College Music in the Cane Fields: Religion, Americanization, and the Louisiana Record Book of St Mary's Brass Band, 1869-1905.

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Abstract

Few scholars explore late nineteenth-/early twentieth-century music education in the American South. Even less pay attention to related phenomena at Southern Catholic colleges. As such, this study provides an analysis of the St. Mary's Brass Band record book—penned by students attending a Louisiana Marist institution of higher education and participating in an early college brass band. Contextual analysis sheds light on the intersection of religion, regionality, and Americanization on college-level music learning and performance.

Introduction

Music education, as part of the larger US curricular landscape, has experienced significant changes, particularly during the nineteenth century. Historically, nineteenth-century music instruction could encompass subjects from individual vocal, piano, and string lessons to organized wind and percussion ensembles at schools, colleges, and universities. Indeed, music education at the collegiate level underwent numerous transitions during the latter half of the nineteenth century—of particular note was the emergence of college brass bands. Such phenomena have been recounted in various music education history texts (Mark 2008, Weiss & Taruskin 2007, Keene 1982). However, music education in the American South has been under-researched. Southern states with significant musical legacies, such as Louisiana, have been largely omitted from the existing cannon of historical music education publications. Most history books and articles focus on music instruction in European academies and US educational institutions located in Northern states. While overlooked, formal music education in the American South existed during the nineteenth century—particularly at religiously-affiliated academies. In South Louisiana, parochial education and Catholic higher education took root due to the region's strong ties to the Catholic Church. Instructors at the early Catholic academies of New Orleans and South Louisiana incorporated music instruction, as did professors at the region's first Catholic institutions of higher education (Gray 1991).

While focused examinations of music education in South Louisiana's Catholic higher education scene have yet to be performed, attempts have been made in recent years to address portions of Louisiana's overall music education history. In his book, *Concert Life in Nineteenth-Century New Orleans: A Comprehensive Reference*, John H. Baron (2013) devotes an entire chapter to the subject. Still, the text only briefly references music instruction in the state's Catholic academies. Though Baron and other historians acknowledge the rise of American brass bands in antebellum French Creole Louisiana as well as the Reconstruction-era growth of African American-led brass bands (Burns 2006, White 2001), no in-depth research explores the advent and evolution of music education in Louisiana's nineteenth-century Catholic academies. And yet, nineteenth-century Catholic brass band activities were common enough that Baron cited several Reconstruction-era ensembles, including the Christian Brothers Parochial School Brass Band, Saint Mary's Orphan Boys Asylum Band, the St. Joseph's School Brass Band, and St. Mary's Brass Band of St. Mary's Jefferson College (Baron 2013). St. Mary's Brass Band is the only ensemble associated with a Catholic *college* featured in Baron's text, despite the existence of several regional, period Catholic colleges.

Regarding the history of Catholic higher education in the American South, various Catholic institutions opened during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Unfortunately, many closed due to poor finances, low social support, curricular intransigence, and failure to compete with state-supported institutions of higher education. Historically, the American South was hostile to the Catholic Church, owing to the region's predominantly Protestant population, and anti-Catholicism was a regular occurrence. Subsequently, Catholic colleges and schools suffered. Those institutions that experienced success were located in geographic spaces with relatively high Catholic populations, such as New Orleans, Louisiana, and Mobile, Alabama. In addition, several Catholic rural communities existed in Louisiana that boasted active nineteenth-century colleges. For example, Grand Coteau was the site of Louisiana's first Catholic college: St. Charles College (founded 1831). Similarly, in 1864, the Society of Mary (Marists) established St. Mary's Jefferson College in Convent, Louisiana, the first US Marist college. At each of the aforementioned institutions, music was a part of the instructional paradigm. Regardless, these, and several other Louisiana Catholic colleges closed for reasons similar to the above described. Today, three Catholic institutions of higher education remain in Louisiana: Loyola University New Orleans, Xavier University of Louisiana, and University of Holy Cross—all founded in the early twentieth century and largely supported by the Southern metropolis of New Orleans (Manning 2006, Capace 1999).

Given the rise and fall of so many Southern Catholic colleges, it is no surprise that their histories have not been properly recorded. Nor have the histories of their students, administrators, and curricular activities. Many higher education origin stories occurred at colleges that have closed, as is the case with this study's subject. What may have been the earliest Catholic college brass band in the American South was founded, thrived, and ultimately perished at the defunct St. Mary's Jefferson College, in the heart of Louisiana's sugar plantation region. Taking into consideration the lack of published literature concerning nineteenth-century music education in South Louisiana, this study attempts to shed light on the foundation, development, maintenance, and evolution of music instruction at a Catholic college founded at the end of the American Civil War (1861-1865). As has been mentioned, US music instruction underwent extensive instructional and instrumental change during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Music education in South Louisiana followed suit. Though several curricular catalogs and newspapers advertisements depict late nineteenth-century music instruction at Louisiana's Catholic educational institutions, a singular archival document sheds light on the advent and evolution of one early Catholic college brass ensemble—the record book of St. Mary's Brass Band. The record book's entries, penned by student secretaries, detail not only the ensemble's activities, but also the effects of regionality, religion, and Americanization on music instruction.

Figure 1. "St. Mary's], Jefferson College, La." c. 1900. Image courtesy of the Archives of the Society of Mary, Atlanta, GA.

Catholic Music Instruction, Louisiana's Early Colleges, and the Brass Band Movement

Recorded accounts of music education extend back to approximately 500 BCE. As the western expansion of education progressed, the Catholic Church not only engaged in pedagogical practices centered on Catholic dogma and the spread of Christianity, priests also permitted music instruction and student performance as a means to glorify God (Mark & Gary 2013). With the advent of Protestantism (1517), religious education for both Catholics and Protestants progressed simultaneously—though not always amicably. Though limited to the offspring of affluent men and women or those associated with clerical training, religiously-affiliated education spread throughout Europe with music affixed to curricular designs (Sternfeld 1948). From the 1603 establishment of the first Catholic school in colonial American by Franciscan Friars (St. Augustine, Florida), music instruction was attached to New World parochial education in the form of vocal and instrumental instruction (Gray 1991). Though US Catholic education experienced waves of Anti-Catholicism, Catholic schools and colleges persisted. While Northern states such as Maryland, Michigan, and New York experienced significant Catholic numbers, most Southern states, save geographic regions formerly located in French or Spanish colonial territories (South Louisiana, South Alabama, Coastal Mississippi), played host to smaller Catholic populations (Woods 2011). In 1725, the first Catholic school opened in New Orleans. One of the academy's genesis instructors was a music teacher, Pierre Fleurtet (Baudier 1939).

Though state-supported higher education had been a part of the Louisiana landscape since the founding of the Collège d'Orléans in 1812, chartered Catholic colleges in Louisiana did not emerge until 1837. That year, members of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) established St. Charles College. Soon after, Jesuits founded the College of the Immaculate Conception in New Orleans (1849). At these Catholic colleges, music instruction was included (Platt 2014). As Louisiana's educational scene progressed through the antebellum period, music instruction evolved from song and occasional violin lessons to include brass and percussion instruments. Though music was taught in regional parochial schools and colleges, most music instruction was conducted by private tutors. During the early nineteenth century, private music instructors advertised their pedagogical services in newspapers (Baron 2013). Private music tutors offered their services to affluent families and often taught in area plantation homes (Pryor 1981). Regardless of the occurrence of private, home-based music instruction, formalized music education remained a part of South Louisiana's Catholic schools and colleges.

As the US music scene progressed, so did instrumentation and instruction. During the 1840s and 1850s, the United States experienced a surge in industrialization and agricultural wealth. It also experienced an increase in public music performances and the recasting of traditional instruments in group ensembles. Public events, parades, promenades, and concert halls (formerly reserved for string and vocal performances) witnessed the birth of the American brass band. Early brass bands were small groups of male performers who played cornets, valved trombones, early tubas, drums, and cymbals. They provided music to the public (something that was historically reserved for private homes or ticketed events) and played marches or brass arrangements of popular period tunes (Newsome 1998).

As brass bands became commonplace, such ensembles were incorporated into US military units as well as college campuses. Perhaps the earliest establishment of a college brass band in South Louisiana was at Centenary College in Jackson, Louisiana. Despite Louisiana's French heritage, Jackson, located in East Feliciana Parish, was largely populated by Anglo-Americans representing other Southern States such as Virginia and South Carolina. Following the 1803 Louisiana Purchase,

Protestant Anglo-Americans moved to Louisiana en masse to profit from the sugar industry (Rehder 1999). This new population of Anglo-American Southerners steadily increased throughout the antebellum period, affecting the region's cultural and political landscape. When the Collège d'Orléans closed in 1825, Anglo-American legislatures plied for state funding to found a new academy in Jackson. Funds were granted and Louisiana College opened in 1825. That same year Anglo-American legislatures converted the instructional language used in regional schools from French to English. Outraged, Catholic French Creoles put forth funds to establish an institution that would venerate French Creole heritage. The result was Jefferson College, located in the French Creole populated St. James Parish, surrounded by fields of sugarcane and plantation vistas (Morgan 2008, Platt 2017)

When Louisiana College closed in 1845, the campus was purchased by the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1846 and renamed Centenary College. American traditions and practices were commonplace at the Protestant-affiliated institution. In 1851, the college's administration ordered a cadre of brass instruments to establish a band under the direction of a US music educator, Mr. Blackmar (Gipson 2002). At antebellum French Creole Jefferson College, however, music instruction was relegated to the periphery (*Statutes, Plan of Education, and Rules, Adopted in Jefferson College, Louisiana* 18—?). Despite French Creole pride in Jefferson College, funding dropped following the 1837 agricultural panic and a crippling campus fire in 1842. Due to rebuilding debts and poor financial support, Jefferson College closed in 1848. In 1853, the college was reopened under the administration of French immigrant and educator, Louis Dufau. However, owing again to poor social support the college closed in 1856 (Carriere 1974). Three years later, regional planters revived the institution once more, only to have it close for a third time in 1862, due to the Civil War. Fearing that the college would be converted into a freedman's school by Union authorities, planters offered the campus to the Society of Mary (Marists) who reopened the institution in 1864 as St. Mary's Jefferson College (De Sennegy 1877). Prior to the Marist arrival, music instruction under each of the former Jefferson College regimes was maintained by private instructors via individual lessons.

After the Civil War, brass band popularity significantly increased due to the connection with Confederate and Union military units and the need to improve regional morale in the wake of Southern war losses, emancipation, and political reconstruction. As local colleges became symbols for community pride and celebration, festivals tied to campus life became sought after for entertainment. As a result, brass bands formed at colleges across the American South. Additionally, as military instruction was a fixture at several Southern colleges prior to and after the Civil War, brass bands were often affixed to student cadet corps, donned similar uniforms, and led student military units in parades, competitions, and commencement ceremonies. The same was true at various Southern Catholic colleges (Andrew 2001; Platt, McGee, King 2016).

With the end of the Civil War, French Creole plantation wealth was ruined, as were the fortunes of various Anglo-American families. Anglo-American culture had slowly subsumed French Creole culture during the late antebellum period due to the increase in Anglo-Americans relocating to the sugar parishes between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. As Reconstruction-era French Creoles sold plantation properties to American sugar corporations and representatives from Northern states, South Louisiana's sugar region was further Americanized (Rehder 1991, Rodrigue 2001). Soo too was regional curricula. After the war, South Louisiana college curricula shifted from wholly liberal arts to encompass science, commercialism, and brass band instruction. To compete with regional private and state-supported institutions of higher education, the Marist administrators of St. Mary's Jefferson

College incorporated new curricular and extracurricular trends such as business management, accounting, mechanical science, football, baseball, debate, cadet training, and even student journalism (Platt 2017).

St. Mary's Brass Band and the St. Mary's Brass Band Record Book

Before the establishment of athletics and military training at St. Mary's Jefferson College, one particular Americanism significantly influenced the institution. In 1869, several brass instruments were ordered from France by the college's Marist administrators. "On January 22nd, 1869, . . . sixteen brass instruments, one bass drum, a pair of symbols [*sic*], three snare drums, and a triangle" arrived at the campus. That same year, St. Mary's Brass Band was established under the direction of three Marist priests: Jean-Baptist Bigot, Antoine Halbwachs, and Antoine Pompallier. The purpose in establishing the ensemble was "to encourage the study of music to afford the members of that philharmonic society an agreeable and useful pastime during the year and add solemnity and spirit by their performances to the celebration of the Religious and Literary festivals of the College" (Blanc 1878, 6). The brass band comprised the majority of music education at the rural Catholic academy. In time, a small string orchestra was operated in addition to the brass ensemble, but it never gained the popularity of St. Mary's Brass Band. In 1878, the ensemble's new director, Father George S. Rapier, ordered a custom record book from the Mobile Register Bindery in South Alabama to record the ensemble's activities.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, student record books, diaries, etc. were not uncommon. Various examples exist in academic archives or have been published as edited and annotated volumes (Dabney 1863-1869, Jeffrey 2016). Even so, detailed record books kept by students regarding singular extra-curricular organizations—in this case a music ensemble—are not as common. The record book of St. Mary's Brass Band comprises 250

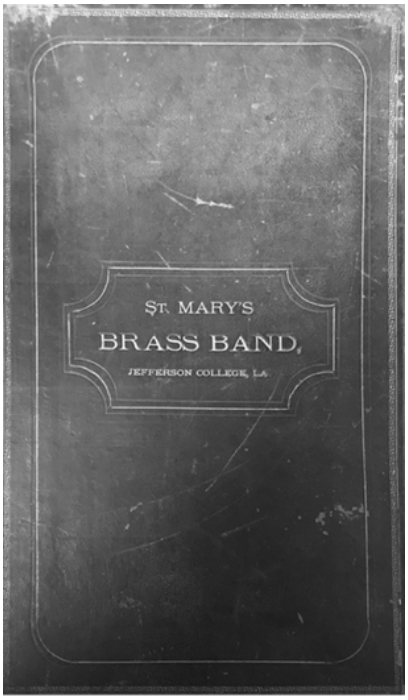


Figure 2. "St. Mary's Brass Band [Record Book], Jefferson College, La." 1878-1905. Image courtesy of the Archives of the Society of Mary, Atlanta, GA.

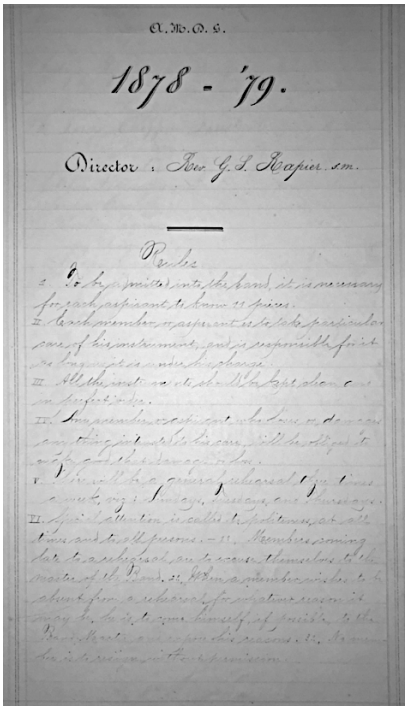
lined and numbered pages, almost two-hundred of which contain copious written documentation that depicts more than three decades of student memory, musical performances, and related activities. When directorship of the brass band was turned over to a US music educator in 1882, members of the brass band were encouraged to engage in a level of student leadership and decision making that had been unheard of in other, similar music organizations at regional Catholic schools and colleges—the election of student leaders by majority vote, music selection and performance by vote, and the maintenance of ensemble record keeping, which had first been established under the directorship of Father Rapier. The first entry in the record book was penned by the brass band's 1878 student secretary, J. C. S. Blanc. The opening entry extols the ensemble's history, rules and regulations, and list of the band's twenty members. Finally, the entry ends with the names of eight "aspirants" who practiced with the

ensemble, but would not perform with the group until their musical talents improved sufficiently to warrant full membership. Each subsequent page provides colorful details of student festivals, Catholic bazaars, funeral parades, Mardi Gras celebrations, commencement ceremonies, changes in instrumentation, the results of student elections, etc., accompanied by or associated with the college brass band.

As time passed, music selections performed by the brass band reflected local cultural changes. In this historically French Creole region influenced by nineteenth-century Paris, music often displayed aspects of French culture. However, as the band progressed into the late 1800s, music selections and performances changed to reflect regional Americanization trends. Though the Americanization of St. Mary's Brass Band is evident in the ensemble's record book, regional changes related to the nineteenth-century influx of German and Irish immigrants are also apparent. While French Creole influence gave way to an Americanized music repertoire, religion, in this case Catholicism, remained omnipresent throughout the lifespan of the student organization. A detailed analysis of the record book's myriad entries illustrates three aspects germane to the existence and evolution of music education at a South Louisiana Catholic college in the latter-half of the nineteenth/early twentieth century: religion, regionality, and Americanization. As a record of a Catholic academy situated in Louisiana's French Creole sugar plantation region slowly acclimating to Anglo-American culture, numerous instances in this significant primary source showcase how religion, regionality, and Americanization each influenced music education and performance.

Religion

When St. Mary's Brass Band was founded in 1869, the student ensemble was organized under the patronage of St. Mary. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also a patron saint of St. Mary's Jefferson College. In addition to honoring Mary, the ensemble also venerated the Holy Family. The names Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are often inscribed on record book pages via the acronym "JMJ." Such symbolism did much to link the brass band to the college and to the Catholic Church. Reflecting these continuing ties, Father Henry Gaud, president of the Marist college (1870-1874), presented the ensemble with a "costly banner" that was blessed during a high mass at the campus chapel (Blanc 1878). Religious symbolism is evident in the record book, but equally important are the entries recounting the group's participation in Catholic ceremonies and festivals. The brass band regularly performed at fairs and fundraising bazaars in support of local churches such as St. James Church in Vacherie, Louisiana, nearby St. Michael's Church in the town of Convent, and Holy Name of Mary Church in Algiers, across the Mississippi River from New Orleans (Tuxillo 1886, Derivas 1892, Middleton 1895).


A. M. D. G.

1878 - '79.

Director : Rev. G. L. Kaper, S.M.

Rules

Figure 3. "St. Mary's Brass Band [Record Book], Jefferson College, La." 1878-1879 rules entry. Image courtesy of the Archives of the Society of Mary, Atlanta, GA.

Likewise, the band often led the campus procession of Corpus Christi near the end of each academic year, as well as processions associated with the Feast of the Assumption of Mary in August (Lacassagne 1883). In 1886, the band's student secretary, Robert Truxillo, recorded that year's Feast of Corpus Christi, the associated religious pomp and circumstance, and the ensemble's role in venerating the Body of Christ: "The band was called to order in front of the [campus] Chapel; to join in the procession. . . . Immediately following the cross . . . [came] the banner of St. Mary's Brass Band . . . followed by the Sodalists, headed by their banner . . . and lastly the clergy. . ." (1886, June 24) St. Mary's Brass Band became a regular fixture at campus and local religious celebrations. The band so often performed at holy services that archbishops and other religious leaders commented on the ensemble's ability.

In 1885 the brass band performed for Father James Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore, Maryland. The following year, the ensemble performed for Sénior Staniero, a delegate from Rome (E. Rapier 1886). In March of 1888, New Orleans Archbishop Francis Janssens visited the college and "administered the sacrament of confirmation to about 24 boys." When Janssens arrived, the band "burst forth in a loud but harmonious strain." The archbishop was so taken by the band's performance that he requested their presence at a similar confirmation ceremony at the nearby Convent of the Sacred Heart. After the ceremony, "the boys immediately fell into ranks, and another march was played during the retreating procession. The Band marched under a small tree which afforded but a scanty shade, and there prepared to give a concert." Janssens heaped so much praise on St. Mary's Brass Band that the student musicians offered up "three cheers for the Arch-Bishop [*sic*]" (Dornier 1888, March 14).

St. Mary's Brass Band performed not only for sacramental ceremonies, but also for marriages, funerals, and Catholic processions that honored the deceased. When Father Rapier, the band's former director and college president died in 1887, the ensemble not only accompanied the mass for the repose of Rapier's soul, they marched and played at the front of his funeral procession. They continued to play while Rapier's body was interred in a crypt next to the campus chapel (Lauve 1887). Likewise, the band regularly attended and performed for the November 1st Feast of All Saints, in veneration of the faithfully departed. The band's secretary, Sidney Montéguh, recorded events related to the group's cemetery performance: "In the evening the sorrowing train [of people] moved towards the graveyard where Reverend Father Mandy preached an eloquent sermon . . . The sermon being finished, the auditors, most of them now 'with beads of sorrow on their cheeks,' took a farewell parting to the city of the dead. With weary steps and sorrowed hearts, we arrived at College there to meditate on what we had seen and heard during the course of the day" (1887, November 1). In 1894, additional details about the band's presence at the annual Feast of All Saints were recounted: "There were many eyes dimmed with tears [at the cemetery]. The crowd then repaired to the church lawn where the Band played several lively pieces to allay their spirits" (Coco 1894, November 1).

The presence of St. Mary's Brass Band at the annual mourning rituals, as well as other Catholic festivals and services, illustrates the influence of religion on the ensemble's music selection, regular practices to perfect appropriate compositions, and promotion of the college's strong Catholic affiliation. This strong influence is perhaps unsurprising, for as previously mentioned, Catholicism in South Louisiana was and remains an important part of regional culture. Aspects of Catholicism intertwined with the area's French Creole heritage, Irish and German immigrant culture, as well as the ethos influenced by Southern secession, the Confederacy, and post-Civil War society.

Regionality

Catholicism has long been a part of Louisiana's cultural heritage. So too has Francophilia, Confederate "lost cause" sympathies, and aspects of Southern history tied to racism and segregation. Though Louisiana became a US state in 1812, many of its nineteenth-century residents claimed a lineage that crossed the Atlantic Ocean. As many St. Mary's Jefferson College students were part of French Creole families, they, like their progenitors, heralded France as the mother of Louisiana. In 1869, members of St. Mary's Brass Band performed the "Marseillaise" and "Galop de la Bande Noire" to acknowledge regional ties to Paris. While the band occasionally played French music, the ensemble also performed pieces that resonated with other Louisiana immigrant populations. The band sometimes played "Wearing of the Green" (Blanc 1878), which was popular with Irish individuals who immigrated to Louisiana during the nineteenth century (Kelley 2014). Furthermore, in post-Civil War Louisiana, music that venerated the Confederacy was often performed.

In 1870, St. Mary's Brass Band performed "Overture [to] Stonewall Jackson," in veneration of the Confederate General. Similarly, in 1872, brass band members played "Dixie's Land," a famed pro-Confederate tune (Blanc 1878). When former Confederate officers visited the college, brass band members heralded their arrival with musical scores that venerated the Confederate Lost Cause. In 1887, Louisiana governor Francis Tillou Nicholls, former Confederate brigadier general (Dawson 1990), visited the Marist college to review the campus and its academic activities. The band's secretary recorded the following regarding Nicholls' arrival: "The college threw open her massive doors to receive an honorable visitant, Francis T. Nicholls . . . a true patriot—one who was, in turn, a brave warrior . . . who stood with unflinching hand at the helm of his cherished country to guide her free-born sons in the broad pathway of duty and virtue." The student secretary not only regarded Nicholls as a Southern patriot, but also one who defended the Confederacy and its "free born" white citizens. Nicholls was moved by the musical reception and requested that the college president declare the rest of the day a holiday (Montéguh 1887, November). US archbishops, Louisiana governors, and even local celebrities appear to have frequented the campus of St. Mary's Jefferson College. For example, in 1891 the famed female journalist for the New Orleans-based *Times Picayune* newspaper, Martha Field, visited the campus while writing about late-nineteenth-century sugar plantation life. During her visit, Field (who wrote under the pseudonym Catherine Cole) was afforded the opportunity to listen to the college brass band (McLaughlin & McLaughlin 2006). Thereafter, she wrote a positive review of the ensemble in her newspaper column (Brou 1891).

Interest in South Louisiana's post-Civil-War plantation vestiges brought many tourists to the sugar parishes. Travelers not only commented on the region's sugarcane crop, they also recognized the importance of the Mississippi River to local residents. Indeed, the river not only influenced agriculture, but also the travel performances of St. Mary's Brass Band. Ensemble members often practiced marching while playing their instruments on the winding road adjacent to the river. The brass band's secretary recorded that residents watched the ensemble march by playing a crowd favorite, "Les Dragons de La Reine" (1886). The tune, composed by Austrian pianist and 1867 New York immigrant, Heinrich Maylath, honored the queen of France's personal guard (Remy 1919). Not only did the brass band practice on the river road, they also traversed the waterway to perform for social events. Multiple record book entries reference traveling and performing on "floating palace" river boats (Blanc 1878, Groetsch 1893).

Student secretaries wrote about trips on steamboats such as the *Pelican* to perform at plantation picnics (Points 1898). At the home of Hector Hymel, the band played to a local crowd. Thereafter, "the band proceeding to a large oak,

where a sumptuous meal awaited them. The boys were well treated and enjoyed themselves exceedingly well." That evening, the band "marched as far as Thibodaux's, where they were invited to take a glass of wine" (Groetsch 1893, February 5). Alcohol was commonplace at South Louisiana festivals and brass band students often recorded their enjoyment of both. At one particular event, the band's student secretary Leon J. Coco recorded, "We were indeed very hospitably treated. At 11 we were given an excellent supper. Our appetites were as sharp as swords and we did ample justice to the meal. Punch, soda, lemonade, beer and even champagne were at our demand" (1894, September 16).

Recollections of local celebrations and social gatherings fill the pages of the record book. During the Christmas season, the band marched from the college campus to the earthen levees that flanked the Mississippi River. Bonfires roared atop the levees while the band played festive overtures and marches for onlookers who attended the annual tradition (Bourgeois January 6, 1884). Similarly, the ensemble participated in yearly Mardi Gras parades and festivities (Lacassagne 1883). Though these regional traditions long influenced the performances of St. Mary's Brass Band, the Americanization of South Louisiana continued. By the end of the nineteenth century the ensemble reflected more American traditions than it had in the past.

Americanization

As early as 1869, St. Mary's Brass Band began playing US favorites such as John Howard Payne's "Home, Sweet Home" (Blanc 1878). Payne was an American actor and singer who made the tune popular following its inclusion in the 1823 opera, *Clari, or the Maid of Milan* (Sylvester 1922). That same year, the band played "Hail Columbia," one of the unofficial US anthems prior to the 1931 adoption of the "Star-Spangled Banner" (Blanc 1878, Collins 2003). Excerpts from European composers popular in America during the latter half of the nineteenth century were often performed by the college band. Pieces such as the overture from the *Barber of Seville* and the "Anvil Chorus" were heard at events that featured the ensemble.

As in the American South, racism permeated the larger sphere of nineteenth-century US society. Racist aspects often appeared in music composed by Northerners as well as Southerners. For example, during the 1870s, the brass band played "Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me" by American composer T. Brigham Bishop (Blanc 1878). Bishop composed the song during the Civil War while in command of a Union African-American military unit. Originally, the song contained racial slurs and references to Bishop's regiment—Company G (Macintyre 1916). As music selections and performances were influenced by Americanization, so too was the ensemble's organizational structure and operation.

In 1882, directorship of the band was turned over to an American musician and music educator, Professor F. Greene (Lacassagne 1883). When Greene assumed directorship, he introduced another facet of Americanization: democracy. Despite the democratic state governmental conversion of Louisiana in 1812, local Catholic organizations remained authoritarian. St. Mary's Jefferson College was similarly governed with Marist priests comprising all high-level administrative positions. Even so, the continued Americanization of South Louisiana caused the region's cultural stance to favor collective voice in lieu of strict dictatorial leadership. While the Marist college's administrative structure resembled the hierarchical norm of the Catholic Church, student organizations such as St. Mary's Brass Band experienced an increase in democratic practices.

During the early 1880s, yearly democratic elections for student president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer were incorporated (Lacassagne 1882, Middleton 1894, Nargassans 1905). Likewise, if an aspirant wished to join the performing group, he had to

Figure 4. "St. Mary's Brass Band," c 1903. Image courtesy of the Archives of the Society of Mary, Atlanta, GA.

formally apply, audition, and be voted in by existing ensemble members. Organizational rules and monetary fines for infractions were also decided by vote (Lacassagne 1883, Bourgeois 1885). The group went so far to ensure a collective, democratic voice by having the student secretary submit draft reports for peer review before they were entered into the record book (Landry 1889).

In addition to democracy, other aspects of Americanization influenced the brass band. American militarism was common at Southern colleges during the nineteenth century. Militarism at St. Mary's Jefferson College, on the other hand, seems to have begun with the brass band. Military marches had been popular among brass band members since the 1870s. During the 1890s, the organization adopted several marches composed by "The March King," John Phillip Sousa, director of the US Marine Band. The group performed Sousa's "In Memoriam: President Garfield's Funeral March" to honor college presidents that passed away (Middleton 1895). The band played other Sousa marches such as "The Bells of Chicago" and "Red, White, and Blue" (a sobriquet for "Stars and Stripes Forever") at campus ceremonies (Points 1898).

Just as American militarism influenced the band, so too did American athletics. Due to the proliferation of college sports in the American South (baseball and football in particular), brass bands often performed at athletic events. The same was true for St. Mary's Brass Band. Indeed, a popular tune played by the ensemble during the 1880s and 1890s was titled "Base-Ball" (Truxillo 1885). In 1901, it was recorded that the ensemble performed at regional athletic events including St. Mary's Jefferson College baseball games as well as local Catholic academy sporting events. At the end of these athletic events, the band would play "Home Sweet Home" if requested by the crowd (Broussard 1901).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, additional elements of Americanization became evident at the Marist college and were observable in the brass band. In the 1890s, cadet training was incorporated at St. Mary's Jefferson College. Student cadets, along with members of the brass band, donned fatigues similar to West Point uniforms. The band was thereafter attached to the college cadets and led the uniform-clad students in military drills (Groetsch 1893). Donning military attire, members of St. Mary's Brass Band performed on national holidays including the January 8th holiday that commemorated President Andrew Jackson's victory at the 1812 Battle of New Orleans. Per the band's student secretary: "Just as the blush of morn began to mantle in the East, the old Jefferson bell tolled the dawn of that legal holiday which commemorated the birth of American freedom. . . . [T]he sun, emerging from the eastern horizon, shed the blithesome rays of liberty over the fantastic oaks & white washed walls of our beloved Alma Mater. That pride which animated our forefathers roused the spirits of every student. The band rendered a few national airs & was enthusiastically applauded" (Broussard 1902, January 8).

Though St. Mary's Brass Band entered the twentieth century playing military marches and newly-learned American rag-time tunes, the ensemble languished in the early twentieth century. In 1900, Professor Greene stepped down as director and Professor L. Staiert, a recent European immigrant, assumed the

position. Staiert, it would appear, did not share Greene's enthusiasm for record keeping or the brass band in general. From 1901 until 1905, detailed student secretary recording keeping dramatically decreased. In 1905 the record book ends with a list of that year's 29 brass band members (Nargassans 1905). From 1906 until Staiert resigned in 1912, the brass band performed sporadically. The college's orchestra, however, took center stage as Stairt seemed to prefer European orchestral traditions to American brass band instruction. Thereafter, the ensemble experienced almost yearly directorship turnover ("St. Mary's Jefferson College Catalogs" 1900-1920). Many of these new music educators were also European immigrants who paid little or no attention to the college brass band. Instead, they highlighted orchestral instruction and performance. While the brass band diminished, St. Mary's Jefferson College was also weakening. Due to curricular competition with large, regional public and private universities such as Tulane University of Louisiana and Louisiana State University, St. Mary's Jefferson College began to decline. In 1927, the Mississippi River rose to an unprecedented level and flooded South Louisiana's agricultural region. Countless livelihoods were lost and the Marist college was further diminished. The college closed that year, ending more than six decades of Catholic higher education in the sugar parishes (Platt 2017).

Conclusion

After the closure of St. Mary's Jefferson College, all related records, including the record book of St. Mary's Brass Band, were sent to the Marist archives in Washington, D.C. During the twentieth century, the archives were relocated to the Marist School in Atlanta, Georgia. Until now, the record book has gone largely unexamined. Despite the myriad details provided about the band, no significant accounts of national politics, regional social class struggles, or elements regarding race or gender were recorded by student secretaries. Only one entry makes note of race. On May 29, 1886, the ensemble attended a fair at St. James Catholic Church. While there, the student group witnessed a "band of Colored Musicians" passing by the churchyard (Truxillo 1886, May 29). Likewise, aspects related to gender are mentioned infrequently. A handful of entries mention female students attending the local Sacred Heart Convent school. It appears that the record book reflects the limited world in which the students of St. Mary's Jefferson College lived, confined to the events of rural campus life and local performance venues set amidst the backdrop of sugarcane fields and Americanized South Louisiana culture.

Still, this significant primary source allows for unique insights concerning student life and music education at a South Louisiana Catholic college. Despite the closure of St. Mary's Jefferson College and the end of St. Mary's Brass Band, the brass band movement had taken hold at other colleges and universities across the American South. Though the Marist college brass band no longer exists, the organization's detailed record book does much to illustrate more than three decades of social and music education evolution as influenced by religion, regionality, and the Americanization of higher education in the sugar parishes of French Creole Louisiana.

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