

“I THINK WE SOUNDED BLACK!”:
SPACE AND COMMUNITY IN BLACK DRUM AND BUGLE CORPS

BY

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THESIS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines three Black drum and bugle corps from the Civil Rights era of the nineteen-fifties and sixties: the Carter Cadets and the CMCC Warriors Drum and Bugle Corps from New York City, NY and the Washington VIPs from Washington, D.C. It uses historical and ethnographic methods to present a history of Black corps, mainly based on interviews with alumni. By using theories of space and community, the goal is to analyze how urban planning made way for the formation of Black corps in inner cities. These marching ensembles served two purposes within their communities: to teach youth valuable life skills to benefit their socioeconomic advancement, and to protect them from likely life-threatening situations, including drugs and violence, by showing them how to embrace their Black identities and create awareness of different opportunities. This significance of this study is to present a little-researched performing ensemble within the United States, and base it historically during the Civil rights era to show one way Black communities coped with urban planning and the lack of socioeconomic opportunities in their neighborhoods.

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Introduction

Inspection & Opening Fanfare

Brooklyn Day was the springboard to everything. Mother first took me to the Brooklyn Day parade. We had to get there early because the place was packed.

For some reason, I was able to discern which groups were better than others—just kind of how they sound, how they presented themselves, and how they look. I heard the sound bouncing off the brownstones, triumphant kind of sound. I was like, “God, what is that!?” That’s when I saw the Carter Cadets coming down the street. I said, “Wow!” It was a like a sound I never heard before in my life.

It was just robust, you know? It was like one of those majestic kinds of sounds you hear in the opening of a fanfare in a popular movie. It was ricocheting off the sides. It was strong and powerful. The uniforms, the cadet style uniforms; and the silver horns, the sunlight hitting the horns; and the precision and the snap were just...[they] blew everything.

Harold Barber¹

Boisterous and teeming down Stuyvesant Avenue, the Brooklyn Day parade was the introduction to drum and bugle corps, or simply corps, for many of New York City’s Black youth in the nineteen-fifties and nineteen-sixties. Rivaling the Macy’s Thanksgiving Parade, the Brooklyn

¹ Harold Barber, Skype Interview with author, June 23, 2015.

Day parade was the Black community's "day to sparkle"; and nothing sparkled like sunlight reflecting off of horns, drums, and military uniforms accompanied by the music of a Black corps (Barber, N.D.). It captivated inner city Black youth like Harold Barber by offering them a new opportunity to be part of something that appeared bigger than themselves. Local churches, municipalities, veterans' organizations and individuals sponsored Black corps to provide youth participants an effective personal and collective growth experience. For example, the Carter Cadets Drum and Bugle Corps began as a parade corps with sponsorship from minister Miriam Carter (Chenault 1964). Eventually, they became a competitive corps with sponsorship from the George P. Davis American Legion Post #116, "the only Negro post in Brooklyn" (*Brooklyn Daily Eagle* 1954). According to Barber, many of these sponsors, especially African-American Churches, were significantly involved in the parade, often sending their own corps to march and attract new members.

In the nineteen-fifties and sixties, Black corps were an influential component of urban working-class communities. They were part of the local life of their Black neighborhoods in New York City and Washington, D.C. by performing in local parades, festivals, church events, and more. Most importantly, corps served the youth. This activity changed the lives of countless Black youth, influenced by the learning and performance opportunities they provided. At the invitation of Drum Corps International (DCI), today's largest competitive corps circuit, Barber wrote a short article to celebrate Black corps in honor of Black history month:

I know I speak for a lot of inner city adults who marched in African-American drum corps when I say that the drum corps activity has shaped the person that I am today. It kept me safe and out of trouble from the mean city streets. I was taught discipline, punctuality, teamwork, esprit de corps, hard work and respect for flag and country. In drum corps we learned to function with one goal; to be the best we could be collectively.

These same principles guide my life today. I've seen many of my childhood friends fall by the wayside over the years. They did not have the same support mechanism that I had; God, church, family, good friends and drum and bugle corps (Barber 2014).

Barber's reflections make apparent the strength of his belief that corps taught significant skills and values, and taught individuals to function within a collective whole. It might not be too much to say, in the words of many of my interlocutors, that corps saved lives—certainly Barber thought as much. In this thesis, I use theories about space and community to suggest that Black corps in the nineteen-fifties and sixties had two primary functions. Aside from saving lives, they taught lives, evidenced by the life skills and values alumni cite as important to their socioeconomic mobility in racialized urban spaces. The ability to travel away from their urban spaces increased their consciousness of their own communities, and the systemic lack of opportunities embedded within them.

This study spotlights three of many Black corps from New York City and Washington, D.C., particularly the Carter Cadets from Brooklyn, the CMCC Warriors from Manhattan, and the Washington VIPs. All three were located in Black neighborhoods characterized by limited

Figure 1: Wynn Center Toppers, 1965 Brooklyn Day Parade. Photo provided by Harold Barber.



social and economic opportunities, influenced by midcentury America's racial politics and discriminatory urban planning.

Since Black corps have yet to be researched (scholarship and other publications include almost no information on Black corps), this study offers new perspectives on Black music making during the Civil Rights movement of the nineteen-fifties and sixties. Alumni of these corps often chose to attend rehearsals as alternatives to direct action, or joining Black power organizations. Music was their form of protest, used to build Black musical aesthetics and identities. They rehearsed and performed all year, played Black music, traveled out of the city, learned life skills, and 'stayed off the street.' In some ways corps might be considered an alternate form of protest against the limitations of racial segregation. Black corps and the communities they created contribute to conversations about conceptualizing urban spaces and Black experiences.

Furthermore, Black corps research contributes to conversations about social class and American music. According to Gayle Magee, class is "the very real socioeconomic conditions into which Americans are born, and which determine to some extent their privileges, opportunities, and limitations in life" (2011: 696). Magee makes a case against American essentialism, in which studies of American music often downplay social class, though they may do a better job of studying race and gender. Magee suggests that by taking the perspectives of different social classes on American music, music scholars can diversify and expand the field of musicology. This also includes creating awareness of how social class affects the discipline itself, asking, for example, "To what extent do class backgrounds influence a budding scholar's interest in musicology...?" and "Is the field of American music studies any more (or less) attractive to or supportive of scholars from working class and poverty backgrounds?" (699). Like

Magee, I cannot answer these questions, though the intersection of my experiences as a scholar of color as well as one from a working class background has let me to this topic. More importantly, however, is my confidence that this study adds to Magee's conversation about class in American music and its intersections with race for Black corps members.

NOW ENTERING THE FIELD: DEFINING THE DRUM AND BUGLE CORPS

The present corps evolved from post-WWI competitive parade corps, which emulated military field music ensembles into immense and highly competitive musical and visual productions. Instruments and instrumentations, color guard equipment and choreography, uniforms, rules and regulations, show designs and concepts changed tremendously over the course of the twentieth and twenty-first century. *A History of Drum & Bugle Corps* recounts much of this history (Vickers and Powers 2002). The book covers the development of the bugle, changes in visual design, instrumentations, competitive scores, and many more attentive details; however, it does not include any descriptions of Black corps. Since my project focuses on Black corps in the fifties and sixties, I will only outline general aspects of corps during those two decades. It will be useful to begin with a general outline of performance practice, move on to a description of the various components of the ensemble, then end with a brief description of repertoire, mostly drawing on information from *A History of Drum and Bugle Corps*. The issue of repertoire will then be expanded in chapter one.²

The people involved in this activity were incredibly diverse. Ranging from young children to military veterans, almost anybody of any age could participate. There were Black, White, Asian, Native American, and racially integrated corps. There were all male, all female,

² Among its various authors, this book makes no specific mention of Black corps. Photos appear throughout and names appear in the extensive master list of drum corps in the end of the book, but there are no instances that identify race.

and coed corps. Some corps had all-female color guards and all-male horn and percussion sections. In this thesis, the three case-study corps were Black and coed, though I must acknowledge it is limited to male voices due to being unable to obtain interviews with female interlocutors.

Corps had three sections: brass, percussion, and color guard, each with multiple subsections. From the nineteen forties through sixties, performances changed from marching in parade block formations to “maneuvering” the field, in which corps could march in other non-symmetrical shapes, generally on a football field. This involved using straight lines to create various drill patterns as the corps entered, centered, and exited the performance area. In the nineteen sixties, some competitive organizations began permitting curved lines into field maneuvering. Nevertheless, all formations remained symmetrical around the 50-yard line (100).

Performances began on the starting line, or the goal line on one side of the field. Judges inspected uniforms, instruments, and posture. A single gunshot signaled the start time so a corps could play the opening fanfare, before entering the field with a “bombastic opener” (107). At center field, the presentation of the colors began (this included an American flag, the corps’s flag, sponsors’ flags, and some members acting as “guards” sporting rifles or other side arms), accompanied by a patriotic tune. (98). A drum line feature followed, segueing into the concert piece, and a shorter “out of concert” piece, before the corps began maneuvering off the field to the opposite goal line. Another gunshot signaled one minute remaining of the allotted field time. The last piece, or closer, was often a love song or a song of farewell. Each performance lasted eleven to fifteen minutes, depending on the regulations of the host organization. A tick system was the primary scoring criteria: judges would count mistakes with ticks on paper then deduct points from 100 based on the number of ticks to determine the final score (100). A corps

accumulated ticks by playing out-of-tune or out-of-time, for poor drill formations and marching, exceeding the time limit, playing outside of a designated tempo, scuff marks on shoes, an unpolished horn, poor posture, and more.

Brass instrumentation in corps included three voices: soprano, tenor, and baritone/bass. Soprano bugles were generally in the key of G, but many corps utilized crooks—inserts placed between the horn and the mouthpiece—or a piston valve to transpose the instrument to D (21, 25, 73). The tenor (French horn bugles) and baritone (bass bugles) voices were added in the nineteen fifties (102). The Bb horns used in modern corps and marching bands existed, but they were often associated with fife and drum ensembles (74). In the nineteen fifties and early nineteen sixties, musicians were using their tuning slides to bend pitches down by a half step, similar to the use of a trombone slide. This hack quickly led to innovations in rotor valves. One or two rotor valves were added to lower pitches up to three half steps. While it was still impossible to play a full chromatic scale, this change opened up opportunities for new repertoire (see below). Additionally, a huge variety of horns meant there were no standardized brass instrumentations. As long as the horn was deemed to be a bugle, it could be played in competition.³

In the nineteen-sixties, bugle instrumentation expanded to include a contrabass bugle and a marching euphonium. The contrabass bugle, pitched an octave below the baritone bugle, was essentially the tuba/bass voice. Euphoniums and bass bugles had the same pitch, but the former

³ The bugle is defined as a brass instrument without pistons, valves, or other keys. Considering the modern corps no longer plays traditional bugles (today, all brass instruments have three or four piston valves and various tuning slides), there is actually no legitimate use of actual bugles in corps. This trend begins in the 1950s. Bell front brass instruments, in which the bell of the instrument is in front of the performer's face or over the shoulder so that the sound is directed forward towards the audience, play the *role of bugles* and are considered acceptable (for example, this means that a contrabass bugle constructed so the instrument is held on the shoulder and the bell forward facing can be used, but not a concert tuba where the bell faces upwards). It is not uncommon to hear corps instructors today who marched themselves as recently as the early 2000s continue to refer to Bb trumpet sections as "sopranos," referencing their pitch roles. The Racine Scouts, from Racine, Wisconsin, were the last corps to switch from "G" bugles to "Bb" horns in 2011. As of 2015, Drum Corps International began allowing all brass instruments, though most corps stick to "bugles" as their standard choice of instrumentation.

was manufactured with a conical bore to create a more open and darker timbre, as opposed to the brighter sound of the bass bugle's cylindrical bore. Thus, the three voice brass line expanded into four voices resulting in a four-octave range: sopranos, mellophones, baritones/euphoniums, and contrabass bugles. The F piston was also introduced in the nineteen sixties and added another method for instrument transposition (76-77). No matter the instruments or instrumentations, the overall goal of a corps brass line remained the same: be loud (98).

Around this time, drum lines and color guards did not experience as much extensive innovation like brass instruments. Throughout the nineteen-fifties, drum lines were relatively small: three snare drums, three tenor drums, two bass drums, and a cymbal (93). Bass drums simply played the pulse while the others performed rhythms that were not always composed to fit within or complement the phrases of brass compositions. The creation of the rudimental bass drum in the sixties, built smaller than the previous bass drums and using wooden mallets, allowed for cleaner articulation. Cleaner articulation and the incorporation of Swiss and British rudimental percussion exercises allowed rudimental bass drums to articulate the rhythms of the snare line. By the nineteen sixties, drum lines had grown to include four snare drums, four tenor drums, two bass drums, two rudimental bass drums, and three cymbals. Marching timpani and mallet keyboard instruments started to be seen in the late sixties, but did not become popular until the seventies.

Color guard sections were based on military color guards that had the honor of protecting the colors—or flags—using rifles and sabers. In corps, flags included the necessary American flag, and often the corps's flag, flag of their home state, or sponsors' flags. Corps color guards did not begin to become today's visual spectacle until DCI's formation in 1972. Originally, color guards only presented the colors by marching onto the field with the rest of the corps, then down

the 50-yard line towards the audience. In the nineteen fifties, color guards began using drill formations, decorative flags, and their weapons to visually accent the music. Larger weapon and flag sections were created in the nineteen sixties as they began to go beyond the military's standard equipment maneuvers (106). With DCI, this evolved into large visual spectacles of dancers trained in the creative use of traditional equipment like rifles and sabers, stylized flags to mirror musical expression, and other visual props. Eventually, the standard colors were no longer required.

Repertoire was incredibly diverse, especially for the Black corps. New pitch capabilities in brass instruments allowed the shift from traditional military fanfares based on a horn's natural harmonic system to Western art music, Broadway tunes, popular music, jazz, spirituals, and Latin music. After the end of WWII, many corps also began employing professional brass instructors to teach music (105). Many of the musicians, especially in Black corps, could not read music, so instructors taught based on memorization and focused on playing technique. In 1968, the Carter Cadets played "Show Me" from *My Fair Lady* and "Everything's Coming Up Roses" from *Gypsy* (both Broadway musicals), "On the Mall March" and "In the Mood." The CMCC Warriors were known for their selections from Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* and Pérez Prado's Afro-Cuban influenced "Voodoo Suite." Meanwhile, in 1972, the Washington VIPs played Beethoven's Ninth Symphony alongside music by the American pop group Chicago.⁴ In chapter one, I will discuss repertoire in more detail as it helps to see how these corps expressed Black musical aesthetics.

⁴ A compiled list of Black corps and their repertoires can be found in appendix 1.

METHODOLOGY: ETHNOGRAPHY AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY

My own introduction to drum and bugle corps was in 2005. I was an incoming high school freshman about to join the marching band. The band was fortunate enough to obtain tickets to the DCI World Championships at Gillette Stadium in Foxboro, Massachusetts. I enjoyed the show, but the activity did not have a profound impact on me until I was a college freshman. My college lacked a marching band, but I wanted to continue marching. Coincidentally, the New London, Connecticut community where I was attending college had a small corps. I auditioned for the 7th Regiment at the end of 2009. In 2010 and 2011, I performed on a contrabass bugle, and in 2012 I became the lead drum major. After I aged-out, or became too old to march at the age of twenty-one, my involvement with the corps continued in a volunteer capacity, which continues to the present day. I cook, make repairs, and drive equipment vehicles whenever I can. During this time, a group of fellow alumni and I founded an association to get 7th Regiment's alumni involved in fundraising, community events, and social gatherings, among other things. Now, I am mostly involved as an editor of the corps's newsletter, published a few times a year.

My introduction to Black corps was a recommended video on YouTube: a photomontage of various Black corps, accompanied by audio from the 1971 Page Park Cadets of St. Louis, MO ("African American Drum & Bugle Corps" 2010)⁵. Intrigued, I searched online for more information and found surprisingly little until I came across Barber's article on DCI. It was my first lead and inspiration for this project:

I decided to find people who share the same sentiment and have finally found such people. It is a long time coming, but I am trying to do something to help plant the seeds of growth. I'm currently involved in a new initiate to plant a new seed of growth for new

⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gm1xGdl3jtU>.

drum and bugle corps. I believe in giving back that which was giving to me. Hopefully, I can do that with this new endeavor, sharing my history as well as my experience. I was once told, “Out of a little ripple, comes a big wave.” I hope I have done that (Barber 2007).

Unfortunately, Barber’s attempt to begin a new drum corps in New York City never came to fruition. Instead, he hopes sharing Black corps history will educate youth on what he considered to be part of the “fabric of African-American community back during the 1950s, 60s, and 70s” (ibid.). The sentiments are the same ones he shared above regarding what corps taught him, and finding people who shared those sentiments was simple for Barber; he was friends with many of them.

Finding information for this project, however, was a perplexing challenge. Aside from the video and Barber’s article, the only two Black corps websites I could find were inactive and outdated. My only leads were corps mentioned in Barber’s article. There were other promising possibilities in alumni Facebook groups. I requested membership to many of these groups, accompanied by private messages explaining who I was and my research interest, but received no responses or memberships. Eventually, I was accepted into one group: “African Americans in Drum Corps Then and Now,” hosted by Mo Clark, a Black alumnus of the integrated 27th Lancers from Revere, Massachusetts (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/aaidctn/>). The group description reads: “Welcome, to AAIDCT&N. This group was created not to segregate, but to educate our young & old in our great activity called Drum and Bugle Corps. (It is an Open Group too all) To let DC fans have a taste of African American History in Drum Corps.” Coincidentally, the group’s purpose echoes Barber’s goals. I posted a blurb to the group’s wall to explain my research and to ask for volunteers or leads for interviews, of which I received both.

In the absence of significant traditional media visibility, digitally-mediated memories are

critically important to those who participated decades ago. Facebook's virtual community became my primary ethnographic field. First, it is where alumni separated by physical space can connect and create a collective memory and imagined community. Facebook posts, as well as comments on posted photographs, audio and video recordings, newspaper clippings, among other submissions are common in the few digital mediums that recollect Black corps history, as well as reestablish and perpetuate social relationships among alumni. Secondly, Facebook put me in touch with people who spread the word about my project and connected me to interlocutors. Most of what I learned about Black corps came from interviews with alumni. We messaged via Facebook, exchanged numbers or email addresses, and met for interviews in various formats. Most interviews happened over phone calls or video calling on Skype. After connecting online, I went to New York City, NY, Clifton, NJ, and Washington D.C. to meet and interview some alumni in person.⁶

Since this research focuses on corps in the nineteen-fifties and sixties, its impossible to experience a live performance. CDs and videos, however, make past performances accessible and serve as digitally mediated memories. Very few videos exist online, but audio recordings are more abundant, though difficult to find. I was grateful to receive thirteen audio recordings of eight Black corps over the Internet from Harold Barber, ranging from 1968 to 1971. I uploaded a CD to my computer from Darryl Robinson, an alumnus of the Washington VIPs (Washington, D.C) that included seven tracks from unmarked years. They likely range sometime from 1961-1970 because Robinson and his friend Norman Downtin, who I also interviewed, collectively

⁶ I should mention that not all alumni seemed willing to speak with me. On more than one occasion, I've been asked, "why are you interested in Black corps?" "Why do you care?" "What's this for?" "Why are you doing this if you're not Black?" "Wouldn't a Black student better understand this?" Some alumni were skeptical and I was passively denied interviews. For those I did interview, they were glad that somebody (it didn't matter who) cared enough to document their history. Furthermore, my explanation of my corps experience, my multiracial background, and my Mellon Mays Fellow status (an organization which supports racially marginalized and first generation college students to obtain professional degrees with the goal of diversifying college faculty) helped convince interlocutors that I was capable of this research.

marched during those years and remember and can sing along to many of the arrangements. Additionally, a seller on ecommerce website Ebay appears to have amassed hundreds, possibly thousands, of digital corps recordings. I contacted him and acquired eight CDs via mail of Black corps that I found on his seller profile (drumcorpscdandmusicstore). These contained over thirty shows from 1954 to 1973. Though I could not cross-reference every show due to the lack of historical records, those I could account for matched repertoire lists I found on corpsrep, an online drum and bugle corps database (see appendix). It seems likely that the other recordings were of the corps each CD claimed to be. I use some of these recordings later to analyze the music of Black corps, though right now it is more important to recognize the use of these CDs as a form digitally mediated memory and as part of my historical and ethnographic field.

What follows here is a theoretical discussion on collective memory. I include this for three reasons. First, collective memory is vital for the current preservation of the Black corps community and history, which mostly occurs online and in audio recordings. Secondly, I use collective memory to stimulate the memories of interlocutors, in which I often ask questions inspired or informed by previous interviews. Lastly, this project itself is a product of collective memories. Although they are not my memories, I have drawn upon others' memories to create the first ethnographic and historical study of Black corps.

Barber's desire to remember Black corps and create a Black corps history aligns with French Historian Pierre Nora's concept of "realms of memory," in which "the need for memory is the need for history" (1996). Nora, however, asserts a difference between "true memory" and memory that is "transformed by its passage through history, which is practically the opposite" (8). True memory exists only in personal knowledge, unspoken traditions, or in intimate items such as diaries and photos, as suggested by scholar of comparative media studies José van Dijck

(2007, 1). Remembering certain events implies forgetting others, suggesting a higher level of value for that which is remembered or physically preserved in mediated formats. Uncovering the underlying values preserved in memories and their reinterpretations into the digital age is important to understanding why certain memories are shared in and help perpetuate the Black corps community. When it comes to the remediation of physical to digital memories, “digital media to remember is not about taking a passive approach to the passage of time, however fast it appears to be. Rather, it is the active, subjective, organic, emotional, virtual and uncertain production of the past and present at the same time” (Garde-Hansen 2009, 8). Digital remediation further signifies the values we find important enough to electronically share.

Nora goes on further to clarify the relationship between history and memory as follows:

Memory and history, far from being synonymous, are thus in many respects opposed. Memory is life, always embodied in living societies and as such in permanent evolution, subject to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of the distortions to which it is subject, vulnerable in various ways to appropriation and manipulation, and capable of lying dormant for long periods only to be suddenly reawakened. History, on the other hand, is the reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete, of what is no longer. Memory is always a phenomenon of the present, a bond tying us to the eternal present; history is a representation of the past (1996, 3).

Explained here, memories exist subconsciously in the mind of the present living being, while history “reconstructs” memories into a statement of an interpreted past, and thus never a perfect presentation. Instead, history is a presentable form accessible to an audience that lacks personal memory of specific events. Undoubtedly, this claim has its faults: although memory and history are “opposed,” the same ailments that lead to their imperfections affect both. The clearest difference is perhaps their mediums: memory may rest in the mind while history is a tangible

representation of the past (i.e. text). Nevertheless, Barber reconstructs memory when he asks alumni to accumulate their collective memories into a Black corps history for the purpose of presenting something historically tangible to today's youth that instills their corps values and the hope that local communities may realize a local corps's benefit for youth, and decide to establish new ones.

The need to accumulate individual memories into a collective is also a desire to perpetuate social community. Perpetuating community is not recreating or restarting it, but making sure it continues in its cultural legacy. Collective memory can be defined as the memories of a group of individuals related by shared knowledge of experience, which constructs their social relations. Catherine Strong maintains that "shared knowledge of the past" as well as emotions embedded within memories are important for creating collective memory and social connections with both "known and unknown others" (2011, 34). This calls to mind Benedict Anderson's ideas of imagined community (1991). Strong draws heavily on Maurice Halbwachs, the French philosopher known for developing the concept of collective memory. According to Halbwachs, "Collective frameworks are, to the contrary, precisely the instruments used by the collective memory to reconstruct an image of the past which is in accord, in each epoch, with the predominant thoughts of society" (1992, 40), and moreover, "[w]hat makes recent memories hang together is not that they are contiguous in time: it is rather that they are part of a totality of thoughts common to a group, the group of people with whom we have a relation at this moment, or with whom we have had a relation on the preceding day or days" (52). So far, Barber's call for a Black corps history fits into this idea of collective memory. He reaches out to a large group of individuals who share a past experience, whether or not they are personally familiar with one another. Within that experience, they hold the same framework or "predominant thoughts," a

similar system, a discourse with which they can communicate their memories. Furthermore, alumni share a strongly emotional nostalgia for the values they learned while marching and continue to keep. Facebook groups connect these many individuals to one another.

Another aspect of collective memory is when social relations facilitate the recollection of shared experience and knowledge. As Nora stated, memory is not always consciously at the forefront of the mind. Rather, memories are resurrected through interaction with a social community that recalls shared experiences. Halbwachs also claimed, “It is not because memories resemble each other that several can be called to mind at the same time. It is rather because the same group is interested in them and is able to call them to mind at the time that they resemble each other” (52). Thus, memory is a channel for the continuity of community by maintaining social relations among similarly interested people. As memories are recalled and shared, they recollect the experiences most valued to the people sharing them and are thus useful as a means towards recreating, perpetuating, and uncovering the characteristics of a distinct community. While Barber’s article is one mode of rekindling his and others’ memories, many forms of communication help maintain social relations and the Black corps community. Facebook serves as a place of interaction. Halbwachs recognized that memories exist in a multitude of frameworks, but the localization of memories limits the individual’s many frameworks towards the same frameworks of other individuals (52-53). Facebook uses virtual, rather than physical, spaces to organize designated groups. The designation of each group, indicated by titles such as “African Americans in Drum Corps Then and Now” or “1960s Drum Corps” or “Real Drum Corps...No Amps or Electronics” (each of which I am a member), asserts a framework for memories to be shared in a collective consciousness.

José van Dijck adds the mediation of items, which must be considered in memory theory:

These items [“photos, albums, letters, diaries, clippings, notes,” etc.] mediate not only

remembrances of things past; they also mediate relationships between individuals and groups of any kind (such as family, school classes, and scouting clubs), and they are made by media technologies (everything from pencils and cassette recorders to computers and digital cameras). We commonly cherish our mediated memories as a formative part of our autobiographical and cultural identities; the accumulated items typically reflect the shaping of an individual in a historical time frame (2007, 1).

Van Dijck affirms that collective memory creates and maintains social relationships, yet also includes that physical forms of memory are technologically mediated. Such mediation is the interpretation of present memory that becomes part of a historical past via documentation. During the mediation process, the individual contributing a memory situates their personal and social identity into the memory. Barber's article is an example of mediated memory: he documents his memories in writing, a technological tool of mediation, in a public forum to engage with a community who also share in the same or similar experiences. He communicates his own identity as disciplined, punctual, works well with a team, respectful, etc., but in relation to the values that he learned in the corps community. In his mediation, then, his choices regarding content to share are deliberate; Barber individually shared what he considered to be either most important or relevant to the collective framework of Black corps. This action of mediation is commonplace—consciously and unconsciously—in the many objects we produce, but in the act of establishing collective memory it's important to make those values conscious. These values, as Nora stated above, recall certain shared experiences, which create a certain kind of collective memory (though not the only one).

The next step is to consider the implications of digitized mediated memories, particularly when physically mediated memories like photos, newspaper clippings, and audio and visual recordings become digital. Dijck does not think there is much difference. No matter the method

of documentation or where it ends up, the memories are still mediated (2007, 37-38). Scanning photos and newspaper clippings or creating electronic files of audio and video are just more ways of mediating memories. That said, Dijk recognizes that there is often a sense of nostalgia associated with the original physical forms while digitized versions are more widely dispersed with less care.

Mediated memory is especially important in the virtual spaces of Black corps because media posted online must be digitally reinterpreted from their original source. Once again, then, the choices being made regarding what is important enough to spend time digitizing and sharing online are deliberate and telling. This is especially relevant when considering Barber's article has been shared in various Black Facebook groups and other websites, thus a form of remediation. For example, in the "About" section for the "Minisink CMCC Warriors Drum and Bugle Corps," Barber's article appears in its entirety under "general information," implying that the group's creators share Barber's memory and sentiments with the Carter Cadets in a similar fashion.⁷ It could be said that digital media and relationships, especially social networking, are impersonal because of their lack of physical interaction, but Joanna Garde-Hansen, a scholar of Culture, Media and Communication, argues against this idea. Though skeptical in her essay regarding the use and privacy policies of Facebook, Garde-Hansen takes the position that Facebook is simply another tool or forum for people who are already familiar with each other to engage and solidify social relationships.⁸ This is true for the Black corps presence on Facebook. Although people may be friends or strangers, a sense of familiarity persists because of their shared experience realized through collective memory.

⁷ https://www.facebook.com/CmccMinisinkWarriorsDrumAndBugleCorps/info/?tab=page_info.

⁸ Joanne Garde-Hansen, "MyMemories?: Personal Digital Archive Fever and Facebook," in *Save As...Digital Memories*, edited by Joanne Garde-Hansen, Andrew Hoskins, and Anna Reading, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 136.

In addition to collective memory, I employ theories of space and community. Philosopher and sociologist Henri Lefebvre's (1991) theory of perceived, conceived, and lived space helps me analyze how Black corps created and claimed Black spaces within their racialized neighborhoods. The idea, in short, is that conceived urban Black neighborhoods limited the socioeconomic opportunities of their residents, which suggests that urban planning perceived what Blackness should be. In response, Black corps used music to take control over perceiving and conceiving their own racialized spaces and, in a sense, the way they create and interpret their Black identities—an act, as Lefebvre would call it, of lived space.

Black corps members' ability to exist within a lived space is due to the achievement of what Tony Blackshaw calls a higher consciousness of community, broadly granted by opportunities for travel. Blackshaw describes an individual's four levels of historical consciousness, or the cultural narratives people interpret and understand as their past, present, and future that shapes their numerous and normalized identities (2010, 11). Each level is indicative of an individual's relationships to their collective community. These relationships reflect social hierarchies, economic structures and class relations, spirituality, a sense of time that recognizes either or a combination of the past, present, and a hope for the future, social mobility, and finally the individual's capability to be aware of these relationships. My use of this theory mostly focuses on the sense of time, social mobility and awareness. To briefly describe the first three stages of historical consciousness: 1) *community consciousness*: an individual is aware of “social stratification and patriarchal social relations,” it is a necessity for survival, mobility is not possible, and the system repeats itself with no possibility for a different future; 2) *class consciousness*: an individual is aware of economic class hierarchies where social mobility is possible between classes based on work ethic, though highly restricted, and the future is

unknown; and 3) *consciousness of classes*: an individual understands social hierarchies based on production and consumption, there is a greater possibility for social mobility based on work ethic, and the future “can be known, predicted, and conceived” (12-13).

The final level of historical consciousness, *consciousness of community*, is, I believe, where my interlocutors exist. At this stage, an individual still sees hierarchies as consumer based, but also “reflected in culture, judgments of taste and the juxtaposing of different lifestyles” (13). A class system exists, but its maintenance is more important to those who maintain the privilege of being a member of higher classes. In regards to social mobility, it is not just a possibility, but is viewed as a right. “Extreme social inequalities” are obvious as the awareness that “society does not have the economic means for providing all social and cultural groups the means to satisfy [them]” (14). There are “no expectations of the future,” but rather the “intent on living life in the here and now,” or rather demanding social change in the present (14).

Marginalized peoples, because of the statuses prescribed to them by their society’s socioeconomic power structures, most easily achieve consciousness of community, in my opinion. My interlocutors, as will be seen throughout this thesis, reflect on the power structures that effected their chances of socioeconomic mobility and created inequalities in their local spaces, and what was their present means of combating it: performing in a corps. Blackshaw also posits departure, or leaving, community, as one of the most effective methods to understanding one’s community (16). When an individual leaves their communities, as competing Black corps so often did, it becomes an opportunity to see and compare differences. Being comprised of Black, marginalized youth traveling from their urban spaces to competitive performances outside of the city makes Black corps a compelling example of individuals who could achieve this level of historical consciousness. Undeniably, other alternatives were available to Black youth—many

alumni mention sports they participated in—but corps offered regular travel to places far outside large urban cities. My interlocutors assert that this consciousness literally saved members’ lives as they became more aware of institutional racism in their conceived spaces, and then purposefully chose to reinterpret the Black identities of those perceived and conceived spaces by perceiving and conceiving their own Black identities themselves via lived space.

Before continuing, I acknowledge that I present a popular cliché that music saves lives. Admittedly, that is not the case for everyone and the extent to which the corps activity “saved” lives is subjective. As will be mentioned later on by one of my interlocutors, issues such as drug use continued to be prevalent, even during performances. Violence in Black corps communities was largely due to the influence of outside gang relations.⁹ My call for participation in this study was limited to online Facebook groups, and it could be reasoned that members of those groups and those who responded were members by choice because they had a positive corps experience and wanted to continue being part of a community of collective memory. The narrative excludes voices of individuals who may not have had life-changing experiences, were unable to find new socioeconomic opportunities, failed escape drug culture or street violence, and, unfortunately, may have passed away to a variety of circumstances. One common theme throughout my interviews was a remembrance of lost brethren during the corps days and the decades to follow. No one elaborated on the many lives that have been lost or how they were lost, but it seems everyone felt compelled to mention those who did not make it in order to pay homage to the voices that will likely never be heard within this narrative of Black history.

⁹ In my personal corps experience, I have never come across nor heard about issues of violence in the modern corps community. I have, however, heard many stories of “parking lot brawls” from decades ago. Usually, these fights were to defend the name of a corps that was disrespected, prove loyalty, or settle “scores” when corps disagreed with adjudication results. It is notable that these stories came from or was about integrated or white corps, but I do not have a large enough data set to make any inferences here.

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I conceptualized different portions of this thesis like a drum corps show in the nineteen fifties. The introduction begins with the “Inspection” and “Opening Fanfare” where I introduced the corps activity and my theoretical frameworks and methodology. Chapter one steps “Off the Line” as the production begins and I open with the importance of urbanization and localization to the formation of Black corps. This is followed by the “Presentation of the Colors,” where I include three case studies of individuals in different corps to narrate their experience from first learning about the corps to recollecting how it affected their lives. In chapter two, I present the “Concert Piece” to theorize community not as an imagined object but as methodological tool to understand how corps protected their members from some of the prevalent dangers of their local neighborhoods, the focus as I move “Out of Concert.” The “Final Fanfare” begins the conclusion and observes how privatization of corps into national competitive circuits led to the decline of Black corps. The “Retreat” reflects on what Black corps studies can contribute to the field of ethnomusicology, Black history, and imagines how a Black corps might continue to exist today.

Chapter 1: Spatializing Black Drum & Bugle Corps Identities ***Off the Line & Presentation of the Colors***

[I] was growing up in the sixties, so for a Black kid in New York—in the projects of Brooklyn—there were not that many activities you could do. In those days, you could join the PAL—the Police Athletic League—and they would have a center. You joined. You just did stuff. What they did... they did have some activities, but the activity that they liked a lot, typically that they had, was the drum corps. You joined that.

Keith Warfield, 2015¹⁰

I interviewed Keith Warfield in August of 2015 and use this excerpt to introduce Black corps' fundamental relationship to urban spaces. Warfield played the snare drum in the St. Rita's Brassmen (Brooklyn, NY) from 1972-1973. The Brassmen began in 1962 as an integrated corps called the St. Joseph Patron Cadets and changed its name in 1968 while under new sponsorship. Warfield and I discussed the relatively few activities available to youth in Brooklyn. Aside from the "normal kid stuff" (Barber 2015) many alumni recalled, Warfield stressed that money was scarce in "the projects of Brooklyn" to sponsor activities like, for example, a youth baseball league, especially during an era when Blacks were not allowed to play with Whites. Instead, the Police Athletic League (PAL), local churches, and veteran posts sponsored corps (Brooklyn had at least twelve).

In this chapter, I hypothesize that drum and bugle corps in New York City and Washington, D.C. formed as a result of and in response to the impacts of political and economic urbanization and localization. In response to the Great Migration (1916-1970) of southern Black

¹⁰ Keith Warfield, Skype interview with author, August 17, 2015.

Americans to growing northern cities, urban planners designed racialized spaces in specific areas of New York City. I use Henri Lefebvre's theories to examine how Black corps were a means of teaching youth skills and values that contributed to socioeconomic advancement within their lived spaces. To recall, those skills and values included "discipline, punctuality, teamwork, esprit de corps, hard work and respect for flag and country" (Barber, 2014). Black neighborhoods were designed with systemic socioeconomic obstacles, making it difficult for Black citizens to achieve socioeconomic mobility (for example: Avila, 2004, Hartman, 2006; Sze, 2007; Satter, 2009; Arena, 2012; Goldstein, 2012; Duncan, 2014; Sugrue, 2014). Drum and Bugle Corps was not the only activity to teach such skills, but it was an effective and relatively inexpensive way (due to local sponsorship) to do so. As I will discuss in chapter two, many members of these corps were 'street kids'—youth who had resorted to drugs and violence—from which the corps experience 'turned them around.' Furthermore, by recognizing their Blackness these corps used performance to distinguish and take pride in Black identities.

After analyzing how spatialization led to the conditions in which Black corps existed, I employ four individuals' stories and experience in corps: Harold Barber from the Carter Cadets (Brooklyn, NY), Keith Griffin from the CMCC Warriors (Manhattan, NY), and Norman Downtin and Darryl Robinson from the Washington VIPs (Washington, D.C.) These case studies reflect how each individual came to know and be part of their corps, their experiences with the music, and how their participation continued to significantly influence their lives.

OFF THE LINE: URBANIZATION AND SPATIALIZATION OF BLACK CORPS

In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre sees space as a product maintained through constant social reproduction. The production of space happens in three ways: through spatial

practice, representations of space, and representational spaces; or, more simply, through perceived, conceived, and lived spaces (1991: 38-39). The perceived space is the process in which individuals discern and “appropriate” the use or function of a space (38). This is determined by constant and consistent social interactions with that space over time. Perceived space is “cohe[sive], but this does not imply that it is coherent” (38), meaning that the use of a space is largely socially agreed upon, regardless if that space is supposed to have a particular purpose. A parking lot, football stadium, basketball court, gym floor, or an empty field where a corps practiced is a perceived rehearsal space because the performers and teachers understood it and repeatedly used it as such, regardless of any specific purpose that space might have had.

A conceived space is a space that is produced with a specific purpose. There is logic involved in designing and creating a space with useful or functional intentions. In many ways, those intentions are made tangible either through verbal statements, or objects like maps and blueprints. A football field is a conceived space with its yard lines, hash marks, end zones, goal posts, benches, and stadium seating, all designed to cater to the rules of the game and spectatorship.

Lived space is the combination of both perceived and conceived spaces in daily practice. In many instances, an outside actor, such as an urban planner designing neighborhoods for people of color, can impose a spatial product on a community but never interact with the space. Lived space is an insider interaction in which social actors can perceive idealistic uses of their spaces as well as tangibly or materialistically conceive spaces. For those living in these spaces, it is a daily practice. Although corps reevaluate the function of a football field for competitive performances (perceived space), they still use the football field as a conceived space with its ten-yard line markers, hash marks, and stadium presentation on which to design their shows.

By investigating how Black urban spaces were conceived, perceived, and lived, I interpret the ways in which these spaces generated the conditions for Black corps to grow, as well as how Black corps were responses to those same conditions. The city was a perceived space of economic opportunity during the Great Migration. Urban planning, however, conceived Black neighborhoods to accommodate new southern migrants in ways that limited socioeconomic opportunities and contributed to structural inequality. Black communities were aware of the limitations of their conceived space and organized corps as one response. This was an action of lived space, in which the community was able, via corps, to not just perceive and conceive how they were going to use space, but also perceive and conceive their Black identities within the corps and the communities they represented.

The Great Migration began in the twentieth century as African-Americans moved away from the rural south to seek social and economic opportunities in the north, where cities were perceived as spaces for economic mobility due to the rapid expansion in industry. Geographer Don Mitchell claims in “Working-Class Geographies: Capital, Space, and Place,” that geography itself is integral for capital. Geography determines where and how the place of production is constructed (or conceived, in Lefebvre’s terms) to include producers, consumers, and a working middle-class (2005). Growing urban economies and American geography led African-Americans, among others, to capital centers. As urban planners conceived cities as centers of capitalistic economies and industry, migrants perceived the city as such.

Urban planning was integral to the structural inequalities that created different social class spaces deemed useful for capitalism. A need to control capital gain meant a need for consumers with spending power: the white middle class. Black neighborhoods were created by urban planning policies to segregate Black migrants from the white middle class to maintain a

higher capital value in white spaces. Planning and re-planning reinforced the hegemony of the white elite while racially discriminating against Blacks and Latinxs. These groups fell into a cycle of poverty caused by the expenses of constant relocation, high unemployment, poor housing opportunities, poor living conditions, and lack of public transportation, in part due to their poorly conceived spaces.

Racially marginalized and working class communities were aware of these structural inequalities and reacted in a variety of ways. The most obvious resistance was the national Civil Rights movement. As the following case studies will show Black corps were local responses to the conditions of their conceived spaces. Local municipalities, churches, and individuals thought participation in a corps was an impactful youth activity at a time when there was little else to do. Through corps, sponsors conceived new spaces meant to take youth off the streets to teach them life skills and values. Corps communities acted in lived space by representing and finding meaning in the perceptions and conceptions of Blackness established in their urban space.

PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS: THE BLACK DRUM AND BUGLE CORPS

In the following case studies, my goal is to present a narrative of each person's experience, including how they became aware of the activity and the influence their participation had on their lives. These narratives helped me learn how urban spaces were perceived, conceived and lived in the experience of Black corps members.

Harold and I met on Facebook. When I posted on the Facebook wall of the “African Americans in Drum Corps Then and Now” Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/aaidctn/>) looking for interlocutors; someone suggested I speak with Barber, subsequently tagging his profile in the comments of my post. We conversed

on Facebook and set up two interviews, the first of which was via Skype in the summer of 2015. A month later, we met again in a restaurant in Brooklyn, NY, where he also took me on a driving tour around the area where he grew up, practiced, and performed with the Carter Cadets. A few days later, we met again in Clifton, NJ where I watched him play timpani with the St. Rita's Brassmen Alumni Corps for a Drum Corps Associates competition.

My conversation with Keith Griffin began on Facebook, too. We met in Clifton for the first time, at the same show where Barber was performing. Griffin was invaluable as he introduced me to more Black corps alumni, many of whom marched with the CMCC Warriors. Griffin was a gracious "host"—the competition itself felt like his home as he greeted seemingly every other person. He introduced me to his friends while extolling my project, invited me to sit with him in the stadium's stands, reminisced with his Warrior alumni long after the show was over, and dubbed me an official Warrior ("welcome to the family!").

Like these first two, my first communication with Darryl Robinson began on Facebook. We agreed to meet in Washington D.C. for an interview, along with his friend Norman Downtin. Robinson and Downtin picked me up and drove me to Robinson's home on a Friday evening, where we conversed, listened to recordings of the Washington VIPs, and looked through boxes containing newspapers articles, corps records, and other paraphernalia Robinson had collected late into the night.

Harold Barber^{11,12} and the Carter Cadets

Barber lived in Brooklyn, NY for most of his life, recently moving out of the state after retiring as a teacher from a New York City public school. His corps experience began around age

¹¹ Harold Barber, Skype interview by author, June 23, 2015.

¹² Harold Barber, interview by author, July 8, 2015.

nine when he listened to a collection of corps albums in Brooklyn's Beulah Gospel Tabernacle, at the behest of his brother's friend, and it continues through today as he plays percussion with the St. Rita's Brassmen Alumni Corps.

At that time, marching bands weren't making albums, to my knowledge. When I saw this glossy album cover, and one of the drum corps' drum lines, it was a beautiful shot. I looked at it, and immediately I said to myself, "I want to do this." I want to be in that shot. It just grabbed me.

Barber's first time seeing an actual corps can be seen in the introduction's epigraph, which recounts his first live experience of the Carter Cadets in the Brooklyn Day Parade. Alongside recordings, this experience inspired him to join a corps. He recounts this moment extensively in an autobiography on the St. Rita's Brassmen website:

I stretched my neck over the police barricade to see who it was. Suddenly, I saw these white and blue flags that were unfurling in the wind. I watched the color guard captain, holding her saber, give commands to the color guard to "mark time march". I had not seen such military bearing and precision up till that point in the parade. The sound grew louder as the drum line came into view carrying white mother-of-pearl drums. The cymbal players twirled their cymbals and did all kinds of fancy tricks for the crowd. Directly behind them was the horn line. The sunlight made the silver chrome bugles shine. I was totally amazed at what I was witnessing. The sound was full and robust; it filled the whole area. It reminded me of those movie themes from some great blockbuster movies of that era. No marching band ever sounded like this, I thought. Who was this magnificent group?

The unit froze at attention after they finished playing their number. Nobody moved. Then the drum major shouted out "parade rest". I watched this group move as one to a military

‘at rest’ position. The crowd went wild with applause. I stood marveling at their uniforms as I clapped, too. They wore white buck shoes and blue pants with a white stripe down the side. Their blouses were white satin with a diagonal blue stripe down the front. A gold cummerbund encircled their waists. Their shakos were white mother-of-pearl with a blue top. A white plume rested on top of the shako. This group had a real military look. They looked sharp. I asked a man next to me who they were. He said, “Young man, that’s the Carter Cadets.” “Wow!” was the only thing I could utter from my lips.

I watched the drum major give the command “mark time march”. The Carter Cadets drum line started playing their street beat. The crowd began to clap to the rhythmic beats. They played their roll off, and the horns snapped back up. Carter began to play another song. I stood with a big smile on my face. I just marveled as the drum corps marched passed me. So many questions ran through my head. Where were they located? How could one join Carter Cadets? I was impressed. Carter Cadets left a mark on me that day. This was a real drum and bugle corps! (Barber, n.d.)

Figure 2: Harold Barber, pictured right, sitting outside the Beulah Gospel Tabernacle. Photo provided by Harold Barber.



Inspired by the albums, the performance and the visual spectacle of the Carter Cadets, Barber began playing almost immediately.

He started in his “friend’s father’s little church drum corps,” the Beulah Gospel Tabernacle’s drum corps, with his mother’s permission only because “it was a church-related activity” (Barber, N.D.) The ensemble included drums and glockenspiels; Barber played the cymbals, “started ground level and then I worked my way up.” While attending Stephen Decatur Junior High School (Now M.S. Stephen Decatur), Mr. Johnson, a social studies teacher, established the Decatur Cadets where Barber played snare drum from 1967 until he graduated in 1969. Mr. Johnson saw the activity as “getting the kids and students involved in something positive.” Carter Cadets’ members often taught the Decatur Cadets, so naturally Barber joined them in 1969, which unfortunately was their last season. Following their disbandment, Barber joined the St. Rita’s Brassmen “for a while,” paused from the activity but returned in the nineteen-eighties to play with the New York Skyliners (New York, NY). While a teacher in a New York Chinatown public elementary school, Barber instructed multiple drum lines.

Like Mr. Johnson and the Decatur Cadets, the Carter Cadets had an individual behind it with similar goals: “Mrs. Carter—I forgot what church she belonged to—but she did the whole Carter Cadets as a way to get kids off the street, then someone else took it over.” A small article in the *Eastern Review* drum and bugle corps publication provides brief insight into the corps’ beginning (1964). Mrs. Carter and an unknown minister began the corps in 1950 “only as a parade corps...contributing [to] many social and civic events.” When they shifted their focus to competitive “marching and maneuvering” a decade later, their sponsorship shifted to the George P. Davis American Legion Post #116. The Carter Cadets is a great example of the many sponsors a corps could have. Harold recalls:

I would say back then, a lot of the drum corps that came out to be successful... they

either were sponsored by a church, or someone who saw the need for a youthful activity in the community. It might have been someone who was a veteran in foreign wars and came back and saw the need to get kids involved in a very good activity. I would say the church has played a major role in drum corps, especially the Catholic Church. Multiple churches played a big deal in getting kids involved in drum and bugle corps.

Aside from the spectacle of the Carter Cadets, the fact that the corps was local to his neighborhood made it seem inevitable that he would join.

No, we were all local, because, you have to understand, back then, we're talking about Brooklyn. Brooklyn alone had at least over ten drum and bugle corps within a particular neighborhood— some being better than others. Its good to compete on a high... You didn't have to travel far to be part of a good drum and bugle corps. You really didn't.

Like I said, depending on the neighborhood and where you grew up, and who introduced you to whatever corps first, that's where you went to join. Didn't have to travel far. You might have somebody that might live in Manhattan, came down to join a Brooklyn corps, but you really didn't have to because if you're in Manhattan then you got the Warriors, so why travel to Brooklyn unless, you know, you like that particular style?

People joined their neighborhood corps mostly for proximity, but corps were also intertwined with the life of the local community, something Barber thinks is missing from the activity today:

But, the thing that my generation of drum corps [had], as opposed to [what] today's generation of drum corps never had, is that sense of community. For example, if someone in your community saw you with a drum corps jacket on, carrying a uniform, they knew who you were. [clapping hands] "Where you going? Got a show today? What's going on with the corps?" People in the community knew. As opposed today, if you were in one of these top corps and you're walking, nobody would [know]. And I know, because they're not accessible to the activity anymore like it used to be. There's all these types of pride of

marching through the community in your sharp cadet uniform. People are maybe in your neighborhood, on your block, see you and they shout your name out and you just swell up with pride and everything. You go out into something that people appreciated.

Corps represented their communities, especially through music, and the differences in musical representations can be heard regionally and locally. Harold often describes the music of the Carter Cadets and other New York based Black corps as “full and robust,” a New York sound as opposed to the, “Midwestern corps, where, you know, [were] sort of soft and loud through their approach to the music.” The Carter Cadets embodied the New York sound, “from right off, from the first note, its right in your face... The impact [claps hands] was direct.”

Repertoire helped create the right sound. The Carter Cadets’ crowd favorite was “To Sir, With Love,”¹³ written by Don Black and Mark London. The theme song was originally performed by Scottish pop star Lulu for the 1967 British film of the same title, which was based on the 1959 autobiographical novel by E. R. Braithwaite. In the film, Sidney Poitier (the first Black actor to ever win an Academy Award for Best Actor in 1964) portrays Mark Thackery, an engineer from British Guyana who finds himself teaching in an East London School. His students are rowdy, disrespectful, and undisciplined, but their behavior is recognizably caused by troubled home lives. To reach out to them and prepare them for life after graduation, Thackery begins to treat them as adults and expects them to treat each other with courtesy and respect, requiring them to call the ladies “miss,” the gentlemen by their surnames, and Thackery by “sir.” Instead of studying schoolbooks, he bases their daily lessons on conversations the students want to have about life, to surprising success. In the process, Thackery becomes a Black parental figure to this group of white students by teaching them how to survive in the real world. The plot

¹³ According to Corpsrep.com, the only other corps who used this song at the same time were the Appleknockers from Geneva, NY in 1967 and 1968, and the Tiermans from Hornell, NY in 1968. As far as I can tell, neither of them were Black corps, but the fact that these two corps alongside the Carter Cadets might indicate that the song itself was suitable for arranging into that New York sound.

thus contradicts the role of race though race itself is never explicitly mentioned. Rather, as seen below, the students attempt to grasp this contradiction in Thackery's person as a well-to-do "toff" that is and is not like them. He relates to the students as he unveils his poor upbringing and the many jobs he worked to pay for his education and find success, ultimately inspiring his students to do the same. Students ask:

Barbara Pegg: You ever been broke, Sir? Real broke? Skint?

Thackery: Yup. Many, many, many times.

Ingham: Oh, I don't understand you a bit, Sir. I mean, you're a toff, and you ain't.

Tackery: Huh?

Moira Joseph: Well, Sir, you're like us, but you ain't. I mean, you're not. It's kinda scary, but nice. You know what I mean, don't you?

Thackery: Well, I... I don't know how to answer you, except to say that I teach you truths. My truths. Yeah, and it is kinda scary, dealing with the truth.

Scary and dangerous... (Clavell 1967)

The lessons of the movie align with the lessons of Black corps, and whether or not it is simply coincidence, it cannot be ignored since the song's main theme was the Carter Cadet's crowd favorite. Instructors may well have served as parental figures to their students. The message of scary and dangerous "truths" is absolutely prevalent, as will be seen in chapter two. Thackery was an example of how hard work and education can lead to success, which would undoubtedly have inspired Black youth. Finally, learning to become adults and how to survive in the world is the ultimately goal, for both Thackery's students and the members of a corps. Perhaps the corps and its audience saw the significance and connection between the movie's lessons and what the corps was doing.

Relatedly, *To Sir, With Love*'s narrative with Sidney Poitier in the lead role further

signifies what it does and does not mean to be Black during a transitional era from a peaceful Civil Rights movement led by Martin Luther King Jr. to Black Power movements (Levine 2001). Although Levine does not discuss *To Sir, With Love*, his analysis on two other Poitier films released in the nineteen sixties (*Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* and *In the Heat of the Night*—both released in 1967 as well) are just as relevant. Levine examines the “interracial male narrative” in which Poitier’s roles as a “symbolic father of the cultural order” are meant to “settle that era’s fears of racial violence by locating black masculinity on the side of cultural law and order” (366). It is the power of White men, however, to grant such masculinity, and not the role of the Black man to do so himself. This analysis is mostly through a lens of protecting White womanhood, though I shall not delve into that topic here.

More importantly, in *To Sir, With Love*, Poitier takes on this civil role of Black masculinity that errs on the side of “law and order,” control, peace, success, and respect. This is particularly significant considering the shift from the peaceful protest advocated by Martin Luther King Jr. to the more violent nature of some Black Power movements; Poitier remained an advocate of non-violence throughout his career. In the context of the corps activity, as has been mentioned earlier and will be returned to in the next chapter, many members participated as an alternative to joining Black Power organizations, protesting, or rioting. Considering it was an *alternative*, musical performance itself, then, was also a way to peacefully protest and create and evaluate Black identities.

Levine also postulates that settings outside of the continental United States (e.g. Hawaii in *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*) is “meant to represent an alternative to U.S. racial ideology” (367). *To Sir, With Love* takes place in London where a Black man can be in a protagonist role that inverts America’s Black stereotypes. Although the corps I focus on were all in the

continental U.S., for the Carter Cadets to include this “To Sir, With Love” as a signature piece suggest a political statement that Black citizens do not have to fit into widespread American stereotypes. In a biography of Poiter, Aram Goudsouzian describes Poiter’s life experiences as befitting that of the protagonist Mark Thackery (2004). Goudsouzian describes Thackery as, “dignity incarnate, a buttoned-down, bottled-up symbol of middle class values,” “rose from poverty,” “espouses nonviolence,” “a passionless monument to self-control” (260-261). Poitier himself fits the image. Assuming that Black corps members knew the source for their repertoire, they would have been introduced to Thackery as a symbol of what can or should be, and Poitier as a real symbol of someone they can and should become.

Of course, it is the sound of the song “To Sir, With Love” that would have been the most important reason for its favorite status with the corps. The song has a driving backbeat, a simple chord progression emphasized by a sparse electric guitar and grooving electric bass line, melodic strings, organ, and a powerful vocal. It was number one on Billboard’s Hot 100 for five weeks in 1967 (Billboard). According to Corpsrep, an online drum and bugle corps database, the Carter Cadets featured this song in their 1968 and 1969 productions, using it as their out of concert piece before playing “Show Me” from the Broadway musical *My Fair Lady* as their closing number.

The corps’ 1968 version of “To Sir, With Love” (as I hear it on an album) served as an out of concert piece, and it begins with a brief drum line feature and a loud brass fanfare before suddenly dropping dynamics for the verse. The baritone bugles play a simple accompanying ostinato while the drum line plays eighth notes with various accents to accompany the soprano section’s melody, whose shorter note lengths and syncopation contrast Lulu’s original melismatic singing. During the bridge, the bass bugles belt the bass line while a soprano duet,

close to overblowing their horns, play a highly ornamented and harmonized melody. For the chorus, the entire corps enters at maximum volume (though the recording fades because the corps is seemingly moving off of the field) while the drum line plays what feels like a Cuban *tresillo* inspired rhythm. Once through “To Sir With Love”, the corps transitions into the chorus of “Show Me” from the musical *My Fair Lady* as their farewell piece. Barber explained that off of the field, corps members often changed the chorus lyrics in “Show Me” and sang “Here comes that corps. Here comes that corps. Here comes that corps. Carter!” It served as something like a corps theme song.

The Carter Cadets, like many corps, used repertoire to create their identity and signify style, mainly by playing mostly Broadway tunes, jazz, and popular music. The 1968 repertoire included “Show Me” as the opener, followed by “On the Mall March,” “In the Mood,” and “I’ve Got You Under My Skin.” They followed those with “Everything’s Coming Up Roses” from the Broadway musical *Gypsy*, “A Little Town in Singapore,” and crowd favorite “To Sir, With Love,” before ending with a reprise of “Show Me.” To put some of this repertoire into a broader context, “Show Me,” “On the Mall March,” and “I’ve Got You Under My Skin” were each only

Figure 3: The Carter Cadets Drum & Bugle Corps performing at the 1969 VFW National Preliminary competition in Philadelphia, PA. Photo taken by Moe Knox, provided by Harold Barber.



played again by five corps or less thorough 2016, according to data gather from corpsrep. Considering that thousands of corps existed in the sixties, and the fact that other (White) corps playing this repertoire were not in the same regional areas as the Carter Cadets, it is fair to say that this repertoire was unique to the Carter Cadets. On the other hand, everybody was playing “In the Mood.”

Barber credits the Carter Cadets’ sound to Hy Drietzer, a White musical arranger and instructor who wrote for over a dozen Black, White, and integrated corps. He was mentioned many times during interviews for this project, since he arranged for the Carter Cadets, the CMCC Warriors, St. Rita’s Brassmen, and the Skyliners, making sure each corps had a unique sound. In the larger corps community, Drietzer is considered a revolutionary brass arranger who shaped the sounds of countless corps. In our interview, Warfield recalled that “[Drietzer] wrote for almost every top drum corps in the country because, at that time, he was probably the biggest brass arranger in all of drum corps. But, he was based here in New York.” He also claimed that, “Hy Dreitzer tried to pick music that satisfied the black sensibility” (Warfield 2015). Ultimately, this shows an awareness of arrangers and performers of Black musical aesthetics and the likely deliberate selection of repertoire to indicate certain styles that (racially) identified a corps.

Barber reminisces on his corps experience and the impact it had in his life:

Oh, my goodness. We appreciate that we had the opportunity that most kids are not given today. We cherish that moment, that camaraderie. Even though we were—even with the Warriors and the Brassmen—we were rivals, but we appreciated the excellence that both of us were producing back then, you know. We had that fellowship. A lot of us we grew up together. A lot of us went to the same school together.

Barber laments the fact that today’s corps are not local to a neighborhood, believing members are missing out on the camaraderie because of it. Corps today fulfill their membership with youth

from around the world, making it more difficult to establish camaraderie with one shared local space. Regardless, there are still aspects of his experience that have carried on:

We were held accountable. When I think about how many times the phrase, “no excuse, no excuse,” you know what I mean? You don’t want to be late, so you give yourself a little extra amount of time to leave so in case something goes wrong, you won’t get there late. Our director, he drilled that punctuality into us so much, I don’t like being late! To this day!

...

I don’t know, I think I would probably be a different person. I don’t think I would have had the experience of being well rounded... For example, when I was in St. Rita’s Brassmen drum and bugle corps, we went on tour. These guys, they played all kinds of music on the bus: jazz, classical... One guy was into electronic music when it started. You heard all this different music. Well, these tunes, they stayed with me today.

...

But, the training that I got from drum corps really helped me solidify myself as a teacher. Especially when it came to discipline, because I applied those same skills and techniques that I learned in drum corps to my career.

Keith Griffin¹⁴ and the CMCC Warriors

At the time of this writing, Keith Griffin published the first part of a series about the City Mission Cadet Corps (CMCC) Warriors, also known as the Minisink¹⁵ Warriors (henceforth Warriors), in *Drum Corps World Magazine* (April 2016). He guides the reader through a timeline of leadership and sponsorships, beginning with the corps’ formation in 1937 through the

¹⁴ Keith Griffin, Skype interview by author, October 2, 2015.

¹⁵ The CMCC Warriors were sometimes referred to as the Minisink Warriors because one of their rehearsal locations was the “Minisink Townhouse” owned by the NYC City Mission Society in Harlem.

nineteen-sixties. His introduction states:

This is the story of a drum corps with a very humble beginning. This was a drum corps built to instill the character in the African-American youth in Manhattan and The Bronx. The drum corps that would become the Minisink Warriors, started with a mission to take a child off the streets and develop him into a well-rounded citizen of the planet. It instilled discipline, dedication and devotion in its members. These were principles that were started in the drum corps, the developed into a larger, broader cadet program which provided the Harlem community a dignity all its own. The New York City Mission Society would comprise not only a drum corps, but steel bands, a choir, a fraternity, a sorority, sewing classes and many other activities. At its center was a very strong Cadet Corps program, which provided paramilitary training program for young men. It had over 3,000 cadets participating in marching, leadership training and officers' training. The purpose was to meet the needs of the community. It saved lives through keeping neighborhood children in activities and out of harm's way.

Griffin links the Warriors to the New York City Mission who were "on the frontlines of the war on poverty for more than 200 years" (NYC Mission Society). While they no longer sponsor a corps, today, in partnership with New York City's Afro-Latin Jazz Alliance, they sponsor Global Rhythms in our Tribe (GRIOT) to provide youth with free music education. The NYC Mission Society continues to sponsor and maintain activities that keep youth safe throughout the city, as well as "character building" (Interview with author, 2015).

Aside from the NYC Mission Society, Griffin writes that Harlem's St. Mark's United Methodist and Mother of Zion African Methodist churches, and St. Augustine's church in The Bronx, also sponsored the Warriors. During an interview, Griffin recalled that the Harlem Youth Opportunities Unlimited, more commonly known as HARYOU or HARYOU-Act, was a federal program started in 1964 that sponsored corps. A New York Times article reports the "anti-

poverty project” received over \$118 million for three years, of which \$7,605 was designated for corps.¹⁶ Griffin also recalled that HARYOU sponsored the Carter Cadets and the all-Black Riversiders (Brooklyn, NY). But, once the money disappeared those corps eventually, declined, finally ceasing operations by the early nineteen-seventies. The Warriors continued because of their many other sponsors. This suggests that corps with more local support and resources were likely more financially stable than corps dependent on external funding.

The Warriors began in 1937 as a parade corps that practiced in Harlem and The Bronx and performed for community events. They could not participate in competitions until the nineteen sixties due to their race. Griffin finished his first installment on the Warriors by ending with Bobby Winslow, a hired arranger and instructor in 1962, around the time the corps began competing. Griffin refers to Bobby as an “innovator” and “as cool as the other side of the pillow.” African and Brazilian music influenced Winslow, who studied at Berkeley School of Music, learned from “Miles Davis’ drummer” (he is unnamed in the article) and African American jazz drummer Roy Hayne. Winslow also incorporated 6/8 meters in his percussion arranging for the Warriors. This, I believe, was relatively uncommon, but it strongly signifies African and Afro-Latin rhythms, including clave and bell patterns, at the time during the Mambo craze (Monson 2007: 137-142). In addition, Winslow instructed the Riversiders, and was the first African American corps to perform with the New York Skyliners. He, along with Hy Drietzler, ultimately created the Warrior’s sound.

When I asked Griffin to describe the Warrior’s sound, he responded enthusiastically with, “Man, we sounded... I think we sounded Black!” which means:

To me, we sounded like, we sounded like... have you ever taught a corps? You’ve been

¹⁶ Paul L. Montgomery, “Haryou-act Sets \$118 Million Budget,” *New York Times*, June 25, 1964. Accessed April 15, 2016. http://www.nytimes.com/1964/06/25/haryou-act-sets-118-million-budget.html?_r=0.

drum major right? [Author: Yeah.] You know, you teach the white boy the visual, and sometimes they don't get it. You know what I mean? Like, sometimes they don't grasp it. In the Warriors, you would play a rhythm that was fascinating to somebody else, and to us, it was just "Oh, we got that." It was easy. We used to play a lot of *Porgy and Bess*, and those rhythms were, like, upbeat, a lot of beats, a lot of stuff with your foot in the air. [Sings a melody from "Oh Lawd, I'm On My Way" from *Porgy and Bess*]. That rhythm, I have nothing against white people, but that rhythm, they're not gettin' it on the first time. You show that... You come to a Warriors rehearsal, and we already got that [laughs]. You know, all you have to do is show that to us one time and we got it. That's, a lot of your feet are in the air. If you're marching to it, half the time you're hittin' your foot is in the air.

Griffin describes syncopation as a Black musical aesthetic. Playing rhythms when "your foot is in the air" means the syncopation created when the notes are played between the beats when the foot is physically off of the ground while marching. He continued to talk about the repertoire including "a lot of traditional Black music," *Porgy and Bess*, and Pérez Prado's "Voodoo Suite."

A 1973 production features at least two spiritual tunes: "Sometimes I Feel Like a

Figure 4: The Warriors compete in 1969 at a competition hosted by the Carter Cadets at the Boys High Field in Brooklyn, NY. Photo taken by F. Simpson Jr., provided by Harold Barber.



Motherless Child,” and “Kum Ba Yah.” The origin of each spiritual is unknown, but each has become widespread in various musical styles. Both began to widely appear in the 1920s, though “Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child’s” first publication is traced back to 1901 in *Cabin and Plantation Songs* under Bessie Cleveland, the director of the Hampton Students of Hampton Institute (Miyakawa 2012, 2). This ensemble was modeled after the Fisk Jubilee Singers, though Miyakawa notes that this particular spiritual never occurred in Fisk’s repertoire. Aside from signifying the Black church, “Sometimes I feel like a Motherless Child” is also a sonic symbol of the Civil Rights movement. It was a signature feature sung by Alabama-born folk singer Odetta, who often performed it during the Civil Rights era (Kernodle).

“Sometimes I feel like a Motherless Child” occurs during what appears to be the presentation of the colors. It begins with a legato baritone melody accompanied by a drum roll with syncopated accents. As the melody moves to the mellophone section, the rest of the corps plays counter melodies until a fiercely loud soprano solo cuts through all the sound. This is followed by a continual ensemble buildup with a heavy drum line beat that concluded in a dramatic half time ending. “Kum Ba Yah” is the out of concert feature. The melody is played quietly by a solo trumpet accompanied by a high brass chordal accompaniment. Halfway through the full verse, the full horn line continues in the same manner with baritones taking the melody. This all occurs over a cyclical rhythmic pattern with a syncopated Latin feel. This leads directly into an aggressive and loud “Voodoo Suite,” originally composed in 1954 by Cuban-Mexican musician and composer Pérez Prado and American Jazz trumpeter Shorty Rogers.

The Warriors were known for their powerful and highly energetic rendition of “Voodoo Suite,” which often began or ended their shows. Griffin reflected, “It was definitely Black. It was definitely ethnic. Troopers [Casper, WY] heard it for the first time—they were a little scared.

They told us about it.” “Voodoo Suite” was originally composed as a tone poem for a massive mambo orchestra. It mixed Afro-Cuban and jazz aesthetics in order to imagine the sounds of Santeria ceremonies and Orishas (da Gama, 2015). The Warriors’ arrangement appeared to be a similar arrangement every year it was played with small variations. It used the main melody and ostinato bass line that occurs throughout the “Voodoo Suite.” The following description is from my own listening experience of a 1970 recording on a CD. It begins quietly with an unknown metal instrument being struck to seemingly imitate a Latin bell pattern. The percussion section provides “random” (but likely pre-composed) ensemble accents while soprano soloists perform fast and seemingly out of time rips and growls that create a chaotic sonic atmosphere. The underlying bass line creeps in and gradually increases in volume while driving the song’s tempo forward. Soon enough, the drum line inserts a steady groove underneath that also grows dynamically. A brief timpani melody and drum line feature usher in the “hit.” The soprano bugles and mellophones blast the melody while the low brass accent it between phrases. A solo

Figure 5: Keith Griffen performing with the Bridgemen Drum & Bugle Corps in the 1976 DCI Finals held at the University of Pennsylvania. Photo provided by Keith Griffen.



soprano trills upwards over a drum roll before the whole ensemble returns with an explosion of sound. The high pitched melody is forceful on top of a driving and energetic bass line and a fast percussive groove in four that switches to hard-hitting 6/8 rhythm that causes a hemiola with the rest of the corps when the melody returns. There is not a “proper” ending. The drum line transitions into a percussion feature to lead into the next song. To Griffin, no one sounded like the Warriors. No other corps attempted “Voodoo Suite;” it belonged to the Warriors. Many performed selections from *Porgy and Bess*, and even “Man of La Mancha (I, Don Quixote)” from the Broadway production of *Man of La Mancha*, another of the Warrior’s signature songs arranged by Hy Dreitzer, but “Voodoo Suite” was uniquely theirs. Regardless, Griffin believes the Warriors best captured Black aesthetics.

Griffin was introduced to Warriors at six years old because his family was involved. Two older brothers were Warriors when it was just a parade corps, and his mother served as a chaperone and nurse for the corps. Griffin joined the New York Mission Society’s Cadet Corps, a feeder corps, at six years old and was immediately made a corporal¹⁷ in the corps because of his family connections:

The first day I come in they made me a corporal because my brothers were in it. They said, “Stand up! You know, come on, Griffin! Stand up! You’re a corporal.” It was the first day, but that’s how they treated you. It was as family thing. If they know that you can learn something, then they made sure that you exceeded. They didn’t let you sit back and, you know, just be a part of it. They made sure, like, “You know, you gotta be a leader because your brother knows, so you better know stuff.”

¹⁷ The Warriors used the military ranks of private, corporal, sergeant and staff sergeant to denote experience and leadership. Since Griffin was around the Warrior’s and not completely new to the activity, he skipped being a private and moved up to corporal. In today’s vernacular, most corps members are often referred to as rookies, veterans, and super-veterans.

From a young age, Griffin was expected to be a leader. In his youth, his mom kept him busy with corps and other activities because “the neighborhood that we lived in was pretty hard. It wasn’t an easy place to live.” Besides corps, Keith attended a preparatory school for two years, played basketball and football, sang in the choir, was a member of the drill team, and was a cub scout.

Griffin joined the New York Braves corps from 1964-1965, which was “fed” by the New York City Society’s 3,000 member cadet corps, where Griffin began. The cadet corps maintained different units throughout New York City. In the wider world of corps, feeder corps typically train younger children in the marching arts until they are considered qualified and talented enough to move up to the next level or parent organization. The New York Braves fed the Warriors, where Griffin played from 1966 to 1975. Following the Warriors, he marched with different integrated corps, including the Bridgemen (Bayonne, NJ) and the Hawthorne Caballeros (Hawthorne, NJ) in 1978 to 1982, where he was the Caballeros’ first Black soloist. Afterwards, he judged competitions and continues to teach color guard, marching, and brass to different marching bands around the country.

Being a Warrior affected Griffin’s, “without a doubt—total life experience, and what I do today, and how happy I am, and where I live. From top to bottom, without a question.” In terms of what stuck with him, he says:

People don’t realize how hard you have to work to be in a drum corps. That alone pushes you through, you know, my basketball team, my camps, and continually working and continually doing things well—and having that high degree of excellence with whatever you do. That’s what I really take from drum corps. You know, because...you know, well shit! You’re drum instructor tells you, “Look, we’re gonna take that again. That wasn’t perfect. Let’s do it again.” [laughs] You know how it was. You know how it was.

Man, it's a great degree of excellence that goes along with being in a drum corps, man. That never leaves you, you know? And if you let it leave, then you're making a big mistake. I feel like, even at this age of being in my sixties, I've still got more to give. That's why I'm trying to stay out there, do things for kids, and give back. Make sure I'm doing the right thing, hanging out with the right people.

Norman Downtin, Darryl Robinson¹⁸ and the Washington VIPs

Darryl Robinson: Now this was in that pile of stuff that I don't recall. It must have been important to somebody. It says, "The Victory Verse." It says:

[Victory Verse]

If you think you are beaten, you are

If you [t]hink that you dare not, you don't;

If you'd like to win, but think you can't;

It is almost certain that you won't.

If you think you'll lose, you've lost;

For out on the field or floor you'll find

Success begins with the marchers' wills,

It's all in the state of mind.

If you think you are outclassed, you are,

You've got to think high to rise;

You've got to be sure of yourself before

You can ever win a prize.

¹⁸ Norman Downtin and Darryl Robinson, interview by author, August 17, 2015.

[DR: This poem is incredible!]

*All the contests don't always go
To the bigger or stronger clan;
But sooner or later the corps that wins,
Is the corps that thinks they can.*

Darryl Robinson found this poem while sorting through a box during an interview in his home. The author, Harry H. Patin, was unfamiliar to us, but an internet search turned up two possible relations to two other corps: a founder of the Spectacle City Mariners (Greendale, WI)¹⁹ and a drum instructor for Marquis (Fond du Lac, WI)²⁰ (Its very plausible they could be the same person). Somehow this poem came into Robinson's possession mixed inside a box of photos, newspaper clippings, programs, schedules, and administrative documents he saved from the time his mother was a secretary of the Washington VIPs. The poem is modeled after Walter D. Wintle's "Thinking," which is also sometimes called "The Man Who Thinks He Can" or "State of Mind." Many of the original words were changed in Patin's version to reflect the corps experience. Robinson praised this poem that embodied that night's conversation topics. When I met with Norman Downtin and Darryl Robinson in Robinson's Maryland home just outside of Washington, D.C., our conversation focused more on their emotional connection to the corps and how it affected their lives, rather than on music or the broader community.

Darryl Robinson was in the Washington VIPs (henceforth VIPs) from 1965 to 1970, when Washington D.C. was predominantly Black. He played trumpet in his school's seventh grade band at the time when his older sister married a man who marched in the Royal Sabres (Washington, D.C.), the preceding corps to the Washington VIPs. His new brother-in-law took

¹⁹ <http://www.corpsreps.com/corpsreps.cfm?view=corpshist&corps=191&corpstype=Junior>

²⁰ <http://www.corpsreps.com/corpsreps.cfm?view=corpshist&corps=100&corpstype=Junior>

him to a VIPs rehearsal and Robinson joined the corps at twelve years old. He recalled that the public schools at the time had Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs, and all boys were required to be cadets. ROTC had drill teams and bands that competed against other schools throughout the city. While Wilson had not heard of corps beforehand, being in this program gave him an easy transition into the corps experience.

Norman Downtin is slightly older than Robinson. He was in the Royal Sabers from 1961 until 1964, and then joined the VIPs from 1965 until he was drafted into the United States Army in 1969. Downtin learned to play the snare drum while in elementary school, and was unaware of the corps activity until President Kennedy's 1961 inauguration parade:

Every inauguration they have a stand, a viewing stand that sits up in good view of the parade route. [My uncle] took me to the inauguration parade. The Boston Crusaders [Boston, MA] was in Kennedy's presidential inauguration. When the Boston Crusaders came around that corner, they came down the street, I was like... I had never seen nothing like it in my life. I mean the beat, the precision, everything! I was just mesmerized. Mr. Ross, the director of the VIPs—I mean the Royal Sabres—was out there. Kennedy's inauguration was the coldest inauguration ever. It snowed ten, twelve inches the night of his inauguration and they had to clean the whole... the big thing. A lot of people, they didn't show up. At this point, it was cold out there and I looked up, and me and Mr. Ross were the only ones out there watching the Boston Crusaders. He told me, he said, "young man, you better lean back off of that banister or you're gonna end up down there in the street." He told my uncle, he said, "you outta bring him up there." He said, "he likes drum corps. Bring him up there to join the corps." I told him I played drums. He said, "We got enough drummers, we need some horn players, but bring him up there anyway." That's when I joined, that's when he took me to the Royal Sabres practice and I jumped right in there. I was hooked ever since. But, when I seen the Boston

Crusaders, I was like, I'd never seen anything like that in my life. It was like love at first sight. I was just mesmerized because they were bad.

Like Barber and the Carter Cadets, a parade drew Downtin into the activity. His uncle was a member of the James Reese Europe American Legion Post (named in honor of the African-American bandleader of the Army National Guard), which sponsored the Royal Sabers. His uncle told him, "If you get good grades when you get big enough...I'll take you up there and let you join." Downtin did exactly that. Eventually, he was more involved with the corps than his grades: "It was like, if my mother told me that for getting bad grades I couldn't go to practice, I'd run away from... I was not gonna miss practice. They didn't have to worry about me coming to practice. I was at every practice. I don't think I missed a practice the whole time I was in the corps."

Since Washington D.C. was already predominantly Black, every corps in the capital was Black. Most, however, did not compete like the VIPs. They were parade corps whose membership came from local public high schools and performed in their communities. Downtin and Robinson name the Lancers, a Boys Club, the Royal Eagles, and Kennelworth as other local corps, all of which I was unable to find any public records.



Figure 6: Washington VIPs performing in a 1969 competition hosted by the Carter Cadets at the Boys High Field in Brooklyn, NY. Photo by Frank Simpson, Jr., provided by Harold Barber.

The VIPs were originally the Royal Sabres, sponsored by the James Reese Europe American Legion Post. Downtin emphasized the importance that it was this post that sponsored the Royal Sabres. James Reese Europe (1880-1919) was a Black American musician, bandleader and composer from Mobile, AL. He studied music in Washington D.C. and New York City, wrote popular music, was a theater director, founded the Clef Club (an African-American musicians' union) and conducted the first Black orchestra to perform in Carnegie Hall. He was instrumental in the spread of ragtime and blues, especially throughout continental Europe where he was deployed as the bandmaster for 369th US Infantry Regimental Band during WWI, also known as the Harlem Hellfighters. (Badger). It is fitting that an American Legion post honoring a Black musician sponsored Washington D.C.'s only competitive Black corps.

When the Royal Sabres began competing in 1962, the American Legion Post was unable to continue sponsoring the corps. Operations ceased within a year. Downtin says, "The Royal Sabre name belonged to the American Legion Post. When we left American Legion, we took all their equipment and they never got it back. We didn't want to give them a reason to come after us about using their name of their drum corps somewhere else, so, they came up with the VIP, the name VIP." Our Lady of Perpetual Help (OLPH) church in Washington, D.C. was their new sponsor, headed by Father St. Amand, a white priest. Father St. Amand had a similar vision to those who sponsored New York City corps: he saw it as a useful, worthwhile activity to get youth off the streets. According to a 2010 article in the *Washington Post*, Father St. Amand "cashed in an insurance policy he had to buy the first set of drums, bugles and makeshift uniforms for the corps" (Wilson 2010). Once the VIPs began, alumni from the Royal Sabers transferred there. OLPH sustained the corps for about a decade. When I visited the church for a Sunday mass in the summer of 2015, many older members of the congregation remembered the

VIPs, since they themselves or their children participated in it. Many took pride in the VIPs because it demonstrated the financial capabilities of a Black organization. Robinson exclaimed, “For me, the drum corps was a role model as a whole. We [were] a Black organization that bought buses. We had buses. We traveled on our own buses!”

Dowtin and Robinson scarcely discussed the music. Whenever I asked, they would put on an audio recording to listen to and talk over. They had little interest in the music itself, which included the theme from the 1961 film *King of Kings* (a film about the life of Jesus Christ), medleys from *Porgy and Bess*, Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, music from the rock band Chicago, and Carole King’s “Will You Love Me Tomorrow?”²¹ Instead, they were more enthusiastic with remembering the feelings performances gave them. Dowtin remembers:

There’s nothing like standing on the starting line. Back in those days, you had the starting line and the finish line. Now, you just go out on the field and you set up anywhere and start. Before, you had a starting line, and there is no greater fear than to be standing on that starting line and hear them announce you and say, “VIPs, you may take the field in competition.” You’re driven, you’re [inaudible], your heart is pumping [bangs on chest], and sooner or later somebody say, “mark time.” BAM! Then, you’re huffing down there. You’re just out there kickin’ ass, man. Your giving it all your... All that practice, that whole week, all that up in the hot sun, hungry, feet hurtin’, knees hurtin’, shoulder hurtin’. When you step off that line, you put it all in there, and then going off the field, you laid it out to them and then you say, “Goodbye.” That was it.

I felt like Michael Jordan. I’ve been telling them how I’m great, how I’m doing this thing. Man, shoot.

²¹ Many of the VIPs instructors came from the United States Air Force Drum and Bugle Corps, thus many of the VIPs musical selections were from the Air Force corps. Unfortunately, I have been unable to locate historical records of repertoire lists from that time.

Dowtin and Robinson consistently brought our conversation back to their relationships with fellow alumni and the effect corps had on their lives. They mentioned numerous marriages between members, including Dowtin who married the color guard captain and made another alumnus the Godfather of their son. They also reflected on the people they lost over the years. The corps experience was the base for many of their lifelong relationships. VIP and other Black corps alumni from the D.C. area, continue to meet monthly for breakfast, and annually to watch the DCI World Championship in August. For Dowtin, the best time of his life was when he was in corps:

I haven't found anything else to give me that feeling that drum corps gave me: that camaraderie. The army was something like that, but it just wasn't like the drum corps. It was like, you saw that thing, *Band of Brothers*,²² you know the movie, that's what drum corps was. Once you left town, you're a VIP. There's almost a hundred of us, they say, "oh, man. We better get out of here." Here they come. Come into town, we be raising hell. The bus would be rocking.

Darryl Robinson has fond and emotional memories of his time with the VIPs. He recalls the camaraderie as well as the importance of every individual in making their contribution to the corps: "We were kids, we had fun. But, we knew how to be serious, too." Overall, Robinson thinks that the corps experience had an effect on "how [he] turned out."

To build character. It helped me build leadership. I could trust my brother. I got a worldly view, maybe not a big worldly view, but like I said, we traveled. I've got to see places that I probably wouldn't have seen if I hadn't been in it. I got to be with my parents. That was special to me.

²² *Band of Brothers* was a 2001 HBO television mini-series that followed the Easy Company from the U.S. Army's 101 Airborne Division during WWII. It highlighted their immense sense of camaraderie and brotherhood while in overseas combat.

For me, this is government town, so I went to work for the federal government. Thirty-four years. I'm retired now. It was part drum corps, but it was other organizations. See, it makes you feel...you're unafraid to not join something or step out to the unknown. Drum corps did that to you.

In the beginning of this interview, Robinson went on YouTube to show me a trailer for a documentary about the VIPs that, unfortunately, was never completed.²³ The trailer was created by a VIP alumnus and interviewed multiple members about their experiences, including Father St. Amand. They reflected on the difficulty of living in South Eastern Washington D.C., the commitment of Father St. Amand to create an opportunity for Black youth in the area, the hard work needed to put on a successful performance, and the racial experiences of being the only competing Black corps in a dominantly white competitive circuit. The nine and a half minute trailer brought back many memories for Robinson, crying as he watched:

It's the bomb. And, just like tonight, every time I've seen this video, probably in the last week or two, maybe five or six times, each time, it brings tears to my eyes.

CONCLUSION

In the article "Subjects in History: Making Diasporic Identities" Stuart Hall states, "Symbolic lines are being drawn, and what we know about culture is that once the symbolic difference exists, that is the line around which power coheres. Power uses difference as a way of marking off who does and who does not belong" (1997: 298). Hall argues that power requires difference, but power varies in distinct places. Diaspora sometimes limits multiplicity in its "closed narratives" (ibid.) because it essentializes different diasporic identities into a singular object (e.g. Africa) attached to the homeland. Diaspora, however, is more complicated because

²³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xC3wbBcppA>.

different systems of power create different identities. Hall uses Black identity as an example:

In the 1970s, the signifier “black” was adopted as a political category of struggle, both by Afro-Caribbean migrants and by migrants from the Asian continent. People who manifestly were not, in any of the significant ways in which the term “race” had ever been used, the same race, called themselves by the racial signifier. They said, “Since the British can’t tell the difference between us, we must be the same.” We might as well call one another by the same name. That’s what identity is; it always has a constitutive outside. Those people didn’t know about a “constitutive outside,” but they knew one when they got it. Since they were manifestly not white, they were Black. They called themselves Black. They organized under that *political* roof. (295)

This is similar to the process that occurred in Black corps. The political reach of urban planning chose to identify racial difference. This identification racially signified Whiteness against its constitutive outsider, Blackness. Conceived spaces physically separated Whiteness from Blackness, creating neighborhoods in Brooklyn and Manhattan that purposefully maintained the socioeconomic status quo that gave power to a white middle class while disenfranchising the Black working class. Black communities who knew they were on the outside adopted the identity given to them: Black. A Wynn Center Toppers (Brooklyn, NY) alumnus, Mario, explained in an email, “I like to think of corps’ members as Black first (racially all inclusive) and African-Americans secondly. More than a few corps’ members were from Caribbean islands, while and a very few were from Africa. The far greater number were African-Americans.”²⁴ Thus, otherness was framed by Whiteness as Whites conceived to spatially separate the other away from them. While these ‘others’ had differences in their identities, they unified under their marginalization, accepted the title of “Black,” and gave it meaning. As a result, Black citizens could establish

²⁴ Mario, email message to author, June 15, 2015.

ownership and agency over their identities. Black corps and their music were just one means of accomplishing this.

Drum and bugle corps were spectacles. The uniforms and the sound awed children in parades, while communities supported and stayed aware of their local corps' activities. In a nationalistic analysis of the European Song Contest, Phillip Bohlman claims that this massive event is a spectacle, "and therein, too, lies its power to unify" (2004: 8). The same is true for Black corps. They certainly were inspiring spectacles that unified Black communities by giving them power to teach, learn, express and take pride in Black identities, especially through music. Barry Shank states that, "The musical confirmation of already existing political groups helps to consolidate them as self-aware communities" (2014: 15). Since Blackness is politically conceived, performing Black music helped to teach and learn self-identities, as well as give power to the marginalized to separate themselves from Whiteness by shaping musical difference. Paul Gilroy emphasizes that, "the most important lesson music still has to teach us is that its inner secrets and its ethnic rules can be taught and learned" (1991: 134). Like the youth in Black corps, he comes to this realization while a youth himself:

As a child and a young man growing up in London, I was provided by black music with a means to gain proximity to the sources of feeling from which our local conceptions of blackness were assembled. The Caribbean, Africa, Latin America, and, above all, black America contributed to our lived sense of a racial self. The urban context in which these forms were encountered cemented their stylistic appeal and facilitated their solicitation of our identification. They were important also as a source for the discourses with which we located our own struggles and experiences (134).

Gilroy's experience of being young in an urban space where blackness was "assembled" in lived space via music is a similar effect urban Black corps had on their membership.

The extent to which inhabiting space was threaded through my interviews for this project pushed me to analyze them in these terms. All of my interlocutors spoke about space through their experiences in specific urban areas in which all or lack of their opportunities was related to where they lived. As Warfield reflected in the epigraph to this chapter, “[I] was growing up in the sixties, so for a Black kid in New York—in the projects of Brooklyn—there were not that many activities you could do.”²⁵ Space was also constantly threaded throughout conversations when interlocutors discussed other corps: The Carter Cadet’s from Brooklyn, the Warriors from Harlem, the VIPs from D.C., from Manhattan, Queens, upstate New York, the East Coast, Kansas, Texas, from places where people had degrees in music. It seemed obvious that space was important to my interlocutors because they so often compared their music, uniforms, style, opportunities, socioeconomic class, and their overall experience to other corps from other spaces. Space is just one of the heavily prevalent theoretical tools my interlocutors, and thus I, used in order to evaluate the space of local community (to be evaluated on in the next chapter) and what seems to be a central part of Black corps experience.

Black corps gave power to their communities. There was power in the spectacle to unify marginalized people; in sponsors’ financial power over how to allocate funds for the benefit of the community; in the community itself when they supported the corps as a representation of their conceived space; in the music to create difference and affirm a Black identities; in lived space as corps perceived and conceived their identities; in the opportunity to learn life skills and values to push youth beyond their conceived spaces’ socioeconomic limitations; in the ability to have pride in Black cultures; and it was powerful to be a member of the Black corps community, where it was possible to achieve the highest level of historical consciousness that saved the lives of many corps members.

²⁵ Warfield, 2015.

Chapter 2: Saving Lives Through Community

Concert Piece & Out of Concert

Frank Nash: You know if your church had a drum corps, chances are, if you were really inclined or whatever, you were gonna find your way there. Or, you might find your way there another way, where there were a lot of people telling you they got themselves in trouble and they knew of maybe having to have some sort of punishment for what they did. They were told, “Well, you need to join that organization and get off the streets,” that type of thing. You know what I mean? A lot of people will tell you that drum corps saved them *[laughs]*.

Author: What do you think about that statement? Do you agree with that?

Nash: Oh, wholeheartedly, wholeheartedly! I know, for myself, my family was very much involved in getting us involved in things, even involved in sports. You want to do something. You don’t just want to sit around. I know people who hung out with people for the sake of ... or [they] just hung out with the wrong crowd. They found themselves, once they got involved with drum corps, started getting away from those people. I hung out and played basketball with some guys who did crazy things on the weekends. On the weekend, I was with drum corps. So, I wasn’t exposed to that.

Frank Nash²⁶

Frank Nash marched in the Wynn Center Toppers (Brooklyn, NY) from 1963 to 1966. When we conversed over why people joined corps, he explained that joining a corps could save

²⁶ Frank Nash, phone interview by author, August 15, 2015.

your life. For some people, joining a corps was a punishment. For others, it was an alternative to the “crazy things” other youths were doing. In this chapter, I present some of the realities members of Black corps faced in their lived spaces, and how the opportunity to perform and leave their urban spaces with a corps removed them from other activities that could well have endangered their lives. I use community theories to understand the effect travel had on the historical consciousness of these Black youth, which also contributed to the corps’ ability to lift youth out of some of the dangers of their urban cities.

CONCERT PIECE: FROM THE STREET TO THE FIELD

Corps was not easy. Aside from the technical difficulties of memorizing music and drill formations, corps had tough people. Keith Warfield, an alumnus of the integrated St. Rita’s Brassmen (Brooklyn, NY) and Professor of Music at Passiac County Community College, illustrated this situation:

When drum corps started, they started in low class neighborhoods. It was a way for kids to be off the streets. They were connected to the church, get them into the church rectory or whatever. Pull them into any kind of youth program. Get the kids off the street. So, you had all these rough guys joining a drum corps. Then it was like I said, it was like a gang. You go to a competition and one guy from one corps might say something that you didn’t like. All of a sudden, boom! They were fighting.²⁷

Warfield continued describing how “rough guys” and “kids off the street” who joined a locally sponsored corps were transformed into a community loyal to their corps. It is not uncommon to hear stories about fights in the nineteen-sixties and seventies (due to things like race, disrespect to fellow corps members, and disagreements over competitive scores). I heard many while

²⁷ Keith Warfield, Skype interview with author, August 15, 2015.

volunteering with Surfers (New London, CT) alumni in my home corps, 7th Regiment. Warfield equated a corps to being “like a gang” because many members came from (sometimes opposing) gangs, but united in the experience of performance to, in a way, form a new, united gang.

Keith Griffin was the most forward with me about drug issues in the Warriors:

There was a lot of dope going around in those days. Have you seen *American Gangster* (2011)? [Author: No, I haven't.] The movie *American Gangster* was the same era that the Warriors were living in. That same movie, that same time, a lot of dope was flowing through Harlem. A lot of people were, you know, getting shot up on dope. A lot of people. The Warriors were using drugs, using heroin, you know. I've seen people... I've seen other corps leave a drummer in concert and go back field, and the drummer's nodding out cause he's on heroin. In the middle of a show!²⁸

Griffin assured me this it was not a common occurrence, but he saw it happen. He recalled that sometimes people were high while performing. At one point, heroin was such a prevalent issue in the Warriors, the corps almost disbanded:

I know one time they was getting ready to break us up because of it. Somebody got caught in the community center down in the bottom of Manhattan. They brought the whole corps, the whole Warriors corps into the center with their parents. They told everybody, “Bring your uniform, and bring your parents.” They were gonna break the corps up because of that same thing, same situation. They tried to do what they could to curtail it, but, you know, people are gonna do what they want to do, man. It's not that simple.

Obviously, marching in a corps is not a simple solution to restricting drug use or overcoming addictions, but it helped by keeping people distracted:

You couldn't shoot up all day, you couldn't just keep getting high! You had to get off the

²⁸ Keith Griffin, phone interview with author, October 2, 2015.

bus; you had to get on the field. Some people have died from it, some people still alive, some people sick from it, but that's not the reason, that's no reason for us to stop trying. That's no reason for us to not keep going on and trying to do better, and see if we can get us, us Black people, our drum corps someplace because it's possible.

When in a corps, there was little time to be involved in situations including, as interlocutors summarized, dealing or taking drugs with the possibility of overdosing, being in gangs, and participating in riots and police encounters (particularly the riots that followed after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968). When a member had to practice and perform multiple times a week, there was little time to do anything else. There also was an immense sense of responsibility to one another. Keith refers to "us" and "we" having no reason to not continue, "trying to do better" as Black people and as a corps. Members held a deep sense of connection to one another, in part, because they expected their fellow members to meet their responsibilities since every individual contributed to the success of the corps as a whole. Each one was responsible for memorizing music and drill, coming to practices and performances, maintaining equipment, and personal well-being. Corps saved lives by keeping youth too busy to be on the streets, but also by instilling monumental feelings of camaraderie, teamwork, responsibility, expectation, and dependability on all its members so they could move forward and succeed together as Black people and as a Black corps.

Here, I do wish to reiterate a point made in the end of the introduction. Although I am presenting a narrative in this project that music saved lives, it was likely not so for everyone. Due to my own methodology and some of the difficult circumstances of urban life, this narrative is limited to the voices of those who have been positively influenced by corps and continue to engage with the activity. There is an eerie silence of voices of those who were unable to have the same life chances.

OUT OF CONCERT: COMMUNITY AND HISTORICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The idea of community is commonly linked to romantic notions of social unity. Though it implies togetherness and inclusion, it must also imply exclusion. Gender and Woman's Studies professor Miranda Joseph questions the persistence of positive communities in her book *Against the Romance of Community* (2002). She defines community through processes of inclusion and exclusion via capitalism and modernity, which "depend on and generate the discourse of community to legitimate social hierarchies" (viii). Her assertion of community caused by capital relates to Lefebvre's theory of space (1991) and Mitchell's *Working Class Geographies* (2005), where urban planning can conceive segregated spaces to the benefit of capitalism, resulting in inclusive (but caused by exclusion) Black communities like Brooklyn and the Bronx. Black corps members I interviewed are united by their perceptions and experiences of race, marginalization, and poverty due to the consequences of urban planning. Thus, they experienced community in terms of exclusion from middle class whiteness, and inclusion within shared Black experiences. This became most evident through the consistent mention of spaces, as discussed in the previous chapter, such as local neighborhoods, where people or corps were from, where rehearsals and performances were, and the difficulty of moving to and from some of these spaces.

In *Key Concepts in Community Studies* (2010), sociologist Toni Blackshaw prefers to discuss the individual in community rather than the collective of community. An individual's understanding of their communities depends on their historical consciousness, meaning their interpretations of their identities' cultural narratives (11). Blackshaw theorizes four levels of historical consciousness: community consciousness, class consciousness, consciousness of classes, and consciousness of communities (12-14). As discussed in my introductory chapter

(pages 18-19), these four levels follow an individual's progressive awareness of their relationship to their collective community's historical narrative. This includes systems of production and consumption, hierarchies and socioeconomic mobility, and an understanding of circular and linear time, generally meaning the past, present, and future. I am most concerned with the final level of historical consciousness: consciousness of communities. To recount, an individual in this stage comprehends hierarchies through consumerism and aesthetics, in which hierarchal difference is reflected in "taste and the juxtaposing of different lifestyles" (13). Socioeconomic mobility is regarded as a right rather than just a possibility. As such, hierarchal inequalities are incredibly clear, and thus require socioeconomic change in the present, moving away, then, from the past while being impatient for the future. I believe my interlocutors are within this stage of historical consciousness and have come here through a larger process of community formation.

Benedict Anderson's (1991) articulation of imagined communities with regards to creating nationalistic sentiments and identities helps begin the process that allows Black corps members to reach a stage of consciousness of communities. While Anderson takes many approaches to defining the nation as an imagined community, such as standardizing language through print technology or the use of censuses, maps, and museums, his basic definition of the nation is,

...an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (5-6).

Black corps alumni exist as an imagined community in the sense that not all of them know of, or are even aware of, all of the individuals they feel connected to through the Black corps

experience. This is evident foremost in the existence of the “African Americans in Drum Corps Then and Now,” Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/aaidctn/>). The online community contains close to 2,000 members of Black alumni from Black and integrated corps of the past to the most recent age-outs. There are always new members who introduce themselves, or are introduced by others. Regardless, without a doubt, not everyone in this group knows one another, but imagines them to be connected through their corps and Black experiences. Additionally, when I showed my interlocutors my compiled list of Black corps (I don’t believe any list outside of my own exists), the number of corps surprised many of them. Nevertheless, they still imagined themselves connected to Black corps.

Anderson also suggests that expressive culture plays a role in creating national identities through the process of unisonance, which seems especially relevant.

...there is a special kind of contemporaneous community which language alone suggests—above all in the form of poetry and songs. Take national anthems, for example, sung on national holidays. No matter how banal the words and mediocre the tunes, there is in this singing an experience of simultaneity. At precisely such moments, people wholly unknown to each other utter the same verses to the same melody. The image: unisonance. (145)

The idea of imagining community through sound, unisonance, is relevant to this discussion because, as we have seen, music has been used to affirm and create Black identities, which in turn becomes representations of the local spaces where those corps are from, and it create distinctions between different corps. Within all of these processes, members performing certain songs connect themselves to others in multiple ways to establish imagined communities.

Sociologist Vered Amit disagrees with the concept of imagined communities because, “The imagined can all too easily become the reified, category, group, individual subject merging

into the possibilities offered by the text of attributed [learned] identities” (2002, 19), so that what was imagined has in fact become real. Amit argues alongside anthropologists of the 1970s, particularly structuralist like Fredrik Barth, that community is an “uneven and unequal distribution of cultural ideas, information and production across social situations and actors” and is thus, “a set of choices and strategies employed by individual agents” (16). Thus, community boundaries are established and reestablished through learned social processes of normalized and socially acceptable interactions, it involves inclusion and exclusion, and it is a conscious choice. Deciding what is acceptable may itself be imagined, but the process of conducting oneself in acceptable behavior makes the imagined real.

I believe it is possible that the theories of Joseph, Blackshaw, Anderson and Amit together actually support a theory of a larger process in which an individual can obtain Blackshaw’s highest level of historical consciousness. Anderson describes how people can imagine their connections to others to create an imagined community through shared experiences and processes such as unisonance. Then, we can see how community becomes tangible through Amit’s process of acting out normalized social interactions that then progress through Blackshaw’s four levels of historical consciousness, allowing the individual to more acutely comprehend the social and institutional structures and hierarchies of their communities. Eventually, it is possible to discern Joseph’s communities of inclusion and exclusion when, at Blackshaw’s highest level of historical consciousness (consciousness of community), an individual is able to reflect on structures of consumerism and capital, class hierarchies, lifestyles, social inequalities, human rights, and social mobility (Blackshaw 13).

Consciousness of community, where individuals can reflect on their marginalization, cannot occur without also considering the processes in which Lefebvre (1991) describes we

perceive, conceive, and live in space (Chapter 1). Perceiving and conceiving space is in all levels of historical consciousness, but in lived space an individual can reflect and respond to their marginalization that coincides with the highest level. Blackshaw claims “it is the individual’s experience of departure that is the key to understanding community today” (16). In other words, an individual can compare and reflect on how space is perceived and conceived in their community spaces to other community spaces, aided by their departure from their normalized space. Departure was precisely the opportunity corps given to Black members. It pushed Black corps members into the highest level of historical consciousness that influenced the lived space Black corps created. They could interpret hierarchies, inequalities, social mobility, and marginalization within their communities, and respond to it by taking control over perceiving and conceiving the lived space of corps. The departure from urban neighborhoods physically removed youth from the presence of drugs and violence mentioned in the previous section, but departure also created a high level of historical consciousness that made youth aware of other life possibilities that also helped “save” them via a new realization of self-determination. Barber said as much:

I think the traveling aspect of drum corps—taking us out of the community and seeing a much broader world—really opened up a tremendous amount of possibilities that I never would have gotten a chance to see had I been involved in some other youth activity.²⁹

To emphasize how important the moment of departure was for creating historical consciousness, we must return to urban planning. Constant relocation of different communities and development of new neighborhoods required updated transportation infrastructure, especially as cities grew and became more densely populated. Historian Eric Avila (2004) addresses white flight to the suburbs in Los Angeles and the highway system subsequently built to allow access

²⁹ Harold Barber, Skype interview with author, June 23, 2015.

from the suburbs to the city's cultural center (2004). As a result, the urban spaces conceived for people of color were bypassed in infrastructure planning and it excluded them from both the cultural downtown area and the white suburbs. An article in the *Washington Post* interviews Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx, a Black man from South Carolina who experienced the impact of highway infrastructure:

As a child, Anthony Foxx knew he couldn't ride his bike far from home without being blocked by a freeway. By the time he became U.S. transportation secretary, he knew why. "We now know—overwhelmingly—that our urban freeways were almost always routed through low-income and minority neighborhoods, creating disconnections from opportunity that exist to this day," Foxx said.

"It became clear to me only later on that those freeways were there to carry people *through* my neighborhood, but never *to* my neighborhood," said Foxx, who grew up in Lincoln Heights, a neighborhood walled in by three highways. (Halsey 2016)

Certainly, California and North Carolina have different cities with different histories of urban planning and infrastructure, but the same proceedings seem to have occurred in Brooklyn. Before Brooklyn's gentrification, interlocutors addressed the lack of public transportation in their area to reach either Manhattan or the suburbs. Instead, highways connecting Manhattan to the suburbs ran through Brooklyn, but never exited there so its users could bypass this conceived Black space. To the memory of my interlocutors and the way they perceived their space, since the highway passed through, and there were no or little public transportation systems available, and poverty kept many people from owning cars, Brooklyn's Black community was stranded.

Competitions allowed departure from this urban entrapment. Buses transported corps to regional and national competitions. Based on interviews, Black alumni from New York City

most often went to other parts of the city, upstate New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut for competitions. If economically feasible, they would go on to national championships in Pennsylvania and Ohio, among other places. Competitions were more than the epitome of performance practice; they were opportunities for Black corps to depart from their urban spaces. Leaving allowed members to reflect on their socioeconomic situation, especially in comparison to new spaces. There were few activities like corps where youth could leave their neighborhoods and do this. Downtin reflected:

Most kids back then never left the city. For us to leave the city every weekend, every other weekend. We were out there. We gone to New York, Philadelphia. New Jersey might be a small state, but it's a million... I think I might have marched in every city in New Jersey, I swear to god. I've been there.³⁰

Or as Robinson said:

I got a worldly view, maybe not a big worldly view, but like I said, we traveled. I've got to see places that I probably wouldn't have seen if I hadn't been in it.²⁹

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I used a theoretical approach to interpret how exactly the corps activity saved lives, at least according to my interlocutors. In doing so, we were able to see what it is these alumni thought they were being saved from, and how corps, via the departure from space, was able to bring a certain level of historical consciousness that made alumni more aware of their life chances and other opportunities. Again, to reiterate, there are certainly alumni who do not share in this experience. Overall, however, this is the kind of discourse many older alumni use when discussing their experiences.

³⁰ Norman Downtin and Darryl Robinson, interview by author, August 17, 2015.

From this point, the next question to ask should be, “what happened?” The impact of Black corps on their members and communities was significant, so what caused their rapid decline beginning in the nineteen-sixties? The concluding chapter addresses likely reasons that includes desegregation and privatization, in addition to discussing how the ideas behind Black corps that I presented thus far can still be relevant in a contemporary context.

Conclusion: Decline of the Black Drum & Bugle Corps

Final Fanfare & Retreat

Author: My final question is: what do you think is the most important thing I need to know about the Black drum and bugle corps experience?

Scott Williamson: That's a loaded question.

Author: It is. If you were to pick one thing that I haven't mentioned it, or maybe you already mentioned it, but one thing that you think is really important if you were to try and summarize our conversation, what do you think would be the most important thing for someone to know?

Williamson: That we need to keep striving. We need to keep going forward. We need to keep involved.

Author: Who is "we?"

Williamson: "We" is those that have been there before, and those that are coming through now. My day, at some point, will be over. I don't know if I'll do this forever. I got another daughter I'd like to finish seeing grow up. But, at the same time, my kid is seventeen. I was in the Skyliners longer than my daughter is old. Like I said, we gotta just keep passing it along that this is a good, healthy, disciplined, fraternity that just keeps going and we have to keep going with it. We have to keep encouraging people to get involved.

Scott Williamson³¹

³¹ Scott Williamson, phone interview with author, August, 15, 2015.

As I have argued so far, Black corps had two purposes. First, corps taught youth life skills and values to aid in their socioeconomic advancement. Youth learned “discipline, punctuality, teamwork, esprit de corps, hard work and respect for flag and country” (Barber 2014), to maintain a high degree of excellence (Griffin 2015)³², and to be “unafraid” (Robinson 2015),³³ all skills that impacted the lives of the alumni I interviewed. Secondly, corps removed youth from possibly dangerous and life-threatening situations by providing them with an alternative to ‘the street’ via travel away from their local neighborhoods. Leaving their neighborhoods allowed members to achieve what Tony Blackshaw calls “consciousness of community,” where youth gained an awareness of opportunities beyond the limited offerings of their racialized spaces. They were conscious of the systemic cycle of poverty in their neighborhoods. This consciousness made members aware of alternatives to possibly life-threatening situations like prevalent drugs and violence in their neighborhoods. Ultimately, both of these purposes established pride in corps members’ Black identities, allowing them to exist in a lived space where members could perceive and conceive of who they were and wanted to be.

While historically Black colleges & university marching bands continue to perform today, and while over sixty corps continue to perform today in the United States, we might ask what happened to the Black corps? Everyone I interviewed was disappointed that Black corps had ceased to exist, and felt that Black urban youth miss out on the experience. For instance, Barber put it this way:

To me, its sad because... Yes, I would love to see more kids involved in the activity.

You’re talking about an activity that has given me so much, but it’s so limited. A whole generation of kids that could have done very well with activity did not get a chance

³² Keith Griffin, Skype interview by author, October 2, 2015.

³³ Norman Downtin and Darryl Robinson, interview by author, August 17, 2015.

because... it just out priced itself. It out priced itself. A lot of inner-city kids who could not afford to travel to march in these corps anymore. That's how they pull the activity away from inner-cities. (Barber 2015)³⁴

Although the political and social climate began changing in the nineteen-seventies after the 1964 Civil Rights Act passed and ended segregation, I conclude by reflecting on Barber's statement that corps "just out priced itself" by suggesting that privatization in the nineteen-seventies made it difficult for smaller local corps to maintain an affordable operating budget.

FANFARE: PRIVITIZATION AND DESEGREGATION

In 1971, Drum Corps International (DCI) was founded, consisting of thirteen junior corps (Vickers & Powers 2002: 319-330). At the time, the American Legion (AL) and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) organizations were the United States' largest and most widespread sponsors of corps. Each organization maintained its own large competitive circuit and national championship, though each with different rules and regulations. Corps 'traditionalists,' mainly World War I and II veterans, wanted to maintain military origins in field music and bands, particularly the feeling of military camaraderie.³⁵ Junior corps consisted of these veterans' children (the parent corps are referred to as senior corps), but eventually expanded to include anyone from each corps's local community. Junior corps were frustrated with the creative and financial limitations the AL and VFW competition rules imposed on them, choosing to break away from the strict military traditions of the senior corps. When DCI formed in 1971 and held their first competitive season for junior corps in 1972, it began the rapidly successful rise of DCI and the modern corps.

³⁴ Harold Barber, Skype interview by author, June 23, 2015.

³⁵ A much more detailed early history of drum and bugle corps activity starting after WWI can be found in Powers & Vickers, 1-62.

DCI established itself financially in a way that effectively disenfranchised Black corps, as well as hundreds of other small corps. The original thirteen and likely all White corps partnered, in part, because of their competitive and financial success. In addition to competitive wins bringing in monetary awards, it appears that overall these corps generally had fewer financial burdens. During DCI's first year, each corps director signed a \$2000 check (a total of \$26,000, or over \$150,000 in 2016) to contribute to a corporate account—which either came out of each corps' budget or the director's pocket—to help usher in a financially successful first season Powers & Vickers, 321). None of this money, however, was ever needed. These corps were much more financially stable since all but one was able to sever their ties to their local AL and VFW sponsorships in that first year. Instead, they received private and corporate sponsorships and increased their members' tuition fees. Additionally, DCI established national tours that culminated in a single national championship, as opposed to multiple regional competitions and championships, thus streamlining the cost of travel. By going on longer tours instead of weekend competitions, the idea was to be able to travel around the country with a group of competing corps, moving smaller distances from place to place over the course of a few months rather than returning back to their hometowns every weekend.

Black corps were so embedded in their local communities that the DCI model did not work for them. The staff for many Black corps refused to join DCI because of their seemingly for-profit ventures (though DCI filed as a 501(C)3 non-profit organization) that went against Black corps' values of community and personal development. As more junior corps joined DCI, there were less performance opportunities for Black corps. The AL and VFW sponsored fewer corps and hosted fewer regional competitions, so corps traveled farther to compete on a weekly basis, something most local Black corps could not financially afford. National tours required

full-time participation as well since they were on the road daily, making it difficult for local corps who only competed on weekends to participate. Thus, the process of moving from local and public sponsorship to private sponsorships and having to take control over the regulation of their own finances made it difficult for Black corps to keep up. The rising cost of operating a corps became less feasible.

Alumni lament that Black corps no longer exist, especially within urban spaces where they think they are useful for the development of Black youth and community. Perhaps the most significant effect DCI had on the decline of Black corps was the lack of competitions in Black urban areas like New York and Washington DC, limiting exposure to the activity:

I don't know about design. I don't want to say conspiracy; that you just, totally just wiped out that whole participation of African-American youth. You're talking about a product that was not advertised or marketed to the New York area. For me, when I got involved with drum corps, the product was there. I saw the product. I could join the product. As time went on, people had to move out of the region, travel out of the region to join a quality corps when you had a quality corps right in your own region for you to join. They didn't sponsor any shows. You go back and track their record. There had not been a major... We're not talking about Jersey, we're talking about a New York show where DCI had delivered drum corps to New York City. A major show, not some minor show, a major show. None. And that's like, seriously? (Barber 2015)

Normin Downtin and Darryl Robinson also reflect on the lack of exposure in Washington, D.C. when they tried and failed to start a new corps:

Downtin: We were trying to plant that seed. I kept saying that what we need to do is go to DCI, tell them we got two busloads of school kids that we want to take to a show. Give us the tickets so we can take two busloads of kids and plant that seed and let it grow because that's where its gonna happen. Then, maybe by the time if you do that for two or

three years in a row, then you got the interest.

Because there's only one show in town now, because of DCI. When we were competing, we had the mid-Atlantic drum corps association. We had the [inaudible] drum corps association. All the different...

Robinson: And the nationals! We had VFW nationals, American Legion nationals, CYO nationals, these were all over... You see, around here, its laid dormant for so long, ain't nobody know nothing about drum corps. The kids don't know it exists. That's what we were trying to do. (2015)

Attempts by Barber and other alumni to start new corps were also unsuccessful. Exposure to generate interest and the high cost of starting a corps made it seemingly impossible.

While this economic turn in the activity severely limited Black corps, we must also consider desegregation. Although desegregation officially ended in 1964, many corps would not allow Black members. For example, Scott Williamson became the first Black member of the Boston Crusaders (Boston, MA) in 1981, though he continued to experience racism from members and staff during his three years there (Williamson, 2015). There were, however, many integrated corps before then, and even before the end of segregation. In fact, the overall response I received when asking about issues of race in the corps activity was positive. There were certainly issues of racism from particular corps, white judges possibly unfairly scoring Black corps, and from people outside the activity when they travelled, but for the most part:

You had to understand, if their music is played well, the audience is gonna react to it, Black or White. That was the key. And then, you know, like I said, most of their tunes back then were popular tunes. The audience knew the songs that the corps were playing. They'd introduce something new to the audience—it took them awhile—but the audience

would catch on real quick. (Barber 2015)

As long as you could play, nobody cared who you were. Or, as Downtin would say, “It was your talent. That’s what they looked at, your talent” (Downtin, 2015).

Scott Williamson and Harold Barber reflected on their experiences in integrated corps during the nineteen-sixties and seventies. Williamson marched in nine different integrated corps, but he connects most with the New York Skyliners (New York, NY) because of their diversity:

Williamson: I did 18 years in the Skyliners. I’m always a Skyliner.

Author: Why a Skyliner?

Williamson: Because that was something totally different. That was where I finally felt like I was at peace, I was at home, because all the different mix of people that were in that corps.

Author: Can you describe what you mean by that mix?

Williamson: Yes. The whole rainbow coalition. Everybody, everybody, every walk of life was in that corps, from the low life to the high life. We were all there, and we were all family. We all looked out for each other. (Williamson, 2015)

When Barber left the Carter Cadets to march with the St. Rita’s Brassmen, he recalled:

That was the most remarkable experience because... You gotta understand, at that time I was 14, going on 15, when I transitioned to the Brassmen, then I saw all these individuals. Black, White, Puerto Rican—it didn’t matter—coming together for one particular purpose. And that’s to be the best that we could be. There was no room for any animosity or ill will. What you thought about a person, we were all just one big family. I wish it was compared to the outside world where I went to a predominantly white school. Well, I mean you had your issues there but they seemed to be more together down there

than the outside world. There was too many other forces that divided us. We were all a collective of one. (Barber 2015)

In Chapter two, I wrote that corps members felt a responsibility towards one another by being held accountable for themselves and their contribution to the success of the corps, an agreement that saved lives of Black youth. That same idea continues here where aspects of personal identity, like race, did not matter because everyone was required to participate and contribute equally to their corps' success.

However, like I said earlier, everybody basically worked together to produce the product, but not everybody hung out with everyone. That was kind of, of course, any activity back then was kind of like that. ... Drum corps, in that sense, was maybe a pioneer in race relations because you had people from diverse backgrounds that came together and were forced to work together, through whatever differences there were. Overall, I'd have to say it was positive (Frank Nash 2015).

Desegregation likely had an affect on the decline of Black corps, but likely less so than privatization because, if Frank Nash is to be believed, corps was already “a pioneer in race relations.”

RETREAT: BLACK CORPS RESEARCH

Black corps research can benefit from using community and space as theoretical tools to understand their place within United States history. The United States has a complex racial history, and theories of community and space help reveal at least one interpretation. This theoretical orientation is especially appropriate to study the marginalization of race and gender. Black and Latinx people may be able to more clearly acknowledge the effects of social and institutional systems in their communities, thus obtaining Blackshaw's highest level of historical

consciousness. Black corps studied through space and community not only provides a narrative of these ensembles' identities, but also assists in contextualizing their communities' social and institutional structures.

This thesis has limitations. I did not include women's voices, nor the input of sponsors, instructors, music and drill writers and arrangers, judges, or audience members. I am also limited to New York City and Washington D.C. though I know there were many Black corps in other urban cities like Chicago, Illinois and St. Louis, Missouri. Unfortunately, over half a century has passed since Black corps were numerous, there is limited historical documentation of the corps activity in general, and it is difficult to find interlocutors. Corps research benefits from and becomes a collaboration of methodologies in archival historical musicology, ethnomusicology's fieldwork methodology (translated to making the Internet the field), and collective memory. Further research can expand beyond what I included here with the effort to find more interlocutors and other historical materials.

I hope that this study opens up a broader field of research in music: the Black corps and, more broadly, drum and bugle corps. I think the activity is a previously unstudied social atmosphere of coexistence and it could be used to expand upon the study of race relations in the time surrounding the Civil Rights movement. A new understanding of how corps were "pioneer[s] in race relations" can be useful, and even applicable to current issues of racism, violence, and poverty in today's urban cities, simply by asking, as many alumni have, how these corps could change our communities now. In one instance, I already see this happening.

A 2013 documentary titled *The Whole Gritty City* follows a Black high school, a middle school, and a youth marching band in New Orleans as they prepare for the local parade season surrounding Mardi Gras celebrations. The film opens with a quote in white lettering on a black

background from Louis Armstrong, “What we play is life.” A tuba bass line leads into the image of a sweating director conducting his band as they sing, “I lift my hands in total praise to you,” from Richard Smallwood’s gospel hit “Total Praise” (1996). As the band then plays at maximum volume, childrens’ drawings overtake the screen. Later in the documentary, we learn that those drawings were from the childhood of one of the band directors and they depict the reality he grew up with: police violence, murder, and funerals. As “Total Praise” continues, the viewer can now see a marching band is performing the song in a second line for someone’s funeral.

The documentary observes how marching band leaders in New Orleans try to keep their students off of the streets, including the school band directors and an organization called “The Roots of Music,” which serves nine to fourteen year old students. Their goal is to use music to teach their students about life, how to deal with life, and help them forget some of their problems while they are with the band. Much of the rhetoric throughout resonates with Black corps of the nineteen-fifties and sixties and the conclusions I arrived at in this study. I will leave it to the reader to interpret the similarities. A band directors reflects on why he first joined a marching band after seeing bands for himself in parades: “I wanted to be a part of that: that respect, and that power, and that dignity” (11:40-11:45). Another director thinks about one of his students: “It’s hard to get the hood out of him because as soon as he walks out the door, he gotta get hood again. As soon as he hit that block, he needs to be a certain way. Or else, the rest of the people in this community are gonna treat him a certain way” (4:30- 4:45). After a student holds down his own part, a director tells his band, “As soon as you sit down and can play your parts, you make an immediate impact” (3:50-3:55), suggesting that everyone is responsible for themselves and they impact they can make on the entire band. As a high school marching prepares to perform, a director yells to his band, “This is my town. I own this town. I run this town. I’m the best man

out here. That's the way you act. You act that way, they treat you that way" (1:55-2:03).

The bands appearing in *The Whole Gritty City* are just a few examples of many programs around the country that are using music to help students to grow and deal with all of life's obstacles. It seems to me that knowing a history of Black corps who took similar actions during the Civil Rights can greatly benefit today's programs as the United States continues to deal with issues of racism and police violence. Perhaps, we can turn to history and alumni to learn how the corps activity helped youth in urban spaces, and—maybe—bring back more corps, or more generally the marching arts, to inner cities where local communities can invest in their youth and hope to have a similar impact as Black corps.

THE BUS RIDE HOME

The most important thing at that time, for me, was to make sure that people recognized that African-American drum corps had a significant impact on the activity. We have a lot of people who, from the African-American drum corps, who marched in very good corps. Sort of like...they don't bring up the history as much as they should because you can't wait around for somebody to tell you a story. If you're waiting around for somebody to tell you a story about how it was back then, then your delusional because no one is gonna do it unless you do it. You step up to the plate and say, "Yes, we did this during the time of drum and bugle corps, and it should be noted that we were the first ones that did this, and we did that..." (Barber 2015)

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APPENDIX

Black Drum and Bugle Corps & Repertoire List

This incomplete Black drum and bugle corps repertoire list was compiled with information from interviews, my research, and Corpsrep (<http://www.corpsreps.com>), an online drum and bugle corps database formed by corps alumni from the nineteen-sixties and seventies. With the help of the larger corps community, this website compiles a growing list of corps, their repertoires, competition scores, and photos (currently, there are upwards of 1,500 separate corps entries). While incomplete, it is currently the most comprehensive repertoire list.

Corps, Location

Year Song Title

Composer

American Woodman Cadets, St Louis, MO

1965	La Virgen de la Macarena	Bautista Monterde, Bernardino
	Where or When (from Babes in Arms)	Rodgers, Richard; Hart, Lorenz
	God of our Fathers	Smith
	Thunderer March	Sousa, John Philip
	Love is a Many-Splendored Thing	Fain, Sammy; Webster, Paul
		Francis
	Bess, You is My Woman Now (from <i>Porgy and Bess</i>)	Gershwin, George
	Summertime (from <i>Porgy and Bess</i>)	Gershwin, George
	It Ain't Necessarily So (from <i>Porgy and Bess</i>)	Gershwin, George
	Basin Street Blues	Williams, Spencer
	The Birth of the Blues	Henderson, Ray

Cadets of Brooklyn, Brooklyn, NY (formerly Cadets of First Baptist)

1998	<i>A Typical Week in New York City</i>	
	Take the 'A' Train	Strayhorn, Billy
	Drop Me Off in Harlem	Ellington, Duke; Kenny, Nick
	Cotton Tail	Ellington, Duke
	Satin Doll	Ellington, Duke; Strayhorn, Billy; Mercer, Johnny
		Traditional
	Amazing Grace	Traditional
	What a Wonderful World	Weiss, George; Thiele, Bob
	In My Solitude	Ellington, Duke
1999	<i>A Broadway Dream</i>	
	One Night Only (from Dreamgirls)	Krieger, Henry
	Harlem Nocturne	Hagen, Earle; Rogers, Dick
	Manteca	Gillespie, Dizzy; Pozo, Chano;
		Fuller, Gil
	Town Without Pity	Tiomkin, Dmitri; Washington, Ned

Cadets of New York City, New York, NY (merge of Cadets of Brooklyn and Kips Bay Knight Club)

2000	<i>A Weekend in New York City</i>	
	White Rabbit	Slick, Grace
	A Touch of Beauty	Ramirez, Umberto

	Santana A Mighty Fortress	Lopez, Victor Luther, Martin
2001	<i>Sketches of the City</i> Nights in White Satin Cadillac of the Skies (from Empire of the Sun) A Mis Abuelos A Mighty Fortress	Hayward, Justin Williams, John Sandoval, Arturo Luther, Martin
2002	Incantation and Dance Cadillac of the Skies (from Empire of the Sun) Platt Opus Nights in White Satin	Chance, John Barnes Williams, John Morganstein, Rod Hayward, Justin
2003	Cenotaph Fanfare for a New Era Lento (from Dance Movements) Platt Opus	Stamp, Jack Stamp, Jack Sparke, Philip Morganstein, Rod
2005	<i>Tapestry</i> Homage: Three Tapestries	Holsinger, David
Carter Cadets, Brooklyn, NY		
1966	Ruby Black, Black, Black Crown Victoria Who Can I Turn To (from Roar of the Greasepaint)	Bricusse, Leslie; Newley Anthony Cory, George; Cross, Douglass
	I Left My Heart in San Francisco People Tropical Heat Wave Yesterday	Wilson, Stanley Lennon, John; McCartney, Paul
1967	Everything's Coming up Roses (from Gypsy) On the Mall March Spanish Flea People The Trolley Song (from Meet Me in St. Louis) Tropical Heat Wave Yesterday	Styne, Jule; Sondheim, Stephen Goldman, Edwin Franko Wechter, Julius Martin, Hugh; Blane, Ralph Wilson, Stanley Lennon, John; McCartney, Paul
1968	Show Me (from My Fair Lady) On the Mall March In the Mood	Loewe, Frederick Goldman, Edwin Franko Garland, Joe; Razaf, Andy; Manone, Wingy
	I've Got You Under My Skin Everything's Coming up Roses (from Gypsy) A Little Town in Singapore To Sir, With Love Show Me (from My Fair Lady)	Porter, Cole Styne, Jule; Sondheim, Stephen Black, Don; London, Mark Loewe, Frederick

- 1969 Show Me (from My Fair Lady)
When Johnny Comes Marching Home
In the Mood

I've Got You Under My Skin
Out of this World
Everything's Coming up Roses (from Gypsy)
To Sir, With Love
Show Me (from My Fair Lady)
- Loewe, Frederick
Gilmore, Patrick Sarsfield
Garland, Joe; Razaf, Andy;
Manone, Wingy
Porter, Cole
McHugh, Jimmy; Dubin, Al
Styne, Jule; Sondheim, Stephen
Black, Don; London, Mark
Loewe, Frederick
- Carver Gay Blades, Newark, NJ**
- 1962 Theme from Samson and Delilah
King of Kings
Sincerely
Temptation (from Singin' in the Rain)
Sweets for my Sweet
Rock Around the Clock
James E.
Keep Your Sunny Side Up (from Good News!)
To the Ends of the Earth
- Saint-Saens, Camille
Rozsa, Miklos
Twilley, Dwight
Brown, Nacio Herb
Maragh, William
Freedman, Max C.; Myers,

Hayton, Lennie
Sherman, Joe
- 1963 Sweets for my Sweet
Miserlou
Temptation (from Singin' in the Rain)
What Kind of Fool am I (from Stop the World I Want to Get Off!)
- Maragh, William
Roubanis, Nicholas
Brown, Nacio Herb
Newley, Anthony
- CMCC Warriors, Harlem, NY (Minisink Warriors)**
- 1969 The Impossible Dream (from Man of la Mancha)
Porgy and Bess Overture
I Loves You, Porgy (from *Porgy and Bess*)
I'm on My Way (from *Porgy and Bess*)
Summertime (from *Porgy and Bess*)
Man of la Mancha (from Man of la Mancha)
- Leigh, Mitch; Darion, Joe
Gershwin, George
Gershwin, George
Gershwin, George
Gershwin, George
Leigh, Mitch; Darion, Joe
- 1970 Voodoo Suite
Somewhere (from West Side Story)
It Ain't Necessarily So (from *Porgy and Bess*)
A Woman is a Sometime Thing (from *Porgy and Bess*)
My Man's Gone Now (from *Porgy and Bess*)
Oh, Lord, I'm On My Way (from *Porgy and Bess*)
Bess, You is my Woman Now (from *Porgy and Bess*)
Summertime (from *Porgy and Bess*)
Blue Rondo A La Turk
Black Orpheus
- Prado, Pérez
Bernstein, Leonard
Gershwin, George
Gershwin, George
Gershwin, George
Gershwin, George
Gershwin, George
Gershwin, George
Brubeck, Dave
Gerhardt, Ladislav
- 1971 Sketches of Spain
Man of La Mancha
Voodoo Suite
- Leigh, Mitch; Darion, Joe
Prado, Pérez
- 1972 Man of La Mancha
Theme from Shaft
- Leigh, Mitch; Darion, Joe
Hayes, Isaac

	Does anybody really know what time it is?	Lamm, Robert
	Beginnings	Lamm, Robert
	Blowin' in the Wind	Dylan, Bob
	Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child	Traditional
	Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen	Traditional
	Kum Ba Yah	Traditional
	Wenoveh	
	Voodoo Suite	Pérez, Prado
1973	Theme from Ironside	Jones, Quincy
	Blowin' in the Wind	Dylan, Bob
	Sometimes I Feel like a Motherless Child	Traditional
	Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen	Traditional
	Walk Him up the Stairs (from Purlie)	Geld, Gary; Udell, Peter
	Theme from Shaft	Hayes, Isaac
	Kum Ba Yah	Traditional
	Voodoo Suite	Pérez, Prado
Ebony Guard, Chicago, IL		
<i>No information available</i>		
First Baptist Cadets, Brooklyn, NY		
1997	Amazing Grace Medley	Traditional
	Satin Doll	Ellington, Duke; Strayhorn, Billy; Mercer, Johnny
	St. Louis Blues March	Handy, William C.
	What A Wonderful World	Weiss, George; Thiele, Bob
Giles Yellow Jackets, Chicago, IL		
<i>No information available</i>		
Hornets, St. Louis, MO		
1974	Mellow Yellow	Donovan
	Nights in White Satin	Hayward, Justin
	Oh Happy Day	Hawkins, Edwin
	Oye Como Va	Puente, Tito
Kips Bay Knight Club, Bronx, NY (Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club)		
1996	To the King—Tribute to Tito Puente	Ramirez, Umberto
	South Beach	Fernandez, Julio
	A Touch of Beauty	Ramirez, Umberto
	Para Ti Latino	Cartaya, Oscar
1997	<i>An Evening at the Club</i>	
	Scream	
	South Beach	Fernandez, Julio
	You'll Be Mine (Party Time)	Estefan, Emilio Jr.; Dermer, Lawrence; Ostwald, Clay
1998	<i>Live at the Club—An Evening of Wonder</i>	
	Let's Get Going	

Scream
An Evening of Wonder
Another Star

Wonder, Stevie

1999 *Another Night at the Club, the Rhythm of our World!*
White Rabbit
Rhythm of Our World (from Hot House)
Another Star
A Mighty Fortress

Slick, Grace
Sandoval, Arturo
Wonder, Stevie
Luther, Martin

Manhattanaires, Manhattan, NY

No information available

Memorial Lancers, St. Louis, MO

1970 How the West Was Won
Hang em' High
I'll Walk with God (from The Student Prince)

Sunshine
The Impossible Dream (from Man of La Mancha)

Newman, Alfred
Frontiere, Dominic
Brodzky, Nicholas; Webster,
Paul Francis

Leigh, Mitch; Darion, Joe

1996 I Can't Get Started
St. Louis Blues March
Fanfare
I Can't Stop Loving You

Duke, Vernon; Gershwin, Ira
Handy, William C.
Winter, Paul
Bickerton, Arthur; Waddington,
Anthony

1997 I Can't Get Started
I Can't Stop Loving You

Duke, Vernon; Gershwin, Ira
Bickerton, Arthur; Waddington,
Anthony

Bellavia
St. Louis Blues March

Mangione, Chuck
Handy, William C.

1999 I Can't Get Started
Bellavia
St. Louis Blues March

Duke, Vernon; Gershwin, Ira
Mangione, Chuck
Handy, William C.

2000 I Can't Stop Loving You

Bickerton, Arthur; Waddington,
Anthony

Mighty Liberators, Rochester, NY

1977 You are the Sunshine of my Life
Land of Make Believe

Wonder, Stevie
Mangione, Chuck

Page Park Cadets, St. Louis, MO

No information available

Privateers, Brooklyn, NY

No information available

Riversiders, Brooklyn, NY

1965	Laredo Battle Hymn of the Republic When Johnny Comes Marching Home The Robe Mission Impossible Wade in the Water You Only Live Twice	Garcia, Russell Steffe, William Gilmore, Patrick Sarsfield Newman, Alfred Schifrin, Lalo Traditional Barry, John
1966	Laredo Battle Hymn of the Republic When Johnny Comes Marching Home The Robe Mission Impossible Wade in the Water You Only Live Twice	Garcia, Russell Steffe, William Gilmore, Patrick Sarsfield Newman, Alfred Schifrin, Lalo Traditional Barry, John
1967	Laredo Battle Hymn of the Republic When Johnny Comes Marching Home The Robe Mission Impossible Wade in the Water You Only Live Twice	Garcia, Russell Steffe, William Gilmore, Patrick Sarsfield Newman, Alfred Schifrin, Lalo Traditional Barry, John
1968	Laredo Battle Hymn of the Republic When Johnny Comes Marching Home The Robe Mission Impossible Wade in the Water You Only Live Twice	Garcia, Russell Steffe, William Gilmore, Patrick Sarsfield Newman, Alfred Schifrin, Lalo Traditional Barry, John
1969	Laredo Don's Delight I've Gotta Be Me Oh Happy Day Sunny If Ever I Would Leave You (from Camelot)	Garcia, Russell Hamilton, Chico; McGhee, My FHoward Marks, Walter Hawkins, Edwin Hebb, Bobby Loewe, Frederick
1970	Room 222 Yankee Doodle Dandy Mission Impossible The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly Hang 'em High Slaves	Goldsmith, Jerry Cohan, George M. Schifrin, Lalo Morricone, Ennio Frontiere, Dominic Scott, Bobby
1971	The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly Yankee Doodle Dandy Wild, Wild West	Morricone, Ennio Cohan, George M. Markowitz, Richard

Lucretia McEvil
The Ecstasy of Gold
Slaves

Clayton-Thomas, David
Morricone, Ennio
Scott, Bobby

1972 Cast A Giant Shadow
Theme from Ironside
Boys and Girls Together
We've Only Just Begun
The Ecstasy of Gold

Bernstein, Elmer
Jones, Quincy
Peterik, Jim?
Nichols, Roger; Williams, Paul
Morricone, Ennio

The Royal Sabres, Washington, D.C.
No information available

The Royalairs, St. Louis, MS
No information available

Sabre's Edge, St. Louis, MS
No information available

Spirit of St. Louis Junior, St. Louis, MS
No information available

Spirit of St. Louis Senior, St. Louis, MS
No information available

St. Andrew's Hornets, Chicago, IL
No information available

Washington VIP's, Washington D.C.
1972 Meadowland
Ninth Symphony (Ode to Joy)
Will You Love Me Tomorrow
Music by Chicago

Traditional
Beethoven, Ludwig van
Goffin, Gerry; King, Carole
Chicago

Wynn Center Toppers, Brooklyn, NY
No information available

Wynn Center Toppers Alumni, Brooklyn, NY
No information available