An Investigation of Support for Community Bands:

A Sample Annotated Bibliography Assignment Response for

ENGL 135 at DeVry University in San Antonio

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As a long-time bandsman delighted to return to playing through a community jazz band, I am interested in finding out how such groups can best be supported and how such support can best be obtained. In looking for documentary evidence to conduct such an investigation, I initially searched Academic Search Complete for “community band,” limiting my search to full-text peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and case studies published since 2010. Doing so yielded only five sources, of which I incorporated two into earlier work. The search was subsequently expanded to articles ranging back to 2008—a ten-year span—which yielded additional sources. Review of them for their utility ensued, as did review of key sources mentioned in those materials. Afterwards, noting that the sources revealed thus far had done more to offer context for discussion than to offer direct support for ideas, another search in Academic Search Complete extending back to 2008’s full-text peer-reviewed articles, book chapters, and case studies for “supporting community organizations” revealed other sources likely to be of specific utility; the most immediately useful-seeming was reviewed and annotated.


The history of a Canadian community band is presented in brief, citing prominent figures and their achievements in the band’s history and noting the group’s civic engagement—particularly in school music programs. The band’s current-to-the-time-of-writing status is noted,
as well, and the band’s leader is quoted on a valedictory note to conclude the piece before references and an author-blurb are provided.

Although the piece is relatively brief, it does speak to the potential value of community bands to their communities across time. As such, it is useful in establishing that community bands should receive support, although it is not necessarily useful for determining what kind of support is optimal or how such support might be secured. It is likely to be included in either introductory materials or in the problem portion of a problem/solution setup.


After a narrative that gives context for the study that follows, the article contains an extended description of its rationale and an overview of relevant research. It proceeds to give socio-historical context for the subject of its study, describing the focal group’s repertoire, rehearsal, performance, and notational practices, as well as its institutional affiliations. The group’s alignment with prevailing understandings of community music receives attention, as does its contributions to ongoing development of agglutinative cultural identities. Socio-economic contexts are treated before implications for community figures are addressed; references and an author note conclude.

A piece of solid scholarship, the article is useful in offering additional justification for the existence of community bands, pointing out other sources to investigate, and motioning toward a possible venue for community band support: grants from non-profit and governmental agencies. As such, the article will almost certainly be employed both in introductory/contextual materials
for the final project and in development of the central argument—although, like the Mantie (2009) piece, in what capacity is not yet clear.


After a brief introduction, an overview of scholarship on Canadian community bands and discussion of the bands’ various attributes precedes a list of four points of interest in fostering community band activity: music-making can be a sustaining activity, having more community bands tends to promote public support for music education from the public, having more community bands tends to promote public support for music education from political bodies, and having more community bands tends to increase the amount of time educators can spend in teaching. Study methods and results are described, and implications of community bands for music educators are noted prior to references and an author-blurb.

The piece does much to argue for the need for community bands, joining other sources in doing so. It also makes some suggestion for mutual support; community bands give school bands something towards which to direct their energies, even as they offer potential support for school bands. The angle thus motioned towards—that support for community bands might well be an outgrowth of school band programs—is one that demands consideration, although whether it will be a primary focus or a counter-example is not clear as of the current writing.

The author presents and supports a useful, if somewhat loose, definition of community music. Veblen lays out the context for discussion before offering a five-part descriptive framework and moving in sequence through explanations of the five parts. Ideas of community music taken from Northern European and descended areas are described, followed by examples of community music programs. Present-to-the-time-of-writing circumstances of community music receive attention, as does the difficulty of taxonomy of community music programs. The author then calls back to earlier work and offers a valedictory message. References and an author-note conclude the piece.

As a definitional work, the article is most useful as a tertiary source, one offering context or a rubric through which to approach other material. (Indeed, it was suggested for inclusion by reading materials that cite it.) It is most likely to be used in introductory materials to the present project, as it is not likely to have much argumentative force for suggesting a specific means of support; it will do much to clarify what is meant by which term, though, which is useful in framing any argument.


Three case studies are used to interrogate how community organizations use research to enact favorable changes to public policy. A review of relevant scholarship is presented, and definitions pertinent to the article are offered and supported from yet other research. Methods
and the cases studied are introduced, and findings are reported. The cases studied notably began their work with research and then either disseminated their own findings or used the research done to construct arguments presented to policymakers and stakeholders; the kinds of research done by the community groups were described, as was their support of others’ research. Implications of the findings are noted before references conclude the article.

The source suggests that a means for securing support for a community organization is to compile research and present it to policy-making groups. The suggestion has obvious implications for a community band, so the source will likely be used to make a case that effective support can be marshaled from local governmental and policy-making groups.