

Doctoral Dissertations On The History Of Music Education And Music Therapy

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The purpose of this study is to examine selected characteristics and trends in historical research in music education and music therapy. Specifically, the researchers examined the entire body of doctoral dissertations on the history of music education and music therapy written at American universities through 1989. The following variables were examined for each dissertation: topic, granting institution, geographical region of the granting institution, type of degree, and sex of the author.

Some researchers have examined the content and other aspects of master's theses and doctoral dissertations in music education and music therapy (Bentley, 1975; Cather, 1950; Cipolla, 1979, 1980; Fonder, 1994; Kantorski, 1994; Leglar, 1993; Weimer, 1980/1981; Worthington, 1956/1957), while others have examined various presentation modes of re-

search, some of which include graduate student documents (Brittin & Standley, 1994; Gilbert, 1979; Grashel & Lowe, 1995; Hammett, 1985; Hedden, 1992, 1993; Heller, 1992; Hooper, 1969/1970; Humphreys, in press; Humphreys & Stauffer, 1996; James, 1985; Jellison, 1973; Karjala, 1973; Kjerstad, 1932; Kratus, 1992, 1993; LeBlanc & McCrary, 1991; Nutting, 1978/1979; Sample, 1992; Schmidt & Zdzinski, 1993; Schneider & Cady, 1965; Stabler, 1986/1987; Standley, 1984; Yarbrough, 1984, 1996). A few researchers have examined various other aspects of the history of research in music education and music therapy (Bergee, 1987; Butler, 1973/1974; Fiske, 1992; Heller, 1987, 1990; Humphreys, 1985a, 1985b, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1993; Mark, 1992). In addition, Humphreys (1989) compiled a bibliography of music education theses and dissertations published

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Table 1 -- Frequencies of Topics Within Decades and Percentages Within

Topics Across Decades

Decade	Topic						Total	x ² (df=5)
	Bio	K-12	C/U	Com	PO	Oth		
1920s	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	—
	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%		
1930s	2	0	0	0	0	1	3	—
	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%	33%		
1940s	3	1	4	1	2	2	13	—
	23%	8%	31%	8%	15%	15%		
1950s	6	10	13	5	4	18	56	15.79**
	11%	18%	23%	9%	7%	32%		
1960s	27	34	32	28	12	59	192	36.69***
	14%	18%	17%	15%	6%	31%		
1970s	63	22	28	35	12	70	230	70.17***
	27%	10%	12%	15%	5%	30%		
1980s	39	16	16	9	14	40	134	41.07***
	29%	12%	12%	7%	10%	30%		
Total	140	83	93	78	44	191	629	130.69***
	22%	13%	15%	12%	7%	30%		
x ² (df=3)	12.18**	3.51	5.12	4.44	2.00	.09		

Note: chi-squares computed for 1950s-1980s only.

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

before 1932, and Heller (1992) examined published historical research in music education and therapy during a 25-year period. To date, no researcher has examined the entire output of historical dissertations in music education and music therapy.

Method

A master list of historical dissertations was compiled from various sources (*Dissertation Abstracts International*, 1938-1991; Gordon, 1964, 1968, 1972, 1978; Hartley, 1966; Heller, 1991; Humphreys, 1989; Larson, 1949, 1957). The three authors of the present study independently assigned each dissertation to one of seven topical categories: biography, K-12 music education, college/university/teacher education, community/church music, professional organizations, other, or not applicable. (Professional organizations were defined as organizations oriented toward music education, not music performance.) These categories seemed to fit the data better than those employed by either Gottschalk (1969) or Heller (1992), both of whom used fewer categories. The categories are similar to those employed by Kratus (1992) in his study of empirical articles published in three music education research journals over three decades.

Beginning with the first known American dissertation on the history of music education (Spell, 1923), data were compiled separately for each of the seven decades. Decades were defined as: Decade 1, 1920-29; Decade 2, 1930-39; . . . Decade 7, 1980-89. Each dissertation was assigned to the decade in which the degree was granted.

Granting institutions (using their current names) and degree titles were tabulated by decade. The various degree titles were collapsed into three categories: Ph.D., Ed.D. (including D.Ed., D.M.E., M.Ed.D.), and D.M.A. (including D.A., D.M., M.A.D., S.M.D., Mus.D., A.M.D.). Region of the granting institution was classified according to the six divisions of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC). Current divisional configurations were used. When possible, sex of the author was determined from the first, or given, names; granting institutions' records were consulted for the sex of persons with ambiguous names.

Results

Of the 629 dissertations on the master list, the three raters agreed unanimously on topical categorizations for 515 works (82 percent). Two of the three raters agreed on 111 of the remaining works (18 percent); in these cases, the category chosen by the two agreeing raters was used. The three raters failed to agree completely on only three dissertations (less than 1 percent). In these cases, the principal author's categorizations were used. Interrater agreement, calculated by the formula $\text{agreements}/(\text{agreements} + \text{disagreements})$, was .90, .89, and .85 for the three pairs of ratings (i. e., raters A/B, A/C, B/C), for a mean agreement of .88. None of the dissertations on the master list was categorized as "not applicable" by two or more raters; therefore, all 629 works were included in the analysis.

The frequencies and percentages of each topic by decade are displayed in Table 1. The number of historical dissertations increased steadily from Decade 1 through Decade 6, with a statistically significant decline from Decade 6 ($n = 230$) to Decade 7 ($n = 134$) ($\chi^2 = 25.32$, $df = 1$, $p < .001$). Chi-square analysis also reveals significant differences in topics chosen during each of the last four decades (1950s-1980s). (The extremely small frequencies from the first three decades were deemed inconsequential and therefore were not analyzed.) "Other" is the largest category in each decade, with 30 percent of the total over the seven decades. Biography is the second largest topical category (22 percent). Percentages in the college/university/teacher education (15 percent), K-12 music education (13 percent), and community/church music (12 percent) categories are similar to each other. Professional organizations was the least popular category (7 percent). Within topics across decades, only biography registered a statistically significant change over time as a percentage of topics chosen, from 11 percent in the 1950s to 29 percent in the 1980s. Altogether, doctoral dissertations related to the history of music education or music therapy were produced at 84 institutions from the 1920s through the 1980s. Twenty of these institutions contributed 450

Table 2

Rank	In
1	U
2	F
3	U
4	U
5	U
6	I
7	U
8	C
9.5	C
9.5	N
11.5	B
11.5	G
13	N
14	U
15.5	U
15.5	U
17	C
18.5	U
18.5	U
20	U

Table 2 -- Top Twenty Granting Institutions

Rank	Institution	1920s	1930s	1940s	1950s	1960s	1970s	1980s	Total
1	U. Michigan	0	0	0	8	31	40	4	83
2	Florida St. U.	0	0	0	1	16	14	7	38
3	U. Illinois	0	0	0	1	10	10	13	34
4	U. Minnesota	0	0	1	1	8	12	6	28
5	U. Iowa	0	0	0	1	11	14	0	26
6	Indiana U.	0	0	0	2	11	7	5	25
7	U. Sou. Cal.	0	0	0	7	14	3	0	24
8	Columbia U.	0	0	1	4	8	6	4	23
9.5	Catholic U.	0	0	0	2	2	12	3	19
9.5	Northwest U.	0	0	0	5	5	4	5	19
11.5	Boston U.	0	0	0	1	13	1	3	18
11.5	George Pea. C.	0	0	3	1	5	7	2	18
13	New York U.	0	1	1	4	2	5	3	16
14	U. Cincinnati	0	0	3	2	1	4	5	15
15.5	UMKC	0	0	0	0	4	7	1	12
15.5	U. Texas	1	0	0	1	3	7	0	12
17	Ohio St. U.	0	1	2	1	2	2	3	11
18.5	U. Nor. Col.	0	0	0	0	0	4	6	10
18.5	U. Rochester	0	0	0	1	2	6	1	10
20	U. Nor. Texas	0	0	0	0	0	2	7	9

Surely, one could argue that the number of dissertations produced is as valid a measure of institutional eminence as the number of articles published in selected journals by a given institution's faculty...but they are questionable measures of individual and institutional eminence because relative quality is not assessed directly in either case.

(just under 72 percent) of the 629 documents (Table 2).

The mean number of dissertations sponsored by the 84 institutions is 7.49, but the median is three and the mode only one, with some 13 institutions each sponsoring only one historical dissertation during the seven decades. The disparity among institutions can be seen in the large standard deviation (11.64). The University of Michigan produced 83 documents, 13 percent of the total and well over twice as many as the next most prolific institution. After producing the most dissertations in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, including 40 during the 1970s alone, Michigan produced only four historical dissertations in the 1980s, however, tying it for ninth place with four other institutions (Table 2). Another dramatic change occurred at the University of Iowa, which tied with Florida State University for second place in the 1970s with 14 documents each, but produced no historical dissertations in the 1980s. The decline at Michigan and Iowa alone accounts for 52 percent of the total decline between the two decades (50 out of a total decline of 96). Other large declines occurred at Florida State, the University of Minnesota, Catholic University, George Peabody College for Teachers of Vanderbilt University, the University of Missouri-Kansas City, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Rochester. Altogether, declines at the nine institutions named above account for 95 of the national decline of 96 dissertations. In fact, production declined at 13 of the overall 20 top institutions between the 1970s and 1980s. The other seven institutions increased their production, but only the University of North Texas registered a relatively

large increase. No institution contributed dissertations in each of the seven decades, although two — New York University and Ohio State University — produced documents in six decades.

The production of dissertations in each MENC division is shown in Table 3. Statistically significant differences occurred between divisions in each of the last four decades (1950s-1980s), with the North Central Division leading in each decade. The North Central Division produced 42 percent of the total works, more than twice as many as the Eastern Division, the second most prolific division with 20 percent of the total. The Northwest Division produced only 6 historical dissertations over the seven decades, the least by far and less than 1 percent of the national total. Three divisions made statistically significant changes across decades in the percentage of the total for each decade: the Southern and Southwestern divisions increased significantly, while the Western Division decreased significantly. Of the top 20 granting institutions, only two are located in the Southern Division (Florida State and George Peabody), only one in the Western Division (the University of Southern California), and none in the Northwest Division (Table 3).

More than half (56 percent) of all the degrees are Ph.D.'s (Table 4), while Ed.D.-type degrees account for 27 percent of the total. D.M.A.-type degrees first appeared in the 1950s, including five D.M.A.'s (all from the University of Southern California) and one M.A.D. (from Boston University). The number of degrees by type is significantly different within each decade (1950s-1980s). Ph.D.'s led in each decade, and Ed.D.-type degrees were second in each decade except

Table 3--G

Output Wit

Decade

1920s

1930s

1940s

1950s

1960s

1970s

1980s

Total

χ^2 (df=3)

Note: ch

* $p < .05$;

Table 3--Granting Institutions by MENC Division: Frequencies of Divisional Output Within Decades and Percentages Within Divisions Across Decades

Decade	Division						χ^2 (df=5)
	East	NC.	NW.	South	SW.	West.	
1920s	0	0	0	0	1	0	—
	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	
1930s	1	2	0	0	0	0	—
	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%	
1940s	3	7	0	3	0	0	—
	23%	54%	0%	23%	0%	0%	
1950s	16	26	0	3	1	10	55.66***
	29%	46%	0%	5%	2%	18%	
1960s	38	81	2	30	20	21	112.70***
	20%	42%	1%	16%	10%	11%	
1970s	45	102	2	44	30	7	169.61***
	20%	44%	1%	19%	13%	3%	
1980s	23	46	2	30	26	7	57.37***
	17%	34%	1%	22%	19%	5%	
Total	126	264	6	110	78	45	380.40***
	20%	42%	1%	17%	12%	7%	
χ^2 (df=3)	3.76	2.01	—	10.65*	13.63**	14.78**	

Note: chi-squares computed for 1950s-1980s only.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 4-- Degrees by Decade: Frequencies of Degree Types Within Decades and Decade Percentages Across Decades

Decade	Degree Type			x ² (df=2)
	Ph.D.	Ed.D.	D.M.A.	
1920s	1	0	0	--
	100%	0%	0%	
1930s	2	1	0	--
	67%	33%	0%	
1940s	10	3	0	--
	77%	23%	0%	
1950s	33	17	6	19.75***
	59%	30%	11%	
1960s	101	61	30	39.50***
	53%	32%	16%	
1970s	136	53	41	69.82***
	59%	23%	18%	
1980s	67	33	34	16.76***
	50%	25%	25%	
Total	350	168	111	76.80***
	56%	27%	18%	
x ² (df=3)	1.09	1.94	5.76	

Note: chi-squares computed for 1950s-1980s only.

*p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

Table
Author

Note:
*p <

Table 5

Author Sex Within Decades and Sex Percentages Across Decades

Decade	Male	Female	χ^2 (df=1)
1920s	0 0%	1 100%	—
1930s	3 100%	0 0%	—
1940s	13 100%	0 0%	—
1950s	50 89%	6 11%	34.58***
1960s	163 85%	29 15%	93.52***
1970s	182 79%	48 21%	93.52***
1980s	86 64%	48 36%	10.78**
Total	497 79%	132 21%	211.80***
χ^2 (df=3)	4.55	4.55	

Note: chi-squares computed for 1950s-1980s only.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

...certain regions, institutions, and one individual in particular made significant contributions to the knowledge base in the history of music education.

for the 1980s, when they were surpassed slightly by D.M.A.-type degrees. Although the number and percentage of D.M.A.'s increased across decades, the percentage of all three types of degrees remained constant within statistical limits ($p > .05$) from the 1950s-1980s.

The first author was female, but no more female-authored historical dissertations appeared until the 1950s (Table 5). From that point on, the difference within each decade is significant in favor of men. The percentage of female authorship did grow considerably, from 11 percent to 36 percent during the last four decades, but the growth is not statistically significant. Even when data from the first three decades are collapsed into one cell (female = 6 percent), the change across decades is not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 6.50$, $df = 4$, $p > .05$). Women have contributed 21 percent of the total dissertations.

Conclusions

Heller (1992) speculated that the decreasing numbers of historical dissertations in the 1980s may have been due to declining numbers of doctoral students or to increasing interest in empirical research on the part of doctoral students and their advisors. No reliable figures are available on the total number of music education and music therapy dissertations produced in this country, but data compiled by the National Center for Education Statistics (1988, 1989, 1990, 1991) suggest that the number of doctorates granted annually in the visual and performing arts increased slightly from 1970 through 1989. Therefore, the national data indicate that increasing interest in empirical research (or perhaps declining interest in historical research) may be the main reason, rather than declining numbers of doctoral students. Nevertheless, the percentage of historical dissertations produced at American universities remains high relative to the United Kingdom,

where Bentley (1975) presented "a list of researches presented for higher degrees [in music] in the universities . . ." (p. 105) between 1920 and 1974. Bentley's list, which contains master's projects, includes only four works that seem clearly historical and two more that could be considered hybrids. Only one of these (Rush, 1971) is a doctoral dissertation.

Heller (1992) found only four dissertations on music therapy history. The present study identified five,¹ for a ratio of music education to music therapy historical dissertations of 624:5. Three of the therapy dissertations were produced at the University of Kansas, one at Pennsylvania State University, and one at the University of Michigan. Clearly, more work should be done on the history of music therapy (Heller, 1992), a field with a long and distinguished history.

As for topics, Kratus (1992) found that students in grades 1-12 were used as subjects of empirical research more frequently than college-age students in articles published in three journals during the 1960s and 1970s, but not in the 1980s. On the other hand, Yarbrough (1984) found that college/university students comprised a large proportion of empirical subjects in articles published in the *Journal of Research in Music Education* (JRME) during its first thirty years. However, neither author applied tests of statistical significance to their data. The present study did not find substantial differences between K-12 and college-age subjects in historical dissertations or statistically significant shifts in topics over time, except for a larger percentage of biographies. These findings suggest that historians have been reasonably balanced with respect to K-12 and college-age subjects. In addition, the fact that 30 percent of the dissertations were classified as "other" suggests that a broad range of topics has been chosen by historical researchers.

No systematic attempt was made to collect data regarding individual faculty members

who directed the 629 dissertations, but Allen Britton directed some 52 dissertations at the University of Michigan in the 1950s-80s, most of them historical (Britton, personal communication, April 6, 1994). Undoubtedly, Britton is the individual leader nationally in directing historical dissertations. Thanks in large part to Britton's leadership, Michigan was the undisputed leader in the production of historical dissertations for three decades (1950s-1970s), but no institution or individual emerged to take Michigan's or Britton's place during the 1980s. The University of Illinois produced more historical dissertations than any other institution in the 1980s (13), but that number fell far short of the 40 turned out by Michigan in the 1970s.

If the number of dissertations of a certain type can be considered a measure of institutional eminence, the results of this study differ from those of Standley (1984) and Britton and Standley (1994), who used faculty publications in selected music education research journals as the criterion for eminence. In fact, the top 20 institutions in the present study (Table 2) and the top twenty in Standley's (1984) study of music education faculty research productivity contain only nine institutions in common. Surely, one could argue that the number of dissertations produced is as valid a measure of institutional eminence as the number of articles published in selected journals by a given institution's faculty. Both types of data make for interesting reading and probably provide valid information about certain aspects of institutional and individual productivity, but they are questionable measures of individual and institutional eminence because relative quality is not assessed directly in either case. Similarly, the criterion of number of citations of individual authors by other researchers (e.g., Kratus, 1993; Schmidt & Zdzinski, 1993) can be misleading as a means of individual eminence due to the popularity of certain topics relative to others.

There have been very few studies of regional differences conducted in music education or music therapy. This study, however, points out clear, consistent, and statistically significant regional differences in the produc-

tion of historical dissertations. Only the Southern and Southwestern divisions increased their outputs significantly over the decades, and only the Western Division decreased significantly. An inspection of the data suggests that the production decline in the Western Division can be attributed to decreased activity at the University of Southern California, which provided most of the earlier output (Table 2). Population growth in the Southern and Southwestern divisions could explain their ascendancy, but not the decline in the Western Division, which has experienced population growth also. Clearly, the North Central Division is the leader, followed by the Eastern Division. For unknown reasons, the Northwest Division has contributed very little to historical scholarship in this field.

D.M.A.'s and related degrees increased in number over the years, probably due in part to performance degree candidates who completed dissertations related to the history of music education. The increase was not statistically significant, however. Clearly, the Ph.D. was and remains the degree of choice among historical researchers.

The percentage of historical dissertations produced by women increased with each passing decade beginning in the 1950s, although the difference is not statistically significant. The finding that women contributed 36 percent of the historical dissertations in the 1980s parallels Hedden's (1992) finding of a sharp increase in paper presentations by females beginning in the 1970s, and his finding that females authored approximately 40 percent of JRME articles in volumes 27-38 (late 1970s and 1980s) (Hedden, 1993). The increase in female authors also corroborates the large increase in female JRME editorial members in the 1970s and 1980s (Humphreys & Stauffer, 1996), and in female authorship of dissertations related to string education in the 1980s and 1990s (Kantorski, 1994).

Despite the fact that no attempt was made to access the quality of the dissertations, the results of this study demonstrate that certain regions, institutions, and one individual in particular made significant contributions to the knowledge base in the history of music education. The results also reinforce George

Heller's (1992) statements about the current status of historical research in music education and music therapy:

Synthesis is still needed. The time may be fast approaching for music education historians to attempt large overviews and broader themes than they have tackled in the past... Music therapy historians still lack so much basic research as to make a synthesis impossible at this time. (p. 61)

Indeed, more synthesis is needed in music education historiography. Nevertheless, these 629 dissertations constitute an extremely valuable body of information in themselves. Perhaps most important is their contribution to the knowledge base of the history of music education. Most extant historical textbooks and other extended treatises in music education history owe much to this body of historical dissertations. Music therapy historians, on the other hand, have few secondary sources upon which to draw. To achieve maximum results, both fields should produce more studies on specific topics and more synthesis studies. In addition, inferential statistical tests should be applied when they can facilitate meaningful analysis of historical data.

Notes

1. The therapy dissertation not reported by Heller (1992) is by Boxberger (1963/1964).

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