night that Lewis Liddell was determined that the Southern band was not going to be the last band to leave the stadium.

Liddell's interview corroborated the essence of this story while shedding some light on motivations,

The truth of the matter is Southern had won all of the fifth quarters for everybody until 1995. In 1995, we had 80-83 tunes in our book. And of course, I wanted to play a few tunes and go home. But Magruder, one of our assistants, refused to leave. He said, 'We can't leave.' And so as they played one, we played one. We played our entire book.

However the end of the book, even one that big, was not the end of the battle for a rivalry this intense. Liddell went on about what happened after each band had played their entire book, "We sat there and looked at each other for about thirty seconds... then we started playing scales and everything!" He continued through laughter, "so we refused to go, and they turned the lights out and locked us up in there."

Adams, who was on JSU's staff at the time, spoke about the outlandishness of the event, "I literally left the band there that night. My wife was there, and I decided we were going to go. I just... I couldn't take it anymore. But, the band ended up getting locked in the stadium. And some of the kids ended up climbing the fence." Jackson concurred, "They... cut the lights off; they cut the sprinkler system on on the field. Jackson State wouldn't leave." Liddell emphasized, "We had to climb over the fence to get out. We had to hand our equipment over to someone and climb over the fence, to get out of there." Perhaps the most ridiculous events were the tolls the bands incurred in order to participate in this event. Jackson admitted, "We had our meals waiting for us at a local restaurant. But we did not want to leave!" Liddell also mentioned, through laughter, this part of the story, "They (SU) missed their meal! They paid oh \$5,000 for a dinner meal, and the place was closed." The battle had taken on such a mind of its own that SU was forgoing meals and much-needed sleep in the name of this event. The Human Jukebox was due to perform the halftime show at the New Orleans Saints game the next day. Adams commented, "They were not thinking about the next day; they were too busy thinking about us (JSU)."

Lawrence Jackson, SU's assistant director at the time, said of the results, "it was a draw... because everyone left at the same time."

The Human Jukebox clearly felt the effects of that match though. Adams said that the next day, "They were there for the game and you could see the kids sleeping in the stands. And so the kids from Jackson had fun with that because they knew what that was about. They were tired!" However, the Human Jukebox was not the only band to incur damage from the 1995 showdown. Though the game took place in the city of Jackson, it was at Veteran's Memorial Stadium downtown, not on JSU's campus. For many years the Sonic Boom has taken busses to their own home games. Caught up in the magic of the battle, the band left the bus drivers waiting, and the company charged the band a \$1000 fee. However Dr. James, the department chair at the time, was not bothered. Liddell told me,

They paid the money and said, 'thank you!' Because they wanted to shut Southern down. He (Isaac Greggs) was a braggadocious, that guy... and we shut him down, and have been doing it ever since. It was a turning point... I think he was the hottest thing going till we made that turn in 95... We won that argument. Oh, and the next time I saw Patty Greggs (Isaac Greggs' nickname), the next game, you know what he did? He played his alma mater and left. He did not even try. (laughing) Just played his alma mater and left."

This event was so significant that mere word of it changed the trajectory of what other bands were doing. Perhaps because JSU had finally stood up to SU, or just the sheer excitement of the tale; whatever the reason, the post-game tradition took on a new heat after the 1995 game. Jackson, who was also present at the famous SU vs. Alcorn game in the early 70s, said the 1995 SU vs. JSU game was the true beginning of the fifth quarter.

"I'm going to give Southern credit; they caused me to do a lot of things" Origins of The Zero Quarter

In the development of the pre-game zero quarter tradition, two big elements from the fifth quarter played a big role; the ever-present competitive edge, and the desire to play despite the

imposition of new rules. Lowell Hollinger, current assistant director at JSU and one of the youngest directors I interviewed, said of his time marching in the band,

When I was at Jackson State, you know we would play tunes after the game. I think ... what I know kind of really started the zero quarter is because...most schools, from a financial perspective, started putting bands out of the stadium. When I was at JSU in 2000, we went to UAPB (University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff), and we literally stayed there *all* night long... so I mean *literally*. They turned out the lights; we were still in there playing... And from a financial perspective, you just can't do that anymore, especially at night because they gotta keep the lights on, and that's a huge cost to the university. So we had to agree to doing a specific amount of tunes, like five to seven, and then leave.

In light of these limits on playing during the game, and now after the game, band directors saw an opportunity to play full selections before the game. While this trend took hold in the SWAC conference, it should be noted that it does not have the same presence in the MEAC. Julian White, director of bands at FAMU until 2011, said of the zero quarter, "Oh no. No, we don't do that." However, this was incorporated into the pregame traditions of schools in the SWAC, such as JSU and SU. When asked about the origin of the zero quarter, Liddell said, after some consideration, "The zero quarter...I don't know when it was... we started getting there early, oh- southern caused that too! Southern would get to the game early. And what they would do is if you're late, you'd get there and they'd already have your fans on their side. They'd hype them up." With Southern as an instigator, the perfect opponent was needed to initiate a battle. JSU was this opponent. Jackson said,

If anybody says two other bands originated the zero quarter or the fifth quarter, that's not true! Often imitated, but never ever duplicated. It was always a heated rivalry between Southern and Jackson State. And that's when the zero started, that was when the fifth started, all in that 90s era.

In the development of this tradition, again, one game stands out above the rest. I had the following exchange with Haymer, allowing me to date and pinpoint more information about this famous match up. I told him, " I have been trying to pin down the origin of the zero quarter... do

you have any idea...” and before I could finish my question, Haymer said with a knowing laugh, “1997.” The memory stood out vividly in Haymer’s early memories of his time at SU. He went on,

Southern University versus Jackson State. We just happened to go into the game early. Now I was a freshman that year in the band, and we were playing for the crowd. Jackson State marched in, and we started playing on them when they came in. Didn’t realize what we was doing at the time.

Adams elaborated on the Human Jukebox’s early arrival, providing insight into the scheme,

The Southern band was noted for getting to the stadium early, and um...wanting to preempt a home band...And they knew that Jackson had a grand entry, on ‘Get Ready.’ (see Appendix A: item 3) And so their goal was to disrupt ‘Get Ready.’ They called it ‘showering down,’ they’d shower down on the band and cause the band to lose its step because they couldn’t hear the drum line. Because, you know, the band is so stretched out.

Haymer and Jackson directed me to video footage that has now been posted to YouTube. This video is made up of three different camcorder versions of the event (see Appendix A: item 5). In the video, the viewer can see how the logistics of Veteran’s Memorial Stadium set up this historic event. The stadium is a horseshoe shape, and bands enter from the ground level at the opening of the horseshoe. They must march along the perimeter directly in front of the visitor section to ascend the ramp into their seats. During this march along the perimeter, there is only enough room for about four bandsmen to march shoulder to shoulder. This means that if the visiting band is already in place, as the Human Jukebox was in 1997, they are in perfect position to play over a band that has been elongated and stretched thin. This stretching out puts bandsmen farther away from the drums than usual, making it harder to stay in step, as Adams said.

The video footage of this game opens on the Sonic Boom’s march into a totally packed stadium. Shimmering plumes accentuate the swinging and swaying motion of the band, and “Get Ready” echoes through the stadium. The camera zooms out, and fans are pumping blue and

white pom-poms to the beat of the traditional tune. Then as the band comes to the bridge of the song- or more tactically, when JSU's brass players are right in front of the Human Jukebox- SU unloads Crucial Conflict's "Hay in the Middle of the Barn." A clip from the field emphasizes the difficulty of maintaining tempo for the Sonic Boom. Drum majors accentuate their moves and band members are guided by the sight more than sound, though the drum line pounds out the beat at full volume. JSU's J-settes are seen straining to maintain "Get Ready's" quick 120 beats per minute (bpm) tempo while hearing a full dose of "Hay's" 80 bmp groove. Liddell is seen in this clip, visibly tense, directing his band up the ramp.

Southern took advantage of an opportunity that day, and it would not be long before this became a tradition, especially now that band events were commonly relayed via video footage.

Liddell told the story of another day after that event,

They blew on Jackson State, so we were ready to blow on them. I told the band, get through all the marches. But when Southern gets to that gate, I want to stop all marches, get the loudest rap tune in the book and play it. I don't know the name of it (laughing)... but get it. And so, we played the marches, all pretty little stuff. And we got there and uh... Southern got right in front of us. The whole stadium was quiet. Wondering what was going to happen. And we unloaded-ha! Unloaded. We unloaded everything on them- raw power.

Isaac Greggs, not to be outdone, changed up his game in response. Liddell went on,

He did the only thing he could do. He has his drummers stop playing. Had his band walk in, look dignified, and take a seat. That's all he could do. Cause you couldn't march in time. There was too much power coming at you... They were very organized, it looked like that was part of the plan. They just stopped all the sticks from moving and walked right on in. And I said-I felt like I was the only one who saw what was going on- I said, 'oh... that man pulled a dignified move,' the only thing he could do.

Chapter 6. HBCU Bands Today

“It’s a blessing and a curse”: YouTube and Other Social Media

YouTube and social media have increased the exposure of HBCU bands. Before that, the biggest platform for HBCU marching bands was game coverage on the Black Entertainment Television channel (BET). Dowell Taylor told me,

HBCU bands started getting national coverage when BET entertainment started broadcasting our football games. During that era, the broadcast station would actually air the halftime. They didn’t go to commercial, they didn’t go to the talking, the halftime was a part of the experience...They don’t do that anymore.

Halftime shows today are very rarely aired on television, HBCU or otherwise, with the notable yearly exception of the Bayou Classic between Southern University and Grambling State University.

YouTube, which was first introduced to the public in 2005, had an incredible impact on marching bands. Lowell Hollinger said that, prior to YouTube, “The only way you could actually get a band tape is if you actually went to the game or knew somebody that was doing that...So you would actually have to take a trip here, and actually get a tape.” This band tape culture was the only way to spread what bands were doing; therefore, most bands had a very localized following. When YouTube was introduced, suddenly people could share band videos across the country for free.

My interviews revealed that YouTube has both positively and negatively affected band programs. The main positive effect has been increased exposure. Haymer mentioned that YouTube has helped “expose the university internationally,” and went on to mention that he found a clip of a Scottish band playing an arrangement strikingly similar to his. He continued, and said, “When I say it was my arrangement copied to the T... I wasn’t offended; I was honored that somebody this far away acknowledged what we do. So, it’s a powerful thing.”

Nearly every director I interviewed mentioned increased exposure as the main positive that has come out of YouTube. Jackson said,

The positive side is it gave bands who were not known exposure; and a good way to help recruiting. It gave them an opportunity to showcase what they can do and it even helped the overall image of that particular band program. If you put a good package on the field, that gives students another opportunity for a good school to go to and another band.

Hollinger brought up the point that YouTube allows students to quickly review performances. Sections can get together and review the footage, and decide what they need to improve on. In those ways, YouTube has been very beneficial for band programs.

Virtually every band director also talked about the negative effects that YouTube has had on their programs, particularly for their jobs as directors. Jackson described,

You lose the element of surprise. Everybody knew what you were doing or what you did and they were hungry to see you do something else. It caused the band director to have to do extra shows. And caused band directors to encourage the arrangers to write extra arrangements.

Along the same lines, Haymer said

YouTube has forced band directors to do their job. Not only the book, but you can't do the same field show, you can't do the same halftime. ... anything that got a lot of house, meaning the crowd's going crazy...guarantee (if) you do it the next week ,they've already seen it a million times because they're at their jobs, they're on their phones, whatever, watching it over and over again. So by the time you play it it's no longer effective because they know what's coming up.

He added,

At one time, in the 80s, 90s, and 70s too, you could pretty much do the same road show, because they don't know what's coming. You can't do that anymore so it's forced us to be more creative. So it's a blessing because that exposes your band. But it's a curse that it forces us to work ten times harder than we had to.

Jackson confirmed this and said that SU used to be able to use one good show as a "road show" for all away games. This allowed them to plan about three or four different shows a season, versus the six or seven shows the band performs now. Hollinger also confirmed,

You could do two, three shows a year and be fine. Because nobody really saw what you were doing. But that right there has been the biggest thing that I think has affected band and *especially* HBCUs because, you know, like, you can't get caught doing the same thing all year long.

“Now,” he added, “your field show is online before you get off the field.” This puts HBCU marching bands on another level that is not even realized in many other entertainment fields. Kedric Taylor said in our interview, through chuckling, “I saw Jay-Z and Beyoncé are doing this tour... You think they switch their show? But they're making *millions!* Every show, and they ain't switching nothing.”

I interviewed K. Taylor on Monday afternoon following the SU versus Alcorn game. In his office, I could see that he was dealing with a lot of outside communication. Mr. Taylor consistently received alerts on his Apple watch, email notifications on his computer, and had students knocking on his door. Prior to my arrival, I saw the video clips from their Saturday performance, as well as the online comments. Apparently, many fans were not impressed, and were critical of the Human Jukebox despite an arguably excellent performance. In our interview, I asked K. Taylor about whether the video sharing and social media aspects have made things more personal. K. Taylor brought up the Alcorn performance from a few days prior to our interview. He said,

Yes! I'm dealing with that now. We put on a show this weekend... eleven-minute show. Eleven minutes straight for halftime... And people are on the comments saying we weren't really up to par for the fifth quarter because we played these same songs last week. And I'm thinking, when I was in the band, we played the same songs *every* fifth quarter. Like... we didn't change up! But we didn't have YouTube.

YouTube and social media comments, according to my interviews and personal experience, have become very personal. Many commenters know the names of individual dancers or band members, without ever having met them. They comment on individuals'

progression, or lack thereof, from week to week. Commenters also critique arrangements.

Hollinger said, “And all of those people in the comments have become band directors, *without* the training,” emphasizing how incredulous commenters can get. The commenters are ultimately judging which band is the best, but my participants said the judging criteria has changed. D.

Taylor said,

Well, among HBCU bands competition has always been high level, intense, and um...vigorous. The thing about it, though, in the early bands there was more stress on quality of marching while playing... music. Dancing while playing, and precision. And so the competition was strictly limited to those areas.

Jackson’s statement corresponded with this, emphasizing that commenters are focusing on different elements now. He said,

Sometimes, people put who was the best band that day on the zero quarter or the fifth quarter, and I think that’s totally out of order. You really want to evaluate a band not on what they do in the stands, but in what they do on the field...And I think (the fans) are starting to put more stock in the zero and fifth quarter and I think it’s not where you should judge overall band performance. It’s always been halftime with me and a whole lot of band directors in my era.

Jackson entered SU in the fall of 1971, and D. Taylor entered JSU just one year later in the fall of 1972. These gentlemen played against each other from 1972 until 1975, though the only year they were opposing directors was 1991. D. Taylor continued on the subject of changing standards and competition,

Later on, the competition took on a different tone. It took on more of a severe rivalry type of tone. You started developing this *musical dislike* for certain bands. It was always this rivalry between Southern and Jackson, even in the 70s. But it was how do you march, how well do you play....What tricks can you think of on the field? But it appears that it’s gotten to a different level now where it sort of has a personal tone that I was never attracted to. But it’s there, and it’s with the advent of social media.

These comments extend to both band specific sites- such as bandhead.org- and mainstream social media. Liddell said with regard to social media, “I don’t think band directors

should get on there (and) talk about other bands. That's not professional... you have some guy on there, an eighth grader in Miami, talking about who got the best band."

"They don't want no close contest, almost better than Southern-they expect you to wipe out the other band": Pressure to Compete

Band directors at HBCUs have to be careful about whom they take pressure from because it comes from everywhere. The bands are so integral to the HBCU football experience, and expectations are high. Haymer said,

If the Human Jukebox is not at an away game, I get all kinds of calls and all kind of just threats and whatever... It brings that special thing that makes an HBCU game an HBCU game, no matter which school it is.

With this prestige comes a responsibility to entertain the crowd, according to these band directors. I asked Haymer what he thought the role of the battle mentality has been in the development of the HBCU band style. He answered,

It causes the band to really get more recognition than... football team, more recognition than the school. But the level of competition, you have to be on it. It's a sport within itself. You don't know what the next band is gonna play.

I wondered how different the planning was, from a band director's perspective, based on the opponent. Jackson said,

Well, I don't know... We treated every band the same. We were as intense with other bands like it was with Jackson State. But we knew that the Jackson State rivalry was going to bring out the best in everybody, whether it was on the Jackson State side or the Southern side.

Hollinger's statements supported this, adding to the notion that the rivalry brought out the best in students. He said,

I would say that is more so for the students as opposed to the band staff... If we play, and I'm not trying to make anybody's program light, but I'm just simply saying from a position on where they are currently... Like if we play Valley (Mississippi Valley State University), we have to kind of motivate the students because they don't really see Valley as a threat.

Hollinger went on about how any band can improve at any time, but that students typically bring out their best for the big rivalries. He continued, “From a band perspective our biggest rival, definitely, is Southern...from a student perspective and how they look at it...That game is really one that they look forward to.”

I observed that this competitive mentality is displayed not only between bands, but between sections within bands. In YouTube clips such as those in JSU Bands’ “Bandroom Session” series, viewers can see certain instrument sections (most frequently mellophones and baritones) turn towards each other in a battle to overpower the other (see Appendix A: item 9). Visually, this seems divisive, but clearly, competition has had a positive impact on HBCU bands, overall. I asked Hollinger, “Would you say the element of competition is manifested between sections in the band?” He replied,

I would definitely say that it is. Well, and in my opinion, competition is healthy...But it has to be a wholesome competition. Because in my mind, all that does is it makes you get better. That particular section want to get better. The only time it really gets bad is if it winds up going into a personal-type situation. And being frank, we’ve had some of that to go on. But typically, it’s just a friendly type of competition within the band program. And that’s the part of it that we definitely want. Because it’s not going to do anything but help the program.

This competition exists both within and between bands. However, perhaps the greatest pressure comes from fans, especially for big rivalries. Liddell said,

It’s very competitive. And our fans are very negative. They’ll boo you. I never got booed. But our fans expect nothing but the best. They don’t expect you to be close, they expect you to wipe out the other band. They don, almost better than Southern. They want you to be head and shoulder (above them).

**“When the females in the audience start singing the other band’s tune you’re in trouble”:
Getting House**

Getting “house,” or pleasing the crowd, is important. These directors are all classically trained musicians of a high caliber, but the crowd at a football game is not. Hollinger said,

I think some directors, we can kind of get so caught up in that component of it, in the musicality that we can kind of forget that we're actually putting on a show to entertain the masses. And a part of that is that it is important for you to do things and play things that are recognizable to the masses. So from a house perspective, I think it's very important for us to be involved in that. Especially given that, at football games, we're part of the game experience. So at like...LSU. LSU does some amazing shows. They do some amazing football shows. But, you know, at institutions like that, in most cases, at halftime the crowd is going to get beer. Or going to the concession stand or going to take a break from the game, you know. Because band isn't as important as the football game itself.

He went on to say,

Now sometimes what we get caught up in...what is the crowd?...A large component of our fan base are older people. And then that kind of middle range. So we have to make sure when we plan shows, we are covering all bases, so that the older crowd will get something from the show, that the middle-of-the-road crowd will get something from the show, and then the millennials will also get something from the show. So that's kind of how we try to plan the shows so that everyone can get a little taste of something that they recognize and remember.

K. Taylor agreed that entertaining the crowd is important and emphasized how much people's expectations have increased. He said, of getting house:

We do consider it a lot. It's very important that you please the crowd because you're an entertainment business. That's what your job is as an ensemble and a band, to entertain. Now you have different people that have different tastes in what they like and everything but you can't take it to heart. You know, you can't take it personal. But I have noticed over the years- it's *hard* to entertain the crowd because they've seen so much, so it's like, what's next?

K. Taylor said that now, fans frequently expect "the unthinkable." This level of expectation is hard on these directors, but both JSU and SU are legendary programs known for consistently exceeding expectations. Liddell expanded on what strategies get house.

I remember, one year, we went to Tennessee State (TnSU). I think it was 97. We did everything right. We blew those jokers to the moon. And Tennessee... and we got off the field, TnSU came on the field, they were tacky, but they stopped, in a concert formation and played the right tune. When the females in the audience start singing the other band's tune you're in trouble.

He continued through laughter, “So they got house! When our Jackson State females, singing Tennessee State’s song, we’re in trouble! Tennessee State didn’t know what they had done.

They’d never do it again.” Liddell went on to tell me how he adapted to these circumstances.

The next year, we had something. Every time we played Tennessee State we had a house tune. And I remember... (in 2011) We were going to play Tennessee State. The first thing I wanted to do was get a house tune together. And so what I did was... (Rodney) Chism was our arranger. He could arrange, he just... couldn’t get the right tune. I wasn’t satisfied. So I called (Travis) Prewitt. I said Prewitt, man, we need a house tune. And Prewitt called me back in about 30 minutes and said, ‘I got one.’ He had ‘Call Tyrone.’ And uhh... band didn’t wanna play it. We played ‘Call Tyrone,’ and the crowd went crazy.

In many cases during Liddell’s tenure, the tunes the students wanted to play were not necessarily the best songs for the crowd. Liddell said, “See they’re looking at the dormitory. I’m looking at all those people out there that are 35 and older, that’s your house. Not those in the dormitory, those 5,000 people, I’m looking at the 40,000.” Liddell referenced a specific 2011 game against Texas Southern University (TxSU) in which the band played Tina Turner’s “What’s Love Got To Do With It” during halftime. Liddell said,

I put ballet dancers out there- what! They said they didn’t want that. So I went to the dance ensemble. We got them girls. I said I want them girls’ dresses to be flowing, I want them down to the ankle. I want, when they turn around for that dress just to blow in the wind.

Liddell did all of this in an effort to appeal to a larger crowd, despite the band students’ doubts. I heard this ballad in person at a different 2011 field show performance, in the Georgia Dome. When the chorus came in, the crowd was swept up in singing along, and video evidence indicates the TxSU game was no different. In every YouTube video I found of this performance, the crowd sings along with enthusiasm.

Liddell described a different season of failed dance routines. He confessed, “We were getting no house. We were playing and everything, doing it perfect- getting no house.” So

Liddell went to a local high school and conducted a poll, asking for dance routine tune suggestions. He also conducted a poll with his music appreciation class at JSU. Diversity was another thing that Liddell used to get house. He told a story of a face-off with FAMU (see Appendix A: item 7):

We were in Indianapolis, and they wanted us to do a halftime and a post-game show. Florida A&M went on before us. And Florida A&M went out there and danced for eight minutes. I swear to you, they danced for eight minutes! The first two minutes, there was applause, then its cricket cricket ...you could hear crickets. Eight minutes? People get sick of anything after eight minutes. People want to see some diversity. Now we came on the football field with a diverse, traditional Jackson State show. The crowd went crazy. Dr. White and them had missed house. Then, the post-game, we went on first. We did our show and left. I looked at their show; I peeked at it. They had a real good show, but didn't nobody see it (laughing) they should've done what they did at post-game, they should have done it at halftime. So that was...he misread people. They wanna see dancing, but they also want to see diversity.

“Rap, to me, great stuff. Lots of messages... but the music is woefully inadequate.”

In the 2002 fictional movie *Drumline*, head band director Dr. Lee fights against demands from students, fans, and administrators alike to play the latest rap tunes. Dr. Lee states that he prefers music of substance, and in the final scenes both groups have made compromises to put together an entertaining, yet musically substantive halftime show (Austin & Stone, 2002). This tension between older, more complex music and repetitive rap tunes of today came up in my interviews with band directors. The phenomenon is not new, as indicated in Adams' statements about SU's band staff adopting more current tunes in the early seventies. Haymer said,

The band is always a reflection of your culture and time. Everything is a reflection if you go back to whatever era; it's a reflection of the time. And for you to turn your nose up at rap music, you're going to get a little behind. If that's what the student body loves...

I asked D. Taylor about how his teaching style had changed over the years, and his statement agreed with Haymer's opinions.

Well, what affected our teaching style was the music itself. With the birth of rap music. That affected HBCU band programs-most of them, not all of them. There is an innate desire to stay current. And what is current now are the rap tunes. Those are the tunes that

the youngsters are attracted to. And we don't knock that. As a matter of fact, we were attracted to our current tunes. And our current tunes, say from my era, is the Temptations, Smokey Robinson, and those type of... Gladys Knight-those type of tunes. And that's what we played we played what we heard on the radio. We danced to what we heard on the radio. These kids are dancing to- not necessarily what they hear on the radio, but what they hear on YouTube, on TV, and it happens to be rap.

K. Taylor, of Southern, is 30 years younger than D. Taylor, but spoke with the same reverence for music of past decades:

My sister was at Jackson State in '90. With Dowell Taylor, and Paul Adams and Magruder, all those guys. Southern had Roy Johnson, Carnell Knighten, Dr. Greggs. They played *music*. It wasn't no, everybody just play rap songs... they played music, and you can appreciate that as a musician. Now people just want to see and hear you play the loudest note you can play on the horn and... as a musician, I'm a music educator... who you gonna please?

D. Taylor spoke with respect for rap music, but emphasized the need for something more also.

He said,

Rap to me, great stuff. Lot of messages. Lot of teachings that if they listened to them carefully they can get something from a lot of the messages. But the music is woefully inadequate. Its good funk, it's good to bob your head to... But (in) musical elements, very lacking. And those band programs that go heavily in the direction of rap with come up short in other areas. For instance, if you are a rap band. If your repertoire is 80% rap, then you're not going to be able to play a march effectively. You're not going to be able to play a ballad effectively.

These statements track well with Liddell's earlier mentioned statements about maintaining a diverse set of repertoire. Both JSU and SU's directors made comments about the balance of educating through music while also playing current music, specifically rap tunes.

Hollinger said,

What directors sometimes can get caught up in is what we think is musical and what we think is relevant and important. And from a pedagogical perspective, all of that is important because we're teachers and ultimately, we want to teach our students about the different types of music. And typically what's going on in pop culture, you know, our students are always going to know that, so it's the other things and western European music and the other things that they don't- frankly-care about; those are the types of things we really have to drive into them and help them see the importance of those things.

Not that any one thing is more important than the other but just... it has its relevance also.











For these reasons, both JSU and SU have very diverse sets of repertoire each year. A staff of directors, and sometimes students, arrange each piece. Arrangers on staff write everything from Southern's edition of Queen's "Bohemian Rhapsody" to JSU's version of John LaBarbers's "Tiger of San Pedro." Haymer continued our discussion of the emphasis on rap music, expressing some frustration,

Now, what makes me mad... after I could work four, five, six, seven, eight days on an arrangement that's Earth, Wind, and Fire, just has all kind of chords... and I could work four minutes on a rap tune, and a rap tune is what's going to get their attention. They go crazy over it. And I'm like I just wrote this... they don't *care* about that... so you have to entertain them. Then you can educate. Give them some good stuff. But always have that entertainment value there. Because that's what the students are going to respond to, that's what the fans are going to respond to.

“SWAC is more in your face. MEAC is more... *friendlier*, shall I say” SWAC vs. MEAC













Most of the larger HBCUs belong to one of two athletic conferences- the Southwest Athletic Conference (SWAC) or the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC). The diagram below indicates the current make up of these conferences:

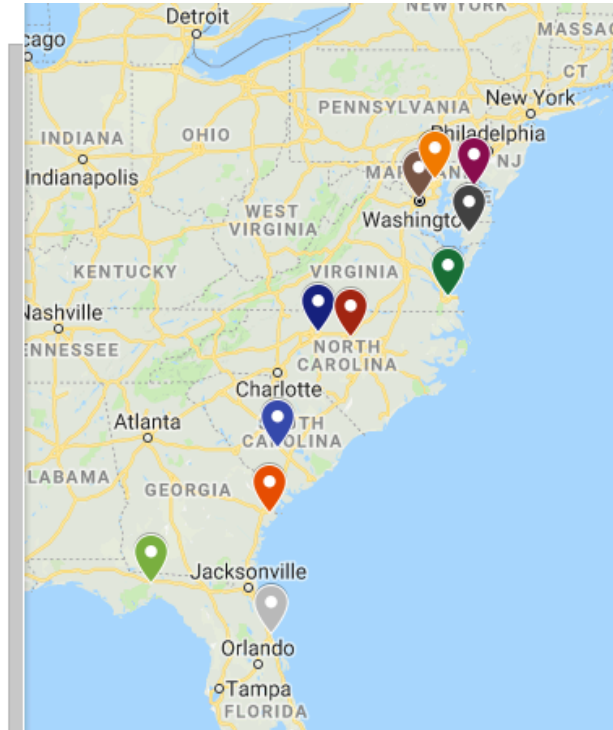
SWAC

-  Alabama A&M University
-  Alabama State University
-  Alcorn State University
-  Grambling State University
-  Jackson State University
-  Mississippi Valley State University
-  Prairie View A&M University
-  Southern University and A&M College
-  Texas Southern University
-  University of Arkansas Pine Bluff



MEAC

-  Bethune Cookman University
-  Coppin State University
-  Delaware State University
-  Florida A&M University
-  Howard University
-  Morgan State University
-  Norfolk State University
-  North Carolina A&T State University
-  North Carolina Central University
-  Savannah State University
-  South Carolina State University
-  University of Maryland Eastern Shore



I participated in the marching band programs at both Norfolk State University (MEAC) and Jackson State University (SWAC). I noticed differences in the traditions and approach to band, and my interview participants supported and elaborated on these observations. There are drill differences. Some MEAC bands have incorporated some corps-style drill elements, most notably North Carolina A&T State University (NCAT). Examples of these elements include a roll step marching style, break away from the traditional twenty-two and a half inch step, and stepping away from the four-man squad. In contrast, SWAC bands maintain strict allegiance to traditional drill styles pioneered by band programs like Purdue University and the University of Michigan. Not all MEAC bands have incorporated these corps-style elements. There are also differences in visual trends between the bands in the two conferences. Julian White, a retired MEAC band director, said,

The size of bands in the SWAC are considerably larger than the bands in the MEAC. And then as far as style is concerned... I think one difference is that in the MEAC, we tend to

focus more on picture formations whereas in the SWAC they're more drill-oriented and not as much with the pageantry in mind of the picture formations.

This emphasis on picture formations was a hallmark of FAMU's program, and Paul Adams, who was a band director in both conferences, said that FAMU set the example in that way.

Well, Florida A&M... Very classy band. They were very sharp and they played popular stuff and they did pageantry... they did the same stuff that Ohio State does today, people don't really realize that. Florida A&M was doing that a long time ago... Most of those guys who graduated from Florida became band directors up and down the east coast.

Liddell concurred that visuals are a distinguishing factor between bands in the two conferences,

They (MEAC bands) have flags. They have more integration in their programs with the auxiliaries. Bit off from the corps style. A&T (NCAT) I think is the best example of that... So I think that's pretty much what it is that made a difference in those bands.

These bands are visually distinct, but the most frequently mentioned difference was the difference in the sound, and approach to playing. Haymer put it simply, "SWAC is more in your face. MEAC is more... friendlier, shall I say." Adams phrased these differences in terms of driving influence. He said,

MEAC bands grow out of a symphonic base and they have a much more colorful sound, the colors you know, obvious in the winds. And the SWAC bands evolved to the R&B and the driven sound, you know out of Memphis and out of Detroit, that whole thing. And um I'm pretty much responsible because at that time in my youth I recognized that that's what our audience wanted and... there was nothing I didn't think we could play. I thought we could play anything that came on the radio. And you know, adapt it for band and that was the beginning of that direction and shift.

This difference, according to Adams, was inspired by one innovative program in each conference that created a near dichotomy of styles. FAMU graduates primarily influenced bands on the East Coast, and Adams said, "The guys from the Southern and the Gramblings started, got the jobs in the Mid South. And they were bringing that style to them." Jackson elaborated on major distinctions in sound, "MEAC bands don't buy into power. They are not interested in you

powering them out.” He continued, drawing on his experience as a MEAC band adjudicator for a 2017 ESPN competition. Jackson said of MEAC bands,

They have that warm sound, and they peak at a certain distance. And the arranging is different. Most of the SWAC schools left their arranging style because the fan base in the SWAC was power-hungry, as it relates to volume. High notes, and they were...it was just like they were on a natural high. But the MEAC bands did not follow that...they really wanted to write in the instrument ranges. They wanted a tuba to sound like a tuba... you understand what I’m saying? So that’s the difference. MEAC is going to stay within the practical range of the instruments and is going to peak every now and then. And then use it as a highlighter. But with the SWAC bands most, not all, but most buy into power.

Jackson agreed that this difference stemmed, in major part, from Southern’s style. He said,

SWAC band arrangers have gravitated to what Southern is doing... I think when I started writing for Southern, I brought that power concept. And that was in 91. And you can quote me on that. I think the power writing stemmed from my mentality. But it wasn’t power so much as to have an extended range but it was power in that... the way we voiced the chords. You know now the writing had become to where the power is coming from an extended range. Rather than the voicing of the chords and breathing from the diaphragm, where you’re playing through the horn, not in the horn, you see? So um... and that’s what I feel it was.

Both Adams and Jackson undoubtedly had an incredible impact in the world of arranging and represent two major periods of influence at SU. These periods of more aggressive arranging styles line up clearly with the advent of the competition-driven fifth quarter and zero quarter.

Jackson was hired on SU’s band staff in 1991, and the first zero quarter took place six years later in 1997. Adams was rehired at SU (after serving in the Vietnam war) in 1969, just before what I have deemed with this research the first fifth quarter between Alcorn and Southern around 1972.

Adams recalled a significant arranging innovation that was exemplified that day as well,

Now, the other thing that happened in that situation, I do remember a tune we played at that time. This may help you with the timing, Kool in the Gang’s the tune is uh... ‘Chocolate Buttermilk.’ And it was a tune, the reason it stands out in my brain is because it was the first time I took the f horns to the altissimo D. you know, the D6 on the staff... And it yelled. Oh, it was so uh... impactful! And it brought the horn thing together, and all of a sudden the horn players took a lot of pride in it because it was like a feature for them, even though it was a background part. And from that point on the horn players always wanted some lead parts...I would utilize that color with the band to reinforce the

melody, to assist the trumpets... It would warm the sound up a little bit, you know, and it was not always that high sound.

This illustrates horn lines that were written out of the practical range, which Jackson mentioned is a hallmark of the SWAC's aggressive sound. Adams' description of that day is also a powerful testament of giving the horn section ownership of their part. This increased pride was an impetus for competition between sections within the same band, as I will discuss later. The combination of playing outside practical range, arranging for power, and playing with intense aggression led to a style known today as cranking. When I asked Hollinger about the major stylistic differences between the bands in the MEAC and SWAC, he said, "Biggest thing is cranking, ok. So... let's just call a spade a spade." Hollinger had an interesting perspective because he grew up in Miami, Florida, where schools had been heavily influenced by FAMU. He said, of cranking, "I didn't even know what that word meant until I came to Jackson State University as a student." Like traditions such as the fifth and zero quarters, Hollinger also did not remember using the word "cranking" during that time. He said, "I don't even remember us saying 'crank up' (instructions for the band to play louder and more aggressively)... like that is a really new phenomenon... I think just the idea of it was already here, it was just given a name later on and I really think that's what it was." The line of development from competitive spirit to cranking, a hallmark of the SWAC, is clear. In an online interview with "Band Director's Corner," Kedric Taylor credited Lawrence Jackson with coining the term "cranking." K. Taylor says that many people now mean loud when they say "cranking," but the term was originally about the energy and aggression players display ([Meet Me on the 50], 2019).

The cranking approach has received a lot of criticism. Cranking involves playing beyond practical ranges and dynamic levels, and this essentially results in an uncharacteristic sound from a symphonic perspective. Engaging in this style poorly can result in overblowing, and playing

out of tune. For many classically trained musicians, this style can be offensive to the ear. All of my interview participants were trained at a high level in the Western art music tradition, and they all presented some feelings of caution about cranking. Jackson offered a picture of two different types of bands,

Mind you, there are power bands who play with balance. Even though they play extremely full, they play with balance. And there are power bands who might not be interested in intonation and balance and all the good things that musicians or ensembles are supposed to have.

Liddell said, similarly, of SWAC bands, “Sometimes that aggression is their weakness. Their aggression ends up going out of tune, overblowing,” but quickly assured that JSU does not engage in that. Hollinger said, in reference to cranking,

I mean if you look at it just from a musical perspective, I have to be honest, it really is not good. But it is kind of one of those things when in Rome, you know you do as the Romans do.

Hollinger went on to say that much of JSU’s recruiting team picks up students who want to come to JSU because of the SWAC style of cranking. He presented the dilemma of recruiting numbers of students versus quality, and said, “Please don’t misunderstand me when I say quality, but I’m just simply saying- do you want to miss out on the numbers because of *your* idea of quality?”

Liddell told a story of his interaction with FAMU’s band, which was under White at the time, that outlined the expectation difference between SWAC and MEAC bands. He said that, at a battle of the bands event,

They had Florida A&M and Jackson State side by side. And uh... he just, I was shocked, Dr. White turned and said, ‘Dr. Liddell, would you direct Florida A&M University in their performance of ‘Purple Carnival?’’ I said, ‘Yes sir.’ ... We got through playing it. I said, ‘Dr. White, would you conduct the Jackson State Sonic Boom of the South in the playing of ‘Purple Carnival?’’ (laughing) said ‘he-ha!’ It shocked him! ‘Cause he didn’t know we had that kind of music. He thought we just played pop, pop, pop. So it shocked him, and I think got a lot of respect too. Because he saw we were playing some good stuff.

Perhaps partially because of bias against bands in the SWAC, many directors expressed at some point an assurance that they maintain musicianship, in the classical definition of that term. K.

Taylor said, in describing differences between MEAC and SWAC bands,

Sound-wise they (MEAC bands) play with a lot of control, and I can appreciate that as a musician. I've never disowned musicianship over nothing. Here (Southern), we definitely teach musicianship. I don't know if people have been paying attention but over the years, since I've been here on staff. We don't play any kind of way.

As if in direct response to this, Liddell said in our interview,

Southern, down in Louisiana, believe it or not, was the most influential HBCU in the last 30 years in a negative way. Blowing loud, and wrong notes... correct notes but out of tune. They have taken that stuff about aggression to the extreme. Intonation. Like there's no consideration. Overblowing. Now they've changed it over the last few years with the band director they've had now. Dowell (D. Taylor) told me they changed that.

These defenses of musicianship are discussed in more detail later in this paper. It is notable that they were brought up in the SWAC/MEAC context, in addition to comparison to PWI programs. As a researcher, I also noticed that while Liddell felt comfortable criticizing SU in our interview, directors from SU may have kept similar criticisms of JSU's program to themselves. I did not have a prior relationship with most of the directors from SU, and they also knew that I graduated from JSU. The bias between SWAC and MEAC programs was exemplified in Liddell's story about a battle of the bands event in the Midwest,

The sponsor wanted Florida A&M to come in and give a clinic. That was an insult to me. Gonna invite me to a battle of the bands, then take Florida A&M and have them do a clinic. What made them special? I'm Lewis Liddell! Who are you? You don't know more than I know. And they told us we had to leave, and I said shh- I ain't goin' no where... So we got in the stands.

In this case, FAMU was presented as the superior band; the one who should give a clinic, and Liddell rebuked that. The next part of the story framed perfectly the stylistic differences between the two. Liddell continued,

And Florida A&M played ‘Elsa’s Procession.’ (see Appendix A: item 8) I said oh sh... ‘Elsa’s Procession’ was so beautiful. It was pretty! We had nothing in our folders to match that. Nothing! Magruder (assistant band director) called the loudest rap tune in the book. Whoom! And (to me) put this in your research, Magruder said ‘That’s how you take care of that pretty shit’ (laughing) Magruder wiped em out! So we turned the fans against them. Our fans went crazy, and their fans too.

“It’s like a jazz musician is gonna have finesse and a blues musician is necessarily going to have a doggone different type of finesse.”

With this research, I wanted to learn more about why trends manifested differently in these conferences. Adams brought up the differences surrounding football between conferences. He said, “SWAC bands in my prime, we had phenomenal symphonic bands also; But what transpired is the football was much more popular and bigger on that end of the world, and so marching bands started getting the play.” He, like sources in my literature review (Rowley, 2013; Walker, 2014) credited Foster’s program at FAMU with influencing other HBCU bands. He said that prior to the 1960s, “It permeated the HBCUs and everybody tried to be like them, or similar if you will.” Adams said that later, though, “the SWAC bands moved closer to the R&B application,” and that had the biggest impact on the sound. White also attributed a difference in competitiveness to a difference in the athletic culture. He said,

I think one other difference is that the competitive aspect the SWAC is probably more intense than the MEAC. And I guess that’s just because of the nature of the football team, the athletic competition in SWAC is probably more extensive than in the MEAC. You know you have the big Florida Classic between Bethune-Cookman and Florida A&M, that to me is the largest one in the MEAC. Where in the SWAC you have the Thanksgiving Classic, you have the classic in Memphis, Tennessee, and there are a number of classics... so I think that’s the main difference that I see between the two.

In our interviews, directors also attributed many stylistic differences to the geographic set up of the conferences. MEAC schools are spread out farther than the SWAC schools. Haymer said,

If you look at the geographic area of the MEAC...you got Florida, you got DC. And that’s a big (hand motion indicating space)...So, back in time, MEAC bands didn’t travel as much as SWAC bands. Because we played Grambling-same state. We go to Alcorn-two hours away. You got Texas Southern-four hours. Everything is closer, so the bands back in the day saw each other more. And the *crowd reacted to power!* The band is a

strong sound! And that's what caused the SWAC to have its style. The MEAC was more laid back because... they don't have as many battles as we have. Because geographically, it's hard to travel from Tallahassee, Florida (FAMU) to Washington DC (Howard University).

White agreed with this notion of geographic effect and said, "The proximity... the SWAC schools seem to be closer together, just in terms of their positions in the state and around the areas that they play than in the MEAC." Bands in the SWAC were closer together, so these ideas of power, aggression, and cranking spread in a snowball effect. D. Taylor said, "If all you play are bands who play a particular style... See most of them, they play each other. And that's just what you're going to conform to." He agreed with Adams' assessment of FAMU's impact and said, "The SWAC was once MEAC-like." Then, over time, the bug of aggression spread. D. Taylor said that today, "If you look at the SWAC bands, all the SWAC bands mirror each other." These statements further emphasize that bands seeing each other played a large role in developing the SWAC style. Liddell attributed stylistic differences to social and historical differences as well. He said, "On the East Coast...the black culture is a bit different over there. Mississippi and Louisiana ...are raw people. You know, black folks here (SWAC) are really raw people." Liddell also brought up the point that Mississippi was the birthplace of the Blues. He continued,

They had less racial discrimination than they had in places like Mississippi. I think all those things impacted the emotionalism. The impact. And aggression. They said, well I just wanna show the world that I can do something. And I... I think that's an impact. It's like a jazz musician is gonna have finesse and a blues musician is necessarily going to have a doggone different type of finesse. It's raw. So I think that the bands in the SWAC are sort of raw compared to the MEAC...In the SWAC, all the bands will come at you. Every night, you gotta be careful. They'll cut your head off. Every night. Alcorn, all of 'em. A&M (Alabama A&M University), Alabama State, Grambling, Southern, Prairie View (Prairie View A&M University).

It is significant that Liddell said next, "You gotta watch Prairie View. Prairie View is really dangerous now," because he retired from Jackson State eight years ago. He is not required

to keep up with the goings-on in SWAC band programs, but he clearly does. He went on, “You gotta watch ‘em, all of them will come after you,” then with pride, “And they all want revenge against Jackson State. Because they got slaughtered many times.”

The SWAC and MEAC are not the only HBCU-majority conferences, but these two contain typically larger schools that have larger band programs. As mentioned in the literature review, Tennessee State University’s program (TnSU) has been influential. However, TnSU is not a member of the SWAC or the MEAC. Adams described how TnSU fit into the mix,

Now Tennessee State, geographically was in the middle. And they played both schools, they played Southern AND they played Florida A&M....So Tennessee State ended up being a wedge because when they played FAM(U) they had to match up with that symphonic sound. And they used French horns on the field, and they didn’t have necessarily a hard R&B effect, but when they played us they went to the black Baptist church with that sound and pretty much played on that side. So I can use Tennessee State as the wedge. That’s the band that had both things going on and that’s why they called themselves the Aristocrats of Bands. They had stylistically different flavor, and they could do both. But they couldn’t beat Florida (FAMU) at what Florida was doing, and they couldn’t beat Southern at what Southern was doing.

In conclusion, my interviews revealed that with SU spurring change the SWAC and FAMU leading the MEAC, over the decades two distinct styles formed. This is perhaps best summed up in D. Taylor’s statement,

It’s an evolutionary process with those two conferences. Um... they used to be somewhat similar but now when you think about the SWAC and you think about the MEAC you tend to think about aggression and about passivity. The SWAC is aggressive. They will get in your face. And they will try to drown you, and they will try to hammer you, the SWAC. The MEAC on the other hand, from my point of view, they are still trying to pay homage to musicality.

D. Taylor admitted that the MEAC is “still trying to but... they’re getting infected.” Slowly but surely, many MEAC bands are starting to adopt the SWAC style of playing. The development of this change in the tides will be interesting to watch.

Chapter 7. The Directors

“HBCUs are musical too.”

Band directors spend their careers diagnosing problems and listening for mistakes within a group of many people. This critical eye and ear came up in my interviews, and directors expressed concern about maintaining musicality within their environments. K. Taylor said, of his arranging,

It's not accepted by everybody because I'm a musician, I can't just write loud notes on the paper and think that you know, I write... The same way we play in the spring is the same way I want it in the fall. Why? Because music tells a story... So people who know music are like, 'Man that's awesome.' People who don't know music are like, 'what is that? That sounds so (disgusted face) pretty' ... what?!

K. Taylor went on to say that he gets frustrated when non-musicians such as administrators ask for things that are not musical. SU's program has clearly embraced and even played a large role in founding “cranking”. However, K. Taylor said, of HBCU programs in general, “We sometimes get to a point where we go too far. Too much... it's like putting hot sauce on everything.” He said that pressure from the crowd often comes in the wrong forms, and, “now people just want to see and hear you play the loudest note you can play on the horn.” K. Taylor also said fans have been criticizing his band, saying, “they're not aggressive anymore... not aggressive?! I didn't know you fight the horn (laughing).” Both JSU and SU's programs work hard to entertain the crowd, as evidenced in earlier sections of this paper. However, directors expressed some regret about going too far. K. Taylor said,

If it's on the Internet, you can't ever take it back. You can't explain why to someone who's in Washington or Maryland who doesn't know nothing about... and they just hear it like wow, they're out of tune, or playing nasty. You can't explain that. Especially if you know it's not right.

Hollinger expressed similar concerns, and said,

About the whole crank mentality, for me, it's a 'when in Rome,' you know what I mean? Do I agree with every component of what we do? No. I can't be a symphony musician; I'm not trying to brag on myself, but I'm just being honest about it. I can't call myself the musician I am, or think that I am, and think that some of the things we do are good. Just from a musical perspective.

Hollinger currently plays clarinet in the premier professional orchestra in the state, the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra. Hollinger also mentioned that Drum Corps International (DCI) bands play loud too, but do not seem to put the same strain into their playing. He said he would like to find out more about the approach those bands take, "so that we can keep the sound but enhance it. Because at a certain point, your ear can't hear anything anyway, from a decibel perspective." He also mentioned that he thinks about the possible ear damage they are inflicting on students. The JSU band room is far too small for the size of the band, and the walls are made out of cinderblocks. He said, "And we're playing the loudest that you can play...like what are we doing from a health perspective do our students? That's really something that we think about."

I did not expect such a legendary cast of teachers to express concern for the current state of their programs and students. All of these men have led top tier programs during sensational eras, but this is perhaps because they are constantly critical and looking ahead. K. Taylor said, in relation to music in HBCU bands,

As it relates to where we are now I really think it's gotten out of hand with some people. And we are just trying to grab a hold of it before it really gets to a point where it's just gone and we really lose the HBCU culture to something that people are like, 'We really can't appreciate this anymore because it doesn't make sense.' Kind of like the music today. It's nothing out there that a band can really play that's of any caliber that has any substance to it... Most of the songs made have talking through a song, and putting music in the background. So I hope we continue to embrace the past and mix it with the present time, definitely going into the future.

White, who is now retired, gave this message for current band directors,

Do not sacrifice musical standards for the sake of the audience. I think that we have to be very careful when we play the popular tunes that we watch our performance fundamentals. The emphasis on tone quality, intonation, articulation, the phrasing, the

blend and balance, the precision. (To me) those kind of things, in my opinion, need to be emphasized in a study such as yours because I'm sure that you're going to have a great audience of HBCUs reading your study.

With this message, he added, "And I'm not saying that I think they are not at a high level, but I think that we can always strive for a higher level of artistic excellence." Dr. Julian White achieved much artistic excellence over his career, such as leading the FAMU wind ensemble in concert at the American Bandmaster's Association Convention. He also said he wanted to, "congratulate and compliment the HBCU bands for the progress made over the years." He added,

I taught for 50 years starting from elementary, middle, high, and 30 years on the college level. And so I have watched the quality and quantity of our HBCU bands... the uniforms, the bands are well equipped with instruments; They look good...and so I would really compliment them on that.

This paper primarily focuses on marching band traditions, but many credited their marching band success to the work done with their concert ensembles. Liddell told me, "What really made our program good was the symphonic and concert band." He added, "The marching band is only justified to the extent that it is a direct outgrowth of your symphonic band." He was not alone in this point. Hollinger, who studied under Liddell, spoke about the success of the Sonic Boom and said, "At the end of the day, the reason it is what it is, is because it is a direct outgrowth of our symphonic and concert programs." This similar phrasing indicates this is one of the pillars of JSU's band philosophy.

Directors from SU emphasized the importance of symphonic bands also. As mentioned earlier, Haymer said, "There's a lot of people that turn their nose up at HBCU bands." He added, "That's not true, look at our symphonic band or wind ensemble. We work just as hard." These statements show the importance of Western art music to HBCU band programs. They also echo a sense of needing to prove their musicality that stretches back to Frank T. Greer's fore-mentioned comments from a trip to Disney World in the 60s. Greer said, "Somebody made the comment,

‘you know what those bands play.’ So I made sure we could play... (challenging) pieces. I wanted those people to know that our bands could play the same music they play.” (McDonald, 2009, p. 66)

David Ware (2008) interviewed many HBCU band directors for his 2008 book, two of which I also interviewed. He said, “all of them said that continuing to improve yourself as a director is important to building a strong comprehensive band program,” emphasizing that comprehensive means stepping beyond marching band as a foundation. Jackson wanted to emphasize to readers that,

The HBCU bands are looking for the same musicians the PWI bands are looking for. Musicians who have good tone quality, can sight read, good playing fundamentals, dexterity, who are part of a band that went to solo and ensemble. Who tried out for all district, county, and all state band. The musicians whose band believes in going to festivals and competing. Musicians who have good moral fiber. Good academic achievement. We’re looking for those musicians too.

This “us too” phenomenon was common in responses. Hollinger said,

One of the big things that I would not want to be left out is that although we may be different, from other programs, we still are important. And we still are musical, ok? And we still, the most important thing for me is that marching band isn’t all that we do... we are not just the Sonic Boom of the South, and we haven’t been, for many, many years. And the reason why our band program is what it is, is because we have a fully functional and well-rounded music program.

In my experience, this well-rounded and comprehensive set up allowed for students at many different levels to thrive. Students in the top ensembles are challenged with difficult repertoire, but not every band student that comes to JSU is ready for that challenge. Liddell said, “Every child that comes here plays in a symphonic band, the concert bands, or the orchestra. Develop true musicianship. And I think Jackson State made a remarkable contribution there.” Later on in our interview, Liddell told a story of a student who came to love and thrive in concert ensembles,

Now some of these little kids; I had this little boy who played baritone... he was from New Orleans. And he told me, he said he had never played in a concert band until he came to Jackson State. A music major! He said he had never played in a symphonic or concert band, didn't know what that was. He thought everything was "Get Ready" or "Blowin'" (JSU marching band classic tunes). So... he said he loved it (symphonic band).

Many HBCUs have music programs in which these students can thrive alongside students who were all-state musicians in high school. Hollinger said, of JSU's concert ensembles,

If I could leave any kind of legacy, if you will, on the program it would be that. It would be to allow those ensembles to perform at events that are well-respected amongst the band world. So that the world would know that marching band is not all that we do; and that we have some very good concert ensembles that can compete with some of the major schools. Now from a perspective of our student population, it's definitely going to be different. But for us to have ¾ of our student population in my symphonic wind ensemble is made up of non-majors...now for us to still be able to play at the level we are, I think is good, you know what I'm saying? And it should be respected.

Put more succinctly, he also said, "HBCUs are musical too," which I think all of these directors wanted to get across in this study.

Proud Moments

I asked David Ware what he would do differently, if he were to do his project, which involved interviewing 16 HBCU band directors, again. He said,

I would ask these band directors more about their feelings. You know, I would ask them, 'how did it make you feel'...you know, how did you feel when one of your best students or mentees got a good job offer, took that job, and is doing really well in that job, you know, how does that make you feel as a band director?

I asked questions about proud moments to help fill this void. Liddell started by saying, "When you're in it, I didn't have an opportunity to reflect. It's very competitive," confirming Ware's additional ideas about male directors not reflecting often. Some proud moments mentioned were about performances. White mentioned high profile and meaningful performance such as Barack Obama's inaugural parade, and FAMU's performance in Paris, France. K. Taylor talked about the joy of seeing a field show come together as imagined and receiving a positive response from

fans. The competitive edge common in HBCU band programs was evident in one of Liddell's memories. He said,

I was proud the day we took out Florida A&M in '95 (see Appendix A: item 6). Because that was my first experience meeting... one of the greatest bands of all time, to tell the truth. We wore 'em out. That was pride to me. And uh... we wore them out every time since then.

The most common source of pride by far was the feeling the directors get when their students graduate. When I asked about his proudest moment as a director, Haymer immediately knew, "Oh, seeing a kid walk across the stage." Hollinger said in kind, "Seeing them walk across the stage is the best gratification that I can have in this job." Liddell mentioned that he is also particularly proud of his students and former staff members who have gone on to earn a doctorate. Jackson expressed similar sentiments,

(My) Proudest moment as a director also was when they march across the stage, and got that diploma. That they finished the course. Cause often time I talk about finishing the course. I'd say, 'and you have not been successful if you march in the band four years, you get your jacket, and you don't get a degree. You wasted valuable time.' But when they march across that stage, and I smile and think yes! They made it! I'm like a proud papa.

Directors mentioned graduations, promotions, and the acquisition of life skills as ultimate goals for their students. Liddell mentioned a specific student of his, Cortez Bryant, who was at one time famed rapper Lil' Wayne's manager, and went on to become the president of the highly profitable record label Young Money Entertainment. Liddell said,

I was on the (practice) field. This was in 2011, my last season with the band...And Cortez Bryant had pulled up in his Mercedes, and he was just sitting there. I walked up and spoke to him and he had *tears* in his eyes. I said, 'How you doing Cortez??' He said, 'I want to thank you for getting me out of the ghettos of New Orleans. For giving me a scholarship.'

This inspiring story took an unexpected turn when Liddell continued, "I said...'You mean I gave a cymbal player a scholarship?!' (laughs) I said, 'I need to have my head examined for giving a

cymbal player a scholarship!” As it turns out, Liddell had visited a high school in New Orleans that had a particularly stellar senior class of musicians. Sometimes, when this happened he would offer a scholarship to every band student from that school that wanted to come to JSU as a recruitment tool. Then, students were more likely to come and be successful with their cohorts. He said, “Cortez Bryant was in that bunch,” and that changed Bryant’s life.

So many students have been offered incredible opportunities through band programs at HBCUs, via scholarship or otherwise. D. Taylor said,

HBCU bands have produced a lot of professionals in a lot of different disciplines. And they have provided skill sets for students who have come into the program with no idea what it means to be disciplined. No idea what it means to start a project on Monday, and complete it on Friday. Time management. I think that’s what is lost on a lot of people who just see the bands out on the field. Those bands are creating productive citizens...They (HBCUs) play a very important role in creating some of the professionals you see today. And we’re very proud of that.

Chapter 8. Summary, Implications, Research Recommendations, and Final Reflection

SU and JSU both have rich histories behind their instrumental music programs. Both programs expanded to marching bands in the decades immediately following World War II. In the 60s and 70s the Human Jukebox and Sonic Boom of the South developed identities, and competition among HBCU bands began to grow. Research question one asked “how did pre- and post-game traditions develop?” and I found that rivalries inspired innovation and birthed the fifth and zero quarters. The first fifth quarter, as Adams said, “happened by accident, quite frankly,” in the early seventies between SU and Alcorn. The zero quarter occurred as a result of the intense rivalry between SU and JSU. At this legendary 1997 game, the Human Jukebox was in position to “shower down” on the Sonic Boom’s stadium entrance, making it difficult for JSU to stay in step. Both of these traditions were disseminated throughout HBCU bands and are big events today. However, bands in the MEAC do not typically participate in zero quarter battles. In fact, there are many differences between bands in the MEAC and SWAC. MEAC bands are typically more visually active on the field, making use of flags and picture formations. SWAC bands typically stick to more traditional geometric drilling that moves up and down the field. SWAC bands play more aggressively, while MEAC bands have comparatively retained a more symphonic style. My interview participants pointed to the geographic situation of each conference, suggesting that the SWAC bands are more aggressive because the close proximity of the schools allows the bands to travel to away games and come into contact with each other more frequently. My participants also pointed to FAMU as the ultimate inspiration of the MEAC style, and SU as the ultimate stimulus of the SWAC style. Many people hold the band programs at

FAMU and SU in high esteem, and have done so for the last fifty years. The success of each program is often ascribed to their respective long-serving directors, William P. Foster and Isaac Greggs. In my investigation of the histories of the Human Jukebox and Sonic Boom, I found that both programs had long-serving directors that frequently learned from one another. Liddell said with pride, “I taught just about every band director at Jackson State,” and the history of SU was similar. Directors from both SU and JSU attributed part of their success to the consistency and homegrown nature of their directorship.

My interviews revealed that HBCU band directors are under enormous pressure from administrators and fans, especially now in the digital age. Research question two asked “how have HBCU marching bands changed over the last fifty years?” and I found the introduction of video sharing through YouTube and other social media was the largest catalyst of change. Directors bemoaned the fact that with the advent of YouTube and popularity of their videos, each band must perform twice as many distinct halftime shows as they used to. YouTube and social media have a positive effect as well, because they give programs wider exposure. This is particularly helpful for smaller band programs that are not well known. However, since JSU and SU are both well established the magnifying glass is bigger. Directors as recently as the early 2000s did not have to deal with the pressure of having every single performance posted and critiqued online, but that is the reality SU and JSU are currently dealing with. Each band works hard to capture their audience, and getting house, or pleasing the crowd, is a big part of the show.

Research question three asked “which remarkable and important stories in this tradition are not told in academic literature?” My participants wanted to bring notice to the symphonic program at each institution. These directors spoke from a pedagogical perspective about the importance of concert bands for a well-rounded band program, but they also brought attention to

them for their own sake. When HBCU band programs do receive notice outside their local communities, it is almost exclusively for their marching bands. Many schools have phenomenal concert bands that deserve recognition too. These discussions are inextricably tied to a racial lens. Directors seemed to feel a kinship to each other and other HBCU band programs because of their minority status, as evidenced by sweeping statements about HBCU band programs. Many white band enthusiasts outside of the HBCU band world write these programs off as vapid entertainment machines, but there is so much musical activity and value in these programs. Hollinger emphatically stated, “HBCUs are musical too,” and each band director I interviewed said something similar.

Implications for Music Educators

This research is valuable to music educators because it uncovers important information about the role of the community in school music, the impact of competition between music ensembles, and the value of HBCU band programs. Throughout my interviews, I continually heard about the community surrounding the programs at SU and JSU. Much of the Human Jukebox’s tradition is reflective of the second line brass band culture, and likewise, the Sonic Boom has incorporated jazz and blues music into its repertoire and arranging styles. Both bands are a reflection of their communities, and because of this they have a pronounced influence in those communities. Enriching community support and influence is beneficial for all school bands. Interview responses indicated that the bands at SU and JSU receive fierce support, and video evidence supports this. In the footage from the 1997 SU vs. JSU zero quarter (see Appendix A: item 5), the large stadium is packed to full capacity significantly before the game begins. The community support and impact evident in the Sonic Boom and Human Jukebox can serve as models for all school music programs.

The competitive elements between HBCU band programs are also viable models for music educators. Many secondary school bands participate in band competitions, and undoubtedly competition can have a positive impact on a band student's performance and experience. Complaints frequently surround obsession with obtaining high scores at the competition, contrasted with the preferable goal of creating a positive experience for students regardless of scores. The intense rivalries between HBCU marching bands exist outside of formal contests and scoring systems, providing a model of harnessing this spirit without an objective goal. Introducing this competitive energy in secondary school bands outside of formal contests can positively impact the student experience and product.

It is my desire that music educators will leave this study with an inspired view of HBCU music programs such as those at Jackson State University and Southern University. Teachers who have students they think would thrive at an HBCU should encourage them to do so, and I hope this research gives teachers evidence about what that experience looks like.

Research Recommendations

HBCU bands have been understudied, so there are many opportunities for future studies. This study merely scratches the surface on the histories of these programs, and left out many institutions that are also worthy of study. There are many other HBCU marching bands with rich histories that warrant study. A few suggestions from the SWAC include the programs at Grambling State University, Alcorn State University, and Texas Southern University. Grambling's "world-famed" marching band rose to prominence during Hall of Fame football coach Eddie Robinson's tenure. Alcorn's band program was mentioned throughout this paper in several historic games, and TxSU's "Ocean of Soul" is widely regarded as an influential marching band. I did not discuss bands in the MEAC in detail in this study, but the programs at

Morgan State University, Bethune-Cookman University, and Howard University are particularly ripe for research. The most influential directors of the previously mentioned MEAC schools (Melvin Miles, Donovan Wells, and John Newson, respectively) are still active in the music education community. Interviews with these men would yield rich history. Like SU, JSU, TnSU, and FAMU, each program I listed had at least one band director with a long and legendary tenure. The marching band at Mississippi Valley State University (MVSU) is also of interest. MVSU is one of the youngest HBCUs, and Liddell mentioned in our interview that the marching band began using corps-style techniques. An investigation of that transition would be interesting and benefit this field greatly.

Many HBCU band programs also have phenomenal symphonic groups that have not been studied. These groups are worth study in and of themselves, but are also suited to a study about the discrimination that these groups have faced over the years. I suggest the programs at Howard University, Tennessee State University, Jackson State University, and the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff as starting points. These groups have historically toured frequently with highlights such as JSU's performance at the 1965 World's Fair (Bandmaster Chronology, n.d.), and are situated in racially tense cities.

I did not include this story in this paper, but Liddell also told me the story of JSU's first female drum major, Tamara Myles. Myles took her post likely as the first female drum major at any HBCU. Many HBCU band programs did not allow any female members until the early 70s, and today many programs have never had a female in a leadership position such as a drum major or band director. Liddell told me she received protest even in the audition phase, and that other drum major candidates refused to train with her. Despite her excellent audition, when the results came in, "They (the other directors) had voted her down... I told Dr. Magruder, 'we can't do that

man... she was the best one.” Myles was named drum major, and the protests continued. Students, female students in particular, were hostile towards her. The next year Myles was a promising pick for the head position, and students put up posters protesting her appointment. Liddell added, “Tammy was tough. She had to be tough to take the abuse she took.” Despite protests, she was named head drum major the following year. Eventually, Liddell told me, “She won the love of the band, and the respect of the community. She was a trailblazer.” Her story is one of historical interest, triumph, and inspiration. I did not include what I learned about her in this paper because her story is worthy of its own study.

Final Reflection/Personal Vignette: “In stories told years from now, this will be the game that changed somebody’s life.”

The date is October 27th, 2018, and my chest flutters with anticipation as I hear the final chord of Southern University’s alma mater, signaling the end of the game. In SU’s Mumford stadium, the fifth quarter of the Boombox Classic is about to begin. A cool breeze drifts across the stadium as I follow my fellow Sonic Boom alumni to the bleachers in front of the band. As we make our way through the crowd, the stadium is suddenly engorged with the sounds of JSU’s low brass and drums. I do not recognize this song, and the looks on the crowd’s faces show they do not either. The driving bass line and uncomplicated beat have a rock music feel, while the trumpets and trombones belt out scalar riffs reminiscent of Earth, Wind, and Fire. I tell myself I’ll have to ask someone later what the name of that song is, because despite the unfamiliarity, the whole stadium is caught up in the groove. The arrangement is scored perfectly for cranking, which somehow accentuates the 70s-style rock song perfectly. This is a bold start to the battle. The song ends on a dissonant, fantastically incomplete chord, and the ball is now in SU’s court. Chief arranger Brian Simmons calls the band to play with their traditional

chorus of “oooooh” followed by “ready, up.” The crowd is quiet as we attempt to decipher what is going on.

The Human Jukebox is playing something chorale-like, just above a whisper. Slowly, more sound comes from their side of the stadium through a crescendo and a hit from the bass drums that sends the band into a passion-packed increase in volume and tempo. The new section of this tune, still unrecognizable to the crowd, is more rhythmically active and intense. The song continues to build in a dramatic fashion, and I turn to my friend, “this sounds like a movie soundtrack.” He nods, considers, and replies, “yeah... is this from Batman?” “Oh, that’s what it is!” we hear from nearby as the crowd comes to a consensus. SU is stepping outside of the box with this song, a brand new selection they have clearly saved for JSU. The crowd is taken on an unexpected journey through the soundtrack of Batman. SU’s stellar trumpet section shines on wailing lines Simmons arranged for them, and the crowd around JSU begins to shift anxiously. JSU came out hitting, but SU is hitting right back. This is a phenomenal piece, though no one around me in blue and white will dare say this out loud. As the Sonic Boom unloads its next selection, heads turn in interest.

Kevan Johnson is conducting Walter Murphy’s “Mostly Mozart,” a hip and challenging blend of classical melodies and funky interludes. The brass pelt the stadium with sound in syncopated chords while the woodwinds fill the space in between with quick, fugue-like riffs. Sonic Boom fans and I journey through a disco-infused, crank-fied display of virtuosic melodies, bobbing our heads and smiling with pride. As the battle continues, each band trades a few stunning ballads they have been saving for this meeting, and the crowd sings along. As Roderick Little ascends the ladder to conduct

JSU's next tune, I see this might be the final selection of the night. This will be each band's fifth song, and Little has a particular gleam of excitement in his eyes. As he brings his fist down, the band responds with "oohh," re-emphasized each time the signal is given, until horns are brought up to playing position. The sudden silence is palpable. Little counts off a largo "*one and two and ready and play and!*" In an instant the stadium is covered in crank-age. Then, several of the stadium lights go off. The crowd shouts in the half darkness of the tuba break, encouraging the bands to continue. Little, unbothered by the disruption, brings the rest of the band in for a few bars, ending on a gut-wrenching chord that reinstates the tuba break.

The band chants "go home!" in rhythm towards the Southern side. As Little cuts off the song, I turn toward Southern to see what they will throw back. The lights indicate the battle is going over the time security allotted for the bands, but if the Human Jukebox leaves now it is an admission of defeat in their own stadium. Southern does not yet have their horns up, but I whip around when I hear JSU unleash Chaunte Moore's "Who Do I Turn To?" The band boldly only plays the introduction, which is packed with power. After the final chord from the Sonic Boom, SU scrambles through the count off to avoid being cut off again. The Human Jukebox's reply is met with nonchalance from the Sonic Boom as they don hats, preparing to march out of the stadium. Fans begin to file out, and Southern continues to play another song. The JSU fans around me laugh at the Human Jukebox's effort to make up for a battle they know they lost, and I imagine fans on the SU side are saying that they ran the Sonic Boom out of the stadium. In this rivalry, neither side publicly admits defeat. I see Lowell Hollinger and Dowell Taylor lead the

Sonic Boom out of the stadium as Kedric Taylor lines up his own band for their exit. Each face shows pride in tonight's performance.

The crowd that is exiting the stadium now is a diverse one, made up of people of all ages. There older folks who marched under the direction of Isaac Greggs and Harold Haughton. There are also young children who perhaps, like Kedric Taylor was, are tired and ready to go home. I notice the commanding moves of a petite five-year-old girl on the field, emulating the Human Jukebox's drum major. She could very well be Southern's first female drum major fifteen years from now. Her future band director may also be in the crowd. Undoubtedly, some inspired high school students will use the results of this battle to determine which college they choose to attend. Many band directors can name the band performance that decided their college of choice, myself included. In stories told years from now, this will be the game that changed somebody's life.

Appendix A: YouTube Video Links

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXcubPJ95sc&t=1234s> SU vs. JSU zero quarter 2016, as described in opening vignette.
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBbt033spn4> JSU drum majors get revenge on the fans with blue and white pom-poms.
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LNlp1k18ICI> a typical JSU Sonic Boom entrance into Veteran's Memorial Stadium.
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmcPL4qmr4c> part of SU vs. JSU fifth quarter battle in 1995.
5. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFawGGC6yVc> SU plays over JSU's stadium entrance in 1997- the first zero quarter.
6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gMVn1eCr1Ww> JSU halftime show against FAMU in 1995.
7. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYB9314nPFs> FAMU Circle City Classic halftime show in 2003, as described by Lewis Liddell.
8. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAcxoT6IT94> FAMU plays "Elsa's Procession to the Cathedral," with fan commentary.
9. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRqLcLj15NI> in JSU's band room, mellophones and baritones turn and play towards each other in an impromptu battle at 13:30 minute mark.
10. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erWqPHkcrdg> JSU "Tiger Run On" halftime show entrance, with tribute to legendary announcer Dr. Jimmy James Jr.
11. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KaQFKZJdwBY> Human Jukebox plays Bon Jovi's "Livin on a Prayer" at University of Louisiana-Lafayette.
12. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ss8PyUD0FSI> Louisiana State University marching band plays "Neck."
13. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPpqjD1FtcY> Human Jukebox makes halftime score on the field at 3:00 minute mark.
14. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vudn5KKsUow> JSU vs. SU fifth quarter battle 2018, as described in closing vignette.

Appendix B: IRB Exemption

On March 23rd, 2018, the LSU Institutional Review Board reviewed an application for this project (IRB# E10966) and determined that because “there is no manipulation of, nor intervention with human subjects,” the project is exempt from a formal review.

Appendix C: Interview Transcript Request Information

Interview transcripts can be made available by contacting the author, Claire Milburn, at cemilburn@aol.com.

Appendix D: Interview Questions

1. Can you briefly tell me about the history of your program?
2. What unique innovations do you think could be attributed to your program?
3. How do you feel your program is unique compared to your PWI counterparts?
4. How is your program set apart from rival bands?
5. Why are you unique?
6. When planning, how much do you consider “getting house”? What are the pros and cons of this?
7. To the best of your knowledge, how did HBCU bands develop their own unique style?
8. What was your first experience with the fifth quarter?
9. What do you know about its origin?
10. What was your first experience with the zero quarter?
11. What do you know about its origin?
12. Do you see as major stylistic differences between the bands in the MEAC and SWAC conferences?
13. Why do you think these differences came about?
14. How does the element of competition influence the culture of your band program? How does it affect your job as a band director?
15. How has YouTube/social media affected your band program?
16. What was your proudest moment as a band director?
17. If you were writing this paper, what would you want to be sure is included?

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Vita

Claire Ellen Milburn, born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, is a passionate young music educator. Upon receiving her bachelor's degree in music education from Jackson State University, she decided to pursue a master's degree at Louisiana State University where she is currently a graduate teaching assistant. Miss Milburn participated in two HBCU marching band programs during her undergraduate education, which led to her current research interest in HBCU band history. She plans to graduate in May and enter the teaching profession full-time.