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This dissertation, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the College of Graduate and Professional Studies of Abilene Christian University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

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the College of Graduate and
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Abilene Christian University
School of Educational Leadership

Leading Through Music: A Comparative Case Study
on the Effects of Military Band Performance

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Jessica A. Williams

September 2022

Dedication

To my husband, Bryan – we endured a global pandemic, several deployments, a cross country move, and job changes all during this degree, and I could not have weathered all those challenges without your love and endless support. Thank you for all the meals made without complaint, for always filling in the blanks when I was lost for words, and always being my biggest fan through it all. You are forever my cabin in the mountains – I love you!

To Doctor Stowman – when a class advisor said to reach out to someone I trusted about my topic, you were my first phone call before I started writing anything. From being your young trumpet student until now, you’ve continuously encouraged me to SAY SOMETHING through music and action. Thank you for always being a source of guidance and inspiration through the years and for reading my Chapter 1 while the Steelers were on.

To my military band friends, team leaders, first sergeants, and Army Band commanders, past and present, who have served in all branches of our country’s military. Thank you for your encouragement, inspiration, and continued dedication to the field of military music. Our military and communities are better because of people like you!

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To everyone who played a part, no matter how small, in helping me get through coursework and writing this dissertation – thank you all for answering surveys, acting as sounding boards, and always being willing to spare your precious time for me.

Finally, to the military bands who continue to make music around the world and the audiences who support them – keep the music going, keep creating experiences together, keep making the world a better, brighter, more musical place.

PRIDE. SERVICE. MUSIC.

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Abstract

This study explored the emotional impacts of military band performance, as well as the result of military band support loss on individuals in surrounding communities. The primary objectives of this qualitative comparative case study were to discover the value of military bands perceived by audiences and musicians. A critical, qualitative examination was implemented to assess how the atmospheres created by military bands influence their audiences and how communities react to reduced opportunities to interact with military band members. Community members of the 329D and TRADOC Army Bands were surveyed and interviewed in this study to compare the morale and sense of community response within each community. Drawing from an interpretivist standpoint, the symbolic interactionism theory, affect control theory, and affect heuristic were used to analyze the value of military bands in community and morale building. Narratives from this study increase the understanding of the unique relationship that exists between military bands and their various audiences. This study provides a unique insight into the social and emotional benefits of military band performance and important recommendations to multiple levels of leadership for improvement. Overall, the resulting themes reveal crucial evidence that military band support performances provide a positive impact, and that military band support loss negatively impacts communities. It is concluded that merging the interests of the government, community desires, and the military band mission may be indicative of what social-merit based factors affect morale, well-being, identity, and sense of community.

Keywords: military, musicians, music performance, music perception, music audiences, community building, symbolic interactionism theory, affect control theory, affect heuristic, identity, emotion, social merit, social support, morale, well-being

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Answering the call to support musical missions around the world, the United States military bands performed in over 38,000 military ceremonies, public concerts, and educational events for over 67 million people in 2016 (Von Ah, 2017). Access to this type of valuable community support is reduced as military band personnel, and entire ensembles are cut from government spending (Mitchell, 2016). Despite their expansive geographical coverage and substantial history of service, scholarly research neglects to highlight the value of military service branch bands, their specific contributions to their communities, and their influence on individuals in their audiences (Graham, 2004). The majority of scholarly music research focuses on general or civilian music performance, music education, or music psychology (Bannan, 2020; Koelsch, 2014; Larsen et al., 2010), resulting in a lack of attention and knowledge to the military band context and their overall social merit or their community and well-being enhancing capabilities.

What is known is that general music performance plays an essential role in community engagement and identity, social development and change, education, and the mental and emotional health of audiences worldwide (Dean, 2019; Huss et al., 2016; Marsh, 2019; Strom, 2020; Wilson & Mantie, 2017). Collaborations between musicians and audiences shape and influence individual and group growth over time (Henley et al., 2012). Various authors emphasized that personal and social musical impact spans all ages, nationalities, and races, which reinforces the importance of consistent musical interaction for individuals from all backgrounds (Barrett et al., 2010; Boer et al., 2012; Gudmundsdottir, 2017; Koelsch, 2014; McDermott et al., 2014). Despite the demonstrated flexibility of military ensembles and the emotional and recruitment benefits of military band performances, the budget of military bands

continues to draw harsh criticism from congressional representatives and anti-arts enthusiasts (Mitchell, 2016).

Background of the Problem

As congressional representatives support budgetary cuts to military bands, community engagement opportunities continue to dwindle, suggesting a disconnect between what military musicians contribute to societies at home and abroad and what American politicians know about the contributions and their benefits. From 2012 to 2017, military bands were cut by nearly 10 percent across the board, with more than half a dozen additional unit reductions in 2019, critically reducing community access to taps for veterans, musical education outreach, and military ceremony support (Frame, 2017). Therefore, this problem affects students, teachers, musicians, military personnel and their families, retirees, foreign and local dignitaries, and civilian audiences around the world. Many military band critics may not fully understand the social and emotional benefits of music performance in society (Bannan, 2020; Gooding & Langston, 2019; Oakes & North, 2008; Regelski, 2016), but the results from the following study may help emphasize the social, emotional, and political profits of military band presence in schools and at public functions. If Congress and critical journalists research and vocalize the importance of military band performances, their support may improve the perceived value of military bands and the need for their presence in various communities.

My Introduction to Army Bands and the Problem

In June of 2014, I drove through the gates of Fort Lee, Virginia as a newly trained United States Army Soldier. Following Advanced Individualized Training, I was assigned to the 392D Army Band, which boasted a heritage of musical service since its first designation in 1942 as the

Quartermaster School Band (392D Army Band, n.d.). Over the next four and a half years, I would test my skills as a Soldier, musician, entertainer, leader, and friend.

As a trumpeter in the Army Bands, a common mission involves performing Taps for both active-duty military casualties and retiree funerals. The present-day rendition of Taps was modified from the original “Extinguish Lights” call during the civil war (Villanueva, 2018). The tune is highly recognized and charged with emotion, signaling the final song for service members. In July of 2014, I performed Taps for my first military retiree funeral. I stood on the balcony of a small church and watched the family bow their heads and wipe their tears as the honor guard folded their father’s, husband’s, and grandfather’s flag and presented it to his widow. After the three volleys, signaling the moment for Taps, I sounded the call and rendered my salute. While I was packing away my trumpet, one of the retiree’s daughters climbed to the balcony and approached me with tears in her eyes. She told me how thankful she and her family were to have a live military bugler and that her father would have been so honored.

A few months later, the brass quintet I was assigned to was called to a mission in rural Virginia for a patriotic community event. Our brass ensemble was programmed between a few rock and country cover bands, so we were not expecting the crowd to be as attentive to some patriotic marches next to the billboard hits. Between each selection, we would stand up and introduce ourselves and provide some music history for the next piece. To our pleasure, the crowd was welcoming and clapped and tapped along to selections like the ever-patriotic military Service Medley, which allowed veterans to stand during their branch song and be recognized. Following the program, we mingled with the crowd to thank them for coming, shaking the veterans’ hands in the crowd. A middle-aged woman approached me and took my hand in hers;

with a lump in her throat, she told me that her son had just left for military basic training and that the music made her feel closer to him and so proud of his service.

Countless times, my brass quintet or barbershop quartet would enter retirement homes, where retired service members and sometimes their spouses would quietly shuffle into their multipurpose rooms for the “Army Band.” Within minutes, smiles would spread across faces as we played and sang familiar tunes from their time in service or their formative years. They would sing and clap along and almost always request an encore. Nursing home assistants would commonly approach us after performances and tell us how much the residents enjoyed military band performances and how much it brightened their days as well.

Every year, military bands across the country put together programs and perform for Music in Our Schools Month (Music in Our Schools Month, 2021). While preparing to perform with my brass quintet on one such mission, I sat on the edge of the stage as around 300 elementary students danced their way into the auditorium. We always played a mix of marches and popular music on a mobile sound setup while they came into the performance space to keep the excitement up. On this occasion, the first few rows of children hit me with a barrage of questions: how many pockets do you have, what instrument do you play, where are you from, is this the Army? I will never forget the little girl that ran up to hug me and proudly exclaimed, “there are girls in the Army!”

The problem is that government officials and military leaders who fail to see the value of military music never witness the interactions and appreciation between military band members and communities every day. However, I can accept that just as any person needs to experience a military band performance to know how valuable it is, that government officials also need to see and understand the science and proof behind the benefits of music to understand why military

bands are so vital to the social growth and well-being of communities, which extends far beyond a trumpet player from the now inactivated 392D Army Band.

The Problem for Education

Local youth are particularly impacted by the loss of musical support from military bands, creating barriers to music education opportunities. Myers (2006) cited an increasing percentage of music education from local symphony orchestra musicians beginning in the 1960s. Today, military musicians have the geographic advantage of reaching underserved schools and creating social opportunities for students. Henley et al. (2012) stated, “when an individual undertakes a social music-making activity they are interacting with their own cognitive processes as well as with the social environment” (p. 513). Without qualitative investigation of the interactions between military bands and school-aged students, we cannot know the benefits of maintaining and improving these relationships.

The Problem for Retirement Communities

Further, retirement communities must endure the loss of emotional and psychological-building opportunities when musical support is reduced in their areas (Gregory, 2002). Music performance teams (MPTs) from bands like the 392D Army band frequent retirement homes, where performances are often structured to evoke nostalgia and happy memories for elderly audiences. During these performances, in particular, Vuilleumier and Trost (2015) explained, “music provides a rich cognitive, sensory, and motor experience, with strong affective and motivational components” (p. 219). Further research may explain military bands’ impact on retirement home performances and the nostalgia-inducing capabilities in those settings.

The Problem for Military Personnel and Families

Military communities lose valuable resources and soft power assets without musical support provided by military ensembles (Fraser, 2010). As symbols of the American military, Army Bands are uniquely capable “to directly enhance the mission or, through morale performance, indirectly enhance the mission by rejuvenating the military personnel through music” (p. 55). The 392D Army Band supported Fort Lee and the surrounding Appomattox community before its official deactivation in October of 2019. It is important to gauge the military community’s reaction to reduced military band presence at funerals, patriotic events such as Independence Day celebrations, and other military ceremonies where military members and their families gather for support.

The Problem for Social Inclusion and Diversity

The benefits of military band presence in terms of social inclusion and diversity can be justified as two-fold. Graham (2004) supported military musicians, “send messages through quality performance and symbols, our flag and the uniform for example, to the world about democracy, diversity and excellence” (p. 35). This appeal to democracy and diversity intends to unify diverse audiences through inclusive social settings and various musical styles, employ a range of diverse musicians capable of creating cohesive, motivational teams, and serve as a recruitment tool for a more diverse military. Deepening the effect on education and social inclusivity,

[a 2019] longitudinal study following a diverse sample of over 30,000 students revealed that black students, males, those with disabilities, those in poverty, and those not yet fully proficient in English are not getting the same opportunities for exposure to the arts in public middle schools as other groups. (Peralta, 2019, p. 4)

Before its deactivation, the 392D was strategically positioned to reach these underserved populations through free and accessible public performances. Investigation of this impact may further explain the potential loss to minority and poverty-stricken populations.

The Problem for Community and Identity Development

Beyond social inclusion from a diversity standpoint, military bands seek to build community. Graham (2004) acknowledged, “musicians connect disparate peoples by establishing commonalities on an emotional level—not intellectual” (p. 35). After personally experiencing the symbolic power of military musicians to motivate, inspire, and connect with people of all ages and ethnicities, it is crucial to qualify these soft power assets’ community and identity development capabilities (Marc, 2020). On an individual level, “the most committed audience members want to be engaged, inspired, challenged, surprised, stunned, overwhelmed...they want to grow from a transformative musical experience that ignites the spirit and has a lasting emotional impact” (Collins, 2019, p. 17). People turn to music in times of need, for inspiration, and to find others who share the same group identity, such as love for country and patriotism, symbolized by military ensembles (Tolfree & Hallam, 2016). Strom (2020) argued, “arts and artists help create what has been called ‘bridging capital,’ a form of social capital that connects people across class and place lines” (p. 489). We need to know if the 392D and TRADOC Army Bands used their strategic placement to enhance individual and group identity and provided a sense of belonging and community among various audiences.

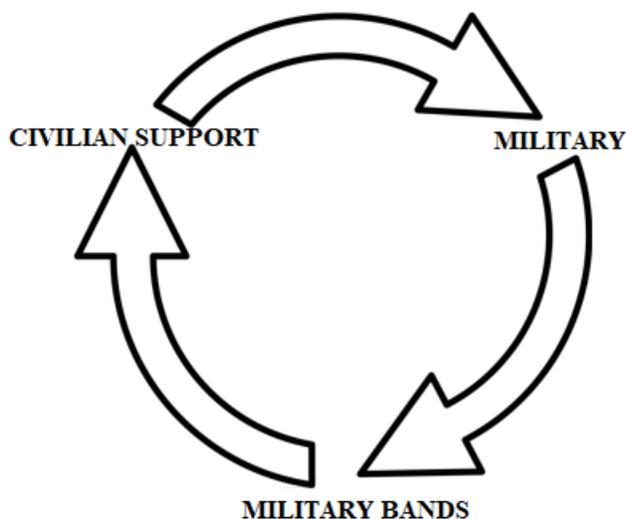
The Problem Portrayed

To further exemplify the nature of military band support and the effects of deactivation or severe reduction in support, one must understand the relationship between military bands and the communities they serve. In accordance with Army Techniques Publication 1-19 (2015), “the

mission of Army Music is to provide music supporting unified land operations and instill in our forces the will to fight and win, foster the support of our citizens, and promote America's interests at home and abroad" (p. 1-1). The proposed cycle of Army Music's mission of military force and community support is exemplified in Figure 1, demonstrating the proposed relationships within the military band support system. The idea is that the system depends on the presence and investment of each party. Without each party's contribution to the cycle of support, the remainder of the system fails.

Figure 1

Cycle of Support



The relationship goals between each of the primary parties (i.e., military, bands, and civilians) include respect, mutual goals, sustainability, shared benefits, trust and confidence, morale, and support (Fraser, 2010). Based on the previously identified problems in each affected area, I propose that this partnership seeks to reduce barriers to social equality and community safety and cohesiveness, activate community support and involvement, amplify community and military voices, build communication pathways, tell the Army story, and strategize and execute

missions for community well-being. Ultimately, civilians need their military, and the military needs a voice to promote its ongoing mission to fight and win wars. Toven (2015) explained, the Army requires the trust and confidence of the American people to remain relevant and effective; and while these things may begin as intellectual processes, they ultimately reside in the realm of emotions [and] music is a highly effective means of forging an emotional connection. (p. 2)

What happens when military bands are removed from the relationship?

Statement of the Problem

Recurrent government budgetary cuts and value speculation aimed at military bands suggest that researchers should investigate military bands' social merit to determine the value they provide within the communities they serve (Midgette, 2016; Olson, 2017; Phillips, 2016). Government entities have specifically requested additional measurements of performance results from bands and note the lack of qualifying evidence produced regarding the social impacts that military bands bring to communities (Von Ah, 2017). Concert attendance numbers and total performances required by military regulation are simple data for bandmembers to compile; however, the social benefits, defined by each community and their values, are far more time-consuming and difficult to track (Akkuş et al., 2020).

Without further research, budget cuts may continue, depriving communities of the educational, emotional, and social benefits of music performances by military bands (Lianu, 2016; Marc, 2020; McFerran et al., 2016; Mori & Iwanaga, 2017). Research has not provided a thorough understanding of the value military bands supply to communities and the military, nor the cost of deactivating them (Ray, 2016; Von Ah, 2017). Military bands aim to advance social connectedness as the United States' ambassadors by deconflicting foreign engagements, building

relationships, and connecting through human emotion (Dean, 2019; Northouse, 2016).

Researchers who formerly focused on music's broad emotional and social benefits (Bronson et al., 2018; Gudmundsdottir, 2017; Marsh, 2019; Zhang et al., 2019) inspired further study regarding emotional and social transformations following military band performances in community settings.

Comprehension of military bands' transformational, soft power capabilities (Dean, 2019) will justify their retention and enable band leaders to use personnel and performances strategically to improve communities worldwide. Fraser (2010) emphasized that band leaders benefit from requesting and analyzing perceived personnel capabilities and shortcomings to improve overall performance and community effect. Band leaders will benefit from more information about human experiences from their band personnel and audiences to make informed decisions about what to change and how to use the military band assets and more effectively explain their value in response to future accountability requests.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative comparative case study aimed to understand the value of military band performance and how the loss of band support and interaction impacts local communities. The case study investigated the experiences of those who currently live in an active military band community as well as a community that has experienced the recent loss of military band support. The study also explored the roles and experiences of military band members in the communities they serve. The research was framed to examine the social merit of military band performance, the mental and emotional effects on their audiences from military band and civilian community members' perspectives, ultimately supporting why military bands are needed in communities and why military bands should not be the first consideration in making national defense budget cuts.

Research Questions

RQ1. How do community members describe their experiences from attending and being actively engaged in military band performances?

RQ2. What are community members' perceptions of the impacts of losing military band presence and support in local communities?

RQ3. How do band members describe the experience of supporting community events as military musicians?

RQ4. What criteria are required to create meaningful military band performances that are meaningful and beneficial to military bands and their community audiences?

Definition of Key Terms

The following key term definitions used throughout the study are provided for clarity and deeper understanding. Each term here represents the way each adds to the study.

Affect control theory. A theory introduced by Heise (1987) that quantitatively defines individual meaning and identity in social situations. Beyond the mathematical framework this theory provides, the founders of the theory produced dictionaries in multiple languages that measure the definitive emotional meaning of words around the world.

Affect heuristic. A method for surveying, judging, or characterizing the value of processes, symbols, and experiences (Slovic et al., 2005). Also, an automatic, intrinsic process for individual decision making (Spence & Townsend, 2008).

Audience. Audience refers to any individual or group of people witnessing military band performances, both as active and passive listeners.

Band member. Refers to active, veteran, or retired status Army Band personnel, specifically.

Civilian community member. Refers to community members not currently in a military status and those who have not served in an Army Band associated with the study.

Community engagement. Refers to both case study focus areas: Fort Lee and its surrounding area and Fort Eustis and its surrounding area. It also refers to the act of building cohesiveness between groups and a sense of belonging through musical activities and participation.

Community member. Any person residing within the community of the case studies. “Community members” in the research questions refers collectively to band members and civilian community members.

Community music. Musical activities and performances characterized by equal opportunity and inclusivity, referred to as “music-making with social goals” (Ansio et al., 2017, p. 4). Rimmer (2015) lists prime locations for community music, “community centers, prisons and retirement homes; extracurricular projects for school children and youth; public music schools; community bands, orchestras and choirs; musical projects with asylum seekers; marching bands for street children” (p. 182).

Military bands (Army bands). Military bands refer to all branches of service bands, including Air Force, Coast Guard, Navy, Marines, and Army bands. Though Army bands are the focus of this study, advocacy of military bands includes all branches.

Mission. Mission refers to the overall mission to support military forces, citizens, and America’s overall interests (Army Techniques Publication 1-19, 2015). Mission also refers to individual music tasks or assignments for bands as a whole or small MPTs. For example, the process of coordinating, programming, and supporting a military retirement is defined as an MPT mission.

Morale. Morale is a common theme in military music history and research, often used as “boosting morale” (Jones, 2015; Rourke, 1996; Schuette & Armstrong, 2019) when discussing the emotional, physical, and psychological well-being of Soldiers during conflict or upon homecoming.

Music Performance Team (MPT). Also, Music Performance Unit (MPU) – the Army-specific term for a small, mobile music ensemble within the Army bands, like a brass quintet or jazz combo, versus a large concert ensemble that executes missions or performances.

Perception. From a performer standpoint, perception is the attention paid to audience response (clapping, tapping, inattention) to the performance. From an audience standpoint, perception is the attention paid to the performance and performer efforts, including aural, visual, emotional cues.

Social merit. Based on the term, “social profit” (Grant, 2015), or “desired social benefits...defined locally depending on what a community of people values and what they need” (p. 2).

Social support. In this study, social support refers to military bands’ musical and emotional support through interaction, performance, and service.

Structured performance. Also tailored performance; a term for programming a musical setlist to fit the style, demographic, and requests of known audiences.

Symbolic interactionism theory. Blumer (1969) coined a theory that determines how individuals assign meaning to other people or things based on the interaction with the object itself, and experiences with others while interacting with the object.

Chapter Summary

Military bands experience significant scrutiny, resulting in adverse conditions for their communities, such as reduced educational, retirement, and military community support. Reducing military band support compounds the issues already present from music program cuts and the marginalization of low-income communities. The barriers to this kind of symbolic support reduces the military's capability to reach audiences with the type of social and emotional experiences available. While military ensembles like the 392D Army Band will continue to be targeted by government budget decisions without community input, the bands that remain must continue to display the adaptability and flexibility necessary to remain relevant through worldwide social issues such as revolving changes in musical taste (Bryson, 1996) and current events like a global pandemic (King, 2020; Raddatz, 2021; U.S. Army, 2020).

Budget cuts to military bands have proven that audience counts are not enough to measure military music's reach and musical affect. Grant (2015) acknowledged, "feelings of belonging, pride in citizenship, confidence in the future, a general sense of well-being-requires soft measurements. That real question is whether those measurements can help us achieve what we care about" (p. 21). Where limited research falls short regarding these interactions between the military, military bands, and civilians and relationship factors of trust, confidence, well-being, and morale, there is a clear need for further study of this topic impacting a wide range of people. This lack of research is significantly apparent in communities that have recently lost military band support, such as Fort Lee, Virginia. This study was conducted to address the severe lack of existing research regarding this problem, and because of the potential positive impact that further research may have on the morale and well-being of audiences and military band personnel.

The following literature review summarizes the musical literature, both symbolic and affective, and outlines the psychological theories pertaining to emotion and perception concerning music listening. The literature review has two essential goals. My first goal is to provide a quality theoretical framework that will introduce methods for analyzing data following qualitative research in the case study. The study of symbolism and affect in military band performance is virtually unexplored. The literature review investigates the theories, psychological science, and quality of interactional relationships from this form of community music. Specifically, I examined the concept of military bands as symbols of a larger military entity and the potential impact on audiences.

Additionally, I reviewed the premise of military band performances as contributors to audience “affect pools,” which inform their past, present, and future perceptions of military bands as symbols (Spence & Townsend, 2008). The second goal of the review was designed to explain the overall scientific and psychological implications of music performance, which informs the more specific, understudied impact of military bands. In summary, military and music scholars should consider an enhanced focus on the role of symbolism, emotions, and affect to develop reliable models for structured performance and analysis.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this qualitative comparative case study is to understand how the loss of military band support impacts local communities. The problem is that military bands continue to be the target of government spending cuts. At the same time, so much remains unknown regarding the impacts of military band support loss in civilian and military communities. Very little scholarly research focuses on the scientific impacts of military bands and their social value. Therefore, creating a theoretical framework requires merging the themes of community music and identity, music education and psychology, and performance and sociology to continue the exploration of military band roles as community developers, morale builders, and symbolic liaisons.

The limited knowledge regarding the social merit of military bands rests in the repeated focus on quantitative data, or audience counts and missions executed (Von Ah, 2017), which drives the need to examine the interactions and relationships between bands and their communities. Some of the key elements this research focuses on include the strategies derived from military bands that promote morale, well-being, and a sense of community belonging through social inclusion and group identity.

Literature Search Methods

The concepts of interaction and identity serve as two significant focuses, prompting the resourcing of studies on affect control theory and symbolic interactionism theory. This focus supports the subsequent analysis of audience and musician interactions and attention to the criteria and programming to promote community development and belonging. Keyword phrase searches were conducted through Google Scholar and Abilene Christian University using filters for peer-reviewed journals to initiate the review of existing research. Examples of search phrases

include, but are not limited to, *military bands (music)*, *music and morale*, *music in communities*, *music and belonging*, *music and well-being*, *music and emotion*, *music and symbols*, and *music and communication*. Multiple reference sections within articles were used as additional resources for finding relevant literature. Because the scholarly research on military bands is so limited, I rationalized that it was appropriate and necessary to include a small number of news articles that demonstrate both supportive and oppositional perspectives from social value and budgetary standpoints. Social media, primarily Facebook, was also used to research military band history, performances, educational outreach, and social support efforts that would also be relevant to the study.

An important part of understanding how the broader field of research in music performance and community affects military music and its audiences involves understanding military music history and its historic contributions to the military and community music up to today. As military bands have made similar significant contributions to the military and their communities throughout history, it is appropriate to begin with the broader literature review of military bands before connecting with my communities of focus in the comparative study. Therefore, the literature review opens with a theoretical framework involving affect control and symbolic interactionism theories. The review moves into a general overview of the emotional and social impacts of music performance on various social settings, including schools and retirement homes, followed by a summarization of what is known about military bands, their challenges, and their social contributions to various communities throughout a brief analysis. Finally, I focus on music's impact on social morale and community, tying in military music's service as a social and psychological support system.

Theoretical Framework

This investigation focuses on the interactions between military bands and their audiences and the resulting relationships following performance engagements. In particular, this study is concerned with the role of military bands as a symbolic, patriotic support system and liaison between the rest of the military and civilian audiences as they contribute to the social well-being and morale of their communities (Gooding & Langston, 2019). As reductions in military band support continue, this lack of support will adversely impact the surrounding communities. Reduced military band support in emotional, educational, and social settings may be causing developmental impediments that are yet to be discovered (Begbie, 2017; Bensimon, 2020; Freeland, 2018; Srivastava & Guin, 2021).

A vast majority of research on music and the mind theorizes that music intervention stimulates beneficial effects, including behavioral, social, and psychological (Gudmundsdottir, 2017; McDermott et al., 2014; North et al., 2000; Shields, 2001; Taruffi & Küssner, 2019). Military bands strive to create emotional and symbolic connections between the music they perform, their audiences' lives and beliefs, the country's cultural values, and the sacrifices that the military makes serving the United States' interests (Army Techniques Publication 1-19, 2015; Toven, 2015).

The value of morale-building, symbolizing, and contributing to a cultural belief system, and appealing to human emotion and identity remain among the most critical factors for defending the social merit of military bands (Davis, 2020; Gleason, 2015; Rikard, 2004; Rourke, 1996; Schuette & Armstrong, 2019; Sullivan, 2007). In general, music listening has been found to "promote emotional self-regulation and offer...resources for increasing and restoring well-being" (Sheltzer & Consoli, 2019, p. 1336). Additionally, music listening aids in developing self

and group uniformity, serving “as symbolic ‘possessions’ and badges of identity” (Leaver & Schmidt, 2010, p. 109). In order to present the context that unites military bands and audiences, I have collected resources that cover the history of bands supporting communities, as well as the theories that explain the draw to music as emotional, educational, and social support.

I propose that affect control theory and symbolic interactionism theory offer unique perspectives regarding the influence of military band performances today. These theories establish the social foundation present in the interactions involved in the study. The literature review attempts to support the evidence that audiences who encounter military ensembles executing their mission (Army Techniques Publication 1-19, 2015) are more likely to experience more tightly-knit communities, a sense of belonging, and feelings of increased morale and well-being. In the following theoretical and historical overview of research, I define the impacts of general, community, and military-based music from undertheorized theoretical perspectives to support my study.

Introduction to Affect Control Theory

Interactions are affected by what people perceive based on their established attitudes, identities, and the meanings they bring from social experiences, defined as affective control theory by David Heise (1987). Counter to its qualitative, or “soft measurement” sister theory of symbolic interactionism (Stryker, 1987), affective control theory mathematically represents meaning through three primary factors, evaluation, potency, and activity (Schröder & Scholl, 2009), which determine “how perceptions, fundamental meanings, transient impressions and social behavior are interrelated” (Smith-Lovin, 1987, p. 172). Music often evokes meaning and emotion at individual and group levels depending on the activity and experiential history of the audience (Tolbert, 2001). While affect control theory supports that people intentionally search

for social situations that reaffirm their emotions and identity (Shank & Lulham, 2016), it would be beneficial to learn how affect control theory drives audiences toward military bands that symbolize their identities, such as patriots, veterans, military supporters, and civilian community members.

Affect control theory research attempts to supplement the “unscientific” findings of symbolic interactionism theory by mapping and quantifying the emotional reactions to social situations (Stryker, 1987). Stryker (1987) concluded, “humans organize their behavior to resolve problematic situations...by defining those situations, specifying who they are in the situations, who others are and the nature of themselves” (p. 90). This defining process relies on social cues like how music intends to make audiences feel a certain way and how audiences self-identify in performance situations as spectators, learners, and participants.

Personal identity affects how individuals and groups perceive internal and external emotional events and their sense of emotional belonging (Trepte & Loy, 2017). Leaver and Schmidt (2010) supported an earlier notion of “the role of music as a resource for the symbolic construction of both self-identity and social identity” (p. 109). Together, Henri Tajfel and John Turner developed “principles governing the categorization of everyday objects...to explain the categorization of people, including oneself, into social groupings” (Huddy, 2001, p. 132). The development of these models brings attention to the growing social and personal identity issues in the United States, focusing on interpersonal interaction initially thought to be rare by Tajfel and Turner (Hornsey, 2008). While social identity primarily focuses on belonging to a specific group, personal identity and self-categorization are less about identifying as a group member and more about an individual’s behavior within that identity (Trepte & Loy, 2017). In affect control theory, emotions and attitudes modify the identities of those involved in various interactions

(Shank & Lulham, 2016). Heise (1987) stated, “the meaning of an event is determined by the identities of the people engaged in it, and we can change the event and its likelihood by changing the identities” (p. 13). Additional research needs to be conducted at a scholarly level to determine the application of affect control theory in music performance settings and the justification of retaining military bands in budget constraints.

Many models of affect control theory outline ordinary social interactions or settings describing the way people associate themselves and their actions within everyday activities, but few if any focus on the association of music with the universal measurements of emotion, potency, and activity as defined by Heise (1987). This case study intends to qualify how military bands socially manipulate their communities. While the quantitative model of affect control theory measures reactions to emotion-invoking statements like “the man attacked the woman” (Wiggins & Heise, 1987), the case study will focus on the attitudes and emotions resulting from performance and events such as “the bugler performed for the fallen Soldier.” Wiggins and Heise (1987) contended that “according to affect control theory, social events are constructed to generate transient impressions which confirm fundamental social attitudes” (p. 156). In fact, many musical performances, especially in military ensembles, are programmed to construct certain social attitudes because music appeals to the emotions and plays a role in establishing individual and group identity (Army Techniques Publication 1-19, 2015). Toven (2015) stated, “both trust and support imply emotional involvement-people *feel* trust and choose to support things to which they feel emotionally connected” (p. 17). Discussing the emotion, potency, and activity of military band performances with audience, ensemble, and community members via affect control theory may clarify their meaning regarding musical selections, their communities, and military band support in general.

Based on this approach, I propose a framework for assessing the effect of military band performance on communities. First, it must be reiterated that music is foundational to human experience from birth to death, and “serves as a foundation for group belonging” (Regelski, 2016, p. 18). In children, music creates safe spaces and advanced learning opportunities, enables them to discover social relationships, and encourages engagement of the body and mind (Bensimon, 2020; Gudmundsdottir, 2017; North et al., 2000). Musical experience benefits extend from young children and adolescents into adulthood, where research has intervened between elderly patients and cognitive impairments (Gregory, 2002). These common, foundational experiences form the basis of affect control theory, allowing people to establish meaning and make judgments based on social interactions (Heise, 1987).

Second, it is helpful to understand why individuals of all ages, backgrounds, identities, and cultures are driven to musical experiences as a form of expression, communication, and emotional home base. Moxley et al. (2012) stated, “the arts and humanities offer people an avenue for appreciating the world around them, and specific aspects of that world” (p. 703). Affect control theory allows people to translate the potential appreciation and perspectives of their world into meaningful patterns and resources for future cognitive callback (Smith-Lovin, 1987). This process is just as valid for young children as it is for retirees and a wide range of personalities and professions. More importantly, just as affect control theory invests in quantifying the emotional perceptions of individuals in everyday life, the arts, and military music, in this case, are evidenced to serve as the pulse that brings emotional meaning to everyday communal and social activities (Wilson & Mantie, 2017).

Finally, it is essential to understand how to use programming and outreach strategies from a musical performance perspective to facilitate community engagement and enhancement.

Further research will help determine if military bands are uniquely equipped to serve as interventionists in communities, using the arts to build cohesiveness and resilience (Huss et al., 2016). To accomplish their mission, “musicians should be prepared to adapt music-making, creating, and listening strategies for participants representing diverse age groups, musical backgrounds, and levels of interest” (Myers, 2006, p. 81). This level of preparedness ensures the military bands may continue to be effective in various environments and encourage positive change. Of note, Strom (2020) defended that “arts and cultural projects have been viewed as potential catalysts for regional and urban regeneration in the face of structural economic changes and growing spatial inequality” (p. 475). Affect control and symbolic interactionism theories are particularly concerned with where social interactions take place to determine how the structures of communities impact emotional responses (Stryker, 1987). Therefore, the case study must also consider audience members’ perceptions that create potential meaning following public performances and social interactions.

Introduction to Symbolic Interactionism Theory

Harold Blumer (1969) is known for introducing the field of sociology to the term known as symbolic interactionism, inspired by the research of George Herbert Mead, who founded the perspective of meaning and interactions between individuals and groups. Mead discussed that a significant symbol is an action or gesture, that “arouses the same response in the individual who makes it that it arouses in others” (McPhail & Rexroat, 1979, p. 458). Much of the early research regarding symbolic interactionism focuses on developing the focus and structure of the theory, which argues that “society is created and maintained through repeated interactions among individuals” (Carter & Fuller, 2016, p. 932). Stryker (2008) suggested that just as individuals and groups are influenced by society, society is influenced by the interactions between individuals

and groups in a constant cycle of symbols and interpretation, as outlined in Figure 1, Cycle of Support in Chapter 1. This continuous cycle of action and interpretation between the layers of society led some researchers to focus on the creative factors of human activity and their interactions (Wiśniewski & Bukalska, 2020). Though researchers like Blumer initiated strong arguments regarding the symbolic interactionism perspective, a significant decline and opposition to the theory, driven by a negative view of the soft research methods, was put into motion until a revival of the theory in the 1980s (Stryker, 1987). In this way, the research regarding military bands and symbolic interactionism reached a confluence regarding their soft power or emotional focuses (Grant, 2015; Marc, 2020; Phillips, 2016; Stryker, 1987). Additional research is needed at a scholarly level to understand the applicability of symbolic interactionism and the cultural structures created by human interaction during military band performances.

In addition to social interactions between people, groups and individuals regularly participate in and benefit from symbolic interactions with musical experiences (Holyfield et al., 2013). Upon interacting with musical and emotional patterns, an audience member “manipulates and translates these objective elements as symbols to solve the problem of organizing his own emotional life into the pattern of the composer’s” (Akeley, 1934, p. 676). Military ensembles are uniquely structured with various small ensembles capable of supporting a wide array of musical tastes, executing the stylistic and symbolic intentions of many composers, and ultimately evoking emotions from their audiences based on the meaning they bring to the performance (Toven, 2015). Akeley’s (1934) research suggests that not only do military bands symbolize and support the greater military as an organization, but community music such as military performances help audiences symbolize their patriotism and how they feel about their communities and country (Davis, 2020). Davis (2020) continued, “patriotism requires a locus of

identity, something toward which a community's loyalty can be directed and sustained" (p. 381). In this case, military ensembles serve as the locus, bringing together individuals and groups with varying identities searching for a common bond.

As with affect control theory, symbolic interactionism also focuses on creating and finding meaning in interactions (Blumer, 1969). This case study is focused on finding how military ensembles create meaning through social interactions with audiences, aiding them in finding meaning and heightened emotional experiences for themselves. As symbols of larger military organizations, patriotism, and strength, I propose that military bands can bring additional meaning to music and their audiences because of what they represent. Bychkov (2012) contended:

As a whole, symbolization can be understood as a dialectic-dialogic process of creativity and co-creative perception, at whose center stands the artistic symbol, and through it shines the profound meaning of the symbolized entity, which itself acquires full actualization only in the artistic symbol. (p. 65)

However, Snow (2001) cautioned that researchers must be attentive regarding symbolization to avoid assumptions that the symbolization of any individual, group, or organization is concrete, as opinions and meanings are always changing depending on experiences and decision-making. Therefore, I plan to qualitatively plot the emotion-based perceptions of community members and military band members according to the affect heuristic, which proposes:

Images (which may be perceptual or symbolic representations) within the mind are tagged to varying degrees with positive and negative affective feelings and these are used to guide judgments and decision making, particularly when decision making is carried out spontaneously or with limited cognitive resources. (Spence & Townsend, 2008, p. 84)

Since the affect heuristic occurs spontaneously, it should help measure responses and stored images related to past performances and spontaneous interactions between band members and their audiences. Slovic et al. (2005) supported that these responses and images are cognitively retained in an “affect pool” by individuals witnessing a particular interaction or performance, and that each relates to a positive or negative emotional feeling. The case study intends to discover how people positively or negatively categorize military band performances in their cognitive storage, and ultimately determine whether these communities recognize the social value of the support.

Summary of Theories

Based on this proposed framework, the case study should be effective in discovering the opinions and needs of community audience members and strategies for developing more effective community support systems through military band performance. Affect control theory suggests that people act based on the meaning or value they assign to certain interactions, groups, and symbols (Rogalin et al., 2007). The future of military bands is highly dependent on the value audiences assign to them and their ability to evoke emotions from the public during performances. Affect control theory will assist in identifying the meaning and value that audience and military band members (past and present) assign to military ensembles.

Audiences of all ages often seek the meaning in music to find happiness, a sense of belonging, and determine their identity (Vaillancourt, 2012). Affect control and symbolic interactionism theories help individuals (often unknowingly) create systems or arrangements of understanding and meaning for their lives (Behr, 2009). While personal characteristics and attitudes play a critical role in assigning meaning to social interactions, symbolization and external affect, especially in musical settings, encourage the constant need for meaning,

understanding, and identity reevaluation (Garrido & Macritchie, 2020). Affect control and symbolic interactionism theories support this study because they contend that social interaction and continuous meaning-making may contribute to individual and community identity and cohesion development. While there are still individuals and groups that use musical meaning and taste as symbolic boundaries to maintain in and out-groups (Bryson, 1996), music in general still possesses the ability to break down walls, open lines of communication, and encourage more social and cultural understanding.

The Value of Music in Society

Before speaking to the social meaning and effects of military band performance, it is vital to define the overall value of social music activities, including public performance and education in society, which will ultimately inform the unique merit of military bands. Outside the military music genre, some believe “music is used as a social glue to boost...morale, foster a sense of engagement and create a message of hope” (Sutu & O’Brien, 2021, p. 308). Music, as with other forms of art, contributes to community planning and development (Wilson & Mantie, 2017), enhances the psychological well-being of citizens of all ages (Clennon & Boehm, 2014; Paton, 2011), and provides creative outlets for educational engagement and social expression (Boer et al., 2012; Kasinitz & Martiniello, 2019). Marsh (2019) proposed:

Music is the language through which we explore, question, and challenge the way things are, and imagine how things could be. We understand music to be a physical, social, emotional and political force, capable of shaping our attitudes and behaviors and propelling change in and between our communities. (p. 303)

Ultimately, outlets like music and the arts represent symbols, which individuals and groups link to experience and continue to pursue for pleasure, happiness, and emotional belonging. Mori and Iwanaga (2017) stated,

art, including music, is not necessary for survival...but enough people have sought art through all of the ages and over the whole world. The function of chills and tears may be one reason why people need music and other art. (p. 8)

An understanding of why individuals and communities use music as an outlet for the daily demands in their lives may support why the additional symbolic nature of military bands elicit a unique draw for their audiences and provide a valuable resource not available elsewhere.

Community Development and Music

Community development often sounds like infrastructure, buildings, and economics when it involves so much more regarding people and their psychological needs. Community and people development require trust and socialization, volunteering and lending a hand, and prioritizing education and child development (Putnam, 2000). Where Grant (2015) describes the receipt of these prioritized benefits as social profit, Kivijärvi and Poutiainen (2020) and Putnam (2000) defined the development as social capital. Further, Kivijärvi and Poutiainen (2020) suggested, “music and music-making can work as an instrument and channel through which social capital could be developed, expressed, and established” (p. 348). Alternatively, Caló et al. (2020) argued “the evidence regarding processes associated with the impact of community-based music interventions remains unclear” (p. 989). Therefore, it is important to explore additional music-based community interactions, such as military band performances, to investigate the proposed potential impacts and benefits.

Connectedness and other social capital goals must extend beyond financial constraints to develop communities that benefit from programs and activities with social merit, including improved educational opportunities and prioritization of the arts (Grant, 2015). Cronenberg (2020) discussed the importance of music education and listening opportunities in identity development and social interaction. Beyond the benefits of marching band practice and choir rehearsal, “adolescents mainly use music to satisfy a range of emotional needs and desires” (Tolfree & Hallam, 2016, p. 48). Merit-based music activities are not limited to adolescents. Olson (2005) explained:

Music...has the potential for “teaching” adults in four ways: fostering self-identity, physical or emotional therapy, awakening consciousness and spiritual connections that cannot be achieved otherwise, and forging connections to past experiences and cultural heritage. (p. 57)

Moreover, education is not limited to singing or instrumental lessons, but involves developing self, expanding understanding, and connecting to history through common experiences (Bradley, 2021). Hess and Bradley (2020) reasoned that “in encountering the aesthetic [music, drama, and visual arts]...an individual brings past experiences to new encounters as transformation of energy into thoughtful action that assimilates meanings from past experiences” (p. 436).

MacLean (2019) discussed the popularity among music educators and their supporters of engaging with community music as educational experiences for all; however, she also pointed out that not nearly enough scholarly research has taken place to analyze the real outcomes of these engagements.

Communities and the relationships within them thrive on shared feelings, events, and actions (Hall et al., 2018). After September 11, 2001, the United States came together after a

horrific shared event, where music spoke and brought communities comfort when public figures and leaders could not (Meacham & McGraw, 2019). Most people can vividly describe a moment where they have experienced music with a group that made them feel closer to everyone in that socialization moment. Bradshaw and Shankar (2008) charged:

Music is a rich and complex symbolic, social, and political product that emerges as a sort of magical domain that can captivate audiences, provide cathartic and embodied experiences, and ground identities and communities, but also introduce us to rich exchanges between peoples while somehow both reifying and subverting power structures. (p. 225)

Bringing communities together in shared emotional experiences is a common theme throughout music history (Salmela, 2012; Trigg, 2020; Ziv, 2009). Further research in audience and musician experiences could establish that military music is a cornerstone of these shared and ultimately developmental efforts.

Negative social impacts have been proven to be mitigated by the presence of the arts, specifically music, in communities (Coyle, 2018; Florida, 2005). Overall, communities invested in music maintain more meaningful peacebuilding initiatives (Henley et al., 2012; Marsh, 2019; Wilson & Mantie, 2017), including reducing crime and engaging in diplomatic strategy with local and foreign governments. Vuilleumier and Trost (2015) observed:

Researchers have proposed that nine main affective states are commonly elicited by music across different music genres and different Western populations. These emotion categories include emotions investigated in other domains, such as joy and sadness, but also other categories that might be more specific to music such as wonder, tenderness, nostalgia, tension, power, peacefulness, or transcendence. (p. 213)

Dean (2019) noted that music promotes peace through its ability to “cut across differences” and rebuild relationships torn by violence, war, and other conflict. He stated, “music, through its ability to develop connections between conflicting parties, restores these relationships and can create positive social interdependence, which allows for more effective forms of governance” (p. 307). Meyer and Fourie (2019) suggested that peace is a component of the worldview of human flourishing and that music aids communities in overcoming the pain associated with violence in their lives. However, Sandoval (2016) countered, “there is a widespread intuitive sense that music should be able to contribute to peace, but the scholarship in this area, for a range of legitimate reasons, offers mixed assessment of this notion, at best” (p. 267). Kent (2008) clarified, “music is peaceful or unpeaceful not because of the inherent character of the music itself, but because of the way it is used” (p. 112). In a study, Lianu (2016) cited a multitude of occurrences between the 1940s and 2013 where music was used as a soft power tool to bolster peace and connection across continents and religious ideals. Research demonstrates that music may continue to serve as a tool to bring peace in difficult social situations for years to come.

Putnam (2000) argued that children and their educational experiences are significantly impacted by reduced activities that provide social merit and community involvement, such as music and the arts. Researchers have concluded that activities like after school music programs support not only improved academics but social and relationship skills as well, which enhances communities overall (Clennon & Boehm, 2014). Sheltzer and Consoli (2019) asserted:

With respect to after-school programs focused on music, researchers have linked music participation among the youth to higher rates of college enrollment and achievement, improved grades, and increased school and civic engagement, when compared with those not involved in music. (p. 1366)

However, Sheltzer and Consoli (2019) admitted that further scholarly research is needed to determine the methods and outcomes of emotional and educational benefits in adolescents and young children. From the 1960s to the 1980s, local orchestral musicians began “supporting school programs with a broader commitment to community service, which generally involves advancing a wide range of interactions between practicing musicians and increasingly diverse segments of the community” (Myers, 2006, p. 81). Myers (2006) defended that this type of community engagement was implemented to instill communal accountability into young musicians who would ultimately return the favor of enhancing social well-being when they became the next generation of orchestral musicians. This study proposes that military musicians are the present-day musicians who represent public accountability and commitment to community well-being.

Communities that remain active in musical outreach reap benefits that stretch far beyond childhood to influence adults who feel disconnected from their communities without opportunities, such as military band performances, which provide opportunities to engage, connect, and share in common experiences (Grant, 2015; Putnam, 2000). Left unchecked, the reduction in musical opportunities dramatically reduces creative motivation in communities, impacting aspects of diversity, inclusion, and economic factors (Florida, 2005). Camlin et al. (2020) discussed the general impact of music on communities regarding mental health, social achievement, and relationships. Still, additional qualitative research is needed to capture the unique social and emotional influence of military band performances.

Music Psychology, Emotion, and Meaning

Psychology and Emotion. The psychological impacts of music performance are two-fold, focused on the emotional and educational experiences of both the audience and the

performer (Kania, 2017). As affect control theory determines how people feel and act (Heise, 1987), general music listening is an activity where people make continuous decisions based on how they feel and what they prefer during the activity (Anglada-Tort et al., 2019). Levitin (2006) stated, “when we love a piece of music, it reminds us of other music we have heard, and it activates memory traces of emotional times in our lives. Your brain on music is all about ... connections” (p. 192). Music is just as much a psychological, emotional event as a physical, auditory event, which creates disagreement among music researchers regarding where emotional meaning in music derives (Tolbert, 2001). Hodder (2016) stated:

Emotions are experienced with greater or lesser intensity; they have no clear location in the body; an emotion does not have to be made manifest but when it is, the same emotion can show itself in many different ways; emotions may be unfounded; they can be judged as desirable or undesirable; they are often mixed; and they have no clear boundaries. (p. 426)

Thus, defining emotion and measuring subjective emotional response to musical performance presents a significant challenge, especially considering the subject’s lack of consensus among theorists (Hodder, 2016). Even so, this case study is particularly interested in the potential emotional reactions from audience members involving the symbolic nature of military ensembles and what they represent through their stature, programming, and performance.

Well-Being and Morale. An additional aspect of the psychological impacts of music includes well-being and morale, which are two popular focuses of historical and modern musical performance. Paton (2011) contended that the historical success of music performance is judged by the performers’ ability to increase audience well-being on emotional, mental, physical, and social levels. Sutu and O’Brien (2021) stated, “studies demonstrate a role for music in mitigating

psychological burnout and orchestrating well-being” (p. 208). The challenge in promoting well-being from a performer standpoint involves knowing how to serve the various audiences most effectively that any ensemble may encounter, including students with and without special needs (McFerran et al., 2016). Implemented thoughtfully and effectively, musicians have the opportunity to enhance social merit and social inclusion on multiple levels (Putnam, 2000). Kivijärvi and Poutiainen (2020) contended, “there is a growing body of evidence that confirms that social capital is connected to subjective well-being through social cohesion, which refers to shared norms of reciprocity, trust, and cooperation” (p. 350). The potential for increasing these shared norms may strategically assist military ensembles as symbols of the larger military.

Enhancing individual and community well-being involves finding ways to build up morale. Though a wide range of music and morale research relates to ensembles engaged in active duty troop morale (Fraser, 2010; Gooding & Langston, 2019; Jones, 2015; Lefferts, 2016; Rourke, 1996; Schuette & Armstrong, 2019; Sullivan, 2007), civilian and general community morale is just as essential in regards to music’s social value. Sutu and O’Brien (2021) supported that music is a primary resource for boosting morale, hope, and even patient care, especially during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 global pandemic. Faraj et al. (2014) conducted a music listening study in a medical environment, which demonstrated that music “improves the morale of most staff, as 66% enjoyed their work more when music was played” (p. 201). However, the same study found that a little over a quarter of medical staff believe music can be distracting in the wrong circumstances (Faraj et al., 2014). Krehbiel (2006) advocated that enhanced morale in educational settings, such as middle school choir, reduces discipline issues in the classroom. Ultimately, morale is still an underresearched concept and serves as a primary focus for qualitative data in this study.

Meaning. As with emotion, meaning presents an equally difficult challenge in reaching a consensus on definition and definitively describing what musical meaning *means* to audiences and performers. OlteȚeanu (2012) posited, “music’s ‘meaning’ may lie in the fact that we cannot say in words what it means: music can itself become a signifier in a way that words cannot” (p. 257). These musical signifiers also possess subjective meanings for many individuals, purportedly capable of emotionally transporting them to another time or another frame of mind. Even without words or specific associations, music communicates meaning in ways that are increasingly researched for use in therapy and education (Yehuda, 2011). Still, musical meaning lies deeper than researchers are able to discover; just as one layer is peeled back, another reveals itself.

Musical taste and music listening habits will continue to evolve as they have for the last century (Meacham & McGraw, 2019). From elementary school, through adulthood, and into old age, music serves various unique purposes and meanings for every age in life (Bannan, 2020). Jourdain (1997) reported that some musicologists deny the presence of any real meaning in music but supported that musical taste is a justification for what type of music people prescribe to themselves to fit the mood and meaning of their lives. While musical “meaning” is extraordinarily vague and always exists at an individual level, it encompasses overall audience behavior and the continued draw to specific genres and performances (Copland et al., 2011). Some would attribute meaning to music as a physical or emotional response, such as hair raising on the neck or crying (Mori & Iwanaga, 2017). Copland et al. (2011) stated that all music has meaning, but clearly identifying the meaning is challenging, which explains why measuring the value of military band performance is so difficult. Measuring meaning is equally as challenging as measuring the emotion of a performance, which is slightly more recognizable in physical

responses (i.e., crying or laughing; Day & Thompson, 2019). These phenomenological responses to music are common and increasingly popular in music-based research in communities, therapy, and education. The planned qualitative case study would seek data regarding audience perspectives of military band performances meaning in their lives and memorable emotional responses to those performances.

Music Education

Music Education for Children and Adolescents. Research has indicated that music's emotional value and meaning begin in very early stages (Tolfree & Hallam, 2016), which engages people to regulate their emotions in various situations stemming from musical experiences. A common theme in the necessity of music education from a young age involves satisfying emotional needs and harnessing creative tendencies for problem-solving in various professions, cultures, and relationships throughout life (Bannan, 2020; Cronenberg, 2020; Gudmundsdottir, 2017; Lorenzon, 2021; North et al., 2000). Shields (2001) argued that the emotional sensitivity learning gained from music performance and listening for urban children is particularly potent and impactful for addressing social competencies. Despite the research that cites the overall benefits of music education, political and educational reform continues to drive out music from schools and communities (Aróstegui, 2016).

In addition to the emotional and psychological benefits of musical activities for children, music education provides opportunities for physical movement and motor response exercises, encouraging listeners to move in time with musical selections (Vuilleumier & Trost, 2015). Park et al. (2019) described the following movement tendencies in listeners:

Motor reactions to music have been largely attributed to the rhythmic features of music.

For instance, hearing a groove laid by a drummer often engenders foot-stomping, head-

bobbing, hand-tapping, and other observable behaviors. The periodicity of rhythmic sound makes the subsequent beat predictable, so listeners spontaneously or deliberately synchronize their movements to the beat without much effort. (p. 54)

Conversely, Park et al. (2019) explained that even though music inspires movement, it does not definitively mean that the movement improves motor issues. Thus, further exploration would be helpful to discover if military bands inspire healthy emotional responses and movement in children during educational performances.

Music Education for Adults and Elderly. Musical educational opportunities are not (and should not be) unique to children and adolescents. Previous phenomenological research indicates that, in general, music evokes meaningful memories for those in the senior age category (McDermott et al., 2014). Bowles (2010) contended that music listening and learning experiences in older adults are just as essential to maintaining meaningful social interactions, mental health, and intrinsic motivation as young adults and children. Providing meaningful musical performances for senior populations can be viewed as a form of healthcare afforded to an often-marginalized group (Wakeling & Clark, 2015). Research suggests that music may serve as an intervention strategy for older adults with cognitive issues (Gregory, 2002), proving that music transcends aesthetics and understanding. Saarikallio (2011) proposed that the importance of musical interaction in older communities extends to the ability to regulate emotions, combat loneliness, and build a sense of self-understanding. More often than not, most audience members seek music simply for more enjoyment and beauty. Additional research may help us understand if older communities experience more than entertainment.

When thinking of nostalgia in relation to music listening, one's thoughts may focus on the older generations reflecting on good times in their lives. This is because "personal nostalgia

tends to return to these [teenage] years...and the songs and musical works that adults remember as ‘our music’ are frequently from their mid-teens” (English & Davidson, 2020, p. 257).

Therefore, music transports listeners in various emotional ways, including real-time emotions and reflecting on past emotions. However, English and Davidson (2020) cautioned that some listeners might experience increased anxiety with nostalgia depending on their relationships with their pasts. This provides reasoning for musicians to know their audiences when possible and to program to create more meaningful interactions and outcomes for listeners. Creating a positive interaction with nostalgia for audiences is beneficial because it “has the capacity to connect us regardless of historical accuracy and can lead to the building of symbolic capital, provide continuity and coherence to a collective identity” (Holyfield et al., 2013, p. 459). This case study is focused on discovering whether military bands evoke nostalgia in retirement communities and older audiences, which may aid in reinforcing individual, group, and community cohesiveness and identity.

Music, Identity, and Culture

Music encompasses and defines many aspects of life, as previously discussed, including education, memories, and self-worth, but perhaps most importantly, music defines identity (Sheltzer & Consoli, 2019). Historically speaking, music has shaped when and how people congregate, how people view certain cultures, and how people feel belonging in their communities (Meacham & McGraw, 2019). Music represents a great deal of symbolism to many countries and communities, a wide range belonging to America alone (Larsen et al., 2010). Research indicates that people gravitate toward music they feel symbolizes their culture or identity (Henley et al., 2012; Jackson, 2019; Leaver & Schmidt, 2010). Within the music of a certain identity, a sense of inclusion and belonging exists of safety and familiarity that few other

shared experiences can replicate across cultures (Marsh, 2019). While much research supports the role music plays in identity construction and reinforcement, unknown factors remain regarding the role music plays in belonging, well-being, and repeated meaningful interactions (Greenberg et al., 2020; Wakeling & Clark, 2015)

There are different types of identity, including individual or self-identity, which feeds into group or community identity through repeated encounters and relationship-building (Vaillancourt, 2012). Music often serves as the meeting ground for repeated interactions and finding individual and group similarities. Larsen et al. (2010) advocated, “music, like all products, has the ability to carry and communicate cultural or symbolic meaning, which is used by individuals in identity construction” (p. 671). Music symbolizes various emotionally potent areas for individual listeners, including politics, family and cultural values, social activism, and religion (Freeland, 2018), drawing like-minded people together for performances, services, or events into mass group identity interactions. However, Garrido and Macritchie (2020) countered, “when people share a physical space with others with whom they also share a sense of identity, individual emotional responses can become ‘depersonalized’ and submerged in a collective emotional response” (p. 156). This presents a challenge for performers in creating meaningful interactions that leave lasting, positive impressions on individual audience identities without being manipulated by the larger group identity.

Other challenges that face musicians include communicating cultural values and beliefs that attract audiences, inspire individuals, and unite communities. Florida (2005) expressed the creative, economic, and relational importance of building communities through culturally rich performances. Fallon et al. (2020) illustrated:

Music has been used therapeutically across different cultures all around the world and is considered the language of emotions for its ability to express emotions and be perceived by the listener. In fact, instruments over 35,000 years old have been discovered, which suggests that music has practical importance for survival and is essential in life. (p. 20)

Therefore, cultural values and beliefs are represented through music in combination with the symbols, history, and languages communicated through performances. Schaerlaeken et al. (2017) reiterated that “regardless of cultural background or musical training, people are generally able to name the intended emotion [of music], providing evidence for a universal recognition not only of the expression of basic emotion but also of more complex feelings” (p. 2). Thus, while cultural diversity remains essential to belonging and togetherness, research suggests that music is universally recognized (Beier et al., 2020; Hodges & Wilkins, 2015). Beier et al. (2020) reported that cultural recognition and knowledge are reinforced through listening to music but cautioned that identifying emotion in any piece of music does not equate to feeling the identified emotion. Additional investigation may help determine if the emotions involved in musical performance and listening relating to one’s culture impacts their sense of social support and belonging.

Music, Belonging, and Social Inclusion

Belonging. Feelings of belonging contribute to increased social satisfaction and confidence in self-identification (Greenberg et al., 2020). As children who depend on music for happiness and physical movement opportunities (Gudmundsdottir, 2017) grow into adolescents who depend on music for self-identification (Aróstegui, 2016) and later age into adults who depend on music for continued social support and recalling fond memories (Saarikallio, 2011), music remains in a very central place in finding belonging to groups and communities (Schäfer & Eerola, 2020). Finding one’s place, as described by Matsunobu (2018), involves developing “a

sense of place through memory and experience with such elements as rootedness, belonging, meaningfulness, satisfaction, sense of time, and emotional attachment” (p. 490). Research suggests that enjoying similar types of music with larger groups that share common values and beliefs provides a sense of “belonging” and well-being. Coyle (2018) stated, “when you receive a belonging cue, the amygdala switches roles and starts to use its immense unconscious neural horsepower to build and sustain your social bonds” (p. 25). He continued, “a steady flow of interactions [creates] bonds of safety, identity, and trust” (Coyle, 2018, p. 31). Measuring musical affect and understanding what types of music makes audiences feel a sense of belonging in varying communities and identities may present valuable information for military bands to engage in social inspiration and inclusion through music in communities.

Social Inclusion. Music has been the driving force behind uniting communities, bridging racial and cultural gaps, and challenging power since the earliest days of the United States (Kent, 2008). Scholarly studies have determined the primary benefits of social inclusion, including “(1) greater confidence and the development of social support networks, (2) increased self-determination and control for communities, (3) improved mental health and happiness, (4) learning new skills and improved access to education, and (5) improved opportunities for employment” (Laing & Mair, 2015, p. 254). In the 1960s, Jazz music provided an outlet for Black artists to communicate their emotions and advocate for change and fair social inclusion during extreme racial tensions (Jackson, 2019). Graham (2004) noted, “music surpasses speech by establishing a communicative connection between people that involves the basic senses common to all, without resorting to sounds unique to any one race, ethnic or social group” (p. 35). Kent (2008) countered:

Some music may help to make some kinds of peace some of the time, but, like many other good things, music has a dark side as well. There is music that celebrates war, viciousness, hate, and humiliation. Music does have the power to heal, but we need to see that it also has the power to hurt. Music can bring us together, and it also can divide us. (p. 112)

As time has progressed and the primary genre of musical representation largely shifted away from Jazz music, marginalized social groups still use music as a soundtrack for resistance, whether in racial or feminist movements (Church, 2019).

Research indicates that individuals living in low-income areas and racially marginalized communities have less opportunity to participate in music activities, despite the inherent advantages of widespread participation (Peralta, 2019). Those who advocate for reduced music and arts in society (Mitchell, 2016) often forget that music not only provides an outlet for marginalized peoples but also creates a platform for equality and justice unmatched by other political fields and professional backgrounds (Meacham & McGraw, 2019). Laing and Mair (2015) supported that “leisure and the arts have long been considered an avenue for addressing social inclusion. It is seen as contributing to the community and social wellbeing, as well as the revitalization of communities, particularly in rural areas” (p. 254). As with finding a sense of belonging in general, “creative placemaking has more recently been deemed the deliberate integration of arts, culture, and community-engaged design in community development practices to expand opportunity for vulnerable populations” (Wilson & Mantie, 2017, p. 35). This case study argues that deactivating military bands dramatically reduces social and educational opportunities for these types of communities.

Introduction to Military Music

The foundational goal of this case study is to investigate the data behind community profit and developmental benefits of military music and the potential detriment of taking away that type of support. Military bands have provided creative educational, diplomatic, and relevant entertainment for centuries (Blum, 1958; Ray, 2016; Rikard, 2004). Beyond the entertainment value, military ensembles provide “strategic outreach, force support, family support, public diplomacy, community relations, education, and recruiting” (Fraser, 2010, p. 54). Soloists, small groups, and large musical ensembles regularly fill the creative and diplomatic gaps often left by the school and military budget constraints (Army Music Organizations, 2013). Marc (2020) stated, “music’s ability to generate emotions and convey ideas and ‘identities’ across borders has long been used by states in what has been called ‘music diplomacy’” (p. 254). Military bands are the groups executing these soft power and diplomatic engagements at home and abroad. However, it has been suggested that the various military branches that house the United States military musicians have failed to develop “objectives and measures to assess how their bands are addressing the bands’ missions, such as inspiring patriotism and enhancing the morale of troops” (Von Ah, 2017, p. 1). While it is true that very little quantitative research has been conducted regarding the role military bands play in social support and community development, further scholarly qualitative support may provide insight into audience perception and the meanings they assign to the uniformed service ensembles.

Military Band Realities and Challenges

Budget constraints aimed at military bands are not a new concern and are among the most prevalent challenges for concerned journalists and government financial officers (Midgette, 2016; Olson, 2017; Von Ah, 2017). In the mid-1860s, military band members were cut across the

board for savings, but there were and are still those who believe “that music and musicians were universally seen as a positive...unifying force” (Nelson, 2006, p. 4). Military bands continue to face adversity at significant levels today and without intervention, will continue to undergo deactivation under pretenses of financial constraints and perceived performance measurement value (Mitchell, 2016; Phillips, 2016). Frame (2017) observed the research of Von Ah (2017) in an article regarding military band cuts, which questioned the bands’ capability to inspire patriotism. He stated, “the government is now trying to determine how essential bands are. But it's not as easy to measure the value of music as it is a weapon system or a battleship” (Frame, 2017, p. 4). Collins (2019) described the difficulty of influencing audiences through the arts; people want to experience transformative experiences and go home feeling inspired. A qualitative case study may provide the data necessary to show how military musicians inspire more patriotic communities and deconflict cultural differences through shared events (Grant, 2015). However, as budget and personnel cuts increase, military bands will have increasingly fewer opportunities to provide essential social, emotional, and educational opportunities for their communities. Kelly (2021) and Raddatz (2021) emphasized the more recent challenge of inspiring patriotism and hope amid a global pandemic, supporting that military bands possess a unique ability to unite communities even when they cannot be physically together. Krause et al. (2021) conducted a study that showed many individuals relied heavily on music and other entertainment to self-regulate during the pandemic. Thus, qualifying the loss of music-based, creative, educational opportunities in schools, military ceremonies, and social settings is essential to determining the potential cost for communities.

Another significant challenge to military ensembles involves the pace of cultural, communal, and individual evolution, the challenge being remaining relevant throughout rapid societal change (Toven, 2015). Jourdain (1997) asserted:

Research shows that most people largely make their personal musical choices for reasons that are neither “personal” nor “musical.” Rather, they listen to conform, taking on music as an emblem of social solidarity with their peers, each generation adopting its own conspicuously different styles. (p. 263)

If military ensembles fail to maintain the symbolism of strength, trust, and dependability for the rest of the military, audiences may choose to conform to alternative musical genres and the values therein. There are strong opinions on both sides regarding military bands as essential organizations; some believe bands neither serve a strategic purpose nor bring any value for their cost (Ray, 2016). Ray (2016) cited, “despite a decrease in funding, however, the report noted an increase in the number of performances per band” (p. 27). What is known is that throughout the transformation of American music and values, military bands continue to tailor themselves and their performances to try and meet the expectations of the public and military strategy.

Military Music Mission, History, and Roles

Military music literature has long suggested that military bands are uniquely capable of succeeding in soft power politics or influencing the hearts and minds of those who see and hear them (Fraser, 2010; Toven, 2015). Though this case study will focus solely on two Army Bands and their surrounding communities as a source of data collection, the rich mission and history of military bands extend to all services; Coast Guard, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Army. Regardless of the uniform each musician wears in their respective service, the mission remains the same involving the cycle of community support as outlined in Figure 1. Each branch is

responsible for representing its service and performing in a way that guarantees the continued rejuvenation of foreign and domestic relationships through quality, repeated community outreach.

Military Band Mission and Functions. The mission of military music was present and functional before it was the official mission of military music per military regulations. When fifers, buglers, and drummers were employed to signal troop movements only, they still found a way to entertain troops and build morale (Gleason, 2015). Even with official military band branch missions outlined in military regulations, government researchers are interested in establishing the quantifiable value of what the military band mission executes. The drive to quantify this information is driven by the assumption that military bands do not provide the morale and patriotism intended by the organization. Graham (2004) briefly described the suppositions regarding the military band mission:

There are general assumptions about the mission of music in the military, but they usually are vague. Ceremonies, troop morale and entertainment are the three that most often come to mind. While it is very true these are objectives all military musical units fill, they are only a small part of the mission. (p. 34)

Since this case study will focus on two specific Army Bands and their communities as data sources, the Army's definition of mission support is used to clarify and expand the generalized military band mission. As outlined in Army Techniques Publication 1-19 (2015), "Army Music's role is to provide music supporting the resilience, morale, and esprit de corps of Soldiers, Department of Defense civilians, and other personnel authorized to accompany the force during unified land operations" (p. 1-1). Further, Army Regulation (AR) 220-90 (2016) described that mission strategy includes Soldier, family, and recruiting support as well as public diplomacy and

community relations. As Graham (2004) stated, these efforts extend beyond ceremonies, morale, and entertainment.

The social and strategic functions of military bands match the mission goals of other military components. The band mission is included as part of military public affairs operations (Army Regulation 360-1, 2020), which is concerned with using different means of communication to inform and influence public interest that benefits the Department of Defense. The public affairs regulation states, “musical support includes, but is not limited to, parades, concerts, choral presentations, patriotic openers or presentations, and other events where a band or band element performs” (Army Regulation 360-1, 2020, p. 32). This suggests that support from military bands may significantly influence audiences from a communication strategy standpoint. The public affairs operations Field Manual 3-61 (2014) described additional strategy priorities for military commanders:

Under the mission command warfighting function, one of the commander’s primary designated tasks is to inform and influence publics, inside and outside the command. Staffs coordinate themes, messages, and actions to meet the commander’s communications objectives. This task informs global and American publics, influences foreign publics, and affects adversary and enemy decisionmaking. (p. 12)

Just as public affairs operations teams coordinate public influence and decisionmaking through themes and messaging, I propose that the bands’ mission and function involve coordinating influence through structured performance and repeated interaction. Influence is used as a strategy for motivating and inspiring domestic audiences and also for implementing and accomplishing positive engagements with potential threats (Field Manual 3-13, 2016). As previously discussed, music serves as a cognitive tool to influence individuals, communities, and cultures and

manipulate emotional and physical levels (Juslin & Laukka, 2004). Field Manual 3-13 (2016), which focused on information operations, stated:

Within the cognitive dimension are the minds of those who are affected by and act upon information. These minds range from friendly commanders and leaders, to foreign audiences affecting or being affected by operations, to enemy, threat or adversarial decision makers. This dimension focuses on the societal, cultural, religious, and historical contexts that influence the perceptions of those producing the information and of the targets and audiences receiving the information. In this dimension, decision makers and target audiences are most prone to influence and perception management. (p. 10)

Therefore, as producers of musical influence and symbolic information (Boeskov, 2017), military bands have functionally succeeded in performing within the realm of information operations. Ultimately, the mission and purpose of military bands are not fully understood, as exemplified through public opinion and research (Midgette, 2016; Olson, 2017; Von Ah, 2017), and it seems that bands may be employed more strategically in public affairs and information operations missions through further investigation. Though this section and the next focus on the history and current state of military bands, the case study intends to plot the future of community needs and military band capabilities.

Military Band History. As a genre, I propose that the history of military music can best be separated into three periods or classifications: Early, Pre- and Post-War, and Modern. The Early Period of military music encompasses pre-Civil War, Civil War, and leading up to World Wars I and II. The Early Period of military music was considered “important to bolster morale, entertain, as well to reinforce communication” (Schuette & Armstrong, 2019, p. 1). As history transitioned into the Pre- and Post-War period surrounding the world wars, especially World War

II, the government transformed military bands into morale-focused organizations, shipping Big Bands and Swing ensembles to where the morale was needed (Moore, 2013). Although, as the war terrain changed, music also became an outlet for anti-war sentiments, particularly in the Vietnam era (Rikard, 2004), making military music's influence on patriotism and fighting for one's country even more essential to the military's strategy and recruitment efforts. In the early 1980s, the trends of American music morphed into what we now know as popular music, or "pop" music (The U.S. Army Field Band, n.d.), which moves the continued transformation of military music into the Modern period. I categorize the styles of military music predominantly to reinforce the role of military music in every landscape at home and abroad and exemplify how military bands adapt and transform in their roles and environments to meet their audiences' needs.

Military Band Roles. Studies from the Pre- and Post-War periods of military music have demonstrated that a performer and audience member's emotional interconnection in performance contributes significantly to audience feelings of morale, patriotism, and well-being (Gleason, 2015). Musical performers accomplish this connection by adapting to diverse roles in community engagements as needed and predetermining what audience needs will be in the performance's setting, timing, and emotional landscape through experience (Myers, 2006).

In the same way music symbolizes memories and ideas to audiences, military ensembles symbolize the military story and the expected stature of military organizations (Graham, 2004).

Army Regulation 220-90 (2016) outlined:

Army MPUs [Music Performance Units] are highly visible, effective at building esprit de corps and cohesion, and serve to enhance the Army's public image. Members of Army

MPUs must demonstrate the highest levels of professional musical performance, conduct, and appearance standards to best represent the Army and the Nation. (p. 10)

Whereas military occupational specialties like mechanics, cooks, or administrative service members often remain in the background, rarely interacting with the public, military musicians interact with audiences nearly every day of the year as a collective organization across the globe. Performances provide a unique, positive environment for audiences to interact with service members as symbols intended to impact how the public views the rest of the military by fostering their support (Ray, 2016). While some officials have contended that keeping military music in the defense budget is a waste, advocates have countered that the symbolism that music and art bring to communities is precisely what the military fights for (Frame, 2017).

Beyond symbolizing the military as a whole, military ensembles also perform as musical liaisons, not only between civilian communities and the rest of the military but between America and other countries; the government and the American people; the composer of a song and the audience; and then between the song itself and individual listeners. Schäfer et al. (2013) asserted:

Music contributes to social cohesion and thereby increases the effectiveness of group action. Work and war songs, lullabies, and national anthems have bound together families, groups, or whole nations. Relatedly, music may provide the means to reduce social stress and temper aggression in others. The idea that music may function as a social cement has many proponents. (p. 2)

As the military's storytellers and liaisons, military musicians invest time in structuring programs that enhance social cohesion and understanding. Golden (2016) cautioned, "we shouldn't forget the obvious point that music's coordinating power can and has often been used to unite one group but divide it from another, promoting distrust and even violence" (p. 275). Therefore, it is

essential for military ensembles to gauge the values and interests of each unique audience; mismatched musical tastes and desires can potentially harm an MPT's capability to liaison between the various factors of the mission and affect audience engagement in their communities and future performances.

The effects of the Pre- and Post-War periods on military personnel induced the introduction and practice of music therapy (Rourke, 1996). Gleason (2015) acknowledged, "while music had been used to soothe convalescing Soldiers since ancient times, World War II was a period when efforts were made in music therapy to return Soldiers to duty or civilian life in the best possible physical and mental condition" (p. 5). In a way, this era thrust military musicians into music therapist performing roles, meaning military ensembles adapted their mission from strictly entertainers and morale-builders to emotional and psychological empathes and healers. Military studies suggested that women's military bands, in particular, were recognized "as a valued partner that provided therapeutic services by performing for and interacting with the recovering Soldiers" (Sullivan, 2007, p. 284). Though military music and the course of music therapy have branched off into separate professions, the inherent value of military bands as a form of therapy may still be applicable even in the Modern period of military music as tastes and music meaning have transformed. Steele (2016) reported, "theorists in community music therapy discourse argue that music is an active social phenomenon what can be used to help create flourishing communities in which the diversity of individual difference is celebrated, and support is shared" (p. 1). However, Steele (2016) countered that there are music therapy professionals who believe "community music therapy relies too heavily on evaluation from external parties, and is contrary to a client-centered approach to practice" (p. 3). One could deduce that this is the exact obstacle that military bands face today, where external parties, or

government officials, advocate disrupting the therapy-based relationships bands establish through repeated interactions based on shared social values.

Finally the case study's emphasis on symbolic interactionism and affect control theories may support the military band's role as social entrepreneurs, capable of using symbolism and emotions-based performance to inspire specific feelings (Barberá-Tomás et al., 2019). According to symbolic interactionism, individuals express outward emotions in social interactions based on what they perceive, whether the interaction is completely preplanned and intentional (Carter & Fuller, 2015). Barberá-Tomás et al. (2019) observed:

Despite the importance of emotions to social entrepreneurship, both in attracting potential supporters, and getting them to act in support of the cause, there is very limited work in the social entrepreneurship literature that focuses on how emotions are elicited in audiences. (p. 1792)

Because military ensembles intentionally structure performances to elicit emotions and achieve a shared sense of belonging among attendees, identifying them as social entrepreneurs may be appropriate. While research suggests that music elicits robust emotional and physical responses from listeners (Harrison & Loui, 2014), it remains unknown if military bands acting in a social entrepreneur role can deliberately manipulate emotions as recognized by audience members. This case study may explain the interconnection between how well audiences feel military musicians fulfill their roles as symbols, liaisons, therapeutic resources, and social entrepreneurs and how their perceptions enhance or degrade the experience. While studies have suggested that positive and beneficial musician and audience interactions enhance morale and well-being overall, it is still unknown if a severed relationship, or inactivated military ensemble, causes a decrease in individual or community morale and well-being.

Military Bands and Social Affect

Research has identified some key characteristics of military music that relate to performers' and audiences' combined social and emotional wellness. Fraser (2010) argued that community outreach activities like military band performances “ensure that the future relationships among our citizens, governments, and cultures have memorable and positive foundations” (p. 55). As previously discussed, military ensembles use their roles as symbols, liaisons, therapists, and social entrepreneurs to engage with audiences, regardless of background, and create impactful experiences. The overall emotional impact of military performances results from various concentrated efforts regarding community development through socialization, intentional emotion-focused efforts through structured programming, and social identity and inclusive considerations (Toven, 2015). The common themes of music's ability to create a sense of belonging, build self-identity, and foster emotional health are reinforced in military music studies.

Military Music and Community Development. When considering the social merit of military bands, community and people development requires trust and socialization, volunteering and lending a hand, and prioritizing education and child development (Putnam, 2000). Berberian (2021) insisted, “music provides a unique platform to share a country's history, culture, values, and people, enabling the United States, its allies, and new partners to gain a deeper understanding and respect for each other” (p. 2). Therefore, military music may be the essential link between different communities seeking community-based solutions. Field Manual 3-61 (2014) established, “command-initiated actions that contribute to positive community relations include participating in or providing open houses, exhibits, static displays, bands, color guards, and speakers” (p. 28). Graham (2004) proposed, “[the] ability to project values through music,

associated with symbols, strengthens the reputation as a good neighbor that is a respected professional organization responsible for national security” (p. 35). This idea reaffirms Putnam’s (2000) notion that trust is a primary requirement for community development. Olson (2005) charged that “musical interaction facilitated group trust, critical reflection, individuality of voice, individual and group identity, and dialogue” (p. 56). Coyle (2018) proposed that productive communities are built on the caring and safety of internal relationships. Military music serves as a unique vehicle for uniting groups and establishing common loyalty (Rourke, 1996). It is vital to learn if and how military bands use interactions and relationships to build a culture of togetherness through music, common feelings like patriotism and pride, and social closeness. Military music combined with community development ideals may also contribute to the growth of identity and inclusion in underserved communities.

Military Bands, Social Identity, and Inclusion. Military band audiences come from diverse communities, varying in cultural backgrounds, identities, beliefs, and values. Many military musicians entering the military music field are challenged in determining how to enhance community group cohesion and identity through structured performance and audience education (Fraser, 2010). Schäfer and Eerola (2020) proposed, “it is conceivable that music provides a similar opportunity for affiliation through identification and that lyrics serve as a sort of narrative through which listeners identify themselves with the artist” (p. 246). Community members who continue feeling isolation or marginalization from a group identity may dismiss the importance of the relationships with military bands as national symbols that could potentially create a sense of solidarity and increased emotional satisfaction (Pohly, 2010). McDonald (2020) cited:

Scholars of nationalism have long established the emotive power of national symbols—objects, such as flags and national anthems—in helping to shape the creation and maintenance of a given nation identity, while also arguing that these imaginings often help establish the legitimacy of the political entity of governance, the State. (p. 3)

Audience members and military band personnel who fail to build these communal relationships by uniting behind cultural and national symbols experience a weak sense of belonging and struggle with identity (Wakeling & Clark, 2015).

Military bands represent a unique opportunity to create communal power through diversity where men and women, whites and African Americans, and high school and college graduates can come together as one community to enhance social profit (Grant, 2015). All-Black and all-female military ensembles may serve as models for stronger, more diverse military band organizations throughout the history of their accomplishments (Ford, 2019; Jackson, 2019; Lefferts, 2016; Strom, 2020; Sullivan, 2017). Marginalized communities, such as women and African Americans, used military music to break the status quo of their capabilities while also uniting external communities through music performance (Ford, 2019; Sullivan, 2017; Wilson, 1990). For example, Wilson (1990) illustrated:

The existence of military bands in black regiments helped black soldiers to adjust to the rigours of army life in a way that enabled them to retain their cultural identity. ... Black band members declared their freedom, citizenship and cultural pride in the musical repertoire they performed. (p. 35)

Black Civil War regiment bands also contributed significantly to recruitment efforts of all races; however, “while black band members received encouragement and support from some officers, from others they received at best harsh criticism and at worst, ruthless exploitation” (Wilson,

1990, p. 35). On the other hand, women made unique contributions in ultimately diversifying the military as a whole. Sullivan (2011) explained:

The bands played performances for military and civilian audiences throughout the country in a variety of venues, bringing music to many who needed it during this unsettling time--parents who had lost children in battles far from home, injured soldiers in the hospitals, enlistees needing a morale boost, soldiers leaving for war, and citizens simply needing to hear patriotic music as an incentive to buy war bonds. (p. 125)

However, women often faced adversity, as many citizens rejected the idea of females serving in the military (Sullivan, 2011). Still, women trailblazed forward, executing the mission of recruiting, bolstering public support, and opening doors for women to wear the uniform for generations (Sullivan, 2011, 2017).

The rich, diverse history of military ensembles fosters the framework for exemplifying the melting pots of various communities and the importance of maintaining access to creative musical outlets to bring communities together, regardless of race, religion, or creed. An early documented example of music bringing communities together involves the story of the Christmas truce from World War I, when songs sung across enemy lines paused the fighting and men found common ground (Coyle, 2018). One of the primary ways military bands bring so many kinds of people together for one performance is simple: people appreciate songs that make them think of home, feel connected, or help them remember better times in their lives (Kelly, 2021; Krompecher, 2014). Laing and Mair (2015) cautioned of purely symbolic efforts, where governments advocate for inclusivity and breaking down racial and cultural barriers for marginalized populations. Marginalized communities can significantly benefit from arts

programs (Clennon & Boehm, 2014), which suggests that military bands may play a critical role in advancing diversity and representation in communities and within the military ranks.

Military Music and Emotion. As military bands continue to be deactivated worldwide due to budget cuts, very little is known about the potential emotional impacts on audiences. The challenge of deeper research involves defining and qualifying the emotional impact on audiences and the experiences of military musicians. Copland et al. (2011) described music as a process from the composer to the audience, with performers as the medium for performance. Military bands are accessible, iconic interpreters of countless years and styles of music, providing a wealth of educational and emotional opportunities for communities worldwide (Army Music Organizations, 2013). Further, Graham (2004) supported that military bands provide the emotional influence required to garner support and trust in the remainder of the armed forces, connecting the quality of musical performances to the perceived performance quality of everyone who wears the uniform.

Many musical scholars have focused on the phenomenology behind physiological and psychological emotional responses to music, often disregarded by government studies on military band effectiveness (Von Ah, 2017). Bogdan (2020) contended:

The physiological “fingers-up-and down the spine” phenomenon is a necessary but insufficient condition for achieving musical spirituality, one that had to be undergirded by the more profound “shimmer factor” in order for the respondent to attain a genuinely transcendent musical experience. (p. 147)

The spine-tingly effects of music often build to more intense physiological and emotional responses, including physical tension and crying (Cotter et al., 2018). However, Cotter et al. (2018) countered, “people try to assimilate the aesthetic object [music] to existing knowledge. If

they are unable to do so...they seek to behaviorally or cognitively leave the situation” (p. 224). While physiological and emotional reactions are easier to observe and identify, measuring psychological and emotional reactions and explicitly targeting those reactions through performance present a more significant challenge. Koelsch (2014) stated, “for adults, the prime motivations for engaging with music are experiencing, and regulating, emotions and moods” (p. 170). More specifically, Levitin (2006) reaffirmed, “current neuropsychological theories associate positive mood and affect with increased dopamine levels, one of the reasons that many new antidepressants act on the dopaminergic system. Music is clearly a means for improving people’s moods” (p. 191). Knowing the psychological implications, Bierley (1973) described the ability to perform specifically to the emotions of a crowd to gain a more rousing reaction. Belfi et al. (2016) would agree that knowing your audience and pulling memories from the past will evoke more emotional responses. These are the more useful tactics for military bands to consider when planning setlists and to consider the emotional response desired through performance. These are also factors that can and should be qualified through additional research.

Music and affect predominantly focus music performance impact on audience members, but rarely on those who execute the performance through shared emotion. While the measurement of emotional responses from audience members is in short supply for military band performances, perspectives on how military band members invoke and share emotion are even rarer in research. Army musicians focus on fostering the support of American citizens toward the country’s goals and inspiring military forces to fight and win through performance (Army Techniques Publication 1-19, 2015). This influence cannot be accomplished without first understanding the principles of shared emotion, which is loosely defined as experiences involving heightened mutual awareness in shared emotions (Grant, 2015; Metiu & Rothbard,

2013; Trigg, 2020; Ziv, 2009). While shared emotion experiences are challenging enough to invoke in one-on-one settings, inspiring a large crowd toward shared emotion and measuring it is supremely difficult and would be time-consuming. This challenge directly impacts military bands' capability to respond to queries regarding qualitative value in their communities (Von Ah, 2017), which spurs the motivation for independent study.

Military Band Support

Military musicians serve specific communities regularly through the previously discussed combined symbolic, developmental, emotional, and inclusive efforts. The following section describes those specific communities and the research surrounding the interactions. The missions described are typical performances executed by military musicians around the world. More importantly, they are the performances that no longer occur or occur far less frequently in the research communities involved in the case study.

Support in Education. As described in the introduction of this dissertation, military bands provide educational music performances for Music in Our Schools Month, which provides exposure to multiple factors: quality music performance, music education themes, an introduction to the military as an employment option, and a symbolic tie to patriotism and belonging (Davis, 2020). Gleason (2015) advocated, "one of the most important connections between military music and formalized instruction came after the war when these thousands of musicians returned to civilian life with many becoming instrumental music teachers- predominantly band directors" (p. 3). This engagement was one of the earliest opportunities for military ensembles to educate the public about the military and encourage relationships with local communities (Field Manual 3-61, 2014). Major (2013) cited the challenge of music educators to avoid music education budget cuts as school boards and administrations question

the amount of accountability and ability for standardization with music as a centerpiece. Often, military bands fill these critical gaps in children being exposed to the social benefits of participating in musical experiences together (Marsh, 2019; McFerran et al., 2016). Edwards (2021) detailed a recent overseas engagement with military bands and Qatari music students, which established military music's wide educational and diplomatic reach. Welborn (2015) reported:

The National Association for Music Education (NafME), which collaborates regularly with the premier United States service bands on music education outreach efforts, has stated that the proposed cuts from Washington are 'potentially devastating' to the scores of musicians in the military and a disservice to the public that they serve. (p. 6)

Critical military reports (Von Ah, 2017) leave the benefits of these educational and social experiences unaccounted for, arguing that even though operating costs continue to decline and demand continues to increase, military ensembles must quantify their worth in other ways. The impacts of military band loss may never be qualified without comparing communities that have recently lost military band support, and those that remain unaffected for a time.

The military band mission will always involve performing and educating, which may often be the first exposure to creative listening for students in schools with no music programs (Edwards, 2021). However, little research qualifies the value of military band performance for elementary and adolescent-age students. The emotional value of general music education is yet to be established as a priority among educational budgets (Chung, 2019). Putnam (2000) cited:

A considerable body of research dating back at least fifty years has demonstrated that trust, networks, and norms of reciprocity within a child's family, school, peer group, and

larger community have wide-ranging effects on the child's opportunities and choices and, hence, on his behavior and development. (p. 296)

Following the Pre- and Post-War period of military music, military musicians naturally funneled into music educator positions in the states (Gleason, 2015). This connection between military music and formalized education may support that current military musicians' skills, perceptions, and values were passed through music programs led by military musician veterans. North et al. (2000) countered, "the central importance of music in the lives and identity of many teenagers seems to develop outside rather than inside the classroom: our results correspond with data described in the introduction which suggest that school music is out of touch" (p. 269). Further research would establish whether military bands could fill the emotional void left by nonexistent music programs and whether teachers view military performance as an asset for students.

Support in Retirement Communities. Music performances for elderly and retirement communities are often structured around nostalgia and triggering emotions through music based on experiences and memories (Barrett et al., 2010). Unlike younger school and military community audiences, retirement community audiences gravitate toward music that reminds them of their formative years (English & Davidson, 2020), carefully constructed and provided during military band performances. Andrews (2014) acknowledged, "the health sciences have demonstrated how music can be utilized quite practically in caring situations and contexts establishing, for example, its efficacy as a therapeutic and technical tool in medical research, diagnosis and treatment across various clinical specialities" (p. 7). It remains unclear if military bands successfully invoke nostalgic experiences and if the resulting experiences support retaining military ensembles in communities.

Support in Military Communities. Performance support in military communities encompasses military personnel, their families, American allies, and civilian personnel who work alongside the military daily. Music is an increasingly popular therapy among military personnel following deployment-related physical and mental injuries (Gooding & Langston, 2019). Rourke (1996) supported:

Music should be provided along with other activities offered to patients because it is one of the most effective vehicles for bringing a group together, for releasing the emotions, and for creating a spirit of fellowship and esprit de corps. (p. 191)

Throughout musical research, it has also been reiterated that the psychological and emotional effects of military bands on military personnel are essential to morale enhancement (Jones, 2015). Sullivan (2007) emphasized that the service military bands provide is about morale during service abroad for military personnel and includes the opportunity for healing through music for everyone at home. Gooding and Langston (2019) illustrated:

All the musical interactions in the historical reviews took place in military hospitals, and all highlighted positive responses to music among the military service members including increased engagement with live, familiar music, responding to music when other stimuli failed, increased motivation to participate in treatment, and positive mood changes. (p. 331)

Further, Shaw (2015) asserted that regardless of the audience, it is essential that bands remain in the cycle of support to maintain morale and remind Americans of the significance of military service and a cohesive nation. Farrelly (2019) noted, “playing at so many public events which are attended by civilians provides an opportunity to

promote the forces in a way that engages directly with the public” (p. 8). Persistence in these efforts reinforces that while military musicians and music in schools may always be under scrutiny, the benefits are of utmost importance (Midgette, 2016).

Beyond the beneficial well-being, morale, and mental health implications of military band support, the ensembles also contribute to a basic requirement of successfully maintaining the military overall: recruitment. Under one of the military bands’ primary purposes as a force multiplier, Army Regulation 220-90 (2016) explained that bands are used in “actively supporting efforts to recruit civilian personnel for service in all components of the Army” (p. 1). For example, Von Ah (2017) cited an example of military band recruiting impact where within one month in 2016, one Air Force band “reached 7,000 students, and recruiters reported an increase in queries after these events” (p. 28). The recruitment effort of military ensembles is more important than quotas; it is also about diversifying the force, which military bands have successfully executed since recruiting Blacks during the Civil War (Wilson, 1990) and training and recruiting women during World War II efforts (Sullivan, 2011). Overall, military band recruitment tactics reach various military, civilian, and foreign audiences, influencing and motivating them to become a unique part of the United States Armed Forces (Farrelly, 2019; Fraser, 2010; Gleason, 2015).

Chapter Summary

The overall goal of this literature review was to discover how individuals and communities react to music performance, which includes general listening and military music performances. The research elements focused on the social value perceptions of music as community support, the historical challenges and triumphs of military music, and the affective

and symbolic nature of music performances. Community perception values of musical support are difficult to measure (Chin & Rickard, 2012; Grant, 2015), but research suggests that communities benefit more from active artistic, social activities such as military band performances, which may ultimately enhance the sense of belonging and group identity for military band audiences (Ophir & Jacoby, 2020; Vaillancourt, 2012). Musical meaning, persistent interactions, and individual perceptions significantly impact the music community. In particular, the fate of military bands hangs in the balance of what value audiences, including the Government, perceive them to hold in bolstering patriotism and creating ties between military and civilian populations.

Just as general music practices and tastes change with time, military bands continue to adapt to changing musical tastes, cultural values, and community needs. Where large concert bands once were the focal point of military ensembles, small MPTs like jazz combos, rock bands, and brass bands have taken the stage to recreate popular top hits to relate to audiences (Army Regulation 220-90, 2016). The attempt to remain relevant in constantly evolving communities and cultures requires continual presence and evaluation by ensembles and their leadership. Military ensembles cannot control the government's budgetary decisions, but they can control the opportunities and support they provide in creating programs intent on inspiring communities. Military bands have the opportunity and responsibility to build structured programs that support their audiences' emotional and cognitive learning, regardless of age or background. Many military bands have consistently supported community support programs such as Music in Our Schools Month and retirement community programs; however, it remains unknown how students, retirement residents, teachers, or caretakers perceive the support and how these programs are impacted following military band deactivation.

Von Ah (2017) proposed that additional measurements are needed to understand how military bands provide social support and bring meaning to the audiences they influence. Keeping in mind that each community is different, measurements should also be tailored specifically for the needs and desires of various audiences. Only qualitative, comparative data, or soft measurements will help gain insight into audience perceptions during military band performances and when those performances are no longer available (Grant, 2015). In-depth, descriptive interviews will aid in analyzing the interactions between military bands and community groups' perceived social merit of military ensembles. It is essential to discover audience and performer viewpoints and the perceived social value of military ensembles in communities that still have support and those who remember the support but no longer benefit from it.

The following chapter outlines the research method of the comparative case study. Chapter 3 reintroduces the study's research questions and establishes the research methodology, population, study sample, materials and instruments, and qualitative data collection and analysis procedures. It also includes researcher methods for establishing trustworthiness, a description of the researcher's role in the study, the ethical considerations, and finally the assumptions, limitations, and delimitations for consideration.

Chapter 3: Research Design

The primary purpose of this qualitative comparative case study is to investigate the social interactions between current and former military bands and the perceptions of military musicians and various community audiences. Exploration into interactions between musicians and their audiences is needed to fulfill the purpose of developing meaningful data to understand the potential impacts on groups and communities that may have and lose military band support. This comparative case study investigated how two Army Bands impacted their various audiences and will compare audience and performer experiences from both communities based on military band presence and impacts.

As outlined in the literature review, military bands have an extensive history of public service through morale-building. However, the intent to retain them in consideration of their social value is a point of contention between band personnel and their advocates, and unsupportive journalists and politicians. Since history demonstrates how important military music was to community well-being, it appears that a disconnect between that knowledge and financial decisions exists as military bands continue to be deactivated and band budgets slashed. The outcome of this comparative case study may inform governing politicians regarding the perceived social value of military ensembles and determine the impact of the continued destruction of this community resource.

Research Questions

One underlying question provided the blueprint for this study: How does military band support and loss contribute to audience and performer morale and well-being? The following four research questions provided a framework for exploring audience and performer experiences:

RQ1. How do community members describe their experiences from attending and being actively engaged in military band performances?

RQ2. What are community members' perceptions of the impacts of losing military band presence and support in local communities?

RQ3. How do band members describe the experience of supporting community events as military musicians?

RQ4. What criteria are required to create meaningful military band performances that are meaningful and beneficial to military bands and their community audiences?

The questions will be employed through personal interviews with varying audience members and Army Band personnel, which might provide naturalistic generalizations (Stake, 1995) for communities with military bands facing inactivation.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will discuss the research design and method, population description, study sample and instruments, and all data collection and analysis propositions and procedures. This chapter also includes a dialogue on ethical considerations, assumptions, and limitations of the study.

Research Design and Methodology

As the perceived social value of military band presence from a scholarly perspective remains largely underdeveloped, it is essential to collect data from the audiences that cuts potentially impact. A comparative case study approach considers the interactions between military bands and their audiences and clarifies the dynamic between communities with and without military band support. Social value and relationship-based inquiries in this case study required a qualitative research design that encompassed pointed research questions, informed

propositions and unit analysis, and in-depth data interpretation and proposition resolution planning (Yin, 2014).

The qualitative comparative case study design predominantly followed the research of Krehl and Weck (2020) and Sakata et al. (2021). Krehl and Weck (2020) suggested two starting points for comparative research: traditional and recent. However, this case study will follow a more traditional model of comparative case study, searching to yield applicable naturalistic generalizations (Stake, 1995) from performer and audience feedback to make assumptions about the remainder of military bands as a global organization under the United States Department of Defense. In the naturalistic generalization process, Melrose (2009) explained, “as readers recognize similarities in case study details and find descriptions that resonate with their own experiences; they consider whether their situations are similar enough to warrant generalizations” (p. 1). According to Sakata et al. (2021), a smaller number of participants in case studies impedes the capability of naturalistic generalization. Still, I proposed that as military bands share a similar mission regardless of branch of service, qualitative data collected from interviews and surveys would see overlap in common themes and experiences even with an average sample size and that experiences will be relatable regardless of location. As readers review audience and performer experiences from the identified communities in this comparative case study, their applied experiences from similar situations create naturalistic generalization from common understanding of the circumstance (Melrose, 2009). Sakata et al. (2021) use a 3-axes model (transversal, horizontal, and vertical) to summarize the findings of comparative case studies. The transversal and vertical axes have been examined in the literature review by identifying important historical and political research and documentation (regulations) that affect military bands’ perception and performance strategies. The horizontal investigation included

interviews and surveys to reveal further qualitative data relevant to the impact of structured performances. Comparative research methods provided clarity regarding participant interpretation and experience (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2008).

In this comparative case study, an interpretivist paradigm was used to guide the case study to search for and understand the meaning-making experiences of military band audiences in response to the intent of military band performances in their communities. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) contended, “reality is socially constructed; that is, there is no single, observable reality” (p. 9). The social nature of this study aims to account for all the possible realities and experiences of audiences and performers, recognizing that one performance may be perceived in countless ways. While music academics in other areas, such as music education, use action research coupled with the participatory paradigm to study their students as well as their own teaching methods (Cain, 2012), music therapists (who can link their history back to military bands) often use qualitative research coupled with constructivist and interpretivist paradigm to gain subjective realities of patients in response to musical experiences (Baines & Edwards, 2018; West et al., 2021). Cain (2012) insisted that an interpretivist approach works well for investigating individuals’ knowledge and belief construction, which is essential to research based on symbolic interactionism and overall emotional affect. Regarding the overall interpretivist process, Dammak (n.d.) emphasized that “the relationship between the knower and the subject to be known is not out of detachment, but rather of involvement, interaction” (p. 5). Just as military bands use interaction and relationship-building with their audiences to evoke memories and emotions, I attempted the same in this case study with participants. Therefore, within the interpretivist paradigm, I take an explanatory aim, based on my expectations of the research, in

discovering the lived perspectives of individuals influenced by military band performance (Rowley, 2002).

This case study utilizes qualitative design methods, which involves approaching the data in a way that promotes variety and genuine phenomenon exploration (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Simons (2009) asserted, “using qualitative methods, [case studies] can document participant and stakeholder perspectives, engage them in the process, and represent different interests and values” (p. 18). Simons (2009) continued that proper representation of participant experiences and data will serve to eventually “inform decision-making, policy and practice” (p. 5). The data collection process included recruiting, interviewing, surveying, and member checking (Rowley, 2002) and data analysis involved systematically organizing interview and survey results patterns in ways that accurately represent and connect audience, performer, and researcher experiences in an interpretive analysis (Farquhar, 2012).

Population

This case study focuses on the now inactivated Fort Lee, 392D Army Band, and the active Fort Eustis, TRADOC Army Band, and their surrounding communities in southeastern Virginia. Yin (2014) explained that the characteristics of chosen populations in case studies will help determine if the results may be naturistically generalizable for further study in similar areas. Therefore, it is important to note the makeup of individuals interviewed and any organizations visited for consistency and study duplication as desired.

In recent years, the 392D Army Band generally maintained a 40-musician roster and was reduced to under 20 when they became a temporary detachment of the TRADOC Band around 2016. The Fort Lee band supported a range of surrounding counties, including, but not limited to Prince George, Dinwiddie, New Kent, Chesterfield, and Richmond. Fort Lee is home to a wide

array of people, including active and reserve military personnel, Department of Defense civilians and contractors, and military families, all of which will be considered potential study sample participants based on known interactions with the former 392D Army Band.

The TRADOC Army Band experienced a similar temporary deactivation order between 2017 and 2018 when both bands were selected for possible budgetary cuts. However, the TRADOC Army Band is now back to full strength and supplementing the support loss of the 392D Army Band, performing for missions on and around Fort Lee, 60 miles away from Fort Eustis. The TRADOC Band's temporary deactivation, coupled with its mission to support the former 392D Band's communities, provides a unique opportunity for comparison in this study, where the perspectives of Fort Lee's community members may be potentially witnessed by members of the TRADOC Band who can corroborate the experiences of the loss of support in the community. The TRADOC Army Band and its surrounding communities include James City and York counties as well as the larger Norfolk, Virginia Beach, and Hampton Roads area. Like Fort Lee, Fort Eustis is a large training base for the Army's newest recruits and is home to an extensive military and civilian workforce as well as their families. Of note, Williamsburg remains one of the most popular cities to retire in the United States (Harris, 2018), making the TRADOC Band an essential resource for retirement community engagement and well-being support. This is a significant consideration in identifying the study sample for TRADOC Band audiences for further investigation.

I contacted and interviewed a diverse set of participants based on age, ethnicity, and profession from each community. Stake (1995) emphasized the importance of variety and balance in data sampling, which inspired the justification of resourcing a range of community participants from musical and nonmusical audiences. The resulting population of the study

consisted of 26 total military and civilian interview participants and 53 survey participants. Each set of interview participants, based on their background, consisted of primary and alternate contacts to ensure there were enough interviews and data to achieve data saturation and validity (Francis et al., 2010). I first identified military civilians who currently work or worked closely with their respective community's military band. These individuals worked in fields that encourage regular interactions with band personnel. School representatives from each community were contacted for interviews, such as school counselors or music teachers. Five school representatives with teaching backgrounds responded to the initial request to participate, and four completed all necessary steps for interview. Both locations have child development centers on post, which served as an initial opportunity for possible interviews; however, no participants responded to participate in the study. Civilian community members that were considered and contacted to provide valuable perspectives included members of local VFWs, veterans' hospitals, funeral establishments, and local theaters. I contacted one of each from each of the Fort Eustis and Fort Lee areas and successfully attracted two participants from these areas. Active-duty military band personnel perspectives were of particular interest in this case study, and five military participants from each community were predetermined for interviews. Because the 392D Army Band is no longer active, military participants were contacted via phone and social media and were either in active or veteran status outside the immediate Fort Lee area. Finally, frequented retirement homes were an essential source of experiences and two locations from each community were contacted to speak with directors, residents, or activity advisors. This plan brought the participant total to 13 interview participants from each community for the case study, which is an important consideration for completing a thorough investigation of insider perspectives in each community (Suter, 2011).

Study Sample

The 26 total participants included a varied, purposeful sample of military community members, including band leaders and subordinate personnel, civilian support personnel, as well as civilian community members involved with schools, retirement homes, and other local community members. For this study, the term “community member” is inclusive of military and civilian participants. The terms “band member” and “civilian community member” are used to identify their community status individually. Accessing active military band participants and military civilian employees required pre-approval attained through base leadership for a pre-approved amount of time. In TRADOC’s case, permission was requested and approved from senior band leaders who were informed of the purpose of the study, its proposed benefits, and all privacy considerations regarding recording and publishing of interviews and associated documents (Brinkmann et al., 2018). Site approval was requested from Fort Lee and Fort Eustis base commanders via the public affairs offices to interview Department of Defense participants after recruiting via social media and snowball sampling.

It was essential that participants in the case study possessed previous knowledge and experience with military band performance and interactions with military band personnel. Following Coyne's (1997) fertility study example, I elected to use selective and theoretical sampling combined, as participants were selected based on their known experience with military bands through preestablished personal and professional relationships. Coyne (1997) stated, “theoretical sampling involves sampling to test, elaborate and refine a category and further sampling is done to develop the categories and their relationships and interrelationships” (p. 626). Therefore, based on their experiences and explanations in the initial sampling, I decided if I needed to contact alternate participants in the same category (military, civilian, educational,

retirement) to saturate the initial views. Researchers Leonard Schatzman and Anselm Strauss coined selective sampling in the 1970s, which simply means that locations and participants are preselected before sampling begins (Draucker et al., 2007). Participants were prerecruited based on established personal and professional relationships with military and civilian community members of Fort Lee and Fort Eustis contacts. Including audience perspectives in education, retirement, and military support provided the variety and clarity necessary to determine military band social value and any recommended perspectives for improvement. Social media served as the primary source used to contact participants, but snowball sampling (Marcus et al., 2017) was also be used to reach additional participants who qualify for the study, which led to four participants for the study.

Regarding sample size, Francis et al. (2010) suggested that interview data stops yielding all new information and feedback in a 10+3 rule, in which the first 10 participants are the typical baseline, and three additional participants establish data saturation and confirm no new data are likely to occur. Within a similar framework, Guest et al. (2006) suggested data saturation occurs at 12 participants. While there are many other suggestions regarding how many interviews provide a complete sample for coding and reporting, I remained within the recommended sample size per Francis et al. (2010) and Guest et al. (2006). Because of the comparative case study design, each community needed to reach data saturation requiring anywhere from 10 to 13 participants: Fort Lee, the community that lost military band support, and Fort Eustis, the community that still has military band support. Therefore, I aimed to complete a minimum of 20 interviews and completed an additional six anticipated interviews as needed in response to the data. The sample also included known military band veterans and active-duty members who received surveys distributed via social media regarding their perceptions of military band value

and how they feel band deactivations impact individuals and communities. Specifically, I distributed the survey to 11 Facebook groups following group administrators' pre-approval. These groups included groups specifically for band alumni and a variety of community pages from each surrounding area to solicit feedback, which resulted in a response rate of over 50 participants.

Materials and Instruments

Data collection materials for this case study included: an interview protocol (Appendix A), observation protocol (Appendix B), interview consent form (Appendix C), two sets of interview questions for each military band community (Appendix D), survey questions (Appendix E), reflection notes, and photos and descriptions of military band performances. Participants received the interview protocol and a copy of the interview questions via email in before scheduled interviews.

A review of the interview protocol and consent form was conducted with participants before beginning each interview to ensure participants understood the purpose of the study and were comfortable with providing their responses. Each participant was asked to review and sign the consent form prior to starting any interview recording, which explained the study's purpose, process, and privacy considerations. A copy of the signed consent form was provided to the participant and saved in a secure file. The method for differentiating between interview recordings and scripts: (1) label completed interview materials with an abbreviation of the location ("E" for Eustis, "L" for Lee), and the participants' first letter of their last name with a unique numerical identifier and (2) label files in a secure folder with the correlating alphabetical and numerical identifier.

Two sets of interview questions were produced in keeping with the comparative case study design: one set for each community being investigated based on military band presence. The interview questions were categorized under each of the four overarching research questions. Additional questions included three generic opening questions and one closing question to ensure participants had the opportunity to provide any additional relevant information. One of the overarching research questions focused strictly on military band members from each community. Band members and community contacts from the inactivated band community were contacted based on established relationships. Band members from the active band community were also contacted based on established relationships and assisted in snowball sampling (Marcus et al., 2017) to reach community contacts who engage with the band regularly. Success in the interview process of the study involved conducting interviews to benefit participants and keep their information confidential (Brinkmann et al., 2018). Finally, success in the interview process involved validating interview data with interviewees as a form of member-checking to allow participants to review and affirm their input (Carlson, 2010). Each participant was contacted via email to validate their transcript and to have an opportunity to add any additional comments or answer any clarifying questions regarding their data.

Interview questions were field tested with three trusted military band advisors whose responses were used to improve interview and survey question structure and delivery (Chenail, 2011). All three field test participants are affiliated with the Army; two are retired military band members, and one remains on active duty. Their unique insight was valuable in modifying questions to prepare for the live interview process. The first field test participant recommended implementing questions that aimed to discover band members' expectations of what the field can do to improve; this recommendation was accepted and incorporated into questions responding to

the fourth research question. The second field test participant made a few minor rephrasing and punctuation recommendations for questions. In response, I modified the first opening question to remove unneeded descriptors. The second field test participant also recommended adding Likert Scale responses for a few interview questions. However, I did not implement this change to maintain the qualitative, open-ended interview style. The final field test participant was very complimentary of the overall appropriateness and intent of the questions and volunteered to assist in finding participants for the study.

Survey questions (Appendix E) were formulated to access data from a wider expanse of active and former military band members from the 392D and TRADOC Army Bands, especially former members of the inactivated military band in the study. Surveys were specifically formulated based on known intent and expectations of each band, my personal experiences as a band member, and the known experiences of peers from each band. The survey questions were produced online in the Qualtrics survey tool and distributed via social media pages for active and alumni military band members, as well as the community pages to reach the former and current audiences for Fort Eustis and Fort Lee. The survey distribution was assisted via snowball sampling (Marcus et al., 2017) to reach as many qualified participants as possible. A distribution statement was included that states all survey responses will be kept anonymous, and participant data will not be saved other than the survey responses.

Opportunities to observe live military band performances and interactions with audience members were considered but limited due to COVID considerations. I initially planned to observe military band performances, audience members, and their interactions. Sakata et al. (2021) proposed that individuals involved in interactive relationships such as performer-audience interactions “participate in the co-construction of knowledge, reality, meanings and relationships;

but each party may perceive and understand the co-constructed truth differently” (p. 196). An opportunity to observe this interaction may have provided an external, triangulated perspective of what occurs between the parties during the performance. Unfortunately, too many restrictions in place for schools and local performances inhibited me from attending live performances for observation. However, Appendix B is available for review and as a potential resource for replication studies.

Data collection instruments for this case study included the online Qualtrics survey generator for building the participant survey, my personal cell phone and a call recorder application for recording and transcribing distance interviews, and the Zoom H4 audio recorder for serving as a backup for recording interviews. Any photos shared in this study are from my collection or public social media platforms with permission from the band’s public affairs office that took the photos.

Data Collection Method

Following approval by the university’s Institutional Review Board (Appendix A), I began distributing solicitations to known contacts for interviews and social media pages for survey participants. The general strategy for data collection included any remaining public data collection outside literature review content, which involved observing the active social media page of the TRADOC Band. I completed participant recruitment and scheduled phone interviews over seven weeks. I simultaneously distributed online surveys via social media to initiate data collection from online survey participants and posted reminders to continue recruiting survey participants over the same time.

Recruitment

Recruitment for this qualitative comparative case study depended heavily on contact via social media and personal emails. Interview participants were primarily contacted via Facebook messenger to request phone interview sessions. Survey participants were recruited via Facebook and via snowball sampling (Marcus et al., 2017) by qualified participants. Following page administrator approval, I posted public solicitations within 11 Fort Eustis and Fort Lee area Facebook groups to recruit those interested in completing surveys for the study. Participants qualified for the study if they were over the age of 18 and served in the 392D or TRADOC Army Band or lived or worked in either community and interacted with either ensemble. Newington and Metcalfe (2014) suggested that an effective strategy in participant recruitment includes providing reminders to participants. Interview participants received at least two reminders if a response was not received before moving to alternate contacts. Survey participants received online reminders as needed until at least 20 survey responses were received to accumulate the appropriate amount of data. Recruitment for military interviews includes working with military gatekeepers. Namageyo-Funa et al. (2014) suggested that gatekeepers may present challenges in acquiring access to participants or crucial observations. In this study, gatekeepers are military band leaders, school and other public entity directors, and Facebook page moderators. Building trust and communicating well and in a timely fashion with gatekeepers was essential in recruiting the necessary amount of participants for each category.

Interviews

First, data for this study were collected using an open-ended interview style with community and military members from both case study locations. Turner (2010) proposed, “open-endedness allows the participants to contribute as much detailed information as they

desire and it also allows the researcher to ask probing questions as a means of follow-up” (p. 756). Qualitative interviews foster the transfer of experiences from the participant’s life if the interviewer is open to understanding phenomena from their perspective (Brinkmann et al., 2018). This interviewing style allowed me to investigate the emotional experiences, values, and feelings related to the problem. Probing questions were used to clarify, explain, and further evaluate the participants’ experiences. It was essential that probing questions followed the natural flow of the interview where appropriate while also maintaining the conversational style of the study. While face-to-face interviews may have been more advantageous to observing nonverbal responses as participants recall experiences, phone interviews were used to communicate with all interview participants and seemed to encourage equal openness from participants. Pratt et al. (2020) cautioned that interviews might become stale in attempts to drive the data toward eventual replication. Therefore, an open-ended interviewing style encouraged conversational discussion and opportunities for probing questions that ensured all possible themes were addressed in participant experiences. Interviews ranged in length from just over 20 minutes to over 90 minutes.

Surveys

In addition to one-on-one interviews, surveys were distributed via social media as an additional form of data collection per Appendix E. Through a selective sampling method (Draucker et al., 2007), I used preconceived criteria to distribute surveys to groups and individuals with known military band experience, focusing intently on individuals who served with the case study communities to gain relevant perspectives. By using surveys in this study, I collected information from larger samples of the involved communities with the opportunity to compare survey results against the data from interviews while using less time and resources.

Data Analysis Procedures

In this explanatory comparative case study, I used the interpretivist paradigm and thematic analysis to analyze and interpret unique audience perceptions of military bands. From an interpretivist standpoint, the researcher “acknowledges the subjective meanings used in social interactions” (Farquhar, 2012, p. 6). A thematic analysis approach enabled me to identify the common perceptions of support and support loss among those subjective responses and provided a formula for future coding in similar research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I used an inductive research approach (Krehl & Weck, 2020) to discover patterns among the data, compare my preconceptions with the results, and form possible theoretical explanations for the importance of military band and audience interactions. The analysis includes data collected from one-on-one interviews and group surveys, which are organized using transcription, coding, mapping, and summarization.

Interview and survey data were transcribed and coded by theme to determine commonalities in the data while reflecting on the research questions and purpose of the study (Gibbs, 2011). To assist in the organization and emphasize similarities and differences in responses, some data were mapped using visual representations or tables and figures (Aaltio & Heilmann, 2012). The closing interpretive analysis involves comparing data findings and recurring themes with *a priori* assumptions of the study

Data Transcription and Code Development

The first steps in the data analysis involved creating a codebook based on *a priori* personal assumptions of theory (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011) and the literature review and transcribing and preparing data for analysis. The codebook was constructed using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with appropriate data columns for coded data from the interview and survey

transcripts. The template codebook used for this study is outlined in Appendix G. I initially transcribed recordings using the Call Recorder application and finalized transcribing by comparing the transcriptions and corresponding audio files and storing the transcriptions following the processes outlined in ethical considerations. Matheson (2007) emphasized, “listening to a recording of an interview provides a flood of thoughts and memories that are not ever-available, and should be recorded as theoretical memos before those memories fade” (p. 549). Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasized the importance of reading and taking notes as “familiarizing yourself with your data” (p. 87). Therefore, I created space to take notes on my perceptions and thoughts while transcribing.

Surveys were transcribed and combined into a single report with figures by the online Qualtrics tool. I further analyzed the Qualtrics survey report for patterns of repeated codes between participant responses and linked responses to the research questions they most closely answered. Computer-assisted data analysis software was an option I considered prior to data collection: Salmons and Kaczynski (2016) discussed a software application called Dedoose, which is cheaper than NVivo and presumably more user-friendly; however, the challenge of learning Dedoose quickly turned me away toward finding a better option. Quirkos (2022) qualitative analysis software proved to serve as a more valuable and user-friendly coding tool. Interview transcriptions were uploaded into the online Quirkos coding program to allow for color-coded organization according to emerging categories and reorganization by theme when complete. Quirkos allows the user to analyze participant narratives by highlighting single words, phrases, or entire paragraphs and dragging them into user-created bubbles named by emerging categories. The more categories that emerged through common participant responses, the more bubbles that were created. Through the analysis and repeated coding, a total of 34 categories, or

bubbles, were created to house common participant responses in Quirkos. The more data dragged into each bubble, the larger the bubbles became. Visually, this tool provided an additional avenue for analyzing what ideas or perceptions were most common among participants. Following the inductive generation of codes after reviewing all interview data, the transcription of all interviews, and triangulation through member checking, I compiled the finalized in vivo labels, correlating research question, and participant and location in the codebook (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011).

The second step of data analysis involved executing the official coding of the data, including finalizing the codebook and methodically reviewing patterns of codes; this process was iterative and systematic, and involved repeating the process of creating codes, reviewing transcriptions, and refining codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Saldaña, 2013). Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) defined seven different types of data analysis and contended “that there are two major rationales for using multiple data analyses tools in qualitative research, namely: representation and legitimation” (p. 579). Of the analysis types Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007) presented, I used constant comparison (or standard coding) only. Domain analysis, focused on symbols and cultural significance (Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2007), seemed to be a reliable second option, but not perceived to provide any further clarity to discovering the overarching themes of participant responses. Instead, Suter (2011) recommended code checks with participants, also referred to as informants, which allows the researcher to confirm their impressions of the data with the person who presented it and produce the final overarching themes built by the codes. I used the data-driven code process defined by DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2011) to develop the codebook, which includes the following five steps: “(1) reduce raw information; (2) identify subsample themes; (3) compare themes across subsamples; (4) create codes; and (5)

determine reliability of codes” (p. 141). Codes are linked to evidence provided by the data (Guest et al., 2006) and are initially marked and listed on the first reading of the transcription; this includes the in vivo description of the data, or the verbatim words of interviewees (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011). On the second reading of transcriptions, additional codes were added electronically in the color coded and labelled bubbles for clarity and differentiation. Additional readings were used to confirm that the data received the correct code and that codes were still relevant or if they needed to be changed. Saldaña (2013) recommended the use of one-word codes listed in capital letters for labeling themes. While this technique applied to some themes, I also used short phrases where needed to explain the theme more clearly; phrases were modified until clarity was reached.

The resulting data from all surveys and interviews were triangulated to discover the assigned meanings and common experiences of community members in response to military band interactions and interpretations of military band support loss. Code and theme patterns were quickly recognizable through the use of Quirkos. By including the perceptions of both military and civilian community members, the resulting data provides a robust representation of person triangulation (Hussein, 2009), in which the common meanings and emotions in the data resulted from a variety of people with varied investment and knowledge toward the mission of military ensembles.

Data Mapping

Visual representations of the data analysis are helpful from an organizational and comprehension perspective. Suter (2011) insisted, “visual models play an important part in describing the meaning of the data and conveying an understanding to others” (p. 346). In this section of the design, I created visual representations of the interview and survey schedules, transcribed interview questions, including the probing questions, and the finalized codebook. The

majority of the representations are organized using tables to match data and research questions, multi-column tables for interview data, codes and their definitions, and in vivo labeling and bar charts to demonstrate survey participant feedback. Using these visual representations provides quick data reference points and organizational tools for the researcher and contributes to transparency and replicability for future research (Pratt et al., 2020).

Interpretive Analysis

Following all coding and theme generation, I summarized and compared data findings and themes with my *a priori* estimations of the study. Braun and Clarke (2006) defined the overall approach of understanding the data, coding, and developing themes as thematic analysis. The most essential and often most underdeveloped portion of a thematic analysis of data is the final report, which defends data, coding, and thematic value (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Just as quantifiable data are not always the most effective way of measuring military band performance value, Vaismoradi et al. (2013) stated, “a theme is not necessarily dependent on quantifiable measures, but rather whether it captures something important to the overall research question” (p. 403). Therefore, the final report includes the meanings and implications of the themes and *a priori* versus *a posteriori* reasoning and how they can increase understanding of this topic.

Due to my association with military bands as a prior service member, I possessed some presumptions of where and how to collect data in these communities and an idea of the common experiences, codes, and themes that would be extracted from the data. Tetnowski (2015) contended that developing *a priori* theoretical propositions leads to more fruitful and effective data use. While I anticipated extracting many more codes from the data, the following *a priori* codes were some that I estimated may emerge: (a) constructed meaning, (b) cultural referencing, (c) interaction description, (d) community influence, (e) influential music, and (f) military band

field challenges. The primary *a priori* themes I estimated would emerge from the data were: (a) shared experience and military band-initiated interactions (individual experiences), (b) positive community collaboration and impact, (c) negative support loss impact, and (d) future opportunities/strategies for improving military band-led interactions (reasons for deactivation/suggested improvements). Performing comparisons of *a priori* and *a posteriori* codes and themes served as another way to be transparent with my possible bias, establish further trustworthiness, and exhibit the logical reasoning in code and theme creation (Suter, 2011).

An overall thematic analysis falls short of being effective without a compelling narrative connecting the nature of the analysis, data descriptions, the literature, and the study's research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As this study is rooted strongly in the realities that audiences and military band members experience, it was important to ensure the collected data were summarized in a way that captures the nature of participant interactions, emotion, and any other data, while maybe not repeated, but is essential to the nature of the study. Connecting data definitions, codes, and themes back to the literature and research questions aided additional data triangulation. Hussein (2009) stated, "'within-method triangulation' involves crosschecking for the internal consistency" (p. 4). It was necessary to make these essential connections between the data and scholarly research to further legitimize the study and all future related investigations into the problem.

Researcher's Role

Before discussing this study's ethical considerations, it is important that readers understand my history with the topic and my intentions for the project. As a veteran military musician, I remain highly invested in military bands' continued success and strategic implementation. As a researcher, I sought data from participants I served with and who I know

still serve in the communities within the study. My intention in this study was not to paint a picture of what bands are on paper but rather what they are in the souls of the communities they serve and the people who wear the uniform and serve within them. My familiarity with and personal connections in both communities allowed me to access feedback from people I know would be honest and candid with their responses. Additionally, scholarly research must continue to steer in the direction of measuring the unmeasurable way the thing brings value to the world.

Grant (2015) reinforced:

We can say it cannot be measured, or we can measure it ourselves in the manner that social profit demands: a combination of pertinent metrics and a qualitative description of what social profit that can only be created by the people who are providing and receiving it. (p. 24)

Therefore, measuring military band performance through audience counts and performances executed is often the representation of a stunning number and undoubtedly an incredible feat year after year. Still, I considered my role as a researcher to act as a tool that intuitively understands the mission of military band performance beyond audience and performance counts alone. As someone who lived the military band experience, I can effectively reach and communicate the qualitative perspectives of audiences most impacted by both service and loss of military band support.

The case study design contributes to an objective analysis despite the recruitment of subjective experiences from those involved in the study. Baxter and Jack (2008) explained that a case study design is useful for research when the intent is not to change the opinions or behaviors of participants. However, other researchers contend that it is important to approach research situations with propositions, which ultimately contributed to the triangulation of the data from a

variety of sources compared to *a priori* thought processes (Tetnowski, 2015). Tetnowski (2015) also contended that avoiding personal bias in research is essential to the validity of the findings. Given my close relationship with the study topic and my potential participants, it was crucial to confront the ways my personal feelings could influence the data analysis. Tufford and Newman (2012) indicated that a bracketing strategy can help combat or bring potential biased thoughts to the forefront during the research process by writing memos, conducting external interviews to review findings, or journaling. I used a journaling bracketing approach following interviews to challenge my inner assumptions and reflexive feelings toward participant perspectives. Immediately following each interview, I took notes based on my initial reactions of the participant's attitude toward the subject matter and interview in general, as well as what I viewed as high points, low points, and probing questions that led to unique or emotional responses. To further substantiate my role and views as a credible researcher, I considered all ethical considerations from an informed and well-intentioned standpoint.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were considered paramount for this case study. Before any data collection, I executed the appropriate steps to complete Abilene Christian University's Institutional Review Board (IRB), including receiving my dissertation chair, committee, and IRB approval to move forward with data collection. The IRB required preparation for securely storing data throughout the research process (Cushman, 2019). To prevent the possible dissemination of any confidential information, I stored all interview consent forms, surveys, observation notes, bracketing and journaling notes, and sound files on a password-protected external hard drive using Windows BitLocker.

Interview and survey participants acknowledged that their participation in the study was voluntary and that their private information would be kept confidential in all publication of results (Appendix C & E) in accordance with respect for persons protections (National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research, 1979). Brinkmann et al. (2018) recommended that researchers propose ethical questions at the beginning of the interview portion of the research, including asking how the study can simultaneously benefit participants and protect their identity and privacy. A significant privacy concern included conducting interviews in confidentiality. I allowed all interview participants with relevant experience with military bands to preschedule one-on-one phone interviews with relevant experience to ensure they could answer questions in a suitable location that would protect their identities and responses. Ethical considerations for interviewing active military participants also involved respecting the authority under which they serve, which required requesting permission from band leadership prior to requesting any interviews with uniformed military. Written permission from both base commanders as well as written permission from the active TRADOC Army Band command team was acquired prior to initiating data collection.

Establishing Trustworthiness

It is critical that readers can trust the overall findings of data collection and analysis in this study as being logical to their personal experiences and applicable to further study. Connelly (2016) defined the elements of trustworthiness as credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. I executed certain steps during data collection and analysis to ensure that each characteristic was represented to bolster the trustworthiness of the overall study.

Credibility. Establishing credibility directly contributed to establishing the trustworthiness of the data collection process, analysis, and study results. Connelly (2016)

defined credibility as “confidence in the truth of the study” (p. 435). The critical strategies in establishing credibility include instituting researcher transparency and data triangulation. Carcary (2009) explained, “in the interpretivist paradigm, the researcher is not perceived as being entirely objective; rather he/she is a part of the research process” (p. 12). In addition to subjectivity evaluations through bracketing, instituting researcher transparency and dependability included explaining any personal biases and experiences (Tong et al., 2007) through reflecting on overall research experiences and connections with participants. Additionally, transparency was essential while interviewing participants and the transcription of their responses and actions. Chenail (2011) advocated that closed-ended questions stifle the willingness of participants to provide their candid perspectives, which could significantly impact the trustworthiness of the study. As outlined in Appendix D, interview questions were designed to be open-ended, and any probing questions were proposed in the same approach. As previously described, transparent journal bracketing also aids in the credibility of the study for the reader.

Dependability. Scholars repeatedly indicated the importance of triangulation to establish trustworthiness in research (Chenail, 2011; Hussein, 2009; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). Triangulation, executed through peer debriefings and varied resource data collection (Hussein, 2009), increases the dependability of this study (Connelly, 2016). Pratt et al. (2020) summarized the research tactics for establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research; using varied data sources and multiple peer reviews stood out as the most utilized practices among researchers. In this comparative case study, the multiple data sources: civilians, military, teachers, and other community members contributed to triangulation through the ability to cross check and compare their experiences upon data analysis. As previously discussed, journaling (bracketing)

contributed to confirmability through comparing what I perceived following an interview or survey with what a given participant stated when referencing interview recordings.

Confirmability. Like credibility and dependability, the confirmability characteristic of trustworthiness relies on an analysis audit trail and transcription member-checking, which enables researchers to confirm and repeat the study as needed (Connelly, 2016). Regarding overall trustworthiness, Suter (2011) discussed validity, which includes consistency checks and member checks as part of the process. Haven and Van Grootel (2019) proposed that best practice for to ensure confirmability is to outline processes and procedures clearly and with as much detail as possible. I outlined step-by-step processes via an audit trail to provide an explicit method for reproducibility. I also performed member checks for participants to confirm their data and journal to reaffirm that findings were valid (Suter, 2011), which contributed to the confirmability of the study.

Transferability. Of each of Connelly's (2016) four trustworthiness characteristics, transparency is the most important to transferability. Connelly (2016) defined transferability as "extent to which findings are useful to persons in other settings" (p. 435). A lack of transparency in data collection and analysis would be immediately evident in this type of experience-based case study, as truth or credibility regarding experiences (Connelly, 2016) will be recognizable among participants and readers. Effective transferability directly contributes to naturalistic generalization (Stake, 1995) determined by readers and their similar, relatable experiences with military ensembles. Carcary (2009) concurred these strategies ultimately assist other researchers to replicate the study and further legitimize the findings, which optimistically establishes the overall reliability or transferability of original data collection and analysis.

Assumptions

As with inherent researcher bias, I approached this case study with a certain set of assumptions regarding the data and design. According to Farquhar (2012), it is expressly understood that researchers working within the interpretivist paradigm express their bias as a feature of their study and as a strategy for understanding case study communities. I propose the following assumptions are present in this study: (a) the participant sample responses were representative of community members within the same case study region, (b) the participants were open and candid in their surveys and interviews, (c) the subjective nature of the qualitative design was interpreted by readers as genuine and credible, and (d) my background as a former band member inevitably impacted the findings. To address these assumptions, I resourced participants from various professions within the community (e.g., Department of Defense civilians, military, and educators) to ensure that the majority of common audience participants of military band performances were included in the study. Due to the preestablished relationships with various planned participants and the camaraderie of veterans within the field, I anticipated and experienced lively, open discussions and bluntly honest responses in surveys. Finally, I remained completely open regarding my personal experiences and beliefs. While my assumptions may have impacted the perspective of the study, I contend that my perspective and the perspectives of those like me must be acknowledged to contribute to a fuller picture of the problem and its effect on individuals and communities.

Limitations

There were inherent factors that may have limited the validity or reliability of the study. Sakata et al. (2021) noted the limitations of the comparative case study methodology, including its lack of criticism among scholarly research and the variance in established truths regarding

knowledge and reality. This comparative case study faces the additional challenge regarding the minimal studies for comparison and cross checking. To my knowledge, no comparative case studies exist regarding the impact of military band support loss in communities, so advocating for its validity with no comparison presents a significant limitation.

The Fort Lee Band identified in the population of this case study, and the military band I served in for over four years, was inactivated in October 2019. Therefore, a potential limitation rested in the ability of participants from that community to muster potent and meaningful memories of interactions with the band before deactivation. Additionally, I anticipated possible limitations in obtaining truly open and honest responses from active-duty military musicians. However, their experiences were overtly genuine. I imagine only a small percentage of bias may be present to protect and advocate for the field. Suter (2011) advocated for consistency checks to validate credibility in collected data; however, the ability and investment of participants to execute thorough member checks was limited due to the busy schedules of those interviewed from the military and educational fields.

Delimitations

The boundaries of this study exist in its construction as a case. Yazan (2015) reiterated that a case is naturally focused on single entities with less opportunity or desire to stray from the subject at hand. Delimitations for this study included focusing on the two specified military bands and their communities that experienced military band support loss. While this study focused on collecting as much qualitative, experiential data as possible, any specific experiences regarding performances by alternative military ensembles in other regions were not included. This study aimed to limit the experiences to the identified regions only. However, there was no timeline limit on experiences, as veterans' experiences from years past were encouraged and

welcomed through survey distribution and interviews regardless of the span of years they spent at either location.

Chapter Summary

This chapter detailed the method strategy to explore the qualitative experiences of communities that have experienced military band support and loss. I introduced a comparative case study design, explained how the qualitative research was conducted, and how data were collected, analyzed, and validated through thematic analysis. In addition to discussing the population, sample, materials and instruments, data collection and analysis, and ethical considerations, I developed and referenced the corresponding appendices that outline interview and survey protocols. Considering the researcher's role, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations, I increased the focus, validity, and trustworthiness of the overall study.

The purpose of this interpretivist case study is meant to further comprehend the perceptions audience members recall of their interactions with military bands and how they feel the loss of support affects their communities. Interview participants from each community in the case study, 13 total from each community, completed semi structured interviews with open-ended questions regarding their experiences and perceptions of military band value; surveys were also distributed to active and veteran military band members and civilian community members via social media. I transcribed interviews and survey feedback and identified codes, themes, and sub-themes using the data collected. Very little research has focused on the impacts of military band support loss; this study intended to clearly identify the unique impacts of military band support in communities and lead to the appropriate advocacy for strategic military band placement as needed. With a better understanding of how individuals within impacted communities feel about military band support, it will ultimately equip military band leaders to

fulfill the needs of their audiences in military, educational, and general community settings. This study implicates the need for future research and how the organization can positively influence its societal and cultural surroundings.

Chapter 4 presents the findings from the qualitative data collection described in this chapter. The results are comprised of the rich, qualitative narratives about participants' responses to military band performances and loss of support in their communities.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this qualitative comparative case study was to establish a deeper understanding of the community support provided by two Virginia Army bands and the results of the loss of support. My intention for this study also involved gaining insight into how leadership in the band field and above can improve military band support from military band members and audience perspectives. During this investigation, I specifically explored issues surrounding the responses to band leadership, presence, and impact for the former Fort Lee 392D Army Band and the active Fort Eustis TRADOC Army Band.

Though many articles and studies challenge the value of military bands and criticize their monetary cost in the defense budget, research has not provided a thorough understanding of the emotional value and meaning military bands supply to communities and the military, nor the social cost of deactivating them (Ray, 2016; Von Ah, 2017). There are very few previous studies on the effects of military band performance, none of which address the impact of military band support loss in the community and what military band members and audience members perceive as successes and failures in the field. Data for this study was collected to address the primary research question, “How does military band support and loss contribute to audience and performer morale and well-being?” Ultimately, the data collected from interviews and surveys is intended to answer to this primary question and used by leadership for field improvements, which will be outlined in Chapter 5.

This chapter outlines data collection and analysis procedure and summarizes participant data, analyzes the online survey and interview questions data, and presents the resulting semi structured interview themes. I administered anonymous online surveys and interviews to gather the appropriate data relevant to performer and audience perspectives. The anonymous online

survey was designed to obtain broad, affective information from community members regarding their experiences with local military ensembles. Semi structured interviews served as the primary source of data collection for this comparative case study. Interview questions were structured to elicit personal stories and accounts from participants based on their experiences surrounding positive band support memories, band support loss impacts, and suggestions for improvement regardless of band activation status. Transcribed data from surveys and interviews were coded and analyzed according to meaning and theme. With the understanding that the effects of band support loss impact on communities were yet to be researched, participant responses were reviewed and analyzed to determine if the *a priori* assumptions that bands have a generally positive impact, and their loss inflicts a generally negative impact on their communities. Several meaningful themes were revealed through the discussion of the research questions with interview participants:

RQ1. How do community members describe their experiences from attending and being actively engaged in military band performances?

RQ2. What are community members' perceptions of the impacts of losing military band presence and support in local communities?

RQ3. How do band members describe the experience of supporting community events as military musicians?

RQ4. What criteria are required to create meaningful military band performances that are meaningful and beneficial to military bands and their community audiences?

As a reminder, the term "community member" used in the research questions and throughout the final results is inclusive of military and civilian participants. The terms "band member" or "civilian community member" are used individually to identify participants' current

status within their community. RQ3 was the only research question that sought responses from band members only; all other research questions applied to all participants.

Participant Summary

Interview data were solicited from military and civilian participants from a community with an inactivated military band and an active military band. All interview prospects were asked to review the interview questions and sign a consent form before beginning each interview to ensure participants understood the requirements for participation and the purpose of the study and were comfortable with providing their responses. Nearly 50 prospects were contacted via email or social media to participate in a phone interview for the study. Of the total contacted, 15 interview prospects initially indicated that they would participate in an interview for the study; however, for various reasons chose not to participate following review of the consent form. Another 10 prospects did not respond to the solicitation for the study. Prospects who agreed to participate in the study received a consent form for signature and the semi structured interview questions for review. Francis et al. (2010) indicated that a sample size of 10+3 was an average benchmark for data saturation, which applies to the data saturation rate for this study. By the time 10 participants were interviewed in each location, repeat responses were common, but three additional participants were interviewed to confirm that no new data would be discovered. On average, Fort Eustis-area participants spent between 2 and 6 years either serving with or associated as an audience member with the TRADOC Army Band, with some outliers associated with the ensemble for nearly 15 and over 40 years. Fort Lee-area participants spent between 2 and 6 years serving or attending performances with up to 30 years of experience with the now inactivated ensemble. Table 1 illustrates some basic interview participant demographics.

Participant names, genders, status (active, retired, veteran, civilian), current careers, and location names have been omitted or altered for ethical considerations.

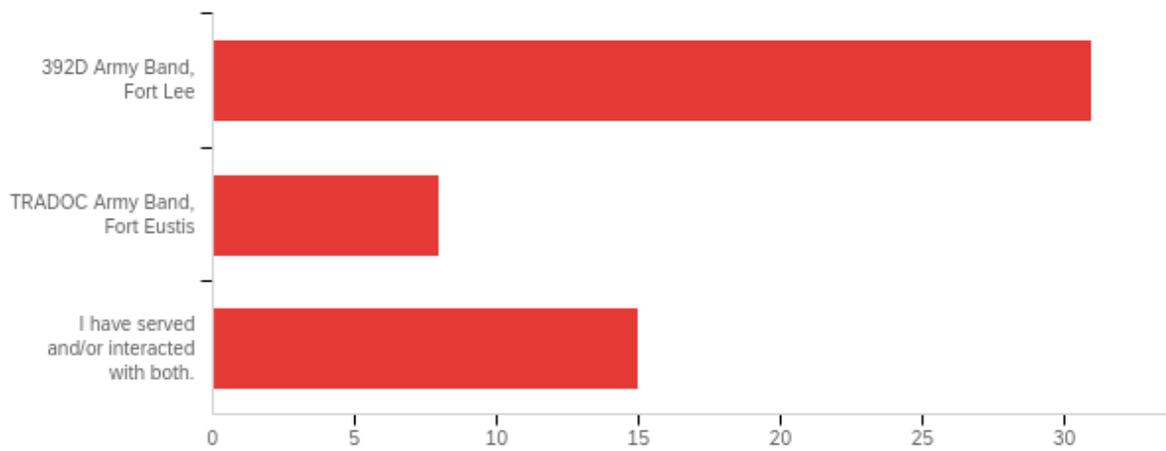
Table 1

Interview Participant Demographics

Band location	Years assoc. w/ band	Associated w/ both? (Y, N, or N/A)
Location 1	6+	N/A
	11	N/A
	9	N/A
	2	N
	30	N/A
	7	N/A
	2	N
	5	N
	5	N
	3+	N
	3	N
	4	N/A
	21	N/A
	Location 2	3
3		N
4		N
2		Y
6		N/A
4		Y
6		Y
4		Y
2+		Y
2		Y
41		N
13	N/A	
13	N/A	

Qualtrics Experience Management (2022) was the website resource used to build and conduct the anonymous online survey for the study. The survey was distributed via Qualtrics to

access general band support opinions and feelings from respondents who lived in the Fort Eustis and Fort Lee areas also interacted with either band. The survey data are not connected to the interview data but instead provides an anonymous way to investigate answers to research questions for those uncomfortable with participating in a more in-depth interview and an avenue to reach additional points of view outside of interviews. Interview participants were not required to participate in the survey. The link to the survey on Qualtrics was distributed to 11 social media groups based in the surrounding communities of the study's military bands. Prospects who elected to participate in the anonymous online survey were required to agree to a separate consent question, at the end of the informed consent, before being admitted to the remaining questions. The survey consisted of nine questions, including the consent question, four multiple choice, one Likert scale exercise that encompassed 22 statements for participants to rate on a scale of 1 to 5, and three open-ended questions. The first three questions included consent, provided general background regarding the band each participant was associated with and assessed their musical preferences. A total of 77 prospects for the online survey consented to completing the questionnaire; however, only 53 participants completed the entirety of the survey. Over half (31) survey respondents were associated with the 392D Army Band, only eight were associated with the TRADOC Army Band, and 15 indicated that they served or interacted with both. Figure 2 illustrates the survey response rates for each community.

Figure 2*Survey Participant Statistics***Data Collection and Analysis Summary**

After acquiring written site approvals for both military bases and gaining IRB approval (Appendix A), I initiated data collection for the qualitative comparative case study. Phone interviews and anonymous survey data were collected over 7 weeks. Though observations were initially planned as part of the data collection process, the COVID pandemic prevented safe travel and observation during that time. All interview and survey participants in the study were required to be at least 18 years of age and must have served in the 392D or TRADOC Army Band or lived or worked in either community and interacted with either ensemble. All prospects were encouraged to address concerns with interview questions or requirements of the study prior to participating in the interview or survey. Prior to soliciting survey and interview prospects for their participation, the interview and survey questions were field tested to ensure the most appropriate and effective questions were used for the study (Chenail, 2011). None of the three field test participants were eligible to participate in the study but were selected for the field test based on their military band experience and their feedback was implemented to improve the effectiveness and trustworthiness of the study's questions and overall results.

Surveys and interviews yielded data from 79 total participants. All survey responses remained anonymous through the Qualtrics online tool, and each interview participant was assigned a unique letter and number combination identifier to protect privacy when coding using the Quirkos online coding software. The multiple-choice, Likert scale, and open-ended responses from the surveys and participant feedback from the semi structured interviews were analyzed and organized by codes and categories. Out of the 26 total interview participants from both communities, 13 participants completed semi structured interviews about their perceptions of the 392D Army Band's impact before and after its inactivation. A mixture of former band members and civilian community members were deliberately recruited to gain the perspectives of performers and audience members. The Fort Lee community recently experienced the widening problem of military band support loss. All participants were asked a clarifying closing question and two basic opening questions regarding their current status in their community and how long they had been associated with the 392D Army Band (Appendix D). Non-band member participants were asked seven primary questions and former band members were asked an additional two questions regarding their experience as performers and as military members. All participants were also subject to responding to probing questions. The questions were organized and served as subordinate questions to the four primary research questions of the study, encompassing community contributions and performance experiences, support loss perspectives, and social meaning outlooks.

Interview data were organized into categorical bubbles using the online Quirkos coding tool and then emergent codes and their corresponding themes were organized in the study's codebook (Appendix G) with the parallel research question. Participant responses and their relationship with the research questions influenced the identification of the *a posteriori* themes

that emerged from the data from both case studies. The themes were determined following a review of interview participant responses regarding military band support and loss in their communities and how they manifested as themes within each research question. Each theme displays the comparative responses of each community. Research questions were designed for each community to evoke meaningful memories and honest feedback.

Research Question 1

RQ1. How do community members describe their experiences from attending and being actively engaged in military band performances? This research question addressed both band member and civilian community member perceptions of engaging in military band performances. Responses to this research questions originated from the ninth survey question and the first three interview questions. The survey and interview questions left a great deal of room for participant interpretation, and the responses were varied and plentiful. The themes that emerged from the first research question were based on perceived positive community impact, band challenges, and shared emotions and are shared below as sub-headings.

Military Band Support Provides Positive Personal and Community Impact

The ninth survey question asked participants to provide their perspectives on the overall impact of the military band community and emotional support as local and national symbols. Table 2 outlines the abbreviated participant responses that describe the positive and negative community impacts translated from participant perceptions. The responses to this survey question refer back to RQ1 with explanations of experiences in witnessing and experiencing performances resulting in community cohesion, morale building, and symbolism.

Table 2*Survey Question 9*

Community impact	Participant perception
Community Building	Increased off-post presence / education opportunities Provides a gathering place Represents tradition / diversity Fosters support from public
Morale / Emotions / Patriotism	Unification and feelings of pride Represents national purpose / overcoming struggles Evokes emotions / tears / respect / inspiration Positive impact in word of tension
Symbolization	Represents the military as a whole Visible, positive force Connection to the military / Other Americans
Lack of Support	Deactivation caused severe reduction in support Not enough time to produce quality performances Reduced support affects quality of life / population

Interview responses evoked the positive impressions of the 392D and TRADOC Band performances in various settings. The community impact theme is comprised of the most categories, further organized into subcategories based on participant responses. Primary categories include: (a) Music is an Essential Part of Life, (b) Musicians Provide Community Service in Various Roles, (c) Bands Provide Memorable Performances, (d) Bands Influence Music Education, (e) Bands Tell the Army Story, (f) Bands Represent and Preserve Military Tradition and History, and (g) Bands Increase Morale and Esprit de Corps.

Music is an Essential Part of Life. Participants from the TRADOC community primarily concluded that music affects people physically and emotionally, it gets people through

“hard times”, and that music is a “uniter” and a “vehicle for change.” Participants repeatedly asserted that music is a “big part of life” and “very important.” Most Fort Lee participants responded that music provokes memories, emotions, and connections and is “universal” in its value and recognizability. Participants also emphasized that music is a valuable “avenue for communicating history” and the “Army story.” Like TRADOC, Fort Lee interviewees agreed that music is also “very important” and that it is a “way to learn other skills” like math, science, and social skills. Finally, one participant insisted that music is a “realistic profession” in seeking a rewarding career path.

Musicians Provide Community Service in Various Roles. Participants were asked at the beginning of their interviews to share some background information about themselves. Throughout the interviews, participants also described how they viewed musicians during personal interactions. Most participants provided their current professions, their additional duties within the military, or their volunteer positions. Some provided examples of how they see musicians performing in additional roles in their communities. Most TRADOC participants defined themselves as their positions within the band: program managers, leaders, and supervisors. Others described themselves as teachers, trainers, coaches, athletes, and caretakers. Band members and civilian community members described military musicians as ambassadors, motivators, and role models who are “passionate,” “invested in their work,” “adaptable,” and “talented.” Some referred to military musicians collectively as “national assets,” performing soldier first duties in addition to their mission as performers.

The majority of 392D participants recalled the qualities of musicians they interacted with as a way to further identify them. They described them as “highly educated,” “talented,” “alternatively skilled,” “unique,” and “versatile.” Many band members described themselves as

program managers, leaders, educators, retired, and students. Like TRADOC participants, 392D participants also said musicians were “soldiers first.” Additionally, musicians were described “ambassadors,” “representatives,” “recruiters,” and the “voice” and “face of the Army.”

Bands Provide Memorable Performances. Many Fort Lee community participants immediately listed the most memorable or influential performances they could think of, with the most popular being holiday events such as Fourth of July, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Christmas caroling and concerts; public events like parades and military ceremonies; educational opportunities such as Music in Our Schools; and college commencements. Interview participants referred to various memorable or meaningful missions or performances 143 times. They described how their community’s band was involved in the local area, and band members described performance experiences as musicians. Of the 143 total responses, TRADOC participants’ top three events they recalled included Music Under the Stars concerts, the Virginia International Tattoo, and performing at retirement communities. 392D participants’ top three events include Fourth at the Fort, Music in Our Schools performances, and community parades. The first subcategory included 20 instances of participants recalling band support during specific holidays.

In 13 instances, TRADOC participants mentioned memorable interactions, including performances at a local children’s ward, an international airport, and the Williamsburg Kimball Theater. Most of these instances involved some form of Christmas or holiday caroling for audiences. In seven instances, 392D participants also primarily recalled the same memorable interactions while caroling in small groups around the Fort Lee base and community. Participants, including civilian community members and band members, specifically mentioned “building morale” and “bringing spirits up” as a recurring result of caroling performances.

Bands Influence Music Education. Participants illustrated 46 instances of band support in educational settings. In 26 instances, TRADOC participants recalled the band's impact in educational circumstances for students aged elementary through high school, including school program recruitment, conducting sectional question and answer sessions for band students, and instances developed to teach and entertain. TRADOC Band impacted learning in their community with the majority of responses from civilian community members, repeatedly noting the value of the Music in Our Schools program. One civilian community member provided the band's impact on their music students. They stated:

It's kind of an applied thing so what I'm teaching them in class, then they can see firsthand, oh, those are the woodwind instruments. Oh, that's a bassoon. Then afterwards I can keep using what [the band] have done or what [the band] brought and keep talking about it, so it's still in their head.

Beyond Music in Our Schools, one civilian community member acknowledged that educating students included education regarding possible future career paths. They suggested:

It is not known at least to our students that there is a path for various ways to make a life in the military and for them to see somebody come in their fatigues, and then they pull out a bassoon, they go whoa, this is amazing. And they always are like, so you can make music in the military and you can make good money and pay off school loans or go to college using the G.I. Bill. It really opens up a whole new world for them.

One band member believed that the TRADOC Band provided an important historical resource to the community at large. They pointed out, "we ... educated, honored traditions in the area. And the response was always felt like such gratitude, people coming up all the time after concerts saying thank you for your service and that they learned something." In 20 instances,

392D participants pointed out the band's impact in educational activities for students aged elementary through college, including the Music in Our Schools program, sectional question and answer sessions, and band program recruitment in local schools. Multiple participants recalled the band's ability to contribute to learning through the Music in Our Schools program and simultaneously maintain a schedule of numerous on- and off-post missions. Notably, Fort Lee participants believed that 392D Band interactions served students in "breaking the routine" of school for a period of entertainment and alternative education.

Bands Tell the Army Story. This category of responses consists of six subcategories: (a) Bands Build Community, (b) Band Leadership Influences Community Response, (c) Band Performances Aid Overall Military Recruitment, (d) Bands Provide Relevant Entertainment, (e) Bands Represent and Encourage Community Diversity and Culture, and (f) Bands Show the Army is More than Bullets and Guns. This category includes a compilation of 136 total responses regarding the ways each band impacts their community or represents the larger Army. In 62 instances, most of TRADOC participants' responses included common phrases such as "military story," "representation," "workforce," "face," and "legacy." Specific perceptions of impact included recurring phrases such as "virtual," "community education," "impact outside the fence," "civilian support only," and "community outreach." In 74 instances, most of 392D participants' responses included common phrases such as "community excitement," "improved events," "morale," "connection," "force multiplier," and "added benefit." As far as representing the rest of the Army, participants emphasized that the 392D was a "positive face" and encouraged "representation." One former band member noted, "[Bands] also provide the community with a sense of understanding of the Army in general. They don't see troops on a regular basis, but band members out in the community provides an opportunity for them to

interact with soldiers.” This sentiment was echoed by the majority of participants who reiterated the importance of seeing representations of the military in the community.

Bands Build Community. This subcategory consists of 54 participant explanations of band personnel or civilian community members’ experience with community building and military music. In 24 occasions, TRADOC participants most commonly responded that the band “brings people together” and provides opportunities for “connection.” Over half of TRADOC interview participants focused on the community connectivity capabilities of the TRADOC Band. One band member recalled:

The more senses you have involved, the more meaningful an event is. [For] the retirement ceremonies, the families and friends would normally just watch their loved ones go on stage and then they sit down, but having the music there just adds that extra layer of connectedness and also stimulation, emotionally and mentally.

Because of the TRADOC Band’s role in the annual Virginia International Tattoo, band members and civilian community members contended that the band plays a significant role as “ambassadors” and in improving “international relations.” One band member noted, “we are really the ambassadors between the military and the public. ... We are the ambassadors. It's not like they can always go on a military base to talk to a regular soldier. We are it.” Other common phrases within this category from participants include “community outreach,” “support system,” and “trust.” Many TRADOC participants commented that the summer concert series, Music Under the Stars, was a key activity for community outreach, or bringing the community on the military installation and connecting with them through music. Of note, one band member acknowledged that the band’s brief deactivation presented challenges in re-establishing community connections. In the remaining 30 responses, 392D participants indicated that the

band contributed to community building through “building relationships,” “connection,” “involvement,” “collaboration,” and cohesiveness engagement.”

Band Leadership Influences Community Response. This subcategory includes 27 responses that outline participant perspectives regarding band leadership impact on the internal band community and external audiences. These responses do not include advice to band leadership, but rather the impressions of how participants feel leaders perform in their roles. Each community’s responses regarding leadership were further categorized based on their positive and negative connotations. The majority of responses for this subcategory came from the TRADOC community with a negative leadership impact slightly outweighing the positive. Common negative impact participant keywords include: “accountability,” “too nice,” “not present,” “consistency,” “communication,” “privilege,” “overwhelmed,” “competence,” “relevance,” “development,” and “favoritism.” The participants who indicated a positive leadership impact most commonly discussed “right focus,” “present,” “handle pressure,” and “advocating.” The single leadership response from 392D participants indicated a negative impact and was focused on lack of effective advocacy.

Band Performances Aid Overall Military Recruitment. Interview participants provided 64 total responses surrounding each band’s ability to inspire and attract audiences in a way that makes them want to be part of a larger group, military or otherwise. In 29 responses, TRADOC participants primarily asserted that TRADOC is known for “recruiting musicians,” “employing musicians,” and creating and advertising military band profession “options” and “opportunities” for young musicians. Additionally, participants noted that the TRADOC Band helped bolster “interest in school bands” and continuing to play instruments through activities like “skills clinics” and the Music in Our Schools program. In the remaining 35 illustrations, 392D

participants focused heavily on the value they believed the band brought to recruiting in the area. They contended the 392D was successful in “recruiting musicians,” “inspiring to serve,” and a “force multiplier.” A common phrase used in this community overall was “connection” when discussing recruitment. Band members also defended the profession as a military musician as a “secure job” while one civilian community member argued that science, technology, and engineering professions are more important than the arts.

Bands Provide Relevant Entertainment. This subcategory consists of 40 responses primarily stemming from probing questions regarding the ability of each ensemble to remain musically financially desirable in their communities. With the majority of responses, TRADOC participants believe the band is successful in remaining relevant. Participants agreed, “we are relevant,” “what they play is current,” and the band is “innovative,” “adaptive,” “historically minded,” and “tailors performances to their audience.” However, an equal number of participants offered alternative views. Common phrases included that the band “needs to work on being relevant,” and that they are “trying too hard” culturally, technologically, and musically. The most common thought among 392D participants was that the “band was relevant,” they “played what people wanted to hear,” and were “traditional.” Less than a handful of participants agreed that the band was not relevant and that improvement was needed to match the musical values and needs of their audiences.

Bands Represent and Encourage Community Diversity and Culture. Interview participants provided 22 responses illustrating how participants experienced diversity and culture with each band. All participants were asked to address diversity in the first question in each interview. However, not all participants responded to the prompt, while others focused on diversity and culture later in their interview. Nearly half of the 392D participants discussed

diversity in one of two ways: (1) that the 392D was diverse in its membership, and (2) the music the band performed appealed to diverse audiences and acted in a universal way to unite different people. In nine instances, TRADOC participants responded that the band is “integrated” and that the ensemble represents “diverse personnel.” Participants also agreed that the band performs programs according to the cultural values and beliefs of their audiences. In 13 instances, 392D participants expressed that the band was a “representation of culture” in the Fort Lee community and that their performances served as cultural “enrichment” for audiences. Fort Lee community members felt that the 392D performed “diverse music” and what they performed had “universal meaning.” Similar to TRADOC responses, 392D participants also emphasized the diversity of the band’s personnel as well as their abilities as musicians and soldiers.

Bands Show the Army is More Than Bullets and Guns. “More than Bullets and Guns,” was a common, varied phrase that appeared in 15 participant responses overall, with 10 coming from Fort Lee participants alone. Some common variants of the phrase include, “there’s other things to do in the Army than shoot a gun,” “the Army is more than dust and dirt and MREs and battles,” “you want to bring more to the table than tanks, bullets, and guns,” “not just killers,” and “show the Army’s presence without being threatening.” Participants emphasized the “soft power” impact of the bands despite the perception of the uniform they wear.

Bands Represent and Preserve Military Tradition and History. This category consists of four subcategories, including (a) Bands Preserve the Tradition of Taps, (b) Band Presence and Appearance Impacts Community Response, and (c) Bands Symbolize Traditional Community Values. Many interviews led to probing questions regarding their feelings about how each ensemble preserved history and tradition in their communities. Each community addressed different types of history and tradition, including military, state, musical, and family traditions

and heritage. In 21 instances, TRADOC participants most commonly emphasized that the band preserves state and area history, acknowledging traditions of local historical sites like Williamsburg and Jamestown. They also illustrated that the band contributed to keeping military traditions alive through contributions to military ceremonies. A few band members noted that they interacted with many participants in attendance at concerts who made TRADOC performances a recurring, generational family tradition. With 35 responses, 392D participants commonly discussed “military tradition” and “ceremonial tradition” in their interviews. Many believed that the music the 392D performed represented the history and traditions of the area, noting that the band participated in many events that honored the historical and social preservation of the area, as well as state heritage.

Bands Preserve the Tradition of Taps. The first subcategory consists of 22 responses between both communities that emphasized the importance of rendering honors properly and personal experiences with live and auto buglers. While some participants acknowledged the importance of Taps on their own, some participants were asked about the importance of Taps through probing questions. TRADOC participants most commonly expressed that the rendering of live Taps is the band’s “most important mission” and the “greatest honor” for those who served. Participants also explained that live Taps is an important opportunity for musicians to form connections with community families in difficult times. The 392D participants insisted that there is a “huge difference” between live Taps and an auto bugler performance for families. In both communities, many claimed they would rather not have Taps at their funeral if the digital bugle was the only support available. In the Fort Lee community, participants charged that as a result of the inactivation of the 392D, military funeral support is suffering, and far more veterans are not receiving live buglers.

Band Presence and Appearance Impacts Community Response. This subcategory consists of 38 observations of the importance of both ensembles' appearance in terms of presence and physical representation. Many of these responses resulted from conversations surrounding the third question for band members only, which asked participants how they felt each band acted as a symbol of larger ideas, values, or beliefs. Some community members also introduced the importance of appearance and uniforms unprompted. In TRADOC participants' 25 responses regarding appearance and uniforms, most acknowledged that uniforms made the band "relatable" and served as a "reminder" of cultural values. Participants also expressed that band presence and professionalism is a representation of "what we stand for" as well as an opportunity for symbolic and visual "interaction." A few TRADOC participants also emphasized that social media presence is an important aspect of appearance for audiences in maintaining a consistent role in the community. The majority of 392D participants agreed that the band served a "symbolic," "relatable," and "visible" role in the Fort Lee community. Participants charged that the 392D also served as the "face of the Army," which is a phrase commonly heard in the band field and a term used in several interviews. The 392D participants explained that uniforms made band members look "professional" and "regal" and audiences feel more "patriotic," "American," and "nostalgic."

Bands Symbolize Traditional Community Values. This subcategory consists of 10 total responses between both communities, which primarily resulted from the third question to band members and what civilian community members felt each ensemble represents during each discussion. In four instances, TRADOC participants illustrated that the band is symbolic of an "image of safety," "servitude," and "value" as a "national asset." In the remaining instances, 392D participants believed that the band is symbolic of "Americana." In particular, they

explained that the band in uniform symbolizes “quality” and “pride,” which appeals to multiple generations and personifies the American culture.

Bands Increase Morale and Esprit de Corps. Two subcategories, including (a) Bands Build Morale through Camaraderie and (b) Communities Desire Patriotic Influence from Bands, relate to the overarching responses regarding morale and esprit de corps. Overall, 47 comments were recorded between the two communities resulting from participant responses to the series of three questions from interviews that requested input regarding morale. Both communities included positive and negative perspectives on community morale. In 12 instances, TRADOC participants largely responded from a positive perspective toward morale and esprit de corps. There was one indication that morale and esprit de corps is lacking in the community. Common phrases from the positive perspective included “hearts and minds” and “relationships.” Some participants indicated that building morale and esprit de corps is the band’s “job” and their “primary” concern to uphold a certain “image” to audiences. One band member considered morale an important factor for former military. They stated, “for retirees, especially veterans, they love to see the Army Band playing. They have a sense of honor, they're proud of being American.” One civilian community member concurred with the feelings of morale and pride instilled by the TRADOC Band:

Just personally being in the community, I've seen their jazz band and their concert band play in various places and there is nothing like a military band to make you feel patriotic. ... As a military spouse and as an American, you feel very patriotic and they bring a lot of life and functionality as far as doing their job of really getting the mission out and being a face for the military community of all branches.

The final civilian community member focused specifically on the morale impact for young students:

It's one thing when you listen to music, but then when you actually get to see professionals come in and play, I think that made a difference. You can always tell when one of the bands is going to be coming, because you could hear them talking about it.

In the remaining majority of instances, 392D participant responses were largely positive. Participants indicated that overall morale was “positive” and “increased” as a result of 392D performances. While only one former band member explained that the 392D’s morale impact could have been improved through additional community service outside music and better advertising of performances, others lauded the band’s impact as “traditional” and “important”, with frequent preemptive comments regarding the inactivation and that desired support is no longer available. Participants communicated the importance of bands being present to “bring spirits up,” citing band members as “good will ambassadors” and performances as a way to relieve stress. One civilian community member stated, “[audience members] are free to let the mind roam and enjoy the music just for a brief period of time and forget the problems in the world.” Many other positive responses focused on the positive morale impact of holiday caroling and the band’s ability to “relieve stress” and improve morale for veterans and retirees in the community.

Bands Build Morale Through Camaraderie. Mentions of camaraderie recurred in 27 total responses that focused on the relationships encouraged by each ensemble’s performances. Many of the responses resulted from the first interview question regarding community connectedness and morale and the subsequent question regarding what the community needs from their local military band to build morale, well-being, and community building. TRADOC

participants alluded to camaraderie in 16 instances, noting the importance of “connection” through music with retired and veteran communities. Participants also stressed the significance of opportunities for association with foreign allies and sister services through music. Of note, one participant insisted that internal camaraderie between band members is important for maintaining morale. In the remaining 11 instances, 392D participants alluded to camaraderie in retired, veteran, active duty, and community relationships.

Communities Desire Patriotic Influence From Bands. This subcategory stems from the 31 total mentions of patriotism in participant interviews from both communities. Most of the responses resulted from the interview question asking participants what the community needs from their military band for morale, well-being, and community building as well as probing questions about what the military uniform represents at performances. TRADOC participants mentioned patriotism in 14 circumstances, with the majority explaining that uniformed ensembles make audiences feel more patriotic than civilian ensembles and that military ensembles are “needed” at patriotic events. Several participants contended that patriotism “increases recruitment,” while a few others agreed that patriotism is what solidifies the connection between the military and civilians. Alternatively, one TRADOC participant stated that patriotism is “hard to quantify.” The 392D participants mentioned patriotism 17 times in interview discussions. The majority explained that uniformed ensembles like the 392D are “patriotic” in general and that the community at large “needs patriotic events.” Five participants argued that patriotism is lacking in general, especially in the surround Fort Lee and Richmond communities. Some of those same participants concluded that the lack of patriotism is due to generational differences in priorities and interests.

Bands Face Unique Challenges While Adapting to What Communities Need

The theme of military band challenges was not an *a priori* assumption of either case study but consistently emerged in interview discussions. I organized participant responses related to this theme into six categories: (1) Overall Band Challenges, (2) Budget Cuts Frustrate the Community and Band Members, (3) Community Traditions are Difficult to Preserve Among Cuts, (4) Challenges of COVID, (5) Bands Seen as Non-Essential, and (6) Unknown Army Bands.

Overall Band Challenges. TRADOC participants cited various overall challenges within the band itself and the community in executing their mission. Like their 392D counterparts, the Fort Eustis community also recently experienced the widening problem of military band support loss but was able to avoid the impact of complete loss when the TRADOC Band was reactivated shortly after deactivation orders were implemented. However, three band member and one former band member discussed the changes to community support and morale brought on by the brief deactivation of the TRADOC Band. One band member explained that the reduction in band personnel impacted the ensemble's ability to support any missions closer to the deactivation. Another band members said:

When I first got there, I would say the first 7 or 8 months was basically full steam ahead. ... We would get these announcements, everyone once in a while to say "hey, [the closure] is coming." Then, when it started to set in, you know, the morale went down a little bit but we were all still doing music, and the community was enjoying it ... I know there was action taken on by community members anyways that would express that their disappointment and how they thought it was the wrong decision. That wasn't just within the band field being upset about it. It was definitely the community so they came out and

supported. I think they came out and supported more thinking that, this may be the last time, like our last summer series.

Another band member focused specifically on community perception in light of band changes and challenges during the time of the deactivation. They stated:

There was that threat that we were going to shut down and we got the news right before I left. I was trying to stay at TRADOC a little bit longer. ... And I just felt like, even though we didn't know if we were going to stay open or not, we were already giving it 100%, but I just felt like we gave it an extra umph. So in that aspect, we didn't do things halfway just because we thought we were shutting down, we still kept doing our best. We perform our best because we knew that the community was rallying for us and we didn't want to disappoint them.

One of the many changes to the TRADOC Band involved continuing flexibility in mission coverage as other bands, like the 392D, were inactivated in the area. One former band member charged, "Because of the bands going away, the Fort Lee band and then trying to do with us here, the Fort Hamilton Band up in New York City, and the TRADOC Band has had to pick up the slack." The TRADOC Band assumed some responsibility for supporting military and community events left in the wake of the 392D inactivation. Regarding mission load, one band member noted, "we simply can't be in three places at once." TRADOC participants indicated that maintaining relevance and adaptability to changing cultural values is a significant challenge. Even though many participants agreed that the TRADOC Band programs performances for each unique audience, they also acknowledged that attracting younger audiences is difficult and "they'll move on without you." This is why a number of participants insisted that effectively "communicating purpose" and "advocating" is so essential, yet equally as difficult. Three

TRADOC participants focused on changes as a result of the pandemic. According to one band member:

When I got there, they were starting up again, before the pandemic. [TRADOC] was starting to take missions again and performances. ... Then the pandemic hit ...

Everything became like on Zoom or getting videos on Facebook. In 2020 summer, we did some outdoor performances and people could come and spread out. Those [performances] were taken really well because people were just really happy to be able to hear music and be in a safe place.

Another band member expressed similar challenges in reacting to what was required to reach the community during a time of isolation. They said, "Most of what we did ended up being virtual performances. ... Our Music under the Stars season ended up being semi live performances where we would perform outside for a very small audience during lunchtime." According to one civilian community member, important education and recruitment opportunities have been missed due to restrictions on public performances. They said:

[The reduction in recruitment] is because of the drop off of connection with the TRADOC Band within the past 3 or 4 years. Those are formative years for our musicians coming in. They're freshman, they're starting to think about what they're doing. So they know it's out there, but it's not in their face anymore. I do think that it helps to get them around the freshman, sophomore year so that they can start to see that that is an option ... but I think that's because of circumstances, we haven't seen them in several years.

An additional three participants discussed the changes to the TRADOC Band and the community following its relocation as the Continental Army Band from Fort Monroe, Virginia to Fort Eustis. One band member noted the impact of the move on the program overall:

Sometimes it just feels like the Government just arbitrarily does this stuff and they really don't think about how the community is affected. It's kind of like, on a soft skill level or on a soft impact level with music. There was a long history of those concerts at Fort Monroe and when they decided to close Fort Monroe because it was no longer useful or money, the band had to move to Fort Eustis. ... When you change the name, I'm not certain that there was any huge effort to advertise we're still going to be around, we're just going to Fort Eustis. ... When you have a combined community in Hampton Roads, over a million people and all these people, they don't go to the concerts. I'm saying all that to say when they got to Fort Eustis, they had to rebuild the entire thing.

Despite the challenge of relocation, one band member observed, "Over the last at least a decade and definitely the last 4 years that I've been here, they've adapted to what the new surroundings are, the new norm." However, from an audience perspective, the relocation caused changes that may not have recovered in the community. One civilian community member stated:

When they were at Fort Monroe, they had such a history of there so that was a major change. When they first shifted up to Fort Eustis, before they built the grandstand, not that many people were there. There were mobs when you went down to Fort Monroe, but when they moved to Fort Eustis definitely lost a big part of its audience ... when we moved to Fort Eustis I think it was not what it used to be. I don't think [the audience] realized with the area where it's located, right on the water there, how beautiful it is. I did see a definite decline in the number of people that were going.

Fort Lee participants largely agreed that communicating the band's purpose and advocating was a never-ending challenge for band members. Participants emphasized common phrases like "quantifying" and explaining that leaders need to insist band members "execute"

versus “play.” Like the TRADOC participants, 392D participants also cited challenges of the former band to adapt to changing desires in cultural taste in music, stating that “adaptability” was a consistent hurdle for the military performers. A smaller number of Fort Lee participants contended that attracting and retaining quality band members was a challenge, as well as instilling the value of quality and consistent performance. Fort Lee participants also agreed with TRADOC participants regarding the challenge of personnel cuts in attempts to preserve the field and the potential cost of rebuilding structures and community relationships when closures occur.

Budget Cuts Frustrate the Community and Band Members. The most significant challenge insisted by both case study participants was budget concerns and cuts. The most common phrases from TRADOC participants included, “repeated cuts are tough,” “cuts don’t save money,” “should never be defunded,” “bands are cheap,” and “worth the expense.” Some participants focused on the budget impacts to military funeral support and the playing of Taps in particular, stating “with all the cuts, it’s hard to get a trumpet player” and that bands are continually asked to “do more with less” in these circumstances. In justifying their opposition to budget cuts, participants most commonly contended that bands help “smooth over” overall defense spending, that bands provide free entertainment and education, and that bands are a large employer for musicians. Some participants believed that budget cuts are a challenge for bands because war efforts and Government priorities take precedence over what military bands provide.

Many Fort Lee participants agreed with TRADOC participants that military bands are “cheap” in the overall defense budget. The most common phrases regarding budget within the Fort Lee community were “unfair cuts,” unbalanced distribution of “funds and resources,” and that bands are “low-hanging fruit” and singled out as a “waste of money” when the Government

Accountability Office is searching for areas to make cuts. Fort Lee participants also insisted on sharing justifications for avoiding budget cuts, including phrases such as “our performances are free,” “bands are your tax dollars at work,” and “bands show the strength of America.” Of note, military funeral support was also a concern in the Fort Lee community. One participant contended that Taps support should always be prioritized in budget considerations.

Community Traditions are Difficult to Preserve Among Cuts. Preserving tradition and history was presented as a challenge, though minimally, for both case studies. A small number of TRADOC participants noted that the history of the TRADOC Band was established as the Continental Army Band at Fort Monroe before it moved to Fort Eustis. These participants believe the band lost audience numbers due to the sudden location and name change without enough advertisement and the lack of history with the community. A small number of Fort Lee participants also illustrated the challenge of preserving history and traditional ceremonial practices without the 392D to provide expert guidance and performances. Also, one participant expressed that historically, Army Bands have had the largest number of bands of all the military services, which they argue seems to no longer be celebrated as tradition.

Challenges of COVID. One recurring probing question in the study asked participants about their experiences and perceptions of the COVID pandemic impact on their community’s band. The most common challenges from the TRADOC community include “adapting for virtual performances” and answering the demand for those virtual performances, especially in education. In response to the COVID pandemic, some TRADOC members were tasked with assisting vaccination centers on top of their duties as band members. These tasks contributed to the list of other challenges facing the TRADOC Band during the pandemic, including altered and last-minute plans, being “caught off guard,” continued regrouping and resyncing after the

pandemic, and “reduced performance counts” that impact their quantifiable data to senior officials. Some noted that having military band performances “put on pause” was challenging as a musician while others contended that music in general seems to be less of a priority following pandemic shutdowns. Challenges stemming from the pandemic in the Fort Lee community were unique due to the timing of the inactivation in October of 2019 and the beginning of the pandemic by the end of the same year. Some participants explained that some of the community were likely confused about the closure due to the timing of the restrictions imposed by COVID. Other challenges faced by the community were the lack of “alternative support” and the ability to attend an in-person performance during that time.

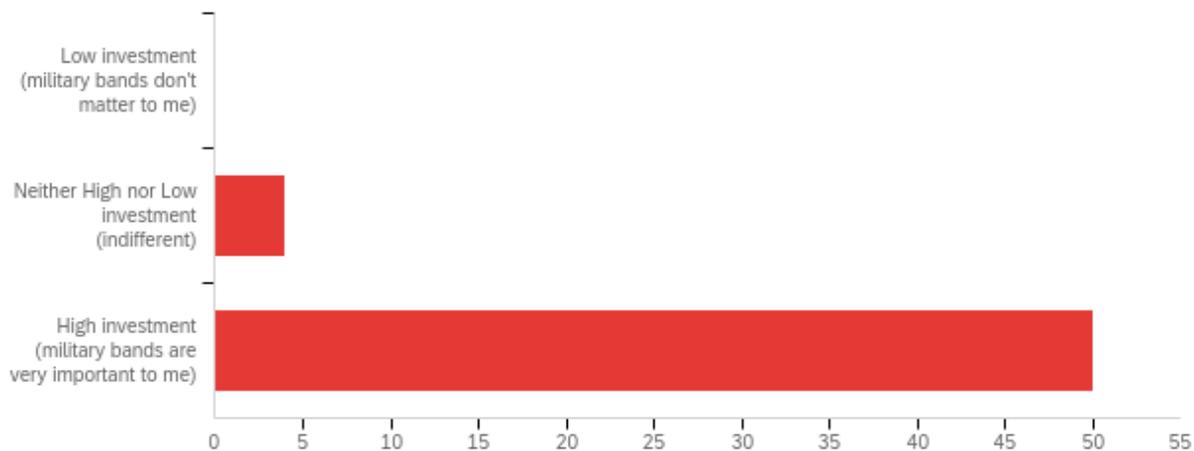
Bands Seen as Non-Essential. Another difficult challenge for bands is remaining a desired resource. In both communities, participants explained their perceptions of why each band may be viewed as a non-essential expense. The majority of these responses resulted from participants being asked about their perspectives regarding deactivations. The most common phrases from the TRADOC community were “people would eventually forget” or “move on” and the band “just becomes a memory.” Others expressed, “they didn’t hate us, they didn’t love us” and support loss is “not life ending.” A few participants concluded that the TRADOC Band is non-essential because the perception was that the military was not interested in their support and that the impact would fall largely on the civilian community only. The 392D community provided very limited input in this area, but the common expression among participants was opposite of TRADOC’s challenge regarding military support. A small number of participants expressed that the military community needed the band and expressed more support than the surrounding civilian community. One participant’s response indicated that 392D support was

non-essential when they admitted they did not know the band was closed until they received the solicitation to participate in the study.

Unknown Army Bands. Beyond being viewed as non-essential in their communities is the challenge of being entirely unknown by audiences. While not a widespread response in the study, the number of experiences surrounding this issue need to be highlighted. Participants from the TRADOC community expressed that they have heard people in the community say they have “no idea there’s an Army Band at TRADOC.” Beyond TRADOC, participants have heard people say, “I had no idea there were military musicians.” The Fort Lee community faced the same issue. Participants said they know audience members who “didn’t know live support is an option.” The majority of 392D participants reported that others “didn’t know the Army has bands” and that despite the band’s efforts, positive impacts remain unseen.

Military Bands Inspire Memories and High Emotional Investment

The fourth survey question asked each participant’s emotional investment toward military ensembles, rating from low investment, indifference, and high investment. Figure 3 illustrates the emotional investment of participants toward military bands. There is a staggering difference between survey participants who feel a high emotional investment toward military ensembles (50) versus those who feel low or no emotional investment toward military ensembles (0). In response to RQ1, a high emotional investment to military bands means that interactions or engagements for these individuals are very important.

Figure 3*Survey Question 4*

The sixth survey question encouraged participants to rate their agreement/disagreement with 22 phrases about the mission, purpose, and public perception of military bands. Participants could rate statements from “Strongly Agree” / (1) to “Strongly Disagree” / (5) on a Likert scale. The overall response rate indicates that survey participants view military bands as an important community resource, with well over half of the phrases gaining a majority of positive, or “Strongly Agree” response rates with phrases that describe military bands as morally, socially, and financially beneficial. This survey question addressed RQ1 regarding personal emotions, perceptions of morale, and the values participants hold from engaging with their military ensemble. Appendix (H) illustrates the response rates for all Likert scale participant phrase ratings.

Band Performances Create Accessible Memories. Participants shared a significant amount of experiences surrounding memories. Common phrases from interviews include “remember” and “memorable.” Most of these types of responses came from Fort Lee community participants. Band members most often discussed their favorite or most memorable performance

experiences, such as watching a large group of third graders form a mosh pit at a rock show or performing holiday shows for appreciative audiences. Fort Lee community members discussed remembering being involved with the band as means of support and witnessing their impact on audiences.

RQ1 Summary

The responses to RQ1 illustrate the positive impacts that the TRADOC and 392D Army Bands provide for their communities. The results show that many participants value music as an essential tradition and means for morale support, which is amplified by the professional appearance and presence of uniformed military ensembles in diverse community settings. The key points that the qualitative data provided are that the bands in this case study executed performances that participants consider highly valuable. Despite the various challenges of closures, remaining relevant, and meeting audience and band member needs, the data shows that the military bands in this comparative case study remain a resource in which community members and band members openly invest their time and emotional energy.

Research Question 2

RQ2. What are community members' perceptions of the impacts of losing military band presence and support in local communities? The second research question addressed the overall community response to military band support loss and potential loss. The interview questions that fed the themes asked participants their perceptions of closure impacts and how morale and well-being would change following support loss. Participant responses from survey questions 6 and 7 also contributed to the resulting themes. The themes that emerged were based on band support loss impact, band challenges, and shared emotions.

Band Support Loss has a Negative Impact on Individuals and Community

The seventh survey question was an open-ended question that allowed participants to provide additional perspectives about the influences and effects of band closures without the influence of preconceived answers. Table 3 represents themes in response to question 7 regarding perceptions of why participants believe bands are a target for defense savings and closure and how the perceptions relate to losing band presence in the community.

Table 3

Survey Question 7

Community impact	Participant perception
Budget / Personnel Cuts	Easy Target / First Target / “Low hanging fruit” Overall military downsizing / evolution Lack of value understanding in leadership
History / Traditions Lost	Many bands gone / More going Deactivations Increasing
Reduced Knowledge / Appreciation	Overall lack of arts appreciation / exposure Warfare emphasized over band support Justification difficult to quantify / explain

The theme of band support loss impact served as one of the primary focuses of the study and was the most anticipated *a priori* theme prior to data collection. Some of the primary concerns among participants from both base studies were separated into the following categories:

Band Closures Cause Feelings of Sadness and Loss. Most participants discussed their personal feelings when asked about how military band support loss would impact them and their communities. In addition to talking about their own feelings, many band members discussed experiencing the feelings and emotions from their audiences during performances and following the band closure in the Fort Lee community. Common phrases when expressing feelings were

“sad” when discussing the 392D Band closure and the potential TRADOC Band closure. Various expressions of “disappointment” were common phrases from participants in the Fort Lee community when discussing the closure. A few band members also discussed feelings of “honor” when discussing performing for veteran and active-duty military ceremonies. Many participants described some variation of being “happy” or seeing audience members be “happy” as a result of performances. One significant recurring phrase from both case studies was participants stating some variation of “you don’t know what you have until it’s gone” when referring to loss of band support. Participants stated, “people may not realize what’s missing or what they aren’t seeing until it’s too late” or “they took [the band] for granted.” Most participants that expressed this sentiment were from Fort Lee in response to interview questions about inactivation results in their community.

Audiences Perceive a Lack of Support Following Band Closures. The “Lack of Support” category in the TRADOC community stemmed from community members saying the TRADOC Band is now “too busy” and that splitting their time supporting Fort Lee creates a situation where less events receive support needed. One band member contended that there are “not enough personnel” to support both communities as desired. Several TRADOC members expressed that this “lack of support” is leading to “empty promises” within the Fort Lee community. Alternatively, seven participants expressed that the TRADOC Band could handle more performances, especially in the military community and education at the high school and collegiate levels. When speaking to support of the military community, some members noted the “lack of engagement” with the large populations of soldiers on base.

Lack of support assertions within the Fort Lee community include phrases such as “no one took your place,” “it’s gone,” “non-existent support,” and “sense of loss” from a majority of

participants. Additionally, Fort Lee community members still working on base and the surrounding area noted the difficulty in planning for TRADOC Band support. In addition to fewer engagements, participants explained that support is likely to be denied for smaller ceremonies and canceled for senior-level events at Fort Eustis. Though it was not a recurring opinion, it is important to acknowledge that one participant charged that though the lack of support is unfortunate, most community members “don’t know what they’re missing” if they never knew the 392D prior to inactivation.

Canned Music is not Comparable to Live Military Band Support. Canned or “piped” music is now a common alternative for support following the 392D inactivation. Many 392D participants described the frustrations of not being able to receive the same level of support prior to the inactivation. The majority of Fort Lee participant responses regarding prerecorded music for events used common phrases like “live music is more special,” “it sounds cheap,” “not the same at all,” and “lame when you hit play.” In two interviews, participants explained the need to resort to prerecorded music for important ceremonies, one person stating, “in one case, it was a ceremony that was a tribute to a fallen soldier, and we had to play music on a boom box.” Three participants pointed out that they were told the TRADOC Band would provide regional coverage, but in many cases, they are unable to support due to their mission load. One point of support contention rested on the use of the electronic bugle. The auto bugle being used for Taps was criticized in this participant pool while others explained they hoped they can find other alternatives before being forced to use canned music. There were two instances of participants admitting that they are now “numb to the change” and that audiences eventually get used to canned music for ceremonies. A select few TRADOC interviews included conversations about the use of the auto bugle or electronic bugle for the rendering of Taps at military funerals. The

common perception from participants was that the auto bugle is “not proper support” and that the auto bugle and other canned music do not provide the same “feeling” as live music. Overall, many Fort Lee participants discussed missing the band in general with one participating stating, “When Army Bands are no longer around to provide that feeling, that sense of pride in your community and your country, it’s a quick and swift [loss].” The inactivation has caused those within the community to either move on and live without support or adjust and fight for the minimal support available from already overtasked bands in the area.

Participant Perceptions of Deactivation Results in the Military and the Community.

The TRADOC Band received deactivation orders and reduced its personnel, but quickly built back up when the 392D was inactivated instead. Participants expressed that there would be a “void” or “something missing” if the TRADOC band would be deactivated. Further, other participants emphasized that it would be a detrimental “loss” to the band field overall. Some participants recalled the audience loss and community impact from the Continental Army Band’s inactivation at Fort Monroe and subsequent movement to Fort Eustis, where participants perceived significant community impact and audience loss for performances. One band member commented on the importance of community support in this situation. They stated:

I think it is very important to have that relationship with the community because if they don't get their support, how can we move forward as a military? So if they would have lost TRADOC, they would have lost the art. They would have lost the community relationship with the military. The continuous support, especially in that area where there are quite a few military bases. That would have been kind of disastrous.

Two participants argued the impact of a full deactivation on schools. One civilian community member considered audience member budgets in the loss of free military band performances:

I think that as far as for the school for the kids, they would lose the opportunity to see a live performance, which is really few and far between these days. Not everybody has money to go out and spend \$50-\$100 on a ticket to go to Sandler. Or would they if they had the money? I think it's really invaluable what [the Fort Eustis musicians] do.

From the military band member perspective, a TRADOC Band deactivation would hurt teachers in particular. They concluded:

I think the largest impact that the closure of the TRADOC Band would have on the community, not necessarily the military side, but the community itself would be the educational outreach that we do. Music in Our Schools month every March ... and especially during Covid, I know I spoke to a number of band directors and our friends within the area that they were looking for any sort of outlet to keep the kids interested in music. And that's the role that the Army Bands, specifically the TRADOC Band filled.

Concurrently, one civilian community member felt that students would lose the opportunity to discover a potential profession as a result of a closure:

A student may not even have thought of a career in music until they hear something like this. And it could end up being maybe a life changing event where they might want to pursue a different career that they maybe hadn't thought about.

Five participants insisted the general community outreach would be the most impacted factor following the band closure. One band member said, "I feel like we're the only musical support, and when I say musical support, I guess I should say community outreach because there's really no other groups that I know of here that goes out in the community" while another stated, "I think most of the impact would have been felt outside of the fence." In addition to one band member's perspective of holiday support such as July 4th and Memorial Day being impacted,

another believed retirement homes would feel the loss, “We have a lot of retirees and nursing homes. . . . So I think it's going to be pretty negatively impacted if there is no band around here.” Alternatively, four participants expressed that while the loss may initially be difficult, the Army and community may move on and find alternative support. One band member stated:

Life goes on anyways, and I think that's the way the army looks at it. But I know that would hurt. That would just hurt them. It would hurt all across that installation too. It would hurt across the band field. Every band closure kind of hurts.

Another band member agreed and stated, “it would be a huge impact on the community. But, what would eventually happen as we would say from the memory and they would seek something else.” Finally, another civilian community member acknowledged additional support in the area. They noted:

You still have the Langley band and you still have the Navy band that are in the area.

And I have a feeling the slack would get picked up there. But there would be no musical representation from the Army, which I do think that would lead to a gap.

A common response in the Fort Lee community to the question regarding the deactivation was participants implying that even though the TRADOC Band is supposed to support, they often “have to do without” for ceremonies that the TRADOC Band cannot or will not support. One civilian community member stated, “there’s a sense of loss that they’re not here anymore because they go so used to it. They were part of the community and when you left disbanded, it’s like, there’s a hole in that community that is not filled anymore.” Others made it clear that closing the 392D was “a mistake” and that the inactivation is a loss for the community overall, families looking for support, traditional military ceremonies and taps, and schools. However, other common phrases in response to deactivation results include that the band is

“forgotten,” “out of sight, out of mind,” and that there has been “no choice but to move on.” Some participants noted that the closure has been a “big hit to recruitment” and a “huge loss” in the retirement community in particular. Three band members participants explained that there was confusion surrounding the inactivation and one of them admitted not knowing that band had been inactivated until contacted for the study. Additionally, some participants noted that the COVID pandemic contributed to audiences being unaware of the band closure, that there is still “confusion” over the lack of support, and that some feel the closure of the 392D was a “political game” held by leadership. Three of the 13 participants for the Fort Lee community shared that the inactivation was unfortunate, but that it is something the community can live without, and that people move on.

Participant Comparisons Between TRADOC and 392D Support. Several participants within each community made comparisons between the priorities and support they perceived from each band. There were fewer comparisons made by TRADOC participants, with limited interviewees noting that community engagement is not as prevalent at the TRADOC Band when compared with the 392D, that the TRADOC community is more receptive to military bands overall, and that the TRADOC Band received more support during its closure from the 392D than when roles were reversed. These responses were not repeated in any circumstance by other participants.

The most common comparisons made by the Fort Lee community included phrases such as, “If you’re not a 4-star, they’re (TRADOC) not playing for you,” and that “TRADOC support is not guaranteed. Participants also expressed that they felt Fort Lee is not a primary concern for their own leadership or TRADOC’s leadership when it comes to military band support and that the 392D provided more support for everyone when they were active. Military funeral support

and the playing of live Taps was specifically cited multiple times here. Participants also emphasized that event planning with TRADOC is more difficult, takes longer, and is often not guaranteed compared to former 392D operations.

Shared Emotions and Experiences Outlined Sadness and Loss in Response to Band Closure

TRADOC participants responded to an interview question that asked how they would feel if the TRADOC Band was officially closed. Some participants described specific areas that would feel the deactivation impact the most, while others reasoned that the community would recover from the loss, which are outlined in the sub-headings below.

Emotional Damage. The most common responses from the TRADOC community included perceptions that a closure would result in “emotional damage” for the community and service members. Another civilian community member agreed on the negative impact to retirement homes:

It would just make it very sad because you miss it. We do. I know we didn't do anything in the summer of 20. I went several times last year and people are looking forward to it, that's the big thing. They also come down here and just do indoor concerts for us or help out with various things. But I think the summer concert people would really miss it.

Those of us have been going for a long time, I definitely missed it. It would be a hole which eventually would fill in because there are things going on, but it was always a consistency that we had access to.

One band members pointed out the importance of military band support for community serve members and that the loss in that area would be “tough.” This question elicited an emotional response from one civilian community member regarding the use of battery-powered bugles at military funerals. They stated:

Don't tell me that I have to quantify a vast amount of stuff of how the group benefits the community when you haven't looked at how is it going to benefit the country and the military budget. ... There are people now that are extremely, extremely upset with that stupid auto bugle nonsense. What an insult to our veterans. What an incredible insult.

From an audience perspective, one civilian community member added:

I think there are people who are very sad and listen, there's no two ways about it, but we also know the military makes changes and stuff like that. I don't know how much if they stayed, it would grow.

Overall, the Fort Lee community remarked that the results of the closure caused “a hole in the community,” “it’s tough,” “it was really sad,” “everybody misses it,” “overwhelming feeling of loss,” that events are “not as fun,” and that the loss is “disappointing” and a “hit to tradition.” One former band member stated, “I think the community has definitely suffered a loss” while another claimed, “there’s no way that doesn’t feel like a betrayal.” Many participants believed that morale and well-being was definitely impacted by the inactivation. One participant shared:

I have definitely spoken to several people that they’re not happy with the fact that there’s not Army Band here because ... the Fort Eustis Band is not covering as many of these missions as we were because they have their own territory they have to cover and it’s just common sense they can’t cover everything.

Further, another civilian community member stated:

I know that not having you guys around on a regular basis has been different and it’s been, I won’t say depressing, but it’s not as fun when we don’t have the band to

participate. If the TRADOC Band is unavailable or last minute can't travel, that's a different tone.

Lowered Morale. Participants were asked to discuss potential changes to community morale and well-being if the TRADOC Band was closed. One civilian community member feared that the question meant the band was due to close and expressed the band was important due to the high military concentration in the area. Another civilian community member shared their personal morale perspective when asked if their morale would be negatively impacted due to the band's closure:

I would say for me, yes, especially under the current commander ... he's been very active in trying to create relationships and some things that I'm interested in proposing to him. He's been open to everything, about maybe doing conducting exchange and I might be able to conduct his group and have him to come and conduct my group.

One band member emphasized the morale impacts for military band service members themselves. They shared, "it feels like they're writing on the wall when they keep jerking around like that. You would think that the decision makers would consider also the health and morale of the 42Rs [musicians] be weighed in on the decision." The majority of the participants commented on the morale impact to the surrounding community. Most of the discussions involved ways in which audience member morale would be negatively impacted due to the closure. One band member stated:

I think [morale and well-being] would lower because I think the military provides that image to the public of safety; a safe and secure image. I think if the community has a positive image of that, they'll feel a sense of public, national pride and protection.

Two band members emphasized the morale impact on retired and veteran communities. The first band member said:

If I were retirees and every Christmas or every summer I usually to come to see the band and they're not there anymore, I think that they have nowhere to go to listen to these kind of musicians playing. For retirees, especially veterans, they love to see the Army Band playing. They have a sense of honor, they're proud of being American. The morale, I think they feel kind of sad the sense that they don't have that kind of support anymore

The second band member agreed while also acknowledging the impact on general audiences.

They explained:

There's things that only military bands can do, and when you're wearing that uniform, especially the community of veterans, it's just another thing about their history, their past that goes away and I think it would be upsetting. Unfortunately, I think you take away the band, you take away the soft face of the Army and you find yourself in a situation where people begin to view the military based on what they see on TV.

One 392D civilian community member explained, "well I think my own morale has suffered. But I have a very, at least compared to a lot of people, a very traditional perspective."

Unchanged Morale. While many participants seemed to believe that the civilian community would experience the loss more harshly, one band member implied that the military community would not suffer as severely, and one civilian community member explained that the loss would not be unbearable. The band member stated:

I don't know if it would change much on the military side of things, the morale for the military itself. Unfortunately a lot of what I've seen between the Fort Lee band and the

TRADOC Band is, there's not a lot of involvement or engagement with the soldiers themselves.

The civilian community member shared:

Music's a big part of my life and I know there's a lot of people here too that have been doing both of those things. But there would be a hole, there's no two ways about that. Is it life ending? No. Most people here that have some contact with the military know that they switched things around in a heartbeat. It would be something that would be missing for the summer. Because I know the summer of 20 a lot of people were like, wow, I can't even just go sit outside and enjoy a concert anymore.

RQ2 Summary

For transparency purposes, it is important for the reader to understand that RQ2 served as the most significant point of interest for this study. The *a priori* assumptions before data collection were that community members and band members would be sad following any band closure, but the data shows much deeper feelings of loss and disappointment alongside some contradicting viewpoints that audiences are resilient and move on despite the loss. The responses to RQ2 show that support loss has a serious impact on the emotional well-being, morale, and traditions of individuals and community members within the Fort Lee and Fort Eustis areas.

Research Question 3

RQ3. How do band members describe the experience of supporting community events as military musicians? The interview questions associated with this research question were only asked to active and former band members from the 392D and TRADOC Army Bands. This provided a unique opportunity to compare what band members perceived during performances with what community members perceived in response to RQ1. The emergent themes from this

research question are based on shared experiences and band challenges. Overall, former 392D band members' feedback was positive. Band members shared impactful memories of their time spent at Fort Lee as service members and that the band was a meaningful resource for the community.

Band Members Shared Mostly Positive Experiences and Interactions as Military Musicians

No survey questions were specifically asked to military members to avoid confusion and civilians answering questions for military only. However, it is assumed that many of the survey participants are active or former military band members. Shared experiences of band members in each community fell into 2 categories: (a) positive feelings and (b) impactful memories. These vivid accounts from both communities' band members provide a clear picture of military musician experiences in response to RQ3.

Positive Feelings. TRADOC Army Band members described their unique feelings from supporting military and civilian events while serving as part of the TRADOC Army Band. One band member described their personal feelings serving as a military musician. They stated:

It made me feel very special to call myself an American soldier. Playing for the community for my people, for the country, to share my talent. I think that was very rewarding to serve countries that way. I'm very honored to play for soldiers.

Of the six band members interviewed from the Fort Lee community, half of them noted that the 392D was an enjoyable assignment. When recalling specific missions and audience interactions as band members, the majority of the feedback was positive. Along the subject of meeting audiences' musical needs, another band member explained that some of the surrounding area was not as "military-focused", which led to feelings of appreciation and understanding at only select performance events. One band member noted the importance and impact of 392D support at

local military funerals, stating “the feeling and emotion that we have the ability and the expertise to put into just those 24 notes of taps makes all the difference at a proceeding like that.” Another band member reiterated additional positive audience feedback; he recalled:

There were times when they would say thank you so much for doing that. My son or daughter or my dad was in the Army too and this was his favorite song. He liked to go see the band when he was able to.

Impactful Memories. Six out of eight band members participants described their memories of the TRADOC Band’s impact on community building and various locations for outreach. One band member stated, “the joint military groups are really important because I feel like people in the community need to see the various services in one setting, so that alone is an outreach there.” Three additional band members participants illustrated their experiences in community building and outreach in regards to joint military ensemble collaborations. They said, “They looked up to us and we [had] banter, the comradeship, relationship between the countries and bands. Even down in the dressing room when we're all piled in, we would break out into music” and “The Norwegian band had herald trumpets and ... we're standing right next to and talking to these Norwegian 18, 19-year-old trumpet players and ... we made friends. That's huge” and “I did love doing Virginia international tattoo. It was really cool playing music with other musicians from around the world. You're building relationships with your fellow allies.” Three additional band members discussed their impression of the importance of military music in schools and in relation to recruitment. One band member explained:

When you do our Music in Our Schools and actually meet a person and then later on, I have seen people who I've known that were impacted by what we've done. I've seen I think twice now that person they're now in the military. They graduated from high

school, they actually did join the military. They may not have become musicians, but they joined. And that's the goal. It's like, wow, this really does work.

Another band member recalled:

Between music under the stars and the educational outreach that we do, those are moneymakers and those are the most memorable things for me. I really like interacting with students. I like seeing the inspiration on kids' faces when we come through.

A third band member that reflected on experiences with students recalled, "I think the Music in Our Schools is such an important program that we can offer that we can help with music education as well as help connect with the community." Two band members discussed the influence of performing or witnessing Taps from a performer perspective. One of them asserted:

It's not a job that I like doing just because I don't like funerals, but I know it's an important job and I'm going to do it well, so I feel like that's the most important thing that we have to do. But unfortunately with all the cuts it's hard to get a trumpet player for every single funeral, it's just not happening.

One TRADOC band member shared a negative experience as a military musician, explaining that community support was stronger than military support of the TRADOC Band in general.

They shared:

The only people in my experience that were actually interested in anything that was going on with the band were people outside of Fort Eustis. When we did the holiday concert in 2019, were it not for the AIT Soldiers, the audience would've been half capacity, hardly anybody. And the whole intent was to get people on post to come to the performance. Hardly anybody really showed up for that. Within the audience itself the majority of

people that I saw come to the performance were family members of the people in the band.

One 392D participant recalled a clear difference between witnessing audience interactions with a popular ensemble and their own classical ensemble. They also stated:

Most of our value is entertainment value but a lot of us on the classical side, we tend to think of it as high art concerts. It's really hard to match that with what the audiences want and the mission of the Army ... playing pop tunes on a clarinet and flute, there's not enough relations there for just a person who is a normal consumer of music.

Over half of the 392D band members interviewed recalled positive performances and interactions in vivid detail. In a school setting, one band member stated, "the kid who runs up to me and was like, that was the best thing I've ever seen. Like that definitely sticks with you forever." Further, one band member recalled supporting veterans as military musicians:

We used to go up and play at the VFW for the World War II soldiers ... called honor flights. That was a great community event ... I just remember countless veterans that came up to us and thanked us for being there just the simple playing some military marches and being able to just provide a little bit of esprit de corps.

Finally, another band member shared a first-hand account of connecting with the large audiences at the annual Fourth at the Fort event:

I used to love interacting with the audiences under those circumstances, especially because that's when you really get to show them that we're just regular people. And once you draw them out and they start really interacting with you and you have banter back and forth between the stage and the audience, it's kind of a magical thing that happens ... It doesn't get any better [when] you've got 8 or 10,000 people there at Williams Stadium

and they're all there to see you and the fireworks. And that's a moment of connection that was pretty awesome to experience.

Band Members Confirmed Roles as Symbols of Ideas, Values, and Beliefs in Communities

TRADOC and 392D band members replied to an interview question that asked if they believed their ensembles performed as symbols of ideas, values, and beliefs for audience members, which provided further valuable insight for RQ3.

Symbol of Power and Patriotism. Three TRADOC band members described their experiences of the band acting as a symbol for the community. The first band member shared how the TRADOC Band symbolizes a powerful military:

You start playing music and then you see somebody like pushing through the crowd and almost tackling you when they see you. Or that song just moved me to tears. They know we have the most powerful military in the world. They know we have the best equipment and the most fit people, and you throw being a musician in on top of all that.

Another band member explained:

The TRADOC Band has, I'm not sure if it's officially or unofficially been labeled a national asset. ... That kind of patriotism that bridge between what was on base and off base between the military and civilians to a larger area of operations than just the Hampton roads area.

The third band member described charged that the TRADOC Band acts as a symbol of patriotism and camaraderie:

I would definitely say just patriotism and a sense of community, camaraderie and it's just a good sense of community. We do a lot of parades, not necessarily these two particular organizations, but just kind of getting out there visually for the community to see is pretty

powerful and I think they really respond well to that. Right now I'm in a performance series of Virginia international tattoo and I think it's a really good representation of the military story we're trying to tell and how we're trying to connect as well.

One former 392D band member believed the impact of the band to be conditional. They stated, "I think the people that are of the older generations, they would respect us and they would see us as being patriotic and providing that symbol." Another 392D band member addressed patriotism as a part of the band's mission. They stated, "I think that the band obviously is specially positioned to give people that special sense of patriotism in the sense you see the military band that's playing ... patriotic music like God Bless America or a number of other songs that it gives people that chill." Finally, two band members connected the wearing of the military uniform with symbolizing the values and beliefs of their audiences. One participant explained:

They see all these parts of the uniform and they know this is not just a person here, this is a soldier in the United States Army and they represent our country. Then to see that person playing music for them, it ties together the patriotism, unity, the professional excellence, the esprit de corps; everything else is part of being a soldier. It ties all that together in a package that people can actually access.

The other band members that also discussed the impact of the uniform stated:

I think people see musicians in the uniform, they see the pride in which they take their job. There's just a certain pride that you within someone when they're standing there performing for their country and they know that that's what they're doing it for. There's just something within that ... gets your blood pressure going.

History and Value Representation. Three TRADOC band member discussed the ways the TRADOC Band represents the values and history of their community and country. The first band member illustrated:

You go into the TRADOC building across from the main building and on that left long wall, you see the history of that band. The history alone matched up with the history of that area. It should just be a protected thing.

Two other TRADOC band members described the ability of the band to recognize the musical values of their audiences. The first band member stated, “[We play] patriotic music and kind of funk or rock or pop music, so that the audience can recognize different genre, something they can recognize [and are] familiar with.” The second band member agreed:

We tend to cater to our audiences, which is a good thing. We're not just playing for ourselves. ... This is a bigger picture. And I really do feel like we programmed around certain events while keeping the integrity of what we were doing.

However, one band member concluded that not all audiences agreed that the band represents the needs and values of the community. They shared:

I feel like the happiest people about our return at Fort Eustis in any way, shape, fashion or form was the civilian community. As far as Fort Eustis itself, we were kind of there.

They didn't hate us. They didn't love us. We were just there.

One 392D band member also agreed that the 392D failed to serve as a symbol of values of their audiences or community. They stated, “I can't think of some kind of value or larger concepts that without us performing people wouldn't have thought, or had, or held.” Several 392D band members addressed the value of the 392D's performances in terms of culture and unity, professionalism and patriotism, and wearing of the military uniform. In terms of culture,

one band member stated, “music is a huge cross section of any culture and we provided a huge amount of that spectrum for everybody who came to any of our shows.” Another band member addressed unity:

Most everybody wants to be part of something bigger than they are. And whether they realize it or not, a lot of people want to do that because I just makes you feel like more of a part of humanity. I mean, there’s a reason why they call [music] the humanities.

Reiterating the unique mission of the 392D and of Army Bands in general and representation of the Army as a whole, one band member stated, “that’s what you get from your Army. You see the discipline of the Army and yet everybody can rock out and have a good time.”

Beliefs and Audience Attraction. Beyond values, one TRADOC band member noted how they have seen the band draw audiences based on beliefs:

Music, it creates another level of emotion and it reaches another level of senses that maybe like a picture or just like words on a paper can't give you. When people go to an event, they're going to it because it's something they believe it. So then when the band performs it helps to bring what is inside those people it to the stage and helps to create that setting.

Band Members Shared Challenging Experiences as Military Musicians

While sharing memorable experiences and sharing their perspectives as performers, 392D and TRADOC band members commonly expressed challenges they experience as military musicians. TRADOC band members reported more challenges compared to former 392D band members, which included budget and personnel issues. It was important to discover and compare the positive perspectives as well as the negative for transparency in each community.

Unbalanced Budget. TRADOC musicians cited budget issues as a challenge, whose comments are best summarized by one band member. They explained, “when we get close and we work hard, we lose our budget or we get cuts or there's a war and then our forward progress is compromised.” One band member emphasized, “the amount of money you save versus the impact of what in the community and for the troops support you get from an army band is just not comparative.” The 392D musicians agreed regarding budget concerns. One band member emphasized that cutting the bands would not “make a dent” and that the 392D was a “drop in the bucket” in the overall defense budget while another explained that the continued cuts force the bands to “spread ourselves a little too thin.” Another band member explained:

You don't have any idea what a resource those bands are and at a very affordable cost, it really doesn't cost very much money to keep the Army Band running and they just go out and do things that you can't train anybody else to do.

Notably, one band member explained that military bands are a free resource, which saves schools and other locations like retirement homes and military installations from having to spend money on live musical entertainment or DJs – military bands are already funded by the American taxpayer.

Personnel Issues. Several common phrases used by TRADOC band members included “promotion freezes,” indicating the struggles to make rank in a diminishing field. The majority TRADOC musicians cited “continued cuts,” “limited personnel,” and “mission load” as the most prevalent challenges for the TRADOC Band. 392D band members cited that the quality of performer, leader, and music needed attention at Fort Lee. One band member explained that sub-par musicians sometimes slip through the cracks. Another musician advocated that younger

musicians with more experience in teaching and performing should have the opportunity to lead, but the Army hierarchy often overrules those opportunities and affects the musical product.

RQ3 Summary

RQ3 was designed to discover the unique perspectives and experiences of military musicians in the midst of closure challenges. The correlating interview questions were asked to TRADOC and former 392D Army Band members only. The data illustrates a balance of positive experiences and the aspects of their mission and performances that could be improved. Readers may now more thoroughly understand the experiences that inspire and motivate band members during performance interactions. Leadership may also consider the challenges regarding personnel and budget issues in an application of solutions in similar situations.

Research Question 4

RQ4. What criteria are required to create meaningful military band performances that are meaningful and beneficial to military bands and their community audiences? Interview questions and survey questions aimed at answering RQ4 were asked to both military and civilian participants to investigate what audiences and band members think the field needs to continue its legacy of providing social value. Emergent themes from this question included community impact, recommendations to leaders, and shared emotions and experiences.

Audiences and Military Musicians Seek Interactions That Provide Positive Community Impact

The fifth survey question requested participant perspective on the primary mission of military bands. Participants were asked to check all options that applied based on researcher *a priori* assumptions, but were also given a write-in option via selecting “Other.” An overwhelming 49 participants indicated that building morale for service members at home and overseas is the primary mission of military bands. Participants who selected “Other” and

provided a response indicated that a primary mission of military musicians is creating connections with communities as musical ambassadors.

The sixth survey question is also applicable in the response to RQ4. This survey question asked participants to rate their agreement/disagreement with provocative phrases about the mission, purpose, and public perception of military bands. Participants could rate statements from “Strongly Agree” / (1) to “Strongly Disagree” / (5). Responses to 7 of the 22 total phrases indicated that participants most agreed that individuals and communities need military bands to develop, that retirement communities benefit from military band presence, and that communities benefit from having bands to preserve patriotism. Appendix (H) outlines the response rates for all Likert scale participant phrase ratings.

Audiences Desire Involved and Present Military Bands. Participants were asked what they think the community needed from the 392D in terms of morale, well-being, and community building. In addition to their other feedback, five of the 13 Fort Lee interview participants stated that the 392D should be brought back to active status, which was primarily supported by reasoning that present support is lacking from other bands. One former band member explained that something the 392D could have done to improve morale and community building is community reach outside of music performance, such as community trash pickup. Three separate participants stressed the importance of the 392D as free community resource for entertainment and communal gathering. One band member emphasized the importance of music in the community in general. They stated:

If I'm a leader trying to make everybody connected, I think music itself brings people together. Musical language itself, it's universal. Different genres or something that people

recognize, all the songs that we all know, bring us together and positive energy to everybody.

Another band member argued that band presence is not widely known enough. They shared:

What they need, I'm not sure. But what the TRADOC Band could do is have an even greater presence in the community because outside the schools and the retirees, there are people in this community that have no idea there's an Army Band at TRADOC.

Two civilian community members agreed that the band serving as a way to gather the community is essential, stating “it brings people together and gives them an idea of why they’re there and celebrating etcetera. The motivation of why you guys exist has always been to get people to gather and come together” and “[bands need to] provide the opportunity for this sense of connection with other people ... to come together and enjoy something together.” Two former band members noted that drawing in audiences to build community involved appealing to their musical needs. One of them explained, “I think it’s important that the band is able to relate to the community ... through making sure that the music that we’re playing is music that people are able to enjoy.” Participants emphasized the importance of Army representation and presence in the community. Three participants agreed that military representation and “telling the Army story” was an essential mission of the 392D. One of the three civilian community members summarized the group opinion:

One of the things that communities really thrive on is arts and music. Many studies have shown that when cities erect a town center and then focus that on arts venues and music venues, the restaurants follow and it helps with culture, it helps with education, it’s so important. ... It also allows us to bring the Army flavor, which is that sense of

communicating the Army's lineage and history and tradition and telling the Army story through that common language of music.

One band member noted that the isolation of the pandemic will drive people back to military bands and a sense of community. They stated:

I think because of the pandemic it's been really difficult because everyone felt so isolated from people and so I think the band going out in the schools is helping people to feel that sense of normalcy again. I think that's going to be a really big part of the band's purpose. I think that's what the community will want out of the band currently is just giving them that feeling of pre-pandemic life again.

Bands Provide an Avenue for Expressing Emotion. Several 392D participants emphasized the importance of the Fort Lee band as a resource for recognizing and expressing human emotion. One of the three participants stated, "We are really a gateway to a full range of human emotions that we will inspire or trigger with our performances." Beyond emotion, another participant extended the band's impact to spirituality. They noted:

People have in their minds a picture of what the military is going to be like, and then here they come with their instruments and they start playing and the people are standing up and clapping ... sometimes it's very moving, and it can get you choked up because the spirit is there.

Finally, the last of the participants that advocated for the emotional effects of the band generalized, "the 392D was ... a huge force multiplier when it comes to building rapport, building awareness, fostering appreciation. Everything positive about having a standing Army is greatly enhanced, in my view, through military bands."

TRADOC participants also responded to what the TRADOC Army Band can improve in terms of morale, well-being, and community building. One civilian community member observed that performance advertisement could be improved, stating “I don’t hear that much about concerts.” One band member explained the band adapts to what leadership and the community needs at any given time. They said:

It's really whatever the flavor of the day is. When there was the Iraq war, the Chief of Staff put out all military band performances will be done in a dress uniform because we need to soften up the face of the Army because we were a war machine for many years at that point. But as time went on strategically, he said, okay now start wearing the duty uniform to as many performances as you can because we need to give a different face to that uniform. It's not just a war machine. We're not just killers.

Another band member focused on how they feel leadership should approach appointing internal leadership to improve morale and well-being within the ensemble and within the community as a result. They stated:

From what I understand and when I was hearing in the last couple of years, that whole atmosphere over there changed. Not just for the band members. In an effort to keep the band open, they tried to set up structures that the Army would understand but are not really indicative to what we do is a [military occupational specialty]. And then kind of ruin it for everybody. And then when you get subpar performing it's you just get subpar results that way. Instead of letting the people who know what they're doing within this field direct how this field should run.

Three band members discussed how they believe that additional community outreach and more performances may improve community morale and well-being. The first band member said:

For observances that come up, I think they really need the bands to be present and to perform at religious or patriotic observances and then I think they need the bands to be out in the community. I always see opportunities [where] the band should be contacting these people because they could be playing here, but I know there's like a lot of legal things too.

Bands are Needed for Educational Outreach. A combination of band member and civilian community members believed that educational outreach is the primary vehicle for building community, morale, and well-being through military music. One band member and one civilian community member focused on education within colleges and universities in particular. The band member shared, “You have a few universities, which is an area that some headway could be made if it's done and approached properly. That was not an area that we really tapped into.” The civilian community member is hopeful that military bands such as TRADOC will come visit their students for music clinics. They said, “if we can invite more people to come to us then I think that will create a stronger relationship with our community and outside groups.” The remaining four participants focused on education discussed Music in Our Schools for elementary and high school students. One civilian community member argued:

First off, the music in your schools and music and education outreach ... I don't believe it's ever enough. They need to do it as much as they have that as they can be allowed to, but that requires developing a real program, a real plan. You can incorporate recruiting and skills clinics.

One band member shared:

As much support as we could provide. I would say positive role models in the community just so the public knows that we're there, we're part of the community, we support them

and we're willing to help, especially with us and kind of more of an education capacity. I think if we were able to get out there just a little bit more, that would be fantastic.

Two band members insisted that performing in schools and colleges provides a way forward for young musicians and potential future soldiers in terms of education and recruitment. One stated:

We've gone to colleges; we changed our focus. We realized what we were missing as band members and musicians are the musicians and we started going into more areas.

Because people can't support what they don't see and people can't pursue what they don't see.

The other band member shared:

The kids were just really excited to see someone playing music that looks like their mom or dad, wearing that uniform ... We not only entertain them, we educate them of course, talking about our instruments, talking about what we do.

One 392D civilian community member expressed the importance of the band in lower income schools, explaining that performances by the 392D were something special and unique that those students would otherwise likely not experience in life. Two civilian community members and one former band member justified recruiting in schools via performances as an essential opportunity to build future career paths. The former band member stated:

You make that connection with potential future Army musicians who might see what you're doing and think, man that's got to be me. All of that stuff is gone now. Not to mention probably 30 or 40 performance or more during Music in Our Schools month.

One of the two civilian community members asserted:

What percent of the military is made up by band members? You're a unique breed my friend, and the ability to see that kind of performance can be transformative especially

within the education realm. It can be transformative for these kids and could inspire them to serve. The loss of it in the schools is definitely something I know the orchestral and band teachers notably miss.

The second civilian community member advocating for the importance of recruiting stated:

If the band members aren't out there recruiting their MOSs the way everyone else is out there recruiting their MOSs, you're at a disadvantage ... I think the band should reach out to the communities and the schools to influence the next generation and educate them on the possibilities.

Another band member extended the reach beyond school support to nonprofits who also may be involved in music education for students. They stated, "I think going out and doing these community functions, doing the education trips of playing in the schools and supporting local nonprofits in various ways." The final civilian community member believed that the education level of military musicians was also of interest in performances since military musicians are often role models in educational performances. They said:

I think it's important for them to be involved in the schools because I do think that's an important part of people realizing that ... someone got their doctorate and education. It's always kind of neat to hear people say they're just not sitting in the band, they have a full degree. I think it needs to be part of the schools definitely.

Two band members indicated that emotional engagement is essential to building community and morale. The first band member shared:

If I'm a leader trying to make everybody connected, I think music itself brings people together. Musical language itself, it's universal. Different genres or something that people

recognize, all the songs that we all know, bring us together and positive energy to everybody.

The other band member summarized:

I think our job does provide an escape for both us and the civilians. It does remind us that, we're not just positive machines, we're humans with emotions. Sometimes we need that reminder that we are humans with feelings and it's okay to enjoy the art. It's okay to have fun with the music.

Bands are Essential to Connect With Active and Retired Military. Several TRADOC participants emphasized the importance of military band connection with veterans in retirement communities. One civilian community member said, “a lot of people who live in those communities are veterans and ... they may be generations older than some of the people in the current group, but there's still a connection they are from the military experience” while another civilian community member insisted:

I think bands are definitely worth the expense. That's an important part when you have so many military people in the area and it's very important for us here. Yes. But I think it's always been a big part of the military. ... That's something that should not be cut out. It should not ever be because I think it's a connection that people have even when they retired from military.

A band member shared:

You see a person who's fought in World War II and is still alive and they're interacting with someone who was also part of the First Infantry Division, our First Cavalry or whatever and both people with 60 years difference, both deployed with the same units. It

gives them something to talk about and puts a smile on their face and somehow keeps them connected to their past selves. That's some beautiful things that we offer.

The final band member recalled the emotions involved with performing in these types of communities. They shared:

We went to veteran assisted living communities. We did really cater to the audiences who are mostly Korean and Vietnam veterans. ... Just watching the emotion on their face; some of them had Alzheimer's but once we played the service medley, some of those guys and gals actually stood up so we all know that music can positively impact someone that has dementia or Alzheimer's, so it was kind of bittersweet but breathtaking.

A combination of six band members and civilian community members recalled memories and provided justifications of why military communities would be impacted by TRADOC Band support loss. One band member recalled, "I remember we went to one of the VA hospitals ... they loved being with us." Another band member shared an experience with fellow women service members:

I know at one point I played at a veteran's retirement community and I met a woman who was in the Women's Army Corps and we're just able to really talk about each of our experiences. I think it stirs up memories and some of the good things that they experienced when they were in the military.

One civilian community member commented:

The local field bands are part of the community. And I think it brings pride to each and every community that that those fields bands are in. It strengthens the perception of the patriotism and also of the sacrifices that the community has to give in order to live around military bases.

One band member and one civilian community member discussed the importance of the TRADOC Band in the military community and final honors, or Taps. The band member recalled:

One of the most important things I did was play Taps at funerals. I get that there is a huge mission load for any unit to undertake. But when I hear the difference between somebody come up, just like I'm so glad that you're a real player and not this electronic thing and that there's actually somebody who served who's honoring my father today, with Taps. It's one of the most important things I ever did. And the most heartbreaking thing that I couldn't do after I had my issue. As much as that would wear on you as you know, one after another, you gotta admit that's where you wanted to be; honoring somebody that served.

The civilian community member agreed:

I don't know any military person, especially trumpet player bugler who's played for a funeral who doesn't feel the same way. That's down to the core of our soul. It is one of the greatest honors to do that. And it's the absolute requirements for that person who served. That's the least we can do well.

One TRADOC band member shared that retirement community performances were powerful from a performer perspective. They shared:

The performances that meant the most to me and had the biggest emotional impact for me as far as feeling like this makes it worth it was performing during Covid at the nursing homes. The heartbreaking part of it was we were basically standing outside in 100°, going from going window to window to perform for people, but to see the smiles on their faces, to see them so happy, to see them feel like [they're] not forgotten about. That for me was the most impactful and most to me at that time, the most important thing.

The majority of the 392D participants also felt the support loss impact was felt most strongly in the retirement community, especially within the veteran retirement community. The general consensus among participants was that retirement communities were often the most appreciative of 392D performances. Participants also explained the retirement communities were also the most disappointed and vocal leading up to and following the inactivation. One civilian community member asserted, “it’s a loss because it’s not there anymore, but no one took your place. There’s no one else that comes to those retirement centers and plays music for them. It’s nonexistent.” Two civilian community members and one former band member emphasized the loss in connection between the 392D and veterans in retirement communities. For example:

Virginia is a state with a large veteran populace and certainly in our retirement homes, you can’t round the corner without encountering Vietnam vet, a Korean war vet, a World War II vet. So the lack of engagement, there is definitely a hit to morale for the people who are accustomed to those performances come through and helping remind them of their continuing link to the armed forces.

Another civilian community member explained the impact on a veteran in her own family:

When my father was a World War II veteran and y’all would go out and play at places like that, that’s one of those times when it gets you choked up because when you see former veterans getting to interact, mingle and then get a performance by young soldiers today, that’s one of those memorable moments and they absolutely love it. And now that’s a huge loss just from the retirement community, huge.

Further, a former band member charged that the visual representation of the military uniform and emotional connections during performances increase the sense of loss:

The effect of the retirement community would be a whole lot more impactful ... because how many people in that retirement community served themselves? Sometimes it's the music we bring and sometimes it's, oh, they're wearing the uniform. I used to wear that patch. It's both that feeling of nostalgia that you described and then couple that with man, they came to play a show for me.

Three of the 392D participants explained how support loss potentially affected military functions. One civilian community member stated, "at a nice dinner function or an Army Ball or something, I would definitely want the band there. Who would want a DJ at an Army Ball?" A former band member called attention to the military support loss following the band's long history on Fort Lee. They illustrated, "the biggest impact was the military community just from all the graduations and that they're missing out on the military music that normally was there for the last, what, 60 years or so that is no longer a thing." Alternatively, one civilian community member argued that military functions suffered following the loss, but did little to retain or support their existence. They argued, "the military didn't support the band because they took the band for granted. You were always here but then the day you walked out the door everybody says, where's my band?"

Audiences and Performers Recommend More: Advertising, Outreach, and Budget

Participants were asked to provide their advice to leaders to improve the TRADOC Band and 392D if it could be reactivated. This theme also includes recommendations to senior Government leaders. The eighth survey question asked participants how they would improve the impact of their military band to enhance morale overall. Table 4 illustrates the most common categories, in order of precedence, of recommended ways to improve military band impact resulting from participant responses.

Table 4*Survey Question 8*

Recommended improvements	Participant perception
Availability / More Performances	Increased high-visibility performances needed More community / off-post performances Increased performance radius / travel opportunities Bring the band back / undo deactivations
Better Advertisement / Increase Awareness	Advanced notice of performances Utilize social media Focus on notifying civilian audiences
Community Outreach / Connection	Increase recruitment More available education interactions Connect public with the military
Increase Budget / Ensemble Size	Increase budget to expand operations / reach Double band size / more bands
Performance Improvements	Diversify repertoire / musical styles Know your audience Higher standards for individual performance
Personnel Improvements (Leaders & Subordinates)	Increase value understanding in senior leadership More administrative / Soldier support

More Engagement and Improved Outreach. The majority of TRADOC participants explained that their recommendations to leadership would be to create more community engagement. This included suggestions like performing at more schools, for more active and veteran military events, and more retirement homes. One TRADOC civilian community member re-emphasized that community performances could be advertised more effectively to reach audiences. Three band members agreed that more engagements on base and in the community are needed. The first band member shared:

I know [the band] is already going out a lot in the community. It might be because of the pandemic but I know something that also meant a lot to me was performing for the veteran home, so spending more time playing in veteran's homes.

The second band member focused on military support performances specifically and how those relationships could be improved:

Set up a more consistent performance schedule for the Advanced Individualized Training Soldiers. Be it, the first Saturday of every month, whatever it may be. Something that's consistent that the drill sergeants and the command of all these companies know is coming. Also, the [band] command team needed to get out there and meet with these other commanders.

The final band member agreed that more missions overall would be better for military representation in the community:

I would say if there's a way to just continue supporting the community through different concert series which we do, which I think is great. We also support the month of the military child and music in our schools particularly to help impact the community. I would say let's keep sending groups out there to do that and remind the community that we're still here and we still support them.

Education recurred as a necessary leadership focus for one band member and one civilian community member. The band member concluded:

Get involved with the high schools. ... I feel like that's an engagement point that we really didn't utilize that we need to utilize. [We should be] engaging the high schools outside of just sending a rock band during Music in Our Schools month.

The civilian community member agreed the student interaction is essential. They said, “Maybe more interactions with the students. When the chamber winds group came, I think I only had maybe, I don't know eight or nine people who were there for the master class, but it was very impactful for them.”

392D participants made several suggestions for increased performances and improved performance quality and models. Similar to the TRADOC community, Fort Lee participants noted that “better marketing” and advertisement may have improved community relations and attendance. Additional “community outreach” outside of musical activities was a recurring suggestion. The Fort Lee community also advised that leader engagement and advocacy for the field overall was something that was lacking on base and outside the gates. Three civilian community members felt that leadership should maximize live performances and get out in the community more. One of the civilian community members stated, “you can still do effective outreach with smaller components ... even one or two people is better than pre-recorded music, so maximize the opportunities for live performance.” One of the three civilian community members looking to maximize live performances explained, “to those who made decisions regarding the band, I would say if anything, build it up and send it out to the world to show them that the Army is more than dust and dirt and MREs and battles.” A mix of band members and one civilian community member recommended that leaders focus on community outreach in a variety of ways. One band member thought that the band volunteering for local outreach missions such as cleaning up highways or graffiti would be mutually beneficial for musicians and the community. Two participants recommended outreach in terms of collaboration with other community leaders. They explained that band leaders should engage with other leaders in the community to advocate and connect. One participant summarized:

It's just being consistent and being connected with your communities. Find out who the community leaders are. Go to the civilian military council meetings and meet some of the people that are in the communities and work with your community outreach program manager to find out if there are ways that she can help you interact appropriately.

Another form of outreach recommended to leadership surrounded prioritizing innovative ways to reach audiences. One former band member stated:

We really need to focus in on social media for outreach. Because we have less bands, but the production is becoming a bigger and bigger need, Army Bands really need to look at hiring more sound and video production folks.

Stop Cuts and Reopen Bands. The other most prevalent participant reaction that contributed to this theme was the common response of “stop cutting us” or “leave it alone.” Many of the suggestions for more community presence involved increased advertising for performances and recommendations for band commanders to be more active physical presence in their communities as leaders and as advocates. Participants also indicated leaders should make committee-led decisions for the field and “get on the same page” to balance performances for regional bands to meet mission goals and make sure everyone is effective. TRADOC participants exhibited uncertainty about the field's future overall, twice noting that the band field is “dying.” Participants recommended improving upward mobility for soldiers coming in with high-level degrees and caring about soldier wellness and success. Three band member emphasized the impacts of budget considerations that impact the band and how leadership should handle the associated challenges. The first band member issued a plea to senior leadership to stop cuts to TRADOC and other bands. They stated:

Leave it alone. Support it. Just give up, leave it alone, leave the band alone. Not just Fort Eustis, but come to a compromise with these leaders with these people. ... We've done our own self assessment and analysis on how to move the ball down the field. We're doing our part. Just give us the budget, give us the people. Tell us what extra stuff you want us to do and leave us alone. We will do our part.

Another band member noted that cutting bands affects recruiting:

When younger generation are inspired to become one of the members, but then they're cutting all these bands, we have no place to go. So I would ask them to, just support us in that way. I know the government needs to financially support other [military occupational specialties].

The final band member focused on budget explained:

I wish that higher up that they just would stop cutting us. We are less than, what, 0.5% of the budget. I forgot the exact number. So I just I just wish they would leave us alone and let us provide our services. We're really not that expensive. We're great ambassadors.

Fort Lee interview participants' advice to leaders primarily included recommendations to re-open the 392D. Five of the 392D participants pointed their feedback toward a more senior level of Government leadership. Much of the commentary involved recommending reactivating the 392D, keeping part of the band active, not closing the 392D at all, and focusing less on the minimal cost of bands compared to the entire defense budget. Participants stated, "bring back the damn band," and "okay, so you cut the band, but how could you have left a footprint on the installation?" In terms of the budget, participants noted, "stop closing bands because every time a band goes inactive, it has very little net gain results from closing them," and "to the leaders who

controlled those leaders, I would say, it's .001% of the defense budget, but you're getting a 5% return on that investment. Keep it going. If anything, increase it."

Improve Internal Operating Procedures and Planning. The majority of TRADOC participants agreed that senior level priorities and support improvement is needed to improve the impact of the field and the success of its mission. One band member commented on leadership vision:

I just think that the vision of the band needs to be reinstated and redefined of what it is that we're doing and what are we becoming. Because if you don't have a clear vision of what we're becoming and they're stuck in the past and the future instead of just solidifying this, then you can't improve.

A civilian community member made suggestions for leaders to use research as tools to improve audience satisfaction. They said:

There is a necessity to survey people at the concerts. Come up with a five question thing like you're asking me now and go to a diversity of gigs on the outside. The music in your schools gig, retiring home, veterans home, four July thing because somebody feels like they come out here in the can and watch the fireworks. That would be a way of finding out from the real perspective.

Another community agreed, recommending that audience surveys are needed to make sure the TRADOC Band is accomplishing its mission goals. They stated:

It's something that should be seriously looked at as to how does it affect the community. How does it also affect the band members being able to play for the community. I know they play for military things, but to be able to play for the community is important. I think that's something that should never be defunded. ... To me, it's important part for our

life here at [the retirement home]. To me it's going to have to be making it more visible and people knowing when [concerts are] going to happen. ... They need to talk to people in the community and find out what they think about it.

One civilian community member thought that band leader visibility is needed in the community and at community meetings. They advised:

I would like for the senior leadership, including the commanders to be out in the community. That's kind of like this is what executive directors do, right? We're out in the community and we're being part of the community and I think the commanders, they tend to be part of the military community and they have their military duties, but we don't see them a lot in local boards or even just having initial meetings with community leaders. I think getting out into the community as far as individual leadership, like taking some community roles, [and] doing the individual work of meeting the movers and shakers in the community in the fields that they want to affect.

One former 392D band member stressed that leadership should ensure they reduce complacency in musicianship and that rehearsal time is always being used wisely. The same band member noted alongside another civilian community member invested in improved advertising that “advocacy is probably the most important aspect of what we do in the Army Band.” Two band members explained that leaders should prioritize programming. They agreed that leaders “need to make sure that they’re playing the music that they need to play for their audience.”

Reflections on Meaningful Experiences Provide Criteria for Consideration

Finally, I asked the 392D participants if they had anything else to add and requested any particularly impactful memories from their time serving with or listening to the Fort Lee Army

Band. Participants primarily responded regarding their personal feelings about performances or the inactivation, positive and negative aspects of outreach, and additional recommendations for leadership.

Personal Impact. One former 392D band member discussed their feelings following their service as a military musician:

What I get out of customer service now, it is good. But it pales in comparison to the way people felt after we gave them a great performance ... The Army does ugly stuff. So why do we put money in making things that are ugly look good? So people will feel good about it.

The remaining five participants that discussed their personal feelings were civilian community members. Overall, they discussed missing the 392D for various reasons, including their ability to boost morale, working with and interacting with them in general, and the tradition and heritage they brought to community and military events. One of the civilian community members noted,

Military bands in general have always had, and I suspect will always have a huge impact on me. It's largely emotional, but what it does, it makes me proud that I was once a part of the larger picture that these same folks are now a part of. Now with the 392D in particular, I'm sad that they're no longer available because in a sense, that's my hometown.

Three TRADOC band members and one civilian community member summarized their personal feelings about serving as a military musician and about the field overall. The first band member shared a positive perspective:

My whole 9 plus years in the army band field, it was a blessing. I really enjoy serving for soldiers and for community. I have more positive than negative things to say. Of all the memories I think of all the positive things.

Another band member discussed challenges of musicians in the field and of potential challenges for those looking to join the field:

There are a number of people in the field that I've talked to who are jumping ship just because there's another promotion freeze. A lot more people are going to be retention control point RCPd and people aren't going to make senior. How wild is it to come into a field with a doctorate in musical arts who can't gain one rank.

The third band member recalled a positive performance memory with a young audience member. They shared:

This one little girl went up to me and she's like, hey can I get my picture taken with you? And then she looked at the guys and she's like not with you guys with her. It was just really cute because at the time it felt like this little girl was looking up to me and she's like I want to have ribbons like you and it was just adorable because we are role models.

The one civilian community member that focused on personal feelings simply stated, "For me, it's always the highlight of the summer." One band member and one civilian community member finished their interviews by emphasizing their perspective of the value of military music in general. The civilian community member shared, "It is a valuable community resource and it saddens me to hear that even more are getting closed. It's a real shame" while the band member concluded:

People equate the military with just combat arms and support roles that simply function for that. But there are a lot of artists, there are a lot of creatives that join the military and

are able to serve in a unique way that will help the military that may not have thought that was possible. Military music is very important for sure.

Emphasis on Outreach and Recruitment. In addition to the difficult emotions inflicted from loss, participants reiterated the strategic outreach loss resulting from the inactivation. One civilian community member advised, “the band has lent itself to actual informational missions and helping get the word out about different types of programs, priorities, and efforts that the Army has undertaken.” One former band member reasserted the importance of community service outside of music for bands. They explained, “if we could do more community outreach, we could make ourselves more relevant to not only the military, but also the community as well.” Another former band member insisted that recruiting outreach was an aspect that suffered the most following the inactivation. They contended:

How many times have we possibly removed the opportunity from these young men and women because we wanted to save an almost inconsequential amount of money by eliminating one Army Band? ... It’s impossible to fully quantify the impact of what they did by eliminating this one band, but it’s very easy to visualize the far reaching extent of what they did. It’s really a terrible thing.

Two TRADOC civilian community members reiterated their perspectives about education outreach. The first civilian community member recalled one interaction between students and TRADOC Band musicians:

I did like that they were on the stage and then they came down and showed the instrument more up close and personal. One of them, the bassoonist, he actually came down and let everybody touch his bassoon and hold it.

The second civilian community member described student perspectives following TRADOC Band performances and clinics:

I've had people when we did the combined concerts and playing the Grainger, I also had some people say that this was very impactful and up to that point, this was their favorite event, favorite experience from their time in the ensemble.

Additional Recommendations to Leadership. Several 392D participants provided additional recommendations for improvement to leadership and to the researcher. One civilian community member suggested, “send this to the Department of the Army so they’ll bring the band back.” One former band member shared a similar sentiment and stated, “stop closing Army Bands for sure. Open back up the ones you closed. ... we have a target on our back because we have the largest number of Army Bands. That used to be something to be celebrated.” Speaking to band leadership, one former band member advised:

People who are more experienced musicians should have more of a role in decision making. People who have been in the military longer shouldn't be the decision making power because it should be based on if you have the skill and knowledge that the situation is requiring.

One TRADOC band member reasserted their perspective of recommendations to leadership within the Army Band field overall. They said:

I was determined that I wanted the atmosphere, to be different from where it was going or to best mitigate things to keep people happy about being in the field. I'm saying that only because I think there's still people like that and it won't be long, you're going to lose them. ... I've met some really talented people who cared about what they were doing. I think they're still out there and I don't think it's too late. I think they can turn it around.

RQ4 Summary

Finally, RQ4 was designed to discover the performance priorities community and audience members hold and what they feel leadership should know from their perspectives. Community and band members re-established here that military music plays a crucial role in building community, educating audiences, and providing a place for expressing their love of country and appreciation of the military in general. Notably, many interview participants noted that they hoped this project would reach senior Government levels so the effects of band closures could be understood. RQ4 data provided the understanding that the case study bands serve(d) as integral parts of their communities, and more presence and understanding from senior levels are needed.

Chapter Summary

This chapter summarized the emergent data from survey and interview case study participants. The analysis of participant surveys resulted in the previously discussed primary themes and their various categories and subcategories. The themes depict participant experiences and feelings in response to their personal experiences and perceptions of performing as a military band musician and the impacts of being a military band audience member. The resulting themes from each research question are illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5*Emergent Themes*

Research question	Emergent themes
RQ1	Military Band Support Provides Positive Personal and Community Impact Bands Face Unique Challenges While Adapting to What Communities Need Military Bands Inspire Memories and High Emotional Investment
RQ2	Band Support Loss has a Negative Impact on Individuals and Community Shared Emotions and Experiences Outline Sadness and Loss in Response to Band Closure
RQ3	Band Members Shared Mostly Positive Experiences and Interactions as Military Musicians Band Members Confirmed Roles as Symbols of Ideas, Values, and Beliefs in Communities Band Members Shared Challenging Experiences as Military Musicians
RQ4	Audiences and Military Musicians Seek Interactions that Provide Positive Community Impact Audiences and Performers Recommend More: Advertising, Outreach and Budget Reflections on Meaningful Experiences Provide Criteria for Consideration

RQ1 was implemented to understand the results of military band engagement. The resulting themes in response to RQ1 revealed the consistent positive response to military band performance in the case study communities and the clear and present challenges to maintaining beneficial relationships with audiences. Responses showed that many participants correlated positive morale and increased well-being with military band presence. Very few studies effectively address the impact of military band support loss in communities, which was the goal of answering RQ2. Emergent themes represent the feelings of loss and negative response to support loss in the Fort Lee community and proposed loss in the Fort Eustis community. Where participants related increased morale with military band presence, the equal and opposite

impact was prevalent in light of support loss. RQ3 examined military musician experiences only. The themes exhibit that most military musicians who served with the 392D and TRADOC Army Bands reflect fondly on their time with each ensemble and describe band presence as an asset of community patriotism and symbolism in their communities. However, data showed that band members experienced significant challenges primarily associated with budget cuts and programming to execute quality performances. Lastly, RQ4 aimed to discover community member requirements for meaningful performances and the recommendations for meeting that goal. Emergent themes showed that community members desire increased support in all facets of military band outreach, including in education, military, and retirement communities. Participant recommendations reflect sufficient evidence that military band support is important to community members in each community of this case study.

Overall, participants recalled the types of performances they attended or performed in most extensively, followed closely by the personal or community impact they perceived as a result of band performance as well as the result of inactivation or threatened inactivation. Participant feelings and experiences connected to memories of performances are essential in determining the type of impact that military bands have on their communities. The following chapter discusses the findings presented in this chapter and outlines suggestions on how military band leadership and Government leadership can further address the needs and lifestyle desires of the communities that bands serve.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Military band support is decreasing every year around the world, with a 10 percent reduction between 2012 and 2017 alone (Frame, 2017). Twelve more Army Band reductions were scheduled between 2017 and 2019 (Von Ah, 2017). This dissertation is a response to these previous budget cuts and an attempt to more deeply understand the convergence of military band engagement and audience emotions within two Army Band supported communities. In Chapter 2, previous research was presented to show that music fosters engagement, contributes to community building, and increases health and well-being. The Department of Defense implemented policies that placed military bands in strategic positions to capitalize on the social value of music within military and civilian communities.

The purpose of this qualitative comparative case study was to collect and critically explore audience and band personnel experiences, feelings, and perceptions of the value military band support bring to the community and the impact of band closure. This study was essential to address the problem of understanding support loss impact and community response following the brief deactivation of the TRADOC Army Band at Fort Eustis, Virginia, and the complete closure of the 392D Army Band at Fort Lee, Virginia. Data were gathered via a combination of anonymous online surveys and semi structured, one-on-one phone interviews to respond to the following research questions:

RQ1. How do community members describe their experiences from attending and being actively engaged in military band performances?

RQ2. What are community members' perceptions of the impacts of losing military band presence and support in local communities?

RQ3. How do band members describe the experience of supporting community events as military musicians?

RQ4. What criteria are required to create meaningful military band performances that are meaningful and beneficial to military bands and their community audiences?

The following section reports the implications and findings of personal responses to military band support loss in multiple facets of a community and the perceived social merit of continued support. This final chapter includes a discussion of the findings from the preceding results and a comparison to the literature review, the overall limitations of the study, implications for the field, recommendations for continuing research and application, and a final summary.

Discussion of Findings

The recent closure of the 392D Army Band significantly influenced this comparative case study on military band support and loss impact. Multiple data sources, including 26 semi structured interviews and over 50 survey responses, provided the rich, qualitative descriptions necessary for data saturation. Participants with a variety of backgrounds and professions provided the ability to cross-check and triangulate results. Dean (2019), Marsh (2019), Strom (2020), and Wilson and Mantie (2017) illustrated that music performance is essential to engaging communities in social development, education, mental and emotional health, and community planning and development. The research questions for the study were tailored for each community to gauge band personnel and audience member perception alignment with current research on the positive effects of music on individuals, organizations, and the common good (Florida, 2005). The responses in this case study reveal the musical experiences of both audiences and band personnel within two Army Band communities as well as the underrepresented community perspectives of the 392D Army Band's inactivation. These

perspectives could inform band and other Government senior leadership regarding the true impacts of band cuts and encourage future qualitative-based reasoning in decision-making.

This comparative case study aimed to illuminate community experience based on one primary question: How does military band support and loss contribute to audience and performer morale and well-being? In both cases, participants from both communities commonly reported that military band performances increase morale and that support loss decreases morale. The literature reinforced the positive effects of musical influence and social engagement in communities (Putnam, 2000). Review of the literature and personal experiences as a band member led to *a priori* assumptions that military band interaction leads to positive community collaboration and impacts and that severed support would result in a negative impact for audiences. The resulting *a posteriori* themes that emerged from the interview and survey data for both communities are outlined in Table 5 in the previous chapter. These findings indicate that a more qualitative approach to allocating funds for military bands and making personnel cut decisions would better serve communities from a morale and well-being perspective.

Research Question 1

RQ1. How do community members describe their experiences from attending and being actively engaged in military band performances? One primary focus of this comparative case study was investigating the interactions and relationships resulting from military band engagements and the potential feelings bands could encourage in communities over time, including community building, diversity, morale, learning, and well-being. The common themes in response to this research question are that military bands (1) provide positive personal and community impact, (2) inspire memories and high emotional investment, and (3) face unique challenges while adapting to community needs. Using a comparative research method,

participant responses from both communities provided clarity regarding their personal interpretations and experiences. TRADOC participants predominantly focused on performances they attended as audience members or performed at as band members and the general perception they had of those experiences. Common participant recollections included seeing the band as a representation or symbol of the military in the rest of the community, consistently visible in schools, holiday events, and public concerts in coordination with international ensembles. Chapter 2 outlined how this study coincided with the premise of symbolic interactionism. In this case, participant perceptions illustrated the “root images” of what the TRADOC Band stands for in the community and how the ensemble’s actions define the nature and values of the rest of the community (Blumer, 1969). In keeping with the emergent themes of RQ1, the TRADOC Band was commonly described by study participants as “valuable” or having a “huge impact.” The literature suggests that participants’ reported elevated levels of investment in military bands, and music in general, results from music’s ability to unite personal experiences with the larger community (Vaillancourt, 2012). Some unanticipated responses focused on the impact of the transition of the band as the Continental Army Band stationed at Fort Monroe, Virginia, to their new home at Joint Base Langley Eustis as the TRADOC Band, approximately 30 minutes north. Several participants noted the drop-off in attendance of summer concerts following the relocation. This point emphasizes the importance of the way audiences interpret and find meaning in rituals such as concert attendance. Blumer (1969) emphasized, “the meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act toward the person with regard to the thing” (p. 4). It can be presumed that the transition of the Continental Army Band to the TRADOC Band severed the symbolic connection, which in turn influenced audience behavior, leading to a reduction in concert attendance.

Members from the Fort Lee community who recently lost the support of the inactivated 392D Army Band focused largely on the presence in local schools and the ability of the band to increase morale and provide a “positive impact” in the area. This is another example of how symbolic interactionism is present in this study. Blumer (1969) noted, “non-symbolic interaction takes place when one responds directly to the action of another without interpreting that action; symbolic interaction involves interpretation of the action” (p. 8). In military band interactions, audiences are repeatedly interpreting the meaning of performances and translating them into something usable, or morale, patriotism, positivity as expressed by Fort Lee participants when recalling band engagements. Two participants noted that these musical and symbolic interpretations of the ensemble are “universal.” The idea of musical interactions being universally interpreted affirms the proposition from the previous chapters that affect control theory is a filter for musical experiences such as these. Schröder and Scholl (2009) stated, “while interacting socially, people try to create impressions that match culturally shared fundamental feelings associated with their mental representation of the situation” (p. 180). In this case, morale and positive feelings are the resulting impressions from a culturally shared notion of what the 392D Army Band represented in its community. However, this perspective was not unanimous. One Fort Lee participant stated, “I felt like we were reaching people who already had a reason to like us,” indicating that the 392D’s ability to influence morale in a positive way was concentrated with those who already supported them and the remained of the military. In Figure 1, I proposed that the military band serves as a catalyst between the military as a whole and the civilian community to bolster support. There may be additional community members who believe, as in this case, that the 392D and other bands like it, are not essential to maintaining the proposed symbiotic relationship or influencing hearts and minds. These perspectives, and others

like them, led to the emergent theme that bands face unique challenges while adapting to their community needs.

Research Question 2

RQ2. What are community members' perceptions of the impacts of losing military band presence and support in local communities? Perhaps the most significant findings of this study involved determining how participants experience military band support loss. The two common themes resulting from RQ2 included (1) band support loss has a negative impact on individuals and community and (2) shared emotions and experiences outlined sadness and loss in response to band closure. The literature affirmed that "the point of real impact in music making is the point of encounter, it's the relationships that are formed between practitioners and participants" (Camlin et al., 2020, p. 166). Therefore, the severing of these relationships through band closures contributes to the validity of the resulting themes and feelings of loss. It is important to remember that the TRADOC Band received and had deactivation orders rescinded within a short time period before the 392D received the closure orders instead. Participants in this study clearly expressed that the community was very upset at the potential loss and the community rallied to support their retention and that morale would lower, citing "you take away the band, you take away the soft face of the Army." The common response to military band support loss is best summarized by one participant who stated, "community outreach would be severed." TRADOC community participants felt that the considerable amount of retiree support and school would be the most impacted by the loss. As previously discussed, the surrounding Williamsburg area was the top retirement located in the United States in 2018 (Harris, 2018), which was around the same time deactivation orders were being cut. The anticipation of feelings of loss in the TRADOC community is best explained through the literature for this study. What musical

support means to listeners, especially the military genre of support, varies widely. Yehuda (2011) abbreviated three functions of music from Greek mythology: “(1) restoring both the soul and or the body to a state of equilibrium, arousing or soothing as needed, to temper excess or deficient emotion; (2) creating the sensation of pleasure through movement; (3) inducing catharsis that purges the soul of emotional conflict” (p. 86). This premise and many others like it in music psychology may explain why communities feel a sense of “loss” so profoundly as in this case study. Some alternative viewpoints from the TRADOC community expressed regret at the thought of a potential loss, but seemed to lean toward accepting change as a natural occurrence. One participant stated, “they’re not going to lament forever” when discussing how the community would respond to the loss. Others expressed more surprising thoughts about how morale would be impacted. Participants explained, “I don’t think the Fort Eustis community at large would have really cared specifically. I think most of the impact would have been felt outside of the fence” and “I don’t know if it would change much on the military side of things ... there’s not a lot of involvement or engagement with the soldiers.” The reasoning behind these perceptions resurfaced in probing questions regarding relevance and the fourth research question about what is needed to create meaningful military band performances. There are some participants who believed band leadership is lacking in the necessary engagement tactics with on-base military units to initiate support and others who believe that the performance team structure and music programming is not aligned with the musical desires of modern military service members in a training environment such as TRADOC.

The support loss impact perceptions were very similar in the 392D community, though the responses included more firsthand experiences of how the inactivation affected specific ceremonies. Participants noted that planning is much more difficult and that the TRADOC

support that was promised is not always available, especially for smaller ceremonies. One civilian community member recalled, “if we’re not able to get the Fort Eustis band, then we do without. In one case, it was a ceremony that was a tribute to a fall soldier and we had to play music on a boom box.” Others expressed, “it’s a big void in the community” and “there’s really nothing else around here that’s going to replicate that.” Some participants noted that COVID played a part in the confusion surrounding the inactivation and that some are still unaware of the support loss or the reasoning behind it. Participants also shared their perspectives regarding how they feel morale has changed or stayed the same. Most responses expressed feelings of loss and lowered morale, especially when discussing the loss of support around the holidays and in schools. They emphasized, “closing the band was a huge mistake”, “there’s a hole in the community that is not filled anymore”, and “the community has definitely suffered a loss by not having this band.” Some shared that the morale difference would be difficult to quantify or gauge, while others noted that the change was difficult but adaptable. As previously discussed in previous chapters, morale is essential in motivating military forces and nurturing the American mindset despite some difficult efforts faced by the armed forces (Shaw, 2015). Many participants agree that bands like the 392D were at the heart of presenting a positive force in the community, which in turn made the loss so difficult. However, there were some surprising comments from the 392D community as well. In response to the inactivation overall, some participants concluded, “at the end of the day, life goes on and you can’t really control it.” Even more surprising was the comment, “I can’t think of a situation where somebody is really like ‘man I’m missing the band’” and “I think that people might have forgotten already.” While these perceptions are in the minority compared to the majority feelings of loss, it is important to be transparent regarding the mindset of all participants in this study. All of these participants

explained that they understand the benefits of the arts overall, but that their experiences indicate that the Cycle of Support is not dependent on the 392D's presence in the community.

Research Question 3

RQ3. How do band members describe the experience of supporting community events as military musicians? In addition to comparing the TRADOC and 392D communities for this comparative case study, it was important to compare audience feedback with band members perceptions to investigate potential discrepancies between experiences. The three common themes in response to RQ3 include that band members (1) shared mostly positive experiences and interactions as military musicians, (2) confirmed roles as symbols of ideas, values, and beliefs in communities, and (3) shared challenging experiences as military musicians. While little literature referenced the first-hand experiences of modern military musicians, this study provided transparency into the largely positive outlook of musicians who serve as military band members. The literature continually reinforced that the value of military bands was inherent in its ability to “boost morale” and “bring people together” (Fraser, 2010; Gleason, 2015; Rourke, 1996). The emergent themes in response to RQ3 confirmed that the 392D and TRADOC bands were valued for those same abilities. However, the scrutiny of the band field continues with studies like the Government Accountability Office report (Von Ah, 2017) and news reports questioning the value of military bands as part of the defense budget. This study provides clarity regarding the ways two modern military bands adapted and succumbed to challenges related to budget, personnel issues, and relevancy. TRADOC band members responded to subordinate research questions regarding their general experiences as a military musician, how they felt the ensemble acted as a symbol of values or beliefs in their community, and their reception experiences from supporting the TRADOC and former 392D communities. Band member experiences largely

focused on positive experiences, which aligns with the mostly positive experiences illustrated by their audience members in previous sections. Some key results from this research question are that Music in Our Schools and veteran and retiree engagements stand out as significant interactions for both audience members and band members. Band members recalled experiences like playing “Happy Birthday” for a 100-year old audience member who attended Music Under the Stars concerts for years. They also noted the satisfaction of “seeing the inspiration on kids’ faces.” The literature is reinforced here that suggests “connecting with others is necessary for a ‘fulfilling’ life” (Bradley, 2021, p. 2). This idea applies to band members experiences with performing for veterans and retirees. They stated prior military personnel “may feel disconnected from the military community...so that’s a way for them to still feel connected and patriotic and somehow plugged into the heartbeat of America’s military and that definitely is inspiring for me.” A common thread throughout all interviews was the emphasis on the importance of Taps for military funerals. One band member expressed here, “I feel like that’s the most important thing that we have to do” but “with all the cuts it’s hard to get a trumpet player for every single funeral; it’s just not happening.” The topic of Taps resurfaces in a number of probing questions with band members, who most commonly agree that their experiences and perception of the use of the electronic bugle to render final honors for military members are negative and that support is lacking in both communities. Regarding receptivity in both communities, one band member found the TRADOC community more open to military band support. They stated, “I just think the culture here supports it a little bit more. At Fort Lee, I think sometimes unfortunately I would run into the people that didn’t know we had a band” and “I feel like the Army needed the band more than the community ... I felt like at Fort Eustis a lot of people were more appreciative.” However, separate band members shared, “I know everyone at Fort Lee has been really grateful

that we're still coming over there" and that similar reactions are found at both locations, "especially getting the regular emotional reaction from the kids." These perceptions do not necessarily align with Fort Lee community member perspectives as previously discussed, where many explained that they no longer receive the support needed. Other band members agreed with the latter, stating "It's just tough and definitely not nearly the amount of personnel you need to do it for sure" and "without having a band [at Fort Lee], the community feels betrayed because they had the Fort Lee band there for however many decades ... and [TRADOC] can't support everything." Though the TRADOC Band does seem to be well-received in the Fort Lee community when their schedule allows, the overall impression is that TRADOC band members still believe the TRADOC community is more supportive and that they lack the time and resources to do more for the Fort Lee community following the 392D's closure. This is a significant comparison for musicians and leaders alike to understand to be able to continue telling the Army story where it is needed. The literature reiterated, "it's important that the American people are reminded of the great work the men and women of our armed forces continue to do" (Shaw, 2015, p. 6). The literature reinforced that military musicians "are trusted agents nonverbally communicating the values Americans embrace" (Graham, 2004, p. 35). TRADOC participants concurred that they are able to symbolize those values within the community. Several band members indicated that the military uniform acts as a particularly potent symbol of values, beliefs, and memories for audiences. They noted, "I think it stirs up memories and some of the good things that they experienced when they were in the military", "I feel that the uniform itself is symbolized as serving for the country. When we wear a uniform, people come up to us and say thank you for your service. That's how they feel up front", and "they look good in their uniform and they look professional and we know they're part of the most

powerful fighting force in the world.” However, there were several unexpected perspectives from TRADOC band members in response to this overarching research question. One member noted the band could be doing more in light of the 392D closure, while two others felt the band’s presence is not needed in certain communities. They stated, “The only people in my experience that were actually interested in anything that was going on with the band were people outside of Fort Eustis” and “As far as Fort Eustis itself, we were kind of there. They didn’t hate us. They didn’t love us. We were just there.” These perspectives are surprising given some of the other praise from band members and civilian community members. Understanding that this may be a more prevalent standpoint may be significant in further investigation and planning to better meet community needs.

In comparison, 392D participants also provided memorable experiences as band members and how they feel the band represented values and beliefs in the Fort Lee community. In many cases, band members observed that audience members would frequently thank them for their service following performances and mention songs that were theirs or a family member’s favorite. This finding is significant because the literature showed, “listening to favorite music engaged the part of the brain involved in higher-order thinking, which can involve such cognitive functions as understanding, analysis, and evaluation” (Hodges & Wilkins, 2015, p. 3). Therefore, Fort Lee community members may now be missing opportunities for psychological engagement with live musicians. Other band members described interactions between themselves and audiences. They recalled, “they start really interacting with you and you have banter back and forth between the stage and the audience. It’s kind of a magical thing that happens” and “Big events where we have our ... rock band playing, that was always a really good vibe and the audience had a good energy back towards us, people are dancing that kind of thing.” Upon

reflection of the theoretical propositions for this study, Blumer (1969) argued the origins of symbolic interactionism theory as “sees meaning as arising in the process of interaction between people. The meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act toward the person with regard to the thing” (p. 4). Band members also explained that meaning for audience members was derived from not only interactions, but in the representations of their values and beliefs. The visual aspect of the 392D was something participants emphasized in their experiences. They explained that seeing soldiers perform in uniform, “ties together the patriotism, unity, the professional excellence, the esprit de corps; everything else is part of being a soldier. It ties all that together in a package that people can actually access.” Similarly, “I think people see musicians in the uniform, they see the pride in which they take their job. There’s just a certain pride that you see within someone when they’re standing there performing for their country” and “You see the discipline of the Army and yet everybody can rock out and have a good time.” Symbolic interactionism is applicable in this circumstance as it is a cycle where “an individual interprets someone else's symbols and an individual proposes symbols to be interpreted by someone else” (Monk, 2013, p. 4). Various unforeseen experiences from former 392D band members stemmed from their feelings of lack of support within the community. In the theoretical framework for this study, affect control theory was summarized to explain how people build impressions and label experiences for access in similar situations (Shank & Lulham, 2016). The reality of military band challenges is that musical tastes change and personal and political viewpoints also change, which means that what the 392D represented 20 years ago may not connect with audiences the same today. For example, one band member stated, “playing in wind quintet or four clarinets and flutes ... I remember times when we're playing and people, you can just feel like people are like, what is that?” The same band member expressed, “I can’t

think of some kind of value or larger concepts that without us performing people wouldn't have thought, or had, or held.” Another band member responded to the prompt asking if the 392D represents community values and beliefs. They stated, “maybe 20 or 30 years ago ... but today's day and age, I feel that a lot of people now are very much like, “oh, it's just the band,” or “oh, I didn't know the Army had a band.” It is important to note that because the makeup of smaller music ensembles within the 392D was diverse (i.e., brass quintet, woodwind quintet, jazz combo, rock band, barbershop quartet, and brass band), that audience responses may have varied as widely in each unique performance within the community. However, understanding per affect control theory that one performance by one ensemble may form an impression of the sum of the small ensembles may be significant for future investigation.

Research Question 4

RQ4. What criteria are required to create meaningful military band performances that are meaningful and beneficial to military bands and their community audiences? The fourth and final research question was used to investigate what specific support increases a sense of morale and community building, how each band benefits the military, schools, and retirement homes in their area. Further understanding was sought regarding what recommendations participants would make to leadership to enhance the benefits of military band performance for their area. The three emerging themes in response to RQ4 include (1) audiences and military musicians seek interactions that provide positive community impact, (2) audience and performers recommend more: advertising, outreach, and budget, and (3) reflections on meaningful experiences provide criteria for consideration. The literature supported that, historically, communities have benefited directly from the presence of the arts (Coyle, 2018; Florida, 2005). The common response to asking what can bring the community together and build morale was “more.” Band members and

civilian community members alike more presence, more opportunities for engagement in various settings like schools and retirement homes, and more ways to represent the Army in a way that everyone understands. One band member explained, “I think our job does provide an escape for both us and the civilians. It does remind us that, we’re not just positive machines, we’re humans with emotions.” This is significant because this comparative case study hinges on the interpretivist paradigm, or subjective understanding of a thing (Kelly et al., 2018). Cain (2012) stated, “Teachers cannot cause learning in the sense of bringing learning into being, but can only influence its focus, speed, longevity and perhaps, its significance for students” (p. 415). In the same way, what is suggested from the findings and literature is that military musicians cannot force musical meaning and emotion, but can only serve as a way for people to access memories, emotions, or moments in time that make significant and lasting connections between performer and audience. The results for suggestions to leadership from TRADOC participants ranged from simply increasing advertising and presence on a local band leadership level, to increased missions for military members and schools, and finally to pleading for budget and personnel cuts to cease. Of these responses, education opportunities and engagement were emphasized the most. One civilian community member mentioned that TRADOC conducted master classes and joint concerts, which he noted were thought of as the most impactful memories for students. The literature emphasized that music in schools ends in no shortage of positive impacts. McFerran et al. (2016) stated, “When the whole school makes a commitment to participating in a music culture that promotes connectedness, the possibilities for learners in the schools increase exponentially” (p. 255). The results of this study should indicate to leadership that the Music in Our Schools program and increased presence in high schools and colleges is a high priority for both band members and civilian community members in the Fort Eustis community. As band

support in schools, retirement, and military communities were a primary focus for this study, the effort for discovering deeper affect in these areas was reinforced in the final interview question. Here, support in schools turned toward recruitment. As part of the overall mission for Army Bands in addition to outreach and diplomacy (Fraser, 2010), recruiting is a significant concern for TRADOC participants. One participant responded, “people can’t support what they don’t see and people can’t pursue what they don’t see” while another stated, “At some of these events, that is the only interaction that kids have with someone wearing a uniform. So how does that affect recruitment?” Using military bands to attract new recruits, band members as well as non-band members, is not a new tactic (Gleason, 2015), but it is apparent that it remains to be an important tool for promoting military service as a career in the Fort Eustis community through various engagement opportunities with students from elementary through college. In turn, recruitment in these cases impacts the military as a whole. Further, many participants indicated that the impact of support is particularly impactful for retirement communities, which reinforces that music is important in every stage of life. TRADOC participants responded, “I think they love people coming and visiting. I think it’s probably one of the highlights of their day if people come to visit and play music” and “music is an important part of everybody’s life, and that’s something that we shouldn’t take away from people that are so used to it.” One band member observed:

We did really cater to the audiences who are mostly Korean and Vietnam veterans. ...

Just watching the emotion on their face; some of them had Alzheimer’s but once we played the service medley, some of those guys and gals actually stood up so we all know that music can positively impact someone that has dementia or Alzheimer’s so it was kind of bittersweet but breathtaking.

This shared experience answers the call for research from Hays and Minichiello (2005) who proposed that musical activities benefit individuals with cognitive conditions, but that additional research was needed to represent the responses of older populations to musical interactions as with the TRADOC Band. Overall, this research question yielded responses for the TRADOC Band that provide a personal insight into the values of audiences and band members in terms of morale, leadership, and community needs.

392D participants responded to the same questions, with the exception of the final question, which instead asked them to respond with their perception of support loss on schools, retirement, and military communities in their area. In response to what their community needs from a military band, despite their current situation, one civilian community member believed that the band's presence alone provided a control point for culture and values representative of the area. This finding aligns with the literature that proposed people are more likely to move to locations that are supportive of the arts (Florida, 2005). A former band member proposed that community service, like volunteering to clean a highway or serve at a local soup kitchen, would have improved morale and relationships with the community. Collins (2019) proposed that entities like the former 392D can build loyalty through delivering the quality services that their communities want. In this case, the 392D participating in services beyond musical support could be interpreted as bringing additional value to the Fort Lee community. Several participants indicated that band presence, or the present lack thereof, significantly impacts morale, well-being and togetherness. They responded, "Well, first and foremost you need a band back ... The synthesized, pre-recorded stuff shouldn't be there for the military ceremonies" and "A community needs an opportunity for that entity to show up and give them the stuff that they provide. Bands provide something that you can't get anywhere else" and finally, "Increased

presence. Increased availability. ... the 392D, it was one of two that I'm aware of, a huge force multiplier when it comes to building rapport, building awareness, fostering appreciation."

Participants' short-term feelings in response to the interview suggest that they are parallel with their established values of the 392D and other Army Bands overall, which aligns with the principles of affect control theory (Stryker, 1987). Like TRADOC, 392D participants also emphasized the importance of recruiting. The Music in Our Schools program was a way for the 392D to reach hundreds, if not thousands, of school-age children to entertain and educate them on the possibilities of an Army career off the beaten path. 392D participants apparently agree with Welborn (2015) who called cuts similar to the 392D's closure "potentially devastating" to the mission of music education outreach across the country (p. 6). By impacting this mission, recruitment is equally affected. Several responses focused on the importance of community building and engagement. One participant reported, "The motivation of why you guys exist has always been to get people to gather and come together." Similarly, Olson (2005) contended that musical support like the former 392D "creates a space for a community to create identity, solidarity, and empowerment, providing a groundwork for imagining solutions to individual and group dilemmas" (p. 56). The opportunities noted by Olson are created in the communal space provided by Army Bands like the 392D. Another band member explained, "We are really a gateway to a full range of human emotions that we will inspire or trigger with our performances" which aligns with the arousal theory outlined by Kania (2017) who stated, "the expressiveness of a passage of music amounts to its tendency to arouse that emotion in an understanding listener" (p. 8). In an effort to appeal to audience emotions, two former band members emphasized the importance of programming in their recommendations to leadership. They shared, "they need me to make sure that they're playing the music that they need to play for their audience" and "Being

entertainment really comes down to tapping into what is popular, what audiences are looking for in a situation like this.” Moore (2017) acknowledged, “music can create a sense of expectation, and the degree to which this expectation is or is not met influences the music-based emotional experience” (p. 133). Band members suggestions to leadership are significant in recognizing the responsibility of Army Bands to create meaningful performances. Several recommendations to leadership were reports that advertising and presence of any Army Band is lacking and that they want the 392D to reopen. In most interviews overall, the expectation of civilian community members was for the TRADOC Band to cover the missions left behind by the 392D’s closure. According to Army Techniques Publication 1-19 (2015), “Army Music performances are opportunities to tell America’s story and that of the American Soldier” (p. 1-1). In light of the 392D’s closure, participants repeatedly mention the decline in performance opportunities, which informs the study and leadership of the points of failure and concern regarding engagement. 392D participants were not only concerned with the lack of engagement of the inactivated band, but with leadership engagement in general. In symbolic interactionism, Blumer (1969) contended:

The activities of others enter as positive factors in the formation of their own conduct; in the face of the actions of others one may abandon an intention or purpose, revise it, check or suspend it, intensify it, or replace it. (p. 8)

This is significant because if participant perceptions are that leaders are disengaged, and symbolic interactionism theories are accurate in this case, then audience members may mirror the behavior and disengage as well. Conversely, if communities see band leaders connecting and engaging with other military and community leaders and being more present in their communities, the same principle of symbolic interactionism applies. Because the 392D is no

longer active, participant responses in this case apply to band leadership within other active Army Bands. In response to being asked about band support loss impact on schools, retirement, and military communities, 392D participants focused primarily on the impact to schools and retirement populations. However, two participants acknowledged the gap in support left behind in the military community. The former band member stated, “they’re missing out on the military music that normally was there for the last what, 60 years or so that is no longer a thing.” The literature on symbolic interactionism explains how “meanings emerge from interactions with other individuals and with society” (Carter & Fuller, 2016, p. 932). In the case of the 392D, the community interacted with the band and developed meanings and expectations for what the band represented, which also impacts the interpretation of the loss. Similar to TRADOC responses, each of the support loss comments from the 392D community regarding schools focused on the effects of the loss on recruitment. One civilian community member shared, “it can be transformative for these kids and just like I was talking about earlier that he could inspire them to serve.” The literature explained that bands inspire morale and promote the will to serve (Farrelly, 2019). However, the experiences shared in this case study establish the understanding that many civilian community members and band members witnessed the success of inspiration and morale in the area of recruitment, especially in aspiring musicians. Several members acknowledged the significant loss of support in the retirement community in particular. Civilian community members stated, “The retirement community was the most vocal when they were hearing that the band was being disbanded. Everything from phone calls, to letters, to emails, to just seeing leadership when they're out and about” and “It’s a loss because it’s not there anymore, but no one took your place. There’s no one else that comes to those retirement centers and plays music for them. It’s nonexistent.” A significant tie to the literature in this case rests in the idea of

nostalgia. One former band member discussed what retirees likely felt during 392D performances; they explained:

They're wearing the uniform. I used to wear that patch. It's both that feeling of nostalgia that you described and then couple that with man, they came to play a show for me. They remember, and now I do too.

Perceptions of retirement community audiences was also prevalent in TRADOC participant responses. English and Davidson (2020) linked nostalgia and community music; the authors explained, "community music has been gaining attention as an important contributor to well-being" (p. 254). Understanding why retirees may experience nostalgia in response to military band performance is an essential puzzle piece in creating more meaningful performances for audiences from the band field as a whole. Overall, there was one unexpected response under the overarching research question regarding meaningful performances on the theme of education and recruitment. One civilian community member shared:

I think it's cool that you played in schools and stuff like that, but I think that a lot of kids, I don't want them to have false hope on being a musician because being a musician is pretty tough.

This perception runs counter to the mission of recruitment in military bands, which is not minimized to recruiting for military bands only. Additionally, the literature supports that military bands focus on "encouraging and motivating troops" instead of breeding false hope.

In summary, findings from this comparative case study support the research and indicate that there are additional experiences that should be pursued to further this explorational data collection and analysis. Comparatively, participants from each case provided experiences from their unique perspective, which aligns with the subjective nature of the comparative case study

methodology (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Several commonalities were revealed in participant stories. First, participants from both communities most commonly described their experiences from engaging with their local Army Band from a positive perspective. The majority of participants explained that band presence contributed to increased morale, well-being, and community connectedness with only minor exceptions. Therefore, findings align with the literature, which proposed that music increases morale and cultivates a sense of hope in listeners (Sutu & O'Brien, 2021). Second, participant perceptions of potential and actual support loss in their community was widely regarded as negative, with conflicting exceptions. Logic applies here that if morale and well-being increase on psychological and physiological levels with the presence of music support (Paton, 2011), it decreases with its absence. The conflicting exceptions in each community were revealed to be the types of audiences individuals perceived as primary supporters of the each Army Band of the study. Where TRADOC participants believed nonmilitary, community support of their band was stronger, 392D participants assessed that the band's majority of support originated from on-base military. However, these perceptions were neither unanimous nor even expressed by everyone. Third, band member experiences from each community ran parallel regarding the emphasis of band support in schools and retirement communities as well as each band's perceived role as symbols of values and beliefs. Participants described and advocated that repeated presence in these communities was essential to providing and receiving support in each relationship formed. Camlin et al. (2020) explained that these performance opportunities were "the point of real impact in music making" where relationships continue to build and continued engagements is desired. Desire to continue each relationship was commonly explained by each band's role as symbols, again with common exceptions. Military uniforms were a recurring symbol, which participants explained appealed to young students,

veterans, and retirees in particular. Musical representation was also deemed as essential for maintaining interest and support in each community. Graham (2004) proposed, “musicians are trusted agents nonverbally communicating the values Americans embrace.” This study showed that performers in these two communities experienced interactions that confirmed audience draw to their respective military band as a communal space for finding common ground and identity through music. The few exceptions to this confirmation explained that the bands were not essential for audience members to hold similar values without the established relationship and continued interactions. Finally, in addressing the criteria required to create meaningful, beneficial military band engagement, the commonalities were revealed in the desire for increased presence overall. For TRADOC, this translates to additional performances for military and leadership presence in community events. For the 392D, this translates to additional support from TRADOC, or the more preferred reactivation of the band. In the literature, Grant (2015) advocated for more of the things that increase social profit, including, but no limited to, “great art and music” (p. 2). According to participants from each community in this study, more of a great thing like military music is needed to increase the benefits of its continued presence.

Limitations

Several limitations should be taken into consideration regarding the findings of this study. First, the comparative case study methodology is highly criticized form of establishing absolute truth (Sakata et al., 2021). The Government Accountability Office is particularly invested in absolute truth and challenged the military band field as a whole to evaluate and quantify its long-range impact on its audiences (Von Ah, 2017). The Von Ah report greatly influenced the way forward for discovering the truthful experiences of the people within the chosen communities in this comparative case study. However, this study provides little in

legitimizing or justifying operational expenditures, which may be viewed as one more attempt at avoiding objectivity in light of fiscal limitations imposed by the Government. Due to the absence of prior studies on the impacts of military band support loss, this case study is largely explorational and lacks the potential for external crosschecking with similar studies (Hussein, 2009). Additional limitations include that the data collection pool was relatively small with 26 interview participants and just over 50 participants that completed all questions within the survey. A majority of interview participants were current and former band members, whose perspectives may be impacted by my personal interpretations of their experiences. Several county and school locations around Fort Lee who may have provided valuable insight into their personal experiences interview or survey participation denied solicitations to participate. An unforeseen global pandemic prevented any in-person observations from taking place, which ultimately inhibited the collection of data based on live interactions. Additionally, participants were selected based on prior relationships and known individuals who had interactions with both case study military ensembles. The sample of participants may influence the validity of the study, where a more saturated sampling of non-band members service members and civilian community members might present alternative perspectives than the current findings. Multiple factors surrounding data collection, coding, and analysis may have threatened the overall trustworthiness of the study, which includes considerations of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Connelly, 2016). However, various processes were implemented to mitigate potential limitations of the findings in these areas.

As discussed in Chapter 3, establishing trustworthiness requires complete transparency from the researcher regarding potential biases and connecting the data, literature, and research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Though Tetnowski (2015) contended that a case study

research design “works flexibly with an emerging data set and avoids methodological constraints that might result in *a priori* assumptions that create examiner bias” (p. 39), it does not guarantee that all bias is impossible. Flyvbjerg (2006) clarified that there are many who believe that a case study design is inherently biased in favor of searching for and finding validation in *a priori* assumptions. To combat the risk to credibility in the research design, field testing of research questions was conducted to preempt bias and assumptions within the research questions and modify for relevance and phrasing (Chenail, 2011). While a certain level of selection bias may be present in this study, snowball sampling was key in ensuring those at the center of the problem, but outside of my immediate circle of contacts, could be reached for inclusion in the study (Marcus et al., 2017). The threat to the transferability is my personal assumption as the researcher that this case study is one problem of many in the same category. Upon reflection, the survey questions for this study are highly generalized toward the value of the field of military bands, rather than the specific ensembles identified for comparison. The intent behind the survey questions was to create vivid, relatable statements that participants could connect with their own experiences with the military band they were associated with. Aiming for naturalistic generalization and connection with personal context (Melrose, 2009), the approach may have been too broad. However, it is important to note that several community members who did not qualify for participation due to specific location requirements expressed the desire for a wider radius in data collection. This suggested that the threat to transferability and naturalistic generalization for future study may not be a credible concern.

Theoretical Discussion

The applicable theories for this study are outlined in Chapter 2, including symbolic interactionism, affect control theory, and affect heuristic. The theoretical implications of the

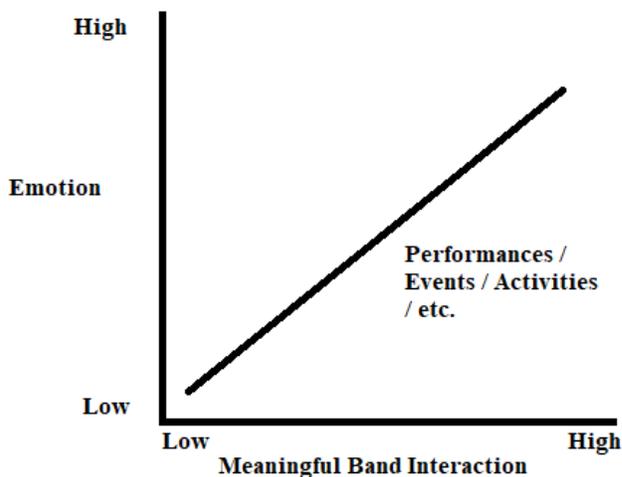
findings for military band support are important for aligning the responses with the primary concepts of a particular theory. Understanding that the purpose of the study was to investigate community value perceptions of military bands as well as the emotions associated with support loss, symbolic interactionism focuses on the subjective experiences of audience members in response to symbols (Monk, 2013), which satisfies the need to investigate responses to support and loss. In many responses throughout the study, participants noted the symbolic impact of the military uniform on their perspective and overall interpretation of the musical interaction.

Throughout the literature and responses in this study, the uniform and association with a military band are referenced as symbols of values, ideas, and status. Wilson (1990) wrote, “The regimental band symbolically demonstrated the ex-slaves' new status. The band members wore their uniforms proudly because they could closely identify with much of the music they played” (p. 35). Per symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969), both performers and audience members assigned personal meaning, or symbols, to what bands of that time represented in their own lives. If band leaders and performers learn the implications of symbolization for organizations like the ensembles in the case study, that knowledge could be used to more strategically plan and program as representatives and symbols within their communities. Contrary to the qualitative implications of symbolic interactionism, affect control theory and affect heuristic establishes subjective meanings and attitudes based on measurements of evaluation, potency, and activity (Schröder & Scholl, 2009). Stryker (1987) argued that the short term, or otherwise knee-jerk, responses to interactions or symbols often reveal personally entrenched values. Additionally, just as emotion is central to investigating the problem of this study, Heise (1987) explained that emotion is the key to measurement in affect control theory. The idea of established values dominating short-term responses is prevalent in the survey results for this study where quick

reactions to emotionally charged statements about military band support resulted in overwhelmingly supportive sentiments. Regarding the importance of symbolization, one survey statement read, “Military bands symbolize strength and effectively represent the rest of the military.” Out of 53 total responses, 30 participants indicated “strongly agree” and 11 participants indicated “agree.” As prefaced in Chapter 2, I used the principles of the affect heuristic, or the inclination to make decisions based on feelings (Anglada-Tort et al., 2019), to map summarized participant responses to questions that elicit emotional feedback. Figure 3 shows the very basic representation of affective responses to questions that trigger emotional responses based on memories of interactions and loss associated with the military ensembles of the study.

Figure 4

Affect Heuristic Response Measurement



Note. In this study, as the perceived meaning of a military band performance increases, as does the emotional response. This figure was adapted from the model of activity and hazard risks and benefits by “The Affect Heuristic in Judgments of Risks and Benefits,” by M. L. Finucane, A. Alhakami, P. Slovic, & S. M. Johnson, 2000, *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*, 13(1), 1–17. In the public domain.

Requests for quantitative data from senior Government officials like the Von Ah (2017) accountability report will likely never end. The ability to provide quantitative representations of qualitative experiences like Figure 4 may aid in responding to similar inquisitions and ultimately provide a greater understanding of the social value audiences and performers establish for their local military ensembles.

Implications

The findings of this comparative case study reveal the social value that band members and civilian community members assign to local military bands and their engagement strategies. Interviews from each community showed the disparity between needs and desires of communities and the priorities and policies of band leadership and Government officials. This investigation provided a clear picture of what ways community members feel military bands and their leadership are succeeding and recommendations for improvement in community support. Comparing these two communities that are so closely tied together through their history of military band support and whose audiences have experienced this unique loss was purposefully intended to clearly dictate the successes and failures and determine a better way forward in similar situations for the field. With an understanding that the problem was related to the limited knowledge of social merit perspectives within military band communities, the findings provide implications for policy, practice, and theory and why they matter for field improvement.

Much of what Army Bands do on a daily basis is dictated by senior policy, and policy can and should be amended to accommodate public needs. According to Army Regulation 220-90 (2016), Army Bands like TRADOC and the 392D are:

Highly visible, effective at building esprit de corps and cohesion, and serve to enhance the Army's public image. Members of Army MPUs must demonstrate the highest levels

of professional musical performance, conduct, and appearance standards to best represent the Army and the Nation. (p. 10)

As outlined in Chapter 2, Army Bands are also responsible for providing performances that increase morale in ways that inspire warfighters, engage the support of the modern community member, and perform as staunch representatives of America in every location they serve (Army Techniques Publication 1-19, 2015). Through the findings of this study, some of the primary challenges the TRADOC and 392D experience are leadership community presence, advertising and engagement, and frustrations related to the defense budget. One approach to addressing band challenges is to improve Army policy. Improving policy translates to the ability of the field to recognize shortcomings or failures and to adapt. In Chapter 2, I outlined when and how military bands adapted to their roles and requirements over time. Gleason (2015) indicated it is important that military bands remain flexible in light of cultural and other circumstantial changes around the world. Adapting local and senior-level Army Music policies to anticipate and meet the needs of a changing world will greatly benefit the future of the field.

From a practical standpoint, band leadership, band members, and concerned civilian community members interested in improving and expanding support must consider policy, but also demonstrate their interest in meeting the needs of their audiences. This should not be an issue strictly relegated to high-level leadership. Fraser (2010) advocated, “All band members should educate leaders on how to use the band's unique capability to enhance the mission directly or, through morale performance, indirectly enhance the mission by rejuvenating the military personnel through music” (p. 55). It is essential that the lines of communication for communicating best engagement and performance practices remain open from top to bottom and laterally from active duty to civilian counterparts. This comparative case study revealed why this

is important; because if the band field was already implementing every practical approach to improvement possible, recommendations to leadership would have been less prevalent in the interviews and statistics from Von Ah's (2017) accountability report would have painted a more successful picture of the band field. The study demonstrated a few possibilities for practical consideration: effective advocacy for military band support is inadequate, band leadership is not listening to junior enlisted or their communities, band members and band leaders are reacting to Government impositions rather than creating solutions, and no one is asking communities what they need from a military band to feel supported. Addressing participant concerns from this study could conceivably introduce ongoing practice for implementing improved support.

Recommendations

Where the implications dictate the findings and why they matter, they also provide suggestions for improvement, execution proposals, and how to enact practical applications and future research. Findings of this study revealed how military band support loss negatively impacts multiple facets of the community, including but not limited to personal morale, education and recruitment, and community cohesion. However, as previously discussed and as indicated in the findings, continued personnel and budget cuts to more military bands like the 392D are a concern for many and an inevitable reality if changes are not successfully implemented to adapt to evolving community needs. This study provides a unique addition to the existing literature regarding the benefits of music and the historical challenges and social value of military bands. The Government Accountability Office report (Von Ah, 2017) postulated that military bands have failed to successfully measure the impact of the military music mission in terms of morale and inspiration of the military. While this study did not focus intently on investigating impacts on active, non-band members military, it did successfully assess the impact

of the military music mission and its loss on communities that support the military as well as the perspectives of how it impacts the country's potential future military recruits. No perfect solution exists to change the minds of senior leaders' intent on silencing military music. However, several recommendations can be proposed to improve the overall impact of remaining bands on their communities.

Recommendations for Practical Application

This research is applicable to the entire military band field where understanding community impact ways to adapt the military music mission should be prioritized. Therefore, it would be beneficial for band leaders and Government officials to access this study to broaden understanding across the field (Stake, 1995). Participants from both communities provided their honest advice regarding the successes and failures of their local military band, and any adaptations for moving forward should take community perceptions seriously. Three significant and recurring responses stand out as the most important focus points for band and Government leaders: (1) leadership community presence, (2) advertising and advocacy, and (3) budget and personnel. Participants want to see band leaders engaging and being active corroborators in their community. Leaders must understand the applicability of symbolic interactionism here. Blumer (1969) emphasized that people formulate their opinions and decisions based on the way they see others conduct themselves. Community members will care about what visible and aggressively invested band commanders in their community care about. This applies to the second focus point on advertising and advocacy as well and harkens back to a significant quote from a study participant, who stated, "people can't support what they don't see and people can't pursue what they don't see." The findings indicate that the principles of visibility and presence in advertising and advocacy impact must be approached in ways that anticipate changes in community

priorities. Army Techniques Publication 1-19 (2015) emphasizes the importance of investigation and planning. Figure 5 illustrates a simple Venn Diagram that can be used to determine discrepancies in meeting community needs and executing them.

Figure 5

Action Adaptation Venn Diagram

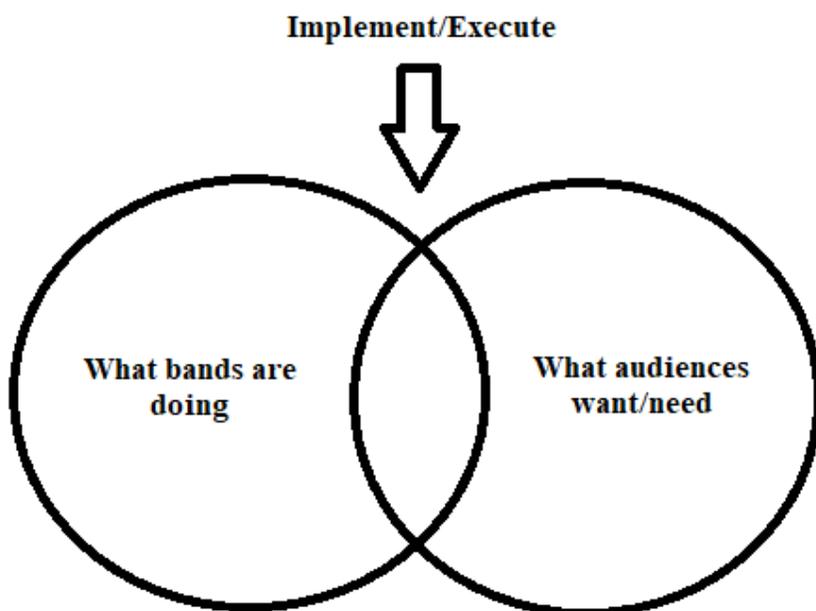


Figure 5 requires band commanders and band members to commit to understanding their mission and being open to providing what audiences need based on what they describe brings them morale. As discussed in the limitations of this study, I was not able to attend and directly observe military band performances, but it is essential for band members (not just band commanders) to attend performances and make observations of how audiences react and recommendations on how to improve. Band personnel should spend time talking with audiences, surveying them for their honest feedback, and providing more of what they need as indicated in the findings. This will help military bands increase the overall quality and reception of their performances and positively affect their various audiences, leading to increased morale and quantifiable data for

future research. The third and final focus point is easily the most difficult and contentious to address, but if nothing else, the findings of this study show that cuts to military music translate to cuts to morale, recruiting, and retention. Government officials that discount the social value of the bands should implement community analyses similar to this research study to make better, thoroughly informed decisions on spending allocations.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several participants expressed concern at the thought of additional impending Army Band cuts while outlining the ways the 392D's closure impacted their own life and community. Others explained the concern and community response leading up to the TRADOC Band deactivation that was eventually reversed. They explained how vocal people were who rejected the idea of each closure, some going as far as contacting local congress representatives and repeatedly calling and writing local base leadership to air their grievances. In this situation, some 392D missions were able to be covered by the TRADOC Band, but other bands facing closure may not have a band nearby to replace the workload left behind. Since transferability was an important mission of this study, it would be important to the field to conduct additional studies regarding impending closures and the results of similar closures for bands like the 392D. This would provide an opportunity for potential confirmability of this study and enhance the observable proof that this issue is something worth advocating for and improving for communities.

The strength of this comparative case study comes from the shared personal experiences of audience members and performers. However, there are a variety of populations that were not reached for comment, which includes the decision makers for the fate of the band field. Several participants explained that they or someone they know experienced confusion in response to

band closures. A qualitative study that investigates the experiences and perspectives of policymakers surrounding this issue would provide important transparency to military band supporters and personnel. A study should be conducted on policymakers' behaviors who enact strategic planning and cuts before and after they experience the settings and emotions created by military ensembles. Participants in the comparative case study explained that policymakers might feel differently about implementing cuts if it was their important ceremony or their family member who did not receive live Taps due to budget cuts. Investigated through the lens of symbolic interactionism, this study would determine how policymakers' views vary between their preformed ideas of the value of military bands and the meaning created from interactions with them.

A quantitative approach to investigating the experiences and emotions associated with military band performance would provide an alternative understanding of the value of military music. Participants in the comparative case study made many assumptions about how they perceived audiences emotionally responded to and appreciated performances. However, confirming these assumptions through in-person observation and scientific methods would likely be acknowledged as more valuable from an accountability perspective. Previous studies have measured the neurological responses to music (Chin & Rickard, 2012), however, participants in this comparative case study mentioned the additional emotional impact in seeing people in military uniforms perform. A comparative case study between civilian and military ensemble performances and their neurological response rates may provide the important answers needed to improve the emotional impact of the field and continue to advocate for what they represent.

Summary

The qualitative comparative case study of the TRADOC Army Band and the former 392D Army Band revealed and compared the unique experiences of band members and civilian community members and how the bands' support and loss contributed to audience and performer morale and well-being. The emotional effects of music on a wide variety of audiences have been summarized by many (Anglada-Tort et al., 2019; Clennon & Boehm, 2014; Garrido & Macritchie, 2020; Harrison & Loui, 2014; Hodder, 2016; Jourdain, 1997; Kania, 2017; Levitin, 2006; Marsh, 2019; Moore, 2017; Mori & Iwanaga, 2017; Tolbert, 2001; Tolfree & Hallam, 2016). However, this study investigated the emotional effects of military band support and loss and revealed recommendations to leaders for the field.

The study was guided by affect control theory, symbolic interactionism theory, and affect heuristic as a basis for discovering and analyzing the experiences from participants. Affect control theory and the affect heuristic provided a means in this instance for understanding and mapping how participants organized their thoughts and assigned meanings to military ensembles (Stryker, 1987). Using the principles of the affect heuristic outlined by Spence and Townsend (2008), I asked survey participants to respond to spontaneous, emotionally charged questions to map the general response. I proposed that the more meaningful or symbolic a military band performance or activity was perceived, the higher the personally identified emotion would be. Alternatively, symbolic interactionism, coined by Blumer (1969) aligned with the qualitative nature of the study, which accurately supported the justifications behind participants searching for meaning in interactions with their military ensembles and comparing them with symbols of unity and patriotism. The literature on the benefits of music emphasized effects like community building (Wilson & Mantie, 2017), educational activity and creativity (Boer et al., 2012; Kasinitz

& Martiniello, 2019), and psychological impacts such as morale and well-being of listeners (Clennon & Boehm, 2014; Paton, 2011). The results of this study contribute to further understanding of how military bands impact feelings of community, access to educational opportunities about music and the Army as a career path, and the emotional merit of performances in a variety of settings.

This study was produced within the parameters of a qualitative comparative case study to solicit the perceptions of TRADOC and 392D Army Band audience and band members and make comparisons of the values and meanings they assigned to performances and recommendations they made to leadership within their communities. The research questions were tailored to each community and each participant's role within that community, respectively. Serving as a member of the 392D Army Band provided me with some of the most rewarding and meaningful performance experiences of my life, which naturally led to the desire to understand how civilian community members and fellow band members felt following the inactivation in 2019. Acknowledging my potential bias and according to Farquhar (2012), I formed my assumptions in alignment with the interpretivist paradigm in the pursuit of subjective beliefs of the 26 interview participants acquired through selective sampling.

The semi structured interviews analysis and coding was conducted in accordance with the guidelines outlined by DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2011), which resulted in the common themes between both communities that essentially explain (a) how bands improve their communities despite challenges, (b) that military band support loss causes negative effects, (c) the challenges and positive experiences of military musicians, and (d) what audiences need from military band performances and their recommendations to leadership. Shared experiences revealed that band presence and morale have a positive correlation, where participants most commonly explained

that military band interactions bring people together, make events more special, and make people feel happier overall. The most important consideration of this study was providing an opportunity for audience and band members in each of the communities to voice their subjective beliefs in an ethical and safe manner. Gaining further understanding in the underrepresented issue of military band support loss aligns with other research that advocates for the importance of music in education, elderly communities, and military. The findings of this study affirmed research observations regarding connections between music and positive emotions and the equal and opposite correlation of support loss and negative emotions. Participants provided valuable insight into improvement considerations for band and Government leadership. Ensemble leaders and Government officials invested in executing strategies for the continued adaptation of the band field will benefit from the findings of this study. The results of this study reinforce the need for band members and leaders to always be present in interactions, listen to their audiences, and take opportunities to adapt and improve.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Community: _____

Date: _____

Participant (Name and Title): _____

Email / Phone #: _____

Interviewer: Jessica Williams

Interviewer Introduction:

Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed and providing your experience for my dissertation, *Leading Through Music: A Comparative Case Study on the Effects of Military Band Performance*.

As an Army veteran and former member of the 392D Army Band, Fort Lee, VA, I remain invested in the successes and struggles of the military band field and their impact on communities and individual audience members. I intend for this study to contribute to many of the unknowns regarding the social value of military bands, how leaders can improve the field, and how bands can be properly represented during budget considerations in the U.S. Government. My degree path in Organizational Leadership has led me in the desire to discover ways that individuals and organizations can positively affect their internal processes and the processes that impact their external communities.

Interview Background:

Extremely limited scholarly research exists that discusses the experiences of community members in response to military band performances, especially in communities that have lost military band support. The purpose of my study and this interview is to investigate and compare the experiences of military band audience members and discover how military band support loss impacts individual and community perspectives in areas such as well-being, morale, and connectedness.

Interview Introduction:

This interview will be conducted in a fashion that protects your privacy, and your identity will not be disclosed in the completed study. I plan to take notes during the interview, both handwritten and computer-generated, to organize and recall details of our discussion. To aid in the transcription of your experience and the data analysis for my study, I will record the audio portion of our interview. The recording and all notes associated with the interview will be stored in a secure file. This interview is completely voluntary and a process you may request to be stopped at any point for any reason.

The interview has been designed to contribute to leadership's understanding of community perspectives regarding the social value of military bands. You have been selected for interview because of your role and experiences with military ensembles. Your perspectives and experiences may not align with the values I believe military bands bring to communities. While this may be uncomfortable, it is important that your responses are truthful and accurate for the sake of the study.

Thank you again for agreeing to be part of this study. If you are comfortable with the details of this interview, please sign this consent form. If you have any questions before we start, please ask them now.

***Start record setting on Zoom H4N recorder or Zoom conferencing application (without video).*

Appendix B: Performance Observation Protocol

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ End Time: _____

1. Program Location / Setting / Attendance / Demographics: _____

2. Chronology of Events & Observations:

Event	Observations

3. Interactions Description: _____

4. Performer Behaviors: _____

5. Audience Behaviors: _____

Appendix C: Interview Consent Form

Introduction: Leading Through Music: A Comparative Case Study on the Effects of Military Band Performance

Thank you for taking the time to be interviewed and providing your experience for my dissertation, *Leading through music: A comparative case study on the effects of military band performance*. My name is Jess Williams, and I am a doctoral student at Abilene Christian University. My chair's name is Dr. Linnea Rademaker.

As an Army veteran and former member of the 392D Army Band, Fort Lee, VA, I remain invested in the successes and struggles of the military band field and their impact on communities and individual audience members. I intend for this study to contribute to many of the unknowns regarding the social value of military bands. My degree path in Organizational Leadership has led me in the desire to discover ways that individuals and organizations can positively affect their communities.

You may be able to take part in a research study. This form provides important information about that study, including the risks and benefits to you as a potential participant. Please read this form carefully and ask me any questions that you may have about the study. You can ask about research activities and any risks or benefits you may experience. You may also wish to discuss your participation with other people, such as your family doctor or a family member. Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You may refuse to participate or stop your participation at any time and for any reason without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of my study is to investigate and compare the experiences of military band members and audience members. I want to discover how you and others view the importance of military bands to your community.

You are eligible to participate if:

- You are over the age of 18; and
- You are a current or veteran member of the 392D Army Band; or
- You have interacted with the 392D Army Band; or
- You are a current or veteran member of the TRADOC Army Bands; or
- You have interacted with the TRADOC Army Band.

You are not eligible to participate if:

- You are under the age of 18; and
- You have never served with the 392D or TRADOC Army Bands; or
- You have never interacted with the 392D or TRADOC Army Bands; or
- You assisted with review of questions for this study.

If selected for participation, I will ask you to participate in two 60-minute interviews either via Zoom or telephone.

RISKS & BENEFITS:

There are potential risks to taking part in this research study. Below is a list of the foreseeable risks, including the seriousness of those risks and how likely they are to occur:

- Loss of Confidentiality: While risk for this study is very low, participants should know that the risk is not “zero.” All precautions will be taken to ensure the safety and security of study participants.

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study. The indirect benefits may include:

- Contributing to advancement in subject area knowledge
- To take an active role in improving communities
- Possibly access memories the improve feelings of well-being/happiness/positive nostalgia

PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY:

Any information you provide will be confidential to the extent allowable by law. Some identifiable data may have to be shared with individuals outside of the study team, such as members of the ACU Institutional Review Board. Otherwise, your confidentiality will be protected by storing all completed consent forms, interviews and transcriptions, surveys, and observation notes on a password-protected external hard drive using Windows BitLocker.

CONTACTS:

If you have questions about the research study, the lead researcher is Jessica Williams and may be contacted at (xxx) xxx-xxxx, xxxxx@xxx.edu. If you are unable to reach the lead researcher, or wish to speak to someone other than the lead researcher, you may contact Faculty Advisor, Dr. Linnea Rademaker at xxxxxx@xxx.edu. If you have concerns about this study, believe you may have been injured because of this study, or have general questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact ACU’s Chair of the Institutional Review Board and Executive Director of Research, Megan Roth, Ph.D. Dr. Roth may be reached at

(xxx) xxx-xxxx
 xxxxxxxx@xxx.edu
 320 Hardin Administration Bldg, ACU Box 29103
 Abilene, TX 79699

Additional Information

The expected number of interview participants in the study will be at least 20. There may be unexpected risks associated with your participation in this study and some of those may be serious. We will notify you if any such risks are identified throughout the course of the study which may affect your willingness to participate. The study is not anticipated to pose any greater than minimal risk to your physical, psychological, or emotional health.

Your participation may be ended early by the researchers for certain reasons. For example, we may end your participation if you no longer meet study requirements, the researchers believe it is no longer in your best interest to continue participating, you do not follow the instructions provided by the researchers, or the study is ended. You will be contacted by the researchers and given further instructions in the event that you are removed from the study.

There are no monetary costs associated with participating in this study. No payments to participants are expected at this time.

Please let the researchers know if you are participating in any other research studies at this time.

Consent Signature Section

Please sign this form if you voluntarily agree to participate in this study. Sign only after you have read all of the information provided and your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. You should receive a copy of this signed consent form. You do not waive any legal rights by signing this form.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining
Consent

Signature of Person Obtaining
Consent

Date

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Opening Questions:

1. Can you provide some information about yourself and your role in your community?
2. How long have you been associated with the Fort Eustis Band?

Interview Questions for Fort Eustis Community:

1. How do community members describe their experiences from attending and being actively engaged in military band performances?
 - a. What are some ways you feel the Fort Eustis Band is involved in building community connectedness, diversity, morale, learning, or well-being?
 - b. Has Fort Eustis Band community involvement changed over time? Explain.
2. What are community members' perceptions of the impacts of losing military band presence and support in local communities?
 - a. Describe your perceptions of how it would impact the community if the Fort Eustis Band was inactivated.
 - b. How do you think community morale or well-being would change, if at all, if it lost Fort Eustis support?
3. *For Active Band members Only:* How do band members describe the experience of supporting community events as military musicians?
 - a. Describe your experience in supporting military and civilian events as a military musician with the Fort Eustis Army Band.
 - b. Do you notice a difference in the receptivity of performances between Fort Lee audiences and Fort Eustis audiences? Explain.
 - c. In what ways do you feel the Fort Eustis Army Band acts as a symbol of larger ideas, values, or beliefs for audience members?
4. What criteria are required to create meaningful military band performances that are beneficial to military bands and their community audiences?
 - a. What does the Fort Eustis surrounding community need from a military band in terms of morale, well-being, and community building?
 - b. What suggestions would you make to band leadership to improve the impact of the Fort Eustis Band in your community?
 - c. How do you think the Fort Eustis Band affects schools, retirement, and military communities?
5. Do you have anything else you would like to add you feel is important to how the Fort Eustis Band impacted its community or you personally, or anything else you would like to share?

Opening Questions:

1. Can you provide some information about yourself and your role in your community?
2. How long have you been associated with the Fort Lee Band?

Interview Questions for Fort Lee Community:

1. How do community members describe their experiences from attending and being actively engaged in military band performances?
 - a. What are some ways you feel the Fort Lee Band was involved in their community?
 - b. How did the Fort Lee Army Band contribute to building community connectedness, diversity, morale, learning, or well-being?
2. What are community members' perceptions of the impacts of losing military band presence and support in local communities?
 - a. Describe your personal experiences and perceptions of your community following deactivation of the Fort Lee Army Band.
 - b. How has community morale or well-being changed, if at all, following the Fort Lee Band deactivation?
3. *For Former Band members Only:* How do band members describe the experience of supporting community events as military musicians?
 - a. Describe your experience in supporting military and civilian events as a military musician with the Fort Lee Army Band.
 - b. Do you feel the Fort Lee Army Band acted as a symbol of larger ideas, values, or beliefs for audience members?
4. What criteria are required to create meaningful military band performances that are beneficial to military bands and their community audiences?
 - a. What does the Fort Lee surrounding community need from a military band in terms of morale, well-being, and community building?
 - b. What suggestions would you make to bands leadership to improve the impact of Army Bands in your community?
 - c. How do you think the loss of the Fort Lee Band affects schools, retirement, and military communities?
5. Do you have anything else you would like to add that feel is important to how the Fort Lee Band impacted its community or you personally, or anything else you would like to share?

**Provide copy of interview questions to participant.

Appendix E: Survey Questions

Study Background (to be posted on respective social media pages to introduce the survey)

Members and audience members of the 392D and TRADOC Army Bands: Please consider taking the time to provide your experience for my dissertation, Leading through music: A comparative case study on the effects of military band performance.

As an Army veteran and former member of the 392D Army Band, Fort Lee, VA, I remain invested in the successes and struggles of the military band field and their impact on communities and individual audience members. I intend for this study to contribute to many of the unknowns regarding the social value of military bands and how band leaders can use human experience to improve the field overall. My degree path in Organizational Leadership has led me in the desire to discover ways that individuals and organizations can positively affect their internal processes and the processes that impact their external communities.

You participation in this study is voluntary. Please see the attached flyer for additional information and participation qualifications. Your contact and demographic information will be kept confidential to the full extent of the law. By completing the survey, you agree to the terms in the Informed Consent Form and agree to the use and publication of your responses in this study and potential replication studies.

1. Have you read and understand the Informed Consent Form for this study?
 - a. Yes, I have read and understand the Informed Consent Form for this study.
 - b. No, I have not read the informed consent form and will contact xxxxxx@acu.edu to read the form before completing this survey.

2. Which of the following Army Bands are you associated with for this study? **If neither, please exit the survey.**
 - a. 392D Army Band, Fort Lee
 - b. TRADOC Army Band, Fort Eustis
 - c. I have served and/or interacted with both

3. What style music performance team do you prefer to hear from military bands? Indicate all that apply:
 - a. Ceremonial Band / Concert Band
 - b. Jazz (big band/combo)
 - c. Brass Band
 - d. Brass / Woodwind quintet
 - e. Rock Band
 - f. Vocal

4. How would you describe your emotional investment level to military bands?
- Low investment (my time as a band member didn't matter much)
 - Neither High nor Low investment (indifferent)
 - High investment (my time as a band member is important to me)
5. Why do you consider the primary goal of military bands? Check all that apply and/or add your own:
- To educate in schools
 - To build morale for service members at home and overseas
 - To support military ceremonies
 - To entertain at public events
 - Other: _____

6. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

_____ The mission military bands serve is important to individual and community development.

_____ Military bands contribute to diversifying the military force overall.

_____ Military bands make music education more accessible to schools.

_____ Military bands improve well-being and morale.

_____ Military bands symbolize strength and effectively represent the rest of the military.

_____ Retirement communities benefit from military band presence.

_____ Military bands are critical to preserve patriotism.

_____ Military bands are too expensive.

_____ Military bands promote military and community interactions.

_____ Military bands promote mental health.

_____ I would rather hear a military band

perform the anthem than other famous pop artists.

- _____ I regularly attend / support military band performances.
 - _____ Military audiences need and appreciate military bands.
 - _____ Civilian audiences need and appreciate military bands.
 - _____ Military bands evoke emotion and promote a common identity in communities.
 - _____ Military bands promote social inclusion.
 - _____ Military bands are an icon of our national culture.
 - _____ Military bands are socially valuable.
 - _____ Military bands are an important recruitment tool for the entire military.
 - _____ Military bands are part of the American identity.
 - _____ Military bands are part of my personal identity.
 - _____ Military bands affect how I perceive the rest of the military.
7. Do you feel that military bands are being increasingly targeted for deactivation/downsizing?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Explain:

8. What could change about military band music to make it more effective in its mission to enhance morale at home and abroad?

9. What overall impact do you feel military bands currently have on their audiences in terms of: (1) building community cohesion, (2) symbolizing a unified nation and military force, and (3) evoking emotions that make audiences see bands as a valued asset?

Appendix F: IRB Approval Letter

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

320 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29103, Abilene, Texas 79699-9103
325-674-2885

March 11, 2022

Jessica Williams
Department of Education
Abilene Christian University



Dear Jessica,

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I am pleased to inform you that your project titled "Leading Through Music: A Comparative Case Study on the Effects of Military Band Performance",

(IRB# 22-029)is exempt from review under Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects.

If at any time the details of this project change, please resubmit to the IRB so the committee can determine whether or not the exempt status is still applicable.

I wish you well with your work.

Sincerely,

Megan Roth

Appendix H: Likert Scale Survey Responses

#	Field	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	Sum
1	The mission military bands serve is important to individual and community development.	41	8	4	0	1	54
2	Military bands contribute to diversifying the military force overall.	29	16	4	1	3	53
3	Military bands make music education more accessible to schools.	17	25	9	1	1	53
4	Military bands improve well-being and morale.	31	18	2	1	1	53
5	Military bands symbolize strength and effectively represent the rest of the military.	30	11	5	5	2	53
6	Retirement communities benefit from military band presence.	36	14	2	0	1	53
7	Military bands are critical to preserve patriotism.	33	14	3	1	2	53
8	Military bands are too expensive.	0	1	8	18	26	53
9	Military bands promote military and community interactions.	39	13	0	0	1	53
10	Military bands promote mental health.	20	22	7	3	1	53
11	I would rather hear a military band perform the anthem than other famous pop artists.	37	10	4	1	1	53

12	I regularly attend/support military band performances.	23	16	9	3	2	53
13	Military audiences need and appreciate military bands.	20	19	9	4	1	53
14	Civilian audiences need and appreciate military bands.	25	20	7	0	1	53
15	Military bands evoke emotion and promote a common identity in communities.	28	18	4	1	1	52
16	Military bands promote social inclusion.	20	18	12	1	1	52
17	Military bands are an icon of our community culture.	23	16	9	1	3	52
18	Military bands are socially valuable.	28	17	4	1	2	52
19	Military bands are an important recruitment tool for the entire military.	29	14	7	1	1	52
20	Military bands are part of the American identity.	27	18	4	1	2	52
21	Military bands are part of my personal identity.	38	13	0	0	1	52
22	Military bands affect how I perceive the rest of the military.	16	18	10	5	3	52