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**‘The Show Must Go On’:
Amateur Musical Theatre as a Community of Practice**

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
Master of Arts Degree**

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‘The show must go on’: Amateur musical theatre as a community of practice

Abstract

Amateur musical theatre has its roots in long-standing theatre traditions that include both professional and amateur production. Apart from the performance, which is the over-arching goal, participation in amateur musical theatre yields many other personal and social benefits in areas of learning, community and identity, aligning with Wenger’s concept of a ‘Community of Practice’.

Using an analytical framework based on previous studies in this area, this research investigates how amateur musical theatre functions as a ‘Community of Practice’. The research was conducted using an ethnographic case study of two contrasting local amateur productions. Experiential data and details regarding participant interactions were gathered via observation, field notes and interviews. Analysis of data follows Wenger’s categories, including aspects of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire, showing how meaningful friendships are formed whilst also achieving rehearsal and performance goals. The data analysis will also include a consideration of nature of the learning that occurs in accordance with established research of formal, informal and non-formal practices. The research contributes to an understanding of the value of musical theatre and what it offers to the amateur participant, in terms of learning, social interaction and educational potential.

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Abbreviations

CoP	Community of Practice
CoMP	Community of Musical Practice
LPP	Legitimate Peripheral Participation
MD	Musical Director
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

1. Introduction

The idea of a society is a simple enough one: humans are social animals, and like ants, dogs and other social creatures they live in communities of various kinds, ranging embeddedly [*sic*] from couples to tribes, in villages, cities and nation-states. Being social is a defining human characteristic (in the strict sense of being part of the essence of what it means to be human), which in turn means that a large part of what we are is determined by our relationships. This observation alone ought immediately alert us to simple but deep facts about why, for a central example, novels, films and plays – stories about people – are indispensable to us. Our bonds, our friends, families, workmates and neighbours help to create us, to make us the sort of people we are.

(Grayling, 2004, p.34)

In this passage Grayling (2004) emphasises a human need for social solidarity. The statement ‘humans are social animals’ suggests that this is greater than a need, but perhaps a natural instinct or a state for humans. Essentially, socialisation is a key part of survival. It is how infants learn to speak for the first time. They imitate the sounds made by the world around them, especially sounds made by their parents. Vygotsky (1978) even theorises that learning as a result of social connection is a key part in the development of human cognition. In older people, human socialisation is achieved by feeling part of a wider community by experiencing shared cultural knowledge (Turino 2008, pp. 1 – 2). Such sharing helps us to feel integrated and united with a social group and also helps fulfil various needs, from expressing our inner emotional lives, wooing lovers and celebrating special occasions. Cross-cultural studies have identified that having good social relationships, experiencing connectedness to others in a community with a sense of purpose alongside being able to do things that one enjoys are important elements of having good health (Ballinger, Talbot & Verrinder 2009, p. 74). Many socio-cultural theories have been formed based on how humans learn from each other, especially novices and experienced others. One such key theory is the Community of Practice (CoP) framework developed by Lave & Wenger (1991), and it embodies many of the tenets described above i.e. belonging, shared interests and learning through practice. This will be explored further in **Chapter 2**.

Anthropologists and ethnomusicologists such as Bateson (1972a), Fitzgerald (2004), and Turino (2008) have demonstrated that the arts are a key element in addressing the above needs. The arts are a ‘primary way that people articulate the collective identities that are fundamental to forming and sustaining social groups, which are, in turn, basic to survival’ (Turino 2008, p. 1 – 2).

Bateson (1972a) even suggests that the arts represent integration between sensation, imagination and experience and thus, if normal language were all that was needed to communicate, the arts would have ceased long ago. Turino (2008) states that music, dance and drama are the three longest surviving forms of artistic engagement, to which Burkholder, Grout and Palisca (2010) note to have existed since ancient times (p. 13). Even today, researchers (Barrett 2005; Cunha & Lorenzino 2012; Palidofsky & Stolbach 2012; Bonshor 2014; Kenny 2016) recognise the importance of the arts and their studies reveal that participation in such ventures ‘stimulates actions, feelings and thoughts by group members that go beyond the music itself,’ (Cunha & Lorenzino 2012, p.74) and thus result in increased social contact and a maintenance of emotional balance. These studies and their outcomes will also be further explored in **Chapter 2**. In summary, the arts, including music especially due to its communicative potential, have been a key part in the development and survival of human cultures.

Another arts-related area that has been explored recently is amateur musical theatre, a genre which combines the aforementioned art forms of music, drama and dance using primarily idioms from popular music styles (Snelson 2001; Kenrick 2013). Amateur can be defined as ‘one who engages in a pursuit, study, science or sport as a pastime rather than as a profession’ (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary). Dean (2002) expands this into the context of theatre.

Amateur theatre ranges from a group of friends who decide to get together and put on a single production, to a long-established company with several hundred members and their own theatre, who put on a number of productions every year. In some cases, amateur theatre members have the same job descriptions and responsibilities as in professional theatre, the only difference being that they are unpaid. Members may care to study how professional theatre operates and apply it to their own organisation. The most important thing is, in amateur as in professional theatre, is that everyone should know where their responsibilities begin and end, and have the knowledge, skills and support to carry them out.

Amateur musicals are now produced in towns, cities, workplaces, schools and colleges. In Ireland alone, such societies – groups that produce amateur musicals - have existed since at least the start of the twentieth century. The Association of Irish Musical Societies (AIMS) is an organisation that currently represents over 130 amateur musical societies in Ireland, with an estimated involvement of 14,000 people and an audience base of 1.2 million (Association of Irish Musical Societies website). Their list of upcoming shows (as of 2017) details a range of genre and history, from classics *Guys and Dolls*, *The Wizard of Oz* and *My Fair Lady* as well as a number of *Hits from the Musicals* concerts. Colm Moules, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of

AIMS, in an interview with Sinead Ryan of the *Irish Independent* (2014) gives insight into the benefits associated with amateur societies, alluding to how encompassing they can be:

All amateur societies involve the local community. [...] it is a great value hobby ...you can really find a new family there and it's great for socialising opportunities.

There's even something to do for those too shy to get up on stage. They can sell tickets, sew costumes, work backstage or front of house and many groups have members in their 60s, 70s and 80s. If you're not into lepping [*sic*] across stage, that's fine.

(Ryan 2014, *Irish Independent*)

These statements correlate with the sense of purpose and involvement with the arts that are so key to good health and well-being. It also demonstrates a clear link to the same benefits as participation in other arts / music related areas discussed on page 2.

On a personal note, I can also vouch for these benefits through my own experiences of performing in musical theatre. My formative connections and performance experiences during my tenure as an undergraduate student were developed through participating with the college musical society. I very much formed my passion for theatre and performing as there were many aspects of it I immensely enjoyed; the feeling of confidence that one gets when supporting and being supported by peers in a mutual activity, the challenge of learning a role (the melody, lines, choreography and characterisation) and the thrill of an appreciative audience that results from months of intense rehearsal. Experiencing the mutuality and sharing involved in these productions was also a key motivator for me to want to explore the process behind these as a subject of academic study.

However, the potential of amateur musicals correlated with Community of Practice has not been fully explored in current academic research. Previous explorations of amateur musicals primarily focus on the adolescent age group in a school or else an institutional setting (Woods 1993; Kinney 1993; Pitts 2007; Palidosfky & Stolbach 2012). However, these studies do form a strong precedent for its benefits. Similarly, Kenny has noted that CoP has not yet been regularly applied to music or theatre. Some previous research on the benefits of participation in the arts makes reference to CoP elements (and these are cited as *why* such experiences are beneficial), though not all of them are fully analysed through the CoP lens. It should seem like the arts, music and

theatre are obvious areas to which CoP can be applied, as soprano Greta Bradman in an interview for *The Guardian* (2016) website states: [Performing arts is] like a family [and] a community, that comes together for an incredible project [...] like a musical or an opera [...] you're so close to the people [you are performing with] and you're all so bound up in it'.

In summary, this chapter has established that we, humans, are social beings and a key component of our health, well-being and survival is that we seek out people with common interests so as to connect with them. The arts, especially music, dance and drama have been established as a key means of achieving this type of connection. Musical theatre is a relatively recent art form that combines elements of all three areas. Additionally, socio-cultural theories have been developed seeking to further understand how such connections develop and some of these theories have also been accorded with the arts. **Chapter 2's Literature Review** will explore these theories further with particular prominence given to the CoP framework. It will also discuss established research into the arts, current musical theatre production practice and the types of learning practices that occur in these settings. The **Methodology (Chapter 3)** will give an insight to the research techniques and provide an introduction to the two amateur productions that are covered in this thesis. **Chapter 4 (Findings and Discussion)** will follow this up and analyse the two productions, primarily through Community of Practice with areas of focus that were established by Kenny (2016) with secondary discussion on the types of learning practices that occurred.

The main research questions of this thesis are:

- How does the Community of Practice framework operate within an amateur musical theatre production?
- What learning practices / issues (socio-cultural or otherwise) occur in such a setting? How does the Musical Director / Choreographer / Director or otherwise facilitate the cast member in these? What strategies are used? Is 'learning' an intended or unintended outcome?
- Are there any non-performance related outcomes for the cast member? Is there any correlation between this and their overall evaluation of the production experience?

The broader aim of this research is to generate new knowledge and understanding of the value of the amateur musical theatre production, adding to established literature on socio-cultural aspects of music education. This should also highlight the importance of the amateur musical as a catalyst for social interaction, musical and community development. It also aims to contribute to the areas of community theatre and music education in Ireland as a means of aiding the allocation of funds and sponsorship for various amateur groups, given that Gardner (2013) describes this area as particularly challenging for groups.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In **Chapter 1**, a relationship was established between socio-cultural learning theories and performance disciplines with the kind of socialisation that is key towards having a sense purpose and belonging in a group with shared interests. This chapter will explore these areas in further detail. How did socio-cultural learning theories come to be and what makes them a key part of our development and well-being?

This will then form the basis for discussion of the Community of Practice framework. An overview will be given first to establish a general understanding of it and the elements involved. Then it will be elaborated on to cover musical settings or Communities of Musical Practice (CoMP) to establish why interactions analysed through this framework have resonated so strongly with participants. Previous works by Kenny (2013, 2014, 2016) will be given particular prominence, as her research provides a seminal insight into how the framework can be used to analyse musical performance settings and thus will be very beneficial going forward in this study. This will then segue into a discussion on Situated Learning as it is a secondary socio-cultural framework that stemmed from CoP and it deals with how people learn in such environments.

The previous studies on performance related areas as outlined in **Chapter 1** will then be explored further. Some of these are related to amateur musicals and others cover different facets of music. What is most of value here is not the medium of performance but rather the outcomes involved, how they are related to each other, the established social need of humans and to CoP if appropriate. It will also be discussed here if there are any areas of conflict that may potentially arise. Thus far it has been established that performance outcomes can be positive, but are there any aspects of it that might be less positive?

Another area to discuss stemming also from the above research are the styles of learning that occur. This is with a view to assess the practices that occur within the musical theatre production. There is some implication that the amateur musical especially may have aspects of formal and

informal learning styles (Pitts 2007). However, since Pitts' study, a third learning 'practice' called non-formal learning has been put forward (Veblen 2012). Is it in any way similar or different to the established literature? Perhaps there is some relationship between that and socio-cultural learning?

Finally, the rehearsal practice of a musical theatre production will be discussed. This is important as the findings here will deal most specifically with what happens in rehearsals, the possible relationships that may occur between people involved and also form a preliminary basis going forward for thematic analysis. It also demonstrates some of the traditions involved, as tradition is a part of how society and cultures function.

All findings will then be summarised to form the conclusion. Emphasis will be given to links across each strand of literature and also to any questions that arise from reviewing them. How will the gaps established by these questions be answered over the course of the data collection process?

2.2 Socio-Cultural Learning Theories

Every function in [a person's] cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological) and then inside the [person] (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals

(Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57).

Here, Vygotsky (1978) describes how a person's development is intricately tied to their socialisation and their relationships with others. This statement forms the cornerstone for socio-cultural learning itself and the many theories which were subsequently developed by Vygotsky and contemporaries. However, definitions need to be put forward first so that the terms 'socio-cultural' and 'learning can be understood. Merriam-Webster defines 'socio-cultural' as 'of, relating to, or involving a combination of social and cultural factors'. This closely matches Vygotsky's statement in terms of important social relationships are. Subsequently, learning, according to Illeris (2009), is 'any process that in living organisms leads to permanent capacity change and which is not solely related due to biological maturation or aging' (p. 3). To this end,

it can be summarised that socio-cultural learning refers to the learning that results from social and / or cultural circumstances.

The above quote also represents Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) belief that socialisation with peers is a key part in the development of human cognition. One of his initial theories based on this was Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which is based on a novice being guided by an expert to their potential level of development by easing them through a continuum from 'cannot' to 'can'. Particular care is taken during this process by the expert so that the task, or subject being learned is never too easy nor beyond the capabilities of the learner. This viewpoint and the theories behind it were then studied by contemporaries seeking to further understand how learning is developed within human interactions. The result of these were the formulation of a number of socio-cultural learning theories and frameworks including Community of Practice and Situated Learning (Vygotsky 1986; Lave & Wenger 1991; Stein 1998; Wenger 1998; St. John 2010). This represented the beginnings of a shift in scholarly attention towards interpersonal based learning that results from the relationships between individuals, their peers and their environments.

2.2.1 Community of Practice

Community of Practice as a framework was initially devised by Lave and Wenger in 1991. Wenger subsequently elaborated on this through the years, sometimes in collaboration with other authors (1998; McDermott, Synder & Wenger 2002; 2011). In these studies, Wenger has put forward a number of descriptions and definitions for CoP. Some of the most salient ones are listed below to give a sense of how the framework has developed and to establish the grounds on which it is based:

Community of practice presents a theory of learning that starts with this assumption: engagement in social practice is the fundamental process by which we learn and so become who we are. The primary unit of analysis is neither the individual nor social institutions but rather the informal "communities of practice" that people form as they pursue the shared enterprises over time.

(Wenger 1998, preface)

A group of people who interact, learn together, build relationships and in the process develop a sense of belonging and mutual commitment.

(Wenger et al. 2002, p. 34)

Communities of practice are a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.

(Wenger 2011, p.1)

These three definitions establish a number of things. Firstly, they recall Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory that 'higher [learning] functions originate as actual relationships between people' (p. 57). They also provide the means of achieving healthy socialisation that were referenced in **Chapter 1**; experiencing connectedness and sharing knowledge with others in a community, doing activities that one enjoys and having a sense of belonging in a group. Wenger further highlights a link between these concepts in his description of 'four theoretical premises' on which CoP is built:

1. We are social beings [...;]
2. Knowledge is a matter of competence in valued enterprises [...;]
3. Knowing is a matter of participation [...], of active engagement in the world;
4. Meaning – our ability to experience the world and our engagement with it as meaningful – is ultimately what learning is to produce

(Wenger 1998, p. 4).

Practice has also been specifically described as 'socially defined ways of doing things in a specific domain: a set of common approaches and shared standards that create a basis for action, communication, problem solving and accountability' (Wenger et al. 2002, p. 35). However, this particular domain can represent a wide range of groups and social practices from: families, workers, students, garage bands [and] recovering alcoholics (Wenger 1998). A later report by Wenger (2011) further cites medieval guilds, nurses and street gangs as possible 'domains' or groups that could constitute a CoP. This list obviously is not exhaustive or comprehensive but the range of groups evident clearly implies that, 'we all belong to communities of practice' and '[they] are an integral part of our daily lives' (Wenger 1998, p. 6 – 7). The reference to medieval groups also highlights how, although CoP as a theoretical framework is recent, the phenomenon itself is age old (Wenger 2011).

In practical terms, CoP was initially formulated to chart out the type of learning practices that occurred between master and apprentice craftsmen. Wenger (2011), on recalling this, found that

a more complex set of social relationships were revealed in these initial studies. These kind of relationships and the processes therein became key to the establishment of the framework. Lave and Wenger (1991) coined the term ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (LPP) to refer to this. It describes a process whereby knowledge is imparted to novices by more experienced others through repeated interactions in a process that results in the novices eventually becoming the expert. Kenny (2016) states that this is how socio-cultural learning is built into the framework and below, a quote from Bonshor (2014) describes this process in detail:

Social learning, situated in CoPs, generates a life cycle among group members; newcomers can aspire to emulate the skills of the role models and the mentors who have helped them on their way to the full membership of their CoP. They can also derive satisfaction and confidence from their evolution into ‘old-timers’ who can pass on their skills to other learners.

There are three other components that are essential to the formation of a Community of Practice; mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire (Wenger 1998). These need to be present in some shape or form in order for a group to be classified as a CoP. All are described as follows:

- **Mutual engagement**

This represents the source of coherence in the community as members ‘engage in actions whose meanings they negotiate with one another’ (Wenger 1998, p. 73). Membership in the CoP is defined by this, and to be a member infers a shared competence with other members that distinguishes members from non-members, though the skill need not be recognised outside the community. Equally, these activities need not happen daily, so long as members establish norms that help them to share information and build relationships thus allowing them to learn from each other (Wenger 2011).

- **Joint enterprise**

Wenger (1998) states that it is the ‘enterprise’ of a CoP that keeps it together. It is the result of a process of negotiation and is defined by participants in their responses to the situation. It can be further broken down into two types of enterprise: ‘negotiated’ and ‘indigenous’ (Wenger 1998, p. 78 – 79). The former relates to members’ communal understanding and their co-ordination of the aspirations of the community, while the

latter represents the larger contexts of the CoP – ‘historical, social, cultural [and] institutional’ – as ‘communities of practice are not self-contained entities’ (Wenger 1998, p. 79). Either way, a commitment is required to maintain this (Wenger 2011). Virkula (2016) states that this commitment is what generates both the connection amongst members and a motivation towards working. In summary, the enterprise references the members and their collective understanding of the community.

- **Shared repertoire**

The repertoire of a CoP includes ‘routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice’ (Wenger 1998, p. 83). In essence, these constitute the resources needed to achieve competence within a community of practice (Wenger 2000, p. 229). This area represents the application of a CoP and thus distinguishes it from a ‘community of interest’ (Wenger 2011, p. 2). The process of practice need not always be conscious. Wenger (2011) states that a lunch discussion about the task may form an equal basis for knowledge just as much as making a concerted effort to apply the practice.

These elements are essential in merging ‘community’ and ‘practice’ together. As Wenger (1998) states, a neighbourhood could be referred to as a ‘community’ but that alone does not make it a practice. Similarly, playing scales on the piano is a ‘practice’ but is not constituted as a ‘community’ (p. 72). It is the ‘community’ *and* the ‘practice’ in tandem that forms a CoP, as well as what makes them the two most important concepts underpinning this study.

2.2.2 Communities of Musical Practice

The Community of Practice framework has also been extended and applied to specific musical settings, or what is referred to as a Community of Musical Practice (CoMP). The term was first coined by Barrett (2005) in a chapter of the book *Musical Communication*, where investigation was given to the culture of children’s playgrounds. These cultures were found to be formed through the transmission and learning of chants and musical games. These games represented the ‘repertoire’ which was established and constantly negotiated by the children overtime through

the reorganisation and elaboration of their material. The children created their own culture of chants, songs and games that expanded as their ‘community’ grew larger. These practices also included group processes of collaborative interaction that involved observation, modelling and ‘shadowing’ of musical sound (Barrett 2005, p. 271). Playgrounds were not the only places discussed, as Barrett (2005) also raised Russell’s (2002) suggestion that children encounter musical practice through family, peer groups and the church. The church was deemed significant as a site where repertoire, idioms and singing behaviours are passed down to children by adult members (not unlike the master and apprentice craftsmen of Lave and Wenger’s original study). Barrett (2005) correlated these examples strongly with the ‘shared repertoire’ and ‘mutual engagement’ elements of CoP. In particular, the culture of common songs, figures to aspire to or imitate and an elaboration / negotiation of material represent a key aspect of children’s musical development. It also establishes how ‘community’ and ‘practice’ merge where music is involved and the types of relationships and behaviours that result from this.

Recent studies by Ailbhe Kenny (2013, 2014, 2016) have further identified CoMP as a significant framework for analysing the interactions between people participating in musical groups. Her settings for research have been varied, ranging from an online traditional music group (2013), a music classroom (2014), a local choir and a jazz ensemble (2016), reinforcing Wenger’s (2011) notion of how widely CoP can be implemented as a framework. Kenny’s (2016) most recent analysis of CoP sets a strong precedent for how it can be analysed in music setting. Not only did she use the triumvirate elements (mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire) but also drew upon a list of fourteen possible indicators that Wenger (1998) proposed for detecting a CoP. These, as per Wenger (1998, p. 125), were as follows:

1. Sustained mutual relationships – harmonious or conflictual
2. Shared ways of engaging in doing things together.
3. The rapid flow of information and propagation of innovation.
4. Absence of introductory preambles, as if conversations and interactions were merely the continuation of an ongoing process.
5. Very quick set up of a problem to be discussed.
6. Substantial overlap in participants’ descriptions of who belongs.

7. Knowing what others know, what they can do, and how they can contribute to an enterprise.
8. Mutually defining identities.
9. The ability to assess the appropriateness of actions and products.
10. Specific tools, representations, and other artefacts.
11. Local lore, shared stories, inside jokes, knowing laughter.
12. Jargon and shortcuts to communication as well as the ease of producing new ones.
13. Certain styles recognised as displaying membership.
14. A shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world.

Of these, nine deemed most relevant as ‘areas of focus’ by Kenny (2016) in her study and were summarised as: ‘participation, membership, relationships, negotiated enterprise, indigenous enterprise, mutual accountability, jokes and laughter, lore, and learning tools’ (Kenny 2016, p. 110). These were subsequently categorised into the three main elements, which are listed below in tabulated form:

<i>Dimensions of CoP</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Areas of Focus</i>
Mutual Engagement	The actual <i>domain</i> , the regular interaction and sets of relationships that form a common endeavour.	Participation Membership Relationships
Joint enterprise	The <i>process</i> itself and the interactions, shared goals and negotiation that it entails	Negotiated enterprise Indigenous enterprise Mutual accountability
Shared Repertoire	The actual <i>practice</i> , ways of doing, joint pursuit and shared resources that are used to make and negotiate meaning	Jokes and laughter Lore Learning tools

Figure 2.1: Wenger’s dimensions of CoP (1998) and Kenny’s (2016, p.110) areas of CoP focus

In spite of the wide range of groups and mediums involved, a number of common findings were very prominent. Participants consistently reported finding a sense of belonging, identity and common knowledge through contributing to their respective CoPs (Kenny 2013; 2014; 2016). To relate this further to the main constituent dimensions of the framework: ‘Shared Repertoire’ was formed through the ‘routines, behaviour, interactions and communal activities [of members]’ (Kenny 2014, p. 10), ‘Mutual Engagement’ was enabled through an even distribution of power in the music classroom (as opposed to the traditional top-down manner of delivery and teacher-student relationship) and ‘Joint Enterprise’ was formed by the practice routines set by teachers for the students, enabling a sense of accountability. Accessible language helped to emphasise ‘collaborative knowledge building, shared ownership and reflective learning’ (Kenny 2013, p. 10). This was especially effective for the online traditional music group due to their wide-ranging backgrounds and levels of experience. The range of groups, backgrounds and relationships in Kenny’s research shows how CoP has evolved significantly from the apprentice tradesmen study that was initially used to devise the framework (Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger 2011). It also reinforces the potential of the framework to make meaning and construct knowledge for people involved in such settings through interaction, learning shared practice and participation (Kenny 2013, 2014). These link very strongly with the needs set out in **Chapter 1** and demonstrate how CoP and music settings can be used towards meeting these.

2.2.3 Situated Learning

From the research of Lave (1988), Brown et al. (1989) and Shor, (1989), Stein (1998) discusses the concept of ‘situated learning’. It also draws upon a number of concepts from in CoP, as the learner in this type of situation learns by dealing with the content, community and participation in a group setting. These in turn allow learners to ‘create their own knowledge out of the raw materials of experience i.e. the relationships with other participants, the activities, the environmental cues and the social organisation that the community develops and maintains’ (Stein 1998, p. 1). Kenny (2016) describes this concept as the building of ‘knowledge through participation in socio-cultural contexts’ (p. 11), again linking the framework of CoP as an important part of fostering this. It is a conclusion that Stein (1998) also draws, for he states that CoP is a ‘joining of practice with analysis and reflection to share tacit understandings and to create shared knowledge from experience among participants in a learning opportunity’ (p. 2).

These are similar elements to what Barrett (2005) found to form the Community of Musical Practice.

St. John (2010) also underpins how situated learning refers back to meeting socio-cultural needs, in how the environment one is situated in is a vital part of learning and development. Learners need to have the ability to give, take and offer contributions that allow them to engage with the learning in a supportive environment. This not only builds mutual trust and respect, but also assists in helping a learner to reach their potential level of development (St. John 2010, p.93; Virkula 2016).

As with CoP, the potential effectiveness of situated learning has been explored in musical settings. St. John (2010) outlines a number of examples of how this occurs. For example, a person dancing along to a CD might notice another member moving differently and start copying him / her. This 'initial' imitation 'personalises and intensifies the experience' (p. 94) and helps the learner figure out what they need to do to succeed in their learning process. Additionally, this may be evoked by a mentor figure. A choral director may place stronger voices next to less-experienced singers in a choir. At other times, a singer may do this naturally without any prompting from a director.

It should be noted that situated learning is not a completely separate framework in and of itself. Rather, it is a theory that extends discussion on how learning occurs through CoPs. It helps to further the potential of CoP by providing a broader understanding of socio-cultural learning. As Folkestad (1998) states, participating in a situated practice allows one to also learn the practice. However, Wenger (2011) notes that learning in CoPs can either be intentional (conscious / intended) or unintentional (unconscious / unintended). Where situated learning is determined in this would probably depend on how much 'intention of learning' is involved in a particular CoP.

2.3. Musical Participation

There have been a number of studies in recent years that have investigated the outcomes of musical participation. Some of these may or may not correlate directly with the aforementioned socio-cultural needs and frameworks, but all they serve a vital part of establishing the key

precedents for this thesis. Also in the interest of transparency, possible areas of conflict will be identified where necessary. As stated on page 3, I can vouch for some of the positive outcomes but there may be areas of the experience that all participants may not be happy about.

Cunha & Lorenzino (2012), in their study of a choir and a jazz band, discovered that the musical activities had a positive influence on the physical and mental health of participants. Several interviewees in their study not only spoke of their desire to make music and improve their musical skills, but also the desire to increase social contact with others and maintain their emotional balance. Furthermore, it was found that musical participation combined ‘cognitive, affective and psychomotor elements of learning’. These emerged from the ‘cluster of factors’ (Cunha & Lorenzino 2012, p. 88) embedded within the production of the music. A study of adults voluntarily participating in music has shown similar outcomes: enjoyment, personal / musical fulfilment, the pursuit of shared goals with like-minded performers / friends and gains in organisational skills and confidence (Pitts 2005; 2007, p.149). Turino (2008) shares and contextualises these aspirations, ‘one of the main things I seek through musical performance is a particular feeling of being deeply bound to the people I am playing with [...] I get a deep sense of oneness with the people I am playing with’ (p.18). These reveal that although these are not direct socio-cultural studies, musical groups constitute socio-cultural entities in terms of the desires and goals for participants. There are even a number of features of CoP – a sharing of social and historical resources, investing in competent participation and mutuality.

Two key studies have also investigated participatory outcomes in the context of an amateur musical production. Both are located in school settings (Woods 1993; Pitts 2007). A teacher interviewed in Pitts’s study describes having long forgotten everything from the school year but still being able to vividly recall memories of the rehearsal and the thrill of performing a show for an enthusiastic audience (p.145). Woods (1993) depicts similar effects of participation on students, noting personal development due to the experience and growth in confidence that result as outcomes of their engagement with the production (p.117, p.140). In another school-based study, Kinney (1993) notes that amateur musical participation provides positive effects on identity, self-esteem and popularity, especially for marginalised students. This impact has also been utilised in a Chicago trauma centre to provide adolescent juvenile offenders with a unique

performance programme to address and heal from past trauma (Palidofsky & Stolbach 2011). These studies all recognise the fun involved in the work of creating and putting on a show. Palidofsky and Stolbach (2011) especially note that a key to success of the medium is the formation of a group with common interests.

However, there are a number of aspects of musical participation that can be quite challenging. These can range from personal or artistic clashes between members, or a dislike of the director / conductor. In choral situations, this may entail one member competing against another, who is singing loudly and inaccurately, or a conductor experiencing frustration with an unfocused group (Bonshor 2014). The substantial commitment of rehearsals may also be a challenge, as it may result in participants having difficulty prioritising academic / working, personal or social lives (Pitts 2007). In musical theatre, this could take other forms. Cast members may develop concerns about their performance, the amount of rehearsal time involved, be it too much or too little, or else they might have issues around their character's emotional state and their relationship with other characters. The result of this oftentimes may be lost tempers, either between the cast members or the director, or else a shunning of the company during breaks and after rehearsals (Maccoy 2004). Pitts (2007) also states, 'those with small [or] group roles to play may also feel dissatisfied due to having less engagement in long hours of rehearsal that do not really involve them' and therefore, may only gain a sense of gratification through the performance itself (p. 156).

It is evident that participatory experiences, either positive or negative, draw a strong emotional reaction from those involved in them. There is also enough overlap between these reactions and the experiences therein that share many core elements of CoP and other socio-cultural frameworks, even if the settings are not analysed as such. However, there is cause to investigate more on the types of learning practice that occur in these settings, as these findings mostly concentrate on the *outcomes*.

2.4 Formal, Informal and Non-Formal Practices of Musical Learning

Some discussion in the above study has been given to the types of learning practices that occur. Researchers have coined terms such as formal, informal and non-formal in an attempt to

understand and classify these as in recent years, the settings and practices have become a lot more fluid. This also stems in part from socio-cultural learning theories, as Wenger (1998) states that learning is primarily a social phenomenon.

Folkestad (2006) describes the ‘traditional’ or ‘formal’ end of learning practice as ‘[musical practice] that results from sequenced, methodical exposure to music teaching within a formal setting’ (p. 136). By formal, he refers to learning that takes place inside a classroom. The curriculum is completely guided by a teacher and is based on the perception that one needs structured guidance, regular lessons and the ability to read and write music (in other words, be musically literate) in order to learn successfully. Wenger (1998), however, makes a generic argument for ‘socially-based learning’ as such institutionalised practices assume learning ‘has a beginning and an end [and it is] separated from the rest of our activities’ (p. 4). This mind-set has found its way into musical practice as well, for Folkestad (2006) ultimately suggests that such learning occurs much more effectively for students *outside* the classroom, as their intention is now to engage with music rather than to learn about music. Other researchers have had similar views and thus, they have investigated the settings where ‘informal’ musical learning takes place. (Green 2002; Clements 2008; Green 2008; St. John 2010).

‘Informal’ musical learning and practice has been extensively researched by Lucy Green (2002, 2008). Her various discussions on it demonstrate that imitation is an important aspect of this. An example of this is where one learns a motif by watching another demonstrating it, or else learning said riff from a recording. This is what Lilliestam (1996) refers to as aural transmission, a musical behaviour that consists of listening, practicing and performing by ear. It is most commonly found in traditional or folk-based musical settings, where there is inherently less emphasis on learning to play strictly from a musical score (Green 2002). In some instances where imitation is used, there can be a process of ‘enculturation’ through extended exposure to music where an older or more experienced person acts as a model for the ‘learner’ to watch, listen to and imitate. This assists the ‘learner’ towards ingratiating with group. Such relationships are described by Green (2002) as ‘master-apprentice’ or ‘guru-shishya’ relationships (p. 6). Clements (2008) suggests that in such environments, terms such as ‘facilitator’ or ‘sharer’ are more appropriate than the term ‘teacher’ to describe the mentor figure, as the mentor’s role not

only develops from the learner's musical needs, but also that of the wider domain where the 'learning' is situated e.g. the needs of the musical group as a whole (p. 7).

It is also noteworthy to state that skills picked up 'informally' have the potential to be carried into more 'formal' settings. Someone who learns a piece by ear through listening to it can apply it to their learning in a choir, orchestra or ensemble. St. John (2010) states that this can be particularly effective for somebody who has less formal training compared to their peers. This demonstrates that informal and formal learning practices have the potential to overlap with each other. These are especially prominent where structured extra-curricular musical settings are involved (Pitts 2007; Cunha & Lorenzino 2012; Kenny 2016). In the case of amateur musical theatre, Pitts (2007) hypothesises that the setting embodies a mixture of both formal and informal practices due to the clear sense of leadership figures involved and not such a strict emphasis on learning from a score. Folkestad (2006), in considering how such an overlap occurs, suggests that the distinction between learning practices is made by the intention of the people and *what* the mind is directed towards during throughout their learning process. This emphasis that formal and informal practices are not simply dichotomised to academic and non-academic settings respectively, as outlined below by a summary of Folkestad's (2006) distinction (p. 141 – 142):

- Formal: The minds of both the teacher and the student are directed towards learning how to play / learning how to make music. It is arranged by a teacher or a person who explicitly takes the task of leading the learning activity i.e. a musician in a musical ensemble.
- Informal: The mind is directed towards playing / making music. It is not sequenced beforehand and the activity itself steers the learning and is preceded by the participants. While it is called 'voluntary learning,' learning is never truly voluntary as it happens whether it is intended or not.

Recently, Veblen (2012) has formulated a third type of practice called non-formal learning. This bridges the gap between the two previously established styles, as while non-formal learning does not take place in educational contexts; it is more systematic and deliberate when compared to informal learning. While a teacher or director may lead the non-formal learning process, there is

not such a strict focus on *learning* how to play, but rather an *intertwining* of social, personal and musical benefits. Veblen cites Ruggeri's (2003) example of an adult chamber ensemble as non-formal because while they played and rehearsed together for four years, they learnt through repetition rather than strict leadership. Another example cited is an Irish traditional workshop whereby Cope (2005) observed a wider age range learning, from young to old, representing a much wider span of learners than that which exists in traditional school and community settings.

Non-formal settings employ a mixture of learning modes from 'oral, notational and experiential' (Veblen 2012, p.249). Within these learning approaches, mixtures of oral and notational-based approaches are used to guide the learning process and practices are formed by applying the skills to a working situation. Activities involving non-formal musical practice are 'chosen, designed or created for a specific learning community' and an interweaving between this and the CoP model is recognised (Veblen 2012, p.248). The concept of non-formal learning has a strong association with the concept of experiential learning, a type of learning where 'the emphasis is often on direct sense experience and on in-context action as the primary source of learning, often down-playing a role for thinking, analysis, and academic knowledge' (Kolb 2015, xviii). This suggests that such socio-cultural settings could employ a fluid continuum of learning styles in emphasising experience over traditional academia. The table below compares and contrasts the three musical learning practices with a view towards summarising this discussion and providing a framework for when the learning practices of this study's musical theatre productions are discussed in **Chapter 4** (see top of next page for table).

	Formal	Non-formal	Informal
Physical Setting	School, institution, classroom.	Institution or other unregulated setting	Unofficial, casual, unregulated setting
Learning Style	Activity planned and sequenced by teacher or other who prepares and leads teaching activity.	Process may be led by a director, leader or teacher, or may happen by group interaction.	Process happens through interaction of participants, not sequenced beforehand.
Ownership	Focus on teaching and how to teach. Teacher plans and guides activities.	Focus on learning. Student usually controls learning or goes along with teacher or group choice, but has ultimate control.	Voluntary
Intentionality	Focus on how to play (work, compose). Intentional.	Focus on playing music. Social aspects and personal benefits intertwined. Intentional or incidental.	Focus on playing music. Incidental or accidental.
Modes of Transmission	Often has notational component.	May use aural and / or notation components, tablature or other systems.	Variety – by ear, cyberspace – many uncharted processes.

Figure 2.2: Formal, non-formal and informal learning practices as outlined by Veblen (2012, p. 246).

2.5 Musical Theatre Rehearsal Practice

A key part of a CoP is its historical traditions, or what Wenger (1998) refers to as the ‘Indigenous Enterprise’. To be able to best analyse this in terms of the amateur musical production, some insight into rehearsal practices will be required. This section aims to discuss these practices, processes and traditions so as to form a framework for later discussions.

Common to all theatre productions is the preliminary process of auditioning and casting. Foreman (2009) states that auditions can take differing forms depending on the director and type of production being staged, ranging from open auditions, one-to-one, group auditions and workshops. In some instances, a director may seek out someone that they know from prior experience to be in the show without any audition. To be successful in an audition, Deer and Dal Vara (2008) suggest there are a broad range of skills required by the aspiring performer. These include musicianship, singing, acting and dancing and can be elaborated as follows. They also state that the role in which one can be cast is also determined by their 'type' – a combination of a person's vocal characteristics, physical appearance and age range.

- **Musicianship:** the ability to sight-sing, with enough basic music theory skills to be able to read and pitch accurately with good intonation and rhythm.
- **Singing:** to be able to maintain a consistent tone across the vocal range. Additionally, having the ability to harmonise with other singers in an ensemble
- **Dancing:** the ability to at least move well with an ensemble, but depending on the show, could also include specific dancing skills i.e. pirouettes, tap dancing.
- **Acting:** while not as measurable as singing or dancing, one needs to have an ability to communicate and embody the meaning of a song.

Once auditioning and casting are completed, the rehearsal process begins. Dean states that while there is a difference between the time scale of rehearsals for the amateur (mostly evenings and weekends) and professional productions (a limited, concentrated period) both require 'almost total commitment to the production being rehearsed' (p.110). Maccoy (2004) breaks down the rehearsal period into four stages (p. 112); these are: introductions, working, blocking and running.

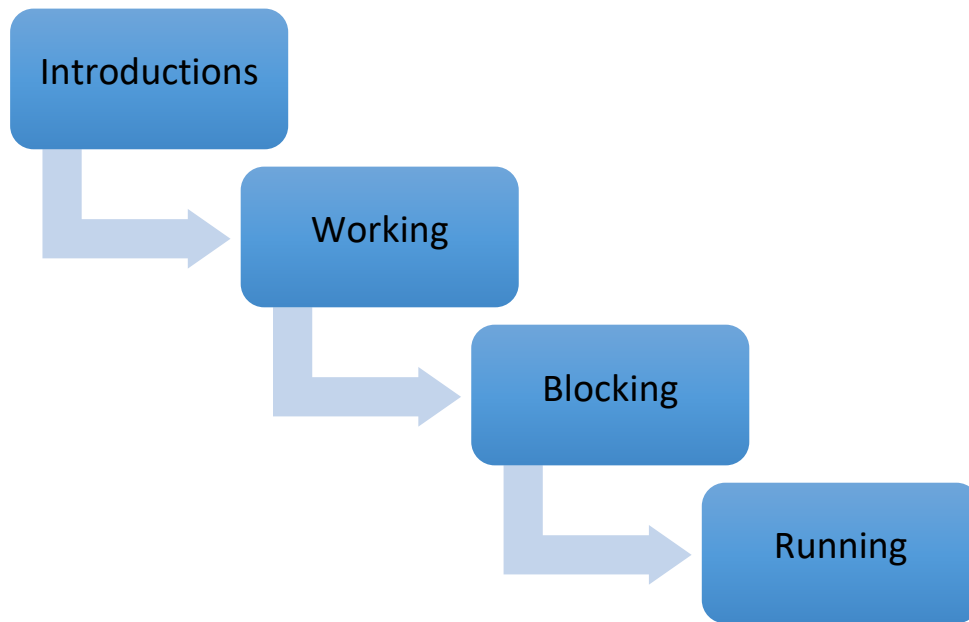


Figure 2.3: Four Stages of Rehearsal Process (Maccoy 2004)

Time is taken at the beginning of the rehearsal process so that the production team and cast members are introduced and the production goals are set out. This usually occurs at the first rehearsal which may also be referred to as a ‘meet and greet’ (Dean 2002, p.110). In some instances, this may take the form of warm-up exercises or else some type of formal introduction. Rea (2014a) considers such exercises vital for the development of extroversion, stage presence, the ability to take risks and communicate with fellow performers and the audience; given how ‘visual codes’ projected by performers can affect the audience’s perception of the music (Rea 2014a). Foreman (2009) and Rea (2015, p.202) describe how these are a way to strengthen physical awareness for the performers, release their imagination and create ease in extroverted expression and focus their attention on what needs to be done in the rehearsal room. The specifics of how these introductions occur, as well as what follows afterwards, depends on the individual director and their practice preferences, but a musical theatre production typically involves an intensive introductory period where a musical director works through songs with the cast (Dean 2002, Maccoy 2004). Dean and Maccoy also note that up to several rehearsals may occur with:

[...] different activities happening at the same time. The director may rehearse a scene with some principal characters while the choreographer works with the chorus in a different room and a pianist works with other members of the cast individually (Maccoy 2004, p.134).

Blocking involves working through the show scene-by-scene with the director / choreographer, deciding how and where the characters are going to move. This process takes several days depending on the length of the show, but as mentioned, depends on the individual preferences of the director (Maccoy 2004). Foreman (2009) states that this is a vital tool for establishing mood, atmosphere and the relationships between characters for the audience. In the rehearsal room, a facsimile of the stage space is marked on the floor and actors and directors use specific terms that are assigned from the audience's point-of-view. Stage directions are a part of how the directors and fellow cast members then communicate with each other i.e. 'stage left, stage right' (Maccoy 2004, p. 117).

Once this has occurred, the 'Working' phase of the production occurs. This consists of the director and the cast working through the production in detail, revising any previous blockings and directions given until it feels right. Foreman (2009) uses the term 'run-throughs' to refer to this stage, describing it as a process where the director gradually runs through the show on a regular basis. This starts with building individual scenes, sequences of scenes and, finally, running the entire show. It is at this point that the cast begins to obtain an overall sense of the show and begin to understand how to pace themselves. At this point, there is an expectation that the cast members will learn their songs and lines to the point that they feel confident enough to rehearse without a copy of the script / score on hand. The director usually dictates the point at which this should occur and initially, they may use a scaffold prompting the actor if a line is forgotten or reviewing forgotten lines at the end of the rehearsal (Maccoy 2004). Repetition consolidates the learning of the cast member until they are confidently 'off-book' (the term used by the production team to describe memorisation without the script), achieving mastery of the required skill.

What follows in the rehearsal process is the 'Running' phase where the production slowly transitions from the rehearsal room to the main stage. These 'technical rehearsals' are where the extended crew are brought in to bring together all elements of the show, especially the lighting crew, sound engineers, stage managers and the full orchestra / band. This is also where the cast run through the show on stage for the first time, and Maccoy (2004) states that this can be

intensive due to the time involved (several days) and the challenges of a different space when compared to rehearsals.

This foregoing analysis of rehearsal practice indicates that there is a high level of established practice both before and during the production. In terms of CoP, this constitutes a high level of 'Indigenous Enterprise'. It also provides a framework for the preliminary themes that will be utilised during the Data Collection process, which is discussed further in **Chapter 3**.

2.6 Conclusion

It is evident that socio-cultural frameworks reviewed provide a means of analysing why certain aspects of human interactions are important for solidarity and learning. From Vygotsky to Lave and Wenger, it is clear that we thrive the most when in situations when we can learn from others who share common interests with us. This makes Community of Practice a particularly effective lens for analysing the kind of settings where this happens. Similar outcomes were present in the studies of musical participation, ranging from; 'a feeling of oneness' (Turino 2008), improvements in physical, mental and social health (Cunha & Lorenzino 2012) and increases in confidence (Bonshor 2014). Previous research of amateur musical theatre has had findings which are essentially an extension of the above; it is potent because it represents a pursuit of shared goals with like-minded people (Woods 1993; Pitts 2007; Palidofsky & Stolbach 2011). However, Dean (2002) and Pitts (2007) describe several areas of conflict that could potentially arise when analysing the amateur musical as a CoP. Wenger (1998) however, has noted that CoPs need not necessarily be harmonious in nature, as even witch hunts were considered to be CoPs.

A clear case can be made that all of the outcomes above are the result of a CoP in some shape or form. However, Kenny (2016) has acknowledged that the framework has only been used in a limited capacity in music research to date. It seems almost contradictory given how her studies have utilised the framework so effectively in analysing why such participatory experiences are so powerful. Kenny's (2016) most recent study solicits that CoP contributes to identity formation, a sense of belonging and meaning through individual and collaborative learning. These areas recall the very important human needs referenced in **Chapter 1**.

In relation to the CoP framework, it also needs to be established if the amateur musical is exactly classified. Is it a CoP or is it more of a CoMP? The genre is more encompassing when compared to previously studied CoP areas, as there is not just the music, but there is also the drama and dancing. For this reason, it is deemed more appropriate from this review to use CoP as the overarching term within this study.

The most pertinent gaps in the established literature mainly pertain to the breadth of settings where the amateur musical has been studied. Previous studies have consisted exclusively of adolescents in mostly the secondary school setting, or in the case of Palidofsky and Stolbach (2011), a specialised delinquent recovery unit. Other areas for further exploration consist of the acquisition of musical and interpersonal skills. Pitts (2007) refers to the potential for acquiring some of these skills from participation in the musical, however there is need for greater quantification of this. For example, would participants have had these skillsets prior to their participation in the production or did they exclusively gain them from this? Additionally, it would also be beneficial to explore people's motivations for wanting to be in the musical. While the outcomes of this (and musical participation in general) have been well documented, it would be valuable to determine if there is any relationship between a person's outcomes and their motivation to participate. There is also the question of the type of learning that occurs in the amateur musical. Cunha & Lorenzino (2012) note in their extra-curricular study of a choir and jazz ensemble that the learning that occurs in such settings is a fusion of differing elements that result from the production of the music. Pitts (2007) similarly postulates that the amateur musical production exists between the formal and informal learning styles. In addition to these, Veblen's (2012) analysis of non-formal learning forms a particularly useful frame of analysis in terms of addressing this issue here.

In light of the foregoing recent literature on music education and musical participation, a new study into the amateur musical production will provide a broader understanding on a number of areas. An investigation of participation, relationships and the learning practices involved therein will provide insights into the potential of CoP as a learning framework and how amateur musical productions can be construed as socio-cultural entities. Investigating the learning practices aims

to provide new perspectives on how methods used in the amateur musical production can relate to music education as a whole.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate two contrasting local amateur musical theatre productions and analyse them using the Community of Practice framework. Secondary aims were to examine the personal outcomes for participants, be they related to skillsets or interpersonal qualities. To further explore these, issues surrounding musical learning practices and strategies employed by the director / musical director were examined.

Key research objectives were as follows:

- To ethnographically explore the experiences and interactions of participants by means of a multiple case study of two contrasting local amateur musical productions. This will be achieved using observation and interviews. Findings will then be discussed and analysed using the framework of ‘Community of Practice’.
- To investigate learning issues that occur in the course of rehearsals and evaluate these in relation to current views of musical learning. This will also be achieved via observations and interviews of selected cast participants. Interviews with directorial figures such as the Musical Director (Case Study 1) and the Director (Case Study 2) will aim to determine strategies used and understand how they facilitate the cast members.
- To identify non performance-related benefits for participants and determine if there is a correlation between these and the participants’ overall experience of the production.

Analysis according to CoP utilised ‘areas of focus’ as outlined by Wenger (1998) and Kenny (2016), including: participation, membership, relationships, negotiated enterprise, indigenous enterprise, mutual accountability, jokes, banter and laughter, lore and learning tools (p. 110). Secondary frameworks for discussion of findings included the situated learning model and the practices of formal, informal and non-formal learning, all of which are outlined in **Chapter 2**.

This chapter will examine the research tools used for this study, and also introduce the two local amateur musical theatre groups featured. Before such techniques can be elaborated on, it is

important first to discuss what *kind* of research study this is and then introduce the two groups in detail.

The previous studies discussed in **Chapter 2** (sections **2.2.2** and **2.3**) follow a trend of tracking a small group of people over a period of time in significant detail. Mertens (2005) describes this as ‘qualitative ethnographic research’ and it strongly aligns with the kind of research done previously on similar areas. It contrasts with quantitative research which deals with larger numbers and is therefore more impersonal. The term ‘ethnographic’ is used when the researcher occupies the same ‘world’ as the participants and the following quote summarises these pointers, with reference to some of the data collection methods that are possible:

[As a] situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It [Qualitative research] consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self.

(Mertens 2005, p. 229).

Below are the two amateur groups contextualised for this study:

Case Study 1: Local city-based amateur musical society

This group is a newly formed local musical society; the production that represented this case study was its second full musical production. It was a relatively well-known show from a respected composer that won various awards and accolades during its original run on Broadway. It represented the larger end of the amateur production as defined by Dean (2002, p. 2) in that it was hosted in a well-known theatre with a paid production team of a professional standing. This group was mainly chosen as it fit the brief of representing a large group of various age groups and experience levels. (over twenty cast members including ensemble roles, see **Appendix D** for a full company list).

Case Study 2: College-based student project

This group was formed to meet the brief of a student as part of their final year devised performance college project. A key component of choosing this group for this study was based on areas in which they contrasted to the group in Case Study 1. Firstly, the musical being

produced was an original show written, composed and directed by the student in question. The overall scale was much smaller, with only five cast members, five production team members and no paid professionals (see **Appendix D** for full company list).

3.2 Researcher Position

As outlined in **Chapter 1**, the Researcher has had previous experience of participation in a range of local musical theatre productions and is thus working as a ‘de facto insider’ (Cresswell 2013, p. 44). This may mean already having some prior working relationship with the people and groups being studied and indeed, played some part in the access to the research sites (especially for Case Study 1). In the interest of transparency, careful consideration and self-awareness of assumptions about the cultural practice of musical theatre were required throughout this study. This meant particular care had to be taken especially when analysing the relationships between participants to avoid them being too ‘cast-centric’ (focused on the point of view of being a cast member where directorial figures could be seen as more authorial than they actually are). Also, mindfulness had to be taken with a possible bias that the participation in the show is a positive experience. A range of strategies were taken as follows in order to ensure reflexivity throughout the process of data collection and analysis.

These had their basis by considering some of the more conflictual themes found in the literature review as possibilities, and also through a range of research techniques. ‘Triangulation’ as a key element of technique, is ‘when two more independent sources all point to the same set of events or facts’ (Yin 2006, p. 115). This is a means of weighing up evidence and countering bias, as for something to be valid in the analysis, an event had to be described by two sources. Miles and Huberman (1994), Yin (2006) and Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2008) encourage that exceptions or ‘outliers’ in the group should be sought (p. 262 – 277). This was considered by drawing on more negative preliminary themes and noting where they occurred as appropriate by respondents throughout the research process.

3.2.1 Access to Research Sites

Prior to each production’s audition, permission was sought in writing (via e-mail). to both amateur groups. This was done by filling out the CIT Informed Consent Forms which was given

to both directors (twice – with a digital copy and a hard copy – see **Appendices A** and **B** for forms pertaining to each respective production). This form stated the purpose, involvement, duration, participant selection, procedures and ethical / confidential procedures of the research. Marshall & Rossman (2015) suggest that if the researcher states an interest in the area of study, it conveys an energy that is useful for gaining access to the sites. Indeed, as stated above, the Researcher Position proved to play a part in how access to the sites were granted. In Case Study 1, the Researcher was offered a supporting cast role in the show and for the second study, the director was aware of the Researcher’s interest in musical theatre.

3.3. Research Design

Now that the two productions have been introduced, the following sections aim to describe the various research methods that will be used in this study. These provide a context for the techniques used and where appropriate will further establish how they will be utilised in this study. Each technique will then lead onto describing the actual research process that was undertaken throughout the ‘field work’ periods with an aim to collating how the data will finally be analysed.

3.3.1 Multiple Case Study

A case study in and of itself ‘provides a unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles’ (Cohen et al. 2011, p. 289). Its main function is to examine a particular instance that occurs within a bounded setting i.e. a community, a clique or a class. Yin (2006) elaborates, ‘[the case study]’ has the ability to examine, in-depth, a “case” within its “real-life” context’ (p. 111). These show that the case study provides potential for intensive description of the experiences of a small group.

As outlined in the Introduction of this chapter, there is also a Multiple Case Study, where more than one case is investigated for the same study (Yin 2006). This was particularly appropriate for this study, as the thesis inherently needs to be more robust than the majority of performance participation literature in **Chapter 2**, which were articles. Miles and Huberman (1994) also provide another salient reason for this need for robustness; ‘the events and processes in one well-

described setting are not wholly idiosyncratic’ (p. 172). Owing to this, investigating two groups, especially two *contrasting* groups, will give a stronger case for the applicability of Community of Practice within amateur musical theatre. In Merriam’s (1998) words, ‘the more cases included in a study and the greater variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be’ (p. 40).

A majority of the studies referenced in the **Literature Review** (see **Chapter 2** p. 15 – 17) pertained exclusively to one group within a limited age range (or else multiple studies of differing *types* of musical groups). This study aspires to broaden the scope by utilising two groups of the same type, in a ‘**Multiple Case Study**’.

Some other strengths associated with the case study are that it allows for attention to subtlety, can be written in a non-professional language that is easy to understand and results are immediately intelligible. As Ramirez (2016) states, ‘[the case study has the flexibility to incorporate multiple perspectives, data collection tools and interpretive strategies’ (p. 19). However, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed when carrying out a case study. How does one record, file and categorise evidence? Similarly, Cohen et al. (2011) note that the results of the case study might not readily be ‘generalisable’ and can be subject to personal bias. The latter was alluded to in Researcher Position, and again ‘triangulation’ seems to be a key towards answering this. Yin (2006) states, ‘in collecting case study data, the main idea is to “triangulate” or establish converging lines of evidence to make your findings robust as possible’ (p. 115). This means that other methods and techniques for data collection had to be used. These are described throughout the following sections.

3.3.2 Observation

It was important to consider the various degrees of observation possible in research. According to Bryman (2012), several roles could be adopted by ethnographic researchers ranging from covert to overt. Merriam (1988) categorises this range as ‘[being] a member of the group being observed [or being a spectator]’ (p. 92). However, she notes that in relation to case studies, one is never truly a full participant or a full observer, accounting for Gans’ (1982) term ‘researcher participant. Owing to such a broad spectrum of possibilities, it needed to be determined what

levels of observation would create a rounded view of the multiple case study experience? The following models listed were deemed to be the most appropriate in each case.

Case Study #1

Complete participation / participant as observer:

The researcher partook fully in the activities. A similar observation model was used by Ferguson (1992) during a study of students with learning disabilities, as she simultaneously maintained her role as a special education teacher while collecting qualitative data. The researcher paralleled this by partaking as a member of the cast (in a supporting role) and a researcher, thus formed the 'participant as observer model'. This is where the activities of the researcher are known to the group but are secondary to the researcher's role as participant. Some pertinent challenges were raised by this model as one key issue is 'trying to collect data and maintain a questioning and reflective stance' (p. 383). Another issue that needed to be dealt with was 'the depth of the information revealed to the researcher and the level of confidentiality promised by the group to obtain this information' (Merriam 1988, p. 93). These were addressed by the format taken during writing the field notes, in that they primarily tracked the experiences of other participants and also referring to the researcher role when appropriate i.e. during the introductions at the first rehearsal and whenever asked about it by other cast members.

Case Study #2

Moderate participation / observer as participant

The researcher's participation in the group was 'secondary to [his] role of information gatherer' (Merriam 1988, p. 93). This was attained by taking a less proactive role during the actual rehearsal process. However, the researcher contributed towards peripheral tasks such as booking the rehearsal spaces, relaying information to the cast and assisting with other tasks as required by this production's director. Bryman (2012) states that being a regular in the vicinity is a key part of forming a 'research bargain to gain entry / acceptance' (p. 442). This was achieved by remaining at the rehearsals (albeit as a member of the 'production team') and partaking in the tasks mentioned above. As with Case Study #1, all parties involved were informed of the research project whenever appropriate.

3.3.3 Field Notes

'Field notes' were taken of these observations throughout the first 'half' of the research / rehearsal process. The reason for this served two purposes, it allowed time to focus on the performance aspects of Case Study #1's production when rehearsals became more intense and for Case Study #2, it gave time to concentrate on the final drawing up of research results (considering semester constraints). These notes aimed to provide a comprehensive description of the activities involved, with the following used as a model for guiding questions (Mertens 2005, adapted from Patton 2002):

Beginning

- How is the activity introduced?
- Who is present?
- What exactly was said at the beginning?
- How did participants respond or react to what was said?

Middle

- Who is involved?
- What is being said by staff?
- What is being said by participants?
- What are the variations in how participants are engaging in the activity being observed?
- How does it feel to be engaged in this activity? (Observer)

End

- What are the signals that the activity unit is ending?
- Who is present at the time?
- What is said?
- How do participants react to the ending of the activity?

- How is completion of this unit of activity related to other program activities and future plans?

Other considerations drawn from this model included describing characteristics of group members, the patterns of interaction and informal interactions / unplanned activities. Therefore, it was necessary to observe participants when no rehearsal activity was happening, especially during the ten minutes on each side of the rehearsal to track their feelings before and after the activity. Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2008)'s suggestion was followed that all field notes should be written as soon as possible after the observation is finished to achieve an ideal amount of retention. All of these were therefore, written immediately after the rehearsal as it was not possible to do so any earlier due to being involved in the rehearsal activities. To address the biases outlined in Researcher Position, the field notes primarily tracked the views and interactions that occurred between other people. These also had to be 'triangulated' before being factored into the 'Data Analysis' (this will be outlined in more detail in **Section 3.6**, p. 42).

3.3.4 Interviews

It is not always possible to obtain intimately involved data through observation and field notes alone (Mertens 2005). Interviews are also used as a qualitative research technique in order to obtain information not readily available through observation and to 'capture multiple realities or perceptions of any given situation, and, finally, to assist in interpreting what is happening' (Colwell 1992, p. 85). A convention of qualitative research is the smaller sample of people used to gather findings. This means that interviews can take a more open ended approach.

In this study, interviews constituted the latter half of the data collection process. A combination of structured and semi-structured approaches were utilised (Berg 2007). This allowed for the use of pre-determined questions based on the research aims, but also allowed for flexibility within the interview itself, as 'probes' were used whenever appropriate. This was implemented to achieve a sense of 'informality' within the interviews, so that respondents could talk at length about their experiences while also keeping in with the aims of the interview. Not giving out the full question list beforehand was also a means of meeting this, however the researcher had the questions on hand for guidance.

Themes for interviews were initially framed following those used in studies by Pitts (2007), Cunha & Lorenzino (2012) Palidofsky and Stolbach (2012), Kenny (2016), which sought to determining the characteristic of a CoP. Learning practices within the production were also explored through participant views. This also entailed some evaluation of cast respondents' skill levels in the areas of singing, acting and dancing to assess any potential learning or change in these skillsets due to their partaking in the production. Assessing this also reflected Wenger's (2011) view that members of a CoP have specific skills that differentiate them from the rest of society. The interview questions themselves were then corroborated through topics that arose during the observation process. All themes were flagged for respondents in lay terms at the start of the interview and were reiterated upon arriving at the section in which each theme was discussed in detail. The interview questions featured the following broad themes:

- Overall feeling of satisfaction / dissatisfaction with the production?
 - What was satisfactory / unsatisfactory?
- Sense of belonging with the group. Is this influenced by production role?
- Balance of demands of the production with other life commitments
- Learning strategies / tools and response to this
- Strategies for negotiating difficulties.

Due to the dispersal of the cast members after the production, the interviews needed to take place during the production process, though it was acknowledged that fuller responses would have been generated from post-production interviews. However, it would have been trickier to arrange interviews due to respondents having other life commitments and also, the loss of convenience of working around a rehearsal schedule. The rehearsals in themselves provided another advantage in that respondents' accounts were fresh and less subject to post hoc rationalisation of their experiences. Interviews were also recorded and transcribed after the field work period of both Case Studies. See **Appendices E - H** for interview questions.

3.3.5 Choosing Interview Respondents

In order to ensure a wide scope of research, it was essential that the respondents interviewed

came from as wide a range of stage and musical backgrounds as possible. This reflected a statement by Cohen et al. (2008) that in a case study, key informants need to be identified as soon as possible. An original hypothesis of the following cohorts were drawn up in order to encompass the researcher's aspirations in this respect.

- A young cast member primarily of a musical background
- A young cast member primarily of a dramatic background
- A young person with a neutral background (neither of the above)
- A person (any age range) partaking in their first ever production
- An older person partaking in the production
- A person (any age bracket) experienced in musical theatre.
- The musical director / director.

Of course, the exact specifics within these (the first six areas) had to vary according to the cast of each production. Interviewees were suggested by the Director(s) and those chosen were based on their status in the production (so that a mixture of lead and supporting roles were involved) and also based on observed interactions during rehearsals. Each potential interviewee was e-mailed to confirm appointments and give a basic outline of the research goals and ethical procedures (see **Appendix C**). Where possible, a balance of age, gender and experience levels of the cast members were also accounted for. See **Section 3.4** (and **3.4.1** for Case Study 2) for profiles of cast interviewees and full selection criteria. Due to the potential size and density of qualitative research, it is advised by Bryman (2012) to keep the sample size condensed in this type of study. Therefore, each case study had no more than five interviews maximum (four cast members and a musical director / director).

3.4. Field Work – Case Study 1

Following the initial correspondence described on **Section 3.2.1**, a research timeline was agreed between the researcher and the director. Observations from rehearsals were documented in field notes throughout the first nine weeks. Sites included various rehearsal venues including dedicated spaces in the performance venue and a nearby independent location for dance rehearsals. Notes written here followed the model mentioned on p. 30 – 31, with an ultimate aim

of outlining pertained to the learning and social bonding that occurred during rehearsals. This period roughly corresponded with what Maccoy (2004) calls the Introduction, Blocking and Working stages of the production (see **Chapter 2**, p.23 for full outline of these stages). Particular to this production was how these elements occurred concurrently and then merged from Week 10 to form the 'Running' stage (Maccoy 2004).

The researcher proposed with the Director that interviews should occur in around Week 7. This allowed time to reformulate questions based on arising themes, establish who ideal respondents might be and most importantly, to build trust with everyone involved. Following a rehearsal, the Director announced to the cast members that the researcher was seeking interviewees for a research project, and that they were free to volunteer themselves for this. Interviews were then organised with interested parties the following week. For ease of scheduling, cast interviews took place after rehearsals at an independent location near the rehearsal venue. Around this time, the researcher also organised an interview with the Musical Director, though this took place outside the main rehearsal schedule.

In total, this production lasted thirteen weeks from the first rehearsal until its closing night. At the beginning of each month, the Director e-mailed the cast a schedule of rehearsals consisting of three week blocks. The initial two weeks consisted of a weekly dance rehearsal in which all cast members were involved. From Week 3, music and reading / acting rehearsals were added to the itinerary. The latter was exclusive to 'principal' characters only i.e. people who had lines of dialogue within the libretto. This structure remained in place from weeks five through nine and intensified from weeks nine through thirteen. One additional dance rehearsal per week was added and on production week (Week 13), dress / band rehearsals took place every night up until the performances.

<i>Rehearsal Schedule</i>	<i>Setting</i>	<i>Research Method</i>
Week 1	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 2	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 3	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 4	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 5	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 6	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 7	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 8	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 9 - 12	Rehearsal Venue Various Locations	Observation Interviews

Figure 3.1: Research Schedule for Case Study 1

Profiles of cast respondents are described as follows. This includes a brief description of their role in the production and reasons for selection. All given names here are pseudonyms.

- Rob (R1) is a retired professional theatre performer with experience of many Off-Broadway and touring productions. His role in the production was in a Trio alongside the researcher and one other cast member. Additionally, Rob volunteered as a committee member and as a liaison between the cast members and the production team. This interview sought to explore the committee member role, in addition to comparing responses given his past experiences as a professional in America.
- Alan (A1) is a young college student who trained and performed with various stage schools while growing up. He played the lead male role in the show. The primary reason for interview was based on his lead role.
- Nuala (N1) is a person in full-time employment outside the show. Her role in the production was a supporting role with one featured solo song. In the third month of the production, Nuala was identified as having a strong skill-set in dance, and other cast members sought her assistance in going over the various dance steps. She was nominated

as a “Dance Captain” by the producer.

- Tiana (T1) is a person in full-time employment outside the show. Her role in the production was part of a specific tap-dance based ensemble that had a prominent presence in a majority of the ensemble songs of the show. Tiana was also nominated as a “Dance Captain,” specifically for the aforementioned ensemble. Her selection for interview was to explore responses to the dancing and ensemble elements.

3.4.1 Field Work – Case Study 2

The production lasted eleven weeks from the first rehearsal until performance. However, due to the semester constraints only the first six were detailed in a research capacity. These primarily consisted of acting and blocking rehearsals, with one observation devoted to an arranging session between the director and musical director. This production only featured a cast of five, so the delineation of principals / ensemble members was not present here. This smaller cast size also made it easier to scale back the timeframe of the research plan.

<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Setting</i>	<i>Research Method</i>
Week 1	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 2	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 3	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 4	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 5	Rehearsal Venue	Observation
Week 6 - 7	Various Locations	Interviews

Figure 3.2: Research Schedule for Case Study 2

The observation period involved sitting in on rehearsals and documenting field notes afterwards. As with Case Study 1, Mertens’ (2005) model of observation was used to write these. The same method and reasons for using observations first then interviews later were also used. In this instance, it also helped determine if interview questions needed to be altered based on particular idiosyncrasies from this production. The two most notable contrasts being that it was an original,

self-devised project written and composed by the Director and the smaller cast size. Emphasis was also given in the questions to personal responses to the themes of the script, as it contained allegories to anti-bullying, drug abuse and strained interpersonal relationships. It also became evident due to the latter that the cast and team here had more professional involvement and training with theatre in the locality. However, as a group that is unpaid, the production still technically fell under the amateur bracket.

Given the differing size and experience of the cast / production teams, interviews involved two cast members (chosen in collaboration with the Director), and the Director. (Due to scheduling reasons, the Musical Director was not as present in the rehearsal process at the point where interviews took place). Brief profiles and selection criteria (with pseudonyms) are as follows:

- Karen (K2) is of traditional student age and played the lead role in the show. She comes primarily from an acting based background but has not done a musical theatre production before.
- Sam (S2) is again of traditional student age and played a romantic role in the show. His background is primarily in acting, with limited experience in musical theatre and pantomime.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Owing to this being a qualitative study that dealt with people, a number of ethical considerations needed to be addressed. As Brenner (2006) states, ‘the protection of the people involved in an interview study is a paramount responsibility of the researcher’ as ‘the qualitative interview involves special considerations because of the personal relationship it often establishes with an informant and the sometimes unpredictable direction that conversations can take as a project evolves’ (p. 361). This point was made more pertinent given that working relationships were established with respondents through the degrees of participation involved.

There is also the matter of informed consent – seeking permission to participate and disclose the nature of the research to participants. Cohen et al. (2011) maintain that the nature of informed consent leads to one also having to consider whether the research is covert or overt, though

Mertens (2005) argues that if the research is too overt, participants may alter their behaviour in a manner that compromises the research. However, this also uncovers the issue of deception, a much-debated ethical problem in research. Mertens (2005) suggests that ‘guarding the privacy and confidentiality of the research participants’ and ‘obtaining fully informed consent’ as two means of undoing deception (p. 35). Cohen et al. (2011) add that confidentiality and privacy can be guaranteed by withholding the real names and other identifying characteristics of participants, as well as giving them the right to veto their contributions to the research.

To that end, the following points summarise how ethical standards were upheld during the research project.

- The names of the productions and musical societies / groups were not disclosed.
- Consent was sought from the Directors of each group prior to each case study in writing, through a digital and hard copy of the CIT Informed Consent Form (see **Appendices A** and **B** for these). This was also done in the case of anyone who was chosen for an interview. The full cast and production teams were made aware of the overview and aims of the project at the ‘meet and greet’ which took place at the first rehearsal for each show.
- Field notes primarily documented observations from the point-of-view of what occurred with others in the group. These were written in full immediately following each observation. Each finding was ‘triangulated’ before being accounted for in further analysis.
- Interview respondents also had the right to withdraw from the research at any stage or vetoed anything said they did not use in the study. All were informed of this (written on the Informed Consent Form and verbally prior to the interview) and also of their right to view and / or listen to transcripts and recordings. None chose to view anything, though one did later veto a comment that ultimately was not essential to the final analysis of this study. All of these were also deleted one year after the final submission of the thesis, as per Data Protection Act procedures.

3.6 Data Analysis

Following the field work periods of both case studies, all field notes and interview transcripts were read with a view towards deductive analysis. This was achieved through using CoP as the main framework, initially through the triumvirate areas of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire (Lave & Wenger 1991). In each of these areas, all notes were copied into a separate document that served to ‘code’ these areas (all sections of mutual engagement were placed in one document and so on) and see if there were any common denominators that emerged. The same process was done with the interview transcriptions. These were then triangulated with the field notes to form a CoP narrative – what facilitated engagement, what were the stated and negotiated aims of each CoP, how did members solve problems and what practices were built within these communities? Kenny’s (2016) analysis and use of ‘areas of CoP focus’ (as described on **Chapter 2**, p. 13) was then used to further refine and distil the themes that emerged. The figure is reproduced here for reference and to flag an addition made to it for this study.

<i>Dimensions of CoP</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Areas of Focus</i>
Mutual Engagement	The actual <i>domain</i> , the regular interaction and sets of relationships that form a common endeavour.	Participation Membership Relationships
Joint enterprise	The <i>process</i> itself and the interactions, shared goals and negotiation that it entails	Negotiated enterprise Indigenous enterprise Mutual accountability
Shared Repertoire	The actual <i>practice</i> , ways of doing, joint pursuit and shared resources that are used to make and negotiate meaning	Jokes, <i>banter</i> and laughter Lore Learning tools

Figure 3.3: Wenger’s dimensions of CoP (1998) and Kenny’s (2016, p.110) areas of CoP focus with banter addition

Kenny's study categorises one area of 'Shared Repertoire' as 'Jokes and laughter'. The term 'banter' has been added to this study as it particularly reflects the observations of teasing and self-deprecating interactions found in this study. This represents an Irish sense of humour. Other indicators, 'participation, membership, relationship, negotiated enterprise, indigenous enterprise, mutual accountability, jokes, [banter] and laughter, lore and learning tools' (Kenny 2016, p. 110), serve as the means of how the data will be presented and discussed in **Chapter 4**.

A secondary framework used was the methods of practice across the learning continuum of formal, informal and non-formal (Green 2002; Folkestad 2006; Veblen 2012). The same methods of analysis were used for this following the analysis of CoP, considering the outline of practices on page 19. In summary, these were the methods used to identify the processes that identify the amateur musical as a CoP and establish if learning is viewed as an intended or unintended outcome within these settings by analysing the practices that occurred.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion on two local amateur musical theatre productions, analysing how the Community of Practice framework is employed. As discussed in **Chapter 2**, CoP provides a lens to make explicit why the various outcomes of participation in musical settings occur. These in turn link back to our need for human solidarity and socialisation (Grayling 2002, see **Chapter 1**). It is hoped that this chapter provides a wider understanding not only the framework, but also the potential of amateur musical production in terms of being construed as a socio-cultural entity.

4.1.2 Main Frameworks Revisited

The primary analytical framework used in this study is that of CoP. It embodies a majority of socio-cultural needs and goals, characterised by interactions between groups of people who ‘share a concern or passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly’ (Wenger 2011). Embedded in this is an interplay of varying levels of expertise between members, what Lave and Wenger (1991) call ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (LPP). This describes a specific process where experts guide novices through the learning process that occurs, helping them to master the task at hand.

Situated Learning (Stein 1998; St. John 2010) represents an extension of this, whereby the learning is aided through the environment in which one is based. St. John (2010) gives a number of salient examples (see **Chapter 2**, p. 14 - 15 for discussion) on how this occurs in various music-based situations. Again, this is marked by an understanding of the socio-cultural relationships between the people involved and their levels of experience. Some of this is also reflected in the recent debates on learning practices. To date, three main ‘types’ of practice have been established: formal, informal and non-formal (Green 2002; Folkestad 2006; Green 2008; Veblen 2012). These are discussed on **Chapter 2**, p. 17. Various studies on musical participation have shown that some fluidity exists in these practices, especially when investigating non-classroom related settings.

The following sections will discuss both case studies in terms of the main triumvirate elements of CoP (mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire) and the areas of focus used by Kenny (2016, see p. 13 and p. 43). This will be followed up with a discussion on the learning practices and a final discussion which draws all themes together. As per **Chapter 3**, each area of discussion in this chapter is ‘triangulated’ across a number of observations and various statements made by respondents during interviews.

4.2 Mutual Engagement

This aspect of CoP comprises of the activities in which members engage with in order to establish norms and relationships (Wenger 1998). Given that this area deals heavily with how members relate to each other, the situated learning and LPP concepts will also be discussed here. The main areas of focus for this component include **Participation** (how and why members wish to participate), **Membership** (What makes one a member of this CoP? How are the roles of novice and expert delineated? What kinds of roles and identities can members take?) and **Relationships** (how are they influenced by the CoP?).

4.2.1 Participation – Case Study 1

The reasons why the cast and the production team (Director and Choreographer)¹² wanted to participate in this production became immediately evident during the ‘meet and greet’ ritual (Dean 2002). At the first rehearsal, the Director gathered all involved into a circle to introduce themselves. This revealed that in spite of a wide age range (approximately 18 to 65), the group had a common ground through a mutual love of musical theatre. Various responses from people during this session revealed reasons for their desire to participate, which included: enjoyment of the integration of singing, acting and dancing; an opportunity to use the musical as a solace from everyday life; the pleasure of camaraderie and an opportunity to make new friends with shared skills and interests. It was observed at the first rehearsal that members came from a broad demographic of performance experience – from those who came through training, stage schools

¹ As per normal practice, the Musical Director also attends but did not in this production due to scheduling reasons. He did his own version of this, however, at the first music rehearsal where he outlined his role, goals etc.

² There are other figures outside of the cast / production (the backstage team) who are also being considered in this analysis. However, they become involved on a peripheral basis later in the production so ‘Participation’ does not apply to them. These roles will be discussed under ‘Membership.’

and other amateur musical societies to those with more limited experience who still sought out the production as a source of recreation. Terms such as ‘community theatre’ and ‘community project’ were also used (particularly by the Director) which implied that a sense of sharing with others was just as important as the performance. These statements listed above also reflected the desires for participation described by Turino (2008), in particular, a sense of wanting to feel bound with fellow performers.

Responses during interviews further reinforced this notion of desiring a social bond. The cast respondents described this as a very appealing part of the production experience: ‘The more friendships you make [from the production], the more you get out of it and the more enticing it is to do it again’ (Nuala, 9 April 2016), ‘I’m as interested in making new acquaintances and friends as doing the show. Any opportunity to meet people in an activity that you already like is a real treat’ (Rob, 2 April 2016). All cast respondents ultimately felt that meeting people with similar interests was something they really enjoyed about their experience. The above statements and the quotes below show how the ‘group of people who share a passion’ definition of CoP emerged in this Case Study.

[The show] is an experience of camaraderie (Rob, 2 April 2016)

It’s really interesting to work [in a production] with a range of people (Alan, 3 April 2016)

I’ve met new people with similar interests, which is great! (Tiana, 25 April)

[My interactions] with other people has improved. Meeting strangers and then all of a sudden being able to act with them, dance with them and sing with them (Nuala, 10 April 2016)

The concepts of ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ (LPP) (Lave & Wenger 1991) and ‘situated learning’ (Folkestead 1998; Stein 1998; St. John 2010) emerged in how cast members experienced participation in this study (see **Chapter 2**, p. 15). Some of this was due to the range of talents that the cast members had and differing areas of specialisation from ‘dancers... singers... actor-singers’ (Alan, 3 April 2016).

In amateur [productions], you’re going to get people with music degrees and people who’ve maybe done nothing [working together] (Musical Director, 23 April 2016).

Dance was a vital part of the production. As Alan (3 April 2016) stated, 'it's a very dance heavy show', however, 'there [were] people who aren't dancers, don't feel comfortable as dancers and need to go through things more slowly and bit by bit' (Tiana, 25 April 2016). Cast members were observed on several occasions aiding each other with dance steps before, during and in between rehearsal breaks. This was achieved through the kind of 'situated' imitation that St. John (2010) described (p. 14): Person B seeks help from Person A, Person A demonstrates the step for Person B who then copies them. As a result, the relationships of 'novices' and 'experienced others' as per LPP emerged naturally as time went on and the cast understood these relationships as prior to one particular rehearsal, one ensemble member said to another 'you should wait until [...] gets here [to help you with the dancing]. S / He is really good at it' (Field Note, 8 March 2016).

In the final weeks of the production, a sense of novice and expert was further represented by the appointment of dance captains (Nuala and Tiana) and the setting up of a voluntary practice group by Rob outside of rehearsals for people to go over anything they were having difficulty with. The former was not in place as of Nuala's interview, however, she clearly acknowledged her role in helping people out with the dances. Tiana recognised how the latter had a positive influence on the cast, 'it's great that the support is there and that people make the time to help others get to where they need to be' (25 April 2016). Rob added how he enjoyed helping people. Essentially, all 'expert' figures understood their place as such and knew how to act accordingly.

However, this status of expert and novice was also found to be very fluid as it evolved depending on the particular situation that occurred. The Musical Director explained one such situation, 'something very odd happened recently [in this production]... several people joined us very late' (Interview, 23 April 2016). This occurrence was in response to a disparity in the ratio of males and females in the ensemble and a need to balance this out. As this happened within a month of opening night, collaboration needed to take place between established cast members to bring the newer members up to the same standard, especially with the dance routines (Field Note, 31 March 2016). This observation also highlighted what Wenger describes as 'complementary contributions' to a CoP where members 'know how to give and receive help rather than try to know everything [themselves]' (1998, p. 125). It also highlighted that perhaps such delineations

of expert and novice in these situations are not as clear cut. This is because of the production, the time involved and the skillsets e.g. one person could identify as being stronger at dancing but might need help singing harmony lines and for another person it could be the other way around. It just so happened that dance provided the most pertinent illustration for this Case Study because of what show it was.

The level of participation experienced by the cast members, through their extent of involvement in rehearsals, also played a part in how satisfied or dissatisfied they felt. A similar theme had emerged in Pitts' (2007) study of the school musical production. Nuala explained that at times, she would be at a rehearsal that involved mainly dancing but her character had more of an acting role. This resulted in her '[being] there for the whole rehearsal but [not actually] being needed for anything' (10 April 2016). She felt that such instances were a bit of a 'waste of time' for her but she was still able to participate by helping others to learn off their lines. Alan, though playing the lead role himself, acknowledged that members of the ensemble experienced a similar frustration. He spoke of an incident where some of them left the venue to get coffee in the middle of a rehearsal and thus were not present at a point they were actually needed, empathising that he would have felt the same way were he in the ensemble (3 April 2016). Tiana also referenced an early rehearsal where, due to a miscommunication, an acting rehearsal took place instead of a singing rehearsal. Those with ensemble (non-named) parts were sent home as a result, and, while she had a named part, she noted she would not have been best pleased were she in that position (25 April 2016). However, it is not strictly down to the size of one's role or if they are in the ensemble or not, 'although I have a small role, I'm in a fair few scenes so whether it's an acting rehearsal, a singing rehearsal or a dancing rehearsal, I'm involved a lot...' (Tiana, 25 April 2016). This demonstrates the importance of one actually *feeling* as if they are able to participate to the CoP in whatever capacity. It seems that not being able to do so makes one feel alienated.

Participation – Case Study 2

This production had two notable differences compared to Case Study 1. There was a smaller team of ten people compared to thirty, and the age bracket was narrower (18 – 25). However, much of the initial rituals involved and reasons revealed for participation turned out to be exactly

the same. While the Director set up the room, one cast member introduced themselves, perhaps in anticipation of the ‘meet and greet’ (Dean 2002). This evidenced that the cast enjoyed and sought out regular opportunities to perform in productions and each had some previous experiences in these areas. A producer also guided this conversation by suggesting that the cast discuss their characters as well. Once the Director finished, this discussion segued into the formal ‘meet and greet’ where the goals of the production were outlined. The cast again revealed their motivations for participating, mostly a desire to indulge a love for performing. Cast interview respondents later elaborated on this: ‘I love acting. I love performing. [My first musical last year] was the best acting gig I’ve ever taken and it’s made me want to do more musicals’ (Sam, 15 March 2017). A desire to make friends, gain confidence and expand one’s social circle was also once again made evident. ‘I made some lovely new friends [in this musical]. That’s a very big thing for me. I always like expanding my social circle’ (Sam 15 March 2017). Karen similarly stated, ‘I went [into theatre] to make new friends and gain confidence in myself’ (15 March 2017). As with Case Study 1, these statements are very applicable to CoP concepts and demonstrate similar motivations in spite of the outward contrast between groups.

The traditional CoP process of interplay between new-timers and experienced others, ‘legitimate peripheral participation’, was also not as evident here (Lave & Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998). This was perhaps due to the smaller group size and sense of expertise observed at the first rehearsal (everybody discussed having some experience with theatre / performing, as opposed to Case Study 1 where members came from a mixture of backgrounds and levels of experience). The Director confirmed this, adding that the cast had a good concept of the rehearsal process with regard to learning lines, understanding blocking and stage directions (25 March 2017). However, members were still able to give ‘complementary contributions’, assisting and giving each other spare copies of the script when needed. The Director also encouraged the cast to contribute, repeatedly stating that this project was a collaboration. This was a position that was reinforced during the interview, to exemplify: ‘I’m more of a “what do you think here?” and give me your advice and “is there anything you’d like to add here?” or “what kind of acting technique would you like to follow?” [...] I’m “of” the community rather than “above” the community’

(Director, 25 March 2017). This acknowledges that there is a sense that novices and experts help each other out and knowledge is not limited to one side or the other.

In spite of the differences that resulted from the smaller scale of this production, the expressed desire of members to be involved in theatre / performing, to make new connections through this field, and to gain confidence were clearly evident. This reinforces the claim for the musical production being understood as a CoP or socio-cultural entity. These findings also resonate with the issues and needs for solidarity discussed across **Chapters 1 - 2**.

4.2.2 Membership – Case Study 1

According to Kenny (2016), ‘role and identity [are] significant aspects of membership’ in a CoP (p. 112). In the amateur musical theatre production, the kind of membership one can take is multi-faceted as a broad range of roles are involved, from production (Director, Choreographer, Musical Director), to the cast, to the technical team (Stage Manager, Sound Engineers, Band Members) and the intermediaries between each one. How does one actually become a member of such a CoP? Wenger (2011) states that a person needs to ‘carry a shared competence with members that distinguish[es] them from other people’. This was the with the cast members as they needed to successfully go through an open audition process to partake in production. All of the cast respondents, to varying degrees, acknowledged that singing, dancing, acting and musicianship skills were required. Tiana’s estimation of these also carried some delineation in terms of what dramatic role one is placed, with a positive view that anyone can participate even with basic levels of skill. Even the Musical Director stated, ‘to sing in tune is pretty useful but I don’t expect people to be able to read music’ (23 April 2016).

You don’t have to be the best singer, especially if you’re going to be in the chorus or the ensemble. Ideally, [one needs to] be able to hold a tune. Even with dancing as well, you don’t have to be a great dancer. Movement of any sort is of use in the production. [Same with] acting as well, if you have lines. [With] basic levels of everything, I think anyone can be in musicals (Tiana, 25 April 2016).

The Musical Director stated that the casting was a collaborative process between themselves, the Director and other production team members during auditions. Emphasis was given to how the MD deals with the vocal suitability of a potential cast member and how the Director has the final say, ‘[dealing] with if [a person] *suits* the part’ (Musical Director, 23 April 2016). This partially

alluded to what Deer and Dal Vara (2008) call 'type' (see p. 21). This was exemplified when the researcher was cast in a 'trio', with the two other members contrasted in age and gender, rather than in the Director's words, having a trio of three young males (Field Note, 18 February 2016). It is important to note that the cast is only one type of membership this type of CoP can have, for even within that, there was a further specification of identities i.e. Nuala and Tiana as dance captains and Rob acting as a point of liaison between the cast and the production team. There were also people in charge of the rehearsal venues who were more peripheral in terms of the production but still key towards a smooth rehearsal process as they booked the rooms on request from the directors, directed the cast members to the correct rooms and made sure the necessary equipment was in place i.e. a keyboard for the MD.

All respondents (the cast *and* the Musical Director) also interestingly cited various social qualities as being essential to membership. Words like 'support', 'respect,' 'being aware of each other' and 'getting along with each other' highlighted that members felt they needed to foster a sense of common identity with each other in order for the production to run smoothly. Alan and Tiana also emphasised these points in relation to the mixed levels of ability inherent in a CoP.

It's different dancing by yourself or with one or two people that you know who are at the same level [as you] versus a big mixed level of abilities in the group and trying to put it all together (Tiana, 25 April 2016).

The key to success in a project like this is supporting each other, because there are very different levels [abilities] in this [production]. There's people in the show who've never acted before or performed on stage before. Supporting these people and learning from them too is really important for it to all work as a] in this [production]. There's people in the show who've never acted before or performed on stage before. Supporting these people and learning from them too is really important for it to all work as a cohesive spectacle (Alan, 9 April 2016).

I think people need to have a good attitude towards learning. To respect me, to respect each other and to work [together] like that (Musical Director, 23 April 2016).

These quotes also represented the some of the process of how CoP members journey from 'peripheral' to 'full' participation ('full' in this case means functioning on stage as a unit). This was also evident from the Musical Director's recognition of the 'need to be able to bridge that gap [of people with and without musical training] competently. As one of the 'leader' figures in this CoP, he also recognised the importance of providing positive encouragement to the cast members. A clear effort was made throughout rehearsals to demonstrate musical phrases in a

direct manner that did not involve too much use of technical language. The Choreographer carried out a similar process during dance rehearsals. In both instances, the cast were constantly encouraged to ask questions if they were unsure of anything. Nuala felt this was very valuable, especially for people without any prior background in musicals.

The Musical Director and Choreographer have been really good at their teaching, especially for people who didn't have any background in musicals or any background in dancing (Nuala, 10 April 2016).

According to the Musical Director, amateur musical productions are very much a 'team effort' where one always needs to 'liase' with others. This carries forward (in terms of that 'role') throughout the casting then teaching them the material, working with the Choreographer in terms of 'tempo' and making cuts to the music as well as working well with the Director. The stage manager was also referenced, but mentioned as a role where the MD would not have much dealings with (Musical Director, 23 April 2016). This highlights the wide range of 'memberships' that one can take in producing an amateur musical and demonstrates why social qualities are so important. While there are direct positions – those who play a prominent part in the CoP throughout the rehearsal process (Director, Choreographer, Musical Director and cast members) and those who may be more peripheral – like a stage manager or a technical crew who may only become involved towards the show's 'opening night' – all need to be socially cognisant and have a good working relationship for the production (the wider 'CoP' if you will) to run smoothly. This is also present with the views stated that one can potentially get by in an amateur production as a cast member (at least in the ensemble) without significant prior training, for the working relationships therein help the LPP process take place. It is evident that LPP helps compensate for the various degrees of backgrounds involved.

Membership – Case Study 2

According to the Director, this production also had an open audition process. However, some key roles were sought out, either due to drop-out or not having found a suitable candidate during these auditions (25 March 2017). Sam relayed an anecdote about how he became involved: 'I auditioned for another show which I didn't get as I knew I did not suit the character. But the Director heard me from outside the room and then wanted to have me on board. [We felt] the

character in [this musical] was in my age range, early to mid-twenties...’ (15 March 2017). This again reflected Deer and Dal Vara’s (2008) discussion on ‘type’.

Cast respondents here also acknowledged the triumvirate ‘triple threat’ skillset. Both their views were similar to Tiana’s in Case Study 1 regarding the extent of these skills required depended on the role in which one hoped to be cast. Karen, for example, stated ‘with singing [...] it depends on where you want to be, whether you want to be the lead or in the ensemble’. She further recommended that a potential cast member should receive vocal lessons to figure out their range and how to make their voice work best. With regard to dancing, she commented that it ‘is always taught [in the production] but it is good to have a sense of rhythm and good special awareness’. Sam shared a similar viewpoint; ‘you don’t need to be spectacular [at dancing] so long as you are able to listen to the choreographer, do the steps and follow to the best of your ability’ (15 March 2017).

The Director, however, did not put as much emphasis on dancing as a required skill-set given that it was not an essential part of this musical. She stated it was written this way as dancing was not one of her own personal strong points. She also emphasised that supportive, good social qualities were desired from the cast time, considering how themes of inclusion versus exclusion were key to the storyline of this show:

Enthusiasm about the show was very important [in casting people]. And that they could sing and act, didn’t mind about the dance. I didn’t mind about the dancing because it not a dance heavy show. [And] Friendliness because [the show] is all about anti-bullying. If they [potential cast] came across as cold shouldered then I wouldn’t be a big fan (Director 25 March 2017).

While the cast respondents did not explicitly refer to social skills in response to *how one becomes a member* of this CoP, they made a number of references to the importance of having trust and comfort amongst each other all the same. This represents an interplay of the musical and social qualities in terms of how a common identity is formed. The Director, similar to the Musical Director in Case Study 1, referenced working in tandem with other key members (Arrangers, Production Managers) in order to ensure things run smoothly. All parties recognised that they are part of a common venture and need to support each other in doing so.

Given the nature of this production (compared to Case Study 1), the traditional scope of ‘legitimate peripheral participation’ was not as pronounced here due to there not being such a strict delineation between novice and expert. This was in part due to the production’s smaller scale and less disparity between the skill levels of the cast members involved. However, a case can also be made that the production itself represents a form of ‘peripheral participation’ in that an expert (the Director) guides novices (the cast) through a process of building competencies (the permutations of singing, acting and dancing required) until the show is produced to the public. This is also a process that is achieved through the social skills and attributes mentioned above that allow for these relationships to occur.

It is also very significant to point out a key similarity between this production and Case Study 1. The two ‘leaders’ of the respective productions both emphasised the importance these skills and attributes. There was a similar acknowledgement of the need to work with others as a team in order to achieve success. The key difference was that one was a ‘Musical Director’ (person in charge of the musical components of the show) and the other was a ‘Director’ (person who oversees the show fully). This was due to scheduling and Case Study 2’s Musical Director not being involved as of that stage of the production. Yet, the two leaders showed very similar understanding in terms of their roles.

4.2.3 Relationships – Case Study 1

While Wenger (1998) describes ‘an absence of introductory preambles’ as an indicator of a CoP, this was in fact a key part to how this community was formed. The ‘meet and greet’ at the first rehearsal was very important towards establishing relationships. It allowed the cast and production team to introduce themselves to each other and establish a common bond. There were also society committee members who were involved in the production that provided a point of liaison between the cast and the production team. Rob was one such person who made his role clear at the second rehearsal (at the start and at the end). He cited the importance that people come to him if there were any issues i.e. conflict with other members, confusion over aspects of rehearsals and as a mediator with the production team if need be (Field Note, 10 February 2016). In a later interview, he confirmed this observation; ‘we made an effort to tell people early on that there were committee members who you could bring problems to’ (Rob, 2 April 2016). He added

this was partially in response to something that occurred in that group's previous production, whereby such roles were not in place and tension occurred as a result. This, he felt, was a means of diffusing this. A similar ritual occurred at the end of the rehearsal where the production team (Director, Musical Director or Choreographer depending on what type of rehearsal) praised the cast for the work done and invited them to clarify any questions they may have had. While the 'meet and greet' could be construed as part of the indigenous practice of musical theatre productions, in conjunction with the second observation / statement, this suggests that some structure and preamble is in fact necessary, especially for building relationships between people (particularly as the musical theatre production operates within such a limited time frame).

The findings mentioned in **Participation** (p. 46 – 49) also revealed that a desire for social relationships were evident amongst cast respondents. 'Sustained mutual relationships' and 'shared ways of engaging' were formed through the rehearsal process and through dealing with the various tasks therein (Wenger 1998). Members formed personal connections with each other by helping each other out with the dance steps, running lines of dialogue with each other and making small talk based on all of these elements from the production. A Facebook group page was also created by committee members as a point of contact to relay or clarify production-related information, or to share anything that might be useful i.e. excerpts of videos from dance rehearsals. This reinforced and further built into the sense of shared engagement people had with each other. It was also used to arrange a 'cast night out' at a local pub. According to Nuala, occasions like these are where 'friendships are really formed' (9 April 2016).

It was observed that relationships between the cast members were also influenced by the relationships their characters in the show shared. All of the cast respondents felt this to be the case. In some shape or form, the people they interacted the most with were the people they shared the most scenes with, even just by virtue of them being the same people they ran dialogue or did dances with; 'It's just natural that the people you have the most work to do with would be the people you end up having the most contact with' (Rob, 2 April 2016). Nuala raised an interesting case of this, as she was not initially cast in a principal role and therefore was at the dance rehearsals, which meant she initially interacted more with the dancers / ensemble members. Her character role was then altered, she subsequently had more interaction with the

other principal characters due to being in the same scenes together. However, she also spoke of still interacting with people outside of this, helping others run lines and dance steps and went costume shopping with some of the other girls (Nuala, 10 April 2016). This means that while the dramatic roles carry some influence with what relationships people share, it is not the only thing and members should be aware of having an even spread of relationships possible so that ‘cliques’ do not become excessive³.

Cast respondents affirmed that building positive relationships with other members was vital to the success of the production, both in and of itself and as a CoP. Consistent reference was made to how a tighter knit bond translated into both fluency on stage and making it easier to get through rehearsals; ‘The more you know each other, the more it comes out as fluency on stage’ (Rob, 2 April 2016). Tiana suggested that it even counteracts the possible perceived negatives of not always actively participating in rehearsals, for ‘even if you’re having downtime at a rehearsal, you’re not on your own... you’re socialising and enjoying it even if you’re not actively participating’ (25 April 2016). Nuala’s statement below summarises the extent of how the production influences relationships.

‘[Productions] are not an isolating experience, they enhance your personal experience with other people’
(Nuala, 10 April 2016)

Relationships – Case Study 2

Rehearsals for this production also formed the primary basis for relationships. This again was initiated through the ‘meet and greet’ at the first rehearsal (Dean 2002), however, some of the cast and production team had prior relationships with each other from past shows (Field Note, 12 February 2017). The smaller group size represented a key difference in that the relationships between the cast were not so influenced by the roles they played in the production. This, in conjunction with an overall smaller scale (less cast, a shorter show with less scenes) also offset the delineation between ‘ensemble’ and people having periods of non-activity during rehearsals.

³ A ‘stage manager’ prior to opening night praised the group for not forming ‘cliques’ with each other. I can only triangulate this with my own previous experience of amateur productions where indeed ‘cliques’ may form due to factors such as age group, ensemble grouping or if certain people are already friendly with each other prior to the production.

Many of the other findings, in spite of the production's smaller size proved similar in comparison to Case Study 1. A Facebook group page was again set up to enhance communication between the cast and the production team. It was also used again as a point of contact, especially when the rehearsal schedule needed to be clarified. Cast respondents again spoke positively of their relationships with others and spoke of their hopes that an outing would further strengthen these.

Karen described this as a process of initially 'interacting with the others on stage as [the character] where we are both in character' to form a group dynamic where 'we can communicate at a deeper level once we are more comfortable with each other'. Sam also stated, 'we [the cast] are doing a very good job of building the group as it is but I feel that [an outing] would be something different and something refreshingly special' (15 March 2017). Both agreed that this type of social dynamic contributed to their overall experience of the production. Karen even stated that this type a trusting, supportive relationship was vital to the production's success.

You have to be comfortable with each other because you are going to be up close and personal on stage. [...] You need to have trust and confidence in each other to know that you're both going to support each other, because if you don't talk to them outside of the characters, if you don't get to know them then how can you trust them? (Karen, 15 March 2017).

The use of warm-up exercises played an important role in building relationships. Karen described the benefits of these, '[warm-up exercises] bring everyone into the room and welcome them. They help to explore the space so we [cast members] know our surroundings clearly and get comfortable with each other' (15 March 2017). A number of observations proved this to be true, as exercises were shown to have a clearly positive effect on the cast members as they communicated, smiled and laughed with each other (Field Note 22 February 2017, 25 February 2017). Again, there was also a sense of 'ritual' to the beginning and end of rehearsals where the Director sets out what needs to be done and praises the cast for getting it done respectively. This contradicts Wenger's (1998) requirement of an absence of 'preambles' for the formation of a CoP, but it is evident that in the musical production that these are a part of the production's practice, and are also key towards building group dynamics and morale.

In summary, the threads found across **Mutual Engagement** revealed that a primary desire for members across both CoPs was to experience connectedness with each other while partaking in

an activity they enjoy. All respondents (including both Case Study’s directorial figures) recognised the need to work as a team and be able to contribute where possible in order for the production to work successfully. The fact that the amateur musical CoP represents a broad scope of ‘memberships’ (from direct roles to peripheral roles) only makes that point even more important because while what one sees on stage is the result of the cast’s talents, they require the production team and even the technical team to get them to that point. ‘Legitimate peripheral participation’ provided a means for explaining some of the relationships that occurred, particularly in Case Study 1 where there was a broader range of backgrounds and experiences but it can also represent how a show moves from rehearsal to stage. However, the rehearsal is key as it is where the main relationships are established. The following table represents the common threads of **Mutual Engagement** found in both Case Studies. Where an area comes up more in one case study as opposed to the other, this is represented by an abbreviation in parenthesis. This represents how, in spite of contrasts between productions, similar dynamics and examples of CoP exist.

Mutual Engagement		
Participation	Membership	Relationships
Cast respondents expressed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Desire to make new friends with similar interests - Enjoyment of musical - Desire to gain confidence - Participate in more productions LPP formed through differing level of experiences and skillsets (CS1) Extent of participation tied to satisfaction / dissatisfaction for cast members (CS1)	For the cast members, a successful audition. It is determined by production team. This infers skills such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Singing, acting, dancing & musicianship Social qualities also cited: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respectfulness, enthusiasm - Casting is a collaborative process - Directors = experts. Cast = apprentices - Sub master / apprentices vary on cast experience levels (CS1) Peripheral roles of membership also possible (stage manager, sound engineers, venue managers).	Formed through meet and greet at first rehearsal Established by rehearsals and dealing with various tasks Can be reinforced by activities outside rehearsals For the cast members, this can be influenced by who their production characters are. Collaboration, trust and comfort essential to success of production

Figure 4.1: Summarisation of CoP’s ‘Mutual Engagement’ across both Case Studies

4.3 Joint Enterprise

Joint enterprise represents the process that occurs within a CoP and how members collectively understand this. It is what forms the core of the venture. Wenger (1998) further breaks this down into three constituent sub-areas: ‘negotiated enterprise’ which encapsulates how members respond to the ‘stated’ goals of the CoP; ‘indigenous enterprise’ which deals with the broader historical, social, cultural and institutional contexts of the enterprise in question and a regime of ‘mutual accountability’ which details how members keep each other in line towards achieving the aims of their respective CoP (Wenger 1998, p. 77 – 82).

4.3.1 Negotiated Enterprise – Case Study 1

Wenger (1998) states that ‘even when an enterprise is refined into a statement, the practice evolves into a negotiated interpretation of that statement’ (p.81). It is obviously evident that with any musical theatre production, the ‘statement’ or the ‘main goal’ of the ‘enterprise’ is to put on a show that is enjoyed by the public. However, this production had another goal in terms of it being a musical society, as the Director and other cast members during the first rehearsal referred to this as a ‘community project’. This term represented the bringing together of people that are passionate about musicals to perform in a production. Rob’s summarisation of this essentially embodied what a CoP is, ‘musical societies are a part of community building. They involve people that have a talent in a certain area that find other people with the same talent as well’ (2 April 2016). Various interim goals were put in place throughout rehearsals by the production team. These consisted, for example, of instructions for cast to print / bind their scripts and scores and to privately practice whatever songs, dances or scenes were covered in rehearsals that week. This is part of a process which ultimately led to having the songs and dialogues memorised.

The refining of these goals or the ‘process of negotiation’ (Wenger 1998, p. 77) emerged through rehearsals as a response to various challenges that would occur. A clear example of this was when some of the cast requested to record videos of the choreography to better memorise the routines. The Choreographer agreed to this and suggested a DropBox folder be created so that all of the cast would be able to access it and thus be more efficient with their homework practice (Field Note, 9 February 2016). How this was accomplished also became ‘negotiated’ as members had difficulty in uploading the videos and using the technology to access DropBox. Eventually,

the videos were successfully uploaded when the group Facebook page was created (Field Note, 7 March 2016). This reflected Wenger's assertion that '[members of a CoP] must find a way to do that [enterprise] together' (p. 79).

A similar process of negotiation was also present during music rehearsals. This pertained mainly to the cast and the Musical Director agreeing on the best way to read / understand their scores as both had slightly different versions. The Musical Director had a score with vocal lines and an orchestral piano reduction whereas the cast merely had melody lines. They agreed to use lyrics as signifiers rather than bar numbers. Musical gestures were also agreed non-verbally, for example, the Musical Director indicated starting pitches for singers and counted the ensemble in for musical entries. They gained more understanding of this as time went on. (Field Note, 23 February 2016; 6 March 2016; 29 March 2016). In speaking to the Musical Director, the importance of negotiation within the CoP was summed up from his point-of-view:

... You will not always meet your own deadlines. I would often have a volume of things to do in one night. Then it turns out that the stuff you did last week needed an hour's revision, not half an hour's revision (Musical Director, 20 April 2016).

This indicates that the work carried out during rehearsals is in fact constantly 'negotiated' based on a number of elements. How people understand the material, use the right tools and how successful they are in meeting the 'interim' goals are all part of the negotiation process. It is also subject to the impact of attendance or non-attendance at rehearsal. This will be discussed further under the **Mutual Accountability** section (p. 66), as this part also represents further implications on how members are responsible for meeting the CoP goals.

Overall, the enterprise emerged as one that revolved around 'people having a good time within the group [while] developing an understanding of music' (Musical Director, 20 April 2016). A sense of people developing singing, dancing and acting skills while interacting with like-minded people was evident. However, it should be noted that the ultimate goal is to put on a show. This was a viewpoint Tiana reflected, 'if the show is rubbish at the end [of the production], I don't think I'd say 'but it was a great learning experience. There is a goal at the end of that learning' (25 April 2016). This reflects that perhaps even the formation of the community is a response, or

a ‘negotiation’ to the goal of putting on a musical. It is something that the Director (and musical society as a whole) envisions and then needs to go through a whole process in order to meet this end, from hiring the production team and the venue to auditioning the cast then going through the permutations of rehearsals. All activity is undertaken with the hope that the production at the end is successful.

Negotiated Enterprise – Case Study 2

In terms of this production, the ‘enterprise’ was twofold as the production was part of a final year college project by the Director. Therefore, there were certain parameters that had to be adhered to due to this, for example, a fifty minute running time. Aspects of the rehearsal process then had to be tailored to deal with this. Care was taken during the initial rehearsals to note the time it took to read through the script. Later on, the songs were also timed and then edits were made to the script accordingly in collaboration between the Director and the Stage Manager. These points also in part reinforce the previous paragraph, as the conceptual goal here was for the Director to put on a musical production and dealing with the challenges were a part of negotiating this.

The rehearsal process itself was also subject to the ‘process of negotiation’ (Wenger 1998). The cast members were able to contribute to the scheduling of rehearsals, as they had the option of e-mailing the Stage Manager with times that best suited their availability (something that could not have happened in Case Study 1 given the larger group size). The Director here, as with the Musical Director of Case Study 1, understood the importance of ‘negotiation’ as what one may plan to do in the rehearsal may not occur for various reasons.

People are in college. People are in work. People get sick. And there’s the bus strike... we blocked the final scene there but half the people were missing due to the bus strike.⁴ You can get over it once you plot and plan it out and you make a plan before you come into the rehearsal , but also have your Plan B and your Plan C (Director, 25 March 2017).

However, this was not just limited to dealing with people, rehearsal plans and attendance. It also pertained to practicalities such as managing the limitations imposed by the space of the venue.

⁴ The ‘Bus Strike’ refers to the cancellation of bus services in the locality due to bus drivers going on strike as a protest. This lasted from 24th March – 14th April 2017, and affected attendance at rehearsals due to certain cast members depending on the bus services for travel.

Of this, the Director said, ‘the space that we’re going to be using has only one entrance [...] having the cast come off and on stage would look very sloppy with one entrance so I had to re-direct it [to fit in that space]’. This meant re-staging the blocking so that the cast would be kept on stage as often as possible to minimise the number of entrances and exits (25 March 2017).

Rehearsals were also an opportunity for ‘negotiation’ between the cast and the Director. One observed example was when, after having read-through a scene, the cast were instructed by the Director to improvise it in their own words. This resulted in them using some ‘ad-libs’ including ‘ums,’ ‘ahs’ and some use of profanity. All of which the Director encouraged so as to achieve a ‘natural’ feeling where lines were not just read for the sake of delivering lines. Some of these were added to further drafts of the script. The cast noted an immediate difference in that this helped them feel more relaxed and thus, had more of a feel for their characters (Field Note, 22 February 2017). The Director later noted that this helped the cast to be on ‘the same page with each other’ (25 March 2017).

Even the composition and arrangement of the music also underwent negotiation. The Director initially had drafted melodies on the ukulele, but did not have a fully fluent scope on musical theory to write a full score. Regular meetings / sessions were had with the Musical Director and an Arranger to discuss and devise expanding these melodies into fuller arrangements. One such session was observed whereby the latter two parties improvised motifs and chords based on their own understanding of the lyrical themes of each song. Their negotiation entailed which songs were worked each session, how they were to be arranged and if the Director was satisfied with the result (Field Note, 17 February 2017). On interviewing the Director, she felt positively about this being a successful process (25 March 2017).

4.3.2 Indigenous Enterprise – Case Study 1

A number of the procedures and practices that emerged throughout rehearsals reflected those established in previous literature on theatre. These are what could be construed as the ‘indigenous’ or ‘native’ practices of the production as a CoP. For example, as mentioned in **Chapter 2** (p.22), Dean (2002) suggested that the time frame of rehearsals for an amateur production was confined to mostly evenings and weekends. The ‘meet and greet’ that was

described throughout **Participation** (p. 46, p. 49 - 50) is also another example of an ‘indigenous’ practice in theatre. This was also true of this production. Additionally, the specifics that occurred were influenced by the Director and the circumstances of this production. It matches closely Kenny’s (2016) that ‘context is important within an indigenous enterprise’ (p. 118). Contrary to literature that stated musical theatre rehearsals begin with a focus on the music, here the music was not introduced until week three. This was because the Musical Director was at the finishing stages of working with another local production. Choreography and Acting / Reading rehearsals were also part of the production’s ‘Introduction’ phase, as per the Director’s preference to work all three components separately to put them together at the same time. Later rehearsals reflected Maccoy’s (2004) description of different types of rehearsal activities taking place simultaneously as the process went on. Collating these observations with the literature clearly suggest that there is a tradition that gets passed down through amateur musical groups. This is also similar to the CoP frameworks brief of sharing knowledge and passing identity and practice down from experts to apprentices (Lave & Wenger 1991). The Musical Director remarked on this in part, adding that personal qualities such as positivity and work ethic are also inherited through groups and their successors.

I played for [a particular amateur musical society] once in 2007, and again in 2011 ...And they had the phenomenal positive attitude towards their show, a great same phenomenal positive attitude towards their show. It was a college, so it wasn’t the same people, so that attitude and that knowledge gets developed and passed down (Musical Director, 23 April 2016).

Some of the cast respondents reflected on how this particular amateur musical society was based within the city locality and how this made it significant, locally and artistically. This suggests the acknowledgement of the existence of a wider musical theatre CoP, especially as counties may have more than one amateur musical group (AIMS). Nuala, for example, very much emphasised the particular locality of this case study’s musical society, ‘it’s [City] musical society’ (10 April 2016). Tiana had also expressed a desire to connect with the wider performing community, in conjunction with other cast members experienced in that area:

I feel more involved with the theatre performing side [of the city]. A lot of people in this show seem to be involved in acting, in singing and dancing, in all these performance areas. And it’s good to know what’s going on... if there’s potential opportunities through these people to be involved in something else (Tiana, 25 April 2016).

Indigenous Enterprise – Case Study 2

The implication that emerged in the findings within Case Study 1 of there being a tradition being passed down from directors, producers and musical societies was a lot more explicit here. In one rehearsal observation, a cast member mentioned having known the Director from a stage school and referred to how similar their directing methodologies and acting exercises were (Field Note, 25 February 2017). These exercises, including games where the cast have to count from one to twenty successfully without talking over each other, serve the same purpose as the purpose mentioned in **Chapter 2**, p. 23 to strengthen awareness and concentration for the cast members. The Director's description of this in rehearsal lined up with these intentions (Field Note, 22 February 2017).

Both cast respondents made statements that not only referred to these, but also outlined their expectations around these traditions. Karen, for example, stated that she would have preferred to have more 'ice-breaker games' at the beginning of rehearsals as they help her to 'leave her personal situations and problems at the door' (15 March 2017). Sam made an allusion to the tension that tends to occur at the later stages of the rehearsal period, as described by Maccoby (2004) on page 16, saying 'I hope nothing bad happens in the last week of rehearsals because that's when things get tense' (15 March 2017). There was also the aforementioned observed anticipation of the 'meet and greet' ritual described in more detail under **Participation** (Field Note, 10 February 2017, see p.49 - 50). This demonstrates that the cast, given their previous experiences of theatre, have an understanding of the rituals that need to occur and how they contribute to the formation of the CoP, be it harmonious with the 'meet and greet' / acting games or disharmonious with the tensions that tend to occur leading up to the production.

Due to scheduling with the Musical Director and the work-in-progress nature of the songs being composed, there was a heavier emphasis placed on acting and blocking during rehearsals. All recorded observations that pertained to the cast rehearsals were of that type. To compensate for this, the Director would sing through the songs in rehearsals where appropriate to teach the cast (Field Note, 12 March 2017). The Director also referred to this in interview:

It's been challenging for the Musical Director not to be able to be there, as of yet. So, me trying to teach [the cast] singing at the same time as trying to block them as well [has been a challenge]. I have to think

musically and of the underscores as well as the music before you get into the lyrics. I've had to think of [all of that] (Director, 25 March 2017).

The above again exemplifies how the specific practices behind a production are influenced not only by the Director's preferences of practice, but also by the circumstances or 'contexts' that are imposed. Lave & Wenger (1991) refer to this as 're-negotiation of meaning in the world [of the CoP] (p. 51) in terms of how the enterprise operates. In summary, it can be said that the two dimensions of CoP enterprise, 'negotiated' and 'indigenous', form a symbiotic relationship with each other, particularly in the amateur musical production setting. The practices and traditions found within the musical production are what 'indigenously' form it but then they can also be 'negotiated' based on the specific challenges and issues that arise in relation to the current production's process. One result from this could infer that both elements of CoP's enterprise are very important in analysing the theatre setting.

4.3.3 Mutual Accountability – Case Study 1

The initial fostering of 'mutual accountability' was implemented by the Director at the end of the first rehearsal, where he spoke of how vital it was for cast members to consistently attend rehearsals on account of the volume of work involved (Field Note, 2 February 2016). Wenger (2011) has the view that commitment is essential to being part of a CoP and Dean (2002) claims a similar view of commitment towards a musical theatre production, whether it is amateur or professional. These suggest that in terms of the musical as a CoP, attendance of rehearsals is the most obvious representation of accountability. This point became reinforced in over weeks as the Director and the society committee members reminded the cast of the importance of attendance, in person and through e-mails. One significant issue even took place around this as the Director noted in an e-mail that there was a 'no show' from half the ensemble at one rehearsal and thus the work scheduled for that evening had to be postponed. Steps were subsequently outlined so that this did not occur again i.e. e-mail the Director in advance of not attending (Field Note, Sub-Note W/C 29 February 2016).

With any scheduling of any large group of people from all different walks of life, you do get a lot of scheduling conflicts (Musical Director, 23 April 2016).

The Musical Director, as quoted above, understood clearly the implications that could occur around attendance and scheduling. Some of the cast respondents also detailed their own scheduling conflicts and how they felt about the demands of attending rehearsals. Nuala, for example, referred to how she had to alter her shifts at work to better accommodate her attendance at rehearsals and also had to forego certain family events to be there (9 April 2016). Tiana also commented, '[rehearsals] take over your life' and had she been 'told from day one how much was involved I may not have signed up' (25 April 2016). These kind of pressures were similar to those that Pitts (2007) described with respect to the long hours and intensive schedules that rehearsals can take. Alan and Tiana both reported a possible association between people not attending rehearsals over not feeling involved, especially in terms of ensemble members being called in only to have lower levels of involvement compared to the principal cast members (Field Note, 18 February 2016). This was another point of contention that Pitts (2007) referenced. Alan further suggested that a clear rehearsal itinerary, with it being made specific who would be needed and what exactly would be worked on could remedy this. While these hypothesis' cannot be ascertained for definite, they point again to the issues raised under **Participation** (p. 46 – 49) and how they can also influence people's 'accountability'.

The 'interim goals' (learn off the dances, the music and the dialogue) referenced under **Negotiated Enterprise** (p. 60 – 62) also played into how the production team reinforced accountability. All of the cast respondents reflected their understanding of meeting these goals through repetition and carrying out other tasks as they arose i.e. buying costumes and writing biographies for the show programme. Tiana indicated that this too was a further demand of time and commitment.

Sometimes it can be difficult [...] whether you can give [homework] the time that [the production team] would like you too. ...The rehearsals take up so much free time that to find additional time to practice things or go shopping to buy costumes is difficult... (Tiana, 25 April 2016)

However, these interim goals also helped a sense of group responsibility to emerge as rehearsals went on. Earlier in this Chapter (under **Participation**: p.46 - 49 and **Relationships**: p. 55 - 57), the fact that the cast helped each other out with the dance routines and ran lines with each other was key to not only bonding, but also accomplishing goals. There was a clear endeavour for

people to be on the same page as each other, to achieve ‘fluency on stage’ as Rob pointed out. It is the difference between having ten people on stage working as a unit / ensemble rather than everyone doing their own versions of a thing (3 April 2016). Owing to this, the use of the Facebook page to post video clips of dance routines as well as the organising of a voluntary extra practice group pointed towards the group being very thorough about this. Even to the point where an Assistant Producer who became involved four weeks before opening night was aware of these initiatives and encouraged the cast to partake in these when not actively involved in rehearsal activity. Tiana outlined how her ensemble group had done this. She reflected on how she and her group found the time and the initiative to work through their dance routines while the Choreographer was working with the other cast members. Additionally, she felt that this was easy to do because of feeling at ease and on friendly terms with her fellow cast members (25 April 2016).

Mutual Accountability – Case Study 2

The most obvious delineation of ‘accountability’ in this production was again set through the Director reminding the cast members to learn through lines and be on time for rehearsals. Initial rehearsals were scheduled by text message from the Director in conjunction with the Stage Manager, though Karen stated that this did not make things very clear in ensuring accountability, as there was a noted trend of rehearsals not starting on time due to people being late. This, she felt, was the result of communication issues with the production team and, as with Case Study 1’s respondents, linked this with the overall accountability amongst cast. Sam also noted this, feeling that (as of that stage in the production) there is a need for more rehearsal time and an overall improvement in punctuality. A quote below by Karen exemplifies how accountability needs to be demonstrated from both the cast and production team in order to get the most out of what needs to be done. This possibly confirms the aforementioned relationship between a clear rehearsal plan and commitment from the cast members.

I feel that the Stage Manager really needs to have more discussion with the Director as to organise rehearsals and send out rehearsal schedules because it doesn’t just affect their lives but it affects all our lives. To have a set-in-stone schedule in advance would be an advantage [...] that would make things a lot easier to know where you’re going and to know what scenes you’re working on so you can be well prepared in advance (Karen, 15 March 2017).

Cast members again also developed a sense of responsibility towards running lines with each other, especially in instances where rehearsals did not start on time (Field Note, 15 March 2017). While not explicitly referred to, both respondents cited that they enjoyed the interactions with others that resulted from this, 'I generally experience the most interaction with the cast during the rehearsal process' (Sam, 15 March 2017). He felt a lot of this responsibility emerged from the rehearsals.

The nature of balancing the production with everyday life was also discussed with the cast respondents. Both acknowledged that this was a demand. However, in contrast to Case Study 1, respondents here placed more emphasis on how this is dealt with as opposed to the challenge of it. The main consensus was that one needs to 'prioritise' his or her time. Karen exemplified this by saying how she always reserved one night off per week to relax and consciously not have to think about the demands of work or of any learning that had to be done for the show. This allowed her to feel recharged and gave her the energy to accomplish whatever she needed to do. Sam reinforced this point, relaying anecdotes on how he was currently in two other productions as well as college and running a YouTube channel. While inevitably, clashes would occur, his previous experiences gave him the methods to deal with these, 'I had originally wanted to go see a film one evening so I could review it for my YouTube channel, but there ended up being a rehearsal scheduled instead. After a couple of minutes [of initial disappointment], I realised that the rehearsal was infinitely more important' (Sam, 15 March 2017). Reflecting on both responses, it can be determined that feeling able to prioritise allowed for accountability to be maintained at cast level.

Throughout both case studies, the findings here evidence that the three 'sub-areas' of **Joint Enterprise** are very much interlinked in terms of the amateur musical production. This is because of the clear set of 'indigenous' traditions that are passed down in terms of its process from start to finish and how the in-betweens are organised (auditions, rehearsals building towards a process of memorisation and fluency to be presented on stage). Because these traditions are quite specific, how they are 'negotiated' becomes even more evident in terms of the needs of the production and the full team of people involved. It could be compared to a blank canvas that can be painted over in many different ways as required. The mutual accountability

that is developed can also be construed as a response to the goals of the ‘enterprise’, because the goals of the CoP are made very clear from the outset. The following table represents the common threads of **Joint Enterprise** found in both Case Studies. Where an area comes up more in one case study as opposed to the other, this is represented by an abbreviation in parenthesis. This represents how, in spite of contrasts between productions, similar dynamics and examples of CoP exist.

Joint Enterprise		
Negotiated Enterprise	Indigenous Enterprise	Mutual Accountability
Response to goals of the production <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put on a show - Form a community (CS1) Interim goals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Practicing / learning the script (CS1 +2), songs and dances (CS1). All negotiated in collaboration between the cast and production team	Traditions and practices are passed down through groups such as musical societies (CS1) and stage schools (CS2) Cast members of expectations on established areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warm-up games (CS2) - Rehearsal practice - How rehearsals are organised 	Importance of the cast members attending rehearsals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear communication of schedule ‘Group responsibility’ that emerges from this <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Running lines with each other (CS1 + 2) - Helping with Dances (CS1) ‘Homework’ set by production team Being able to deal with scheduling conflicts

Figure 4.2: Summarisation of CoP’s ‘Joint Enterprise’ Across Both Case Studies

4.4. Shared Repertoire

The term ‘shared repertoire’ refers to the common resources that members of a CoP use to negotiate meaning within their community (Wenger 1998). In terms of this project, this mainly emerged through two primary facets – socialisation and learning. How this occurred is accounted for through focus on ‘jokes, banter⁵ and laughter’, which detailed how laughter was used to form a connection within the CoPs to ultimately form in-jokes. The second area, ‘lore’ represented how CoP members responded to the genre-specific traditions and conventions of musical theatre, including ‘languages, routines, sensibilities, artifacts, tools, stories and styles’ (Wenger 2000, p.

⁵ To reiterate, the original title of this sub-area as per Wenger (1998) is ‘Jokes and laughter’. ‘Banter’ (meaning ‘to speak or act playfully or wittily’ according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary) is a term added to this study to represent a particular style of communication that occurred throughout observations.

229). Finally, the area of ‘learning tools’, as the title suggests, embodied the methods of learning developed by the CoPs in this project.

4.4.1 Jokes, Banter and Laughter – Case Study 1

The development of this area firstly came through laughter in of itself. During the first rehearsal’s introductions, some of the cast members introduced themselves in self-deprecating terms. This served to ‘lighten the mood’ and get around the apparent discomfort of introducing oneself to a large group of strangers (Field Note, 2 February 2016). Laughter became more prominent during the initial set of dance rehearsals by the cast members in response to any collective slips or errors made. A similar instance of laughter as a response to discomfort arose at another dance rehearsal in response to an instruction by the Choreographer for people to partner up for a routine (Field Note, 12 March 2016).

Laughter was also extremely evident during the reading / acting rehearsals. Lines that were perceived as comedic elicited a laugh from either the Director, other cast members or both (Field Note, 18 February 2016). Alan commented on the importance of this production’s comedic elements, ‘there’s a lot of comedy in [the show] as well so I think [people having] comic timing and an understanding of how comedy works is important for this musical’ (3 April 2016). As time went on, certain lines of dialogue formed the basis for ‘in-jokes’ that the cast members used to playfully engage each other in conversation with. This integrated the script / libretto with the culture of the production’s community. Alan again spoke of this:

I like people’s enthusiasm and their support and encouragement for the comedy. It’s nice to see authentic reactions to the comic lines and things like that. ...It’s a very supportive group and it’s nice to see the comedy just hitting naturally. That’s cool (Alan, 3 April 2016).

In summary, laughter initially emerged as a means to avert discomfort, as evidenced by the above descriptions of the dance rehearsals. This also occurred to a degree in the music rehearsals, as in one instance, the Musical Director jokingly referred to a passage of a song where someone would always get confused between two similar entries of a particular song. Such instances of laughter helped to form a sense of understanding and belonging, which was then reinforced by the reactions to the comedy of the script (Field Note 2 February 2016; 18 February 2016; 23

February 2016; 12 March 2016; 14 March 2016). This formed the ‘inside jokes [and] knowing laughter’ which Wenger (1998) cited as an indicator of a CoP (p. 125).

Jokes, Banter and Laughter – Case Study 2

As with Case Study 1, in-jokes and laughter primarily served to build empathy amongst the group. In this production, this again primarily manifested itself during the read-through rehearsals (upon which a majority of the observations were based). Even at the first rehearsal, much laughter occurred stemming from some of the language and stage directions that were found in the script. For example, an instruction for the two leads to kiss in a love scene was written as “kiss” in the script. There was also an instance where laughter was used to diffuse tension as the Director instructed the cast to have phones switched off. (Field Note, 10 February 2017). This continued to be a trend as rehearsals went on and became especially evident to be a part of building a connection between people. Laughter and in-jokes were regular reactions of all involved to elements of the script including lines, movements or stage directions that the Director might give. Certain terminology even became identified and agreed between the cast and the Director as both an in-joke and a stage direction (Field Note, 12 March 2017). Laughter was also the strongest reaction of people to one particular exercise that the Director referred to as the ‘Mesiner technique’, an exercise where two people pair up and one must state an observation about the other which then has to be repeated. The Director stated both at that rehearsal and clarified later on in interview that the purpose of this exercise was to invoke emotion within the people doing it. (Field Note, 22 February 2017; Interview, 25 March 2017).

Another prevalent instance was of this was when a ‘love scene’ was rehearsed for the first time. The Director suggested another exercise between the two cast members where they would walk across to each other but only if they felt comfortable enough to do so. They had the option of backing away if they felt uncomfortable. The Director encouraged that the cast members laughed if they felt the need to do so (Field Note, 25 February 2017). Ultimately, this exercise was completed successfully in the following rehearsal.

These observations reinforce and build upon the findings in this area for Case Study 1 where this seemed to occur naturally amongst people. Here however, jokes and laughter were deliberately

utilised (and encouraged by the Director) as a means of building the connections that are vital towards a CoP, given that the Director as a leader figure. The findings here of Case Study 2 demonstrates the potential how jokes, banter and laughter can be utilised as a CoP building tool.

4.4.2 Lore – Case Study 1

There were two main areas where ‘lore’ emerged with regard to this case study. The first pertained to the ‘stories and styles’ (Wenger 2000, p. 229) of the cast members. What sort of relationship existed between their past experiences and their current understanding of this production? Past and current experiences of productions were common elements that members discussed with each other before and during rehearsals (Field Note, 14 March 2016). During a rehearsal, two of the cast members discussed the importance of vocal projection as in their own experiences, the microphone did not always function correctly for them. The cast respondents detailed further the influence of their past experiences and stories. Alan, for instance, had more of a challenge learning the dancing skillset as he had not performed in a role before where dancing was so essential (3 April 2016). Nuala was the opposite in some sense in that she learned ballet as a child and this came through in her being a key figure aiding others along with choreography. However, she did not have any prior training in acting and as such, that area was the most challenging for her (9 April 2016). Rob similarly identified himself as a ‘dancer who sings’ (2 April 2016). What is key here is that the respondents felt they improved their weaker areas by way of repetition throughout the rehearsals.

The ‘artefacts [and] tools’ of lore represented the sharing of resources in the CoP itself. There was evidence of this having represented members’ understanding of the broader facets of musical theatre lore. One such pre-rehearsal discussion included the cast comparing their vocal ranges to that of the role of Christine in *Phantom of the Opera*, as it requires a Soprano Top E (they surmised it was one of the highest ranged roles in musical theatre canon). They also shared the fact of how that role alternates between three people on any given week and that the note is often pre-recorded to lessen the strain on the performer’s voice (Field Note, 25 February 2016).

At face value, there was also the utilisation of various stage directions given to the cast by the director and how they understood them e.g. enter stage left, move down stage centre, etc. (Field

Note, 22 February 2016). Such elements changed and evolved as rehearsals went on; from the script being used to not being used, the cast sitting down to learn the music then standing up and adding choreography. The Musical Director mentioned some of these components (or ‘artifacts’) and how they could affect the cast at any given time:

People will find it difficult when components start being added. When you add being on stage, adding movement, adding microphones, adding a band. All these things will upset the cast so it’s just to have faith in them that they do know their stuff and that it will come back together later, whatever the case is (Musical Director, 23 April 2016).

Observation of when the main stage was first used in rehearsals further highlighted this. This space was very different when compared to the rehearsal stages as some were deep and others were very condensed. Cast members were evidently distracted by this, as they had not only missed an entry of a verse but also huddled closer together to where the Director and Choreographer had to instruct them to spread out (Field Note, 31 March 2016). The Director had also made reference to this at an earlier point in time, having flagged that the difference in spaces could be an issue (Field Note, 18 February 2016).

Lore – Case Study 2

As with Case Study 1, lore for Case Study 2 can again be broken down into the past experiences of members and the resources that are shared within the current CoP. Where past experiences are concerned, an was again allusion made to how skillsets and ideas can get passed down from other musical theatre based societies. As mentioned under **Indigenous Enterprise – Case Study 2** (p. 64), one cast member made reference to the Director’s exercises and rehearsal methodologies having been similar to those from a previous stage school director. The Director later verbally confirmed this connection to that director. This represents a close connection between Lore and Indigenous Enterprise of this CoP (Field Note, 25 February 2017) as **Lore** can also represent the established practices of musical theatre.

A discussion had also taken place between the Director and Musical Director in the middle of an arranging session which further exemplified an understanding of theatre lore. The Musical Director compared the compositional methodology for this musical to that of Mel Brooks writing *The Producers*, in that he just devised the melody and lyrics initially and then arrangers added in

the chords and orchestration. This reflected that even at that scale of professional production, composers would have various levels of musical literacy. Both also agreed on the notion that the initial opening motif was energetic, as according to the MD, opening songs in musicals tend towards being energetic (Field Note, 18 February 2017). In other rehearsals, the cast made references to famous shows from the musical theatre canon in commenting on the melodies of this new musical, for instance, comparing certain melodies to *Les Miserables* and *Miss Saigon* (Field Note, 12 March 2017). These demonstrate how members of this CoP share a passion for musical theatre and demonstrate it through their understanding of the established repertoire.

Cast respondents also discussed various methodologies that they had developed to deal with the learning challenges of the production, all of which were picked up from past experiences. Sam particularly referred to picking up new techniques from a recent workshop and had an established method of using journals and character questionnaires from a previous college course (15 March 2017). The Director also referenced a challenge perhaps caused by assumptions based on lore, as she had written the script with the assumption that the stage would have two entrances (on the left and on the right), as per that of a traditional theatre space. However, the actual space of the theatre contradicted this as it had only one entrance and the blocking had to be re-arranged to deal with this (25 March 2017).

4.4.3 Learning Tools – Case Study 1

The production's initial 'learning tools' were devised by the Choreographer and the Musical Director through a scaffolded, shared learning approach that consisted of imitation, counting, conducting, indicating pitches, informal use of language, metaphor and cut-off points. As time went on, these approaches became part of the shared history between members of the CoP and thus, another means of how they shared knowledge and bonded with each other. Learning the material of the production became a key part of how this group became socially integrated. Nuala praised the production team for making their 'tools' accessible for those who were of a non-musical background.

[The Choreographer] and [The Musical Director] have been really good at their teaching, especially for people who didn't have any background in musicals or any background in dancing (Nuala, 10 April 2016).

The original cast recording on YouTube was consistently cited as important, as the Director consistently encouraged principal cast members to start listening to them at their earliest convenience. Cast respondents discussed how listening formed an important part of learning the songs. Alan, Nuala and Tiana particularly referred to doing this activity in very informal terms, for example, listening to the songs over headphones while on lunch break or alternatively, while driving (3 April; 9 April; 25 April). The Musical Director stated in interview that the score should carry equal weight, as, ‘with ensemble singing, you need to be very strict to the score’ due to the importance of making sure that the ensemble are uniform in the cut-offs of notes and consonants. However, Alan was the only respondent who referred to using the score during study of the songs in this regard. This raised pointers that will be further discussed under Learning Practices.

[The score is] important to get the actual detail and precision of where you’re coming in on that beat or only holding a count for so long (Alan, 3 April 2017)

Learning Tools – Case Study 2

Again, the tools and methods of learning consisted of a mixture of approaches. Primarily, the songs were learned aurally through imitation. The typical process consisted of the Director demonstrating a song line-by-line with the relevant cast member who then sang back the line. Having accomplished this, the Director then added suggestions of movement / choreography to the song in a similar fashion. These were also scaffolded by the Director using gestures to demonstrate the rising and falling of pitch, as well as contraction of the stomach to support high notes. This was repeated over several observations which demonstrated again how such tools became part of the CoP. In later observation, two types of recordings were also provided, one with the Director singing unaccompanied and another with a “track” of the song mapped with MIDI instruments (and particular sound effects used to delineate vocals). Throughout, the script was used as a secondary scaffold especially for the song lyrics.

The cast respondents also discussed their individual ‘learning tools,’ all of which seemed to be informed by their past experiences in other musical / theatrical productions. Karen described how, at this stage, ‘learning lines come naturally to me’ especially if it is translated into a

physical movement as ‘[the lines] will stick more [to me]. [...] because the body holds so many cavities and senses that it’s important to explore the physicality of [the lines] because it helps you to open up a new meaning of a word’ (15 March 2017). Sam discussed that a key personal learning tool for him was the use of a rehearsal journal, ‘I normally write down about a full page [about the rehearsal]. Especially if there’s anything that I mess up on in the rehearsal or if there’s something I feel that I can improve, that’s the point where I zoom in on it’ (15 March 2017).

In summary, the three sub-areas provided another means for members of the CoPs to connect with each other. This is especially because the ‘lore’ and the ‘resources’ of the musical theatre production are so tangible, from the rehearsal setting to the aspects found in the script to the collective understanding that formed around how best to get through the learning process. Members found a connection through their mutual understanding of established musical theatre canon and formed their own responses to the experience based on their backgrounds, their own personal ‘lore’ as it were. As per **Mutual Engagement** and **Joint Enterprise**, the table below summarises the areas of **Shared Repertoire** across both case studies.

Shared Repertoire		
Jokes and Laughter	Lore	Learning Tools
Initial responses to rehearsal elements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Slips, script directions, uncomfortable scenes & instructions Dialogue forms banter and “in-jokes” Comedic elements of production help to form group (CS1) Encouraged at times in exercises CS2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Builds empathy 	‘Frameworks, ideas, languages, (etc.)’ that members share <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing of tasks, feelings about production, response to stage directions, scripts and venue space - Knowledge of established musical theatre canon Members’ own past experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trend of skills and challenges for the cast members influenced by past history. They have developed individual methodologies - Current production helps overcome these challenges (CS1) 	Shared learning approach by directors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Imitation (CS1 + 2), counting / conducting (CS1), use of informal language (CS1) - Music / lyrics are reinforced by score (CS1) Imitative peer learning from the cast members / leader figures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstration and repetition Use of recordings (CS2) , line tapes (CS1 + 2) and YouTube (CS1)

Figure 4.3: Summarisation of CoP ‘Shared Repertoire’ across both Case Studies

4.5 Learning Practices – Case Study 1

In **Chapter 2** (p. 17 – 20), the concepts of ‘formal’, ‘informal’ and ‘non-formal’ learning practices were introduced (Green 2002; Folkestad 2006; Green 2008; Veblen 2012). These carried a number of implications of how learning occurs in socio-cultural settings (especially those that involved music) due to the fluidity of methods and outcomes involved. Folkestad (2006) raised the point that it is the *intention* of the activity which determined how formal or informal the learning practice is.

Green’s (2002; 2008) previous research on informal learning aligned with a majority of the practices that occurred throughout this study’s observations. Imitation in particular was a key method and the presence of an ‘experienced other’ such as the Musical Director or Choreographer guiding this reflected somewhat of a ‘guru-shishya’ relationship. Any working of a piece began with a section being introduced and demonstrated by the relevant director. Cast members then repeated this. The process then continued with the appropriate ‘scaffolding’⁶ (Kennel 1992), for example, the Musical Director doubling the melody line on the piano or the Choreographer counting through the beats at a slower, unaccompanied speed (Field Note, 2 February 2016; Field Note, 25 February 2016). Such accounts also aligned strongly with ZPD, as it brought the ‘learner’ from a minimum to maximum potential level of development.

You can’t assume that they [cast members] know what you mean by ‘off on eight’, you have to *do it*. You have to literally, sing the word, counting it out loud to show them what that means and explain things as you go (Musical Director, 23 April 2016).

Use of language was also very important. Throughout, it was observed that the language used was non-technical and easy to understand. Whilst interviewing the Musical Director, it became evident that this was a conscious decision.

I start teaching them the material... something relatively straightforward. ...In session two I revise everything we did in session one and keep going with new stuff and keep that framework. ...I’m always careful not to use vocabulary that’s too complex. In amateur stuff, you’re going to get people with music degrees and people who’ve done maybe nothing, so you need to bridge that gap (MD, 20 April 2016).

⁶ ‘Scaffolding’, as described in Kennel’s (1992) study, refers to a musical-teaching variation of Vygotsky’s (1978) ZPD theory. A section or passage is demonstrated by a teacher who guides a student through a process, slowly reducing involvement as the student masters the passage successfully.

As mentioned earlier, this was also a very important part of how LPP was utilised in the CoP context. There was a wide range of experience levels involved. However, the cast respondents felt that such methods and use of language had a positive effect.

I think that they [Choreographer and Musical Director] have been really good at their teaching and brought people along very well, especially people that didn't have any background in musicals (Nuala, 9 April 2016).

[The Musical Director and Choreographer] were very clear (Tiana, 25 April 2016).

'Casual' learning experiences outside of the rehearsal also represented another part of how imitation was utilised (Green 2002; 2008; St. John 2010). The Director especially encouraged this of the cast members, instructing them to listen to the recordings on YouTube. All of the cast respondents stated that this was their primary method of learning the songs. This would seem to indicate, in terms of this case study, that the leanings of learning practices were more towards the informal end of the spectrum. However, the Musical Director cited blind imitation of a recording to be a pet hate and stressed how the score was essential to learning, especially with ensemble singing:

I don't like it when people learn by listening to the CDs much. ...It's much nicer to work from the score, and *then* make it your own [or else] you're essentially just copying someone else's work. ...With ensemble singing, you have to be [very strict to the score] because you can't have people having [different ideas] (Musical Director, 20 April 2016).

This statement highlights the importance of the learning process here being 'guided' in one capacity or another. Tiana made a similar allusion of '[one challenge being] making sure you're all finishing your "t's" at the same time... trying to put it all together and clear and in the order in what everyone else is doing' (25 April 2016). The implication is that if there is no guidance, either through a mentor figure or a score, the result may not be as coherent. To counteract this, some kind of formal methods need to be in place, henceforth the type of guided imitation that is used in the rehearsal. The type of imitation outside the rehearsal is more informal as evidently, the cast people set their own pace (e.g. Tiana: 'I listen with my headphones during lunch at work'). This description most closely matches St. John's (2010) accounts of informal learning and how it can be brought back into a more formalised setting. A method devised by Alan also

reflected both types of practice and also reconciled the difference between learning by ear and learning by score.

I have the soundtrack playing, going over the songs with the [sheet] music just to make sure I'm coming off when I'm meant to be coming off. [Listening] is grand to have the general idea of it, but going over it with the music is important for the actual detail and precision (Alan, 3 April 2016).

Given Folkestad's (2006) statements on intention, however, it was important to determine how respondents viewed the experience. Did they think of it as learning experience, (which would contradict the amateur musical as an *informal* learning setting) a social experience (which would contradict the amateur musical as a *formal* learning setting but also represent the view of it being a CoP) or a goal-oriented experience (which would represent it as a CoP with learning as an entirely *unintended* outcome). Respondents mostly acknowledged the existence of 'learning' in some capacity.

It's a learning experience and a social experience. ... [My] acting has improved [and] interacting with other people, [by] meeting strangers and then all of a sudden being able to act with them, dance with them and sing with them (Nuala, 9 April 2016).

Alan expressed the view that the experience involved all three elements at different stages, demonstrating an awareness of the goal and an awareness of the learning:

[There's a] physical process of learning. As in, learning your steps, learning the music and the running of dialogue. [...] As a social event, yes. You get to see the other cast members and there's that group feeling. And it is very much goal orientated because you want to get "X, Y and Z" done. At this stage I'd view it as goal-orientated first... (Alan, 3 April 2016).

Tiana cites similarly that there are elements of learning and socialisation involved but that the primary goal is the production.

The goal is to put on a musical. ...It's great to work on your dancing, your acting and your singing and to learn all of these things, but if the show is rubbish at the end of it I don't think I would say "But it was a great learning experience". There is a goal at the end of that learning" (Tiana, 25 April 2016).

Finally, the Musical Director also gave an equal emphasis on the three 'orientations'. The learning was elaborated on with a key emphasis being that a cast member should be able to know things about ensemble singing.

I think it's important to keep it social, keep it fun, have a balance between getting the work done and making [a good show] as well. ...I would hope that any cast member, after a run of a show with me, could highlight to me what are five important things about ensemble singing (Musical Director, 20 April 2016).

In respect of this Case Study, all respondents recognised the occurrence of conscious learning. However, it was only part of an experience that also covered socialisation and the goal of performance. A statement by Cope (2005) in a study of adults in a traditional music ensemble nicely epitomises what also occurred in this study, 'the medium of learning is the tune'. It is the tune (or the production in this case) that motivated the learning, not the other way around. A similar downplaying of traditional academic knowledge and increased focus on experience is also found in Kolb's (2015) description of 'experiential learning.' In comparing this production to Folkestad's (2006, p. 136 – 138) summary of intentions in formal / informal practices, it overlapped between the two as 'arranged by a teacher who explicitly takes the task of leading' but the 'activity itself steers the learning' and 'the mind is directed towards making music'. Based on this production, the amateur musical can be considered to be an 'experiential non-formal learning' setting. As Alan states below, each production is its own experience and things learned in it can be carried forward into future productions.

Every experience that you have is a learning experience in itself. A lot of it might even be subconscious. You just take something from a particular role that you're doing and you might... need that in, you know, two or three years time in some other production. You may consciously do it. You may subconsciously do it, but I think there's always something to be gained from each role, experience and production that you're involved in (Alan, 3 April 2016).

Learning Practices – Case Study 2

With this Case Study, a majority of the learning practices were again based primarily on some form of imitation. This was even more pertinent here because of the musical composition of the production being a work-in-progress and as such, initial rehearsals focused more on dialogue.

One observed meeting between the Director, Musical Director and Arranger demonstrated a strong degree of improvisation and 'non-literate' compositional methods in writing the songs. The Director initially exemplified the melodies and chords on the ukulele. Due to a disparity of musical literacy between the three, they agreed that the Director focused on giving them the melodies aurally and the Musical Director and Arranger would convert the music into a written

form so it can be orchestrated for a small band (Field Note 17 February 2017). This again represented an interplay of formal and informal learning methods at the same time.

The more traditional form of imitative learning became evident at subsequent rehearsals when it came time to learn the songs. the Director demonstrated the song line-by-line for whichever cast member was singing. Then the cast member would sing the line back and the rest of the song would be learned with this ‘call-and-response’ method. This was also supplemented by the Director suggesting movements and scaffolding with gestures to show the rising and falling of pitch (Field Note, 12 March 2017). These were later recorded and substituted as this production’s version of ‘listening over to the songs’. This was partially out of necessity as a written score did not exist yet at this point, though the Director during an interview stated that ideally, one would have been provided.

One interesting discussion occurred where two cast members gave contrasting opinions on how they learned songs. One said they could only feel comfortable learning by ear and the other stated they felt they needed a written score. This implied that preferred methods for learning transition were based on their own past experiences and levels of musical literacy. Cast respondents during interviews did not explicitly discuss one method over the other, but both felt an association with learning naturally through the rehearsal and their physical sense of the experience.

I find learning lines come naturally to me at this stage. [...] I have to relate it to theatre and drama. I have to chant it to myself and I have to pace. I feel if you put a line into a physical movement, it will stick with you more [...] because the body holds so many cavities and senses (Karen, 15 March 2017).

Sam gave a similar statement regarding the learning of music in a rehearsal:

[To learn the songs is] just a matter of keeping a sharp ear out, really. I feel mine are developed enough to efficiently keep up with what’s going on in the music rehearsal. It’s just a matter of keeping up and it all happens in the rehearsal (15 March 2017).

With regard to the ‘intentions’ of the experience and how cast respondents acknowledged the experience of learning, Karen remarked on not just picking up ‘lost skills’, but on ‘social learning’ and how the experience helps with people skills:

[The production] is a fantastic way to meet people. It's a fantastic way to pick up skills that I thought I lost. And learning... you never stop learning. You learn from everyone you encounter. You learn to communicate. You learn to pick up on body language. Observation is key really because that's where you're going to get all of your information from (15 March 2017).

Sam saw the production as having all elements of a social, learning and goal-oriented experience. His initial view on this process was the goal of putting on a production, but he then elaborated on his own personal goals within that larger context.

Goal wise, it's the fact that it is a brand new musical and making it the best that it can, or at least with my contribution... The social aspect, the people are lovely and I love working with them so far. That's a big plus. With learning... it's the opportunity to be in another musical and have a big enough role to do all the singing, the dancing and acting that goes with it (15 March 2017).

The Director's view placed more importance on social qualities. This aligns with earlier statements which emphasise the notion that having qualities pre-disposed towards team spirit is equally as important as the musical skills. While learning was referred to, it was more in the context of the message of the show rather than skill learning.

It's more about social [skills] because of the awareness. And definitely learning, because I should hope in any kind of theatre that there is a message [learned from the production]. ...It's about learning the broader context of things. With the learning and lines and such [cast members] are very apt at that so it's more about learning empathy for people who have gone through [what the main character in the show goes through] (25 March 2017).

Because of the smaller group size, the experience levels of the cast respondents and not as much delineation between singing, acting and dancing rehearsals, the evidence of learning practices found in this Case Study were not as strongly clear-cut as Case Study 1. This is reflected by the two cast respondents' statements of how they felt they picked up the actual 'learning' naturally through the rehearsal process and the Director's statement that the cast were apt at this. However, the heavy use of imitation accorded more with the 'informal' style of practice (especially with the call-and-response methodology the Director used to teach the cast the songs). Interestingly, as quoted above, Karen and the Director placed a big emphasis on the concept of social qualities. This is more outside the scope of learning 'practices' but it lends towards the amateur musical production possessing qualities that lend itself towards an experiential sort of learning. Kolb's (2015) theory of this combines four elements that can each

be aligned with something experienced in the production; behaviour (people learn how to work as a unit and behave towards each other), cognition (the thinking behind the learning of songs, lines and dances), perception (how one thinks of the production in terms of their own feelings and experiences) and experience which literally represents the entire experience itself.

Summary of Learning Practices

In terms of where the amateur musical production lie with respect to learning ‘modes’ / practices, it can be stated that it fluidly takes cues from all three modes depending on the situation. The rehearsals take on the more formal end of this as it is planned and sequenced by a leader who leads the teaching with a specific goal in mind. They also set the learning pace accordingly with some sort of tool, a script, score or an MP3 player if it is a dance rehearsal. However, there is a stronger degree of imitative guidance than what might be found in an academic setting, to account for the possibility of a wider range of experience levels. Due to the clear goal of the production, the cast also take responsibility for their learning and this is where the practices take a more non-formal / informal slant. If, as in the context of Case Study 1 where a voluntary practice group is set up or groups form during a rehearsal break to assist each other, there is still a ‘leader’ figure to guide this but all contribute equally and there is an equal emphasis on building a social connection. Imitative guidance is still prominent here but there is more legroom for the group to control the pace of it. Where the cast practice outside of rehearsals, the learning practices that they used were found to be mainly informal, as they reinforced their learning through repetitive listening to the soundtrack whenever they could (thus guiding their own learning pace). While voluntary, it is done with the intention of transferring what they learned back into the ‘formal’ setting of the rehearsal room.

This reflects Pitts’ (2007) hypothesis that the amateur musical lies somewhere in between formal and in-formal learning practices. Indeed, when comparing the table of Veblen’s summary of the three styles learning practices on page 19, the production by averages mostly fits in with the non-formal practice (thus matching the hypothesis). However, to describe what occurs in the production more effectively, it would be better to classify the practices as existing on a spectrum, as the production can and does cross over the three at various points. The practices during the rehearsal represent a more formalised style when it is guided by a ‘leader’ but becomes gradually more informal as the cast members take responsibility for this process so as to meet the goals of

the production. The following figure represents this spectrum and how all three styles of learning practice occur throughout.

	Formal	Non-formal	Informal
Physical Setting	Regulated, scheduled rehearsals	Non-educational Institution. - Veblen (2012) refers it as an unregulated setting, but this is not applicable here as the non-formal activities still occur in a regulated context.	Unofficial, casual setting (anywhere outside of rehearsals).
Learning Style	Rehearsal activity is planned and sequenced by leader who prepares and leads teaching activity	Process is led by ‘leader’ (a more experienced cast member) through group interaction	Through the individual processes of the learner, not sequenced beforehand.
Ownership	Leader plans and guides activity	Group learning is steered, or negotiated by the cast members.	Voluntary
Intentionality	Intentional, guided focus on how to sing / dance / act	There is also a focus on social and personal benefits in addition to playing music.	Focus is on transferring ‘skills’ towards the goals of rehearsal and production.
Modes of Transmission	Imparted through a tool i.e. script / score, etc. and guided imitation	Aural and / or notational systems (used by both the cast and production team)	By ear / imitative.

Figure 4.4: Modes of Learning found in Amateur Musical Theatre (categories adapted from Veblen 2012, p. 246)

4.6 Discussion

Given the extensive documentation across both Case Studies and the various areas of CoP and the learning practices therein, this section will discuss the main findings in summarised form.

These preceding sections explored the CoP triumvirate in the context of the two amateur musical

productions, the sub-areas for analysis with Kenny's (2016) study being used as a basis and a discussion on the learning practices of both productions. Following this summarisation, the findings of this study will be determined.

'Mutual Engagement' revealed not only the common activities of the production that people participated in i.e. rehearsals, performance, but how they desired to connect with each other while doing so. This very desire relates back to the opening quote of this thesis by Grayling (2004, p. 34) 'Humans are social animals... our bonds, our friends, families, workmates and neighbours help to create us, to make us the sort of people we are'. This transcended the broad range of backgrounds and levels of experiences that were evident, especially in Case Study 1. It also explains why a majority of the respondents referenced a need or desire for altruistic social qualities in terms of being a 'member' of a musical theatre production CoP. There is also a case to be made that the relationships found in the amateur musical production are more fluid when compared to traditional 'master / apprentice' CoP relationships. For example, the person in charge of managing rehearsal venues may only have had passing relations with the production team and the cast members, but their contribution still represents a vital role to the CoP and towards making the 'goal' happen.

'Legitimate peripheral participation', the process of experts guiding novices through a task, was also very present and was key to not only reinforcing the CoP dynamic, but also the bonds and support that people had for each other. Bonshor (2014) states that LPP helps members to derive a sense of confidence and satisfaction from the learning process and this was also true in Case Study 1 where wider disparities in experience were much more prominent. Respondents consciously acknowledged their role in this and how having such supports made others feel.

The sub-areas of 'Joint Enterprise' also proved to be very much interlinked, especially the 'negotiated' and 'indigenous' areas of 'enterprise'. Musical theatre productions, as found in these two case studies as well as the study of the established literature, carry specific traditions in terms of the process of auditions, rehearsals to performance. Because of this specificity, 'negotiation' was particularly prominent while, as both directorial figures of each Case Study stated, one can make a plan but it is always subject to change according to availability,

scheduling and how well the material is being assimilated by the cast. It is also from this that the sense of accountability and group responsibility emerged. Discussions that related to accountability also found similar challenges to those described by Maccoy (2004), Pitts (2007) and Bonshor (2014) in terms of the commitment expected and people with minor roles feeling less involved in rehearsals. These discussions also revealed that there is a clear expectation of good communication between the production team, the cast and everyone else involved, with a suggestion that having this in place offsets these issues.

‘Shared repertoire’ provided a means for members to connect with each other. Not only was there the setting of the rehearsal, the script or the collective understanding, but members connected and discussed their own backgrounds and beliefs in relation to their past experiences. Both productions formed their own system or ways of doing things and formed their own in-jokes based on the material of the production as time went on. These were some examples of the ‘routines, words, tools, ways of doing things, stories, gestures, symbols, genres, actions or concepts that the community has produced or adopted in the course of its existence, and which have become part of its practice’ (Wenger 1998, p. 83).

It was found that the learning practices, in terms of averages, matched closest with Veblen’s (2012) description of non-formal learning. However within this scope, the productions entailed various scenarios where some instances would be more formal and another instance, more informal. Outside rehearsals, the cast tended towards more ‘informal’ methods to aid their learning (use of CD / learning by ear / self-directed) whereas in rehearsals, there was more of a formal learning (leader guided / use of score / specific goal in mind). The findings here demonstrate how different types of learning methods / practices can be utilised and encouraged.

In summarising the amateur musical as a CoP, In terms of the amateur musical, its intentions can also be construed as being different from the literature when compared to traditional CoPs, with the aim being achieving fluency on stage rather than evolving into an ‘old-timer’ as for the undiscerning audience member, everyone on stage (ideally) would appear to be of the same standard. This carries benefits not just associated with performance, but also endows a sense of confidence and well-being through people being able to interact with others and go through a

process together. The potential for personal / psychological transformation was clearly evidenced by respondents and demonstrates the interpersonal potential both the amateur musical and the CoP framework.

5. Conclusion

Theatre, like all good art, can be an exercise in escapism or empathy, an adventure or food for the soul, or all of them – you might laugh, you might cry, but either way you’re sharing something with strangers. [...] One of the things that [is] so exciting about theatre is that you don’t need cameras, a large budget and huge amounts of space – just somebody [to participate with] and somebody to watch [it]. [...] At its best, theatre brings things – people, stories, places – to life. There will never be a time when that isn’t important.

(Mooney 2017, *The Guardian*)

The findings of this study demonstrate that the processes involved in amateur musical theatre production accord with the features of a Community of Practice and provide a powerful mechanism for learning and working together to achieve the goal of a staged production. The first research question, ‘How does the Community of Practice framework operate within an amateur musical theatre production?’ was approached by examining Kenny’s studies (2013, 2014, 2016), in which a useful analytical model was developed. Indeed, this model proved to be very effective as both musical theatre productions in this study fit into CoP’s triumvirate components of ‘mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire’. The nine sub-areas found across the three components also proved useful for thematic analysis. The findings discussed throughout **Chapter 4** detailed how productions fit into the CoP framework and also how the framework can be used to explain the interactions that occurred throughout.

The second research question concerned learning practices: ‘What learning practices / issues (socio-cultural or otherwise) occur in such a setting? How does the Musical Director / Choreographer / Director or otherwise facilitate the cast members in these? What strategies are used? Is ‘learning’ an intended or unintended outcome?’ Previous literature hypothesised that the amateur musical featured learning practices rooted in both formal and informal styles (Pitts 2007). This relates to a wider discussion on the styles of learning that occurred in academic settings – formal learning - and outside of academic settings – informal learning (Green 2002; Folkestad 2006; Green 2008; St. John 2010). Since these studies, Veblen (2012) investigated a third ‘non-formal’ style of learning which combined elements of the former two and thus, would seem to match Pitts’ (2007) hypothesis. However, on investigation it was found that practices from all three learning styles were blended and utilised throughout the production, rehearsals representing formal practices, independent cast practice representing informal practices with

practice in rehearsals being somewhere in between the two. This was because, as per the Musical Director's (Case Study 1) account of the learning issues found in amateur productions, the cast came from different backgrounds and levels of experiences, some with music degrees and others partaking in their first ever show. Therefore, a conscious effort was made on the part of the production team to focus more on imitation and demonstration. A process of 'legitimate peripheral participation' also emerged between the cast members on account of this. Respondents acknowledged a degree of learning as consciously occurring, but the overall feeling was that the 'goal' of a successful production was more important.

Regarding the third research question was 'Are there any non-performance related outcomes for the cast member? Is there any correlation between this and their overall evaluation of the production experience?' Non-performance related outcomes were found to be numerous. Many of these also correlated with outcomes referenced in previous socio-cultural performance literature on **Chapter 2**. Cast members throughout spoke of their desire to make friends, feel connected with others by sharing a passion, increasing their confidence and enjoying feeling able to help others out. The new friendships in particular were cited to be a part of what makes the production experience so appealing, in spite of the challenges and commitment involved.

In summary, the combined findings to each of these questions provide a basis for new understanding of how the amateur musical functions as a CoP, highlighting its socio-cultural benefits, with implication for socio-cultural participation as a whole. The framework also provides an alternative means of explaining the interactions that occur in the course of production, providing a scholarly rationale for its potential benefits in interpersonal development. Exploring the learning practices involved exemplifies how different levels of learning practices can be utilised and how methods can be adapted to ensure success in groups with wider disparities of experience levels and understanding.

In terms of future studies in this area, it would be valuable to trace the specific experiences of 'novices' in this type of CoP i.e. a person who is either participating in their first amateur musical or someone who does not have a whole lot of experience with theatre generally. The interview respondent pool for Case Study 1 was restricted to the principal cast members (all of

whom would have been nearer to the 'expert' end in that CoP's spectrum of participation as opposed to some of the ensemble members who were participating in their first musical) and in Case Study 2, its smaller size necessitated a similar level of expertise (although the cast respondents here had limited experience in musicals, they had experience in other areas of theatre). This would hypothetically generate interesting questions and responses; how would they transition from 'novice' to 'expert' and how would they respond to the indigenous lore of the CoP, given their level of experience would result in a different set of expectations? This could be correlated with the response of an 'expert' to create a cross-case study where dialogue could also be facilitated via a focus group to further compare the experiences. It could also be valuable to trace the experiences of a non-performer i.e. someone who is strictly involved backstage, designing costumes and gathering props, etc. Similarly, interviews could be placed after the production to ensure a more finalised account of the production from respondents (bearing in mind these accounts could be subject to post-hoc rationalisation). This was difficult to implement in this study due to the organisational difficulties in committing respondents to an interview once the production has concluded. In a larger study, a pre-questionnaire could also be used to detail the expectations and skillsets of respondents before the production to more effectively chart their improvements.

From a wider perspective, it is apparent that the value of the arts and amateur societies continues to be threatened by a tenuous relationship between arts councils and other funding organisations. Local performing societies in Cork, despite being recognised nationally for their quality and innovation, have had to scale down their productions in recent years due to not being given the required funding to continue as they were. Therefore, I would hope that this research provides a means for such local societies to bolster support. Similarly, it is hoped that the discussions of the learning practices found can provide new understandings of how to use a mixture of formal, informal and non-formal styles in various settings. This study has shown how these can be used to perhaps more effectively lower the barrier for entry of differing skill levels, and thus could make music education more accessible if utilised in the correct manner. On a final note, this study has intended to capture the direct, lived experience of the participants and as such, they themselves have directly made a case for why the amateur musical deserves more recognition as a venture of performance and participation no matter what the age or prior level of experience.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent Form - Case Study 1

INFORMED CONSENT FORM – TEMPLATE FOR QUALITATIVE STUDIES

The aim of this template is to assist the researcher in the design of their informed consent form (ICF). It is important that this template is adapted to suit the requirements of their particular study. The ICF consists of two sections: the research information and the consent certificate.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form for: [Case Study 1 Group]

[Name of group, organisation or individual for whom this consent is written]

Name of Researcher:	Kevin Walsh
Name of Principal Investigator:	Dr. Susan O'Regan
Department / Unit:	CIT Cork School of Music
Contact Details:	tel: [xxxxxxxx] email: [xxxxxxxx@xxxxxx.xx]
Title of Research:	'The show must go on' - Amateur Musical Theatre as a Community of Practice

Section 1: Information

Purpose of the Research *[Briefly explain the research in lay terms to suit your proposed participant(s)]*

This research seeks to assess how participation in an amateur musical facilitates personal and musical development for participants

What the Research will involve? *[State concisely what you, the researcher, expects from your participant. What are they required to do?]*

The research will involve:

- Observation throughout the rehearsal process to investigate the experiences of the participants.
- A sample of participants will then be interviewed so as to establish their prior musical experiences, assess how the production facilitates musical development and functions as a "community of practice."
- This data will be gathered and presented in the thesis as a 'case study'.

Participant Selection *[Explain why you have chosen this group, organisation or individual to participate in your research]*

I have chosen this group as it is a newly formed amateur city-based musical society. Given this, I feel there is potential to explore the participants' experience of amateur musical theatre, accounting for a range of backgrounds consisting of differing levels of music and theatre education and skill

Voluntary Participation *[Explain that consent is voluntary. If choosing to participate than a signature in section 2 will be necessary. Inform the participant of withdrawal options]*

Consent is voluntary. Individuals have the right to either not be interviewed or have statements used as data in the research study. A signature in section 2 below will be required

Confidentiality *[Outline measures which will be taken to ensure confidentiality of data and/or information of participants. Ensure that you establish an agreement with the proposed participant for use or non-use of names, quotations, etc.]*

The name of this production / musical society will not be disclosed. The same also applies for participants involved in this study. Any specific references to quotes / statements / etc. will be covered by use of pseudonyms, false initials and codes. Owing to data protection policy, any data generated will be made viewable on request.

Duration *[Inform the proposed participant of the research duration and the time you will require from the participant including subsequent meetings, if necessary]*

The proposed duration of research for this production will be from January 2016 – May 2016. The overall proposed research period is from October 2015 – October 2017.

Procedure(s) *[Provide a brief description of the information you require from your proposed participant(s). For example, include the type of questions which they will be asked]*

Information required from participants include prior and current evaluation of aspects of musical skills i.e. rhythm, ensemble and timing. This will also cover how they feel personally about the rehearsal / production experience i.e. what personal qualities do they gain by partaking in the production? In case of the musical director, information required will detail questions on leadership skills. Part of the note taking procedure will require note taking and/or recording of answers in interviews / focus groups.

Proposed use of Result *[Inform your participants what you propose to do with the results, including possible publication(s) and/or use at conferences]*

Results from this study contribute to a thesis to fulfil the researcher's requirements to complete a 'MA by Research' degree. This thesis will then be placed on desk reserve in the library of CIT Cork School of Music

Possible Risk or Disadvantages to Participation *[Describe any risks or disadvantages which may arise and possibly affect your participant(s). If there are none foreseen you should state this to your participant(s)]*

There are no risks or disadvantages foreseen to participation.

Benefits of this Research *[Inform the participant(s) of the projected benefits of the research]*

Benefits of this research include:

- A fuller understanding of participation in an amateur musical
- A contribution to the field of music and drama education
- The potential to draw more funding into amateur musical theatre societies.

Further Information (if required) *[Include any further information which you believe to be pertinent to the proposed participant]*

N.A.

Reviewers of the Research *[Inform the participant(s) who will review and who has reviewed your research. For example, principal investigator(s), collaborating groups, Research Ethics Committee, etc.]*

Dr. Susan O'Regan
Maria Judge
Roisin Maher
Triona Scott
Stephen Lane

Future Queries/Contact *[Details of who your participant should contact for further information or subsequent queries]*

Name:	Dr. Susan O'Regan
Phone:	[xxxxxxx]
Email:	[xxxxxxx@xxxx.xx]

Section 2: Research Consent Form

I/We..... agree to participate in Kevin Walsh’s research study on *‘The show must go on’ – Amateur Musical Theatre as a Community of Practice*

I/We have read the information provided on this research study, or it has been read and explained to me/us.

I/We have had the opportunity to ask questions and as such understand the purpose and nature of the research study.

I/We consent voluntarily or give consent for others under our guardianship to be a participant in this research study and understand my/our/their rights to withdraw.

Data Protection Notice

The Data Protection Act provides that personal or sensitive data cannot be collected or processed without consent.

How personal data is to be used in this study.

Please detail in the space below the specific ways in which someone’s personal data will be used, who it be may disclosed to as part of the study, whether it will be published etc. As much information as possible should be provided here, in order for the explicit consent to be informed and legitimate.

Data used will be non-identifiable, only referring to specific people in coded, occupational terms i.e. “P1LD, a young music student...” The research and data will be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout by an academic staff team based in CIT Cork School of Music. The final thesis will be placed on desk reserve in the library of CIT Cork School of Music, and if published, done so in a manner that does not identify participants publicly. All data used to generate the thesis will be destroyed approximately one year after completed submission of the thesis.

Declaration of Consent

I/We consent to the processing of personal data, including sensitive data, as described above.

Signed..... Date.....

Name in block letters

Appendix B:

Informed Consent Form - Case Study 2

INFORMED CONSENT FORM – TEMPLATE FOR QUALITATIVE STUDIES

The aim of this template is to assist the researcher in the design of their informed consent form (ICF). It is important that this template is adapted to suit the requirements of their particular study. The ICF consists of two sections: the research information and the consent certificate.

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form for: [Case Study 2 Group]
<i>[Name of group, organisation or individual for whom this consent is written]</i>

Name of Researcher:	Kevin Walsh
Name of Principal Investigator:	Dr. Susan O'Regan
Department / Unit:	CIT Cork School of Music
Contact Details:	tel: [xxxxxxxx] email: [xxxxxxxx]
Title of Research:	'The show must go on' - Amateur Musical Theatre as a Community of Practice

Section 1: Information

Purpose of the Research *[Briefly explain the research in lay terms to suit your proposed participant(s)]*

This research seeks to assess how the amateur musical contributes to education by according with it established socio-cultural theories and concepts.

What the Research will involve? *[State concisely what you, the researcher, expects from your participant. What are they required to do?]*

The research will involve observation throughout the rehearsal process to investigate the types of learning experienced by participants. A sample of participants will then be interviewed so as to establish their past musical experiences, assess how the production relates to their musical learning and their overall feeling on the production / group. This data will be gathered and presented in the thesis as a 'case study'.
--

Participant Selection *[Explain why you have chosen this group, organisation or individual to participate in your research]*

I have chosen this group as it is an established college based musical society with students ranging from classical, popular and drama based backgrounds. Given this, I feel there is potential to explore participants' learning from a wide range of different backgrounds and experiences, therefore this would aid in this research being broad.

Voluntary Participation *[Explain that consent is voluntary. If choosing to participate than a signature in section 2 will be necessary. Inform the participant of withdrawal options]*

Consent is voluntary. Individuals have the right to either not be interviewed or have statements used as data in the research as a study. A signature in section 2 will be necessary.

Confidentiality *[Outline measures which will be taken to ensure confidentiality of data and/or information of participants. Ensure that you establish an agreement with the proposed participant for use or non-use of names, quotations, etc.]*

The name of this production / musical society will not be disclosed. The same also applies for participants involved in this study. Any specific references to quotes / statements / etc. will be covered by use of pseudonyms, false initials and codes. Owing to data protection policy, any data generated will be made viewable on request.

Duration *[Inform the proposed participant of the research duration and the time you will require from the participant including subsequent meetings, if necessary]*

The proposed duration of research for this production will be from January – March 2017. The overall proposed research period is from October 2015 – October 2017.

Procedure(s) *[Provide a brief description of the information you require from your proposed participant(s). For example, include the type of questions which they will be asked]*

Information required from participants include prior and current evaluation of musical learning experiences, musical literacy and how they feel personally about the rehearsal / production experience i.e. what personal qualities do they gain by partaking in the production? In case of the musical director, information required will detail questions on learning strategies. Part of the note taking procedure will require note taking in case of field notes and recording in the case of interviews.

Proposed use of Result *[Inform your participants what you propose to do with the results, including possible publication(s) and/or use at conferences]*

Results from this study will be used in a thesis to fulfil the researcher's requirements to complete a 'MA by Research' degree. This thesis will then be placed on desk reserve in the library of CIT Cork School of Music

Possible Risk or Disadvantages to Participation *[Describe any risks or disadvantages which may arise and possibly affect your participant(s). If there are none foreseen you should state this to your participant(s)]*

There are no risks or disadvantages foreseen to participation.

Benefits of this Research *[Inform the participant(s) of the projected benefits of the research]*

Benefits of this research include a contribution to the field of music education and the potential to draw more funding into amateur musical theatre societies.

Further Information (if required) *[Include any further information which you believe to be pertinent to the proposed participant]*

N.A.

Reviewers of the Research *[Inform the participant(s) who will review and who has reviewed your research. For example, principal investigator(s), collaborating groups, Research Ethics Committee, etc.]*

Dr. Susan O'Regan
Maria Judge
Roisin Maher
Triona Scott
Stephen Parker

Future Queries/Contact *[Details of who your participant should contact for further information or subsequent queries]*

Name:	Dr. Susan O'Regan
Phone:	[xxxxxxxxx]
Email:	[xxxxxxx@xxxxx.xx]

Section 2: Research Consent Form

I/We..... agree to participate in Kevin Walsh’s research study on *‘The show must go on’ – Amateur Musical Theatre as a Community of Practice*

I/We have read the information provided on this research study, or it has been read and explained to me/us.

I/We have had the opportunity to ask questions and as such understand the purpose and nature of the research study.

I/We consent voluntarily or give consent for others under our guardianship to be a participant in this research study and understand my/our/their rights to withdraw.

Data Protection Notice

The Data Protection Act provides that personal or sensitive data cannot be collected or processed without consent.

How personal data is to be used in this study.

Please detail in the space below the specific ways in which someone’s personal data will be used, who it may be disclosed to as part of the study, whether it will be published etc. As much information as possible should be provided here, in order for the explicit consent to be informed and legitimate.

Data used will be non-identifiable, only referring to specific people in coded, occupational terms i.e. “P1LD, a young music student...” The research and data will be reviewed on a rolling basis throughout by an academic staff team based in CIT Cork School of Music. The final thesis will be placed on desk reserve in the library of CIT Cork School of Music, and if published, done so in a manner that does not identify participants publicly. All data used to generate the thesis will be destroyed approximately one year after completed submission of the thesis.

Declaration of Consent

I/We consent to the processing of personal data, including sensitive data, as described above.

Signed..... Date.....

Name in block letters

Appendix C:
Template of Interview Request E-Mail

Hello [potential interviewee],

Hope you are keeping well and enjoying the production.

I may have referenced to you before that I am doing a Research MA Degree in Cork School of Music. As part of this, I am doing my thesis on the skill and community building potential of amateur musicals and will need to interview some people from the production about this to fulfill the requirements of my Degree.

Topics involved include musical skills, your experience of musical theatre to date and how the strategies employed by this production, as well as the social aspects relate to these.

I would very much appreciate it if you would consider being interviewed.

This would take approximately 45 minutes. Ideally, we would set aside one hour on either side of the rehearsals (Potential dates and times here) at the [location].

Alternatively, we could appoint a time and place independent of the rehearsal schedule if you would prefer.

The content of the interview is confidential, no reference to your identity will be made and you will have to right to view / withdraw data at any stage.

I look forward to hearing from you on this.

Regards,

[Researcher]

Appendix D

Company List for Case Studies 1 & 2

Case Study 1

Director

Musical Director

Choreographer

Cast x20 including four respondents and Researcher

Alan

Rob

Nuala

Tiana

Researcher

Case Study 2

Director

Musical Director

Arranger

Stage Manager

Assistant Producer

Researcher

Cast x5 including two respondents

Karen

Sam

* = Interview Respondent

Appendix E

Cast Interview Questions - Case Study 1

- 1a. Prior to this production, what was your previous experience of musicals?
- 1b. (If person has prior experience) What kinds of roles have you previously played? (e.g. ensemble, supporting, lead, etc.)
- 1c. How do you feel about your contribution to this production in terms of your role?

- 2a. What skills would you consider necessary to partake in musical productions?
- 2b. How would you evaluate your level of skill in these areas (on a scale of 1 – 5)?

- 3a. Do you feel this production presents you with new challenges in these areas?
- 3b. Have these areas developed / improved since rehearsals began?

- 4a. Are there any aspects of the rehearsals that you particularly like / dislike?
Explain i.e. production's strategies of rehearsal
- 4b. What are your thoughts on the schedule, planning and communication around / during the rehearsal?
- 4c. What kinds of things do you do or what tools do you use to fulfil your role in the show, especially whilst practicing outside of rehearsals?
- 4d. What are your thoughts and feelings on balancing the participation in the production with your everyday life?

- 5a. Do you experience much interaction with other cast members before, during and outside rehearsals? Examples?
- 5b. If yes, who are you spending most time with?
- 5c. In your opinion, do your production roles influence this?
- 5d. How does this interaction relate to your feelings about participation in the production? Does it help you in terms of your own tasks?
- 5e. How do you feel you relate to the tasks given by members of the production team?

6. Do you view the rehearsal process as a learning experience, a social event or a “goal-oriented” experience?

7. What are the outcomes, if any, you feel you have gained through the experience of rehearsal / participation?

8. Overall, do you feel that participating in this production has aided your development? As a performer? As a person?

Appendix F

Musical Director Interview Questions - Case Study 1

1. How do you approach the different stages and challenges of preparing the cast members throughout the production?

2. How do you adapt these to accommodate cast's disparities in experience levels?

- 3a. Primarily, do you encourage learning from score or by ear? How do you come to that practice?
- 3b. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each approach?

- 4a. What do you observe to be the most challenging component(s) of the rehearsal process?
- 4b. How is this dealt with?

5. As musical director, where do you see your role in the production in relation to that of other members e.g.
 - Cast members?
 - Production team?
 - Director?

6. Do you view the rehearsal process as a learning experience, a 'social event' or one that is "goal orientated?"

7. Would you be conscious of individual and/or group development in terms of:
 - Skills development (musical (voice, diction, cohesion, time)/ acting...
 - Group togethernessWhat kinds of evidence would you base this feeling on?

Appendix G

Cast Interview Questions - Case Study 2

1. Prior to this production, do you have much experience of musicals?
 - 1a. (If person has prior experience) What types of roles have you played? (e.g. ensemble, supporting, lead, etc.)
 - 1b. How would you describe your contribution to the production in terms of role?
2. What skills do you consider necessary to partake in musical productions?
 - 2b. How would you rate yourself in relation to these skills?
3. Does this production present you with any challenges/ new challenges in the areas you listed?
 - 3b. Have these areas developed / improved since rehearsals began?
4. How do you feel about this production's rehearsal strategies?
 - 4b. What are your thoughts on the scheduling, planning and communication around / during rehearsals?
 - 4c. What strategies / tools do you use to fulfill your role in the show, especially with respect to practicing outside rehearsals?
 - 4d. Are there any aspects of the rehearsals that you particularly like / dislike? Explain.
 - 4e. What are your thoughts and feelings about balancing participation in the production with your everyday life?
5. How would you describe your interaction with other cast members both during and outside rehearsals?
 - (5b. How does this interaction relate to your feelings about participation in the production? Does it help you in terms of your own tasks?
 - (5c. How do you feel you relate to the themes of the production? Does this help you connect with other cast members?)
6. Do you regard the rehearsal process as a learning, social or "goal-oriented" experience?
7. Are there any positive outcomes you feel you have gained by participating in this musical?

Appendix H

Director Interview Questions - Case Study 2

1. How do you approach the different stages and challenges of preparing cast members throughout the production?
2. How do you adapt these to accommodate any of the cast's disparities in experience levels?
- 3a. Could you tell me about your process of writing and composition for this musical?
(3b.) What methods / process did you use for composition in particular?
(3c.) Could you tell me about some of the themes of this production?
- 4a. What do you observe to be the most challenging component(s) of the rehearsal process?
4b. How is this addressed?
5. As a director, where do you see your role in relation to that of other members?
 - Cast members?
 - Production team?
6. How do you view the rehearsal process, in terms of...
 - production goals?
 - learning?
 - community?
7. Would you be conscious of individual and/or group development in terms of:
 - Skills development (musical, voice, diction, cohesion, time, acting, etc.)
 - Group cohesiveness