

The Gender and Race Disparity in the Brass World

By Alexis Kilgore

My research explores the gender discrimination that many female professionals face in the brass industry. This paper highlights noteworthy examples of gender discrimination in the field while also showing that these women are exceedingly capable of their job as brass musicians and teachers. Additionally, this paper advances the discussion of women in the brass industry by articulating why equal treatment and opportunities are key to a diverse field as well as ways society can make this a reality.

Research on the experiences of female brass musicians has been conducted through a literature survey. After cataloging notable stories found in journal articles from the International Trumpet Guild Journal and International Women's Brass Conference Noteworthy News, select stories were used as representative examples. The stories most notable included the following: Abbie Conant's legal battle with the Munich Philharmonic, Mary Lazarus Woodbury's experience as the first female in the 'Pershing's Own' United States Army Band, and Selina Ott's experience as the first female to win the ARD International Music Competition. The stories selected were used to display the unfair treatment female brass musicians have received because of their gender, as well as how they have proven their capability to play professionally.

Data and sources came from relevant books, journal articles, and web information. To be specific, all experiences came from personal communications and recent journal articles while older sources such as books were used to give information on what the old-fashioned gender ideology included. This ideology was then applied to why gender discrimination occurred in the stories highlighted. The web information from Classic FM's survey included the top orchestra personnel from 2018.

To sum, my research on women in the brass world have experienced significant backtrack in their careers because of the old-fashioned ideology that is still implemented in the community. Telling their stories is important in defining the next steps toward gender equity in the brass world.

The mentioned stories of discrimination and recommendations on how to create a more progressive field are relevant to today's generation of musicians. Despite the notable work society has put forth to create gender equity, there are still significant gaps left to close. Specifically, the brass field is behind in turning away from the old-fashioned ideology that women are not strong enough to play brass instruments (Osborne 1971, 77), creating more obstacles towards their path to professional careers than their male counterparts receive. My research puts together significant

stories to bring light and importance to them all, offering insight on how to create a better future for the upcoming generation of musicians.

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