

**The Geography of Community Bands in Virginia**

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### **(ABSTRACT)**

In the first half of the twentieth century in Virginia, the town band was a popular concert venue and sometimes a symbol of community pride. Originally, community bands faced few competitors for entertainment popularity, but the advent of movie theaters in the 1930's, and eventually television in the 1950's, challenged the band's former role. Attendance decreased at band concerts and the community space that bands had occupied was allotted for other uses. Despite this decline, the town band survived. Virginia is home to at least 34 community bands today.

This study presents a geographic analysis of present day community bands in Virginia. I visited 25 active bands and administered a twenty-five question, self-designed survey to 900 band members (98% response rate). I also personally interviewed conductors and band presidents. Members reported demographic information and the distances and time that they traveled. I also explored how band members perceive their role in the community based on their participation in the community band. I then examined the variation of responses across the state. Results show that bands in Virginia consist primarily of educated, retired individuals with previous musical experience. While traveling the same distance, band members spend more time traveling in regions with large metropolitan areas than in rural regions. Finally, although band members in rural areas received higher sense of community scores than those in metropolitan areas, the scores for both areas were encouragingly high. The results indicate that although regional variations exist for the variables of travel and sense of community, community music in Virginia has a solid rate of participation, and community bands will continue to serve their respective regions in the state.

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Sight, for the geographer, is considered the dominant and most relied upon of the five senses (Pocock 1988, 62; 1989, 193). Sight allows the geographer to interpret landscapes, conceptualize space and note regional or global trends. Thus, it is understandable that geographers often neglect non-visual elements of the world or take them for granted (Nash 1968, 1; Pocock 1988, 62; 1989, 193; Porteous 1982). But, other senses need not be neglected if geography is truly a relevant social science. The geography of music studies the spatial variation of man-made sounds in the form of music (Pocock 1988, 62). Community bands are producers of sound, a musical phenomenon that can be examined geographically. While most studies on community bands involve membership profiles and case studies, a geographer can offer a spatial perspective unique to the subject.

Carney (1990, 35) identifies music as a “significant subfield within cultural geography.” He describes this subfield as being “an important research frontier—a frontier complete with ready-made questions, more than ample data base, and a seemingly endless future” (Carney 1990, 35).

Research in this dimension of Geography has received attention only since the late 1960’s. The 1970’s saw the height of Geography of Music research and a focus on American folk and popular music (Carney 1990, 35). The idea of “soundscape” and what sound means to the Geographer has also become a theme in the Geography of music (Pocock 1988,1989; Porteous and Mastin 1985; Smith 1994). Research on community bands exists in the field of music, but appears absent from the field of Geography. Examining community bands from a geographic perspective thereby adds an additional element to the study of the Geography of Music.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the community bands in Virginia from a geographic perspective. In addition to determining the demographic makeup of community bands in Virginia, a survey of band members and personal interviews with conductors will determine the time and distance traveled by participants to rehearsals and concerts. Survey

results and personal interviews will provide insight into the participants' sense of community based on their involvement with their bands as a form of community volunteerism.

### Definition of Community Band

Goldman (1961, 134-135) states that it is impossible to generalize about community bands based on their operation, proficiency, financial support, and number of performances. Therefore, a variety of definitions of "community band" exist. Bowen defines a community band as "a community-based ensemble of wind and percussion players, comprised primarily of adults who do not receive the majority of their livelihood from participation in the ensemble, which regularly holds rehearsals and performs at least one time per year" (1995, 44). This definition does not include military bands or those that perform strictly for religious purposes.

Goldman (1961, 135) proceeds to offer more depth to the definition. He explains that community bands exist for two mutually exclusive reasons: "to provide entertainment in the traditional way of bands, and also to provide a social and musical activity for the players." He also identifies the "municipal band," whose name was derived from the fact that they receive much of their financial support from the town in which they existed. However, Goldman admits that it is difficult to distinguish between municipal and community bands, and in 1961, he predicted that they would eventually merge (Goldman, 1961, 134-135). Cohen (1997, 19) identifies municipal bands in his research on the community bands of Valencia, Spain. These municipal bands "are comprised of paid professional musicians [and are] sponsored by city or town." For the purpose of my research, the term "community band" will include municipal bands whose members' livelihoods are not related to band membership. The term "municipal band" will be used only when referring to a specific group that uses the term in their title.

Additional terms often used interchangeably with community band include "wind band" and "concert band," which emerged from military bands, as did concert bands (Goldman 1946, 3-5). In contrast to a military band, which originally played as soldiers went off to battle and are still today attached to the military, a concert band is "a body of wind instrument players primarily occupied in...performing music of a self-sufficient sort at functions devoted entirely to music" (Goldman 1946, 3). "Concert band" is a term also used to distinguish a group that plays concerts from those bands, like marching bands, that do not play concerts (Hindsley 1979, 41). Leonhard (1952, 135) identified the concert band as a "a preponderance of woodwinds [that]

often plays indoors.” This was written in contrast to his definition of the marching band, which he identified as playing primarily outdoors. Today, some community bands use the terms “wind band”, “town band,” “wind ensemble,” or “concert band” in their title, which indicates that these terms are no longer distinct.<sup>1</sup>

If one wishes to define community band, it is important to determine the band’s instrumentation. In 1931, the Music and Instrumentation of the American Bandmaster’s Association created a standard instrumentation for concert band, which was approved by the organization at their annual meeting. Before that time, a standardized instrumentation did not exist (Goldman 1934, 30).

In addition to differences in history and usage, instrumentation is what distinguishes a band from an orchestra. While both the band and the orchestra’s primary purpose is to play music, their instrumentation is drastically different (Goldman 1946, 5-7). Goldman (1946, 6) describes band instrumentation:

a group of wind instrument players, approximating the orchestra in size, but with a disposition of instruments resembling nothing in the orchestra...All compasses and registers are covered in the band, to the extent of which wind instruments are capable, and the band is sufficiently developed to be able to perform relatively complex music in full harmony and articulation of parts...The band always has had a well developed percussion section, where the emphasis was on functional time-beating for marching and excessive cymbal-swatting for noise.

The band itself is comprised of three sections: the Reed section, (also referred to as the Woodwind section), the Brass section, and the Percussion section (Goldman 1934, 26; Leonhard 1952, 135). Although neither of these sources lists stringed instruments in band instrumentation, it is not uncommon for a concert band to include a harp or a string bass (Goldman 1934, 27, 30; Goldman 1946, 6). In contrast, an orchestra is primarily an ensemble of string instruments, which may also include a Reed section, a Brass section, and/or a Percussion section.

The issue of whether or not a community band is a for-profit organization has been debated. Most bands are sponsored by a local institution of higher education, or by the agencies

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<sup>1</sup> The term “wind ensemble” was, and still is in university and high school circles, a distinct group (Fennell 1954).

of the town in which the band resides (Goldman 1962, 134). For the purpose of my research, a community band is defined as:

a group of individuals who come together for enjoyment to play music of concert band instrumentation in at least one performance per calendar year, and whose individual members do not receive monetary compensation for performances, time or talent.

In summarizing these definitions, it seems appropriate to generalize that the term “community” refers to the band’s purpose and composition, and the term “band” refers to its instrumentation.

#### A Brief History of Community Bands in the United States

The modern American community band is rooted in European tradition. Records of active wind bands in Western Europe exist from even before the seventeenth century (Goldman 1946, 21; Hazen and Hazen 1987, 6; Whitwell 1985, 23). These exclusively male bands consisting of brass instruments were present in a variety of village activities, from announcements to banquets, a prisoner parade or at the carnival (Whitwell 1985, 23). They grew in popularity during the French Revolution as a form of unified popular expression (Fennell 1954, 20; Goldman 1946, 36). Immigrants, like the German Moravians who settled in Pennsylvania and North Carolina, brought the band tradition with them to the United States. The Moravians organized bands in towns where they settled, and they offered both secular and religious music selections (Camus 1975, 55; Hazen and Hazen 1987, 6). Compton (1979, iv), however, questions the amount of influence this group had on American instrumental music.

Town bands in the United States often emerged from militia or military bands (Bowen 1995, 2). The earliest amateur bands in the United States did occasionally include woodwind instruments, but bands and band music emphasized primarily the brass instruments (Hazen and Hazen 1987, 7-8). What made the band movement so popular, however, was the participation of thousands of ordinary citizens in these ensembles. Participants were familiar with the professional bands of Gilmore, Conway, and Sousa, and town bands emerged in the late 1800’s from the popularity of these men (Bowen 1995, 2). Hazen and Hazen (1987) estimated that in

1889 there were 10,000 bands in the United States. This large number can be attributed the drastic increase in population, due in a large part to immigration, a strong sense of nationalism following the War of 1812, and prosperity between 1837-1857 that allowed for more leisure time (Hazen and Hazen 1987 8, 10). In addition, the Civil War provided venues for bands and patriotism to feed audiences (Cohen 1997, 7). The community band became popular because it represented “a culturally elevating institution that fostered democracy” (Hazen and Hazen 1987, 11).

The community band was also supported at this time by the development of the collegiate band, and later by music education in the public schools (Cohen 1997, 9). By this time, the community band’s mission was to serve the community and the country, and belonging to a band was a prestigious position (Hazen and Hazen 1987, 12-13).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the scope of the band movement changed. The phonograph, the automobile, motion pictures and the radio competed with the band as sources of entertainment. The community band lost popularity as the radio brought the sounds of professional bands to people’s homes (Hazen 1987, 191-194; Marvin 1997, 7). As instrumental music programs developed in schools, many town bands took a step back to allow for emerging school bands (Hazen and Hazen 1987, 191-195). Not all comments about community bands during this era were favorable, however. Hindsley (1979, 16) reports three main criticisms of the community band in general in 1942. One, due to the noise level of music played, the band was exclusively an outdoor performing group. Two, color and expressiveness was said to be lacking from band performances. Three, band literature was not as prestigious as that of the orchestra and was written by sub-standard composers. While acknowledging that there were bands to which these criticisms can be applied, Hindsley argues that many orchestras and choral groups often deserved such criticisms as well.

Community bands originated at a time when communities were self-sufficient and neighbors knew one another. As towns became more externally oriented through the advent of electricity, phone, automobiles and the growth of a national economy, the town band declined. However, the band movement did not completely die out. Some towns continued to support the band, but the nature of the town band changed. Those bands that remained were much larger than their predecessors and drew participation from large areas that extended beyond the town. Brass bands began to integrate a balance of woodwinds instruments, and these once all-male ensembles

opened membership to women. Where bands of the nineteenth century spent time fund raising and collecting donations, twentieth century bands were aided in their quest for financial support by the enactment of band laws. The Iowa Band Law of 1922 allowed for a percentage of taxes collected to be used to support the local band. This legislation not only set a precedent which 40 other states followed, but it also marked a change in public attitude toward community bands as other states adopted similar policies (Hazen and Hazen 194-197).

The last 20-30 years have seen a resurgence of bands in the United States. Heintzelman (1988, 3-4) compares the band's popularity today to that of the early part of the twentieth century, and he attributes the founding of band organizations, such as the Association of Concert Bands (ACB), to this popularity. One can speculate about the resurgence in community bands, and the most prominent would be an increase in the leisure time of the average American (Heintzelman 1988, 13).

#### The Music Environment in Colonial Virginia

To understand the band environment in Virginia today, it is necessary to look briefly at the role music has played in the state's history. Music was a prominent part of colonial culture and the American Revolution in Virginia. The presence of British bands led to the establishment of colonial bands in the states (Camus 1975, 44). Each town had a militia, and most militias had a musical component. In 1687, Virginia set a precedent for support of the militia band when they passed a law allowing the use of tax revenue to purchase musical instruments for the band. It is ironic that the militia had to supply their own arms, but the band instruments were supplied by public funds (Camus 1975, 41).

In the late 1700's, Virginia, specifically its capital Williamsburg, had "flourishing musical environments" (Camus 1975, 45). Traveling music teachers visited plantations around the area teaching dancing and music to the owner's wife and children. They would reside for three or four days on a plantation every three to six weeks, teaching the plantation owner's children how to play musical instruments. The music teachers received free room and board as partial payment for the lessons they taught (Compton 1979, 39). It was common for wealthy plantation owners to spend an evening in the company of an instrumental music ensemble and a group of singers, especially when important individuals came to visit (Carson 1965, 36-39).

The American Revolution enhanced Virginia's musical environment. Fifes and drums accompanied the infantry units, and trumpets accompanied the cavalry. At the end of the Revolution, one colonel of a Virginia division of troops said, "Their [enlisted musicians'] music had more influence on the minds and motions of the militia last summer in this state than would the oratory of a Cicero" (Camus 1965, 175). When the army disbanded, the musicians were permitted to take their instruments home as compensation for their service to the country (Camus 1975, 176). These colonial origins led to the evolution of the community band tradition throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and into the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, the setting for this thesis.

### Research Questions

For the purposes of this study I have three main research questions and three hypotheses. My hypotheses are based on literature reviewed and my own years of experience playing in community bands.

1. What are the demographics of Virginia community bands in my study?

Hypothesis: Community bands are made up of college educated, middle and upper-middle class adults. These adults are almost exclusively white, and retirees constitute the main occupation group. A majority of band members are over 55 years of age and learned to play their instrument in elementary school. The only regional variation expected is that band members in major metropolitan areas are more likely to play in more than one community band than are band members in rural areas.

2. How far and for how long do participants travel to band rehearsals, and what regional variations exist?

Hypothesis: Band members in major metropolitan areas travel shorter distances, but spend more time traveling than do band members in rural areas.

3. What sense of community do participants have by being a member of the community band?

Hypothesis: Band members in rural areas have a stronger sense of community than do band members in metropolitan areas because there are fewer community bands in rural areas and, therefore, their impact on the community is more visible.

### Significance of Study

Community music is a long-standing tradition in the United States. It gives amateur musicians the opportunity to play music without making this pursuit a career. In addition, the adult concert band is “a musical enhancement of society and an educational value to its members” (Reimer 1996, 375). Community bands serve as continuing education venues for those who pursued music in high school and also as justification for the continuation of music programs beyond the secondary level because “making music is an endeavor that neither does nor should cease upon graduation” (Reimer 1996, 376).

Most of the research completed on community bands focuses on history, development and case studies. Little emphasis has been placed on the benefits of community bands to members, audience or community, and even less research has addressed a regional or national dimension (Reimer 1996, 396-397).

In general, research on community bands will enhance awareness of the importance of music in the community. Not only is it important that local politicians and administrators realize the role that community bands play in a community’s educational growth and cultural identity, but it is also important that community members are made aware of performance opportunities. Because most community band members are unpaid, involvement in a community band gives members an opportunity to give something back to the community and to contribute to community wellness (Reimer 1996, 397, 403).

Research on community bands will also help to broaden the focus of studies on the Geography of Music. The pioneer music geographer, Peter Nash, concludes that music is a mappable phenomenon, that this phenomenon is interrelated with environmental conditions, and that scholars should examine the spatial aspects of this interrelationship (Nash 1975, 42).

This thesis is comprised of five chapters. Chapter Two reviews three bodies of literature relevant to this study: literature relating to the geography of music, previous studies on community bands, and literature that addresses volunteerism and sense of community. Chapter



Three describes the methodology used to carry out the study. Chapter Four presents results of data collection and analysis, and Chapter Five presents the discussion of results and concluding thoughts.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **The Geography of Music**

The sub-field the geography of music is fairly new to the discipline, as studies of music were neglected by geographers until recently (Kong 1995). Peter Nash published the first article on the subject in 1968 titled, “Music Regions and Regional Music.” Here he claims that “Geographical consideration of the art of music has been neglected so far, at least by Western geographers” (Nash 1968, 1). He goes on to say that at the time of his publication, “no reference to music could be found in any scholarly American geographical publications” (Nash 1968, 23). Nash’s pioneering article related music to geographical phenomena, such as music regions, and the ties of such phenomena to ethnomusicology. In his attempt to develop a framework from which to examine music and geography, he warns that for music to be geographic, it must “interact with some element to shape the ‘character of places’” (Nash 1968, 2). In a follow-up to this article, Nash (1975) confirms that not only is the production, diffusion and consumption of music “mappable,” but also that the “spatial aspects of musical ‘systems’ should be examined by scholars” (Nash 1975, 42; Nash 1975, 1). In a related article, he suggests that music is the most difficult art form to examine geographically because it has a variety of styles with different origins and growth patterns, the verbal aspect of music is not as bountiful as the instrumental aspect, and because the written records are very complex (Nash 1975, 1). Yet Nash claims music is a “salient surrogate measure of culture” (Nash 1975, 14).

Since Nash’s 1968 article on the geography of music, this sub-field has received increasing attention. The first master’s thesis was completed in 1970, and the first full-length article published in an American geographical journal was seen in 1971. Research on geography of music has by now received national awards and has been the topic of paper sessions at national conferences. Articles have been published in national and international journals, and human geography textbooks have helped legitimate the sub-field by citing music geography material (Carney 1994, 23-25; Nash and Carney 1996, 70; Carney 2003, 1-2). Music phenomena studied by geographers now include style, structure, lyrics, instrumentation, performers and composers, centers and events, varying media, ethnicity, and the overall industry (Carney 2003, 3).

There are now a variety of approaches to the study of the geography of music. Carney (2003) notes ten general taxonomies into which research falls:

1. The delineation of music regions and interpretation of regional music.
2. The evolution of a music style with place.
3. The origin and diffusion of music phenomena.
4. The spatial dimensions of music dealing with human migration, transportation routes, and communication networks.
5. The psychological and symbolic elements of music pertinent to shaping the character of place-image of place, sense of place, and place consciousness.
6. The effect of music on the cultural landscape.
7. The spatial organization of the music industry and other phenomena.
8. The relationship of music to the natural environment.
9. The function of “nationalistic” and “anti-nationalistic” music.
10. The interrelationships of music with other cultural traits in a spatial sense.<sup>2</sup>

Nash and Carney (1996) together found seven themes of music geography present among music geography research. These include: origins, world distributions and types, location analysis, source areas of musical activities, trends based on electricity, impact on landscapes, and global music.<sup>3</sup>

Similar to the themes that Carney and Nash (1996) described, Kong (1995) reviews geographic research on popular music and classifies it into five main areas: 1) the distribution of musical forms, activities and performers; 2) musical hearths and diffusion; 3) the delimitation of areas with common musical traits; 4) the identity of places evident in lyrics, melody and instrumentation of music; and 5) an analysis of lyrics to identify environmental themes expressed through music. However, Kong also identifies some gaps in music research by geographers. These include the social and political contexts of music, the transformation of music as it is consumed, correlations between music and the construction of identity, and the fact that space, in the tradition of geography, is “accepted as a given” (Kong 1995, 185-186).

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<sup>2</sup> The results of this study are discussed as they pertain to taxonomy number one. I explore the spatial organization of bands and member demographics around the state.

Some of these gaps have been filled since the publication of Kong's article. McLeay (1997) studied popular music and expressions of national identity. Using patriotic, American music, McLeay traced the origins of American songs and the various ways they were used after their inception. From Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land" to Springsteen's "Born in the USA," he showed that "national communities are distinguished by the style in which they are imagined" (McLeay 1997, 15). McLeay goes on to give examples of music that contest a national identity, particularly from African American music artists. In conclusion, he states that popular music is a rich source of information, and he calls for research on music and nationalism from countries beyond the United States (McLeay 1997, 15-16).

Geography has, historically, relied heavily upon the visual for the collection and display of information (Smith 1997, 503). However, in 1929 a Finnish geographer developed the concept of soundscape. Geographers have since then studied the non-visible elements of landscape, or the soundscape (Porteous and Mastin 1985; Pocock 1989; Smith 1994). The soundscape is the "overall sonic environment of an area, from a room to a region" (Porteous and Mastin 1985, 169). Porteous and Mastin (1985) studied the soundscape of the South Fairfield urban neighborhood in Victoria, British Columbia. Through machine recordings, listening, and sound pressure monitoring, the researchers objectively identified sounds present at 21 sample locations in the study area. They then surveyed the residents to determine which sounds the residents noticed in their environment and how they evaluated those sounds. Residents of this neighborhood felt that they lived in a quiet environment, and a majority noted no change in the sound quality since they moved to the area. Seasonal differences were also recognized in the soundscape. Porteous and Mastin felt these results would contribute to the understanding of one's perception of their environment and also aid in determining the environmental needs of the visually handicapped.

Leyshon et al. (1998) published a collection of articles on the place of music. In the introduction, the editors state that "the dynamics of musical production are inherently social and political, coercive and collaborative, concerned with both identity formation and the establishment and maintenance of social groupings" (Leyshon et al. 1998, 2).

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<sup>3</sup> My study also explores the source areas of community bands around the state, and instances where interviewees noted changes in the bands' popularity with the development of electric-based forms of entertainment such as radio, cinema and television.

In addition to the place of music, geographers have also studied a variety of music styles and regional music. From rock music (Bell 1998; Butler 1984; Carney 1999; Ford 1971) to folk music (Carney 1990a; Curtis 1976; Lornell 1981) to country music (Carney 1974; Carney 1977; 1979; Carney 1987; Carney 2000; Gritzner 1978; Lehr 1983); from the American south (Carney 1980) to the Pacific Northwest (Bell 1998; Gold 1998; Kuhlken 2003), geographers have left few aspects of music untouched.

While geography of music research now explores many musical arenas, studies on instrumental music, including symphonic orchestras, military music, marching bands, or American band music have received almost no attention from geographers. The only research that touches on this topic is a master's thesis by Fouts (1990). In his analysis of competitive drum and bugle corps in the United States, Fouts identified the cultural hearth as New England. He traced diffusion paths of the corps, and recognized agents of and barriers to the corps' diffusion. Fouts also defined regions of drum and bugle corps activity in the United States.

Lee (1991) published an article that uses classical music as an example of how music can help one understand the landscape as a "flow of experiences through time and space" (Lee 1991, 6). He used examples from music by Hayden, Mozart, Tchaikovsky, and forms of classical music, for instance the sonata, an andante or adagio section, minuet and trio, and theme and variations, to show how a linear art form, such as music, can connect a listener to his or her environment.

### **Community Band Research**

Musicians, specifically music educators, have conducted research about community bands. Reimer (1996) constructed a comprehensive bibliography of the research completed on American community bands between 1969-1994, including books, theses and dissertations, and published articles and papers. He then categorized the research to identify areas that receive attention through research and those that do not. The most common topic for books and dissertations is the general history and development of bands (50% books, 34% dissertations). In both cases, repertoire is the second most common topic studied (25% books, 31% dissertations), and case studies of an individual ensemble the third (roughly 10%). For articles and papers, however, case studies of an individual ensemble are the most common topic on American community bands, with history and development the second most common topic. Reimer

reported that band research is lacking in the topics of recruitment, fundraising and programming (Reimer 1996, 396-97).<sup>4</sup>

### History and Development of the American Community Band

Members of community bands are often amateur, as opposed to professional, musicians. Compton (1979) studied amateur instrumental music in America between 1765 and 1810. He defined amateurs as “individuals who study and play for pleasure, artistic satisfaction, and, occasionally, for social or civic occasions without concern for financial reward” (Compton 1979, iii). Compton further reported these amateurs to be “educated, wealthy, and socially prominent,” but they differed from each other in experience, training, and the importance they placed on musical activities (Compton 1979, ii). Through an examination of amateur players and their teachers, and of the music, instruments and books relative to the time period, Compton distinguished four categories of amateur musicians: 1) untrained or informally trained players, 2) young ladies for whom music was primarily a social accomplishment, 3) bandsmen and members of instrumental clubs, and 4) serious amateurs (Compton 1979, ix). The purpose of his investigation was to place these amateur musicians into the history of music in America. Compton concluded that music in post-colonial America was “a valued part of life”. The amateurs helped “raise the level of musical awareness and discrimination in the United States” (Compton 1979, 250).

One aspect of musical development that Compton purposely left out of his study was that pertaining to the Moravian settlements in Pennsylvania and North Carolina, because other studies specifically addressed Moravian music. Rothrock (1991) studied the influence of one individual, Bernard Jacob Pfohl, on the Moravian instrumental music tradition in Salem, North Carolina from 1879 to 1960. Through the examination of the Moravian community, Pfohl’s life and career as a musician, and his influence on both religious and secular band music in North Carolina at that time, Rothrock concluded that Pfohl had both a regional and state-wide influence

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<sup>4</sup> While my thesis could be categorized as a collective, explanatory case study (Berg 2001), it remains distinct from single ensemble studies because it focuses on twenty-five bands across the entire state of Virginia and compares characteristics of bands between regions. Although it does not directly address any of the voids in community band literature, like recruitment, that Reimer (1996) identified, it does examine the distance and time band members spend traveling to rehearsal. While this is not specifically a recruitment procedure or policy, the information could lend it self to bands looking to attract more members.

on the development of instrumental music in the twentieth century. This influence can also be attributed to the growth of bands before musical instruction was available in public schools.<sup>5</sup>

Polce (1991) wrote about another individual who influenced band development in the United States. Leonard B. Smith was an instrumentalist, composer, educator, and conductor of one of the only remaining professional bands, the Detroit Concert Band, in the mid twentieth century. Using data collected from personal interviews with Smith, his family, and members of the Detroit Concert Band, as well as many secondary sources, Polce concludes that Smith is a link between the eras of musicians like Herbert L. Clarke and William Franko Goldman, and the musicians of today. His energy and dedication was essential to the development of the contemporary band movement.

The studies reviewed here are part of band history and the development of the band. Compton's work on amateurs is particularly relevant to my study, in which most of the participants are amateurs. Polce's study addresses just a single individual and a professional -not amateur- band. But, Leonard B. Smith was important as a music educator, and since community bands are today usually linked to music education, Polce's study is also of special relevance to this study.

### Case Studies of American Community Bands

Case studies constitute a significant amount of literature on community bands. The community bands in my study are made up of volunteers. Thus, it is important to review research on the motivations of volunteer musicians. Patterson (1985) studied the motivational factors that led to participation in nine community bands in North Central Massachusetts. Through the administration and analysis of a survey, he concluded that community band members in that region were well-educated, middle class citizens whose families participated in community bands. Most were motivated to join community bands by attending band concerts, playing in school bands, or through participation in a service band. Band members saw the band as a form of entertainment and community service as well as an outlet for themselves as performers. They participated in community bands out of appreciation for music and for personal pleasure.

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<sup>5</sup> Although my study does not relate specifically to the Moravian movement, many of my interviewees hypothesized that the Moravians played a part in the development of bands in rural western Virginia. While I have not found evidence to support that, I believe it is important to acknowledge the Moravian presence in this part of the south.

Tiede (1970) studied a group of community bands in nineteenth century Minnesota. He analyzed the reasons behind their formation and found that the need for music at civic celebrations and ceremonies, in addition to the evolution of dancing as a popular pastime, prompted the formation of many Minnesota community bands (Tiede 1970, 84). Tiede also recorded community band activities and explored the effects of the bands' appearances in Minnesota communities in the late nineteenth century. For instance, the band was a prominent part of the ceremony to receive the first steamboat each spring. When small towns lacked public facilities for social events, the steamboat would anchor by shore and host the band and festivities. (Tiedi 1970, 86-87, 96). By studying bands in both rural and urban areas, Tiede was able to make comparisons between band environments. While the existence of community bands in urban areas prompted the creation of parks and bandstands for outdoor performances purposes (Tiede 1970, 129), Tiede concluded that the band scene in rural areas mirrored that in urban areas, but on a smaller scale (Tiedi 1970, 159-160). Further, he compared these midwestern bands to those of the east coast, pointing out that the formation of bands in the east was heavily dependent on military influence and activity, where as civilians alone often formed bands in the Midwest. Both the wealthy and immigrant common laborers collectively formed bands on the east coast, while bands in the Midwest emerged out of common society (Tiede 1970, 5).

#### Status and Census Studies

In 1975, Neidig published a survey of community bands in the United States. By sending a survey to all the community bands he could locate, the author determined that not as many adult community bands existed compared to those active during the height of the band movement in 1900. Those that still existed he labeled "successful modern bands," and this category included bands that had been formed since the height of the band movement. One hundred and three bands responded to the 1975 survey. Neidig concluded that community bands were on the rise again (Neidig 1975. 40).

In 1977, Scheller published another national survey of community bands in the same journal (Scheller 1977). This article expanded the bands polled to include military, commercial, fraternal, and private bands, which added 83 bands to the 1975 list. From the information received, Scheller determined two basic functions of the band. First, it provided a musical outlet for adult musicians and second, it enriched the community. Bands' specific functions included



education and entertainment. Most of the bands on the list fell into the category of civic, community, and municipal bands, and many were associated with a college or university. Community colleges were among the most common institutions that financially supported the bands. Scheller was encouraged by the number of bands added to the list since the 1975 publication (Scheller 1977, 30-33).

In 1983, Martin conducted a status study of more than 400 community bands in the United States. He found community bands to be very active, providing a wide range of concerts, working with the public school music programs, and touring the United States and Canada. Conductors were highly educated individuals with formal training, and with personal, professional and service-related reasons for conducting the band. Bands rehearsed once a week and played as few as four to as many as fourteen concerts a year. Martin found two common purposes for the existence and popularity of community bands: to provide a musical for adults, and to enhance the cultural needs of the community (Martin 1983).

Bowen (1995) studied current activities of fourteen community bands. Unlike the other studies reviewed, this one, in addition to being the most current, focused specifically on a regional –not national- scale; namely on bands in the southeast region of the United States. Bowen's goal was to develop a profile of community bands and identify common characteristics. He compared demographics, (city size, ethnic makeup, median income) of cities and considered the existence of institutions of higher education in the cities to determine if any patterns emerged. He found that most community bands were located in areas comprising a 10-mile radius from municipalities with populations less than 40,000. Within the bands themselves, more men participated than women, 95% of participants were white, and the largest age group of participants were those between 18-30 years of age. In addition, participants were well educated and over half had majored in music at some point. The majority had participated in school music programs, and their involvement increased as they advanced through grade levels. Three-fourths of the respondents had participated in at least one other instrumental group in the last three years, and over half listed professional, technical or sales occupations. Family influence was not listed as an important factor for participation in community bands, and few respondents reported a parent who played a wind or percussion instrument (Bowen 1995).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Bowen's (1995) study provides a regional dimension to my study when the results are compared.

## Factors Leading to Adult Amateur Music Participation

The next two studies present demographic information about the adult bands studied. Heintzelman (1988) identified two factors leading to adult amateur music participation. Waggoner's (1971) more in depth study revealed not only reasons for participation, but reasons for non-participation in adult amateur musical activities.

Heintzelman (1988) studied the characteristics of one third of the concert bands in the United States and the underlying motivations of band participants. Demographically, the 18-30 year old age group was the largest among participants in this study, and 89% of participants owned their own instrument. Like Bowen's (1995) study, the most common occupation reported was professional/white collar. Heintzelman also identified four types of concert bands, those with paid membership requiring an entrance audition, those in small towns (under 10,000 population) with no audition requirement, fraternal bands with unpaid members rehearsing in a lodge, and college-connected bands with unpaid membership. Heintzelman concluded that band members were involved for music-related reasons, and secondly for social (non musical) reasons. (Heintzelman 1988).

Waggoner (1971) also studied factors leading to adult participation in community musical performing groups in Atlanta, Georgia. While this study included bands, as well as orchestras and choral groups, Waggoner examined three areas from which to determine factors that led to participation: 1) the home environment of participants before adulthood, 2) musical experiences outside the home before adulthood, and 3) the present status of participants, including their reasons for participation or non-participation. Unlike Bowen (1995), Waggoner found the home environment before adulthood to be very influential in a participant's motivation for joining an adult performing group. Many participants reported a parent who was musically inclined and an available array of music in the home while they were growing up. The three most common reasons for participation in community performing groups were 1) the enjoyment of musical participation, 2) a desire to increase one's skills, and 3) participation as recreation. Waggoner concluded that continued participation was the result of previous participation. Three common reasons for non-participation by non-participants were 1) lack of time, 2) unavailability at rehearsal time, and 3) lack of musical ability (Waggoner 1971). Although Waggoner did not

include an adult community band in his study, the results are important because they help point out what motivates adults to participate in volunteer musical activities.

### **Volunteerism and Sense of Community**

This section addresses research on volunteerism and sense of community. The first body of literature reviewed here addresses volunteerism on a broad scale and the motivations of volunteers. The second body of literature will review studies concerning the sense of community based on one's involvement in a community organization.

#### Volunteerism and Community

Omoto and Snyder (2002) studied the role of the community in volunteerism. They developed a conceptual model of the volunteer process that allows for analysis at multiple stages in the life of a volunteer. The study focused on volunteer service organizations, specifically AIDS volunteers. Volunteer service organizations "recruit, train, and place volunteers into helping relationships with clients who have sought out the services of volunteers" (Omoto and Snyder 2002, 854). These organizations are often closely connected with the community through history, politics, and fundraising and were formed to provide the community with something that did not exist. The study reported that personal beliefs or an obligation to help others, in addition to a concern for the community, was what led people to volunteer. The community provides social support for those implementing social change. Both volunteers and clients in the study expanded their social network through involvement in the AIDS volunteer program. The volunteers themselves became more involved in other AIDS related volunteer programs (Omoto and Snyder 2002).

Clary and Snyder (1991) discussed volunteerism as a nonspontaneous prosocial behavior. The authors define this as a conscientious decision of how and when to help. These volunteers seek out opportunities to help. Motivation to do so is often based on a desire to express one's values or beliefs, as Omoto and Snyder (2002) suggested, a response to social pressures, or as a method of job preparation and resume building.

Clary et al. (1998) conducted a later study to assess the motivations of volunteers. They developed an inventory of volunteers' motivations which was tested on 465 volunteers of

organizations that provide services to children, the terminally ill, handicapped individuals, and clients of social services. The inventory was designed to address motivations leading to volunteerism in general and did not identify specific volunteer activities. It focused on six core motivational factors: protectiveness (reduction of self-imposed guilt as a result of being more fortunate), value expression, career-related benefits, social advantages, understanding (self development), and personal enhancement (growth and development of the ego). The results of the study supported the use of a functional approach in the study of volunteerism, one that relies on psychological motivations of volunteerism. The influences of both the person and situation must be interrelated and considered when determining the motivations of volunteers (Clary 1998). While some of the six motivational factors do not apply to community band members, the authors' claim that motivation is a combination of person and situation is most certainly relevant.

### Sense of Community

McMillan and Chavis's (1986) article describes sense of community and the forces that work together to produce sense of community. Using Doolittle and MacDonald's (1978) original Sense of Community Scale, which measured attitudes at the neighborhood level of a social organization, the authors reviewed literature on the subject and outlined the theoretical framework of sense of community. They refer to two major uses of the term "community." One is territorial, or location-specific. The second is refers to the "quality of character of human relationship without reference to location" (McMillan and Chavis 1986, 8). McMillan and Chavis's definition of sense of community had four elements: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. "Sense of community is a feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment together" (McMillan and Chavis 1986, 9). The university, the neighborhood, the youth gang, and the kibbutz were used to demonstrate the inter-relationships of the four elements. McMillan and Chavis called for a search for ways to develop sense of community among groups and organizations (McMillan and Chavis 1986). It is this suggestion that makes the community band a likely candidate for a sense of community study .

Chavis et al. (1986) add to McMillan and Chavis's (1986) definition of sense of community by stating that it is dependent upon the nature of the experience. They used

Brunswick's lens, a model used to determine the domain of the experience within a population, to develop the Sense of Community Index and tested it on 100 randomly selected individuals in each of three urban areas. The results support McMillan and Chavis's (1986) theory that the four elements described above are useful in predicting an overall sense of community (Chavis et al. 1986).

Sense of community does not necessarily apply only to situations of geographical closeness. Bishop et al. (1997) studied the sense of community among male addicts and alcoholics. Referring to Sarason's (1974) original definition of the concept, "the sense that one was part of a readily available, mutually supportive network of relationships upon which one could depend and as a result of which one did not experience sustained feelings of loneliness" (Bishop et al. 1986, 194), Bishop et al. tested the Perceived Sense of Community Scale, developed by Chertok in 1990, on a support group. The scale proved effective when used within this population, and the authors concluded that civic organizations, among others, were worthy of testing and attention (Bishop et al. 1986).

Like Bishop et al. (1986), Burroughs and Elby (1998) applied sense of community beyond the neighborhood level. Through an integration of community-related variables, they developed a measurement scale called the Psychological Sense of Community in the Workplace (PSCW). Sense of community in the workplace involved the elements of membership, participation, and identification, and was related to the elements outlined by McMillan and Chavis (1986). The authors added the elements of Truth-telling and Spiritual Bond. Size of the work group and employee acquaintances influenced the PSCW. The scale was tested on 256 employees of different positions and organizations. The results partially support the use of this scale in the workplace (Burroughs and Elby 1998).

A final non-neighborhood application of sense of community was explored by Hughey et al. (1999). In this case, the authors created a Community Organization Sense of Community Scale (COSOC) in order to measure the sense of community within a community organization. The scale consisted of four components: relationship to the organization, the organization as mediator, influence of the community organization, and bond to the community. The authors conducted two studies on a total of eight community organizations to test the instrument. The results indicated strong validity for the instrument and strong correlations between the COSOC and other sense of community instruments. They conclude that in order to foster a strong sense

of community, organizations must work to build strong relationships within the organization as well as with the population served by the organization.

I used the COSOC as the framework for my Likert-scale sense of community questions in the band member questionnaire. The community band is a civic organization, and I felt this scale was the most appropriate one from which to guide my questionnaire creation because many community organizations consist primarily of volunteers. Also, the organizations on which the scale was tested did not include community arts organizations, and I thought such organizations would be an interesting application of the scale. Although I pointedly made sure the questions followed each of the four components of the COSOC, all the questions on the questionnaire were my own creation. This allowed me to tailor questions specifically to the characteristics of community bands.

I have reviewed three main bodies of literature. Research concerning the geography of music provides a theoretical basis from which I developed my study. Specific references to these theories and their relationship to my project will be discussed in Chapter Five. While a fair amount of literature exists in this area, my study is the first to focus on the American band movement. The second body of literature reviewed was that on community bands. These studies, almost exclusively by musicians and music educators, explored the historical significance of community bands, case studies of community bands, and community bands as a form of adult continuing education. Only one study employs a geographic component, and no significant differences, in that case, were found. Finally, literature on volunteerism and the motivations of volunteers will prove relevant, in some cases, to the volunteers in my study, while in other cases, motivations such as a volunteer's feeling of civic obligation, will appear not so relevant. The sense of community scales, specifically the COSOC provided the framework for the part of my study pertaining to the sense of community of band members, volunteers in a civic organization. The next chapter outlines in detail the methodology used in this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

Two research methods were employed in this study. The quantitative method involved the administration of a formal survey to community band members in Virginia. Survey research is the most common “mode of observation” used in the social sciences (Babbie 1998, 255). It has been widely used in geography, especially in sub fields of urban geography, tourism geography, and economic geography (Sheskin 1985, 6-7). Surveys provide a means of collecting information that can be obtained only by seeking information directly from the individuals involved (Fowler 1993, 2). Marsh (1982) identifies surveys as having a “particular method of data collection, a particular method of data analysis and a particular substance” (Marsh 1982, 6). The one characteristic that all surveys share is that they be systematically administered (Marsh 1982, 6).

The qualitative portion of my research consisted of personal interviews with band conductors and band presidents. Qualitative methods, although sometimes criticized for being non-scientific, are used to explore the “life-worlds” of individuals or groups. Life-worlds include “emotions, motivations, symbols and their meaning, empathy, and other subjective aspects associated with naturally involving lives” (Berg 2001, 10). These interviews were part of a collective case study, which involved the selection of several “instrumental cases...to allow better understanding or to theorize about a broader context” (Berg 2001, 229). My study was an explanatory case study because it “employed multivariate cases to examine a plurality of influences” (Berg 2001, 230).

For these reasons, I used both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the human social activity of community bands in Virginia. Through the application of these methods, I answered my three research questions: 1) What are the demographics of Virginia community bands in my study? 2) How far and for how long do participants travel to band rehearsals, and what regional variations exist? 3) What sense of community do participants have by being a member of the community band?

#### Sample Selection

Data used in this study were collected from members and conductors of 25 community bands in the state of Virginia. Community bands in Virginia were identified using listings from the Association of Concert Bands (ACB) website and the Community Music (C-M) website.

These lists comprised my sampling frame. From these lists, bands whose name contained the words “symphony”, “orchestra”, “philharmonic”, “jazz”, “military”, or words associated with a specific ethnic group were eliminated because it is assumed that these terms do not fit the “concert band instrumentation” requirement of the community band definition used in this study. After initial contact with each of the bands’ conductors, I then used the snowballing method by asking them to identify other community bands in Virginia that may not be on my list. Accounting for bands listed on both websites and those obtained by snowballing, I identified a total of 34 bands.



## Distribution Map of Community Bands Involved in this Study

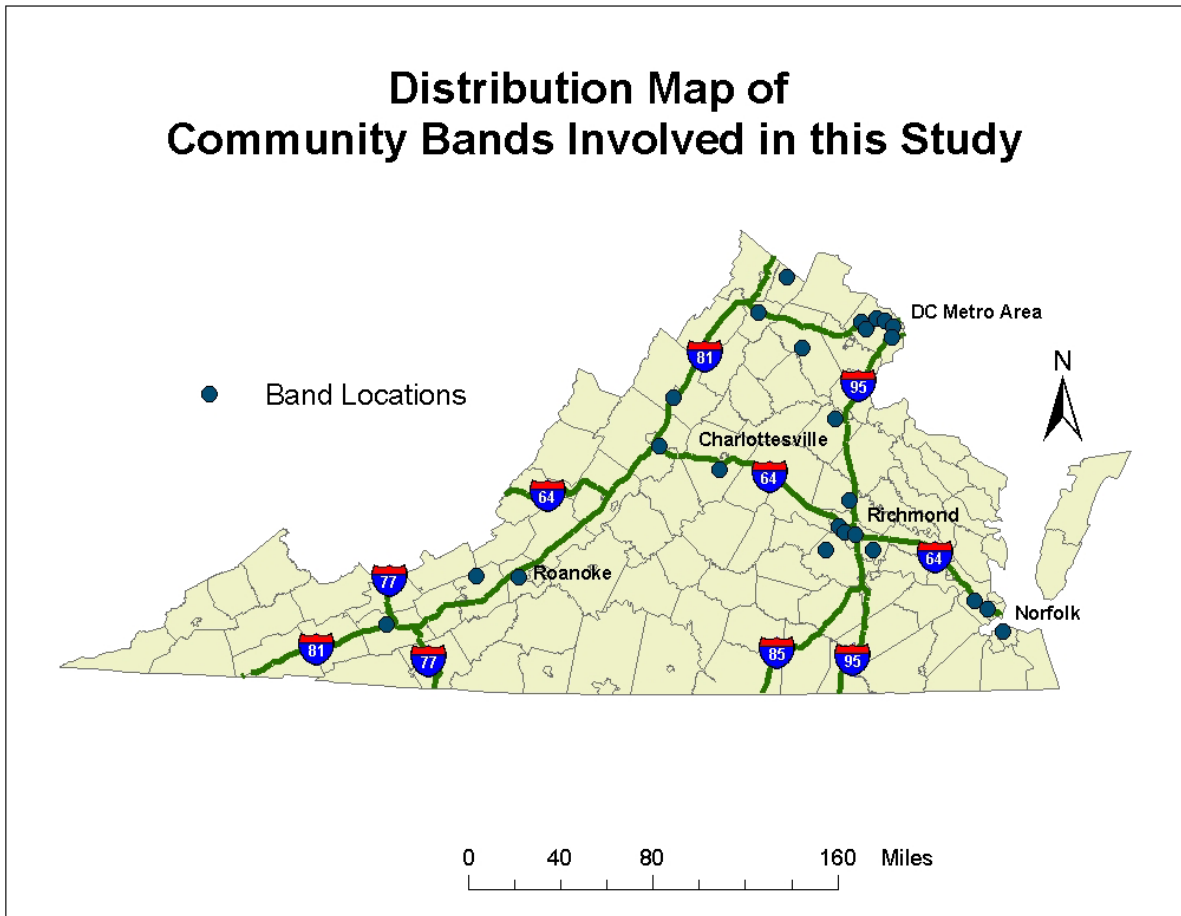


Figure 1: Distribution Map of Community Bands Involved in this Study

The final sample was reached after I contacted each band conductor and asked if he or she, and their band, would be willing to participate in my study. I had no refusals. I arranged to visit each band during one of their fall rehearsals. I decided not to include bands that did not hold regular rehearsals (2) because all my visits had to be arranged ahead of time. These bands did not know, at the time of contact, when their next rehearsal would be held. In addition, some bands were eliminated if the contact information from the websites was not current and if updated contact information was unavailable (5). Before eliminating a band due to unavailable contact information, I asked other bands for help in obtaining updated contact information. Finally, the sample size was based on the rehearsal day of bands that agreed to participate. Over half of the bands I contacted rehearsed on Tuesday nights. Because only twelve Tuesday evenings existed during my data collection period, I eliminated any band after the first that rehearsed on Tuesday nights (2). After eliminating bands that were not of concert band instrumentation, those that did not have updated contact information, and those that I could not visit during my data collection period due to the day of the week on which they rehearsed, my final sample size was 25 bands. My sample population consisted, then, of 73% (25/34) of all bands in the Commonwealth. Although a census of community bands in Virginia does not exist, this percentage is based on the number of community bands initially identified.

#### Contact With Participating Bands

I made initial contact with each band from May through July, 2002. I used two methods for initial contact with bands in my study. If an email address was available, I sent a personal email to the conductor or contact person listed for each band (see Appendix A Invitation Letter: Email). When the band agreed to participate, I sent them a hard copy of the email through the postal service for their records. If an email address was not available, I sent a personal letter to the conductor or contact person for the band (see Appendix B Invitation Letter: Postal Service). I enclosed a self-addressed stamped postcard with the letter asking for contact information and rehearsal day and time. If the postcard was returned with an email address, I used that for further correspondence. If an email address was not provided, I used the phone for further contact. All 25 bands agreed to participate in my study.

After my initial contact with each band, I contacted them again at the end of August and beginning of September of 2002 to arrange my visit to their rehearsal. A number of bands were located in each major metropolitan area of Virginia: Washington D.C. metro area, Richmond, and Tidewater. This band clustering allowed me to visit up to four bands in a particular location in a single week. I also arranged personal interviews with conductors, and, in some cases, band presidents.

### Instrumentation

I conducted this study using two survey instruments developed for this purpose. The first questionnaire was administered to band members (See Appendix C: Band Member Questionnaire). Questions were grouped into four categories. The first group of questions asked participants about their musical experience. I used responses from this group of questions to describe the educational backgrounds of participants' musical experiences by asking what instrument they played, when and where they started playing it, how long they had been in the band, and whether or not they were members of other community bands.

The second group of questions asked participants how far they lived from the rehearsal location and how much time they spent traveling to rehearsal. These questions related directly to my second set of research questions which sought to determine if variations in time and distance traveled exist between major metropolitan areas and rural areas in Virginia. One limitation to this section is that I assumed all participants traveled from home to rehearsal and did not account for those who attended rehearsal directly from work.

The third group of questions consisted of a series of Likert-scale questions designed to determine how the participant perceived their role both in the band and in the local community. Participants were asked whether they strongly agree, agree, remain indifferent, disagree or strongly disagree with eleven statements. Each statement fell into one of four categories based on the Community Organization Sense of Community (COSOC) scale: 1) relationship to the organization, 2) the organization as a mediator, 3) the influence of the organization, and 4) bond to the community (Hughey et al. 1999, 103). Although these questions reflected categories in the COSOC scale, I modified them myself to apply to community band members.

The final group of questions on the band member questionnaire asked for basic demographic information, including gender, age, race, education, occupation, and annual

income. I used this information to describe community band members in Virginia as a group and to compare the results with demographic information published on bands from other states or regions.

I administered the second questionnaire to all band conductors and most band presidents during personal interviews (See Appendix D: Band Conductor Questionnaire). The instrument sought a brief personal background of these informants. It then posed a series of questions about the basic functions of the band as a whole. These included the number of members on the band's roster, the distribution of men and women, information on the band's financial support, a list of the concert venues, and major events in the band's history. Finally, I asked open-ended questions that drew on the conductor's experience with community music. These entailed methods for maintaining a volunteer organization, questions about the band's role in the community, how the community supports the band and what music they enjoy, and how the band fits in to the larger community music culture in Virginia. These interviews were designed to gain basic information about each band. They also gave me a better understanding of the band's role in the community and the ability to draw conclusions based on the quantitative results obtained from the band member questionnaire.

I also created two consent forms: one for the band members and one for those I interviewed personally. The Institutional Review Board at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University approved both questionnaires and both consent forms.

I tested the questionnaires and consent forms by conducting a pilot study on September 1, 2002, with the Old Pro's Community Jazz Band in Dublin, Virginia. Although this band did not fit the concert band instrumentation requirement of my definition of a community band, I used the Old Pro's so that I would not have to eliminate a concert band from my formal study. (Testing the instrument on a concert band would have forced me to eliminate that band from my formal study because, having previously viewed the questionnaire, the members' opinions would have been tainted.) I administered the two questionnaires with attached consent forms to the Old Pro's to determine if the questions were clear and understandable, and to determine approximately how long the questionnaire took to complete. I also interviewed the conductor of the Old Pro's for the same reasons. Adjustments to the final instrument were made, accordingly, but data from the pilot surveys were not analyzed and are not included in my results.

## Data Collection Procedures

Data for this study were collected between September 10, 2002 and November 26, 2002. I personally visited all twenty-five bands. One reason I visited each band instead of mailing the questionnaires was to increase my return rate. Patterson (1985) reported a 76.4% return rate on the surveys he personally distributed to community band members in North Central Massachusetts. Likewise, in his dissertation on community bands in the southeast, Bowen (1995) achieved a 74.6% response rate. He reasoned that, "Personal visits would produce the highest possible percentage of return, as well as allow the researcher to have personal contact with the participants of several community bands" (Bowen 1995, 49). I had a 98% response rate.

At each rehearsal, I was allowed no more than 15 minutes to explain my purpose, distribute questionnaires and consent forms, and give participants time to complete them. Each band member present at rehearsal received a stapled packet of three sheets. The first two were identical copies of the consent form. Participants were asked to sign both copies, keep the top copy, and return the second copy to me with the third page, the completed questionnaire. I collected all completed surveys by the end of rehearsal the same evening.

I asked participants to complete the questionnaire, even if they had already done so in community bands I already visited, for two reasons. One, I calculated my response rate based on the number of people at each rehearsal and the number of completed questionnaires I received. Two, the band member questionnaire was designed to reflect the participant's experience in one particular community band. This experience could be different in another band.

Participants did not receive compensation for completing the questionnaire. However, at the end of rehearsal, after all questionnaires were collected, I offered homemade cookies to all band members, regardless of whether or not they completed the questionnaire. Members were not informed that I brought food before they completed the questionnaire.

In addition to administering my questionnaire to band members, I personally interviewed all conductors and, when possible, former conductors and band presidents. I took extensive notes during each interview. All interviews were tape recorded, with the exception of two. The interview with the conductor and president of the Roanoke Valley Community Band was not tape recorded due to equipment failure. The president of the City of Fairfax Band wanted to answer the questions on his own time and provided me with typed responses upon my arrival at the band's rehearsal. I tape recorded additional questions I had for him during my regular visit to

the band. Interviewees gave me their permission to tape record the interview by signing two consent forms, one that they kept and one that was returned to me. Most of these interviews took place immediately before or after the band's rehearsal, although in five cases I agreed to meet the interviewees at another time and location for their convenience. I met with interviewees either individually, or, in some cases, with other members I was interviewing of the same band. In two instances, an interviewee was the conductor of more than one band participating in my study. In this case, I did not conduct separate interviews but asked the conductor to provide information for both bands during the same interview. Interviews lasted as long as was necessary to cover all the questions on the questionnaire, although typically interviews lasted between 30-40 minutes.

The data collection process was aided by the fact that I am a musician and a student. With the permission of each band conductor, I brought my trumpet and played with the band during the rehearsal. This form of participant observation gave me the opportunity to speak informally with band members. Many of them recommended other people with whom I should speak, and they told me in their own words how the band functions. Past studies of community bands (Heintzelman 1988; Martin 1983; Bowen 1995) led me to believe I would most likely be dealing with an educated crowd. Many of the participants were college educated, and they volunteered to help me in any way that would help my quest for a degree. Some members gave me material from the band, including old programs, membership rosters, mission statements, newspaper clippings, and in one instance a book depicting the band's history. Although I did not include these conversations or materials in my formal data analysis, they nevertheless provided information essential to understanding the band community, and they helped formulate some of my overall conclusions about community bands and community band members in Virginia.

### Data Analysis

I entered data collected from the 881 band member questionnaires into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. All non-numeric responses to nominal, ordinal, and interval level questions were coded with numbers. Non-numeric responses were those where the participant was asked to choose a response from a list that most applied to them.

I also created band regions based on the location of bands in my study. These regions are used and recognized by Virginia residents. Virginians look at the state as a whole with three metropolitan regions in the east (Washington D.C. Metro Area, Richmond, and "Tidewater" or

Norfolk or “Hampton Roads”) and primarily rural areas in the west and southwest parts of the state. Dividing the bands into regions allowed me to perform regional analyses based on responses to the questionnaire.

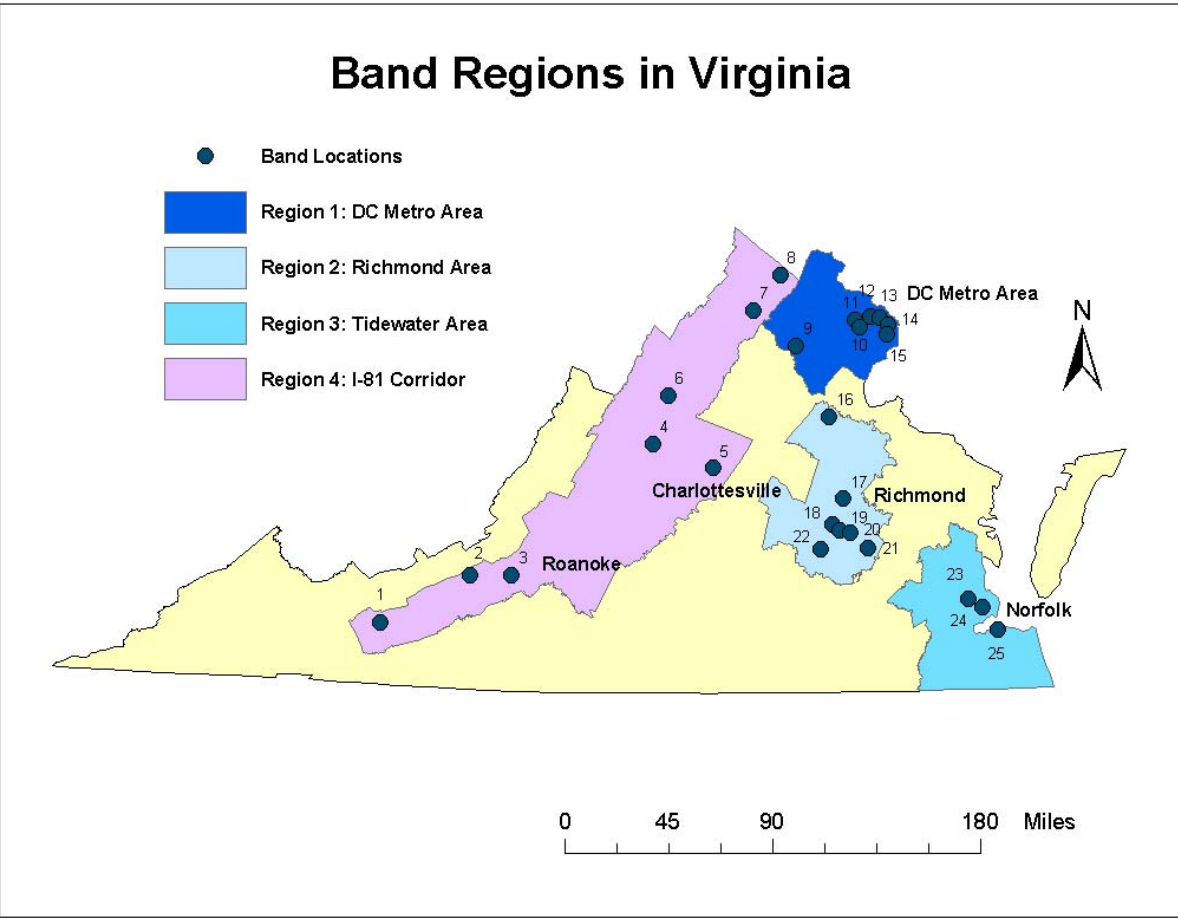


Figure 2: Band Regions in Virginia



**Table 1**  
Regional Delimitation of Bands

<b>Region 1: DC Metro Area</b> ( <i>metropolitan region</i> )
13. Alexandria Citizen's Band 12. City of Fairfax Band 15. Falls Church Concert Band 9. Fauquier County Community Band 11. Kings Park Concert Band 14. National Concert Band of America 10. Vienna Community Band
<b>Region 2: Richmond Area</b> ( <i>metropolitan region</i> )
12. Chesterfield Community Band 20. European Wind Ensemble 15. Fredericksburg Community Concert Band 17. Hanover Concert Band 18. Henrico Community Band 19. Richmond Concert Band 21. Varina Community Band
<b>Region 3: Tidewater Area</b> ( <i>metropolitan region</i> )
23. Chesapeake Bay Wind Ensemble 25. Hampton Roads Metro Band 24. Peninsula Concert Band
<b>Region 4: I-81 Corridor</b> ( <i>rural region</i> )
7. American Legion Community Band 2. Blacksburg Community Band 8. Clarke County Community Band 6. Harrisonburg/Rockingham Concert Band 5. Municipal Band of Charlottesville 3. Roanoke Valley Community Band 4. Stonewall Brigade Band 1. Wytheville Community College Concert Band

In preparation to analyze the distance participants lived from their band's rehearsal location, I created an additional column in the spreadsheet. The value in this column was created when I took the code for each distance interval, multiplied it by 5 (the amount of each mileage interval), and subtracted 2.5 from that number. This new value is a median value for each interval. I also created a column totaling the Likert-scale responses for each participant. This value represents the total sense of community score for each participant. A higher number indicates a stronger sense of community.

To analyze the data collected, I imported the Excel spreadsheet into the Number Crunching Statistical System (NCSS) and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). I used statistical methods relevant to the types of questions answered to determine the significance of responses to the research questions outlined in Chapter One. The specific statistical procedures will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Four.

The major portion of my data collection and analysis is focused on the results obtained from the band member questionnaire. My units of analysis are community bands in Virginia and band members. To analyze these bands, I surveyed their members. The information obtained through personal interviews with band conductors and presidents adds to the descriptive information about the band and its activities, and it allows me to contextualize the results of the band member questionnaire. I paraphrased responses to the conductor questionnaire and analyzed them using frequency distributions. Direct quotes were checked against my tape recordings. The results are discussed in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESULTS**

I analyzed the data collected from 881 completed questionnaires and 25 personal interviews using Microsoft Excel, NCSS and SPSS. The results for each of my research questions are described below.

#### **Quantitative Results**

I personally distributed my questionnaires to 900 members of community bands in Virginia. I received 881 completed questionnaires, which yielded a response rate of 98%.

Research Question 1: What are the demographics of Virginia community bands in my study?

Interviews with band conductors and presidents revealed general information about each band. Of the 25 bands in my study, five rehearse in a church, four rehearse in a community center, one rehearses in a Masonic Lodge, and the other fifteen rehearse in a school, usually in the band room. The bands do not pay for their rehearsal space, although one band mentioned they have to pay custodial fees in the summer. Most bands will hold a free concert in the venue in which they rehearse as a thank you for the free use of rehearsal space.

The average number of members per band is 59. Twelve bands report having sixty or more members. Of these twelve, seven are in metropolitan regions. The average number of years a Virginia community band has been in existence is 34, with a standard deviation of 36. Five bands have existed for more than 50 years, with specific ages of 70, 80, 90, 100, and 147 years. Finally, eighteen bands have the 5013C non-profit status, while seven do not. Band demographics are described in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
Community Band Demographics

<b>Band Name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Rehearsal Location</b>	<b>Number of members</b>	<b>Years in Existence</b>	<b>5013C non-profit status?</b>
Alexandria Citizens Band	Alexandria	School	75	90	Yes
American Legion Community Band	Front Royal	School	60	16	No
Blacksburg Community Band	Blacksburg	School	25-55	14	Yes
Chesapeake Bay Wind Ensemble	Yorktown	Masonic Lodge	60	5	No
Chesterfield Community Band	Chesterfield	Church	35-45	5	Yes
City of Fairfax Band	Fairfax	School	108	33	Yes
Clark County Community Band	Berryville	School	30-45	10	Yes
European Wind Ensemble	Richmond	Church	28	10	No
Falls Church Concert Band	Falls Church	School	65	40	Yes
Fauquier County Community Band	Warrenton	School	20-30	1.5	No
Fredericksburg Community Band	Fredericksburg	School	55	4	Yes
Hampton Roads Metro Band	Norfolk	Church	60	70	No
Hanover Concert Band	Ashland	Community Arts Center	35	13	Yes
Harrisonburg/Rockingham Community Band	Harrisonburg	School	55-60	100	Yes
Henrico Community Band	Richmond	School	28	11	Yes
Kings Park Concert Band	Fairfax	School	50	37	Yes
Municipal Band of Charlottesville	Charlottesville	Community Arts Center	75	80	Yes
National Concert Band of America	Alexandria	School	65	22	Yes
Peninsula Concert Band	Newport News	Church	35-45	52	No
Richmond Concert Band	Richmond	Church	90	32	Yes
Roanoke Valley Community Band	Salem	School	73	16	Yes
Stonewall Brigade Band	Staunton	Community Arts Center	120	147	Yes
Varina Community Band	Varina	School	35	10	No
Vienna Community Band	Vienna	Community Center	50-60	55	Yes
Wytheville Community College Concert Band	Wytheville	School	70	13	Yes

In addition to analyzing the demographic information on bands as a whole, I also compiled demographic information on the individual band members who participated in my study. Using NCSS, I ran frequency tables on the variables of gender, race/ethnicity, age, education completed, occupation, annual household income, instrument ownership, grade level when instrument was learned, and number the number of other community bands in which respondents participate.

Of the 881 band members who completed my questionnaire, 61% are male and 39% are female. My sample is 95.2% white/caucasian, 2.2% African American, 1.3% Hispanic, 0.8% Asian, and 0.5% Other. The greatest percentage of band members were born between 1950-1960 (24.2%) followed closely by those born between 1940-1950 (22.6%), making almost half of the participants 42-62 years old. The mean age of participants was 39, and the median age was 43. The age distribution can be seen in the Figure 3.

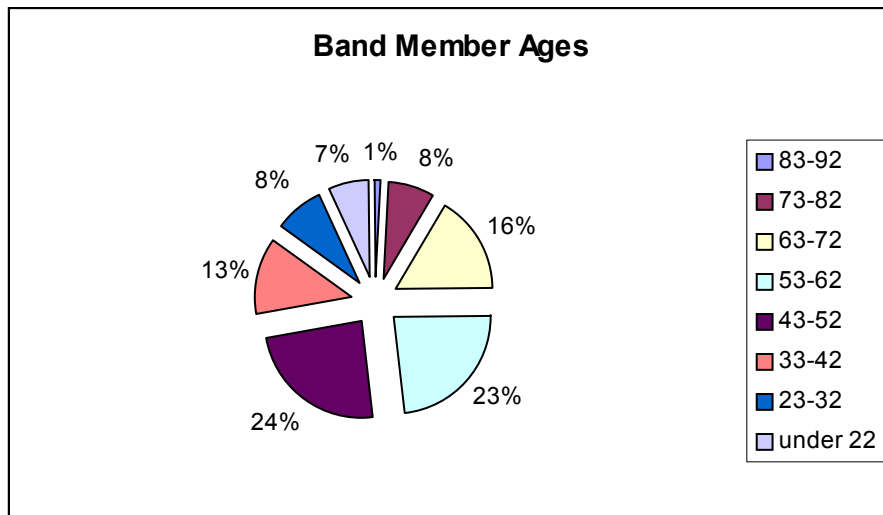


Figure 3: Band Member Ages

The participants in my study are highly educated. Exactly 73% have a bachelor's degree or higher. Distribution of levels of education are illustrated in Figure 4.

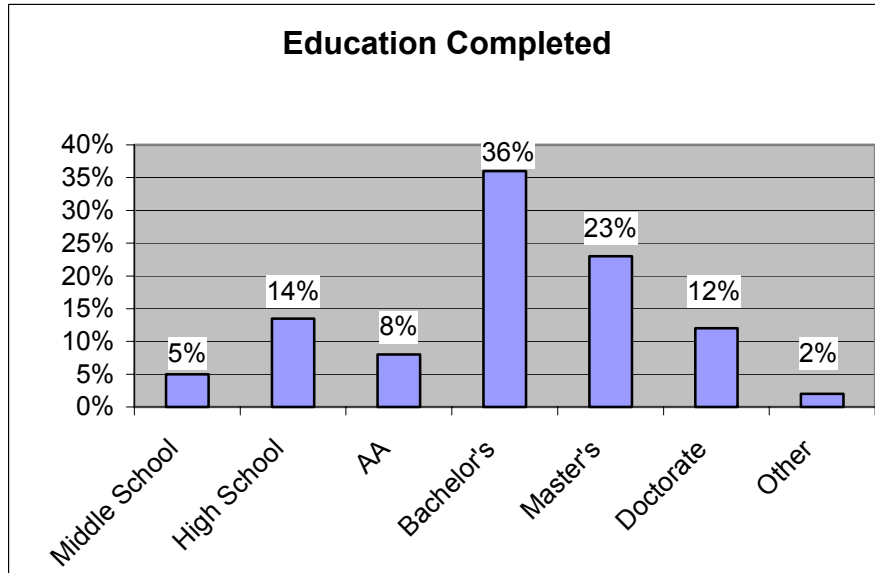


Figure 4: Education Completed

The most common occupation reported was that of retiree (23%), followed by corporate employee (16%), and teacher/professor/education, military/government, and “other” with similar percentages (Figure 5).

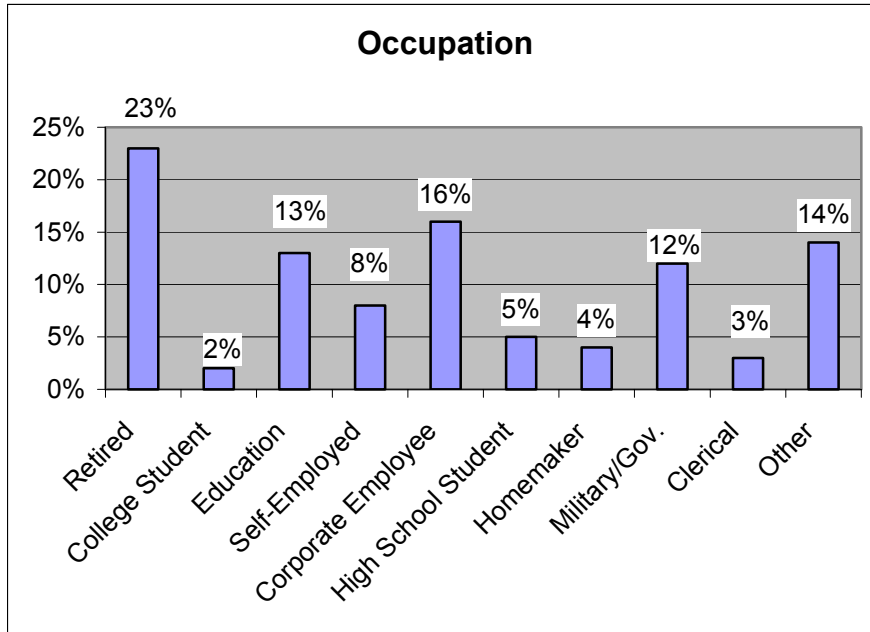


Figure 5: Occupation

When asked to report their approximate household income, more than 50% reported that they earned \$50,000 a year or more. Eighty-seven surveys (9.8%) did not contain a response to this question. Household income levels are shown in Figure 6.

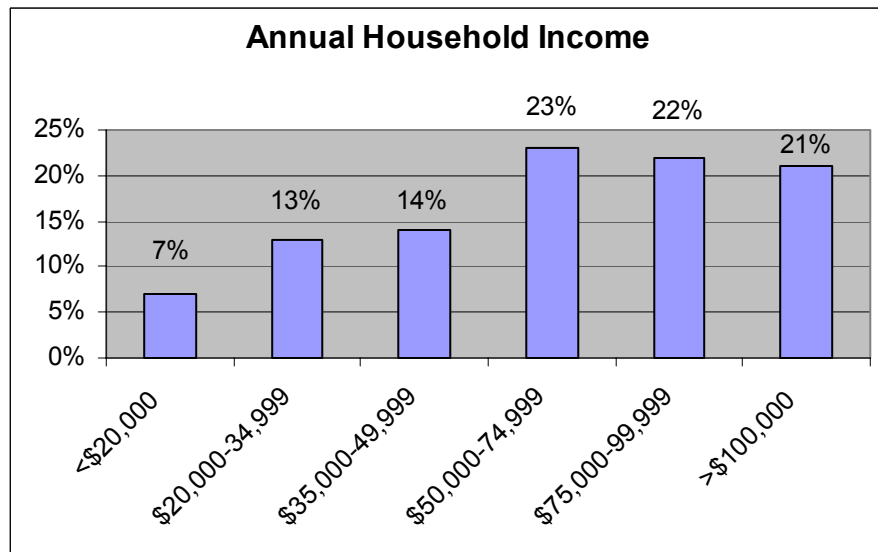


Figure 6: Annual Household Income

In addition to basic demographic information, I was also interested in information pertaining to my participants as musicians. While 48% of the participants began learning to play their instrument in elementary school, another 26% began in middle school or junior high school. In addition, 8% began to play their instrument as an adult, and many of these participants reported that they learned by playing in the community band. These results are shown in Figure 7.

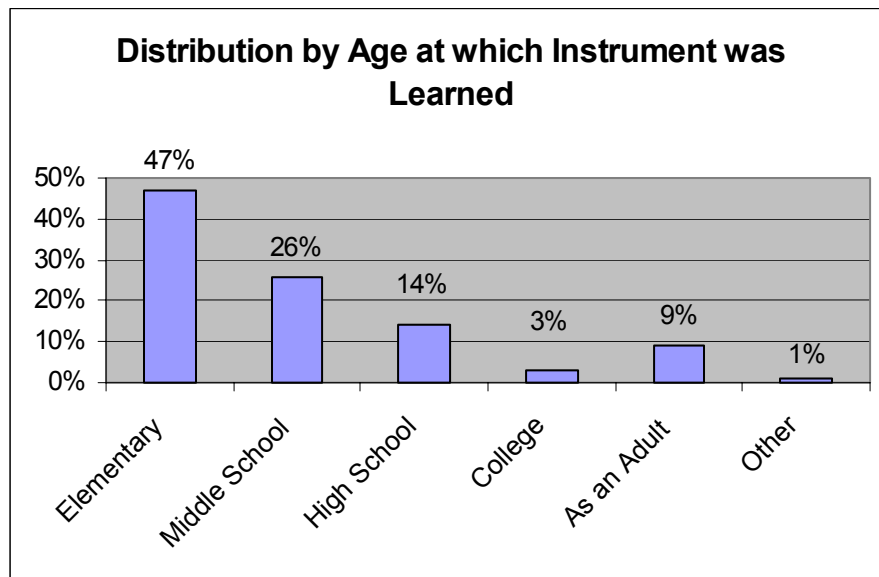


Figure 7: Distribution by Age at which Instrument Was Learned

Finally, I wanted to know if the participants played in other community bands. While 65% said that they did not play in other bands, 22% played in one other band, 7% played in two other bands, and the 1% or less played in three, four, five and six other bands. These results are shown in Figure 8.



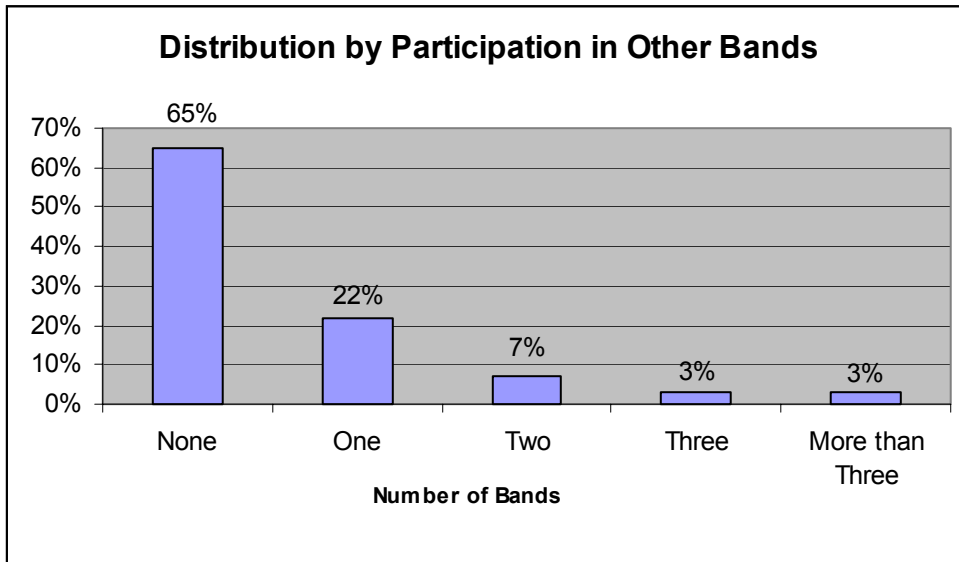


Figure 8: Distribution by Participation in Other Bands

Research Question 2: How far and for how long do participants travel to band rehearsals, and what regional variations exist?

I hypothesized that band members in all metropolitan regions combined would travel farther and spend more time traveling than band members in the rural region. I found the average distance traveled to be 11.76 miles for band members in region 4 (rural region) and 12.2 miles for band members in regions 1, 2, and 3 combined (metropolitan regions). I ran a t-test to compare differences in the rural and metropolitan averages, but the results were not significant ( $p$  value = .56,  $\alpha$  = .05). Therefore, there was no significant difference in distance traveled between the rural region and the metropolitan regions because the regions are so aggregated.

Next, I looked at distance traveled for each region individually. The average distance traveled for each region is described in the Table 3:

**Table 3**  
Average Distance Traveled by Region

<b>Region</b>	<b>Average Distance Traveled</b>
Region 1: DC Metro Area	10.9 miles
Region 2: Richmond	13.9 miles
Region 3: Tidewater	12.3 miles
Region 4: I-81 Corridor	11.8 miles

I used a Kruskal Wallis Test to determine if differences in distance existed between each region individually. The difference was significant, (Asymptotic Significance=.000,  $\alpha=.05$ ) so I paired each region with each other region and used a Mann-Whitney-U Test to see if there were any significant differences in distance traveled between region pairs. The only significant differences that emerged were between the DC Metro region and the Richmond region (Asymptotic Significance =.000,  $\alpha=.05$ ), and the Richmond region and the I-81 Corridor (Asymptotic Significance=.000,  $\alpha=.05$ ).

I was also interested in the time band members spent traveling to rehearsals. The average time spent traveling was 20.2 minutes in the rural region (Region 4) and 22.8 minutes in the three metropolitan regions combined (Regions 1, 2, and 3). Again, I used a Mann-Whitney-U Test to determine if significance differences in time traveled existed between these two groups, and the results were marginally significant (p value= .009,  $\alpha=.05$ ).

Next, I looked at the average time spent traveling for each region individually. The average time spent traveling for each region is described in Table 4:

**Table 4**  
Average Time Spent Traveling by Region

<b>Region</b>	<b>Average Time Spent Traveling</b>
Region 1: DC Metro Area	23.0 minutes
Region 2: Richmond	22.8 minutes
Region 3: Tidewater	22.1 minutes
Region 4: I-81 Corridor	20.2 minutes

I used a Kruskal Wallis Test to determine if differences in time spent traveling existed between each region individually. The difference was significant, (Asymptotic Significance=.003,  $\alpha=.05$ ) so I paired each region with each other region and used a Mann-Whitney-U Test to see if there were any significant differences in time spent traveling between region pairs. The significant differences that emerged were between regions 1 and 4 (Asymptotic Significance =.002,  $\alpha=.05$ ), again, between regions 2 and 4 (Asymptotic Significance=.002,  $\alpha=.05$ ), and also between regions 3 and 4 (Asymptotic Significance =.028,  $\alpha=.05$ ).

Research Question 3: What sense of community do participants have by being a member of the community band?

In order to analyze the sense of community for my participants, I first had to calculate a total sense of community score. I weighted each question according to its importance by assigning it a value one through five, five carrying the most weight (see Table 5).

**Table 5**  
Sense of Community Question Weighting

Sense of Community Question	Weight	Highest Possible Score	Total Points per Question
I feel my role in the community band is valued by the band.	4	X5	20
I can express my opinion and make suggestions about everyday functions of the band.	4	X5	20
By playing in the community band, I am a part of the local community.	5	X5	25
As a band member, I have a positive influence on the local community.	5	X5	25
The band has a positive influence on the local community.	5	X5	25
The local community is aware of the existence of the community band.	5	X5	25
The local community is supportive of the community band.	5	X5	25
My involvement in the community band does not limit my participation in other community music activities.	3	X5	15
My involvement in the community band has resulted in my involvement in other community organizations and events.	3	X5	15
I have met people I would not have met otherwise by playing in the community band.	3	X5	15
I have traveled to places I would not have gone otherwise by playing in the community band.	1	X5	5
<b>Total</b>			<b>215</b>

Next, I multiplied the numeric response for each question by the weighted value, and added up the totals for all eleven questions. This produced a sense of community score, out of a possible 215 points, for each completed survey. Next, I produced a sense of community score for each region and for rural vs. metropolitan comparisons, by averaging the scores for each respectively.

To answer my third research question concerning band members' sense of community, I looked at differences in scores between the rural region and the three combined metropolitan regions. The average score for the rural region was 179.9, and the average score for the combined metropolitan regions was 170.3. I used a Mann-Whitney-U Test to determine if the differences were significant, and they were (Asymptotic Significance=.000,  $\alpha=.05$ ). This confirmed my hypothesis that band members in rural areas would have a higher sense of community score than band members in metropolitan areas. I also used a Mann-Whitney-U Test on the average rural and metropolitan scores for each question to determine if certain questions yielded higher sense of community scores in rural or metropolitan areas. The results are described in Table 6. (Scores are out of 5 possible points).

**Table 6**  
Rural/Metropolitan Significance for Sense of Community Questions

<b>Sense of Community Question</b>	<b>Average Rural Score</b>	<b>Average Metropolitan Score</b>	<b>Rural/Metropolitan Mann-Whitney-U Significance?</b>
I feel my role in the community band is valued by the band.	4.2	4.2	No
I can express my opinion and make suggestions about everyday functions of the band.	4.1	4.0	No
By playing in the community band, I am a part of the local community.	4.3	4.1	Yes
As a band member, I have a positive influence on the local community.	4.0	3.8	Yes
The band has a positive influence on the local community.	4.5	4.2	Yes
The local community is aware of the existence of the community band.	4.1	3.6	Yes
The local community is supportive of the community band.	4.1	3.6	Yes
My involvement in the community band does not limit my participation in other community music activities.	4.3	4.1	Yes
My involvement in the community band has resulted in my involvement in other community organizations and events.	3.5	3.3	Yes
I have met people I would not have met otherwise by playing in the community band.	4.7	4.7	No
I have traveled to places I would not have gone otherwise by playing in the community band.	3.6	3.8	Yes

Next, I calculated the sense of community score for each region individually. The scores for each region are described in Table 7.

**Table 7**  
Sense of Community Scores by Region

<b>Region</b>	<b>Sense of Community Score</b>
Region 1: DC Metro Area	168.5
Region 2: Richmond	176.6
Region 3: Tidewater	163.8
Region 4: I-81 Corridor	179.9

I then used a Kruskal-Wallis test to determine if there were any significant differences in scores between regions. I found the scores to be significantly different, so I used a Mann-Whitney-U Test on each pair of regions to see if their total sense of community scores were significantly different. The results are described in Table 8.

**Table 8**  
Significance of Total Scores by Region Pairs

<b>Region Pairs</b>	<b>Significant Difference in Scores?</b>
Region 1 vs. Region 2	Yes
Region 1 vs. Region 3	No
Region 1 vs. Region 4	Yes
Region 2 vs. Region 3	Yes
Region 2 vs. Region 4	No
Region 3 vs. Region 4	Yes

I was also interested in the differences in scores of each region for each individual question. Using a Kruskal-Wallis test for all four regions on all eleven sense of community questions, I determined that significant differences existed between the regions for all but two questions. Next, I paired each region with each other region for each question that produced significant differences in the previous test, and I used a Mann-Whitney-U Test to determine for

which questions certain region pairs produced significantly different scores. The results are described in Table 9.

**Table 9**  
Significance of Region Pair Scores by Question

<b>Question/Region Pair Significant?</b>	<b>1 vs. 2</b>	<b>1 vs. 3</b>	<b>1 vs. 4</b>	<b>2 vs. 3</b>	<b>2 vs. 4</b>	<b>3 vs. 4</b>
I can express my opinion and make suggestions about everyday functions of the band.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
By playing in the community band, I am a part of the local community.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
As a band member, I have a positive influence on the local community.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
The band has a positive influence on the local community.	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
The local community is aware of the existence of the community band.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
The local community is supportive of the community band.	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
My involvement in the community band does not limit my participation in other community music activities.	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
My involvement in the community band has resulted in my involvement in other community organizations and events.	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
I have traveled to places I would not have gone otherwise by playing in the community band.	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No



The significance of these findings are discussed in depth in Chapter Five.

## **Qualitative Results**

From 25 personal interviews with the conductors, and in some cases presidents, of the bands in my study, I was able to get a better idea of how community bands in Virginia operate. I asked fifteen open-ended questions. The answers to one question were eliminated because the question's wording solicited responses that were difficult to quantify. I grouped the responses to the remaining fourteen questions into categories. The results are indicated below according to the question asked.

### **1. From where do you receive your financial support?**

This question solicited a variety of responses from each band. Most common forms of financial support came from the municipal or county government where the band was located (12 bands), donations (10 bands), and honoraria (unsolicited money given to the band in exchange for a concert) (11 bands). The second most common forms of financial support came from fundraisers (7 bands), and membership dues collected from their players (5 bands). Three bands said that they gave free concerts for the organization that provided them with rehearsal space at no charge. Finally, five responses did not fit into any of these categories.

### **2. How is band membership achieved?**

It was my impression that community bands, as volunteer organizations, are known for being open to anyone. This is consistent among the community bands of Virginia. Twenty bands claimed that membership was open to anyone who wanted to play. Two bands required an audition or personal invitation to join. Two other bands opened membership to any adult, but middle school or high school students were allowed to join by invitation or recommendation only. Finally, one band requires that a new member interview with the conductor and then complete a six month grace period. If attendance and musical ability fit with the band after six months, the individual is granted

full membership. Three bands require that members pay dues in order to vote on band business.

3. What are some effective ways to keep a volunteer community group alive?

Conductors and band presidents agreed to a large extent in their responses to this question. The most common response was “make it fun and social” (12), followed by “challenge the players” (9). Five responded that showing the members their time and effort is appreciated is key to keeping a volunteer group alive. Other responses included “pick music the audience will enjoy” (4), “keep the band active by scheduling [enough, many] performances” (4), “choose a variety of music types” (3), and “choose music the players like” (2).

4. Identify all the places you have played in the last year.

The traditional performance venue for the community band is outdoors in the town bandstand. Of the bands in my study 23 reported that their performance venues included outdoor concerts in parks or bandstands. Bands performed at homes for the elderly (15), while others stated that they perform in auditoriums (13). Churches were a common performance location (7), and some bands gave concerts in a community or civic center (5), often an arts center. The remaining responses (14) did not fall into these categories. Bands reported that they played for town events, such as parades, inaugurations, holiday festivals, etc (18). While these are not physical locations, it is important to include them in the bands’ list of performance venues.

5. Are you invited to play for fundraisers?

Almost all the conductors and presidents I interviewed said the band was not asked to play for fundraisers (20). Of the bands that did report invitations to play for fundraisers, one band said that they get asked, but they do not accept the invitations. Another band stated that they only play fundraisers for charity groups or non-profit organizations. While one band claimed they would only play fundraisers for the county’s own Department of Parks and Recreation, another band said they hold their own fundraiser for a children’s charity. The remaining conductor was not asked the question.

6. Have the band's concert venues changed over the years? What factors caused these venues to change?

Fifteen interviewees reported no change in the bands' concert venues over the years. Of the eight bands that reported a change, six reported an increase in concert venues while two reported a decrease in the number of concert venues. Two bands were not asked this question. The bands that reported some change in concert venues credited it to a change in sponsorship of the band (4), the influence of technology (2), increased publicity (1), and an increase the geographic radius in which the band is willing to perform concerts (1).

7. Have you noticed changes in concert venues and attendance or participation since September 11, 2001?

Fourteen bands reported no change in concert venue, attendance or participation. Ten noticed a change since September 11, 2001. Six of these consciously programmed more patriotic music after September 11, 2001. Three others reported adding or changing a concert in reflection of September 11, 2001. One band was not asked the question.

8. Do you feel the local community is aware of and supports the band?

I divided the responses from conductors and presidents into four Likert-scale categories: very much aware, somewhat aware, not really aware, not at all aware. Eight bands stated that the community was very much aware and supportive, and ten stated that the community was somewhat aware and supportive. Of the eight conductors of bands located in the rural region, five claimed the community was very much aware and supportive, and two claimed the community was somewhat supportive and aware of the band. Five of the total interviewees felt the community was not really aware or supportive of the band, and two did not feel community support or awareness at all.

9. Please outline some major events in the band's history.

The question solicited an eclectic array of responses that did not exhibit a broad pattern. The one common feature, however, was that five of the bands mentioned events in their history that were tied to local history.

10. In your experience, not just with this band, but with community music in general, how do you think public attitude toward community music has changed over the years?

Five respondents reported that public attitude has improved over the years, while two reported that public attitude had grown worse. Four respondents reported no change in public attitude. Other respondents (10) mentioned that the growing popularity of media entertainment, such as television, cinema, electronic music, video games, etc. have negatively affected public attitude towards community music. Five others noted that changes in funding for school music programs influence public attitude toward community music. Four respondents did not identify changes that fell into these categories.

11. What particular genre of music or specific pieces of music does your audience seem to like?

Marches, especially those by John Philip Sousa, were most popular among the audiences of Virginia community bands (10). Show tunes, and big band jazz followed (8 bands each). Five bands reported that their audiences liked pop tunes, while four bands claimed their audience liked music medleys. Three bands listed patriotic music among their audience's favorites, and five bands listed music that did not fall into these categories.

12. Is there a particular piece that gives your band a regional identity?

Eleven bands did not have a piece of music that gave them a regional identity. Of the fourteen bands that did have such a piece, six said the piece was a patriotic one played regularly at concerts. Four bands used pieces that were written about the area in which the band was located. Three bands used pieces written by a member of the band, and one band plays a Souse march at every concert. These pieces are listed in Table 10.

**Table 10**  
List of Bands and Regional Identity Pieces

<b>Band Name</b>	<b>Regional Identity Piece</b>
Alexandria Citizen’s Band	“Alexandria Citizen’s Band March”
American Legion Community Band	“National Anthem” “Stars and Stripes Forever”
Chesterfield Community Band	“America the Beautiful”
Clarke County Community Band	“Oh Shenandoah”
Fauquier County Community Band	“Blue Ridge Saga”
Hanover Concert Band	“Ashland, Ashland”
Henrico Community Band	“Ashokan Farewell”
Municipal Band of Charlottesville	“On the Mall March” “National Anthem” (Simmons) “Stars and Stripes Forever” “America the Beautiful” (Dragon)
National Concert Band of America	“This is My Country” “National Concert Band of America Fanfare”
Peninsula Concert Band	“Armed Forces Medley”
Richmond Concert Band	“Capitol Square March” (commissioned by band)
Roanoke Valley Community Band	“Roanoke Valley Community Band Fanfare and Salute”
Stonewall Brigade Band	Opens with Dixie Tune
Varina Community Band	Sousa March at every concert

13. Can you describe the community music scene in Virginia? How does your band fit into the larger community music picture?

The responses to this question varied. There was some agreement that community bands in Virginia do not interact. One Richmond area conductor stated that “all bands kind of do their own thing” (Personal Communication 10/3/02), while a rural band conductor reported that there is “no coordinated effort [among bands]” (Personal Communication 11/5/02). A rural band conductor generalized that “bands in larger areas can get more people and better people” (Personal Communication 9/11/02). This opinion is echoed by another rural conductor that stated there are “differences in quality around the state” (Personal Communication 11/21/02). Some of the metropolitan bands located in areas with a strong military presence mentioned competition from service bands for members audiences and concert venues (Personal Communications 9/18/02, 10/29/02). However, conductors expressed a positive view of band development in Virginia over the years. One rural conductor noted that “there have been tremendous strides and growth across the state, not just in the number of community bands, but in the number of choruses and orchestras too” (Personal Communication 10/22/02). Another rural conductor supported this statement by saying that “community bands in Virginia are now at their strongest” (Personal Communication 11/29/02).

14. How does the community band contribute to local and regional culture?

Eight conductors reported that the band contributes to local and regional culture by exposing people to music they would not normally get to hear. Four conductors each said the bands provide an outlet for musicians, and the bands represent part of local and American history. Three conductors stated that the community band helps to keep traditional band music alive. “The Band is creating culture,” said one DC Metro area conductor (Personal Communication 10/7/02). A rural conductor described the band’s contribution to local and regional culture when he said, “The band is symbolic in representing a sense of identity in a community, and values and beliefs in what it means to be a member of a community; it helps in preserving history and culture” (Personal

Communication 10/8/02). Six conductors gave responses that did not fall into these categories.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

My quantitative analysis generally supports my hypotheses outlined in Chapter One. An in depth analysis shows some variation between rural and metropolitan bands, as well as inter-regional variation.

#### Quantitative Results

##### *Demographic Description of Bands and Band Members*

The bands in my study vary in size and age. Most of the largest bands are located in metropolitan regions. More than half the bands rehearse in schools, and all but seven have their 5013C non-profit designation making them a tax-exempt organization. Of these seven, five are 16 years old or younger. These younger bands may not have a need for tax-exempt status, especially if they have use of a school's music library, as is the case with the Fauquier County Community Band. Younger bands may also not have had a chance to complete the tax-exempt process, or lack an individual willing to compile the paperwork.

More men participate in community bands than women. Band members are almost exclusively white, educated, middle to upper-middle class citizens, retirees, teachers, and government or military personnel, began learning their instrument in elementary and middle school, and are between 40 and 60 years of age. With the exception of the largest age group represented, these results are consistent with other community band studies that addressed member demographics (Bowen 1995; Heinzelman 1988). It is reassuring that these results are similar to Bowen's (1995) study because Bowen studied community bands in the southeast United States, the area of the country into which my study area falls, thereby confirming a regional dimension to this study.

##### *Distance Traveled and Time Traveled Comparisons*

The results of my analysis showed that there are no significant rural/metropolitan differences in average distance traveled by band members to rehearsal. However, significant rural/metropolitan differences did exist for the amount of time spent traveling to rehearsal. Band members in the metropolitan regions spent almost three more minutes in the car to travel the same distance as band members in rural areas. Although this last result supports part of my



hypothesis, I expected that the difference in time travel between the rural region and the metropolitan regions would be greater. I had assumed that time spent traveling would have been effected by more traffic impediments (bridges, toll roads, rush hour traffic), but my results do not indicate this.

When looking at each region individually, region 2 (Richmond) stands out from regions 1 and 4 in distance traveled to rehearsal. It makes sense that region 2 would be significantly different from region 4 for this variable because region 4 is the rural region. However, I expected regions 1 and 2 to be similar to one another because they are both metropolitan regions, and the fact that the distances traveled by band members in those regions are significantly different rejects my hypothesis. An explanation for the dissimilarity between regions 1 and 2 might be found if I had asked whether or not band members traveled to rehearsal from their homes, or straight from their place of employment. If many band members in either region 1 or 2 traveled to rehearsal from their jobs, and they worked in close proximity to the rehearsal location, this could account for the difference in distance traveled between the two regions. Also, region 2 has the smallest population of my metropolitan regions. It is possible that region 2 becomes rural quicker than the other metropolitan areas, which would yield results closer to that of region 4, the rural region.

The results from the regional analysis for time are easier to explain. Here, region 4 separates itself from regions 1, 2, and 3. This supports my hypothesis that band members in rural areas spend less time traveling to rehearsal than those in metropolitan areas because region 4 is a rural region. Again, my assumption here was that traffic impediments which are present in metropolitan areas, and which are absent from rural areas, would slow down the band members of metropolitan areas traveling to rehearsal. This information is important to those trying to form a community band, and for bands looking to attract new members because it gives them an idea where to advertise for participation.

### *Band Member's Sense of Community*

My third research question addressed the sense of community of the participants in my study. From eleven Likert-scale questions, I attempted to measure the participants' sense of community and then average these scores to see if rural/metropolitan and inter-regional differences existed.

In my rural versus metropolitan comparisons, the rural region had a higher sense of community score than the three metropolitan regions averaged. This confirmed my hypothesis. The map of band locations (Figure 1) shows clusters of bands around major metropolitan centers in the state, and the remaining bands are scattered up and down the Interstate-81 corridor. Many of the urban bands rehearsed in suburbs of metropolitan areas. I formulated my hypothesis on the notion that band members in these areas would have a lower sense of community score due to the difficulty in defining the local community where town boundaries appear to blend together. In rural areas, it is much more apparent when one has left the town boundaries and entered the county, or another town. I assumed band members in rural areas would be able to define their local community more easily, therefore producing higher sense of community scores.

I also assumed that band members in metropolitan areas would experience less appreciation by the community because of the entertainment competition for people's leisure time in metropolitan areas. The greater number of community bands present in metropolitan areas would also lower the sense of community score. For rural areas, I assumed the band was many times the only free live entertainment available and also without much competition. From the map, it is apparent that rural bands are not located as close together as metropolitan bands, and therefore experience little competition from other bands. It was these two factors also that led me to assume the sense of community score in rural areas would be higher than that of metropolitan areas. The results of my analysis confirmed a higher rural sense of community score.

However, although the Mann-Whitney-U Test showed the rural/metropolitan scores to be significantly different, I had expected that the differences would be greater. Out of a possible 215 points, the rural score was 84.7% of the total while the metropolitan score was 79.2% of the total. This is a difference of only 5.5%. This finding makes me very optimistic about the sense of community in band members of metropolitan areas. In other words, although the metropolitan score was lower than the rural score, it was still much higher overall than I expected. In addition, the fact that the metropolitan score is only 5.5% lower than the rural score indicates that the band members in metropolitan regions are not having as difficult a time defining their local community as I originally had expected. Also, while fighting for an audience against many other forms of entertainment, the positive metropolitan score indicates that the audiences that metropolitan bands do support the band.

An examination of significant differences among rural versus metropolitan scores by question demonstrates that the two areas are similar in some aspects while different in others (See Table 3). The three statements that produced no significant rural/metro differences were 1) “I feel my role in the community band is valued by the band,” 2) “I can express my opinion and make suggestions about everyday functions in the band,” and 3) “I have met people I would not have met otherwise by playing in the community band.” The fact that no significant differences exist for these statements makes sense. All three questions address intra-band relations, and would not be affected by the location of the band in either a rural or metropolitan area.

The statements where rural/metropolitan differences were significant make sense as well. The significant differences for “By playing in the community band, I am a part of the local community” and “As a band member, I have a positive influence on the community” can be explained by my hypothesis that band members in metropolitan areas have a hard time defining their local community, and thus it is harder for them to measure their impact on the local community. This also explains the significant differences for the following three statements: “The band has a positive influence on the local community,” “The local community is aware of the existence of the community band,” and “The local community is supportive of the community band.” The fact that bands with strict attendance and audition policies were located in metropolitan areas can explain the significant differences in scores for the statements “My involvement in the community band does not limit my participation in other community music activities” and “My involvement in the community band has resulted in my involvement in other community music activities.” A band member of a band with a strict attendance policy might not have the flexibility to be involved in other community music activities, which could explain the lower metropolitan score for both of these statements.

Finally, the statement “I have traveled to places I would not have gone otherwise by playing in the community band” was the only question that yielded a significant difference between rural and average metropolitan scores, but where the metropolitan score was *greater* than the rural score. I assumed the rural score would be higher because these bands have the tendency to travel to other small communities, possibly communities the band members would not have a reason to visit otherwise. However, this question does not address the frequency of travel, only that travel was to places band members might not have otherwise visited. One explanation for the higher metropolitan score on this question could be related to budget size.

Although I did not collect specific budget quotes from the bands, I would generalize that bands in metropolitan areas were better funded than bands in rural areas, in most cases. In addition, 71% of the band members who make more than \$50,000 a year play in bands located in metropolitan areas. This might be another reason why bands in metropolitan regions are better funded. Regardless, this question received the lowest weight of all eleven questions because some bands do not travel at all. I did not think the sense of community score should be affected by the traveling tendencies of the band, and therefore I did not ask the bands about their travel tendencies.

When I compared total average sense of community scores for each region individually, the rural region (region 4), as hypothesized, produced the highest score. Next highest was Richmond, followed by the DC Metro Area and, lastly, the Tidewater region (See Table 7). The comparison of region pairs offers some explanation for the distribution of scores (See Table 8). The rural region score was significantly different than all regions but the Richmond region. Considering the Richmond region produced the second highest sense of community score, a difference of only 2.6% from the rural region, the fact that these scores are not significantly different is not surprising. Again, the Richmond region is the smallest metropolitan region and includes more rural areas. However, there were significant differences between the Richmond region scores and those of both the DC Metro Area and the Tidewater region (the other two metropolitan regions). This implies that bands in the Richmond area follow sense of community patterns similar to the rural region.

Region-pair comparisons for each individual sense of community statement produced results from which it was difficult to establish a pattern (See Table 9). The Kruskal-Wallis test showed that nine sense of community statements produced significant results for the four individual regions. Of the nine statements, the DC Metro area and the rural region were statistically significant for all but one question, “I have traveled to places I would not have gone otherwise by playing in the community band.” However, when the rural region was compared with the other two metropolitan regions for each question, patterns of statistical significance were not apparent.

The statements “By playing in the community band, I am a part of the local community” and “As a band member, I have a positive influence on the local community” produced the same results for each region pair. This implies that feeling that one is part of the community and

having a positive influence on the community are closely linked. The statement “The local community is aware of the existence of the community band” produced significantly different results for each region pair. Likewise, the statement “The local community is supportive of the community band” -produced significantly different results for all region pairs except the DC Metro area and Richmond area pair. From this I conclude that community awareness and support is a phenomenon that should be examined at the band level and should not be generalized to a larger region or rural/metropolitan designation.

The DC Metro area and the Tidewater region (the second most populous region) appear to be the most similar. The only statements that produced significantly different results were those concerning community awareness and community support. In contrast, the rural region and the DC Metro area appear to be the most dissimilar. The only statement that did not produce statistically significant results for this pair was “I have traveled to places I would not have gone otherwise by playing in the community band.” The Richmond region appears to have different characteristics from both the rural region and the two other metropolitan regions. However, the total sense of community score for this region was high. Region 2 has a summer event called Music at Maymont, which are a series of outdoor concerts that feature many of the area’s community bands throughout the season. It is possible that this event fosters a sense of community among Richmond bands that is uncharacteristic of the other metropolitan bands because it provides the Richmond bands with a well-attended and respected, free entertainment venue that helps tie them to the community.

Individuals may possess a strong sense of community even before they join a community band. Van Vugt and Snyder (2002) state that volunteer contributions are often driven by community-centered motives (Van Vugt and Snyder 2002, 766). Omoto and Snyder (2002) note a direct relationship between the decision to become a volunteer and a strong sense of community. They conclude that a person with a stronger sense of community is more likely to volunteer, and likewise, volunteers have a strong sense of community. This conclusion is emphasized by one rural area band director who stated, “[The] band is symbolic in representing a sense of identity in the community, and values and beliefs in what it means to be a member of a community...” (Personal Communication 10/08/02).

For future research on community bands, I would recommend that the sense of community scale for community bands be elaborated. It became apparent during my fieldwork

that community bands function under a variety of circumstances. These circumstances may influence a band member's sense of community. In turn, a stronger sense of community may encourage or ensure continuing participation in the community band. In broader terms, a strong sense of community may be an indicator of active volunteerism, and it would be interesting to see what other volunteer activities in which members with a strong sense of community participate.

### Qualitative Results

I conducted personal interviews, in addition to the administration of my survey, for a better idea of how bands functioned. This collective case study helped explain some of the results of my quantitative analysis.

#### *Finances, Membership and Volunteer Appreciation*

It was encouraging to see that close to half of the bands in my study received their financial support, at least in part, from the government of the town or county in which the band resides. This type of financial backing implies that the government at the town and county level values the band. The number of donations and honoraria noted by the bands further implies that an appreciative audience exists, although twice as many metropolitan bands reported receiving donations and honorariums than rural bands. Only seven bands had to hold their own fundraisers (no regional variations were apparent here), and all of the bands reported receiving funds from more than one source. It is important for the community band to draw from many sources for financial support.

I did not include any consideration of membership requirements in my definition of a community band because I expected bands to have different membership requirements. That twenty bands had open-seating policies was expected. With a larger population from which to draw, and a number of community bands in close proximity, I expected a few bands in metropolitan areas to have the luxury of being able to attract and choose top quality musicians. Regardless of membership requirements, none of the members received any monetary compensation for their participation in the band, although some bands pay their conductors.

Many conductors and presidents agreed on methods for keeping a volunteer band alive. They realize that if members do not enjoy playing in the band, they are not going to continue

their participation. There appeared to be some disagreement about for whom to program band music. Some conductors thought it was essential to pick music the audience would like, so as to ensure an audience at concerts, while others thought it was important to pick music the players liked. Still others focused on choosing a variety of musical genres in order to keep both the audience and the musicians interested. The latter method appears to be the easiest one to employ, judging from the responses to my question about what genres of music the audience seems to enjoy. An eclectic mix of genre's were included in the conductors' and presidents' responses, including show tunes, jazz, patriotic music, and pop music, which implies that choosing a variety of music would attract the best audience. Conductors also noted that making sure the band members feel appreciated will also help keep the volunteer group alive.

### *Concert Venues and Changes in Public Attitude*

An examination of performance venues shows that community bands, as expected, are accommodating organizations. They perform in a variety of public spaces, a majority of these outdoors, which gives the public indiscriminating access to free music. Even the concerts held in churches and nursing homes are open to the public, although publicity for such concerts is usually targeted towards specific populations. There were occasions when the bands played for a private function, but this was not the norm, and many of these occasions fell into the "other" category in my analysis because they were one-time events. The fact that so many bands play in public spaces shows that in Virginia, these groups are truly "community" bands.

Few bands reported playing for fundraisers. Some made it a policy not to play for such events, and one band limited its fundraiser performances solely to those for non-profit organizations or charities. This, too, shows that Virginia's community bands are organizations that perform for the public at large.

I asked whether the bands' concert venues changed over the years because I thought such changes would reflect technological innovations in entertainment, in addition to a growth in the amount of entertainment options available. Surprisingly, over half the bands noticed no change in concert venue. One reason could be that these bands are too new to have noticed a change, as many of the technological innovations in entertainment (radio, moves television) occurred years before these bands started. I also thought that with increased nationalism throughout the country after September 11, 2001 community bands, as a part of American history, would become more

popular. Again, over half the bands reported no changes in concert venues or attendance since that date. Of the bands that noticed changes, most of these were changes the band implemented themselves, like programming more patriotic music or adding a commemorative concert. I had hoped to discover greater initiative from the public either in joining the band or in attending band concerts.

It was encouraging to see the number of bands that felt the community was very much aware and supportive, or somewhat aware and supportive of their efforts. That seven of the eight rural area bands felt supported by their community is consistent with the high sense of community scores of the rural region. In addition, eleven metropolitan bands felt supported by their community. Although the metropolitan sense of community score was lower than the rural score, the metropolitan score was still high. The conductors' response to the question about community awareness explains why the metropolitan sense of community score was so high. Even though community boundaries are often blurred in suburban areas, bands in these regions still experience a healthy amount of community support.

While many bands stated that the community was aware and supportive of their efforts at the present time, they also noted changes in public attitude toward community music over the years. Technological innovations in entertainment definitely challenge the bands' popularity. With so many ways to spend their leisure time, hearing live music has fallen behind television and movies as an entertainment choice. I would have expected, however, that because live music is not as common now as in the past, especially free live music, its novelty would increase. This point of view was not expressed by band conductors and presidents.

### *Influence of Local and Regional History and Culture*

The history of a community band can provide background to explain responses to certain questions. However, I examined band responses from regional and rural/metro levels, which did not necessitate an examination of individual band histories. Because five bands listed events in their history that were tied to local history suggests that these bands are integrated into their communities, an aspect I would have expected of rural bands. Surprisingly, four of the five bands that listed such historical events were bands from metropolitan areas. The DC Metro area and the Tidewater area both have a strong military presence, and the third metropolitan region, the Richmond area, serves as the state capital. The historical presence of both the military and the



federal government in these regions doubtless helps to explain the ties of metropolitan community bands to local history.

Some community bands are further tied to their respective regions by programming pieces that give them a regional identity. Some bands used pieces written about the region in which they reside, while others used pieces written by a member of the band. Still other bands use a well-known patriotic piece, which not only gives them a regional identity, but also keeps the patriotic American band tradition of the John Philip Sousa era alive.

In addition to using specific pieces of music to identify with regions around the state, the bands contribute to local and regional culture through their performances and activities. They play music that people do not normally get to hear. Bands also provide an outlet for musicians as a form of continuing education for those with any amount of musical training. By playing in public spaces free of charge, only doing fundraisers for non-profit organizations and charities, and helping to preserve local history and culture, the band serves as the quintessential community organization.

Unfortunately, bands in Virginia do not often interact, even with the perceived growth of community music organizations throughout the state. Even the regional summer festival in Richmond, which gives community bands exposure, is not an interactive event. A different band performs individually each week. A community band could provide instrumental support for a chorus or theater group, which would help to integrate the community to a greater extent. However, there is currently not a state-wide venue with which to provide bands with a reason to interact.

### *Connections to Music Geography*

Both the personal interviews and the questionnaires connect this research on community bands to the geography of music literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Carney's (2003) first taxonomy calls for a delineation of music regions, which I did by creating four band regions and conducting inter-regional analyses. Nash and Carney's (1996) fourth theme of music geography asks the researcher to identify source areas of musical activities. Virginia's major metropolitan areas are source areas for community bands in the state. Finally, Kong's (1995) classification of areas of geographic popular music research identifies the distribution of musical forms, activities, and performers as one area. As far as disciplinary identity is concerned, this study

showed the distribution of community bands throughout the state, highlighted their activities, and collected data from and about their performers. Therefore, this research on community bands fits squarely into geographic theory on the study of music geography.

## **Conclusions**

This research studied community bands in Virginia from a geographic perspective by implementing rural/metropolitan comparisons as well as inter-regional comparisons for data collected. Through the administration of my survey to band members and personal interviews with conductors and band presidents, I answered my three research questions.

Both the completed questionnaires and interviews helped me to describe the demographics of community bands and band members in Virginia, and, with the exception of the largest age group, these results are consistent with studies by Heintzelman (1988) and Bowen (1995). An analysis of distance and time traveled by band members to rehearsal showed that for the same distance traveled, band members in metropolitan areas spend an average of three more minutes traveling than do band members in rural areas.

After analyzing the band members' sense of community based on their responses to eleven Likert-scale questions, the average score in the rural region was higher than that of the metropolitan region, as expected. However, both the rural and metropolitan sense of community scores were higher than expected, and the difference between them small. Inter-regional comparisons were significant as well. Here, the Richmond region separated itself from the other two-metropolitan regions. Inter-regional analysis for each question produced inconsistent results in general, but again confirmed that the Richmond region separated itself from the other two-metropolitan regions and from the rural region. The classification technique used, that of geographical location, does not appear to work for the Richmond region bands. I suggest a future re-classification of band regions based on sense of community scores.

The interviews with band conductors and presidents provided information about the general nature of community bands in Virginia. There was some consensus among conductors and presidents concerning the determination of band membership, methods for keeping a volunteer group alive, changes in concert venues, type of music programmed, and the community music scene in Virginia. Conductors and presidents varied in their responses concerning community awareness and support, the band's history, changes in public attitude

toward community music, and how the band contributes to local and regional culture. In general, these interviews highlighted each band's individual characteristics and helped me to understand the community band culture in Virginia.

The community band members in this study are volunteers, and their activities have implications in the larger field of volunteerism. The decision to join a community band is a good example of non-spontaneous prosocial behavior (Clary and Snyder 1991). However, the motivations behind it are different. Although, for musicians or music teachers, involvement in the community band is good job preparation and resume building, rarely are community band members motivated by social pressures or the desire to express their values and beliefs.

As a volunteer in a community band, gratification for one's efforts is often delayed, and sometimes irrelevant. Band members join the band and spend months rehearsing for a concert. By the time the concert is performed, its success, or how well the audience received it, many times no longer matters to the individual. The relationships that formed along the way are what are important. Omoto and Snyder (2002) talk about the interpersonal level of volunteerism, or the "dynamics of the helping relationships between volunteers and recipients of service" (Omoto and Snyder 2002, 847). One might be inclined to think that the recipient of a community band member's service is the audience. I would argue that recipients also include the other band members. A community band volunteer is not looking for a short-term project. The long-term commitment expected of a member of a community band helps to foster the development of strong social networks and interpersonal relationships. Three bands I visited related stories where a now married couple met in the community band.

### Limitations

Some limitations exist in my study. I did not include a question regarding a possible time gap, if any, that a band member spent *not* playing their instrument. Many band members, especially adults, join community bands because they played their instrument in high school or college, but may not have played since that time. The community band provides a supportive, flexible environment in which a band member can become reacquainted with their musical background. The percentage of band members who took time off from playing their instrument, and the average number of years included in this time off, would enhance the demographic description of my sample.

Another question I might have included in my questionnaire was whether or not the band member travels to rehearsals either from home or directly from work. I did not establish from where each band member travels, only how far they travel and for how long. My purpose for asking how far a band member traveled to rehearsal was to try to determine how far away band members lived from the rehearsal location. However, I could not make a generalization because it is possible that many band members traveled to rehearsal from work.

Also, during the interviews with conductors and band presidents, I did not ask if the conductors were paid and for what duties they were compensated. Originally, I did not include this question in my interviews because I assumed that all the conductors, like the band members, were volunteers. However, I learned that some conductors receive small stipends or are paid for mileage to and from rehearsals and concerts. Conductor compensation would have been an interesting venue to explore that might have produced some interesting rural/metropolitan comparisons.

Finally, during the interviews with conductors and band presidents, I worded one question in such a way that the answers could not be quantified and the responses had to be eliminated from my analysis. I wanted to determine how often a band performed with other music organizations. I asked, "How often does the band perform with other community music organizations," which implies that bands already perform with other community music organizations. Instead, a more effective question would have been, "Does the band perform with other community music organizations, and if so, how often?" I could have used responses to support or contradict statements made about the community band environment in Virginia.

### Implications for Future Research

The data analysis in this study on the distances and time band members spend traveling to rehearsal leaves room for additional research. I did not address items such as traffic impediments and travel routes to rehearsal. It is possible that traffic impediments and road classifications influence a band member's choice of routes, or in metropolitan areas, in which band to play. The journey to work literature in geography addresses travel tendencies of individuals for their jobs; something they get paid to do (Gordon et al. 1998; Maraffa and Brooker-Gross 1984; O'Connor 1980). Community band members travel to rehearsal and concerts without monetary compensation. It would be interesting to compare travel tendencies of paid workers versus

unpaid, or volunteer, community band members. I suspect that high-income levels are directly proportional to participation in volunteer activities, and further exploration of this hypothesis would help those who coordinate volunteer activities to focus their recruiting on specific populations. This would also create a bridge between music geography, the journey to work literature, and the volunteerism literature.

The sense of community results can be expanded. I first call for a re-examination of the appropriateness of the Community Organization Sense of Community Scale (Hughey et al. 1999) for community arts organizations. Perhaps the creation of a separate sense of community scale geared toward community arts organizations is in order, as they are not subject to the same motivations as volunteers of other community organizations. Participation in a community band is, in most cases, a long-term commitment. Members attend weekly rehearsals and perform many concerts throughout the year. Most people who join a community band already have some type of musical background, even though they may not have called upon this background for many years. This is true of community arts organizations in general. For those who study community organizations, I would argue that community arts organizations include a different group of volunteers and could be studied separately.

Tiede (1970) and Bowen (1995) both indicate regional variations between community bands. A United States regional comparison of community bands could reveal additional band regions at the national level. State-to-state comparisons of community band activity and personnel might yield spatial variations. Finally, a current U.S. national survey of community bands is long overdue.

The study of community bands themselves could be taken to an international level. Cohen (1997) studied community bands in Valencia, Spain. The band scene in this region is very structured and tied closely to local and regional history. Germany, Finland, Great Britain, Holland, Norway Taiwan, and Canada all are home to many community bands. An international comparison of community bands would extend this type of work even farther in a field with intriguing prospects, as would the study of community bands as an historical European tradition.

The communities that host community bands would be another area deserving attention. Omoto and Snyder (2002) state, "The standards, norms, resources, and institutions of the community provide a backdrop for volunteer efforts" (Omoto and Snyder 2002, 848). A comparison study between towns with community bands, and those without, might allude to the

“ideal” community band environment. The information would be useful to those who wish to start a community band, or revive one that dis-banded.

Community band research can also enhance the field of geography. The study of community bands and their use of public space would tie music geography to both urban and rural geography, since community bands are present in major metropolitan areas as well as small towns. Many community bands play outdoors in town bandstands, amphitheaters, pavilions and parks. It would be interesting to trace community band development and the expansion-, shrinking, or maintenance of public space. How accessible is this space? Who is using it and how is that reflective of the community band mission? Community bands change non-public space, such as a church, into public space when they perform public concerts in those locations. Is the community band marginalized between public and private space? One could also study the soundscape of public space, either as a function of organized music or simply by analyzing the sounds present in public spaces.

Finally, community band research touches on an area of music geography that leaves much room for future research. The traveling professional bands of the latter 1800’s, the spread of symphony orchestras throughout the country, marching bands and the competitions associated with them, and differences between community bands in the mid-west and those in the east are all possible research topics that fall into the themes and taxonomies of music geography.

This study on community bands in Virginia leaves me very optimistic about the role of community music in our country. Community bands continue to serve as venues for adult continuing education, proven by the fact that 8% of my participants learned to play an instrument in the community band. Although some community bands do not feel community at large is aware of their efforts, most are appreciative of the support they do get.

What does the community band in America represent today? The post-WWII revival of the band movement indicates a possible trend towards a more conservative America. One can trace trends in American nationalism through the evolution of the town band, and Martin (1995) confirms this by stating, “the explanation of musical systems is held to lie in social processes” (Martin 1995, 160).

The existence of the band touches on the quintessential symbol of American liberty in small-town America. A community band playing patriotic or American music is an expression of

the freedom on which our nation is built. The community band can also serve as bridge between the rich and the poor, especially in large metropolitan areas. Tuan (1974) points out that “In any large metropolis, people of different income and social status live in separate parts of the city...The poor thus become aware of alien places that seem threatening even when the purpose of the institution...is benign” (Tuan 1974, 207-208). Although similar income levels are apparent among band members, the community band as an entity creates common ground between people of different socio-economic backgrounds by performing free concerts in public parks throughout an area. The band thus becomes a mechanism for egalitarianism, especially in a small town, a place that Tuan (1996) identifies as a prime location for the achievement of equality of knowledge (Tuan 1996, 139).

The effects of a community band to a large extent echo the long-standing criticism about urbanization and modernity: Tuan criticizes large societies by saying that, “lack the warmth of small communities” because, in large societies, “human relations are cool and contractual rather than intense” (Tuan 1996, 164). Public community band concerts in large metropolitan areas can soften the “cool and contractual” environment to which Tuan refers. The traditional community band concert, held in a public park or bandstand, forces the audience to share the same space. Unlike the days of Shakespearean theater where only the poorest individuals occupied the ground, or the elitist setting of a concert hall with boxed seats positioned not for a comfortable view of the performance by their wealthy occupants but instead for prime viewing of the wealthy by the rest of the audience, all attendees of a community band concert hold the same status as audience members. They pay the same entrance fee (usually nothing) and sit at the same level, thus eliminating the “cool” environment often solicited by hierarchical seating. Although the following of traditional concert etiquette is appreciated, there are no expectations of the audience from the band-- no “contractual” environment.

While this study sought to determine the sense of community of community band members, it is possible that the community band can help to foster a sense of community among its audience. Bell and Newby (1971) state that “what finally binds a community together is a state of mind on the part of its members...a sense of interdependence and loyalty” (Bell and Newby 1971, 16). Over half of the bands in this study stated that they played a piece of music that gave them local and regional recognition. Many of these pieces reflected aspects of local

history and culture. This practice enhances a sense of community among the audience as loyalty to the community band becomes synonymous with loyalty to local history.

This research leads me to think about the larger implications of music in general. Many cultures use music as part of their oral history. Music is used as a tool for teaching, and a way to express one's political or social opinions. For others, it is an emotional outlet (Martin 1995, 34-35). Is there a certain percent of a population that will always be musically talented? Will this ensure the continuance of music as a part of culture?

I think bands are definitely affected by technological innovations, rather large budget cuts in public school systems that often affect music programs, and to an extent by nationalism. Community bands will, no doubt, face periods of decline and popularity in the future, but I think the band is part of an American tradition that will live on. The best explanation for this I can give is a personal anecdote from my visit to the American Legion Community Band in Front Royal, VA. An elderly gentleman from the trumpet section came up to me after rehearsal and said, "Sara Beth, I have to tell you...I am 83 years old, and when you get to be 83 years old, you stop looking for things to do for fun, and you start looking for things to do that keep you alive. I can't play a note on my instrument, but this band keeps me alive." It is people with this attitude that will preserve the community band in American culture.



## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

### Invitation Letter: Email

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I am writing to you as a graduate student at Virginia Tech. I am conducting research on the Geography of Music, specifically the Geography of Community Bands in Virginia, for my master's thesis. I found your address through the Community-Music website maintained by Ron Boerger/Association of Concert Bands website.

The purpose of my research is to collect information about the community bands in Virginia and their members, and then show how this information varies across the state. The information I am hoping to collect falls into three categories: (1) demographic information, (2) the distance that the band members travel from their home to rehearsals and concerts, (3) how the band members define "community" and their roles as band members.

Can I count on your band's support? Your participation would take a little bit of time. I plan to collect my data between September 1, 2002 and Thanksgiving Day, 2002. My method of data collection involves my visiting your band during one rehearsal mutually agreed upon in advance. I would hand out a short survey to your band members if they are willing to complete the questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for letting me know if you can help me. In your reply, please include your name, mailing address, phone number, email, band website (if available), number of band members, and regular rehearsal day and time. I will contact you shortly to confirm your participation.

Thank you for considering this request. Feel free to contact my thesis committee chair, Dr. Bonham C. Richardson, at [borichar@vt.edu](mailto:borichar@vt.edu), (540) 231-5514 or myself with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your reply.

Sincerely,  
Sara Beth Keough  
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Blacksburg, VA 24060  
[skeough@vt.edu](mailto:skeough@vt.edu)  
home: 540-552-7217

**APPENDIX B**  
**Invitation Letter: Postal Service**

Dear Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_:

I am writing to you as a graduate student at Virginia Tech. I am conducting research on the Geography of Music, specifically the Geography of Community Bands in Virginia, for my master's thesis. I found your address through the Community-Music website maintained by Ron Boerger/Association of Concert Bands website.

The purpose of my research is to collect information about the community bands in Virginia and their members, and then show how this information varies across the state. The information I am hoping to collect falls into three categories: (1) demographic information, (2) the distance that the band members travel from their home to rehearsals and concerts, (3) how the band members define "community" and their roles as band members.

Can I count on your support? Your participation would take a little bit of time. I plan to collect my data between September 1, 2002 and Thanksgiving Day, 2002. My method of data collection involves my visiting your band during one rehearsal mutually agreed upon in advance. I would hand out a short survey to your band members if they are willing to complete the questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for letting me know if you can help me. Please return the enclosed postcard for including your name, mailing address, phone number, email, band website (if available), number of band members, and regular rehearsal day and time. I will contact you shortly to confirm your participation.

Thank you for considering this request. Feel free to contact my thesis committee chair, Dr. Bonham C. Richardson, at [borichar@vt.edu](mailto:borichar@vt.edu), (540) 231-5514 or myself with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your reply.

Sincerely,  
Sara Beth Keough  
Department of Geography  
Major Williams Hall (0115)  
Virginia Tech  
Blacksburg, VA 24060  
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APPENDIX C

Survey# \_\_\_\_\_ Band ID# \_\_\_\_\_ Region # \_\_\_\_\_



**The Geography of Community Bands in Virginia  
Band Member Questionnaire**  
Sara Beth Keough, Principal Investigator  
Master's Thesis, Virginia Tech 2002

If you have completed this questionnaire before, it is not necessary to do so again. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

**Band Information**

1. How many years have you played with the band? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What instrument do you play in *this* band? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you own this instrument? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no
4. In what year did you start playing this instrument? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Was that in: \_\_\_\_\_ elementary school \_\_\_\_ middle school \_\_\_\_ high school \_\_\_\_ college  
\_\_\_\_\_ other (specify)
6. How many *other* community bands do you play in? (do not include this one) \_\_\_\_\_

**Travel Information**

7. Approximately how far is your home from this band's rehearsal location? (check one)  
 0-5 miles     6-10 miles     11-15 miles     16-20 miles  
 21-25 miles     26-30 miles     31-35 miles     36-40 miles  
 41-45 miles     46-50 miles     more than 50 miles (specify \_\_\_\_\_)
8. Approximately how long does it normally take you to get to band rehearsal? \_\_\_\_\_ minutes

**Your Experience in the Band**

*Directions: Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling the appropriate number based on the scale:*

5 Strongly Agree    4 Agree    3 Indifferent    2 Disagree    1 Strongly Disagree

- |   |    |   |   |   |    |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
|   | SA | A | I | D | SD |
| 9. I feel my role in the community band is valued by the band.                          | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 10. I can express my opinion and make suggestions about everyday functions of the band. | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 11. By playing in the community band, I am a part of the local community.               | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |

**OVER, PLEASE**

- |  | SA | A | I | D | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 12. As a band member, I have a positive influence on the local community.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 13. The band has a positive influence on the local community.  | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 14. The local community is aware of the existence of the community band.   | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 15. The local community is supportive of the community band.   | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 16. My involvement in the community band does not limit my participation in other community music organizations.     | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 17. My involvement in the community band has resulted in my involvement in other community organizations and events. | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 18. I have met people that I would not have met otherwise by playing in the community band.                          | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |
| 19. I have traveled to places I would not have gone otherwise by playing in the community band.                      | 5  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1  |

**Personal Information**

*The personal information collected here will ONLY be used to describe the participants as a group. The information that you share here will not be released in any way that can be tied to you personally.*

20. Are you:     male                       female
21. Are you:     White/Caucasian     African American     Asian  
                    Hispanic                       other (specify)
22. In what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_
23. What is the highest level of education you have completed?  
 high school     associate's degree     bachelor's degree     master's degree  
 Ph.D/M.D/D.V.M./J.D./                       other (specify)
24. Check the one occupation category that BEST describes you.  
 retired     high school student  
 college student                                       homemaker  
 teacher/professor/education                       military/government  
 self employed                                       clerical  
 corporate employee                                       other (specify)
25. What is your approximate household income?  
 <\$20,000                       \$20,000-34,999                       \$35,000-49,999  
 \$50,000-74,000                       \$75,000-99,999                       >\$100,000

**THANK YOU**

APPENDIX D

Band ID # \_\_\_\_\_



The Geography of Community Bands in Virginia  
Band Conductor Questionnaire  
Sara Beth Keough, Principal Investigator  
Master's Thesis, Virginia Tech 2002

First, please tell me a little bit about your background and how you came to be involved with the band.

Approximate number of members: \_\_\_\_\_ males \_\_\_\_\_ females

How many years has the band been in existence? \_\_\_\_\_ years

In what type of venue does the band rehearse? \_\_\_\_\_

From where do you receive your financial support?

\_\_\_\_\_ college or university \_\_\_\_\_ Town Parks and Recreation Dept.

\_\_\_\_\_ completely self-sufficient \_\_\_\_\_ other (specify)

Is the band considered a non-profit organization? Does the band as a whole get paid? Explain.

What level of music does the band play? \_\_\_\_\_

How is band membership achieved? Are their fees? Auditions? Open-seating?

What are some effective ways to keep a volunteer community group alive?

How often does the band perform with other community music organizations?

Identify all the places you've played in the last year (auditoriums, churches, pub/private space, hotels).

Are you invited to play for more fundraisers now than in the past?

How have the band's concert venues changed over the years? What factors caused these venues to change?

Have you noticed changes in concert venues and attendance since September 11, 2001?

Do you feel that the local community is aware of and supports the band?

Please outline some of the major historical events in the band's history.

In your experience, not just with this band, but with community music in general, how do you think public attitude toward community music has changed over the years?

What particular genre of music or specific pieces of music does your audience seem to like?

Is there a particular piece that gives your band a regional identity?

Can you describe the community music scene in Virginia? How does your band fit into the larger community music picture?

How does the community band contribute to local and regional culture?

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### **Websites for Sampling Frame**

Association of Concert Bands- <http://www.acbands.org/>  
Community-Music Website- <http://www.boerger.org/c-m/>

## **Personal Communications**

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September 11, 2002

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Dean Wade, Conductor  
Gordon Bowie, President  
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Ed Richards, Conductor  
Ronald Dye, Conductor  
Robert Johnson, Conductor  
American Legion Community Band  
September 17, 2002

Michael Cuthbert, Conductor  
Falls Church Concert Band  
September 18, 2002

James Paschall, Conductor  
Chesapeake Bay Wind Ensemble  
September 22, 2002

Andre Paquette, Conductor  
Treg Ancelet, Asst. Conductor  
Hampton Roads Metro Band  
September 23, 2002

Guy Hayden, Conductor  
Peninsula Concert Band  
September 24, 2002

John Pickeral, Conductor  
Vienna Community Band  
Kings Park Concert Band  
September 30, 2002  
October 29, 2002

Karla Bloom, Conductor  
Hanover Concert Band  
October 1, 2002

Andreas Marx, Conductor  
European Wind Ensemble  
October 2, 2002

Cheryl Miltenberger, Conductor  
Henrico Community Band  
October 3, 2002

Andrew Paul, Conductor  
Paul Kadel, President  
Fauquier County Community Band  
October 7, 2002

Clyde Crosswell, Former Conductor  
Clarke County Community Band  
October 7, 2002

John Ford, Conductor  
Clarke County Community Band  
October 8, 2002

Mark Poland, Conductor  
Cecelia Jaquez, President  
Richmond Concert Band  
October 15, 2002

Chris Fens, Conductor  
Chesterfield Community Band  
Fredericksburg Community Concert Band  
Allyn Luce, Outgoing President  
Fredericksburg Community Concert Band  
October 16, 2002

James Simmons, Conductor  
Municipal Band of Charlottesville  
October 22, 2002

Robert Pouliot, Conductor  
Ray Abell, President  
City of Fairfax Band  
October 30, 2002

Robert Moody, Conductor  
Stonewall Brigade Band  
November 5, 2002

William Posey, Conductor  
Harrisonburg/Rockingham Community Band  
November 5, 2002

Wilbur Grant, Conductor  
Robert Leftwich, President  
Susan Schlossberg, Historian  
Roanoke Valley Community Band  
November 21, 2002

Donald Leonard, Conductor  
Varina Community Band  
November 26, 2002

William Svec, Conductor  
Wytheville Community College Concert Band  
November 29, 2002

## VITA

Sara Beth Keough was born in Tupper Lake, New York in 1976, and she grew up in the Adirondack Mountains. She attended Jacksonville University in Jacksonville, Florida, where she received a B.S. in History and a B.A. in Spanish in 2000. Sara Beth was the recipient of the Outstanding Student in History in 1999 and 2000, and upon graduation received the University Leadership Award. She completed a Master of Science degree in Geography at Virginia Tech in May 2003. Sara Beth will begin work towards a Ph.D. in Geography at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Among her many extracurricular activities, Sara Beth plays trumpet in the Blacksburg Community Band, the Old Pro's Community Jazz Band, the Sauerkraut Band, and the pit orchestra for the Blacksburg Summer Musical Enterprise. In addition, she is a distance runner, road biker, and avid hiker. Sara Beth hopes to obtain a tenure-track faculty position in an institution of higher education upon completion of her Ph.D.