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Middle School Band Contest Repertoire in Northern Illinois: Analysis and Recommendations

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to provide a description and analysis of repertoire performed at middle school band contests in northern Illinois. Repertoire from 10 Illinois Grade School Music Association—Northern Division district level contests were analyzed in relation to the frequency pieces were performed, dates of publication, publishers represented, and the inclusion of titles on recommended music lists. All contests were held in 2003 and included a mix of urban, suburban, and rural schools. Among the contest programs analyzed, 81 concert bands from 72 schools performed a total of 243 compositions.

Results indicated 1) 46.1% of the selections were composed by just 9.9% of the total number of composers/arrangers represented, 2) nearly 9.9% of the pieces were composed or arranged by just one person, 3) 29.2% of the literature was less than three years old, and 4) 27.6% of the music was published by a single company. Furthermore, 5) transcriptions and arrangements of historical masterworks accounted for 7.8% of the repertoire, 6) 1.6% of pieces represented music of a non-European culture, and 7) 48.1% of concert selections were included in at least one of the music lists examined. Implications of these findings in relation to national and state learning standards and recommendations for broadening the repertoire programmed for middle school band contests are discussed.

Introduction

Several factors influence band directors' repertoire selection including the ability and instrumentation of the ensemble, preferences of students and parents, and the occasion for which the music is to be performed (Battisti, 1995; Prentice, 1986). Programming is also affected by music publishers who spend large sums of money to promote their latest products, and learning standards recommended by state and federal organizations. The *National Standards for Music* (Music Educators National Conference [MENC], 1994), for example, calls on students to “perform music representing diverse genres and cultures” and to be able to “classify [music] by genre and style (and if applicable, by historical period, composer, and title)” (n.p.). The Illinois State Learning Standards for Fine Arts (Illinois State Board of Education [ISBE], 1997) makes similar statements, requiring students to “play...a variety of music representing diverse cultures and styles” (n.p.).

To meet these standards, band directors must program transcriptions of historical masterworks and music of various ethnic heritages including those from non-European cultures. One could also argue that works by women should be included as well. Topp (1989) supports these assertions stating “music by black composers is too little known and too little chosen,” and that repertoire composed by females is “not as rare as a male-dominated music culture might lead us to believe” (p. 2).

The National Standards (MENC, 1994) further require that “*exemplary* [emphasis mine] musical works” be studied and that students be able to “explain the characteristics that cause each work to be considered exemplary” (n.p.). This statement directs educators to select repertoire of the highest caliber, perhaps using objective criteria such as those suggested by Ostling (as cited by Battisti, 1995, see appendix A), Battisti (1995, see appendix B), Cramer

(1997), Del Borgo (1988), Kohut and Grant (1990, see Appendix C), and McBeth (1990). Directors may also consider recommendations offered in such resources as the National Band Association's (2001) *Selective Music List*, *Teaching Music through Performance in Band* (Miles, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2002), *Teaching Music through Performance in Beginning Band* (Miles & Dvorak, 2001), and various state contest lists (e.g., Ohio Music Educators Association [OMEA], 2003).

Research suggests that in spite of efforts to promote the National Standards (MENC 1994) in the instrumental classroom (e.g., Kvet & Tweed, 1996; Snyder, 2001), some music educators may not be selecting repertoire with these standards in mind. Madden (1998), for example, surveyed band directors in central Illinois to ascertain their level of knowledge and commitment to the National Standards. Although many directors felt the standards could have a positive impact on instruction, the majority believed full implementation was impractical and unattainable due to a lack of resources, instruction time, and staffing. Madden therefore determined that participants in the study "did not support the Standards to the degree necessary to fulfill the vision of its authors" (p. 68).

Graettinger (2003) and Rose (2004) examined music selection strategies and criteria of high school band teachers in Iowa, each finding evidence that factors other than state and national standards influenced conductors' repertoire decisions. Both researchers determined that music selection was based more on the group's ability to execute technical demands of the piece and the development of performance skills rather than the acquisition of musical knowledge. Data also indicated that listening to publishers' promotional recordings was among the highest rated strategies used by band directors to select repertoire. This trend, however, may not be consistent nationwide. In Florida for example, promotional recordings were found to be the least important among 12 factors influencing directors' contest repertoire choices (Williams, as cited by Greiner, 2002).

Trends involving school band repertoire have been studied in both Texas (Harris & Walls, 1996) and Iowa (Greiner, 2002). Harris and Walls analyzed the *Texas University Interscholastic League Prescribed Music List (PML)* from 1967 to 1994 to identify older works that should be considered core repertoire for young band. Data indicated approximately two-thirds of pieces listed at the grade one and two levels did not remain on the *PML* for more than two revisions, and that over 42% appeared only once. Harris and Walls stated that instead of allowing quality works to eventually disappear, they could serve as a starting point upon which a foundation for a core repertoire of young band music may be established. This data also point to the potential instability of state contest lists, especially in regard to music for developing bands.

Greiner (2002) compared repertoire performed during 1998 and 1999 at the Iowa High School Music Association (IHSMA) Large Group Festival with that identified by established resources as quality literature. Resources included five state festival required music lists, *Teaching Music through Performance in Band* volumes 1 and 2 (Miles, 1997, 1998), *Best Music for High School Band* (Dvorak, Grechesky, & Ciepluch, 1993), *Best Music For Young Bands* (Dvorak, Taggart, & Schmalz, 1986), and the National Band Association's (2001) *Selective Music List*. Results indicated that depending on school size, between one-third and one-half of the literature

performed was not included in any of the resources examined. Based on data from this research, Iowa band directors adopted a required music list for use at IHSMA large group festivals in an effort to raise the quality of repertoire performed.

Stevenson (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of 24 state contest lists and the National Band Association's (2001) *Selective Music List* to determine which titles were most frequently recommended for festival performance. Although a total of 9,647 individual titles were found among the 25 lists, 35% ($n = 3,402$) were only listed once, a fact that indicated no broad consensus as to the musical or educational value of a large amount of literature. Stevenson, in determining a possible core repertoire, therefore included only the 1,270 works (grades 1-6) that appeared on seven or more of the 25 lists.

Most research conducted thus far (e.g., Graettinger, 2003; Greiner, 2002; Madden, 1996) has focused on literature selection of high school directors. The purpose of this study, however, was to provide a description and analysis of repertoire content at the middle school level. Research questions included:

1. How much of the music programmed was published in the past three years?
2. Which publishers were represented most frequently?
3. How many female and minority composers/arrangers were represented?
4. Which composers and arrangers had their music performed most frequently?
5. To what extent was music of various cultures and historical periods selected as called for in national and state learning standards?
6. Which pieces were performed most frequently?
7. How much of the literature selected has been judged by music educators to be of high quality and listed in respected repertoire resources as a result?

Data generated from this analysis will serve as one indicator of the impact national and state learning standards, the music industry, and leading music educators have on repertoire selected for middle school band contests in Northern Illinois. This information can then be used as a basis for recommendations to improve the quality of literature performed at these events.

Method

Programs from 10 Illinois Grade School Music Association—Northern Division (IGSMAND) district level contests were analyzed in relation to the questions listed above. All contests were held in March of 2003 and included a mix of urban, suburban, and rural schools. Information regarding music published between 2000 and 2002 was obtained through the new band music listings from program books of the Midwest Clinic (2000, 2001, 2002). Additional information was determined based on lists of top selling pieces from the J. W. Pepper (2003) catalogue.

Ascertaining musical quality is a subjective task. It is important, nonetheless, that repertoire be evaluated in order to judge the effectiveness of instrumental curricula. One indicator of artistic and pedagogical value may be the frequency a particular work appears on respected repertoire

lists. Therefore, *Teaching Music through Performance in Band (TMPB)*, volumes I-IV (Miles, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2002), *Teaching Music through Performance in Beginning Band (TMPBB)* (Miles & Dvorak, 2001), the National Band Association's (2001) *Selective Music List (SML)*, and Stevenson's (2003) listing of most frequently recommended works on selected wind band/ensemble music lists were chosen as criterion variables for determining quality. *TMPB* and *TMPBB* together list 211 concert selections for grades 1-3; the *SML* includes 487 titles at the grade two and three levels; and Stevenson lists 20 grade one, 228 grade two, and 332 grade three titles appearing on 7-25 individual repertoire lists.

These sources were selected because 1) they are accepted by the profession as resources for finding outstanding literature (Greiner, 2002), 2) include the most current repertoire, and 3) tend to be more stable (e.g., Harris & Wall, 1996) and consistent (Stevenson, 2003) than individual state lists. Each of these sources lists criteria for the inclusion of repertoire though it is unclear as to what extent they were applied in the selection process. Cramer (1997) implied that pieces listed in *TMPB* (Miles, 1997) should have 1) a well conceived formal structure, 2) creative melodies and counter lines, 3) harmonic imagination, 4) rhythmic vitality, 5) contrast in all musical elements, 6) scoring that best represents the full potential for beautiful tone and timber, and 7) an emotional impact.

Repertoire on the *SML* (National Band Association [NBA], 2001) was chosen based on the recommendations of a nine-member *SML* committee and an *ad hoc* subcommittee. According to the NBA (2001),

All works from the seventh edition [NBA, 1997] that were recognized by at least one member of the committee were initially selected for inclusion in the [eighth] edition. However, each of the committee members were encouraged to make recommendations for works from the previous edition that should not be included in this edition. If a majority of the committee members agreed on titles for exclusion from the current edition, then the editor made appropriate changes to the list (p. ii).

Works listed by Stevenson (2003) only indicated the frequency each piece appeared on the repertoire lists examined. Although criteria for individual lists were not provided, Stevenson only considered lists that 1) were maintained by non-profit professional music education associations or non-profit associations devoted to the advancement of wind bands/ensembles, 2) included music from a broad range of difficulty levels, and 3) included literature based upon some stated or implied criteria of educational and/or aesthetic merit (p. 38).

No pieces grade four or higher listed in these sources were performed at the contests examined. Because *TMPB*, *TMPBB*, the *SML*, and Stevenson (2003) do not include marches, and a comparable list could not be found, marches were not evaluated in this portion of the study. Marches were, however, included in the analysis of data related to research questions 1-6. For the purposes of the present study, the term *concert selections* will be used when referring to the portion of the repertoire that does not include marches.

Results

Data indicated that 81 concert bands from 72 schools performed a total of 243 compositions among the 10 contest programs analyzed. With the exception of one elementary group consisting of fifth-grade students, all bands were from the middle school level (grades 6-8). Each ensemble presented a march and two additional selections as per rules of the contest. The IGSMAND does not utilize a required music list (IGSMAND, 1999).

A total of 29.2% ($n = 71$) of all compositions performed ($N = 243$) were less than three years old. Fifteen percent ($n = 37$) were published in 2002, 8.6% ($n = 21$) in 2001, and 5.3% ($n = 13$) in 2000. Furthermore, 59.3% ($n = 48$) of all bands participating in the contests ($N = 81$) performed a work published in or after 2000.

Pieces written within three years prior to March 2003 ($n = 71$) were analyzed to determine which publishers were represented most frequently. C. L. Barnhouse published 31% ($n = 22$), C. P. P. Belwin/Warner Brothers, 14% ($n = 10$); Hal Leonard, 11% ($n = 8$); Alfred, 11% ($n = 8$); and Carl Fischer, 9.9% ($n = 7$). Six additional companies published the remaining 22.5% ($n = 16$). Further analysis revealed C. L. Barnhouse produced 27.6% ($n = 67$) of the total compositions performed ($N = 243$).

Music by a total of 101 individual composers and/or arrangers was performed at the contests examined. Barbara Buehlman ($n = 2$) and Anne McGinty ($n = 3$) were the only females listed with a combined total of five performances. Quincy Hilliard was the only African-American composer/arranger represented with a total of three pieces performed. Furthermore, 46.1% ($n = 112$) of the repertoire performed was produced by only 9.9% ($n = 10$) of the total number of composers/arrangers represented ($N = 101$). In fact, the music of James Swearingen alone accounted for 9.9% ($n = 24$) of the selections performed ($N = 243$) (see table 1).

Table 1

Composers/Arrangers Performed Most Frequently

Rank	Composer/Arranger	No. Pieces Performed
1	James Swearingen	24
2	Robert Sheldon	13
3	John Edmonson	12
4	Andrew Balent	11
4	David Shaffer	11
5	Frank Erickson	10
6	Ed Huckleby	9
7	David Holsinger	8
8	Larry Daehn	7
8	Eliot Del Borgo	7

Transcriptions and arrangements of historical masterworks accounted for 7.8% ($n = 19$) of the total pieces selected ($N = 243$) (see table 2). For the purpose of this study, a piece was considered an historical masterwork if it was written by a medieval, renaissance, baroque, classical, or 20th century composer listed in *Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians* (Slonimsky & Kuhn, 2001).

Table 2

Transcriptions/Arrangements of Historical Masterworks

Title*	Composer/Arranger	Publisher
Air and Alleluia	Mozart/Kinyon	Alfred
Alleluia	Mozart/O'Reilly	Alfred
Andante from Prince Igor	Borodin/Bullock	Warner Bros.
Arioso	Handel/Kinyon	Alfred
As Torrents in Summer	Elgar/Davis	Ludwig
Ave Verum Corpus	Mozart/Buehlman	Ludwig
Bach=Air	Bach/McGinty	Queenwood
Blessed are They	Brahms/Buehlman	Ludwig
Earl of Oxford's March	Byrd/Williams	Alfred
Irish Washerwoman	Anderson	Warner Bros.
March Lorraine	Gannee/Williams	Alfred
March Militaire Francaise	Saint-Saens/Sweringen	Lorenz
Marriage of Figaro	Mozart/Slocum	Warner Bros.
Selections from Pictures at an Exhibition	Mussorgski/Story	Warner Bros.
Song Without Words	Holst/Story	Warner Bros.
Suite from Carmen	Bizet/Balent	Carl Fischer
Telemann Baroque Suite	Telemann/Hill	
Theme from Orpheus	Offenbach/Williams	Alfred
To a Wild Rose	MacDowell/	

*All pieces were performed once

In addition, *Ancient Castle* ($n = 1$) and *Korean Folk Rhapsody* ($n = 2$) by James Curnow, and *Mazama: Legend of the Pacific Northwest* ($n = 1$) by Jay Chattaway were the only pieces based on music from non-European cultures. A total of 42 compositions, however, contained material based on folk music from the Western-European tradition (see table 3).

Table 3

Repertoire Incorporating Western-European Folk Material

Title	Composer	Publisher	# Perf.
A Childhood Hymn	Holsinger	Wingert-Jones	5
A Little French Suite	LaPlante	Daehn	1
Amazing Grace	Tichelli	Manhattan Beach	1
America the Beautiful	Ward/Dragon	Warner Bros.	1
An English Celebration	Swearingen	Barnhouse	2
An Irish Rhapsody	Grundman	Boosey & Hawkes	1
An Irish Ayre for Winds	Barker	Alfred	1
Appalachian Sketches	Vinson	Hal Leonard	1
As Summer Was Just Beginning	Daehn	Daehn	4
Country Wildflowers	Daehn	Daehn	1
English Folk Suite	Del Borgo	Hal Leonard	1
Fantasy on American Sailing Songs	Grundman	Boosey & Hawkes	1
Fantasy on an Irish Air	Saucedo	Hal Leonard	1
In the Bleak Midwinter	Holst/Bullock	Warner Bros.	1
In the Bleak Midwinter	Holst/Harbinson	Alfred	1
Irish Washerwoman	Anderson	Warner Bros.	1
Kentucky 1800	Grundman	Boosey & Hawkes	1
March on an Welsh Air	Edmondson	Queenwood	1
Nordic Sketches	LaPlante	Daehn	1
Old Scottish Melody	Wiley	TRN	1
On A Hymnsong of Philip Bliss	Holsinger	TRN	2
Prospect	LaPlante	Bourne	2
Scot's Brigade	Ployhar	Warner Bros.	1
Sea Song Trilogy	McGinty	Queenwood	1
Shaker Variants	Del Borgo	Warner Bros.	1
Shenendoah	Ticheli	Manhattan Beach	1
Shenendoah Triptych	Balmages	FJH	1
Songs of Wales	Davis	Ludwig	1
Song Without Words	Holst/Story	Warner Bros.	1
Two Canadian Folk Songs	McGinty	Queenwood	1
Under An Irish Sky	Neeck	Barnhouse	1
When the Stars Began to Fall	Allen	TRN	1
Total Performances			42

The most frequently programmed compositions included *Ceremony, Chant, and Ritual* by David Shaffer (2002), *Big Four* march by K. L. King/arranged by James Swearingen (2002),

and *A Childhood Hymn* by David Holsinger (1991). Each of these pieces was performed five times.

Of the total number of concert selections ($N = 162$) examined, 48.1% ($n = 78$) were included in the *SML* and/or *TMPB*, *TMPBB*, or Stevenson (2003) (see tables 4 & 5). Despite the relatively few number of titles selected from these sources (see table 6), 75.3% ($n = 61$) of all bands in the contests ($N = 81$) performed at least one concert work included in one or more of these resources.

Table 4

Works listed in TMPB, TMPBB, or the SML

Title	Composer/Arranger	Publisher	SML	TMPB/ TMPBB	# Perf.
A Childhood Hymn	Holsinger	Wingert-Jones	X	X	5
Air and Alleluia	Mozart/Kinyon	Alfred	X		1
Air for Band	Erickson	Bourne	X	X	3
Amazing Grace	Ticheli	Manhattan Beach	X	X	1
Ancient Voices	Sweeney	Hal Leonard	X	X	1
An Irish Interlude	Barker	Alfred		X	1
An Irish Rhapsody	Grundman	Boosey & Hawkes	X	X	1
Arioso	Handel/Kinyon	Summy	X		1
As Torrents in Summer	Elgar/Davis	Ludwig	X	X	1
As Summer Was Just Beginning	Daehn	Daehn	X	X	4
A Tallis Prelude	Akey	Queenwood	X		2
Ave Verum Corpus	Mozart/ Buehlman	Ludwig	X		1
Blessed are They	Brahms/ Buehlman	Ludwig	X	X	1
Blue Ridge Overture	Erickson	Belwin	X		1
Canto	McBeth	Southern	X		1
Country Wildflowers	Daehn	Daehn		X	1
Cumberland Cross	Strommen	Alfred		X	1
Exaltation	Swearingen	Barnhouse	X		1
Fall River Overture	Sheldon	Barnhouse	X		1
Fantasy on American Sailing Songs	Grundman	Boosey & Hawkes	X		1
Festivo	Nelhybel	Belwin	X		1
In the Bleak Midwinter	Holst/Bullock	Warner Bros.	X		1
In the Shining of the Stars	Sheldon	Barnhouse	X	X	1
Kentucky 1800	Grundman	Boosey & Hawkes	X	X	1
Korean Folk Rhapsody	Curnow	Hal Leonard		X	1
Mazama	Chattaway	William Allen		X	1

On a Hymnsong of Philip Bliss	Holsinger	TRN	X	X	2
Old Scottish Melody	Wiley	TRN		X	1
Peregrin – A Traveler’s Tale	Akey	Queenwood		X	1
Prospect	La Plante	Bourne	X	X	2
Sea King Overture	Whitcomb	Barnhouse	X		1
Shenandoah	Ticheli	Manhattan Beach	X	X	1
Sinfonia XIX	Broege	Boosey & Hawkes		X	1
Snakes	Duffy	Ludwig	X	X	1
Song for the Winter Moon	Cummings	Grand Mesa		X	1
Symphonic Overture	Carter	Carl Fischer	X		1
Toccata for Band	Erickson	Bourne	X	X	3
Westridge Overture	Barnes	Southern		X	1
When the Starts Began to Fall	Allen	TRN		X	1
With Quite Courage	Daehn	Daehn		X	1
Total performances			42	40	54

Table 5

Works Included on 7-25 State/Association Lists (Stevenson, 2003)

# lists	Title	Composer	Publisher	# perf.
25	Kentucky 1800	Grundman	Boosey & Hawkes	1
24	Air for Band	Erickson	Bourne	3
22	Irish Rhapsody, An	Grundman	Boosey & Hawkes	1
22	Symphonic Overture	Carter	Carl Fischer	1
22	Toccata for Band	Erickson	Bourne	3
20	Canto	McBeth	Southern	1
20	Festivo	Nelhybel	Warner Bros.	1
20	On a Hymnsong of Philip Bliss	Holsinger	TRN	2
19	Fall River Overture	Sheldon	Barnhouse	1
19	Sinfonia VI: the Elements	Broege	Manhattan Beach	1
18	Marriage of Figaro	Mozart/Slocum	Warner Bros.	1
17	Shenandoah	Ticheli	Manhattan Beach	1
16	Exhaltation	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1
15	Anthem for Winds and Percussion	Smith	Hal Leonard	1
15	Blue Ridge Overture	Erickson	Belwin	1
14	As Torrents in Summer	Elgar/Davis	Ludwig	1
14	Ave Verum Corpus	Mozart/ Buehlman	Ludwig	1
14	Childhood Hymn, A	Holsinger	Wingert-Jones	5
13	Covington Square	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1

13	Majestia	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1
13	Pevensey Castle	Sheldon	Barnhouse	1
13	Prelude and Dance	Del Borgo	Hal Leonard	1
13	Old Scottish Melody	Wiley	TRN	1
13	Tallis Prelude, A	Akey	Queenwood	1
12	Aventura	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1
11	As Summer Was Just Beginning	Daehn	Daehn	3
11	Korean Folk Song Rhapsody	Curnow	Hal Leonard	2
11	Peregrin: A Travelers Tail	Akey	Queenwood	1
11	Prospect	La Plante	Bourne	2
11	Romanesque	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1
11	Sea Song Trilogy	McGinty	Boosey & Hawkes	1
11	Songs of Wales	Davis	Ludwig	1
10	Air and Alleluia	Mozart/Kinyon	Alfred	1
10	Reflections	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1
9	Cumberland Cross	Strommen	Alfred	1
9	First Light on the Chesapeake	Hosay	Curnow	1
9	In the Shining of the Stars	Sheldon	Barnhouse	1
9	Irish Interlude, An	Barker	Alfred	1
9	Maelstrom, The	R. W. Smith	Belwin	1
9	Shaker Variants	Del Borgo	Belwin	2
8	Ancient Voices	Sweeney	Hal Leonard	1
8	Arioso	Handel/Kinyon	Alfred	1
8	Ashland Park	Huckeby	Barnhouse	1
8	Bristol Bay Legend	Sheldon	Barnhouse	1
8	Centuria	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1
8	Free Spirit Overture	J. Williams	Barnhouse	1
8	Joyant Winds	Huckeby	Barnhouse	1
8	Westridge Overture	Barnes	Southern	1
7	Jubilance	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1
7	Mazama	Chattaway	Warner Bros.	1
7	Regenesis: Song of the Planet	Higgins	Alfred	1
7	Snakes	Duffy	Ludwig	1
7	Trails of Glory	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1
7	To Challenge the Sky and Heavens Above	R. W. Smith	Belwin	1
7	When the Stars Began to Fall	Allen	TRN	1
7	Windemere Overture	Swearingen	Barnhouse	1
	Total individual titles = 56		Total performances	69

Table 6

Data Summary by Source

Source	Total Pieces Performed	Individual Titles	Total Grades 1, 2, and 3 Titles Listed in Source	Percentage of Titles Performed	Bands (N=81) Playing from source
TMPBB	2	2	51	3.9%	2 (2.5%)
TMPB	40	27	160	16.9%	34 (42%)
SML	42	28	487	5.7%	36 (44.4%)
Stevenson (2003)	69	56	580	9.7%	54 (66.6%)
Combined totals	78	65	-	-	61 (75.3%)

Discussion

Data generated from this analysis suggests music performed at IGSMAND district contests does not reflect the variety of repertoire called for by the standards (MENC, 1994; ISBE, 1997). This conclusion is supported by findings indicating 1) almost half of the selections were composed by only ten individuals and 2) close to 30% were less than three years old. Furthermore, 3) almost 30% of the music was published by a single company and 4) almost 10% was composed or arranged by just one individual—James Swearingen. These factors may lead to sameness within the developing band repertoire due to a lack of diversity in compositional styles and restrictions on scoring imposed by many publishing companies. Carl Fischer Music (n.d) and Lake State Publications (2001), for example, provide specific guidelines to composers/arrangers in regard to instrumentation, ranges, length, keys, meter, and rhythmic complexity allowed for each level of music they publish. Colgrass (2004) makes a similar assertion stating, “As it stands, publishers provide stock fare to the schools—music that is easy to execute but often emotionally superficial (p. 23).

It is also significant that many bands chose not to perform music of non-Western cultures and various historical periods. Although several pieces ($n = 46$) presented material originating from a specific culture, the vast majority of these ($n = 42$) represented Western-European traditions rather than music from non-European societies. Transcriptions and arrangements of historical masterworks were also seldom performed suggesting directors are choosing not to introduce students to music history during contest preparation. This does not mean cultural and historical repertoire has been omitted from the curriculum, as some directors may be programming these genres at different times of the year and using contest selections to focus on other knowledge called for by the standards.

Meeting the standards for music education may, nonetheless, challenge directors to make more of an effort to present quality cultural and historical repertoire to students. Selections of this type do exist for young bands but may require conductors to look beyond larger publishers to those producing less music on a smaller advertising budget (“Multiple perspectives”, 1990). Grand Mesa Music Publishers, for example, offers a series of non-simplified transcriptions from

the renaissance, baroque, and classical periods that are accessible to developing ensembles (Grand Mesa Music, 2004) but remain true to the original composition.

Young musicians should also be allowed to perform music by living composers important to the larger musical community. Several programs initiated in the past 40 years have called on such individuals to write for developing students including the Young Composers Project originating in 1959 (see “Contemporary Music Project,” 1973) and the Yale Seminar held in 1963 (Palisca, 1964). The most recent effort to generate significant repertoire accessible to young students has been undertaken by the American Composers Forum who recently commissioned several prominent composers from outside the field of music education to write pieces for the middle school band (American Composers Forum, 2004). Composers involved in this project represent the diversity of gender and ethnicity lacking in repertoire currently available (e.g., Topp, 1989).

Despite the lack of variety, evidence of musical and pedagogical quality was widespread in the works examined. Although only 48% ($n = 78$) of concert selections were listed in *TMPB*, *TMPBB*, the *SML*, or Stevenson (2003), 66% ($n = 61$) of bands performed at least one piece listed in these sources. This number would have been even higher had marches been included in the analysis. It should be noted that several bands performed original versions or non-simplified editions of marches by J. P. Sousa, K. L. King, or Henry Fillmore, cornerstones of the American band repertoire.

It is beyond the scope of this study to ascertain what resources directors relied on when choosing music for their ensembles. The fact that so few of the titles listed in *TMPB*, *TMPBB*, and the *SML* were performed, however, suggests that conductors may not be using these books a great deal when selecting repertoire. Directors may instead be seeking advice from colleagues or looking to music reviewed in undergraduate or graduate methods courses (e. g. Graettinger, 2003; Rose, 2004).

It is also possible that some directors were drawn to a relatively small number of quality titles that may be evolving into a standard repertoire for middle school bands (e.g. Harris & Walls, 1996; Stevenson, 2003). Additional evidence supports this conclusion. The music of Frank Erickson, for example, was programmed 10 times although he passed away in 1996. Furthermore, Holsinger’s (1991) *A Childhood Hymn* was one of the most frequently performed pieces although it was written over 12 years ago.

Publishers’ promotion of new repertoire might have been the single most influential factor in directors’ musical choices, and may also have been the reason performances of many titles dropped dramatically after the first year of publication. Music published in 2002 was performed 76% more often than that published in 2001 and almost three times more often than music issued in 2000. Some directors may attribute this phenomenon to the fact that much of the new music published is of low quality (e.g., “Multiple perspectives”, 1990) and does not stand the test of time. Regardless, new music sells as evidenced by the fact that 894 pieces for concert band were issued in 2002 alone (Midwest Clinic, 2002).

This study illustrates contest-programming trends in Northern Illinois. Further research is needed to determine if these results are consistent in other parts of the country. It may be that states utilizing a required repertoire list attain a better balance in the musical genres chosen for festival performance. Nonetheless, several trends in Illinois are consistent with those throughout the country. For example, the three most often performed selections in IGSMAND contests were also top sellers nationwide (J. W. Pepper, 2003). In addition, Swearingen, Holsinger, and Erickson were also found to be among the most frequently performed composers in contests outside the state of Illinois (Greiner, 2002).

Recommendations

Directors participating in IGSMAND contests appear to be concerned with musical quality in the literature they select. There are, however, some discrepancies between the repertoire programmed and the learning called for in state and national standards. The following recommendations suggest ways the IGSMAND and similar organizations might encourage directors to program a greater variety of repertoire.

Many state organizations (e.g., OMEA, 2003) utilize a required music list for the festivals they administrate. Although these lists may be unstable (Harris & Wall, 1996) and not very selective, creating a well-designed list that targets music of various cultures, historical periods, and composers may be the best way to broaden the repertoire performed at IGSMAND contests. Like the OMEA (2003), perhaps directors could only be required to choose one piece from the list leaving the other two selections entirely at the discretion of the conductor.

Directors concerned that their freedom to select contest literature had been reduced may oppose this change in procedure. One way to respond to this reaction would be to create a *recommended* rather than a *required* list. Another way would be to eliminate the rule stating every band must play a march, thus allowing conductors to choose repertoire with almost the same freedom as before, while also promoting a comprehensive approach to music education.

While it is important that students learn to perform marches, it is no more important than the need for them to experience other styles of music. The practice of requiring a march is a carryover from the first band contests when bands played marches as non-adjudicated, warm-up selections prior to performing two additional pieces that were judged (Hash, 2003). In later years, the march came to be adjudicated along with the other pieces thus losing its original purpose of allowing the band an opportunity to get used to the performance venue.

Other activities on the part of the IGSMAND could also lead to broader programming. This organization, for example, could sponsor in-service opportunities that promote and demonstrate quality repertoire with which directors are unfamiliar, and commission new works from composers outside the field of music education, especially women and minorities. These projects would not only increase the variety of music performed but also encourage compositions by populations underrepresented in the repertoire.

Conclusions from this study should be generalized with caution as results may vary from one situation to another. Further research is needed to determine repertoire trends in different regions and at various levels of education. Future studies may examine contest programming in individual states as well as samplings of bands from across the county and around the world. In addition, research that compares programming among organizations with (e.g., OMEA, 2003) and without (e.g., IGSMAND, 1999) required music lists might indicate the effectiveness of such lists to promote “a variety of music representing diverse cultures and styles” (ISBE, 1997, n.p.).

Furthermore, directors’ literature choices for performances other than contests and festivals should be analyzed to help determine if national and state standards are addressed at other times during the school year. Finally, longitudinal studies examining music selection over a span of several years would indicate if repertoire trends change over time and if learning standards (e.g., MENC, 1994) are shaping instrumental music curricula. Studies of this type could be conducted *post hoc* (e.g., Greiner, 2002), provided contest programs are available from the past several years.

The National Standards for Music (MENC, 1994) and the Illinois State Learning Standards (ISBE, 1997) call for a wide range of genres in the music curriculum. Although the programming of many band directors may not reflect the variety called for in these documents, organizations that sponsor contests are in a position to positively affect this condition. By providing repertoire recommendations, sponsoring in-service opportunities, commissioning new works, and engaging in ongoing analysis of contest programming, groups such as the IGSMAND can broaden their contribution to the progress of music education.

Appendix A

Criteria for Selecting Repertoire (Ostling as cited by Battisti, 1995, p. 46)

1. The composition has form – not “a form” but form – and reflects a proper balance between repetition and contrast.
2. The composition reflects shape and design, and creates the impression of conscious choice and judicious arrangement on the part of the composer.
3. The composition reflects craftsmanship in orchestration, demonstrating a proper balance between transparent and tutti scoring, and also between solo and group colors.
4. The composition is sufficiently unpredictable to preclude an immediate grasp of its musical meaning.
5. The route through which the composition travels in initiating its musical tendencies and probable musical goals is not completely direct and obvious.
6. The composition is consistent in its quality throughout its length and in its various sections.
7. The composition is consistent in its style, reflecting a complete grasp of technical details, clearly conceived ideas, and avoids lapses into trivial, futile, or unsuitable passages.
8. The composition reflects ingenuity in its development, given the stylistic context in which it exists.

9. The composition is genuine in idiom, and is not pretentious.
10. The composition reflects a musical validity, which transcends factors of historical importance, or factors of pedagogical usefulness.

Appendix B

Criteria for Selecting School Band Repertoire (Battisti, 1995, p. 89)

1. Select music that is interesting, that is, music that is imaginative in the development of some of all of its music elements—melody, harmony, texture, rhythm, form, etc. The music should provide opportunities for teaching musical concepts about form and construction.
2. Individual parts should be as interesting as possible. Students like to play pieces that allow everyone to be “part of the action.” Tubas like to play melodies as well as bass lines; French horns like to play more than offbeats. Choose music that will help each student grow technically.
3. Select music that fits the instrumentation of the ensemble. However, if a conductor wants to perform an excellent work with students and a required instrument (or two) is lacking, substitute a reasonable alternate instrument and perform the piece. Make sure that this is done in a manner that preserves the musical integrity of the piece.
4. Technical and musical demands of the music selected should be compatible with the skills of the ensemble. Music that demands months of excessive drill should be avoided. Students need to play literature that allows them to approach the expressive character and nature of the music. Literature that makes excessive technical demands of the students denies them the opportunity to reach this expressive plateau of music making.
5. Music selected should encompass a variety of styles—contemporary, avant-garde, Renaissance, Baroque, Romantic, Jazz, Popular, etc. This makes possible the teaching of history, various musical styles and performance practices. Music with a variety of textures offers students the opportunity to perform music ranging from delicately scored passages (solo and small group instrumentation) to fully scored tutti section (employing the entire instrumentation of the ensemble).
6. Consider appropriateness when selecting music. A piece that would be appropriate for one occasion and environment might be totally inappropriate for another. For example, the Wagner *Trauersinfonie* might not be appropriate for a Fourth of July concert but might be very appropriate for a concert of remembrance (Veterans Day). In summary, choose music that is of good quality and appropriate for the occasion.

APPENDIX C

Musical Quality Criteria (Kohut & Grant, 1990, p. 85)

1. Has the work stood the test of time? This is a traditional criterion used by many music critics and one that obviously merits careful consideration.

2. Acknowledged quality of the composer or arranger. Although not every work by a good composer or arranger will be excellent, the majority usually are.
3. Expressive quality exemplified by musical tension and release. Music with expressive quality lends itself to being performed with feeling. Synthetic music is usually devoid of expressive content.
4. Closely related to Item 3 is the matter of expressive subtlety. Is the expressive quality of the music perceived after only one or two hearings, or does the music get better and better after each new hearing? Music well written will stand up well under close examination and analysis. It will reveal many possibilities for expressive nuance and will “wear well” in repeated rehearsals.
5. Good craftsmanship. This simply means intelligent and skillful use of the musical elements along with appropriate scoring for the voices and/or instruments for which the work is intended.

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