

MARCHING IN THE MARGINS: A HISTORICAL & RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF ESSENTIAL WOMEN IN THE HISTORY OF THE BAYLOR UNIVERSITY GOLDEN WAVE BAND, 1932–1967

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Feminist theory regarding college women has been a prevalent topic in the modern day world as of late. The “marching arts [like collegiate marching band] are not often thought of as an athletic activity” but if only one would look deeper into archival history.¹ What is the connection between “self-compassion and body image” through the lens of marching band?² My archival research on specifically women in the Baylor University Golden Wave Band in Waco, Texas involved combing through the Baylor University Digital Archives for mentions in the newspaper articles, press releases, and yearbook pages. Historically, women in the the Baylor University Golden Wave Band served a simultaneously essential yet underappreciated role in the development of the band itself over the span of 1932 to 1962 while being made to be distinct from their male counterparts both linguistically and visually—rhetorically. The existence of these distinctions still affect the Golden Wave Band to this day both positively in the growth of female marchers and negatively in the stagnancy of the tradition surrounding auxiliary members. The results of this article’s analysis can theoretically improve the current knowledgeability around performing arts psychology and feminist theory. The implications that were discovered around the auxiliary members’ susceptibility to eating disorders and appearance-related pressures can cause people to take a step back to look at themselves and further consider those around them in relation to these theoretical ideas that could have practical applications and consequences in today’s modern world.

INTRODUCTION

Feminist theory regarding college women has been a prevalent topic in the modern day world as of late. Additionally, research shows the

“marching arts [like collegiate marching band or color guard] are not often thought of as an athletic activity” despite sharing long practice hours and comparable exertion with some other types of athletics and extracurricular ac-

tivities (Levy et al. 240). Modern archival research has helped to illuminate historical feminist landmarks and by looking deeper we can find them in every facet of collegiate activity, including the marching arts. In American cities during the mid- to late nineteenth century, “bands were an important part of the social fabric” due to being an “early form of popular music medium” before the commonality of household radios that would draw in locals to the center of town as well as the neighboring populace to listen to a free concert or a parade (Sullivan 33). What is the connection between “self-compassion and body image” through the lens of collegiate marching band (Barnett and Sharp 226)? How does feminist theory relate to performative arts psychology? A case study on the Baylor University Golden Wave Band in Waco, Texas for example in regards the development of the role of women could help bridge the gap. Coming from the perspective of a woman, the following article details what I have learned of how women have been positioned in the Golden Wave Band over the years by combining my two passions in my collegiate career: marching band and writing—specifically rhetoric.

Historically, women in the Baylor University Golden Wave Band were made to be both linguistically and visually (rhetorically) distinct from their male counterparts while serving a simultaneously essential and underappreciated role in the development of the band itself over the span of 1932 to 1967. There was a general strive to include the women eventually but still make them stand out from the men of the organization. Is the push-pull dynamic of how

women were getting involved representative of women in that time period or was it a Baylor specific trend of that time (Baptist foundation, etc.)? According to historical records, around August of 1902 a 28-piece regulation military band—referred to as the “Baylor University Brass Band”—was organized as part of Baylor University’s R.O.T.C. program under the direction of Mr. Charles Parker of the music department (“Public Band Concert at Waco”). The original band consisted of all men for the first thirty years who were often described as being quite “gentlemanly” in terms of their “conduct” (“Ball Team Goes to A. & M.”) and more—as was printed repeatedly in the *Waco Semi-Weekly Tribune*. The newspaper backed this advertisement by advocating for the band itself, stating that the ensemble of “young men and boys” were a “pleasure” to know (“Always Get the Baylor Band”). During the world’s first homecoming parade that took place at Baylor University, the Baylor Band men led the procession in white uniforms, and The Round-Up Yearbook described their “giant” drum major as “six feet six inches—all man” (“The Round-Up of 1910”). While considering personnel records from the Baylor Round-Up Yearbooks, the Baylor Military Band was confirmed to consist of only men all throughout Mr. Parker’s direction in the years leading up to World War I—at least on the record.

During World War I, the military division of the Baylor band was dissolved, and the organization now became known as simply the Baylor Bear Band. The Baylor band program suffered due to the war, much like most collegiate bands on campuses across the United

States (“Our History”). According to the 1916 Round-Up Yearbook, in addition to wartime efforts and personnel depletions, the Baylor Bear Band was dissolved in 1915 due to Mr. Parker being severely ill but reassembled the next year in 1916 when Mr. Parker recovered (“Round-Up of Baylor U”). The band re-emerged after World War I with Mr. Lyle Skinner as the new director starting in the fall of 1919 after Mr. Parker’s retirement. Director Skinner came from the 36th division of the 142nd infantry band in France where he served as assistant director, and the Lariat described him as a “young man, full of pep and a good mixer” (“Baylor’s New Bandmaster”). There are no records of women being in the Golden Wave Band during the time of Mr. Lyle Skinner either. Were there actually no women allowed? Or were there women in the Baylor Bear Band but no records of them?

My research focuses on the next span of thirty-five developmental years starting in 1932 when women were first allowed in the band to 1967. In addition, there is the idea that there are “gender connotation distinctions” between certain musical instruments like flutes are more feminine and brass instruments are more masculine, but these distinctions are generally considered “not sex-related” (Griswold and Chrobak 6). This archival work can help discussions around instruments women played, distinctions in uniforms, the events that influenced the development and documentation of the Golden Wave Band, and women’s emerging roles in society in the 20th century (Sullivan 33). As of the time of this article’s conception, the Golden Wave Band

is under the direction of Dr. Isaiah Odajima with Dr. Stuart Ivey as the Assistant Director of Bands and the Associate Director of Athletic Bands (Baylor University Golden Wave Band). Women have been a major part of the band for many years now through their prominent female marchers, baton twirlers referred to as “Golden Girls,” and members of their Color Guard. But the question remains: How did we get here?

Feminist rhetorical scholarship reveals that archival decisions are never neutral because they reflect cultural biases, disciplinary norms, and institutional priorities that often privilege dominant voices while sidelining marginalized ones. Aforementioned scholarship describes archives as not being merely passive “repositories” but active sites of meaning-making, shaped by “serendipity, place, and cultural memory” (Kirsch and Rohan 2, 54). Scholars are generally encouraged to adopt tools like “critical imagination” and “strategic contemplation” to recover rhetorical lives that traditional archives overlook, emphasizing that we must be willing “to see [and hear] differently,” and learn “to ask new and different questions” (Royster and Kirsch 4, 23, 133-135). Archival inclusion can be framed as an ethical act rooted in valuing and respecting vernacular, embodied, and relational rhetorics, asserting that rhetorical feminism insists on listening to silenced voices and on making space for them (Glenn 19). These frameworks are essential for examining the archival silences surrounding women in a collegiate marching band during the 1930s to 1960s, considering they provide methodological and ethical guidance for recovering and

revaluing marginalized rhetorical presence, re-shaping how we understand musical and institutional history.

This article will start by describing the archival methodology used to conduct this research. Then it will lay out the results of said research in a historical overview by highlighting certain rhetorical distinctions like gender generalization speech, marketing, and publicity of Golden Wave Band women. Then it will move to visual distinctions like high beauty standards, uniform differences, and presentation of the women of the Golden Wave Band. Afterwards it will go into the essential but underappreciated role of women in the development of the Golden Wave Band like outsourced social event organization, the Iota Chapter of the honorary band service sorority Tau Beta Sigma, and the physical activity with strenuous collegiate work. After the results are documented, the article will focus on the discussion of said results before summing everything up with the conclusions of what can be taken away from this article.

METHODS

To begin to discover these connections, CITI-sanctioned (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) archival research was conducted through a semester-long Undergraduate Research and Publication course through Baylor University under the direction of Dr. Sara Dye in order to piece together the deeper history of the Baylor University Golden Wave Band. The research started by combing through the Baylor University Digital Archives

database using the keyword phrase “Band” through its search function and coming across mentions in materials like the university’s press releases and their school of music programs, but mostly in articles from their newspaper entitled the Baylor “Lariat” dating all the way back to the creation of the university’s band program. A choice was then made to focus on just the Lariat mentions (around 2,300 hits) using the new keyword phrase “Golden Wave Band” which started just over twenty years after the band’s initial creation in 1908 in the archives because the first mention of women in the band was not long after that point.

After about forty-five hours of work on combing these particular archival materials over the course of two months—which included reading the section of the article that mentioned the band in its entirety looking for key sub phrases regarding gender and noting down anything of importance in a spreadsheet—a decision was made to focus on the era of 1932 to 1967 in the band’s history for this article since it seemed to be the most developmental time for gender inclusivity for the organization. Around 400 of the 2,300 Lariat mentions were tagged as holding any relevance for this project on the basis of if they were regarding bands women having physical presence (i.e. named specific women in the article, didn’t use the phrase ‘men’ to generalize the gender population) or notably absent. A separate spreadsheet was also created in this process to track the exact numbers of women in the band each year of this time period by looking at the annual yearbook spread for the Golden Wave Band.

After reviewing the collected archival materials in juxtaposition, the original research topic shifted from just being on the evolution of the role of women in the Golden Wave Band to discovering further era-accurate misogynistic undertones in the *Lariat*. A discovery was made that women were present throughout the era but fit more in the cracks; it was just a matter of if the band or more particularly, the *Lariat*, wanted to advertise the organization as having such inclusivity. There wasn't a lack of women who did or wanted to do the marching band program; it depended on whether they were needed rhetorically or not for the band's image in different media outlets.

This article approaches archival research not merely as a process of data collection, but as a rhetorical act that both reflects and reshapes the boundaries of what is considered attainable knowledge. As Royster and Kirsch assert, what we as researchers find in the archives is selective, contextualized, and up to the archiver's interpretation requiring "processes of meditation, introspection, and reflection," reminding us that absence itself is a rhetorical condition requiring interpretation (84, 101). Glenn emphasizes that "rhetorical feminism" calls attention to the politics of citation, preservation, and recognition, urging scholars to examine how archival practices reflect broader cultural "hierarchies that society has created and continues to enforce" (1, 27, 48). Kirsch and Rohan further note that what is saved in the archives and what is discarded often depends on who is doing the saving, a reminder that archival silences are not accidental but produced through decisions shaped by power,

access, and identity (13). By foregrounding these feminist insights, these methods not only seek to recover women's rhetorical labor in the history of the Golden Wave Band, but also to challenge the archival logics that have rendered such labor invisible. Additionally, they strive to reconstruct a more inclusive historical narrative and interrogate how gendered assumptions have shaped the very conditions of archival survival and scholarly visibility.

RESULTS

"Just Some Publicity to You" ("Keys Girls Get Thrill"): Linguistic Distinctions

THE FIRST BANDSWOMEN: DISAGREEMENTS OF WHEN WOMEN FIRST JOINED THE GOLDEN WAVE BAND

Some could consider the first Band Sweetheart of 1932–1933—Margaret McCollum—as the first woman in the Golden Wave Band, yet she did not play an instrument. An article recounting the history of the Golden Wave Band up to that point that was published in the *Lariat* on November 2, 1951, claims that women were first "accepted" into the band starting in 1937; this article's claim is reinforced in 1963 substituting the word 'accepted' with "introduced" ("Golden Wave Band To Perform", "Golden Wave Is Now Golden"). However, there were actually historical records of women playing instruments in the band starting in at least 1932—five years before the 1951 *Lariat*'s claimed time frame—the same year that sweetheart Ms. McCollum joined the organization.

During the 1930s era, “smokers” were usually men-only less-formalized events where “young men could relax and enjoy an evening of light entertainment” while getting to smoke their pipe or cigarettes “over a glass of something with their friends,” often held with purpose of men being able to “talk about politics and current events away from women” since social norms “prevented most women from smoking in public” (McCormack 3-4). On May 15, 1933, at a smoker for the Golden Wave Band, the Lariat themselves mentioned that three “seniors in the band” gave “short talks” reminiscing on their experience in the band including two named women—Catherine Carkhuff and Louise Hirschman—meaning that they had to have marched for at least the Fall 1932–Spring 1933 season, maybe even longer (“Melten Elected Prexy”). Butler states that the “political implications of claiming that women do not exist” should be of greater concern for feminists (529). Additionally, the allowance of women at this smoker event was a deviation from the social norms of the time period.

MARKETING, PUBLICITY, AND RHETORIC: LANGUAGE OF SWEETHEARTS, QUADRUPLET SISTERS, AND MAJORETTES

On April 6, 1932, a “precedent was set” as the band’s “first ever in the history of Baylor university” sweetheart—codenamed Madame X—was elected and two days later, her identity was revealed as Baylor senior, Ms. Margaret McCollum (“Margaret McCollum”). Despite there being a few confirmed women in the actual marching band at the time, McCollum

was advertised as being the woman of the band even though she didn’t play an instrument. Immediately following the 1935 Homecoming game, the current and past members of the Golden Wave Band attended a Homecoming party hosted by their first sweetheart—Margaret McCollum—at her home in Waco because McCollum remained a “true girl friend” of the band according to the Lariat (“Band’s First Sweetheart”).

The 1936–1937 Sweetheart—Mary Van Jones—is mentioned in the Lariat as being presented as one of the “attractive” features of the band in her first public appearance at one of the band’s monthly concerts on May 16, 1936 (“Golden Wave to Play Final Game”). Furthermore, Jones was interviewed by the Lariat about her election and an article was written about it by a woman—Doll Thompson. The article also details Jones’s predecessor—Eloise Brooks—taking on the “more difficult position of being a housewife” now that she’s married and equated the role to being a sweetheart by stating that it is “hard enough being the sweetheart for an individual” so Thompson was curious as to experience of being the “girl friend of sixty band members” (“Band Sweetheart Is Thrilled”). The last sweetheart of the Golden Wave Band—Nancy Conkwright—was elected the next year on May 6, 1937, for the 1937–1938 season and the Lariat refers to her as being the new “queen for golden wavers” who will “reign” for the next season (“Nancy Conkwright”).

The men of the band might have picked up on this trend considering they decided not to elect a sweetheart for the 1938-1939 season

and disbanded the system for all following years. In an article published in the *Lariat* on October 18, 1938, the band council gave the *Lariat* the three major reasons for the removal of the band sweetheart position: all the sweethearts of the previous six years didn't "fill" the position "successfully in the eyes of the band members," the unfairness that one of the actual band members had to switch out with the sweetheart for out-of-town tours, and the band finally recognizes that the call for a sweetheart is only for organizations that consist of all men like non-coed fraternities for example ("Golden Waves Will Not Elect Sweetheart"). The official disintegration of the band's sweetheart system is one of the first times historically that the band has acknowledged that they have other women in the band besides the sweetheart.

On September 19, 1933, the *Lariat* announced six women joining the Golden Wave Band for the 1933–1934 season, that being a set of freshmen clarinet twins—Mary and Elizabeth Addison—and a set of "famous" and "accomplished" saxophonist quadruplets—Mona, Mary, Roberta, and Leota Keys ("First Band Rehearsals"). The accomplishment of the Addison twins and Keys quadruplets joining the band was advertised numerous times that year in the *Lariat*, yet the articles focused more on the fact that they were twins or quadruplets respectively than that they were women in the band or accomplished musicians. Specifically regarding the "Quadruplets of Baylor," the Keys sisters were literally marketed—*Fox Movietone News* film reels, photoshoots, full-length *Lariat* articles, etc—by Baylor University and President Pat Neff to show the world

that Baylor had what they deemed America's only set of quadruplets in attendance at their university ("Hollis' Four Keys"; "Keyes Sisters Crash"). This marketing initiative continued throughout the Keys quadruplets' time at Baylor to garner publicity for the sisters and the university. This included their third Paramount News photoshoot which took place during a party thrown for them on May 5, 1936, about which the Keys girls were interviewed in the *Lariat*. The girls told the reporter: "Don't make the article sound like we are conceited. We enjoyed it" ("Keyes Girls Get Thrill").

The staff of the band was expanded during the time of Director Richard L. Morse including baton twirlers/majorettes, flag bearers/twirlers, and drum majors. The "drum majorettes" program was reorganized the following year in the spring of 1945 when four baton twirler girls were announced in the *Lariat* for the "centennial" year: Majory Wipprecht, Dorcas Christakos, Bernice Baden, and Olivia Bomar ("Drum Majorettes Named"). The majorette tryouts and announcements were advertised quite frequently in the *Lariat* the following years, almost rivaling the coverage of the Band Sweetheart from the previous decade. The following semester saw two new twirlers named—Louise Cannon and Jane Rede—plus the return of Christakos and Wipprecht. Coincidentally though, at that same time in the fall of 1945, the *Lariat* announced the "outstanding addition" to the band of six girls to a "flag bearers" team to carry flags of each of the Southwest conference schools ("Band Chooses Four Twirlers"). This same group of six girls—Doris Christian, May Belle Freeman,

Jackie Tark Hill, Jeanne McRae, Doris Sewell, and Evelyn Shideler—would also be the “flag twirlers” team led by feature Evelyn Burgess who won first place twice in the “national Swiss flag twirler’s contest” by the Land Music Festival that took place in Chicago, Illinois (“Flag Twirlers Added”). However, instead of keeping the group all women, they added Bill Ross as drum major and reinstated Frank Boggs as head drum major from the previous year. Swiss flag throwing can be considered an early model to modern-day color guard of the marching band variety, but it was less involved in comparison.

In a *Lariat* article entitled “Thirteen Twirlers Try for Band Majorettes: Co-eds Face Problem of Accommodating To BU Style of Less Sex, More Art,” Director Donald I. Moore is described as having difficulty choosing five out of the “beauteous array” of thirteen “talented” prospective twirlers to be the 1949-1950 majorettes team and the twirlers had difficulty accommodating to Baylor’s twirler style of “less sex, more art.” Meaning that the prospective twirlers were used to a more flashy, sex-driven performance, while Baylor supported a more modest outlook on the activity focused on artistry and skill. There was a marketing component to the way that the baton twirlers (majorettes) were discussed in the *Lariat* over the following years like announcing the band was looking for “prospects” among the new freshmen “lasses” (“Twirl Tyros Tries Tomorrow”). When Director Moore chose the five majorettes for the 1949-1950 season a few days later, the *Lariat* chose to point out how “pretty” these “three blondes, a redhead and a brunette” were

for the “eye-catching first line of [the Golden Wave] band” (“New BU Majorettes Step”). Two years later, the caption for a promotional photo of the 1951-1952 Golden Girls read “Oh, For Technicolor Photos” (See Fig. 1), meaning that the picture was better for the readers to visually experience the Golden Girls since they were in color and high-definition.



Fig. 1. “Oh, For Technicolor Photos.” Photograph by Baylor *Lariat* Staff, 1951, The Baylor *Lariat* Collection. Courtesy of the Baylor University Digital Archives. Baylor University Libraries. Waco, TX.

A 1955 *Lariat* article entitled “Golden Girls Plan For Golden Days for Corrigan Weekend,” written by a man named Don Griffis, described what it would be like to date one of

the “Good Baylor girls” Golden Girls as one of their “blushing dates” and claims that “if the girls conduct their dates as they did their halftime shows at the football games” then the “lucky males” should be prepared for an amazing weekend. On September 29, 1955, the *Lariat* announced that several of the majorettes were injured (“Majorettes Plagued By Injuries”). There was an alleged uproar from the Baylor community following these injuries because Baylor released a press release the same day telling the public to relax since “male observers” who witnessed the majorettes’ next practice “punned that despite the [majorettes’] accidents ‘the girls appear to be in good shape’” (“Baylor University Press Release, 09/29/1955”).

“Coeds Add to Appearance of Golden Wave Band”: Visual Distinctions

IDEALS AND PERCEPTION: HIGH BEAUTY STANDARDS FOR FEATURED WOMEN

On May 24, 1933, Dorothy Ann Tucker was revealed to be the 1933–1934 Band Sweetheart, and she was given a more detailed profile in the *Lariat* than the previous sweetheart which highlighted the fact that Tucker was a “candidate” for one of the “beauty page[s] in the [1933 Round-Up] yearbook” (“Dorothy Ann Tucker Named”). A 1958 Baylor University press release officially announced “diminutive” Rita Jean Matus as a new Golden Girl, and chose to comment about her weight and body, and specify that she “tips the scales at a scant 100 pounds.” The *Lariat* then print-

ed a picture of Director Donald Moore jokingly weighing Ms. Matus on a scale as a “gag” allegedly (see Fig. 2) (“Band Members Arrive Early”).



Fig. 2. “This picture of Golden Wave Band Director, Donald I. Moore.” Photograph by Baylor *Lariat* Staff, 1958, The Baylor *Lariat* Collection. Courtesy of the Baylor University Digital Archives. Baylor University Libraries. Waco, TX.

FLASHY OR SKIRTS: WOMEN'S UNIFORM DIFFERENCES

On November 22, 1932, as 1932–1933 Sweetheart Ms. McCollum's last appearance on Carroll Field, she appeared in the “green and gold” sweetheart uniform for the first time (“Two Seniors End”). During Ms. Tucker's time as the band's sweetheart the following year, the sweetheart uniform was described by *Lariat* as a “new green one similar to that worn by members of the band” (“Uniforms Will Be Worn”).



Fig. 3. “Bell-Lyre Trio.” Photograph by Baylor *Lariat* Staff, 1940, The Baylor *Lariat* Collection. Courtesy of the Baylor University Digital Archives. Baylor University Libraries. Waco, TX.

Before the 1945–1946 Golden Wave Band season, the women's band uniforms required skirts. A *Lariat* article published on September 24, 1936, entitled “Coeds Add to Appearance of Golden Wave Band” mentions two new women—Nell Milburn and Dorothy Perkins—joining the band to play bell-lyres for the 1936–1937 season and the band was

getting “special” uniforms (see Fig. 3) tailored for them because they were to “proceed the band in marching order.” Meaning that these two female marchers wearing tailored band uniforms were to be placed at the front of the male marchers on the field, distinguishing them from the rest of the band. Three years later, when the whole band got new uniforms in 1939 since some of them were coming to be twelve years old at that point, the *Lariat* pointed out that the “band boys and girls will be very, very happy” with this change (“Along The Way”). According to the Baylor 1946 Round-Up Yearbook, the group photo of the band from that season shows the women wearing pants instead of skirts just like the men's band uniforms.

Furthermore, a *Lariat* article published on September 15, 1950, stated that the majorettes were to get new uniforms that season to “go with the new stadium” (“Band Prepares For Grid Game”). Two months later, the title “Golden Girls” was first given to the five majorettes with their new gold uniforms (“Golden Wave Band Has Five”). Three years later, the *Lariat* wrote that the “Golden Girls are almost not Golden anymore” when it was time for new uniforms for the whole band, and several majorettes had “trouble getting their uniforms to fit” (“Band's Worry”).

WRAPPED IN GIFT BOXES: PRESENTATION OF 1935 BAND SWEETHEART

There was not much information on Tucker's 1934–1935 Sweetheart successor—Josephine May—but Eloise Brooks was elected the

band's sweetheart for the 1935–1936 season on April 29th, 1935 through the continued tradition of a “secret ballor” (“Eloise Brooks”). During the 1935 Baylor Homecoming football game against Texas Christian University (T.C.U.) that took place on November 2, 1935, three “beauties” were presented at halftime by emerging from wrapped gift “boxes” in a shower of balloons including that year's band sweetheart Eloise Brooks, along with T.C.U.'s band's sweetheart Helen Moody and Baylor's 1935 Homecoming Queen Marguerite Joyce (“Beauties Presented At Homecoming”). Based on further research on this topic, this occurrence seems unique to this institution and does not appear to be part of a wide-spread collegiate tradition of the era.

“Life Is Not Just One Big Twirl, It Involves Hard Work Too”: Essential Yet Unappreciated Role of Women in the Golden Wave Band

THE WOMAN'S JOB: OUTSOURCED SOCIAL EVENT ORGANIZATION

Considering the newfound flourishing of the Baylor band in the early 1930s—now called the “Golden Wave Band”—under the direction of Mr. Everett M. McCracken, the members of the band discovered that they needed some extra help with planning their social events and general organization. The kind of work that only a woman could do apparent-

* “1955 Golden Girls Possess Talent, Beauty, and Charm,” *The Baylor Lariat*, Vol. 57, No. 25, October 28, 1955. <https://digitalcollections-baylor.quartermaster.com/documents/mirador/152516>.

ly since Director McCracken authorized the adoption of the fraternity-type sweetheart secret election system in the spring of 1932 to remedy this pressing issue. Starting in the fall of 1932, the band sweetheart—who would be reelected each following year—would “march with the drum major” while also basically acting as the band's social chair and was elected outside of the women available within the band (“Band To Elect Sweetheart”). The first sweetheart, Margaret McCollum was included in planning committees for events like the annual band banquet which she was named chairman of and was quoted in the *Lariat* for the 1932–1933 band banquet (“Band To Have Banquet”).

UTILIZATION AND OBSCURIAL: THE IOTA CHAPTER OF HONORARY BAND SERVICE SORORITY TAU BETA SIGMA (TBΣ), 1948–PRESENT

On October 2, 1947, the *Lariat* wrote that Director Morse announced the previous day that the Golden Wave Band received an “invitation from the University of Texas to organize a chapter of the National band fraternity” called Kappa Kappa Psi—also known as KKΨ—on the Baylor University campus and the “matter [was] being carefully considered at this time” by Director Morse (“Bob Peek”). Almost a month later, on October 30, 1947, Director Morse told the *Lariat* than an “investigating committee” from Lubbock would be invited down soon to “examine the organization on the Baylor campus, and determine its qualifications for organizing a chapter” of KKΨ (“Owens Elected Prexy”). By January 16,

1948, Kappa Kappa Psi was officially in the works for Baylor University, and the Lariat announced 23 members and one honorary member—Golden Wave Band Director Morse—while stating that the installation ceremony of KKΨ would take place the next month, on February 13–14, 1948 (“Kappa Kappa Psi To Hold Initiation”).

On February 18, 1948, the Lariat announced the “dual installation ceremony” of the honorary band fraternity Kappa Kappa Psi (KKΨ) and the honorary band sorority Tau Beta Sigma (TBS) that took place on February 13–14, 1948, while listing the initiated members of KKΨ but not TBS members (“Band Fraternity Initiates Chapters”). There was an announcement made in March of 1948 in *The Baylor Line* newspaper of the Kappa Kappa Psi chapter installation, but there was no mention of Tau Beta Sigma at all (“New President”). On May 14, 1948, there was a full article written in the Lariat about the KKΨ formal banquet to announce their new members and leadership, but again, no mention of TBS (“Kappa Kappa Psi To Have Annual Formal Banquet”).

However, at the end of Director Morse’s time with the Golden Wave Band towards the end of the spring semester of 1948, the “Baylor 1948 Round-Up” had a half page dedicated to the Golden Wave Band, which stated in the organization description that on February 21, 1948, Kappa Kappa Psi (KKΨ) and Tau Beta Sigma (TBS) were installed by a team from Texas Tech and a national officer from Oklahoma A&M respectively. However, the description specifies that it is the Beta Alpha Chapter of Kappa Kappa Psi, while it just says

“a chapter” of Tau Beta Sigma instead of specifying that it’s the Iota chapter.

According to *The Baylor Line*, Mr. Donald I. Moore was named the new director of the Golden Wave Band in August of 1948 following Mr. Richard L. Morse’s departure (“Moore Is band Director”). Director Moore’s wife, Norma Moore, became the new sponsor for the Iota Chapter of TBS in 1949. In the 1949 Baylor Round-Up, their coverage included a full page shared by both KKΨ and TBS with their own respective descriptions, but TBS’s description mentioned the organization in relation to KKΨ while KKΨ’s description did not. On August 3, 1951, the Lariat states that eight “BU Bandsmen” were honored with a trophy at the annual TBS and KKΨ National Convention for playing in the 1951 100-piece All-American band, but four of these eight band members were named women in the article (“Baylor Musicians Win National Band Trophy”). Kappa Kappa Psi did not become coed until 1977, meaning these named women must have been from the Iota Chapter of Tau Beta Sigma (“Women in the Fraternity, (Part 3)”). There was an instance in 1953 where KKΨ and TBS were sponsoring a dinner for the visiting band of that game (University of Houston) and the KKΨ president is quoted in the Lariat about the event, then it later states that TBS are the ones making the food (“Two Societies Fete”). In the “Baylor 1995 Round-Up,” TBS’s description states that the organization is “for bandswomen” while KKΨ’s description states the organization “promotes welfare” of the band.

MULTITALENTED: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WITH STRENUOUS COLLEGIATE WORK

As described in “The 1944 Round-Up of Service,” Mr. Richard L. Morse of the Baylor Music Department reorganized the band consisting of 15 members in the spring of 1944 with the hope that it would one day rise to the level of the “once famous Golden Wave Band” that predated the draft of World War II. Notably, this group would grow to 43 members by the end of that semester with 26 of them being women because the men’s “decision to join the global conflict” had “greatly increased the musical opportunities” for women (Sullivan 37).

In Director Morse’s last marching season with the Golden Wave Band for the fall of 1947, a “hand picked group of men from the organization” out of the 120 members was chosen for “precision marching” under the guidance of the drillmaster, Edwin Earl Fowler, during their first halftime appearance that season (“Golden Wave Band Opens Fourth Year in Colorful Attire”). The Lariat specified that these marchers were all men and they were there to do skills harder than their average work.



Fig. 4. “Golden Girls for 1955.” Photograph by Don Castello, 1955, The Baylor Lariat Collection. Courtesy of the Baylor University Digital Archives. Baylor University Libraries. Waco, TX.

In a 1955 Lariat article entitled “1955 Golden Girls Possess Talent, Beauty, and Charm,” the Golden Girls are described as being more than just pretty faces and states that they actually work very hard to be as skilled as they are in baton twirling. Another instance of this happening is two years later, when the Lariat published an article by John Roppolo called “Golden Girls Can Twirl, Too,” which

describes what else they do besides twirling for the Golden Wave Band after listing their many medals in the art, which included majors in Interior Decorating, Elementary Education, Music Education, and Education (with minors in Psychology and Religion), and honors like membership in the Iota Chapter of Tau Beta Sigma, Baylor Symphony, Student Congress, Mu Phi Epsilon, and even sponsorship of Baylor's R.O.T.C. program.

However, a decade after the 1955 article uplifting the twirlers was released, another article was published highlighting the first male feature twirler, Jerry McLauchlin, who stated that boys' twirling is much more advanced than ladies' twirling because "what the boys attempt, the girls would not even want to try" referencing tricks like fire batons and sword-throwing, which had already been done by women in years past ("Twirling is a Masculine Sport"). McLauchlin was even described by Director Moore as being "probably the best we've ever had" in a 1967 article and was often listed above the Golden Girls as the feature of the performances ("Twirlers Add Color to the Game").

DISCUSSION

"Just Some Publicity To You"†: Linguistic Distinctions

Was there some hidden motivation behind the attempted erasure from the historical records

† "Keys Girls Get Thrill When Newsreel Grinds Picture For The Public," *The Daily Lariat*, Vol. 36, No. 23, May 5, 1936. <https://digitalcollections-baylor.quartexcollections.com/documents/>

of the women in the Golden Wave Band from 1932-1936? Despite confirmation of there being at least six women out of around 50-70 members in the Golden Wave Band at the time of McCracken's 1933-1934 season, the *Lariat* would continue to generalize the band as all men in relation to Director McCracken including variations like "McCracken's men," "McCracken and Men of Golden Wave," or "Professor McCracken will introduce his men."‡,§,¶ This generalization is understandable for the time considering six out of 50-70 is only 8.6%-12% of membership and majority rules most of the time. However, women continue to statistically be the gender minority in the Golden Wave Band save for the spring of 1944, yet the language of generalizing the group as all men does not continue in the years to come. This begs several questions as to why the 1951 *Lariat* declared 1937 as the first year that the Golden Wave Band started including women: Did the 1951 *Lariat* simply make a mistake by assuming the "men" generalizations were true in their archival investigation?
[mirador/83154](https://digitalcollections-baylor.quartexcollections.com/documents/mirador/83154).

‡ "Band To Give Concert At Waco Hall Sunday," *The Daily Lariat*, Vol. 36, No. 61, January 18, 1934. <https://digitalcollections-baylor.quartexcollections.com/documents/mirador/80052>.

§ "Band Plays Concert In Teague on Friday," *The Daily Lariat*, Vol. 36, No. 92, March 21, 1934. <https://digitalcollections-baylor.quartexcollections.com/documents/mirador/80334>.

¶ "Golden Wave Band Is To Be Featured In Chapel Thursday," *The Daily Lariat*, Vol. 36, No. 97, March 29, 1934. <https://digitalcollections-baylor.quartexcollections.com/documents/mirador/80399>.

tions instead of delving further? Or did they purposefully obscure part of women's history to further a certain agenda?

Furthermore, the implications of the usage of the words 'girl friend' remain unclear considering the standards of college women in the 1930s, seemingly continuing the emerging trend of strange, appearance-oriented rhetoric surrounding the Golden Wave Band Sweetheart. A comparison being made by a woman of the positions of sweetheart and housewife during the 1930s is seemingly monumental considering almost the same comparison can be made in today's world. Additionally, using the term 'housewife' in reference to the band sweetheart's job of managing a group of mostly boys can establish a conversation of women working in ways that men could not. The emergence of this conversation might have been one of the causes of the band's sweetheart system's impending downfall. This language pattern of terms like 'queen,' 'reign,' 'girl friend,' and 'housewife' to describe the sweetheart who was in the gender minority opens up the idea of the men of the band worshiping whoever was in that position each year. These discoveries add to the idea that men will only acknowledge the accomplishments or existence of women when it serves something for themselves. Almost as if there is a trend that the band needed to prove to the public that there were women in their organization by featuring the ones who didn't primarily play instruments. Despite the progressiveness of the later addition and advertisement of drum majorettes and flag twirlers to the Golden Wave Band in this time period, there is still the undertone of trying to

advertise the inclusion of women in ways beside the normal route.

Butler mentions that the feminist theory criticizes the "naturalistic explanations of sex and sexuality" that automatically assume that the "meaning of women's social existence can be derived from some fact of their physiology" (520-524). Why did the physical appearance of the majorettes matter so much to people? The press release regarding how the men viewed the majorettes practicing after their injuries implies that the public should believe the men's word over the women's in regard to the women's own bodies. Furthermore, Levy and Lounsbury claim that marching performers who are "more emotionally stable" will also most likely experience "fewer performance-related injuries" (300). Meaning that it could be speculated that the injured majorettes might have had some emotional stability issues during this time and then they were brushed off by the public eye. Or it could be derived that the extra physical work the majorettes did was ignored because of the general consensus that their role was purely visual or aesthetic. This continuing trend of peculiar and objectifying language like 'eye-catching,' 'beauteous,' and 'pretty' to describe the 'lasses' and 'misses' (feature twirlers) of the Golden Wave Band is in line with the way that the Band Sweetheart was described when that system was in place.

Another instance of distinction despite inclusion regarding the Golden Wave twirlers of both baton and flag variety was when the band would be announced to be going to an event like a pep rally and the Lariat would say that the "Golden Wave Band and twirlers" will be

present or on hand instead of just saying ‘Golden Wave Band’ (“Pep Rally At 10 A.M.”). The Golden Wave Band much like all marching bands can be considered a “naturalistic setting” meaning that “all members are present and aware of one another” (Kornienko et al. 95). If all the band members were generally aware of one another’s existence to a certain degree, how could they let the erasure of their own members happen even linguistically despite the gender distinctions?

“Coeds Add to Appearance of Golden Wave Band”*: Visual Distinctions

The inclusion of the attribute of Tucker as being a beauty page candidate in the 1933 Round-Up yearbook in her list of other extracurriculars, despite the fact that she didn’t actually win a page, shows that the Lariat thought it was important enough to emphasize that she could be considered a beauty among the Baylor female population. What were the beauty standards to be the band sweetheart and were they required to be elected? Another oddity regarding the twirlers within the time-frame of Mr. Morse was when freshman majorette, Jane Reade, was chosen as one of the 1945 “Baylor Beauties” and the Lariat chose to mention that she was also a “twirler with the Golden Wave Band this year,” which was a trend that continued in the years to come (“Baylor Beauties—”). This brings up the same beauty qualification questions that were pres-

** “Coeds Add to Appearance of Golden Wave Band,” *The Daily Lariat*, Vol. 39, No. 7, September 24, 1936. <https://digitalcollections-baylor.quartexcollections.com/documents/mirador/83313>.

ent in the discussion of the 1932-1938 Band Sweetheart election system. Furthermore, were these beauty ideals applied to the female members of the band as well? Or were they only applied to non-marching female members like majorettes and flag twirlers? How did women in the band feel about significant attention being brought to another woman from outside of the band who only contributes to the band visually and by nature of her individual appearance to an extent that women performing musically with the band are rendered invisible?

Additionally, the extent of the scale joke from Director Moore to 1958 Golden Girl Rita Jean Matus is up to debate because there were harsh expectations for the appearance of the Golden Girls like the rest of America’s twirlers. Much like the rhetorical distinctions described earlier, the twirlers were often described by their looks in Baylor media like the Lariat. The 2009 *Journal of Athletic Training* academic article entitled “Body Image, Anthropometric Measures, and Eating-Disorder Prevalence in Auxiliary Unit Members” states that auxiliary members including majorettes are at high-risk to experience “appearance-related pressures ... [and] exhibit unhealthy weight-management behaviors” (418). Therefore, public displays of focusing on what could be considered a major concern for Ms. Matus probably did not help her self-esteem and perception of her own body image.

FLASHY OR SKIRTS: WOMEN’S UNIFORM DIFFERENCES

While the historical records don’t seem to agree as to when exactly women were allowed as reg-

ular members of the Golden Wave Band, they were easy to pick out of group photos due to their obvious differences in uniforms and hair-styles. More specifically, however, the sweetheart of that year would get their own special uniform even more distinct from the rest of the band. The article that chose to highlight how the women and their new uniforms would visually add the appearance of the Golden Wave Band had done so instead of highlighting their accomplishments as women musicians. Considering how the band had their highest percentage of women so far in 1939 (20.8%), it seems only fitting that *Lariat* now recognized the need to no longer generalize the entire program as men. Meaning that almost the entirety of Director McCracken's reign had women also be visually distinct from the men not quite in the name of inclusion. The public announcement of having issues wearing the uniforms regarding the Golden Girls exemplifies the idea that unrealistic beauty and weight standards weighed heavily on the majorettes. The almost literal objectification of women continues in the simplest ways in the archival records like the gift box presentation of that year's band sweetheart for example.

“LIFE IS NOT JUST ONE BIG
TWIRL, IT INVOLVES HARD
WORK TOO”^{††}: ESSENTIAL YET
UNAPPRECIATED ROLE OF WOMEN
IN THE GOLDEN WAVE BAND

The fact that the first band sweetheart, Margaret McCollum, was the first woman to
^{††} “1955 Golden Girls Possess Talent, Beauty, and

be quoted in the name of the Golden Wave Band can be considered a monumental moment despite how small the action might seem. Just over fifteen years later, the *Lariat* had covered the progress of Baylor's potential $\text{KK}\Psi$ chapter for four months at that point, but not a single mention of a potential TBS chapter until the article released a few days after installation. The headline of the *Lariat* article, “Band Fraternity Initiates Chapters,” even highlights $\text{KK}\Psi$ (fraternity) over TBS (sorority) instead of equal representation of the organizations. Considering how much time and consideration went into the installment of Baylor's $\text{KK}\Psi$ chapter as documented in part in the *Lariat*, there must have also been significant time that went into the TBS chapter's creation as well. But the process was not given the same coverage as $\text{KK}\Psi$ despite them being brother and sister organizations. Meaning that the two chapters did get equal coverage for the first time later that semester, but not as equal as once thought later on. The trend of $\text{KK}\Psi$ getting more or all of the coverage over TBS continued for years to come. TBS was often lumped in with $\text{KK}\Psi$ as being described as a fraternity instead of specifying they are a sorority and fraternity respectively (“Moore to Attend”). Meaning that TBS has to be specified as a women organization for the band while $\text{KK}\Psi$ can simply be an organization for the band.

Despite appearances depicted in the print media, there are busy lives behind the female Charm,” *The Baylor Lariat*, Vol. 57, No. 25, October 28, 1955. <https://digitalcollections-baylor.quarxtextcollections.com/documents/mirador/152516>.

auxiliary members of the Golden Wave Band as well including the Golden Girls and the Color Guard. Schneider mentions that “vocational psychology” dictates that “people are differentially attracted to careers as a function of their own interests and personality” (441). People are best suited to careers where they are a “good fit” with their “individual characteristics (i.e., abilities and personality)” and “environmental demands” (Levy and Lounsbury 299-300). Meaning that if you think about twirling, flag tossing, and marching with the band as careers then you can see that those who are interested in said career would theoretically thrive in it. Conversely, it could be inferred that the society assumed that the best role of a woman because of her physiology was to be a sweetheart or a Golden Girl as opposed to her musical or performative skill based on how they are described.

In the years post-draft during World War II, for the first and only time in the history of the Golden Wave Band there were women as the gender majority and the highest percentage of which (60.5%) in the spring of 1944 as the band became “dominated by women” making the 1940s known as “the ‘Great Era of All-Women’s Bands’” (Sullivan 38). This was mainly due to the depletion of men from the World War II draft which affected collegiate marching bands across America, but it was still a major milestone for the organization. Does the hand-picked group of all men for precision drill formations imply that the 1947–1948 Golden Wave Band—more specifically Director Morse—thought that women couldn’t do harder marching formations in their drill?

Or did the Lariat generalize the group as all men but there were actually women present? The two positive additions to the rhetoric surrounding the Golden Girls from the 1955 article “1955 Golden Girls Possess Talent, Beauty, and Charm” and 1957 article “Golden Girls Can Twirl, Too” prove that the Lariat had the capacity to acknowledge the achievements of the majorettes beyond their looks but chose not to in the previous years. The publicity surrounding the first Golden Wave Band feature (male) twirler and Kappa Kappa Psi member, Jerry McLauchlin, from 1965-1967 revealed an agenda to bring men into a female-dominated activity by immediately putting them on a pedestal above the already established women, elevating them into leadership roles sooner, and claiming that men could achieve the skills easier and better than the women all along. The elevation of McLauchlin within the Lariat diminished some of the progress made the previous decade regarding the acknowledgements of how talented the Golden Girls were beyond their looks.

The linguistic and visual distinctions found in archival materials, such as the band sweetheart system, the differentiated uniforms worn by women, and fraternity vs sorority representation, reveal rhetorical moves that reinforced gendered hierarchies within the Baylor University Golden Wave Band. These artifacts (i.e. Lariat articles, Round-Up Yearbooks spreads) did more than document the band’s history, they shaped the public’s understanding by dictating who was considered a legitimate member of the band and who were marginalized. Feminist rhetorical scholarship declares

that archival work pushes “our boundaries of understanding *how knowledge travels, translates, mitigates, and shapes rhetorical actions*” since rhetorical traditions are shaped by the values and assumptions of those who construct them, making it clear that such distinctions were not incidental but ideologically loaded (Royster and Kirsch 84, 154). The rhetorical framing of women’s roles as auxiliary or decorative, despite their essential contributions to organization operations, musical performance, and institutional culture, shaped how audiences understood authority, legitimacy, and value in collegiate music. At the time of this article being written, the Golden Wave Band supports nearly 300 members with around 35-40% being women. These women wear uniforms identical to the men and like their male counterparts are only criticized for their marching and musical skill. Bands of today place great value in absolute uniformity to the point where one individual is indistinguishable from the next regardless of their actual physical differences. Today, these archival traces continue to influence public memory and institutional narratives, reminding us that what survives in the archive is not just evidence, but an argument—rhetoric. By critically engaging these materials, we can challenge inherited assumptions and reframe historical understanding to more accurately reflect the rhetorical labor of women whose presence was essential but underrecognized.

CONCLUSION

Butler states that despite the “pervasive character of patriarchy” and the “prevalence of sex-

ual difference as an operative cultural distinction,” there’s “nothing about a binary gender system that is given” (531). Historically, women in the Baylor University Golden Wave Band served a simultaneously essential yet underappreciated role in the development of the band itself over the span of 1932 to 1967 while being made to be distinct from their male counterparts both linguistically and visually—rhetorically. A 2009 study found that the “prevalence for at-risk eating disorder characteristics and behaviors among auxiliary members” can be estimated to be around “29.7%,” more specifically with “color guard at 31.4%” and “majorettes at 36.8%,” with potential causes as “self-esteem, self-imposed expectations regarding weight and its relation to performance and performance attire, societal pressures relating to body image, and expectations regarding weight and body fat” (Torres-McGehee et al. 421-423).

Meaning that the historical rhetorical distinctions like gender generalization speech, marketing, and publicity along with visual distinctions like high beauty standards, uniform differences, and presentation of the women of the Golden Wave Band can be linked to negative circumstances like harsh appearance-related pressures and misogynistic conventions for the Golden Girls, Color Guard members, and female marchers. This linkage is significant because the existence of these distinctions still affects the Golden Wave Band to this day both positively in the growth of the number of female marchers and negatively in the stagnancy of the tradition surrounding auxiliary members like Golden Girls and the Color Guard.

The results of this article's analysis can theoretically improve the current knowledgeability around performing arts psychology and feminist theory. Knowing the difference in standards between groups such as men and women in times past, current traditions and practices should be reviewed such that all participating members are equalized and humanized. This includes how they are reviewed, recorded, and reported on because, as seen from the research, even the language an organization uses to describe itself betrays the society encompassing it.

This article ultimately demonstrates that archival research is not only a means of historical recovery but also a rhetorical intervention that challenges the frameworks through which gendered labor is remembered and valued. As

Royster and Kirsch remind us, rhetorical traditions are "dynamic" and have the capacity to be challenged, and by interrogating the gendered assumptions that shaped archival practices, this case study intervenes in those traditions to make space for alternative narratives (10-12). By uncovering these rhetorical constructions of past gendered practices and rhetorically analyzing these artifacts, this research not only recovers marginalized histories by proving that these rhetorical constructions of past gendered practices can still shape current perceptions of said gendered practices, but also reshapes the rhetorical discourse through which gender, marching arts, and institutional memory are understood today.

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