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WHENCE COMES THE LADY PERCUSSIONIST?
THE CHANGING ROLE OF FEMALES IN PROFESSIONAL PERCUSSION POSITIONS IN
THE UNITED STATES, 2011-2020

By

Cassidy Cheyenne Calloway

An Undergraduate Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the
Fine and Performing Arts Scholars Program
Honors College
East Tennessee State University

Cassidy C. Calloway Date

Dr. Scott Contreras-Koterbay Date

Dr. Alison Deadman, Thesis Mentor Date

Dr. Matthew Geiger, Reader Date

To my grandmother, Jennifer

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ABSTRACT

Women percussionists have historically been the minority in professional percussion roles. After a discussion of women's roles as drummers in ancient history, this document reviews the role of women percussionists in the rapidly evolving field of percussion. The purpose of this study was to see if there has been an increase in female percussionists in professional positions since Meghan Aube's 2011 study, *Women in Percussion: The Emergence of Women as Professional Percussionists in the United States, 1930-Present*. Because female percussionists have been subject to gender stereotyping of instruments and gender discrimination, this study also aimed to discover if any progress has been made toward the presence of women in percussion education and as performers. In order to update results from Meghan Aube's study, the personnel lists of the top two tiers of orchestras (the top 11.28 percent of 452 orchestras according to the ranking system established by the League of American Orchestras) were surveyed to find the gender ratio of their percussion sections. Likewise, data collected from the College Music Society directory was used to determine the number of women teaching percussion at universities in the United States. In addition, percussion professors from institutions offering graduate degrees in music were surveyed and asked to provide their experiences with gender discrimination toward female percussionists. This document may serve as a resource for further studies and research on the evolving roles of female percussionists.

INTRODUCTION

Since the development of the field of percussion in Western cultures, males have dominated. Today, we see the same situation from prominent universities to world-renowned orchestras as male percussionists make up the majority of educators and performers. Until recently, the documentation of pioneer females in percussion has been extremely scarce and nearly nonexistent. If musicians stopped to think about it, many of them might simply assume that the most successful percussionists have been men. However, research shows that early women percussionists, their achievements, and their contributions to the field were overlooked. Thus, although recent research has shed light on some of these women, many remain forgotten. Although the role of females in the field of percussion may seem trivial, it is in fact crucial in terms of today's concern over the diversity and equality of musicians.

The purpose of this study is to see if there have been any significant changes in the roles of women in percussion since Meghan Aube's 2011 study, *Women in Percussion: The Emergence of Women as Professional Percussionists in the United States, 1930-Present*. My thesis will provide documentation of the evolving role of female percussionists: information that is important for advocacy initiatives. This document reports the results of a study that evaluates the gender ratio of current college percussion students in the United States. Also central to this research study is exploration of the perspectives of male and female percussionists about women's role in the male-dominated field. The study aims to answer the following questions: Has the presence of women in professional percussion positions grown since 2011? Has the ratio of women studying percussion at the collegiate level increased since 2011? Has any progress been made toward eliminating gender discrimination toward female percussionists?

This document will use the term gender to distinguish between the social differences of masculine and feminine characteristics. When describing gender, Ellen Koskoff, professor of ethnomusicology at the University of Rochester’s Eastman School of Music, argues that “behaviors depend not so much on biological sex differentiation as on culturally conceived notions of gender and on prestige systems that accord value to one gender over another.”¹ In other words, the perceptions of gender guide behaviors rather than one’s biological sex. However, although gender is a spectrum, linguistics divide characteristics of musical instruments into male and female, and percussion has developed a masculine identity. When gender stereotyping of musical instruments is discussed, the term gender will be used although previous literature uses sex and gender interchangeably. For musical instruments, a gender stereotype develops when one gender, male or female, is seen most often playing said instrument. When surveying the personnel lists of the top two tiers of orchestras, it is assumed that the members identify by the pronouns used in their biographies. In the study portion of this project, participants were asked how they identified—male, female, or gender non-conforming—in order to document the state of female percussionists in today’s society.

Since ancient history, women have been involved in the development of percussion. Chapter I travels through time, looking at the roles women have played from drummers² to percussionists. In Chapter II, topics of gender discrimination, gender stereotyping of instruments, the documentation of female percussionists, and roles models are examined in a review of the existing literature. The material in Chapter II provides evidence to help gain a better

¹ Ellen Koskoff and Suzanne Cusick, *A Feminist Ethnomusicology: Writings on Music and Gender* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 36.

² Because percussion was not an organized practice yet, the term drummer is used to describe those who played percussion instruments such as frame drum, tambourine, and sistrum.

understanding of the historical background discussed in Chapter I and presents an explanation for the state in which the field of percussion lies in modern times. As Meghan Aube's research was the inspiration for this document, Chapter IV takes the baseline data from Aube's study of women holding percussion positions in top tier orchestras, as percussion professors, and holding leadership positions in the Percussive Arts Society and compares it to data I collected in 2020. In addition, this document briefly examines the involvement of female percussionists in the United States military's premier ensembles because of the heavy influence the military has had on the development of percussion throughout history.

The study portion of this project—discussed in Chapters III and V—was designed to gain insight on the experiences of female percussionists from when they began studying percussion through the development of their careers. In addition, the study sought to discover if participants had any experiences of gender discrimination and if they had any female percussionist role models. Because the field of percussion is so heavily male-dominated, it is critical to receive male input regarding these subjects as well as if change is to be seen. This study consisted of two surveys which were dispersed to percussion faculty teaching at graduate institutions. The first survey collected data on the gender makeup of the institutions' percussion studies in order to see whether more females are studying percussion in college since Aube's initial study in 2011. The second collected the female and male responses to the topics listed at the head of this paragraph which were then analyzed in the results chapter. It is my hope that the conclusions of this study may aid future generations of female percussionists by bringing more awareness to the topics of gender discrimination, gender stereotyping of percussion, and the importance of role models, as well as provide resources for advocacy programs and other researchers.

CHAPTER I

FEMALE PERCUSSIONISTS: HISTORICAL PRECEDENTS

Percussion has played a role in music for thousands of years as percussion instruments are some of the earliest known musical instruments. Drums have been used in worship, war, ceremonies, and celebrations since the earliest civilizations. Now, in the twenty-first century, the use of percussion instruments in Western music has evolved tremendously, and the modern-day percussion ensemble has rapidly developed. But who plays these instruments? Researchers have discovered that women were the primary drummers prior to written records. In this chapter, I will briefly outline a history of women's roles as early drummers in ancient civilization in order to compare them to the roles of female percussionists in Western culture since the mid-twentieth century, thereby laying the foundation for my study.

Female Drummers in Ancient History

Because there were no written documents in the ancient world, we rely on iconography and the discoveries of archeologists to piece together the history of our drumming ancestors. Through iconography, we can see that musicians are often depicted as females in ancient societies. In fact, musicologist Sophie Drinker, in her book *Music and Women: The Story of Women in Their Relation to Music*, explains that rock paintings in parts of Europe and Africa dating back to ten thousand years ago suggest that women were the first musicians.³ In addition to rock paintings, Drinker adds that many artifacts have been uncovered. Examples of these include pottery vessels and Greek vases with images of women holding tambourines, as well as

³ Sophie Drinker, *Music and Women: The Story of Women in Their Relation to Music* (New York, NY: Coward-McCann, Inc, 1948), 63.

figurines of women holding musical instruments, such as clappers, drums, and cymbals that have been excavated in Egypt and Europe.⁴ In Africa, Central and East Europe, household pots and jars—which were used as instruments by women—have been excavated, giving further evidence from the late Neolithic strata of female drummers. In *Percussion Instruments and Their History*, percussionist James Blades explains that all records of the practice of music in New Kingdom of Egypt show the performers as women, except for the male god Bes⁵ who is often represented with a cylindrical bodied drum.⁶ Thus, as the prominence of female figures portrayed as musicians in iconographical studies suggests, women played important roles as the primary drummers in ancient cultures.

Women performed on a variety of percussion instruments. Blades notes that many women of primitive tribes used stamping tubes around sowing or harvest time for fertility rites, and these stamping tubes remain a woman's instrument in tribes today.⁷ The Egyptian sistrum, which is a rattle associated with worshipping the goddess Hathor-Isis, was also performed by women. Blades says the sistrum is held by women of exalted rank, priests, and priestesses.⁸ Not only did women in many parts of the primitive world perform on various types of drums, but Drinker notes they also craft the drums themselves.⁹ Kettledrums and others made of clay, wood, and metal have been recording from around 1550-1070 BCE in the New Kingdom. According to

⁴ Drinker, 65.

⁵ The male god Bes was closely associated with women, as he was known for protecting pregnant women and infants.

⁶ James Blades, *Percussion Instruments and Their History* (Westport, CT: Bold Strummer, 1992), 156.

⁷ Blades, 40.

⁸ Blades, 162.

⁹ Drinker, 5.

J. Schreyer, “They take a pot and bind a skin over it, and on this pot the women beat with their hands and fingers, for these are their drums and kettledrums.”¹⁰ In other words, women created some of the earliest drums out of pottery, and these early clay forms have since evolved into African kettledrums, the Ibibio pot-drum,¹¹ and other drums that are used today. Other examples of instruments used include castanets, clappers, cymbals, sistra and drums that are depicted in works of art found in Greece from about 500 BCE. Furthermore, Blades mentions that cymbals in the Middle Ages were often pictured as being played by women and angels.¹² Similarly, the tambourine, played primarily by women, remained popular in the Middle Ages.¹³ Drinker adds to the conversation, noting that some European peasant women used castanets and tambourines as their instruments.¹⁴ This can be seen in the many pictures in which women are portrayed holding tambourines.

Perhaps one of the most influential percussion instruments of the ancient world was the frame drum. Frame drum expert and historian Layne Redmond explains that depictions of frame drums appeared in the hands of women around 3000 to 2000 BCE in Mesopotamia, and Sumerian texts from 3000 to 2500 BCE describe the goddess Inanna as the creator of all musical instruments, including the frame drum.¹⁵ When describing frame drums, Blades says they were primarily used by women to accompany song and dance, mirth, and mourning, and they

¹⁰ J. Schreyer, cited in Blades, 53.

¹¹ Keith Nicklin, “The Ibibio Musical Pot,” *African Arts* 7, no. 1 (1973): 53, doi:10.2307/3334752.

¹² Blades, 192.

¹³ Blades, 197.

¹⁴ Drinker, 5.

¹⁵ Layne Redmond, “When the Drummers Were Women.” *DRUM! Magazine* (December 2000): 3, <https://drummagazine.com/when-the-drummers-were-women/>.

appeared in two forms, rectangular and round.¹⁶ That is to say, frame drums had many roles in the daily lives of ancient peoples. For example, Drinker mentions that women also played elaborate music in the temples of Babylon under the direction of the queen and priestesses. This seems to have been common as Queen Shu-bad of Ur would create music with the women of her court or priestesses using harp and tambourine.¹⁷ Along with for their own pleasure, women in ancient cultures performed music for various occasions, such as for ceremonies, feasts, puberty rites, death ceremonies, days when the men went hunting, and for religious performances.

Frame drums were some of the primary instruments used by priestesses to worship the moon and goddesses such as Ianna in Sumer and Hathor in Egypt, and for death-and-rebirth rituals. In her book, *When the Drummers Were Women*, Redmond describes a Mesopotamian priestess named Lipushiau, the granddaughter of King Naram-Sin, who was the first named drummer in history.¹⁸ Lipushiau, who lived in 2380 BCE, was revered in Ur as the highest-ranking priestess and head of the temple dedicated to Nanna, the moon god. A small round frame drum called a balag-di was Lipushiau's emblem, and she used the frame drum to lead the liturgical chanting and in religious celebrations.¹⁹ Blades describes an illustration of a Greek frame drum, called a tympanum, that was illustrated on Greek vases from 400 BCE.²⁰ These illustrations depict the drums being played mainly by women for the worship of the goddess Cybele and the male god Dionysos. In addition, the goddess Cybele is pictured carrying the

¹⁶ Blades, 183.

¹⁷ Drinker, 81.

¹⁸ Layne Redmond, *When the Drummers Were Women* (New York, NY: Three Rivers Press, 1997), 73.

¹⁹ Redmond, *When the Drummers Were Women*, 80.

²⁰ Blades, 177-178.

frame drum. Redmond adds to this by acknowledging that goddesses Artemis, Demeter, and Aphrodite were also worshipped by priestesses playing frame drums.²¹ From these examples, it is clear that priestesses playing their frame drums served an important role in the worship of gods and goddesses.

From rock paintings to figurines and vases, one can see the depiction of the female drummer through ancient history. In many regions, women were able to drum and chant to the moon, worship their gods and goddesses, perform for their rituals and ceremonies, and use drums for pleasure. However, the time of the female drummer came to an end. Drinker has demonstrated that as societies began to civilize around 500 BCE in China, India, Egypt, and finally Greece, men began gaining power by looking down upon women. She notes the maxims of Confucius and the regulations of an old Indian pedant, Manu, repressed women's rights. In addition, she documents similar changes to the social structure were occurring among the Jews and other cultures. Around this time, Drinker shows the idea that women were under the will of their fathers, husbands, or sons became popular; women were treated as evil and insignificant, thus they could no longer enter temples or perform their rituals and music.²² Similarly, the rise of Christianity brought upon the banning of the frame drum from religious use, and women in particular were discouraged from playing the drum in secular contexts as well. In fact, Redmond asserts "The Catholic synod of 576 (Commandments of the Fathers, Superiors and Masters) decreed: 'Christians are not allowed to teach their daughters singing, the playing of instruments or similar things because, according to their religion, it is neither good nor becoming.'"²³ It

²¹ Redmond, "When the Drummers Were Women," 3.

²² Drinker, 127-138.

²³ Layne Redmond "A Short History of the Frame Drum" *Percussive Notes* 72, (October 1996): 72, <http://publications.pas.org/archive/oct96/articles/9610.69-72.pdf#search=%22ancient%20percussion%22>.

appears that as women's spirituality and freedom were repressed, so went the days of females drumming. As societies grew and developed, women had minimal-to-no role in music. As time passed and women were slowly allowed to pursue music in Western societies, singing became popular, but the female drummer was a mere memory.

Since the primitive world, percussion instruments have been prominent in music performance. As has been seen, historical evidence shows that women were the first drummers; however, as societies developed and ideals shifted, women were forced to stop playing their instruments. As music has developed and the modern orchestra was formed, women have been subject to gender discrimination which has not allowed for a strong emergence of female percussionists. The study chapter of this document will discuss current professional female and male percussionists' perceptions of gender bias in order to show any progress made toward eliminating gender discrimination.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF PERTINENT LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Historically, women have faced many challenges as musicians, particularly as percussionists. Research continues to provide insight into biases and stereotyping female percussionists have faced in the past and still battle today. As a result of the research, efforts are being made to dissolve some of these biases and document more of the histories of women as professional percussionists. In this chapter, I will lay the foundation for my research by examining topics of gender discrimination, gender stereotyping of instruments, and the documentation of female percussionists.

Gender Discrimination

For centuries, women have been subjected to gender discrimination, whether in the workforce, the military, or the home. The field of music is no exception, and women's role in the development of Western music has been limited and largely unrecognized for centuries. In her book, *Women Performing Music: The Emergence of American Women as Classical Instrumentalists and Conductors*,²⁴ Beth Abelson Macleod—a reference librarian and fine arts bibliographer at Central Michigan University Libraries—discusses the emergence of women as classical performers and conductors in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Macleod claims that some of the first instruments that were acceptable for women to play were violin and piano because they did not distort the facial features. The distortion of facial features was deemed unattractive, thus should be avoided. Posture was also important, and instruments like harp, lute, piano, and

²⁴ Beth Macleod, *Women Performing Music: The Emergence of American Women as Classical Instrumentalists and Conductors* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2001).

guitar allowed women to maintain a graceful, natural appearance. These instruments were also encouraged because of their high ranges and delicate sounds which resemble that of a soprano voice. Women were encouraged to learn instruments that society deemed ladylike and feminine. In the chapter titled “‘Whence Comes the Lady Tympanist?’ Gender and Musical Instruments,”²⁵ Macleod discusses how women were discouraged from performing on instruments deemed masculine. Because of the perceived aggressiveness, physical aspect, and masculinity of percussion instruments, it was unlikely that a woman should be encouraged to pursue percussion. However, around the mid-1900s, women were performing in marimba orchestras. One opinion that may shed light on the emergence of women in marimba orchestras is that of D. Antoinette Handy, in her book *Black Women in American Bands and Orchestras*.²⁶ Handy agrees that playing percussion in the early 1900s was deemed as unfeminine as playing wind instruments, except for keyboard percussion instruments such as marimba and accessory percussion instruments like triangle and tambourine. She clarifies that this belief was due to percussion being traditionally associated with volume and strength, as well as with the military. While a law permitting women to serve in the military was not made until 1948 and many percussion instruments such as snare and bass drums were traditionally used for sound reinforcement, the marimba was a more lyrical alternative. Perhaps the range, appearance, and overall nature of the marimba made it more accessible to women than a large bass drum.

At young ages, girls were subject to gender discrimination in the United States during the early 1900s. School marching bands in the United States during the mid-twentieth century were

²⁵ Macleod, 10.

²⁶ D. Antoinette Handy, *Black Women in American Bands and Orchestras* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998), 204.

especially prone to biases when recruiting. Although girls were present in school bands and orchestras, Macleod describes how school band directors wished to recruit boys:

Early literature describing the formation of a school band invariably drifted to discussions of the needs of preadolescent boys and the adult desire to control them. [...] Such writers were consequently eager to make bands appear masculine, believing that boys would be attracted through their desire for uniforms and their ‘inherent love for the military.’²⁷

Here we see that in the early 1900s, authors describing the formation of a school band—who were most likely male—wished for bands to be made primarily of boys. These writers believed boys would want to join marching band because of the uniforms, since military men wore uniforms.²⁸ Relating back to the importance of a women’s appearance, some band directors worried that girls would ruin the appearance of the band.

In order to allow girls to participate in the marching bands, directors found several solutions. Band directors of the 1930s and 1940s found that forming all-girl bands, especially in larger high schools that had the resources for two groups, solved the dilemma. Another solution was to eliminate the distortion of girls’ facial features. Macleod observes that Joe Berryman, a Texas band director in 1937, assigned girls to play Bugle-Lyre—bells created specifically for marching band—which had an attractive appearance and were not heavy, making them easy for girls to play.²⁹ Even as children, appearance and perceived femininity regulated the instruments that females could choose to play. This correlates with Handy’s research as she found that

²⁷ Macleod, 19.

²⁸ In Chapter IV, I will discuss the role of female percussionists in the United States’ premier military bands.

²⁹ Macleod, 19-20.

though women were discouraged from wind instruments and most percussion instruments, keyboard percussion offered an alternative solution.

Time has shown clear gender discrimination in orchestras since the beginning of the modern orchestra which has been dominated by male performers. In 1952, Raymond Paige, the music director of the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra insists that,

Instruments requiring physical force are a dubious choice, partly because women lack the strength for them, partly because the spectacle of a girl engaging in such physical exertions is not attractive. There are women who play the heavier brasses, the contrabass, the big drum, but their employment chances are slimmer. The orchestral manager, thinking in terms of full audience enjoyment, is reluctant to hire a player whose appearance at her instrument gives off a feeling of forcing or incongruity.³⁰

Paige is saying that women should not play larger instruments such as large drums because he believes, as did many other men during this time, that it is not attractive for a woman to exert such physical energy. He is also saying that orchestral managers will not hire women performing such instruments because of the seemingly unattractive appearance.

Before blind auditions became standard, gender bias was prominent against women taking orchestral auditions causing many to lose the audition regardless of their playing ability. In an effort to limit gender discrimination, the implementation of blind auditions in symphony orchestras, which started during the 1960s and 1970s, has resulted in an increase in the hiring of female musicians. However, the system is not perfect and room for discrimination still exists. In order to combat the bias, Ellen Koskoff claims that in 2014, her female students at Eastman School of Music wore heavy shoes to screened auditions, walked with a “male” stride behind the screen, and breathed quietly so they would not reveal their gender.³¹ Thus, women today will still

³⁰ Macleod, 20.

³¹ Koskoff, 196.

wear heavy shoes rather than heels because the distinct sounds of a woman's shoe can give away a performer's identity, allowing for the possibility of gender discrimination.

In many cases, the final round of orchestral auditions will not be blind, leaving additional room for gender bias. In 2011, Meghan Georgina Aube published her dissertation titled *Women in Percussion: The Emergence of Women as Professional Percussionists in the United States, 1930-Present*.³² In her dissertation, Aube mentions how in the final round of Michigan State's percussion professor Gwendolyn Dease's³³ audition for a European orchestra, the privacy screen was lifted. Thrasher, a successful percussion professor and musician, attributes the lack of a privacy screen and gender bias to not being selected for the position. Aube also gives an example of a woman who beat the odds and won the battle of gender discrimination in the orchestral setting. She gives the example of Elayne Jones, who beat the odds and won the battle of gender discrimination by becoming the timpanist for the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra in 1972. In addition, she was the first African American to hold a principal position in a major symphony orchestra. In an interview with Teresa Reeds, Jones declares "I had to prove that music could be played by anyone who loves it... It's been a terrible burden because I always felt I had to do better, that I wouldn't be allowed the lapses other musicians have."³⁴ Because it was not socially acceptable for a woman to play percussion, women had to prove themselves and outperform the men in order to earn a spot. Drinker agrees that, "Unless a girl attains the rank of a successful

³² Meghan Aube, "Women in Percussion: The Emergence of Women as Professional Percussionists in the United States, 1930-Present" (DMA diss., University of Iowa, 2011), 85, <https://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/920/>. Challenges outlined in this study include gender bias regarding instruments, band teachers' influence, gender of professional musician role models, and gender-stereotyping of certain instruments in America.

³³ Referred to as Gwendolyn Burgett Thrasher in Meghan Aube's dissertation.

³⁴ Teresa L Reed, "Black Women in Art Music," in *Black Women and Music: More Than the Blues*, ed. Eileen M. Hayes and Linda F. Williams (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 188 cited in Aube, 29-30.

virtuosa, she has far less chance for a profitable and interesting career as an instrumentalist than if she were a man of equal native talent and proficiency.”³⁵ In other words, unless a woman can attain a highly credible standing as an instrumentalist, she will remain overlooked by her male counterparts and have a lackluster career.³⁶ Ellen Koskoff adds to the conversation by reminding readers that women who defy the odds and choose to pursue instruments associated with males, such as percussion, risk social exclusion or may be discredited as a feminist.³⁷

To avoid gender bias, some women would dress similarly to men to fit in and eliminate gender from their performances. For instance, in 1909, conductor Ethel Leginska would wear a dark dress or skirt with a jacket that had a bit of white at the neck to mimic male concert attire.³⁸ Similarly, mid-twentieth century drum set player Dottie Dodgion would keep her hair style short and wear unfeminine clothing to combat gender discrimination.³⁹ This was not uncommon for women during this time. Conversely, in the 1940s, jazz vibraphonist Marjorie Hyams explained that she was expected to dress “ultra-feminine,”⁴⁰ especially in clubs, because she and other women percussionists were performing on instruments perceived as masculine. World-renowned percussionist Evelyn Glennie illustrates yet another approach to combatting gender discrimination in her autobiography. Glennie describes touring Bela Bartók’s *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion* with three other men in the late 1980s: “I bought a special evening gown

³⁵ Drinker, 240.

³⁶ This topic will be discussed further in Chapter V.

³⁷ Koskoff, 129.

³⁸ Macleod, 100.

³⁹ Aube, 12.

⁴⁰ Aube, 9.

for the tour, a long dress in black velvet with a gold pattern, a gold band round the tightly fitting waist and a full skirt so I could move freely. All the men were in dress suits, so I wanted to blend in and yet look very feminine.”⁴¹ Here, Glennie paints a picture of the dress that she wore when trying to match the men’s dress suits while maintaining her feminine identity. The desire to present femininity while playing in a male domain was an issue that many women faced in the mid-twentieth century, and it still exists today. In my experiences, there has been an unspoken preference to look the same as the males, wearing dress pants and a blouse rather than a hyper-feminized dress.

As modern percussion evolved and more instruments developed, gender discrimination continued. Females have historically been assigned to mallet percussion more often than drums. In the 1930s, marimba became a popular outlet for female percussionists, since other percussion instruments were perceived as unladylike. In the mid-twentieth century, females were still unrecognized as drummers in jazz or percussionists in other styles based on a lack of documentation. Gender bias was also evident early on in school marching band, with many more girls assigned to be in the front ensemble rather than marching in the battery (which usually consists of marching snare drums, bass drums, tenor drums, and cymbals). In some cases, previous piano experience influences the push toward keyboard percussion. In fact, Aube mentions how the piano experiences during childhood for most of her interviewees contributed to their transition to the marimba.⁴²

⁴¹ Evelyn Glennie, *Good Vibrations: An Autobiography* (London: Arrow, 1991), 146.

⁴² Aube, 57.

Gender Stereotyping of Instruments

Research indicates that it is not only females who suffer from gender stereotyping applied to the suitability of instruments for a particular gender. As it often occurs unconsciously, one might automatically associate an instrument such as a drum or tuba with males and xylophone or flute with females without much thought. These stereotypes can occur when the majority of the performers seen on a particular instrument are of that same gender. While the situation is more complicated, a result of gender stereotyping is that the majority of performers on an instrument are of like gender, therefore reinforcing the stereotype.

Unfortunately, even young children are susceptible to these stereotypes when they are choosing instruments to study in beginning band and orchestra. One of the first major studies of gender stereotyping of instruments was designed by Harold Abeles and Susan Porter in 1978, titled “The Sex Stereotyping of Musical Instruments.”⁴³ The authors conducted a series of four studies. The first study⁴⁴ asked 149 adults to choose instruments they would encourage their children to pursue. These instruments were cello, clarinet, drum, flute, saxophone, trombone, trumpet, and violin. The results showed that these adults were far less likely to encourage a female child to play drums than a male child. The second study⁴⁵ discovered that college students (about half were music majors) viewed the drums as more masculine while the flute was considered the most feminine. The third study⁴⁶ showed that from kindergarten to fifth grade,

⁴³ Harold F. Abeles and Susan Yank Porter, “The Sex-Stereotyping of Musical Instruments,” *Journal of Research in Music Education*. 26, no. 2 (1978): 65–75.

⁴⁴ Abeles, 67.

⁴⁵ Abeles, 68.

⁴⁶ Abeles, 71.

boys maintained a stable preference for stereotypically masculine instruments. Girls chose a wider variety of instruments. However, as girls aged, their preferences moved toward stereotypically feminine instruments. Finally, the fourth study⁴⁷ examined the presentation of instruments to preschool children and noticed that gender stereotyping of instruments may dissipate if children are initially presented the instruments in a neutral setting. As more studies are completed, similar results are found. Mark Walker, author of *Influences of Gender and Sex-Stereotyping of Middle School Students' Perception and Selection of Musical Instruments: A Review of the Literature*,⁴⁸ highlights many studies that add to this discussion. Walker refers to a study done by O'Neill and Boulton in 1996⁴⁹ that examines the question of whether or not males or females should not play particular instruments. This study showed that over 60 percent of males and females believed that females should not play drums; the reason given for these beliefs was that participants had never observed females playing drums. These studies demonstrate that based on previous experiences, the perception that percussion instruments are masculine is deeply rooted in the American culture.

Due to gender stereotyping, instruments such as the glockenspiel are seen as more feminine than instruments like the bass drum, and females are assigned to play on more feminine instruments. Similarly, boys are typically assigned to the snare drum and other masculine instruments. Not only were these stereotypes evident in the 1970s when Abeles and Porter wrote

⁴⁷ Abeles, 72.

⁴⁸ Mark J. Walker, "Influences of Gender and Sex-Stereotyping of Middle School Students' Perception and Selection of Musical Instruments: A Review of the Literature," *Visions of Research in Music Education* 4, (2004): 6, <http://www-usr.rider.edu/~vrme/>.

⁴⁹ Susan A. O'Neill and Michael J. Boultona, "Males' and Females' Preferences for Musical Instruments: A Function of Gender?" *Psychology of Music* 24, (1996): 171-183, cited in Walker, 6.

their study, but additional evidence of these stereotypes was found in a 1981 study by Philip Griswold and Denise Chrobak⁵⁰ that surveyed eighty-nine subjects, both male and female undergraduate students. The participants (about half were music majors) were asked to rate instruments as masculine or feminine. The results show that glockenspiel, along with harp, flute, piccolo, cello, choral conductor, clarinet, piano, French horn, and oboe were regarded as feminine instruments. On the other hand, cymbals, bass drum, guitar, instrumental conductor, saxophone, trumpet, string bass, and tuba were rated as being masculine. In 1992, Judith Delzell and David Leppla⁵¹ reexamined the 1978 Abeles and Porter study, and they found that while gender associations had lessened, those associations were still significant as the positions of instruments on the masculine-feminine continuum remained stable. In other words, the instruments perceived as most masculine or most feminine had remained the same. A follow-up study was conducted by Hal Abeles⁵² in 2009 confirming a reduction in the gender associations that were reported in the 1990s, but girls were still seen more frequently playing flute, violin, and clarinet, while boys mostly played drums, trumpet, and trombone. Although these studies have found that gender stereotyping of instruments is lessening, gender associations are still significant in influencing the instrument choices of children.

Fortunately, gender stereotypes can be broken. Although history suggests that women will remain the minority playing low brass or percussion instruments due to the fact that fewer

⁵⁰ Philip Griswold and Denise Chrobak, "Sex-Role Associations of Music Instruments and Occupations by Gender and Major," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 29, (1981), doi:10.2307/3344680.

⁵¹ Judith K. Delzell and David A. Leppla, "Gender Association of Musical Instruments and Preferences of Fourth-Grade Students for Selected Instruments," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 40, no. 2 (July 1992): 93–103, doi:10.2307/3345559.

⁵² Hal Abeles, "Are Musical Instrument Gender Associations Changing?" *Journal of Research in Music Education* 57, no. 2 (July 2009): 127–39, doi:10.1177/0022429409335878.

women than men are pursuing these instruments, studies are proving that this can change when children are exposed to females playing these instruments. In 2000, Anna Harrison and Susan O'Neill⁵³ completed a study investigating the instrument preferences of 357 children, between ages seven and eight, after being exposed to counter gender stereotypic role models. The participants were grouped into three clusters. Cluster 1 observed concerts by gender-consistent role models; Cluster 2's concerts were performed by gender-inconsistent role models, and Cluster 3 was the control group and did not receive a concert until after the study had concluded. The intervention study found that after seeing a female performer on masculine instruments, male preference lowered, while female preference rose. The data shows that after seeing a female play drums, girls indicated a stronger preference for the instrument.⁵⁴ These results indicate an immediate impact of like-gender role models on children's preferences for particular musical instruments. Recent studies like this shed new light on the previously unaddressed impact of role models on the gender stereotyping of instruments.

Documentation of Female Percussionists and Role Models

Outside of a few biographies, autobiographies, and recent research uncovering the lost lives of female percussionists, many women percussionists have received little to no attention and remain undocumented. Percussionist and author Dr. Geary Larrick has published several books documenting percussion history, pedagogy, and prominent percussion figures of the twentieth century. In his book, *Biographical Essays on Twentieth-Century Percussionists*,⁵⁵

⁵³ Anna C. Harrison and Susan A. O'Neill, "Children's Gender-Typed Preferences for Musical Instruments: An Intervention Study," *Psychology of Music* 28, no. 1 (April 2000): 81–97.

⁵⁴ Harrison, 87.

⁵⁵ Geary Larrick, *Biographical Essays on Twentieth-Century Percussionists* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992), 154-158.

Larrick writes a section titled “20th Century Women Percussionists” in which he briefly highlights the achievements of eight female percussionists: Keiko Abe, Ruth McLean Cahn, Vida Chenoweth, Paula Culp, Patricia Dash, Vicki Peterson Jenks, Karen Ervin Pershing, and Marta Ptaszynska. Seven years after this publication, Larrick published another book titled *Bibliography, History, Pedagogy, and Philosophy in Music and Percussion*.⁵⁶ At the end of this book, Larrick classifies eighty percussionists who he considers to be at the top of their field into six categories based on their specialty. He notes that as percussionists, these artists are certainly capable of playing in other areas, but he categorizes them within one area of concentration. These categories are chamber musicians, drum set performers, jazz keyboard percussionists, orchestral percussionists, percussion teachers, and timpanists. Of the eighty percussionists, nine are women. Larrick included the same eight female percussionists from his 1992 book and only added one more—Elayne Jones. See Table 1 for the distribution of women within the six categories.

⁵⁶ Geary Larrick, *Bibliography, History, Pedagogy, and Philosophy in Music and Percussion* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999), 289-314.

Table 1: Women Percussionists in Geary Larrick’s Specialty Classifications⁵⁷

Chamber Musicians	Orchestral Percussionists	Timpanists
<i>4 of 11 Female</i>	<i>4 of 30 Female</i>	<i>1 of 12 Female</i>
Keiko Abe	Ruth Cahn	Elayne Jones
Vida Chenoweth	Paula Culp	
Karen Pershing	Patricia Dash	
Marta Ptaszynska	Vicki Jenks	
Drum Set Performers	Jazz Keyboard Percussionists	Percussion Teachers
<i>0 of 9 Female</i>	<i>0 of 9 Female</i>	<i>0 of 9 Female</i>

From the table, we see that all of the women recognized are either chamber musicians, of which most are known for their keyboard percussion skills, or orchestral percussionists, including timpanist Elayne Jones. No women were recorded as specializing in drum set or jazz keyboard performance, nor were any recognized as percussion teachers.⁵⁸ Although Larrick’s books are good resources for these nine women, many have been left out and are unrecognized.

Recently, more research has been initiated to unearth forgotten female percussionists, but not many dissertations have been published regarding this subject.⁵⁹ In her dissertation, Meghan Aube highlights the careers of twelve women in her chapter titled “The Pioneer Women of Percussion.”⁶⁰ The women researched in Aube’s study are organized by specialization in Table 2.

⁵⁷ Larrick, *Bibliography, History, Pedagogy, and Philosophy in Music and Percussion*, 289.

⁵⁸ This is interesting since women are typically teachers in many other subjects.

⁵⁹ Meghan Aube, “Women in Percussion: The Emergence of Women as Professional Percussionists in the United States, 1930-Present” (DMA diss., University of Iowa, 2011), 85, <https://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/920/>.

Martin Paul Weir, “The Role of Vida Chenoweth in Mid-Twentieth-Century Concert Marimba Performance and Literature: A Professional and Personal Perspective,” (DMA project, University of Kentucky, 2005), <https://login.iris.etsu.edu:3443/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/304992277?accountid=10771>.

Haley Nutt, “From Piano to Percussion: Vivian Fine, Zita Carno, and Gitta Steiner Compose for Paul Price and the Newly Emerging Percussion Ensemble,” (Master's thesis, Florida State University, 2017), <http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/islandora/object/fsu%3A507716>.

Table 2: Aube’s Pioneer Women of Percussion⁶¹

Jazz	Marimba Performance	Orchestras	Academe
Marjorie Hyams - Vibraphone	Ruth Stuber Jeanne	Elayne Jones	Charmaine Asher-Wiley
Pauline Braddy - Drum Set	Doris Stockton	Paula Culp	Nancy Mathesen
Dottie Dodgion - Drum Set	Vida Chenoweth		
Terri Lyne Carrington - Drum Set	Karen Ervin Pershing		

Table 2 shows that there are several women who built careers in the jazz percussion and academic fields. Aube’s research gives life to women who otherwise would have been left unnoticed by future percussionists. Aube also conducted interviews with and wrote biographical summaries for twelve professionally successful female percussionists of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Topics for the interviews included early childhood and musical background, college experiences, and negative or positive experiences the interviewees had encountered as women in the percussion field.

As female percussionists have been slowly emerging, many challenges have been faced, including a lack of female role models. Based on the previous discussion of the lack of documentation of female percussionists, one can only assume that most role models for beginning percussionists are male. As the Harrison and O’Neill study showed, children are more likely to show preference for an instrument if they see performers of the same gender playing that instrument. This means that for young girls to have female percussionists as role models, they need to see more women playing percussion instruments. If girls only see male percussionists, they are less likely to view pursuing percussion as a possibility.

⁶⁰ Aube, 7-38.

⁶¹ Aube, 7-38.

As a result of gender discrimination and gender stereotyping of instruments, women have struggled to gain ground as artists in the field of percussion. To summarize, appearance was thought to be more important than skill in the 1900s, and blind auditions were implemented to counteract gender bias in symphony orchestras. Although several female percussionists have led successful careers as musicians and in education, many have gone unnoticed by the musical community because of males dominating the field. Nonetheless, more studies on issues of gender bias are bringing awareness to scholars and musicians. More efforts are being made to better document the women in the evolving percussion field, and diversity is slowly being encouraged. Because role models play such an important role in a musician's development, it is a positive step to know that instrument gender stereotypes can be broken by exposing young students to gender-inconsistent models. Finally, in a time when discrimination is becoming increasingly less tolerated, women should be encouraged to pursue jobs in all realms of percussion.

CHAPTER III

THE STUDY DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Like Meghan Aube,⁶² I became interested in the gender make-up of college percussion studios throughout my undergraduate studies as I became increasingly aware of the lack of female percussionists graduating compared to males. My initial intent with this research was to update the data from Aube's 2011 dissertation where she determined the gender ratio of the graduate school percussion studios who responded to her study. In addition, Aube interviewed a small number of professional female percussionists. However, unlike Aube, I created a survey. Rather than interviewing a few people, I surveyed a lot to gather more data to see if it backs up Aube's conclusions. In this chapter, I will discuss my study design in order to explain what information has been collected and how it was retrieved.

Survey Design and Distribution

Objectives

One objective of this study was to determine whether there has been an increase in the number of women studying percussion at the collegiate level since 2011. Another goal of this study was to determine whether women percussionists are still being discriminated against in the male-dominated field of percussion. Finally, this study aimed to gain insight into male perspectives on gender discrimination against women percussionists.

⁶² Meghan Aube's 2011 dissertation, *Women in Percussion: The Emergence of Women as Professional Percussionists in the United States, 1930-Present*.

Survey design

Two surveys were created and distributed using the platform, eSurv. The primary purpose was to collect data on the gender ratios of each percussion studio in order to update Aube's research. Survey Part I was designed to collect data about the gender ratio of students in college percussion studios. Survey Part II consists of two groups of questions. The first group of questions was for participants who identified as male. The second group of questions was for participants who identified as female or gender non-conforming. While the questions did not vary much between the groups, the men were asked fewer questions. The purpose of Survey Part II was to collect responses about faculty members' experiences as percussionists, experiences collaborating and performing with female percussionists, and observations of gender discrimination.

Distribution

The inclusion criteria for the study are participants must be college percussion instructors who are adults over the age of eighteen. The exclusion criteria for the study are minors under the age of eighteen. Since Aube's study surveyed exclusively universities that offered graduate degrees and because my study assessed the changing roles of women in professional percussion positions, the population was percussion faculty members teaching at graduate programs. To minimize risks, no identifiers were collected. Anyone meeting the inclusion/exclusion criteria of this study was eligible to participate regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, or any other classification. Potential participants were college percussion instructors who were identified via the College Music Society Directory.⁶³ Percussion instructors identified via the College Music

⁶³ The College Music Society Directory can be accessed by anyone with a paid subscription. Members can search and filter through institutions, administrators, faculty, graduate degrees, and music specializations. The

Society Directory were emailed and invited to participate. The primary directors of percussion at each institution received emails 1 and 2, which provided a brief explanation and invitation to participate in the study, as well as and Surveys Part I and Part II. All other percussion instructors at these institutions received email 2 and Survey Part II.

Limitations and Delimitations

Delimitations

The participants consisted of percussion instructors at institutions with graduate programs; although, there is no differentiation between graduate percussion programs and graduate music programs that may not offer a master's degrees in percussion. These instructors were encouraged to participate regardless of gender but were asked to identify their gender in order to see the observations of each gender on gender bias in the percussion profession. The surveys for those identifying as female or gender non-conforming included four extra questions to gain more insight into their experiences as percussionists. The overall results of this study could be generalizable to professional female percussionists who teach percussion at institutions with graduate percussion programs in the United States.

Limitations

There may be some possible limitations to this study. The first is that unfortunately, it is impossible to survey every professional percussionist. As I chose to only survey percussion instructors at institutions with graduate programs, my study was limited to these participants. Since exclusively institutions with graduate programs were included, there is potential for

directory can be accessed from
https://www.music.org/index.php?option=com_blankcomponent&view=default&Itemid=2856.

sample bias because some of these schools are more prestigious, and it might be more difficult for women to gain roles. Potential evidence of this may be found in Chapter IV as my research found that more women teach in institutions that only offer undergraduate degrees. My study may also be impacted because only educators were being asked to complete the surveys. Although many of the participants may also be well-known performers, no performers who are not educators were surveyed. Future studies may include professional performers who are not educators, perhaps men and women, in order to see the perspective of musicians who make a living performing rather than in academe. The second limitation concerns the limited access to data since I could not collect personal identifiers. Because I chose not to collect personal identifiers, I was unable to contact any participants with follow-up questions based on their input. This could potentially limit the information gathered in the event that a response would be especially informative. Future studies may include an option for participants to unveil their identity if they would like to reveal more personal information for the research. The third limitation of this study deals with time constraints. Because this was a year-long honors thesis project, there were time constraints which impacted the depth of this study. Although I wished to include many more questions in the survey and cover more areas for discussion, I had to narrow the topics in order to have enough time to analyze the data and responses. Further studies of this topic may allow time for a more in-depth study of gender discrimination in the percussion field.

Assumptions

It is assumed that each participant answered survey questions truthfully since no direct identifiers linking participants to their answers were collected. The role of women in percussion is important as more women seek careers in this field. The world has achieved much progress

toward gender equality in the past couple of decades. It can only be assumed that females should be treated more equally to and enjoy the same opportunities as men today.

CHAPTER IV

UPDATING AUBE'S RESEARCH

The presence of women in the percussion field has slowly been growing since the mid-twentieth century. In her dissertation *Women in Percussion: The Emergence of Women as Professional Percussionists in the United States, 1930-Present*,⁶⁴ Aube recorded important information necessary for tracking the history of female percussionists. In this chapter, I will take the baseline data established by Aube's research in 2010⁶⁵ and compare it with my own in order to chart any changes over the last decade.

Women in Orchestras

Orchestral positions have historically been male-dominated, and to see a woman holding a percussion position is rare. Aube used the Percussive Arts Society's (PAS) 1975/1976 study⁶⁶ (which showed 5.5 percent or eight out of 141 percussion and timpani chairs were held by women) as the baseline with which to compare her 2010 data that revealed only 5.11 percent⁶⁷ of percussion and timpani chairs (nine out of 176) in the top two tiers of major symphony orchestras were held by women.⁶⁸ In other words, the percentage of female percussionists holding orchestral positions had decreased from 1975/1976 to 2010.

⁶⁴ Meghan Aube, "Women in Percussion: The Emergence of Women as Professional Percussionists in the United States, 1930-Present," (DMA diss., University of Iowa, 2011), <https://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/920/>.

⁶⁵ Although Aube published her dissertation in 2011, her research was from 2010.

⁶⁶ Robert Matson, "A Listing of Tympanists and Percussionists Performing in the Major Symphony Orchestras of the United States," *Percussive Notes* 15 (1977): 32 cited in Aube, 3.

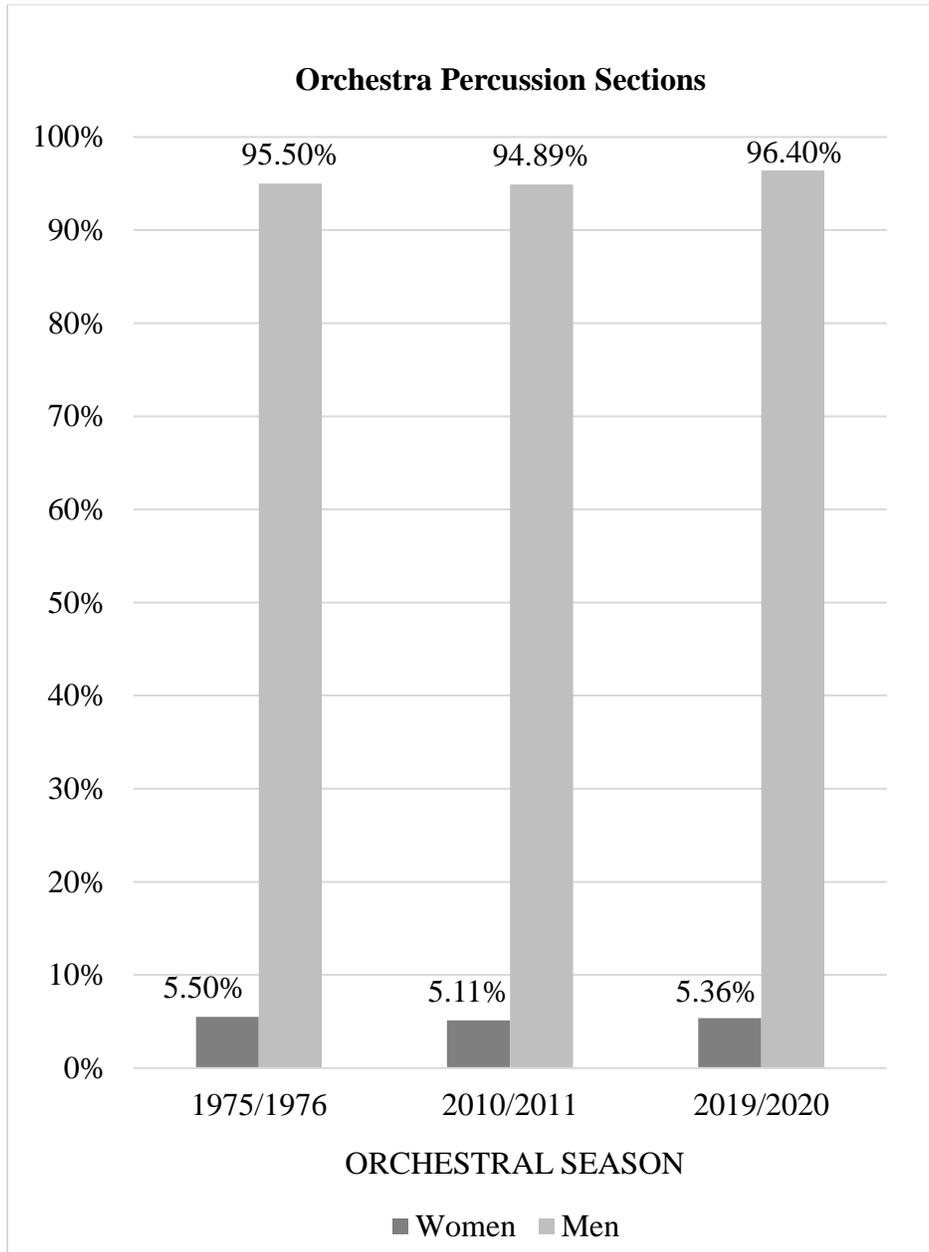
⁶⁷ Aube's data was rounded to one decimal place. I have rounded her data and mine to two decimal places to show changes.

⁶⁸ Aube, 3.

In order to update this data, I surveyed the 2019-2020 season personnel lists of the top two tiers of orchestras in the United States. To determine the top two tiers of orchestras, I consulted the League of American Orchestras' Directory which categorizes that orchestras into groups based on each orchestra's operating budget.⁶⁹ This survey was completed by accessing each of the orchestras' official websites and determining the numbers of females from their members pages by reviewing the listing of orchestral members given by each orchestra. It is assumed that orchestral members listed on the websites of the top two tiers of orchestras identify by the names, pronouns, and photographs given in their biographies. No orchestral member that I came across in my research used a pronoun other than he or she. From the personnel lists, I found that in the top two tiers of orchestras in the United States, only 5.36 percent of the percussion and timpani chairs (nine out of 177) are held by females. Table 3 compares the three sets of data—PAS, Aube, and mine.

⁶⁹ Previously known as the American Symphony Orchestra League, the League of American Orchestras defines the top two tiers of orchestras as having yearly operating budgets of at least 8.2 million dollars a year. It should also be noted that not all United States orchestras are members.

Table 3: Percussionists in Orchestras



As Table 3 shows, the percentage of women percussionists has practically remained the same for about forty-five years since PAS's 1975/1976 study. It appears that as more positions have become available, mostly males have filled them.

Taking a closer look at female percussionists' current state in the 2019/2020 orchestral season, I found that in the twenty-nine Tier 1 orchestras, three out of 110 (2.7 percent) percussionists and timpanists are female. Of the 3 females, only one, Cynthia Yeh of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, is a principal percussionist. No principal timpanists are female. It is alarming that just 2.7 percent of the percussionists in the top-tier orchestra are females. However, looking at the twenty-two Tier 2 orchestras, there is a slight increase with 10.3 percent (six out of fifty-eight) of percussionists being women. Two of the females in Tier 2 are principal timpanists: Yoko Kita with Sarasota Orchestra and Maya Gunji with the Orchestra of St. Luke's and the Orpheu Chamber Orchestra.

Table 4: Instrumental Players in Selected American Symphony Orchestras: Percentage Female⁷⁰

Decade	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s
Number of Orchestras	47	63	36	49	44
Violin	46	44	41	57	53
Viola	33	29	34	36	45
Cello	44	47	45	55	53
String Bass	21	14	13	16	14
Flute/Piccolo	44	43	44	54	61
Clarinet	14	10	9	16	12
Oboe/English Horn	3	21	19	30	41
Bassoon	19	14	12	22	36
Trumpet	8	5	2	5	5
Trombone	6	5	4	2	3
French Horn	18	14	12	16	27
Tuba	7	2	0	0	2
Percussion	13	9	14	12	6
Keyboard	64	64	42	54	60
Harp	80	89	82	88	90

To see how women percussionists' roles have changed since the mid-twentieth century, I looked to Macleod's records of the percentages of female instrumental players in select American Symphony Orchestras by decade from the 1940s to the 1980s. As seen in Table 4, the percentage of female percussionists has essentially dropped since the 1940s. It is unsettling that although 14 percent of symphony orchestra percussionists were female in the 1960s, the percentage of women has decreased by more than half through the decades.

⁷⁰ Macleod, 303. Table 4 was reproduced from Macleod's book, *Women Performing Music: The Emergence of American Women as Classical Instrumentalists and Conductors*. Macleod obtained these statistics from personnel rosters of American symphony orchestras from each decade. She did not include unisex or unusual names if it was not possible to determine the player's gender. Her study combined both large prestigious symphony orchestras and semiprofessional orchestras, though Macleod notes that the number of women was larger in the semiprofessional orchestras.

In addition to surveying the top two tiers of orchestras in the United States, I also surveyed the personnel lists for top American orchestras coined by journalists as “The Big Five.” These orchestras are the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Of the twenty-two percussionists and timpanists in “The Big Five,” three (13.6 percent) are female. None of the principal timpanists are female, but one of the principal percussionists—Cynthia Yeh—is female.

There appears to be a lack of female principals in the top United States orchestras. Perhaps time and experience performing with orchestras contribute to this. Because so few women hold percussion chairs in orchestras, they have not had as many years of experience as some of the male non-principal percussionists.

In August 2019, a study about the representation of male and female musicians in world-class orchestras was published titled, “Orchestrated Sex: The Representation of Male and Female Musicians in World-Class Symphony Orchestras,” by Desmond Charles Sergeant and Evangelos Himondes. This study examined forty orchestras from the United Kingdom, United States, and Europe, and discovered that 12.2 percent of the percussionists (eighteen out of the 148) were female.⁷¹ Sergeant and Himondes note that Europe has a lower percentage of women musicians in their orchestras overall. However, the percentage of female percussionists in the forty orchestras (12.2 percent) in this study is still much greater than in the fifty-one orchestras (5.36

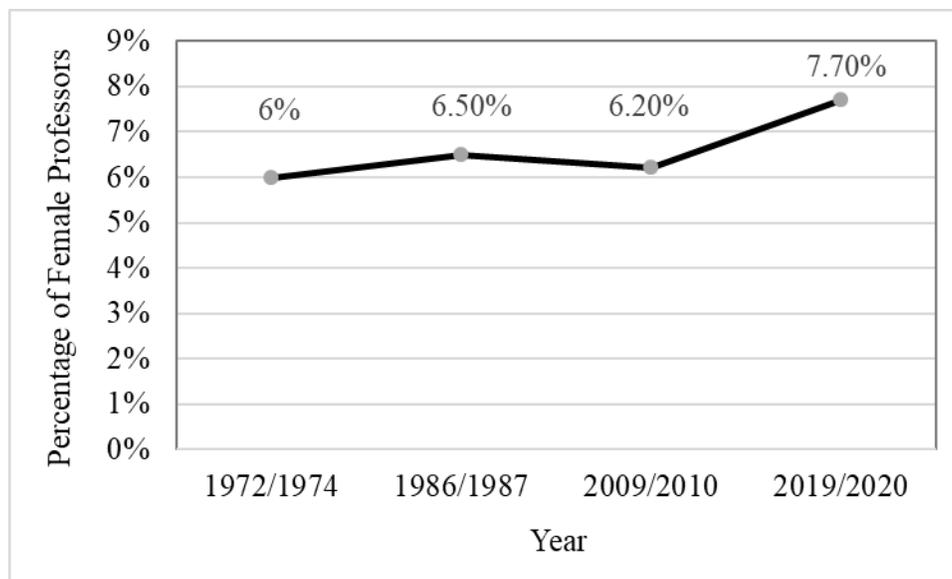
⁷¹ Desmond C. Sergeant and Evangelos Himonides, “Orchestrated Sex: The Representation of Male and Female Musicians in World-Class Symphony Orchestras,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 10, (2019), doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01760.

percent) exclusively from the United States. The data suggests that there is not such a strong gender stereotype in Europe when it comes to percussion.

Women in Academe

Because teachers play an enormous role in shaping the lives of their students, it is important to track how many percussion instructors are female. In Spring 2010, Aube analyzed the 2009/2010 College Music Society Directory of college music professors and found that 6.2 percent of percussion professors at all levels (105 out of 1,691) were women. Aube compared her data to studies done by the College Music Society in 1972/1974 and 1986/1987 and concluded that the percentage of female percussion professors had not changed.⁷² These figures are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Women Percussionists in Academe



⁷² Barbara Hampton Renton, "The Status of Women in College Music, 1976-77: A Statistical Study," *College Music Society* (N.p.: 1980), cited in Aube, 2-3.

According to my study of the 2019/2020 College Music Society Directory of college music professors, the percentage of female percussion professors has increased to 7.7 percent (150 out of 1,948).⁷³ It is encouraging to see an increase in the number of women teaching percussion at the collegiate level. However, although the data shows a slight increase since 2010, it has taken almost fifty years for the percentage of women percussion professors to rise from 6 percent to 7.7 percent. After dividing the institutions into those with graduate programs in music and those without, we find that at institutions offering graduate degrees in music, there are 863 percussion instructors, of which sixty-three (7.3 percent) females. At institutions without graduate programs, 8.02 percent of the percussion instructors (eighty-seven out of 1,085) are female. From the data, we find that there are more women teaching at the undergraduate level. This may be comparable to women's roles in professional orchestras where there are fewer women in the prestigious positions of Tier 1 orchestras.

Tenure track positions (assistant professor, associate professor, and professor) are more prestigious and stable than the adjunct or part-time employees who are contracted from semester to semester. Analyzing the rank of female percussion professors, Aube found that 26 percent of the 105 females were professors, assistant professors or associate professors. The other 74 percent of female instructors were either adjunct or part-time employees.⁷⁴ In 2020, 25.33 percent (thirty-eight out of 150) female percussion professors listed are professors, assistant professors, or associate professors. All others are either adjunct or part-time instructors. In other words, the percentage of female percussion instructors with stable prestigious positions has

⁷³ Professors who are listed for multiple schools were counted multiple times. Without duplicates, 133 female percussion teachers were listed. It is possible that some professors were either not listed or had not been removed in the directory at the time of this study.

⁷⁴ Renton, cited in Aube, 2-3.

remained consistent since Aube's research in 2010. Furthermore, about one-third of the 1,798 male percussion instructors hold tenure or tenure track positions. So, more men than women hold these reputable teaching positions.

Women in Percussive Arts Society Leadership Positions

In addition to analyzing women's role in the percussion sections of orchestras and as percussion professors, I also researched women's role as leaders in the percussion field. The Percussive Arts Society (PAS) was founded in 1961 in the United States. According to the PAS website in February 2020, "Today, the society is over 5,000 members strong, with 48 chapters located across the United States and an additional 20 chapters around the globe."⁷⁵ Many percussion students, professors, and performers are members of the society. In fall 2010, Aube examined the PAS website to find how many females held leadership roles in the society.⁷⁶ She writes,

The Executive Committee of the PAS is made up of seven members, only two of whom are women: Lisa Rogers, president and Julia Gaines, secretary. The current Board of Directors of the PAS includes twenty-three members; the four female members are Ruth Cahn, Julie Davila, Julie Hill, and Alison Shaw. The seventeen committee chairs, also an important part of PAS leadership, all are men.⁷⁷

It can be assumed that the number of members of the PAS has grown since Aube's study in 2011. So, one could expect the number of women in leadership positions to also have increased due to the likelihood that more women have become involved with the PAS as the number of

⁷⁵ *PAS History*, Percussive Arts Society, accessed February 10, 2020, <https://www.pas.org/about/history>.

⁷⁶ Additional research should be conducted to determine the ratio of females to males holding PAS chapter leadership positions, such as president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer.

⁷⁷ Aube, 1.

memberships has increased. In fact, the PAS Diversity Alliance coordinates efforts to expand membership diversity with an “emphasis on serving historically marginalized groups within PAS and throughout the world.”⁷⁸

Presidents of PAS have served between one and five years. However, since 1997 most presidents have served only one year. Lisa Rogers was the first female to be elected as President of the PAS in 2011 and served one year. Since then, one other female, Dr. Julie Hill served as President from 2015-2017. This means that just two (9 percent) of the twenty-two presidents have been female. That said, it took fifty years for the first woman to be president, but surprisingly, it took less than ten years after that for the second female president to be elected. As of January 2020, PAS Executive Committee is made up of six people, two of whom are women: Sarah Hagan (1st Vice President/Treasurer) and Julie Davila (Second Vice President). Although the Executive Committee consists of only six people compared to seven in Aube’s study, the number of females holding positions has remained consistent. The current PAS Board of Directors, which includes the Executive Committee, comprises of twelve members, including five (41.67 percent) women; the five female members are Sarah Hagan, Julie Davila, Kathryn Ahearn, Marcia Neal, and Juels Thomas. The PAS Board of Advisors is made of twenty-three members serving three-year terms. Seven members are females (30.4 percent); Dr. Megan Arns, Maria Finkelmeier, Valerie Naranjo, Sandi Rennick, Dr. Annie Stevens, Lauren Vogel Weiss, and She-e Wu. Four of these females, Dr. Megan Arns, Dr. Annie Stevens, Lauren Vogel Weiss, and She-e Wu, were just voted on the board in 2019.

⁷⁸ *PAS Diversity Alliance*, Percussive Arts Society, accessed February 10, 2020, <https://www.pas.org/get-involved/diversity-alliance>.

The administrative staff of any organization are like a machine in the background making sure everything runs smoothly. Although Aube did not include any data for this topic in her study, I felt that the subject should not be overlooked. Of the sixteen PAS staff members, ten are female.⁷⁹ Why are women more accepted into administrative positions than in the leadership positions? Perhaps gender bias plays a role where women have historically held secretarial or other administrative positions.

In 1972, the PAS Hall of Fame was established. In Aube's research, she briefly mentions females who have been inducted into the PAS Hall of Fame. She states,

Of ninety-four members of the PAS Hall of Fame—an extraordinary honor only given to those deemed to have reached the highest levels in the percussion field—only three are women: Keiko Abe, inducted in 1993; Vida Chenoweth, inducted in 1994; and Evelyn Glennie, inducted in 2008.⁸⁰

Three women out of ninety-four percussionists (3.2 percent) is an incredibly small representation. Since Aube's study, thirty-five more people have been inducted into the PAS Hall of Fame. Of these, there is one woman, Elayne Jones. She was the first woman of color to become a member and the first African American percussionist to hold a principal position in a major symphony orchestra. So, of 129 members of the PAS Hall of Fame, only four are women (5.16 percent). Although it seems that women are becoming a little more accepted in the field, significant progress does not appear to have been made regarding leadership roles and honors in the PAS.

⁷⁹ Not all staff members are professional percussionists, though some are.

⁸⁰ Aube, 1.

Women in Military Percussion Positions

As the military has had such a huge impact on the development of rudimental percussion in marching bands, drum corps, and the military bands, I felt it necessary to include some statistics taken from a survey of the United States premiere military bands.⁸¹ Looking at percussion positions in the United States military, I surveyed the personnel lists of percussion sections in these bands to find out if women play a role. While some bands have more women involved than others, women are certainly present on a variety of instruments. Nonetheless, gender stereotyping of instruments is evident as many of the women musicians perform on instruments perceived as feminine. Likewise, there are a lack of females playing the in the military bands' percussion sections. From the "The President's Own" United States Marine Corps, I found no female percussionists. Likewise, in United States Coast Guard Band, the United States Navy Concert Band, the U.S. Air Force Academy Concert Band, and the U.S. Air Force Concert Band, there are no female percussionists. However, in the United States Army "Pershing's Own," there is one female percussionist in the U.S. Army Ceremonial Band, and one female timpanist in the U.S. Army Concert Band. Like the orchestras in the United States and Europe, there are likely outside factors contributing to the lack of females in the United States Military bands, especially the fact that there have always been more men in the military than women.

⁸¹ Only the premiere ensembles for each branch of the military were included. Tara Copp notes that although most military musicians are combat deployable, exceptions are made for some of the premiere bands such as the United States Marine Corps, "The President's Own." (Tara Copp, "It's Hard to Measure the Performance of the Military's 136 Musical Bands," *Military Times*, 2017, <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2017/08/10/gao-measures-military-band-performance-hits-sour-note/>.)

In sum, it appears that women's presence in professional percussion positions has not grown much since Aube's research in 2011. The number of female percussionists holding top tier orchestra positions has practically remained unchanged for decades. It is possible that women are not auditioning for these positions as frequently as men. However, since we see more women in lower tier orchestras, perhaps gender bias still plays a role in hiring. Women are also not being recognized for achievements in the PAS Hall of Fame. Perhaps women are being overlooked by those making nominations. In colleges, more than 250 percussion teaching positions became available since 2011 but only about 10 percent were filled by women. It is likely that a major underlying cause for these results is the lack of female role models for younger girls, as well as the continued gender stereotyping of instruments and childhood socialization. It is perhaps because of these issues that not as many women pursue percussion professionally. As this is speculation, further research must be done. Perhaps future studies involving early percussion education may shed light on this subject.

CHAPTER V

SURVEY FINDINGS

As the data presented in Chapter IV illustrates, women make up a small percentage of the percussion instructors at the collegiate level in the United States, and this percentage has only slightly increased since Meghan Aube's research conducted⁸² in 2010. In addition to determining the percentage of women in academe, Aube also surveyed universities and colleges that offered graduate degrees in order to determine the gender ratio of students in college percussion studios. The purpose of my surveys was to chart any changes in the gender ratio of percussion studies, as well as gain reports of female and male experiences of women's involvement in percussion studies from elementary school through college. Finally, my study aimed to determine whether any progress has been made to eliminate gender discrimination against female percussionists since the mid-twentieth century.

As explained in Chapter III, this study consisted of two five-minute surveys which participants had a two-week time frame to complete. An invitation to participate in this study was sent via email to the directors of percussion studies at 341 schools⁸³ with a link to Survey Part I.⁸⁴ Another email was sent to the directors with an invitation to participate in Survey Part II,⁸⁵ and directors were asked to distribute the email to the other percussion faculty at their institution. After one week, a follow-up email was sent to directors as a reminder. At the end of

⁸² Aube, 2.

⁸³ Some faculty responded with automatic emails stating that they were out of town or on sabbatical for the semester, and several emails were no longer valid addresses.

⁸⁴ See Appendix C for Survey Part I.

⁸⁵ See Appendix D for Survey Part II.

two weeks, an invitation to participate with a link to Survey Part II was emailed directly to 379 percussion faculty of the same institutions to ensure that the faculty members had received the invitation. For Survey Part I, fifty of 341 professors responded for a 14.67 percent return rate. For Survey Part II, eighty-eight of 720 professors participated for a 12.22 percent return rate.

Survey Part I

The first survey was designed to determine whether the ratio of females pursuing percussion in college has increased since Aube’s research in 2010. In her study,⁸⁶ Aube surveyed 163 institutions and found that the average percentage of females per studio was 17 percent. She found a slightly higher percentage (18 percent of 1,868) of female students at the undergraduate level as compared with the graduate (16 percent of 284 students). From her results, we can see that there is a slightly higher percentage of females studying percussion at the undergraduate level. Along the same lines, this data compares with the previous discussion of the second-tier orchestras having a higher percentage of female percussionists than the top tier.

Table 6: Percentage of Female Students⁸⁷

Percentage of Female Students			
Year	Undergraduate	Graduate	Studio*
2010	18%	16%	17%
2020	23.57%	31.07%	24.77%

In order to determine the gender ratio of percussion studios, my study asked participants to list the name of their institution, the number of undergraduate and graduate percussion majors, and how many were female. Table 6 shows these results in comparison with Aube’s 2010 results.

⁸⁶ Aube, 2. Aube’s survey had a 68 percent return rate with 112 of 163 responses from universities that offered graduate degrees.

⁸⁷ *Studio combines both undergraduate and graduate students.

The data suggests a significant increase (nearly eight percent points) since 2010 with an average 24.77 percent female membership in percussion studios compared with Aube's 17 percent. With a slight increase, the results found that 128 of 543 undergraduates (23.57 percent) studying percussion were female. Surprisingly, the percentage of females studying percussion as graduate students has nearly doubled since 2010 with thirty-two out of 103 graduate students being female. These findings may offer encouragement to females considering pursuing percussion as a professional career.

In many cases, students who enjoy playing music in high school will continue to play their instrument in college without pursuing an undergraduate degree in music. Going beyond Aube's 2010 research, Survey Part I aimed to find out what percentage of non-major students participating in percussion activities such as ensembles or private lessons were female. Because this was not within the scope of Aube's research, there is no 2010 data with which to compare. It was gratifying to see that a large portion of non-major percussionists, 43.59 percent (119 out of 273), were female. In other words, nearly half of the non-majors studying percussion were female. Based on these results, we see that women make up a high percentage of non-major percussion activities and are seemingly being accepted regardless of their gender.

Survey Part II

The second survey was designed to gain insight into percussion faculty members' desire to study percussion and the number of females in their percussion sections from elementary school through college and into their professional careers. The survey also aimed to measure the presence of female percussionist role models and collect observations on the presence of gender bias from female and male perspectives. Participants were asked whether they identified as male, female, or gender non-conforming. Of the 88 participants, 23 identified as female, 65 as male,

and no participants identified as gender non-conforming. Based on their identity, participants were given different sets of questions which are included in Appendix D. The questions are identical with some small exceptions; however, there are several questions that were not included in the males' survey due to time constraints.

Instrument Choice

Because there are far fewer women percussionists than men, I wanted to find out why participants chose to study percussion, whether because they liked it or were encouraged by someone. In addition, female participants were first asked whether they had played an instrument prior to studying percussion, and if so, what instrument(s). As I suspected, a majority (86.36 percent or 19 of the 22 female respondents) stated that they had played an instrument prior to percussion, and most (89.47 percent or 17 female respondents) had played a keyboard instrument (piano or organ). As discussed in Chapter I, women were able to transition to mallet percussion easily if they had prior piano experience. The results of this study discovered that nearly 90 percent of the female participants made this transition when becoming percussionists. Both male and female participants were asked why they chose to study percussion. The proportions are similar between men and women respondents with half or more (50 percent of women and 53.97 percent of men) explaining that the instruments appealed to them, looked fun to play, or they appreciated the variety of instruments while a quarter of the males, and over one third of the females (36.36 percent) were encouraged to play by band directors, family members or friends. In addition, three women chose to switch to percussion because of the similarity between piano, organ, and keyboard percussion instruments. It is encouraging to see that there are a greater percentage of women than men being encouraged to play percussion, and the responses make it

clear that regardless of gender, over half of today's percussionists are choosing to study because of their passions.

Since the Abeles and Porter study⁸⁸ mentioned in Chapter II found that parents were least likely to encourage a female child to play drums, my study asked female participants whether their parents encouraged their pursuit of percussion. In contrast to Abeles and Porter's study, this survey found that the majority of participants did receive encouragement from their parents while five respondents reported their parents were indifferent or eventually encouraged them. Only one participant revealed that her parents did not support her percussion studies. These results may act as evidence that the gender stereotyping of instruments is slowly starting to dissolve.

Females in Percussion Studies

In order for the gap between male and female percussionists to close, girls must be exposed to percussion early in life. Unfortunately, gender stereotyping has caused percussion to be deemed as masculine, and in the past, girls have been discouraged from pursuing percussion. To see how girls were represented in early percussion studies of the respondents, participants were asked how many girls were in the percussion section in the elementary school, junior high school, high school, and college they attended. The results are shown in Table 7.

⁸⁸ Abeles, 67.

Table 7: Girls in Percussion Sections⁸⁹

Girls in Percussion Sections				
Elementary School				
	<i>0 girls</i>	<i>1 to 3 girls</i>	<i>4 to 6 girls</i>	<i>7 to 9 girls</i>
Female Responses	7	6	0	0
Male Responses	14	8	5	2
Junior High School				
	<i>0 girls</i>	<i>1 to 3 girls</i>	<i>4 to 6 girls</i>	<i>7 to 9 girls</i>
Female Responses	3	11	0	0
Male Responses	9	21	5	2
High School				
	<i>0 girls</i>	<i>1 to 3 girls</i>	<i>4 to 6 girls</i>	<i>7 to 9 girls</i>
Female Responses	2	13	3	1
Male Responses	6	24	10	3
College				
	<i>0 girls</i>	<i>1 to 3 girls</i>	<i>4 to 6 girls</i>	<i>7 to 9 girls</i>
Female Responses	1	11	7	0
Male Responses	8	15	17	3

As one may suspect, the number of girls in participants' percussion sections appears to be low in the majority of responses. In fact, until high school, no females reported more than three girls in their section. Based on experience, I feared this to be the case.⁹⁰ The majority of responses indicate that in all levels, there are usually about one to three female percussionists in the section. The size of a typical percussion section varies from one band program to another and that size continues to vary in college programs.⁹¹ However, in my experience, a typical percussion section

⁸⁹ Females with a response of zero were the only females in their percussion sections.

⁹⁰ In my experience, I was one of two percussionists in junior high, and there were four to five females in high school. However, upon entering college, I was the only female for the first year.

⁹¹ Future studies may investigate the size and scope of percussion sections and band programs from the early 1900s to present in order to determine the typical number of percussionists in a section.

may consist of about ten percussionists per grade level from junior high through high school. Although this may seem disheartening, participants⁹² have likely been out of school for many years and numbers have hopefully increased since their time in early education. Surprisingly, as respondents spoke of their high school and college educations, the reported number of females increases. Perhaps high school is a pivotal time when young girls may switch to percussion in order to be in marching band or other performing groups. Since piano skills transfer easily to reading mallet percussion, it is possible that girls who studied piano at an early age switched to percussion in order to participate in school ensembles. More research should be conducted on the participation of females in percussion studies from elementary school through high school today.

Keyboard Percussion Assignment

Since women began reemerging as percussionists around the twentieth century, they have primarily been assigned to keyboard percussion instruments as discussed in Chapter I. In order to see if this stereotyping is still present, female participants were asked what percentage of the time they were assigned to play keyboard percussion instruments as students. 77.27 percent (seventeen of twenty-two participants) were assigned to keyboard percussion at least 50 percent of the time, but a surprisingly large number (63.63 percent) were assigned to keyboard percussion over 75 percent of the time. Put another way, many women spent most of their studies assigned to keyboard instruments rather than having a more rounded approach. A few participants mentioned that keyboard parts were distributed more evenly across genders as they progressed to college, stating that this approach to part assignments creates well-rounded percussionists. When asked whether the part assignments were due to skill, most participants

⁹² Participants are college professors; thus, their responses likely reflect high school experiences from at least ten years ago.

said yes with some including that previous piano experience helped them read the keyboard music better; however, about a quarter of the participants also commented that their assignment to keyboard instruments was due to gender. One participant even mentioned that her assignment to keyboard percussion in marching band was not due to skill, which ties back to the mid-twentieth century gender discrimination of females participating in marching band. Nearly half of male participants (42.86 percent) stated that females were given keyboard percussion assignments between 60 to 100 percent of the time. In other words, men observed that women were assigned to mallet instruments more than half of the time. As the research suggests, women are far more likely to be assigned to keyboard percussion than other instruments, especially early in their studies. Consequently, if women are given mallet parts at an early age, they will be much better at them by high school. Thus, women may be given more keyboard percussion parts and attention in that area in the following stages of their musical studies. Regardless, the gender stereotyping of instruments exists even within the various percussion instruments with females being associated with keyboard instruments and males being more likely to play drums in concert settings or battery percussion in marching band.

Performance with Female Percussionists

Women and men participants were also asked what percentage of their performances over the past ten years have been with other female percussionists. Over fifty percent of both males (50.82 percent) and females (63.63 percent) reported a quarter or less of their previous performances were with female percussionists.⁹³ On the other hand, 27.27 percent of women and

⁹³ This data measures respondent's impression as they had likely not documented their past performances with female percussionists but were making an estimate. The data shows that men seem to perform with female percussionists more often than other females. Perhaps this tells us that women are more aware of the dearth of females in performance settings than men.

37.7 percent of men claimed to have performances with female percussionists at least half of the time over the last decade. A few of the women said they actively seek out opportunities to collaborate with other women. As the research in Chapter IV demonstrated, women percussionists are rare in orchestral positions. This lack of female percussionists may be generalized to other areas of percussion performance making it difficult for women to perform with each other unless these collaborations are sought out. However, when female participants were asked if they have many professional relationships with other women percussionists, 77.27 percent answered yes. Several women indicated that they seek out these relationships, while others reported that it was difficult to collaborate in performance or build professional relationships due to the geographical differences. As there are fewer female percussionists than male, the likely chance of them living relatively close is slim, making it more challenging to engage in these relationships.

Role Models and Mentors

Because role models are important motivators, women participants were asked if they had any female percussionist roles models when they were students. Thirteen out of twenty-one women participants (61.90 percent) indicated that they had female role models. The nine role models that participants listed were: Keiko Abe, Cindy Blackman, Evelyn Glennie, Elayne Jones, Linda Maxey, Valerie Naranjo, Janis Potter, Carolyn Valiquette, and She-e Wu. Although role models are admired and imitated, mentors help guide and advise and are crucial to the development of musicians, so participants were also asked if they had any mentors. While most (twenty out of twenty-one respondents) had mentors, less than half of these (42.86 percent or nine respondents) reported having a female mentor. American percussionist Robyn Schulkowsky, as well as timpanist SFC Julie A. Boehler of the United States Army Concert

Band, were listed as female mentors. With less than half of participants reporting having any female mentors, several questions arise. Is the lack of female mentors due to the lack of female percussionists or perhaps the lack of access to other female percussionists? Would having a female mentor help encourage young women to pursue percussion professionally? What efforts are being made by professional females to reach out to young girls learning percussion? Further research may shed light and help to answer these questions.

Male participants were also asked if they had any female percussionist role models. Of the sixty-three respondents, forty-eight (76.19 percent) said yes, and fifteen (23.81 percent) said no. According to the data, a higher percentage of males indicated having female percussionists as role models than the female respondents. The following nineteen females were listed at least once as role models: Keiko Abe, Karen Carpenter, Terri Lyne Carrington, Vida Chenoweth, Patricia Dash, Evelyn Glennie, Claire Heldrich, Julie Hill, Karen Irvin, Nancy Matheson, Nanae Mimura, Layne Redmond, Sherry Rubins, Rosemary Small, Kay Stonefelt, Ruth Underwood, She-e Wu, Cynthia Yeh, and Nancy Zeltsman. Surprisingly, males listed a wider variety of female role models than the female participants did. Could this be due to an easier access to educational resources and advertising or simply because there are far more male percussionists than female? Or, perhaps the fact that these professional women percussionists were unusual made them appealing as role models?

Discrimination

Finally, women participants were asked if they had experienced discrimination as percussionists and whether they felt that their gender was the basis for the discrimination. The study found that a high percentage (75 percent) of participants declared that they had experienced discrimination. In addition, the same respondents also indicated they felt their

gender played a part in this discrimination. Two participants described the discrimination occurring in marching band and drum and bugle corps. Once again, we see the result of decades of discrimination against females in marching bands.

Since percussion is a male-dominated field, it is important to gain male insight into the role of female percussionists and issues of gender discrimination. Male participants were asked whether they had observed or experienced any discrimination against women percussionists. Over half answered yes, and several indicated that they know gender bias exists. Men were then asked if they had ever experienced discrimination and on what basis was that discrimination. Only twenty-two (34.92 percent) of sixty-three said they had. The primary reasons indicated for this discrimination were age, race (42.86 percent), and the treatment of percussionists as second-class musicians (47.62 percent described being treated as unintelligent because of the “dumb drummer” stereotype).

In conclusion, this study aimed to update Meghan Aube’s college gender ratio study by charting the growth of women studying percussion. The input of many professional percussionists rather than a select few was recorded. These results shed light on the experiences that both men and women have had with other female percussionists and influential role models throughout their early studies and into their professional careers. Men and women are aware of gender discrimination, and this awareness can attract efforts to eliminate the prejudice. Unfortunately, women are still the minority as students, performers, and educators, but this study and other research previously mentioned can be resources for future educators and advocates to promote the equality of female percussionists.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

After examining the history of female percussionists from the earliest civilizations to today's society in the United States, reviewing the existing literature on women in percussion, and discussing the survey results, we see that women have struggled to find acceptance as professional percussionists. Prior to the research conducted in this document, I was unaware that women were some of the first drummers in history until finding Layne Redmond's book.⁹⁴ Many accomplishments of pioneer female percussionists in modern history have been overlooked and forgotten. In my experience, even those prominent women who have found success in their percussion careers are rarely discussed in education. Similarly, women today face challenges being the minority in teaching and performance fields, as well as experiencing gender discrimination. Although the role of women in percussion may seem of concern to only those percussionists who are actively seeking opportunities to improve the diversity of professional percussion positions, it should in fact concern anyone who cares about diversifying the field of percussion and treating all individuals equally.

The first goal of this study was to see if the presence of women in professional percussion positions has increased since Meghan Aube's study in 2011. As the results show, the percentage of women percussionists performing in professional orchestras has remained nearly unchanged for forty-five years. Although blind auditions have helped to eliminate some discrimination, it may only act as a bandage, not truly fixing the issue; as demonstrated by Ellen Koskoff's female students continuing to wear heavy shoes to auditions to hide their identity. To help increase the

⁹⁴ Layne Redmond, *When the Drummers Were Women* (New York, NY: Three Rivers Press, 1997).

number of women percussionists in orchestras, perhaps these groups may feature female percussionists as soloists, whether from their percussion section or guest artists. Seeing these women as featured performers may peak young performers' interests and allow them to see orchestral playing as a possibility. The study also examined the percentage of females teaching percussion at educational institutions in the United States. Although my results found that the percentage of female educators has increased slightly since 2010, this study along with previous studies by Aube and the College Music Society reveal that while change is happening, it is so slow that it's effect is not enough to see an effort toward equality and balance. Perhaps the lack of female instructors stems from far fewer women choosing to pursue a career in percussion than men. However, unless more women are seen as role models and mentors for young girls, this self-perpetuating challenge is likely to continue.

Another goal of this study was to determine if there has been any change in the gender ratio of college percussion studios. To my delight, the results prove that the average percentage of females studying percussion at the collegiate level has increased to nearly a quarter since Aube's initial study. In fact, the percentage of female graduate students has nearly doubled. Although there were some limitations to this study and only a portion of those invited to participate responded, this document may serve as evidence that progress is being made to decrease the gap between the number of female and male percussionists as we see more females studying percussion in college. Schools may help to increase these percentages by visiting grade schools and allowing their female percussionists to share their experiences with the students. In order to continue to track positive changes, future studies must be completed.

Finally, this study aimed to discover whether any progress has been made in the battle to eliminate gender discrimination. Unfortunately, it is clear from the results that gender

discrimination is still prominent as three-fourths of the female participants claimed they had experienced discrimination, and over half of the male participants had observed situations where women percussionists were not treated as equal to the men. This discrimination is not only seen in the lack of documentation of female percussionists, their assignment to more “feminine” keyboard percussion instruments, or their lack of presence in professional positions, but it is also seen in advertisements of percussion products. Many companies feature male artists on their posters or their promotional videos. In addition, percussion equipment such as bongo and snare drum stands are not constructed with the heights of female percussionists in mind. When attending the Percussive Arts Society International Convention, many of the booths are staffed by men selling products that are advertised by men and made for their dimensions. As advertising plays such a crucial role in today’s American society, companies could play a major part in further diminishing gender discrimination by incorporating more females into their advertisements, as well as making more equipment adjustable for the needs of women.

In conclusion, my belief is that an increase in female percussionist role models reaching out to young girls will allow confidence to build as girls will see the possibilities of creating a career as a female percussionist. With the help of advocacy programs like The Diversity Alliance of PAS, prominent companies and organizations, and the voices of individual musicians, we may overcome the past and eliminate the barriers for female percussionists. The findings of this research show that although change is slow, it is happening. My hope is that the topics discussed in this document and the results of my study encourage others to seek opportunities to further diversify the field of percussion and encourage females to pursue their passions regardless of stereotypes.

APPENDIX A

WOMEN IN ACADEME IN THE UNITED STATES



State	# of Teachers	# of Females	Percentage
Alabama	24	1	4.17%
Alaska	3	1	33.33%
Arizona	25	0	0%
Arkansas	17	0	0%
California	238	18	7.56%
Colorado	31	2	6.45%
Connecticut	23	0	0%
Delaware	4	0	0%
District of Columbia	10	0	0%
Florida	60	5	8.33%
Georgia	38	6	16.67%
Hawaii	3	0	0%
Idaho	6	0	0%
Illinois	92	10	10.87%

State	# of Teachers	# of Females	Percentage
Indiana	38	3	7.89%
Iowa	27	5	18.52%
Kansas	25	3	12%
Kentucky	27	0	0%
Louisiana	25	0	0%
Maine	9	2	22.22%
Maryland	43	5	11.63%
Massachusetts	106	6	5.67%
Michigan	51	5	9.80%
Minnesota	41	3	7.32%
Mississippi	17	0	0%
Missouri	42	6	14.29%
Montana	6	0	0%
Nebraska	15	2	13.33%
Nevada	7	0	0%
New Hampshire	12	3	25%
New Jersey	36	2	5.56%
New Mexico	9	2	22.22%
New York	146	13	8.90%
North Carolina	62	5	8.06%
North Dakota	6	1	16.67%
Ohio	71	5	7.04%
Oklahoma	26	0	0%
Oregon	40	1	2.50%
Pennsylvania	105	4	3.81%
Puerto Rico	7	0	0%
Rhode Island	6	0	0%
South Carolina	21	2	9.52%
South Dakota	5	0	0%
Tennessee	53	5	9.43%
Texas	120	9	7.50%
Utah	22	2	9.09%
Vermont	10	0	0%
Virginia	41	2	4.88%
Washington	41	4	9.76%
West Virginia	12	1	8.33%
Wisconsin	38	6	15.79%
Wyoming	6	0	0%

APPENDIX B

COLLEGE PERCUSSIONIST GENDER STUDY

Institution	# in Studio	# of Females	Percentage	Percussion Director's Gender⁹⁵
Albany State University	7	0	0%	F
Appalachian State University	18	4	22.22%	M
Bob Jones University	1	0	0%	M
Boston Conservatory at Berklee	28	12 (8 Grad)	42.86%	F
Bowling Green State University	16	4	25%	M
California Institute of the Arts (World Percussion)	4	2 (2 Grad)	50%	M
California State University, Northridge	14	4	28.57%	M
California State University, Sacramento	16	5	31.25%	M
Campbellsville University	9	2 (1 Grad)	22.22%	M
Cleveland State University	5	0	0%	M
East Carolina University	10	3	30%	M
Eastern Kentucky University	17	5 (1 Grad)	29.41%	M
Eastern Michigan University	14	4	28.57%	M
Florida Atlantic University	13	2	15.38%	M
Florida International University	8	1	12.50%	F
Georgia Southern University	8	4	50%	M
Hamline University	2	2	100%	M
Houghton College	3	2	66.67%	M
Lindenwood University	2	1	50%	M
Mannes School of Music at The New School	8	4 (3 Grad)	50%	F
Murray State University	20	5	25%	M
Northern Arizona University	12	2	16.67%	M
Northern Illinois University	25	7 (1 Grad)	28%	M
Northern State University	8	4	50%	M
Peabody Conservatory	14	4 (2 Grad)	28.57%	M
Portland State University	11	5 (1 Grad)	45.45%	M
Purchase College SUNY, Conservatory of Music	7	3 (2 Grad)	42.86%	M
Rhode Island College	9	2	22.22%	M
Samford University	6	2	33.33%	M

⁹⁵ The names and positions of percussion instructors were extracted from the College Music Society Directory, and it is assumed that information listed in the directory regarding instructors' positions is correct. The gender of percussion directors was assumed by the photos on their institutions' webpages, as well as by the pronouns used in their biographies.

Institution	# in Studio	# of Females	Percentage	Percussion Director's Gender
Simpson College	1	1	100%	M
Stephen F. Austin State University	23	5 (1 Grad)	21.74%	M
Texas A&M University-Commerce	27	7 (1 Grad)	25.92%	M
University of Florida	19	2	10.53%	M
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	22	2 (1 Grad)	9.09%	M
University of Kentucky	23	4	17.39%	M
University of Massachusetts Amherst	14	4 (2 Grad)	28.57%	F
University of Missouri, St. Louis	9	3	33.33%	M
University of Nebraska at Kearney	6	1	16.67%	M
University of Rhode Island	3	0	0%	M
University of South Florida	22	5 (1 Grad)	22.73%	M
University of Southern Mississippi	29	1	3.45%	M
University of Texas at San Antonio	25	4	16%	F
University of the Arts	27	2	7.41%	M
University of Washington	10	2 (1 Grad)	20%	F
University of West Georgia	14	3 (1 Grad)	21.43%	F
University of Wisconsin - Madison	12	4 (1 Grad)	33.33%	M
University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee	11	3 (1 Grad)	27.27%	M
Utah State University	14	7	50%	M
Western Illinois University	7	1	14.29%	M
Wichita State University	13	4 (1 Grad)	30.77%	M

APPENDIX C

SURVEY PART I QUESTIONS

1. Name of institution.
2. How many students are majoring in percussion at your school?
 - a. How many are female?
3. How many of the percussionists are graduate students?
 - a. How many of the graduate students are female?
4. Are you aware of any non-major percussionists involved in private percussion lessons or ensembles?
 - a. If so, how many?
 - i. How many non-majors are female?

APPENDIX D

SURVEY PART II QUESTIONS

How do you identify? (Choose one)

- Female
- Male
- Gender Variant / Non-Conforming

Those who identify as Female and Gender Variant / Non-Conforming

1. Did you play an instrument prior to percussion?
 - a. If so, what instrument(s)?
2. Why did you choose to study percussion?
3. Did your parents encourage pursuing percussion?
4. How many girls were in your percussion sections in elementary, junior high, high school, and college?
5. Thinking of your career as a student, what percentage of time were you assigned to play mallet percussion in performance settings?
 - a. Was this due to skill?
6. In the past ten years, what percentage of your performances have been with women percussionists?
7. Do you have many professional relationships with women in the percussion field? (i.e. work or collaborate with personal relationships)
8. Did you have any female percussionist role models as a student?
9. Do or did you have a mentor?
 - a. If so, was your mentor male or female?

10. Have you experienced discrimination as a percussionist?
 - a. Do you feel your gender was a significant factor in this?

Those who identify as Male

1. Why did you choose to study percussion?
2. How many girls were in your percussion sections in elementary, junior high, high school, and college?
 - a. What percentage of the time were the girls assigned to play mallet percussion instruments?
3. In the past ten years, what percentage of your performances have been with women percussionists?
4. Did you have any female percussionist role models as a student?
5. Have you observed or experienced women being discriminated against?
6. Have you experienced discrimination as a percussionist?
 - a. On what basis was that discrimination?

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