MUSIC EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN VANCOUVER’S
DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC CASE STUDY OF THE CARNEGIE
CENTRE JAZZ BAND

by

Antonia Ceschi-Smith

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Abstract

This ethnographic case study focuses on the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band, a city-run community music program for adult learners at the Carnegie Centre, a community centre in the heart of Vancouver’s most aggrieved and marginalized area, the Downtown Eastside (DTES). I have been playing with the Carnegie Jazz Band, a free and open program at the Centre, since January 2010. As a participant-observer between February and April 2013, I conducted three private audio-recorded interviews with twelve of the fifteen regular members of the band who consented to participate, including Brad Muirhead, the bandleader. They provided information on their reasons for joining the band, why they continue to participate, what they gain from the experience, and what they hope for as outcomes of their participation. In this thesis, I examine the benefits that music making, specifically jazz and creative improvisation, provide for the band members, showing how they see themselves as music-makers within the program, identifying the challenges they face in participating, and situating their involvement in the larger paradigms of community music and communities of practice. The factors that motivate the individual members of the band to participate are myriad, but they all share an interest in and a commitment to supporting one another’s learning. One of the main findings of this case study is that approaching music-making with an aesthetic and ethos of improvisation is central to the band’s success in the aggrieved and marginalized DTES.
Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by author, Antonia Ceschi-Smith.

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List of Abbreviations

DTES – Downtown East Side, Vancouver BC
CM – Community Music
CP – Communities of Practice
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I am ever thankful for my family and friends for their determined love and support throughout this process.
To the Carnegie Jazz Band
Chapter 1: Introduction

The Carnegie Community Centre, which opened in Vancouver in 1980, is at the centre of it all in the Downtown Eastside (DTES). In fact, it is often referred to as the “living room of the DTES.” All services are free, and the Centre maintains an open-door policy for an annual membership of one dollar. Its mission is “to nurture mind, body, and spirit in a safe and welcoming environment. Through the leadership and participation of our volunteers, we provide social, educational, cultural and recreational activities for the benefit of the people of the Downtown Eastside” (Uto, 2009). One of these activities is the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band.

The Downtown Eastside of Vancouver is known throughout Canada as the country’s “poorest postal-code” and was deemed “skid road” by the City in 1965 (Ley, 1994). It stands on un-ceded Coast-Salish Land just blocks away from the ocean, and, though its boundaries are defined differently depending on who you talk to, it is flanked on the West by Gastown (a trendy, over-priced area), on the East by Strathcona (one of the oldest areas of Vancouver), and to the South, by Chinatown. The City of Vancouver (2009) defines the DTES as including eight different neighbourhoods: Victory Square, Gastown, Chinatown, Thornton Park, Oppenheimer, Strathcona, Hastings Corridor, and an Industrial Area (City of Vancouver, 2009). Each of these neighbourhoods has its own characteristics, but all “are affected to a greater or lesser degree by the social and economic challenges in the area” (City of Vancouver, 2009), including unemployment, a lack of affordable and safe housing, poverty, homelessness, drugs, prostitution, violence, and considerable health problems. The residents of the DTES include new immigrants, retired/injured resource workers, artists, Chinese and First Nations people whose families have populated the area for years, people released from or kicked out of the closing mental health
facilities, social workers, those with a mind towards community development, and sex workers. It also has the highest proportion of men to women in the city.

Local activist and artist Savannah Walling writes that the character of the DTES is overwhelmingly and unfairly portrayed as volatile and negative in the media. She explains her view as a resident of the DTES: “Its character has immigrants and young families. It’s a working and retirement home for resource workers. It’s a haven for middle class professionals who value sustainability over growth. It’s a sanctuary for artists and the marginalized” (Walling, 2003, p. 20). At the same time, Walling acknowledges the well-publicized presence of drugs and prostitution in the DTES: “The area’s history of bootlegging, drug dealing, and prostitution stems from a combination of poverty, self-reliance, and its treatment as a dumping ground for the city’s problems” (p. 20). She links the drug scene to “the city’s lack of recovery and mental health services, a widening gap between rich and poor, and increasing homelessness” (p. 20), and to the fact that the DTES has been characterized as a slum or skid road since the 1950s. “During the 1950s, city planners declared this area a slum, despite evidence to the contrary” (p. 20). Walling argues that “[w]ith an average of 12 year’s residency, its population is one of the most stable in the city. Residents stick together, work together, and depend on each other in hard times” (p. 20). Clearly, the way the DTES is portrayed in the media does not tell the whole story. The artistic vibrancy and the prolific creation of artistic work in the DTES demonstrate other, more positive and complicated understandings of this neighbourhood (see Walling, 2003; 2006). Walling cites Patrick Foley, a participant in the Shadows Project (a theatre project in the DTES), to support her positive perspective: “Here we have the Downtown Eastside, a skid-road neighborhood if there ever was one ... And yet, if given an opportunity, the people here can create interesting, moving, and mesmerizing work”(Walling, 2008, p. 22).
In December 2009, I contacted Brad Muirhead, the facilitator/teacher of the Carnegie Jazz Band, a program run by the Carnegie Centre (the community centre at Main and Hastings, at the heart of the DTES). As the Education, Outreach, and Community Programs Coordinator for Coastal Jazz (the organization that runs TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival), an organization partnered with Improvisation, Community and Social Practice (ICASP), I had been encouraged to build a partnership with the Carnegie Jazz Band as part of the two organizations’ outreach programs. At Brad’s invitation, I attended one of their rehearsals. At the end of this rehearsal and after being introduced to the band, I was asked by some members if I was a musician and what I played. To my answer of “yes, the violin,” they exclaimed, “Well, we don’t have one of those. You going to join?” I was taken aback by this enthusiastic invitation, and I joined the band in January 2010. I have attended almost all of their rehearsals since then – every Saturday from 11am-2:30pm – in order to get to know the members and to gain a better understanding of how the band is run (i.e. what goes on in rehearsals). Working with the band as a participant seemed like an excellent way to build a partnership between the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band, Coastal Jazz and ICASP. As a result of my experience playing in the band, I became interested in doing my Master’s Thesis with the band.

1.1 Purpose of the Carnegie Centre’s Programs

The arts community in the DTES is very active, vibrant, and diverse (Heart of the City, 2009). Artists within the community are often involved in a variety of different projects at the same time, and many of the participants in the Jazz Band also perform as members of other groups and theatre productions. In a brief description of the education and arts programs at the Carnegie, Rika Uto, the Centre’s Arts and Education Programmer, writes, “The main purpose of the
Centre’s arts programming is to offer accessible, beginning-level programs for low-income residents to engage, inspire, and encourage community and skills building opportunities” (Uto, 2009). Musicians participating in the Jazz Band either bring their own instruments or borrow instruments from the Carnegie Centre for rehearsals and performances. These instruments are stored in a locked cupboard that many different groups have access to, which is a concern given the Carnegie’s limited resources for repairing and replacing instruments. As part of the Carnegie Centre’s policies, borrowed instruments must stay in the Carnegie Centre. In addition, there is no space in the Carnegie Centre for individual practice; space is at a premium at the City-run community centre. These challenges are prohibitive to the development of individuals’ musical skills and self-expression and also add challenges to offering a community music program in the DTES.

The Carnegie Centre’s mandate requires that the Jazz Band be open and accessible. This means that attendance to Jazz Band rehearsal is spotty. For years the band had a core membership of approximately four people who attended regularly, but, since December 2009, this number has grown to about 15 people. The challenges have made it hard for the band to prepare repertoire for performances. The Jazz Band currently meets once a week for two to three hours, and focus on basic music theory and on playing jazz pieces selected by Brad, the facilitator and teacher. Instrument repair is another prohibitive issue facing the Jazz Band. All of the instruments owned and housed at the Carnegie Centre are in poor condition. Many programs are housed at the Carnegie and building practice rooms, fixing instruments, and designing safe storage all require funds that the Jazz Band currently does not have.

There is a huge diversity in levels of musicianship in the band. This diversity has a positive effect because more advanced members motivate less advanced players and help them
out. Playing with musicians who are more advanced can really help one’s playing. But, the diversity in skills also represents a challenge for Brad. Making the music interesting for all levels and making the band an inclusive space are not simple tasks. The situation can also be frustrating for more advanced players; sometimes they would like to really dig in and take on greater challenges. The frustrations are amplified in performances because Brad wants to showcase everyone and give everyone the chance to really dig in. As a result, some members of the band do not play on all the songs during performances. This is okay with most players, but Brad runs the risk of seeming exclusive. Also, in preparing for performances it is important to have a relatively consistent band configuration, and this has the potential to close the door to folks who just want to (or can only) come in now and then.

Since January 2012, I have met informally with Brad to talk about the band and his role as its leader. I was curious about his motivations for teaching at the Carnegie, about the content of his teaching, and also about his concerns for the program and the challenges he would like to see addressed. I have also met with Rika Uto about the possibilities of developing a partnership between ICASP and the Carnegie Centre, specifically with the Jazz Band. We discussed what she sees as challenges that ICASP might be able to help to address and about how I might approach doing research at the Carnegie. Some of the issues that came up in this conversation were the importance of providing accessible music education that is both challenging and nurturing for participants at all levels. Other pressing issues Uto explained are instrument acquisition and maintenance, the need for new music stands, the need for a better and easier tech set-up in the band’s rehearsal space. In addition, we talked about the benefits of providing access to educational performance opportunities, and the possibility of having visiting musicians do workshops with the band to enhance their educational experience.
My interest in this project grew out of my love of music, from my belief in the importance of community music programs, and from a desire to better understand participants’ experiences of learning in Community Music programs in order to improve my own teaching within this paradigm; I would like to work as a conscientious arts administrator to support such programs.

The term Community Music (CM) refers to programs run for and within communities and to a relatively recent field of inquiry (Veblen, 2005). Although music in communities is not new (people have been learning and creating music together for a long time), Community Music is a relatively new field of inquiry. What is newest is educators’ interest in and awareness of Community Musicians, their music making, and the education that is a part of their work. That is, the recognition that Community Musicians do educate by making music in and with communities (Veblen, 2005, p. 312). The *International Journal of Community Music*, the leading journal of the field, defines Community Music (CM) in the editorial to the inaugural issue in the following way.

Community Music has many meanings and takes many forms depending on several variables. For example: (a) the people involved (e.g., ‘community music workers’ and/or musicians, clients, or students); (b) the communities and institutions involved; (c) the aims, purposes, or needs that a Community Music program intends to achieve; (d) the relationships between a given Community Music program and its geographical, social, economic, religious, cultural, and/or historic circumstances; and (e) the financial support a Community Music program receives, or not. (Elliott, Higgins & Veblen, 2008, pp. 3-4)
Veblen (2008), the associate editor of the International Journal of Community music, has provided her own definition: For Veblen, CM involves active music making and applied musical knowing with an emphasis on lifelong learning and access for all; CM is distinguished by the diversity of people “it” serves; students choose to take part in CM and thus accept responsibility for their part in it; community is conceived of both as a concept or ideal and as a reality; CM is grounded in community; and CM cannot be understood as separate from the context in which it occurs.

My interest in CM is as a musician (a classically trained violinist with some experience in free improvisation and fiddle music), and it was piqued by my experience – I really enjoy playing in the Carnegie Jazz Band. I have enjoyed working with the other members of the band and with the teacher since 2010, and I have learned new musical skills (how to read Jazz charts, how to swing and play be-bop rhythms, and how to solo over prescribed harmonic forms) during my time with them. I have found the environment of the band very accepting and supportive as I have worked to acquire these new skills. Given the history of the Downtown Eastside (the sometimes tenuous relationships with “outsiders” coming in to “fix” neighbourhood problems), and the history of research in the community (the DTES aptly described by Gereke (1991) as having been “researched to death”), I am committed to conducting research on the band in a way that respects the voices of the real experts on the DTES (those who live and work there). I am interested in understanding why the members continue to come to rehearsals (that is, why they participate), in hopes of contributing to the under-theorized dialogue in Community Music about participant recruitment, retention, and what participants look for in a CM program in aggrieved and marginalized communities like the DTES. My first step was to join the band in order to build relationships with people who have an experiential knowledge of this CM program.
The Communities of Practice paradigm, grounded in community development, presents another relevant way of understanding the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band, and more broadly, Community Music programs. Communities of practice, as defined by Wenger, et. al, (2002) are “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (p. 4). Communities of Practice are made up of three essential elements: domain (area of interest), community (a group of people who share the area of interest), and practice (the craft they are developing together within the domain). Wenger, et al. (2002) explains that “the three elements guide community development efforts by indicating the various areas on which one needs to focus in order to foster a well-rounded community” (Wenger, et. al, 2002, p. 41). This paradigm will be central in my theoretical approach to analysis in this project. These well defined elements, the importance of situatedness, and the grounding in participation as education are central to Communities of Practice theory and provide a very provocative and practical framework with which to situate this case study.

The steady membership that has grown from 4-15 people in the last two years suggests a shift in the community’s desire to participate in this CM program, and understanding the factors that have contributed to its success could support the development of other CM programs nationally and internationally. I will be documenting best practices for implementing improvisational arts-based activity into social and educational programs for aggrieved, marginalized, and at-risk communities that could also contribute to the formation of arts policy and in the hopes of securing funding for the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band and to counter the general public’s (municipally, provincially, and nationally) overwhelmingly negative conception of the DTES through the development and marketing of a half-hour podcast that the members of
the band will create. The research will be a step toward testing claims made by ICASP that participation in the improvisational arts can bring connectivity, self-awareness, creative thinking, and transformation to populations in need.

Gaining an understanding of participants’ experiences in Community Music programs can be instructive in ameliorating teaching practices, the development of future CM programs, and to our general understanding of Community Music as a field of inquiry, and, in this particular case study, to apply for funding for the Carnegie Jazz Band. This case study will explore the learning environment in the Carnegie Centre, what the intentions of the program (the Jazz Band) are stated to be, and how the members of the program experience this learning environment. Within this context, I will explore what the implications of this knowledge have for the way this program, and others are run (e.g., teaching methods, physical resources, mandate, and funding). Though the findings may be somewhat unique to the Carnegie Jazz Band since it is a program that is designed specifically for the community it is situated in, they will also likely be relevant to the interests of researchers in Community Music and in Communities of Practice theory. My hopes are that it will also provoke other researcher-practitioners to investigate their CM practices and to approach their research as a partnership between the participants of the program and the institutions that they work with. In addition, I also will examine what makes a CM program work and how to make it work better by attending to the voices of CM participants. This study is important to me as a teacher; I am interested in teaching, facilitating, and organizing community music programs, and this research has given me an opportunity to speak with participants of the Carnegie Jazz Band about what works for them and what doesn’t, for asking how they ‘know’ the world through the program, and to reflect on how these ways of knowing might be instructive to me in my own teaching practice. This case
study includes an analysis of mission statements, rules, and lesson plans, as well as an examination of ways of knowing that are not envisioned and planned for, but that are experienced and brought to the program by participants in the Carnegie Jazz Band.

1.2 Research Questions

How do participants in the Carnegie Jazz Band, a Community Music program for adult learners in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, an at-risk and aggrieved community understand their participation in this program? Why did they join the Band? Why do they continue to participate in the program? How do the various aspects of the program (institutional, teaching methodology, development of relationships) contribute to the interests of the participants? How does the band’s existence and the social processes present within it relate to the Communities of Practice paradigm? Can this band be conceived of as a Community of Practice? What are the implications of the participant observations and reflections on participation for the future development of this program and of other Community Music programs for adult learners in at-risk and aggrieved communities such as the Downtown Eastside? How do these findings contribute to the academic fields of Community Music and Communities of Practice?

1.3 Brief Description of Method

As part of this project, I examine, through ethnographic methods including participant-observation and interviews with members of the band, and Brad Muirhead, the benefits that music making, specifically jazz and creative improvisation, provide for members of the DTES. I analyse how they see themselves as music-makers within this program and the larger paradigms of community music and communities of practice, and the challenges that they face and the
benefits they experience in participating in this open and accessible community music program. Reflexive Ethnography (Davies 2008), Applied Ethnomusicology (Sheehy 1992; Titon 1992; Araújo, et. al 2006; Reyes 2007; Loughran 2008; Pettan 2008) and Community Music (Elliott 1995, 1997; Myers 1995; Mullen 2002; Veblen 2002, 2005, 2008; Coffman 2006; Dillon 2006; McCarthy 2008; Phelan 2008; Silverman 2009) propose some compelling philosophical approaches and practical strategies for engaging responsibly in this kind of work that I will elaborate on in Chapter 3. Each of these paradigms emphasizes the importance of reflexivity in undertaking research, the importance of situatedness, and the importance of research being “useful” for the communities involved.

I used participant observation, journaling, and interviews to gather data. These methods are informed by Reflexive Ethnography and Applied Ethnomusicology. Ethnography is a form of research based on fieldwork and its written product, drawing “primarily from this fieldwork experience and usually emphasizes descriptive detail as a result (cf. Davies 2002; Ellen 1984: 7-8; Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 1-3)” (Davies 2008:4-5). Davies defines reflexivity as, “a turning back on oneself, a process of self-reference. In the context of social research, reflexivity at its most immediately obvious level refers to the ways in which the products of research are affected by the personnel and process of doing research.” (Davies 2008:4) Reflexive Ethnography therefore, is the reflexive activity of self-consciously placing oneself as an active participant within fieldwork and the subsequent documentation of these experiences and reflections upon them. In 1998, the Applied Ethnomusicology Section was established within the Society for Ethnomusicology (Pettan 2008:87). Their mission statement emphasizes the joining of scholarship with activism and participation in community. (Pettan 2008:88). A definition of applied ethnomusicology was adopted at the 39th ICTM world conference that
states, as quoted by Pettan: “APPLIED ETHNOMUSICOLOGY is the approach guided by principles of social responsibility, which extends the usual academic goal of broadening and deepening knowledge and understanding toward solving concrete problems and toward working both inside and beyond typical academic contexts” (2008:91). Both reflexive ethnography and applied ethnomusicology supported my intention in doing this research and provided methodological guidance in undertaking this project. I worked to design and conduct this research for the purpose of learning about the socially and culturally diverse communities of the DTES and to learn about their musical knowledge and resources, and the challenges and the benefits of participating in the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band.

1.4 Outcomes

The outcomes for this project will be a Master of Arts Thesis in Music Education - a case study examining the benefits and challenges of teaching, facilitating and participating in community music (jazz) programs in inner cities (specifically, the DTES), a report detailing the findings for ICASP, and upon completion of this thesis, a half-hour podcast that, with my help, interested members of the band will develop and create, and which will be circulated to community radio stations nation-wide. The outcomes will be informed by the research; that is, by what is identified by participants as being of utmost importance in the continued existence of the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band and in its development.

Sheehy (1992) proposes that applied ethnomusicology is any application of music scholarship beyond research for research’s sake. Music is approached as a tool to accomplish political and social goals – to address issues of oppression and omission, and to empower communities that partake in research. Sheehy suggests tools and strategies to accomplish these activist goals:
“(1) developing new “frames” for musical performance, (2) “feeding back”
musical models to the communities that created them, (3) providing
community members access to strategic models and conservation
techniques, and (4) developing broad, structural solutions to broad
problems.” (Sheehy 1992:330-1)

The possibilities for addressing issues of oppression and omission through the work of applied
ethnomusicology that Sheehy proposes provide a useful frame for thinking about outcomes for
the proposed project with the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band. When I first joined the Band in
January 2010, they performed only at the Carnegie Centre, the DTES “Heart of the City
Festival,” and the “Homeground Festival,” each within the DTES and largely for members of the
DTES community. Developing new performance “frames” will be beneficial to the Carnegie Jazz Band as it will raise awareness in the larger Vancouver community about the vibrant arts community of the DTES and possibly about the long history of jazz in the DTES (Jazz Street
Vancouver, 2008). Working with the staff at Coastal Jazz, I facilitated a performance by the Jazz Band at the TD Vancouver International Jazz Festival in July 2010 (see Figure 1.1), and, at the 2011 Heart of the City Festival (see Figure 1.2), the band was invited by the Honourable Stephen L. Point, Lieutenant Governor of British Colombia to perform at Government House in Victoria on July 14, 2011 (see Figure 1.3). In addition the band has since performed at the Gathering Festival in Downtown Vancouver in 2012 and 2013, and the Renfrew Ravine Moon Festival in East Vancouver in 2012 and 2013.
Figure 1.1 The Carnegie Jazz Band at the 2010 Vancouver International Jazz Festival
Figure 1.2 Heart of the City Festival Program Guide, 2011. Produced by Vancouver Moving Theatre
Figure 1.3 Program for the Carnegie Jazz Band performance at Government House, Victoria, BC, by invitation of Governor General Stephen L. Pointe.

In regards to documentation and challenging the general public’s perception of the DTES, I hope to produce a half-hour radio show (mentioned above) with the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band that will be pitched to community/campus radio stations nationally, online news sources like Rabble.ca,
and the CBC. The focus of the radio show will be to demonstrate the kind of music that the band creates, the reasons they participate, and the uniqueness of their community. As mentioned in the Purpose section, there are some structural challenges to running and participating in the Jazz Band. Instruments are in constant need of repair, individual practice space is needed, and, with that, greater access to instruments. To address these issues, funding is needed to ensure the continued and sustainable existence of the band. It is my hope that the results of my proposed research will be useful in obtaining funding.

The Carnegie Centre Jazz Band is a community music program located in Vancouver’s most notoriously at-risk and aggrieved community, the Downtown Eastside. The band is a very successful program regardless (and perhaps because) of the many challenges facing it. For my Master’s Thesis in Music Education, I have undertaken original research with the band, employing research methods grounded in Reflexive Ethnography and Applied Ethnomusicology that result in a case study that is a unique contribution to the ongoing development of the Community Music and Communities of Practice fields of inquiry. In addition, with the collaborative development and production of a radio show with the band regarding their participation in this program, this research will present an alternative and more positive experience of Vancouver’s DTES to the greater municipal, provincial, and national community.
Chapter 2: Community Music: Exploring Participation and Identity

The Carnegie Centre Jazz Band is a Community Music Program, thus the literature exploring Community Music (CM) is central to understanding the program and in providing insights about research in this context. I will explore the philosophical development of Community Music in this chapter. In addition, I will discuss the complex issues surrounding the difficulties in defining Community Music (McCarthy, 2008) and its relation to David Elliott’s conception of praxial music education (Elliott, 1995). One issue that stands out in particular is that, in Elliott’s view, Community Music can be understood only through its practice – that is, its situatedness (Elliott, 1995) – the practice of music within a particular community by members of that community. The field of Communities of Practice, grounded in community development, and in the idea that participation within a community, brought together by a mutual passion and practice, is educative, will be explored in relation to Community Music. In addition, I will provide a brief review of research that focuses on identity, specifically how identity is formed in relation to community music in adult learners. I am interested in the discourse of empowerment, access, and inclusivity that is associated with Community Music, and how, through performance and participative choices, these values are realized (Phelan, 2008).

2.1 Defining the field or “What is Community Music?”

Although community music is not new, Community Music is a relatively new field of inquiry. What is new is educators’ interest in and awareness of community musicians, their music making, and education – that is, their recognition that community musicians are actually educating when they make music in communities (Veblen, 2005, p. 312). The International
Journal of Community Music, the leading journal of the field, defines Community Music (CM) in the editorial to the inaugural issue as follows:

Community Music has many meanings and takes many forms depending on several variables. For example: (a) the people involved (e.g., ‘community music workers’ and/or musicians, clients, or students); (b) the communities and institutions involved; (c) the aims, purposes, or needs that a Community Music program intends to achieve; (d) the relationships between a given Community Music program and its geographical, social, economic, religious, cultural, and/or historic circumstances; and (e) the financial support a Community Music program receives, or not. (Elliott, Higgins & Veblen, 2008, pp. 3-4)

In The Many Ways of Community Music (2008), Veblen, the associate editor of the International Journal of Community music, goes about defining CM. Community music is active music making and applied musical knowing with an emphasis on lifelong learning and access for all. CM is distinguished by the diversity of people “it” serve: students choose to take part in CM and thus accept responsibility for their part in it; community is conceived of both as an ideal and as a reality; CM is grounded in community; and CM cannot be understood as separate from the context in which it occurs.

In her 2002 article, Apples and oranges, solar systems and galaxies: Comparing systems of community music, Veblen emphasizes, “understandings of Community Music are rooted [and must be] in their particular situations” (Veblen, 2002, p. 9). While many programs have commonalities – the understandings of these programs are influenced by an individual’s personal experience with CM. Veblen examines several CM typologies – from Ireland, the UK, Australia, the Philippines, and North America. She then asks the question “Can they be compared?” Veblen
notes that in some places, CM connotes webs, networks, or pathways through which music making happens. She explains that CM is also used to distinguish between informal and formal musical settings and music teaching processes. In some countries, CM signifies therapeutic, social, or educational contexts in which a facilitator works with various kinds of “clients” (Veblen, 2005, p. 311). Veblen expands on these observations and lists some basic characteristics of CM activities (cited from Veblen and Olssen 2002). These include but are not limited to: an emphasis on a diversity of musics; active participation in music making and the development of active musical knowing; a variety of learner/teacher relationships; a commitment to life-long learning; a keen awareness of the needs of marginalized individuals and groups; an emphasis on the importance of social and personal growth, as well as inter-cultural acceptance and understanding; and a commitment to accountability, flexibility, and excellence in the processes and product of music making (Veblen, 2005, pp. 311-312).

The International Journal of Community Music and Veblen’s definitions of CM are useful, but they are rather broad – it is difficult to pin down exactly what CM is. Phelan discusses that the diversity of CM is central to the difficulty in defining it, and she cautions against defining the field too narrowly: “Defining the field can create a set of criteria for judging whether an activity is in’ or ‘out,’ based on its ability to conform to these characteristics” (Phelan, 2008, p. 145). While defining the field is useful in forming inquiry, it may endanger or diminish the importance of the idiosyncratic nature of CM programs, and this has the potential to impact which kinds of programs receive funding and which do not.
2.1.1 Elliott’s Praxial Philosophy of Music Education and Community Music

The philosophy of CM, though it is still being formed, is deeply rooted in concepts of community, accessibility, empowerment, situatedness, and active music making. These concepts are related to issues that Elliott examines in his praxial philosophy of music education. Elliott (1995) acknowledges that music is a thing, but more importantly, that it is something that people ‘do.’ The act of doing music, or "musicing” as he terms it, is an intentional act that involves listening and practicing/doing, and it is influenced by the situation in which it happens. This situation influences music head-on (it is an outcome of action on its own), in back (the motivation that prompts the action), in front (the goal) and around (the context that influences the musicer, the musicing, and the musical work done) (1995, p. 40).

Elliott’s emphasis on the influence that context has on musical practices and the situational knowledge that is necessary to develop musicianship is enlightening. Elliott argues that each of these influences is related and that the process is even more complex; musicing is indeed related to its context, but it is also related to the musicer (the person musicing), the music (what is being performed/improvised), and the contexts that influence each of them.

Elliott develops the term musicing to remind us that “performing and improvising through singing and playing instruments lies at the heart of MUSIC as a diverse human practice” (Elliot, 1995, p. 47). He is interested in the nature of musicing and what it means to be a music maker. In his exploration of these things, he engages the reader in an examination of the concept of musicianship. He states that to make music is “to act thoughtfully and knowingly” (Elliot, 1995, p. 50), and that it requires the development of musicianship. Elliott states that there are different stages of musicianship: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, expert/artist. Each of these stages reflects embodiment and development of several skills involved in musicing.
and is practice-specific. He states that praxis – the practice of doing music (that is, musicing) in a socially defined context– is at the heart of music making and musicianship and that this should be the focus of music education, which is precisely what CM aims to do.

In a chapter in Elliott’s (2005) book *Praxial music education: Reflections and dialogue*, Veblen takes a critical look at Elliott’s praxial music education and finds many parallels between and intersections with work being done in CM. Elliott’s concepts of “musical practices,” the relationships between music-makers and listeners, and the rootedness of music in community are all central to CM’s existence (in all its diversity). To highlight the importance of a community’s understanding of music, Veblen quotes Elliott, “[M]usical action and musical context work together to co-produce musical understanding” (Elliott, 1995, p. 161). Veblen goes on to argue, much like Elliott, that CM acknowledges the importance of learners’ encounters with an entire social-musical community, and she goes so far as to say that “[C]ontext defines CM. The context – the circumstances and setting – constitutes and embodies the learning, listening, and performing expectations, all of which square with the praxial perspective” (Veblen, 2005, p. 316). Veblen also notes that CM can be argued to fit into the praxial paradigm because CM programs focus on the action of musicing and on the development of active musical knowledge: The process is the reason for making music, rather than the final performance or product dictating the process (Veblen, 2005, p. 320).

Veblen proposes that Elliott’s praxial philosophy is a useful way of contextualizing CM but criticizes it because it doesn’t explain “some key benefits of CM programs.” These benefits include “the special social qualities of informal CM settings, the varieties of human interactions that take place in CM settings, how participants feel about the social and political aspects of their musical efforts” (Veblen, 2005, 323). Veblen’s chapter in Elliott’s (2005) book is a call for those
in music education to broaden their views about what “music education” is and to ask, “How can and how do formal and informal music education systems reach every citizen?” (Veblen, 2005, p. 323) In addition, as opposed to formal education, participants in CM choose to participate and thus, if they elect to play a certain instrument or sing in a choir, they accept responsibility for their part (Veblen, 2005, p. 319). Lastly, and perhaps most closely related to identity, Veblen states that the way CM providers talk about what they do is similar to Elliott’s “themes of enhancing self-growth, self-knowledge, enjoyment, and self-esteem” (Veblen, 2005, p. 323).
2.1.2 Praxial Philosophy: Regelski’s Prolegomenon

Regelski (1996) offers a brief philosophical explanation of praxial philosophy of music and music education, an account that differs from Elliott’s in some important ways; his philosophy provides another way to think about Community Music. This praxial philosophy “takes fully into account what music is ‘good for’ in any consideration of ‘good music’” (25), and is concerned “to get people into action musically” (26). Regelski’s philosophy contests the aesthetic philosophy of music at its core – it looks at music in terms of what it is good for, that is, what human intention is imbued into the act – rather than viewing music as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ in relation to its form approached with disinterest and separate from life. Regelski, much like Elliott, argues that situationality is key in understanding music. His praxial view is far wider than the aesthetic philosophy of music because it allows for theorizing in regards to all musical praxis instead of solely focusing on music that is produced for and performed in concert (Western Art Music). This philosophy holds human agency as its main tenet and, in respect to this, it is liberating and empowering because it accounts for the actions of anyone who partakes in music and music making (musical performing and listening praxis).

Human agency and action are explained to mean action as intentional and not as simply reaction, habit, or mindless behaviour. Regelski states that people engage in musical praxis for a variety of reasons and that, for music to be considered “good,” it must satisfy the goals intended for that musical praxis. Music is no longer tied to the aesthetic view that it is to be judged and evaluated on the basis of its form or its expressiveness. Instead, music is understood as partaking in life and in making ‘special’ what “is most fully human” (26). Extending this argument, Regelski argues that each musical praxis has a unique intention, performance, listening, and learning practice and that the audience need not have any musical training in order to enjoy...
listening to it. On the other hand, he does acknowledge that musical training can enhance a listener’s experience, but that it can also lead the listener to judge the musical praxis against an unrealistic standard that might not be relevant to the situatedness of that praxis. Each listener is involved in her or his own listening praxis based on personal social/cultural background and training. Therefore, teaching with an awareness of the diversity of music praxis is of utmost importance if teachers are to get students involved in the “action of music.”

The idea that any music can be “good” if it is performed with intention and if it serves the purposes that it was intended to serve is empowering. It is empowering because by extension, it means that anyone can make “good” music even if his or her intentions are not strictly aesthetic and bounded by a musical praxis that has become an ideology (Western Art Music). Regelski emphasizes that the “goods” of music can indeed be extra musical and, in a large majority of the world’s musical praxes, they are. In his contestation of the aesthetic philosophy of music, Regelski states that he views the aesthetic approach as simply one musical praxis among many. He states that because of its insularity, inaccessibility, and the challenges of evaluating teaching and learning in the aesthetic philosophy, it should no longer be the basis for music education and curriculum. Regelski believes that his praxial philosophy is a down-to-earth, inclusive, and encouraging approach that, unlike the aesthetic paradigm, has at its core action learning – getting students to partake in the action of musical practice. Music is no longer just for a few to understand and practice ”well” – it is for everyone, and the world’s diversity of music practices should be honoured and respected.
2.1.3 Community Music and identity: What has Music got to do With it

Coffman (2006) provides evidence for the way CM participants conceive of what they do and for how participants identify (or do not) as musicians. His paper *Voices of experience: Interviews of adult community band members in Launceston, Tasmania, Australia*, is a reflection on interviews conducted with members of adult community bands in the aforementioned places. He focuses on the participants’ motivations, hopes, and frustrations, and presents “a model for attracting and retaining adult learners in music performance” (Coffman, 2006, p. 1). In this paper, Coffman frames his discussion around Stebbins (1992) notion of “serious leisure.” “[S]erious leisure activity is typified by: a significant effort to acquire knowledge and skill, perseverance, career elements (i.e. developmental phases, the development of a subculture identity (ethos), obtaining durable benefits, and a resulting strong identification with the activity” (Coffman, 2006, p. 3). Coffman suggests that exploring the notion of ‘serious leisure’ is important because it can help us to understand why people participate in CM programs and to design appropriate experiences for them (Coffman, 2006, p. 6). His findings indicate that participants often depend on programs to provide them with an instrument, that they often don’t have a choice in what they play, but that they enjoy playing their instrument regardless, and that the desire to re-orient their free time, family, and friends influence their decisions to join. He reports that participants often need “encouragement of others as well as some financial assistance to begin a new leisure activity” (Coffman, 2006, p. 15). Another aspect that Coffman focuses on is the musical histories of participants; most mention that someone in their family was musical or that they listened to a lot of music in their homes growing up.

To illustrate his argument and to give voice to participants of the CM programs that he writes about, Coffman includes some of their responses to the question “What is it like being a
musician?” He categorizes their responses into three themes: Emotional Response, Limitations, and Commitment. Emotional responses include participants’ experiences of music as being embodied, as eliciting a “high,” and as sometimes provoking nervousness. The limitations that he notes arise when participants are unable to practice as much as they feel they should and with difficulties they have in securing an instrument. Commitment is expressed in participants desire to improve, no matter what level they were at. In response to the question “How do you make sense of it all? Why is it meaningful,” he notes a theme of community recurring. Finding a community in the band and contributing to the larger community beyond the CM program are values that most of the respondents emphasize in their responses to this question.

In her 2009 article, Sites of social justice: community music in New York City, Silverman defines CM as “any type of ‘informal’ music teaching and learning that takes place outside the walls of public schools, conservatories and universities, and/or partnerships between formal institutions and music programs offered in community settings” (Silverman, 2009, p. 182). She examines what three different CM programs in New York teach and how they teach. She then proceeds to argue that the commonality between each program is the “focus on community as hospitality, fellowship, and emotional and social betterment for the individuals and groups, among other values” (Silverman, 2009, p. 182). Silverman examines several CM sites (through participant observation and semi-structured interviews) and finds that the aims and strategies of the CM programs she analyses “reflect bell hook’s pre-requisites for social justice: care, commitment, trust, responsibility, respect, acceptance and self-efficacy” (Silverman, 2009, p. 188). Silverman argues that the above approach is rarely practiced in schools and that CM programs are stepping in to alleviate serious social problems that schools are not. She cites bell hook’s belief that love needs to be central in education; this is a holistic approach, “an integrated
and working combination of care, commitment, trust, responsibility, respect, knowledge, self-other listening and open communication that we practice (or should practice) each day” (Silverman, 2009, p. 180). I resonate with these practices and see them reflected in Veblen’s definition of CM. If these ideals are indeed practiced in CM programs, then issues of identity are an important area of study in order to examine how these ideals are realized and how participants engage with them in the development of their own identities.

Souza and Müller’s (2002) article, The relationship between music and street children and adolescents, takes a socioeducational approach to Case Study Methodology rooted in Small’s (1989, 1995) conceptions, to examine experiential and community aspects of music in a political-pedagogic project in the Escola Municipal de Porto Alegre (EPA), a city school in Brazil. The basis of the school is to build non-hierarchical and non-formal relationships with knowledge. The authors focus on the role of music in the school, the students’ relationship to music, and how the situatedness (time-space) determines this relationship.

For the participants of the schools, “the musical performance was important because it was a moment when they could connect to their best and what their imagination could proportionate, in spite of deprivation of childhood and stigma; and they also had the possibility of connecting with a “high quality” of relationship which subverted the order of relationships established by necessity and submissiveness to the group” (Souza & Müller, 2002, p. 4). In contrast to their lives on the street, “musical improvisation became … a unique activity at the developing and deepening of the students’ individual and musical bonds, because it started to create commitment and a wish of continuity” (Souza & Müller, 2002, p. 4). The authors observed that “[w]hen they improvised, the students had the opportunity to face something unknown – the not planned musical and body contents – without the familiar feeling of fear”
This case study has interesting parallels to the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band because of the aggrieved communities that both groups of people live in. The authors emphasize that it is essential to “…not leave behind the social, political, economical, and cultural aspects which are implicit in their skills” (Souza & Müller, 2002, p. 6) in community music programs.

Phelan cautions the CM researcher, “Community musicians may embrace and articulate a coherent set of values around inclusivity, access, and participation, but its musical practice may embody these – or contest them – in ways which may surpass the intentions of its participants” (Phelan, 2008, p. 150). She makes the case that it is important to examine what is actually going on in CM programs and how participants think about themselves in relation to CM programs in addition to the aims of the programs. Phelan approaches the question of identity through the perspective of practice as ritual – that is, how through ritual communities perform/practice their identity. She argues that through playing (musicing) together, people engage in already existing communities and in the construction of community. She argues that practice theory is enlightening in the examination of identity in CM because practice theory “emerged as a champion of embodied activity, engaged in by social actors with the ability to influence the socio-cultural contexts within which they negotiated power and identity” (Phelan, 2008, p. 147). This is related to Elliott’s praxial theory and the idea that music is an action – it is a human activity – as well as the idea that musicing cannot be understood outside of its specific socio-cultural context, and it addresses some of the ‘key benefits’ that Veblen argues Elliott’s praxialist philosophy does not account for. Phelan argues that CM is related to identity because actions and decisions in CM programs are strategic (i.e., performance choices and participative choices). These strategies are part of the “tacit knowledge of performance, rather than the conceptual
knowledge of ideology” (Phelan, 2008, p. 149). People create knowledge and patterns – patterns and knowledge that are shared, and community is created through this process. Phelan echoes Silverman in her proposal that ideals of social-justice and the positive influence these ideals have on identity are transformational and are central to what can happen in a CM context.

The work of Guy (1999) is not directly related to CM, but I find it relevant to CM examinations of adult learners and identity since it speaks to choices that “CMians” must make. He also brings into focus some key issues to be considered in the design, implementation, and evaluation of CM programs concerning identity and the importance of culturally relevant adult education – especially for marginalized groups. He argues that “culturally relevant adult education is essential to helping learners from marginalized cultural backgrounds learn to take control of their lives and improve their social condition” (Guy, 1999, p. 5). When talking about culture and in trying to define it, he asserts, we must also consider what the “implications of that answer are for the poor, the marginalized, and the less powerful in our society . . . [since] change [in their lives] cannot be achieved because these learners continue to operate within the cultural norms, values, and traditions of a dominant culture [which contributes to their oppression]” (p. 8). Guy emphasizes that change through adult education is important because mainstream education (which teaches mainstream, white, middle-class values) results in negative and destructive identities being internalized.

Because learning is essential to cultural reproduction, learning is also a central way of combating cultural domination and oppression…Inclusion does not guarantee equity. Rather, educational norms, processes, and goals must be reevaluated for their potential to assist learners whose individual and group
identities are most at risk in terms of the dominant culture’s definition of success.

(Guy, 1999, p. 12)

Guy suggests that it is important to examine identity because “[t]he nature of the fit between learners’ cultural backgrounds and their educational experiences is of central concern because of culture’s importance in establishing criteria for success or failure” (Guy, 1999, p. 13). Guy recommends asking “insiders” what their actions and others’ actions mean to them. This perspective has the potential to provide researchers and educators with a better understanding of what’s actually going on in a community classroom/CM program, what their impact on people’s and groups’ identities are, and to offer insight about affecting positive learning experiences and identity formation among participants. Indeed, participants’ beliefs and systems of meaning may be very different from those of their instructors. In such cases, Guy suggests examining “(1) the instructor’s cultural identity, (2) the learners’ cultural identity, (3) the curriculum, and (4) instructional methods and processes” (Guy, 1999, p. 15). These suggestions are prudent and I believe of central importance in the examination of any CM program, especially if ideals of social justice are espoused, and most certainly in my examination of identity in the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band.

Green proposes a theory of “musical meaning and experience which takes into consideration the dialectical relationship between musical text and context, and which is flexible enough to apply to a range of musical styles” (Green, 2005, p. 76). Green develops this theory by exploring the process of meaning making in music as a referential process, attributing its emotional impact to the multiple meanings that people can imbue music with (delineation). Regarding musical autonomy she states, the “…experience of inherent meaning can indeed change, and challenge, our musical responses to and presuppositions concerning delineation; . . .
it is in this moment of musical autonomy, that the most critical power of music resides” (p. 84-85).

Green applies her theory to music education in the classroom and explores how some pupils will find themselves affirmed by the music studied (their ability to play and understand this music “correctly,” to have positive delineated meanings associated with it), while others find themselves alienated (is not supportive of their relationship with music, or they have negative delineated meanings associated with it). This suggests that musical ability has less to do with success in the music classroom than the student’s “family and social class background, membership of different social groups, and prior listening experiences” (p. 87). She then problematizes this proposition by suggesting that indeed there are moments of autonomy from social contexts in music and that, when children are given the chance to create music, they have the ability to act upon and directly affect the delineated (often perceived as inherent) meanings of music. (p. 89)

Much like Elliott and Regelski, Green suggests that music’s meaning is reliant on the context in which it is produced.

No music can ever be heard (that is, heard-as-music) outside of a social context. Taking music out of its original context of production and putting it into even a completely new and different context of reception does not cause it to lose delineated meanings; it merely replaces some delineations (related to the context of production) with others (related to the context of reception). (p. 79)

The process of meaning-making and its connection to music and context is complex, and DeNora examines it in her influential book, “Music in Everyday life” (2000). One of DeNora’s main concerns in this book is music’s dynamic relation with social life (how it invokes, stabilizes, and
changes the parameters of agency and identity, collective and individual). Further, she asks, if music in social settings is a source of social power, how and who controls this power and what effects does this have on those who are involved with music (DeNora 2000, p. 20)? DeNora emphasizes music's ability to construct experience and an understanding of this experience, “Music is active within social life, it has ‘effects’ then, because it offers specific materials to which actors may turn when they engage in the work of organizing social life. Music is a resource – it provides affordances – for world building” (p. 44). Music, in this sense, is a form of identity building and of community development.

2.2 Communities of Practice

The Communities of Practice paradigm, grounded in community development, presents another relevant way of understanding Community Music, and more specifically, the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band. Communities of practice, as defined by Wenger, et. al, (2002) are “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis” (p. 4). Communities of Practice are made up of three essential elements: domain (area of interest), community (a group of people who share the area of interest), and practice (the craft they are developing together within the domain). These three elements are integral to community development and offer areas of focus in fostering a well-rounded community (Wenger, et. al, 2002, p. 41). In addition to identifying three elements of communities of practice, Wenger, et. al (2002) identify seven key principles to be considered in guiding the development of a vibrant and educative community:

1. Design for evolution.
2. Open for dialogue between inside and outside perspectives.

3. Invite different levels of participation. (core, active, peripheral)

4. Develop both public and private community spaces.

5. Focus on value.

6. Combine familiarity and excitement.

7. Create a rhythm for the community. (Wenger, et. al, 2002, p. 51)

Communities of practice provides a useful framework for researching, understanding, and evaluating CM programs. At its core, communities of practice share many of the values cited by Elliot and Regelski’s praxial philosophy, and by CM scholars (Coffman, McCarthy, Phelan, Silverman, Veblen). Most notable is the importance of situatedness in understanding musicing, and the idea that musicing itself, within a community is educative.

2.3 Life Long Learning, Community Music, and Community Development

“If individuals interact with each other repeatedly over time, they develop a stake in a reputation for honesty and reliability.” (Fukuyama, 1999, in Jones, 2010, p. 294)

Jones’ (2010) central argument is that musicking (that is, collective music making) can foster the development of social capital, leading to civic engagement and intercultural understanding. Jones cites Coffman and Admek (2001), Coffman (2006), Dabback (2007), Ernst (2005), and Pitts (2005), to support his argument that “Music’s inherently social nature helps people develop the kinds of social capital that can combat isolation and build crucial social networks” (Jones, 2010, p. 292). Jones explains that weak ties (connections that bring together people who are different from one another) and bridging social capital (activity and social integration of diverse
people that lead to knowledge-based trust which in turn becomes generalizable trust) are the “type[s] of social capital that can foster intercultural understanding and civic engagement with those of diverse backgrounds…Music serves as a perfect mediating space for people of different groups and musicking not only develops a sense of shared identity and intercultural understanding, but also can teach skills for democratic action such as leading and following, teamwork, debate, compromise, and so forth” (p. 295). To support his argument regarding adult amateur musicians, Jones cites Booth 1999; Bowles (1988), Busch (2005), Chiodo (1997), Coffman (2002, 2006), Coffman and Adamek (2001), Finnegan (1989), Horton (1992), Larson (1983), and Nazareth (1998) who have demonstrated that “development of skills and passion for music are crucial for continued participation as active musicers”. Jones concludes that as music creates social capital, music educators and community musicians should focus on developing this social capital (i.e., “knowledge, dispositions, habits and musicianship skills necessary to engage musically in a variety of social settings with a variety of other people throughout life” (Jones, 2010, p. 298). He observes that what is missing in the research/literature is “a meta analysis of the civic roles and social skills developed within various types of ensembles such as large conductor-led ensembles, small groups with or without prescribed parts such as jazz combos, rock bands and classical chamber groups, and so forth” (p. 298), and, to do this, “a theoretical framework is needed that analyses both the development of social capital and the unique civic roles, social skills, habits, and dispositions developed in various musical practices” (Jones, 2010, p. 299). Social capital is indeed a difficult thing to measure, and it is perhaps best approached through qualitative research with an understanding of music as a social process; and that I approach as an improvised social process.
Newman, Curtis, and Stephens (2003) examine the implications of Jones’ article regarding the development of a theoretical framework to analyse and evaluate community music programs and the social capital that is built within them. The authors acknowledge the challenge that evaluating programs presents, “While many evaluations of community-based arts projects suggest positive benefits to participants (mostly through post-scheme self-reports), some reported outcomes for stakeholders – such as subsequent uptake of training or employment, cannot be attributed to the intervention with any degree of certainty” (Newman et al., 2003).

The authors present the work of researchers whose work argues that community-based arts projects and programs do indeed benefit individuals and communities: “Alongside educational benefits, arts interventions are increasingly credited with enhancing social capital (Williams, 1997), a process which establishes networks, mutual trust and cooperation within communities for the benefit of all (Kay, 2000; Kay and Watt, 2000).” (Newman et al., 2003) The authors present a brief overview of several studies focusing on the evaluation of arts programs. The social outcomes identified fall under six headings: Individual and personal development, social cohesion, local image and identity, imagination and vision, health and well-being, community empowerment. They state, “…[S]elf-reports of positive change were common across the majority of studies and in the majority of areas examined. These included: Personal change…, Social change…., Economic change…., Educational change….” (Newman et al., 2003). They concluded, “Useful – as opposed to accurate – evaluation reports need to consider not just the aggregated impact of arts programs on individuals, but also their effect and the extent to which it can be and is sustained on the communities in which individuals live” (Newman et al., 2003).

Dillon (2006) argues that music identity is an important part of human capital and of the cultural health of communities. Dillon proposes that investigating cultural capital and the
positive influence of musical activity in community development is crucial in understanding, evaluating, and advocating for CM programs. He explores and outlines an approach to evaluating active music making contexts and he examines the relationship between these activities and cultural health. Regarding resilience, Dillon grounds his usage of the term in Masten’s (1994) definition, “a pattern over time, characterized by good eventual adaptation despite developmental risk, acute stressors, or chronic adversities” (Masten, 1994 in Dillon, 2006, pp. 268-9). He suggests that Gordon’s (1995) definition is also useful in framing CM as building resilience: “Resilience is the ability to thrive, mature, and increase competence in the face of adverse circumstances” (Gordon 1995, in Dillon, 2006, p. 269). This paper examines three case studies where “personal or community transformation has been observed and resulted in improved resilience” (Dillon, 2006, p. 269). Dillon compares these case studies to find commonalities in hopes of identifying what characteristics “provide access to meaningful and engaging music making, and that can be described as a positive influence on the community” (p. 269) in order to develop “models for creating meaningful and engaging music making programs” (p. 269). He finds that “attention to the distinctiveness of the community and the kinds of music (much like Guy) that the participants value as expressive” (p. 272) is critical to the success of a program.

Three factors inform the construction of a framework for a successful program:

i. An attention to the distinctiveness of the context;

ii. Attention to the modes of creative engagement;

iii. An examination of whether these clearly lead to personal, social and cultural meaning for the participants. (p. 273)

Further, Dillon suggests that it is important to examine the context and relationships within CM programs (institutional practices, music pedagogical practices, and community values and
cultural practices), and to use tools in research and evaluation that identify and describe modes of creative engagement, and identity meanings constructed and experienced by students in regards to CM programs (p. 273).

Given that the members of the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band are all adults, and their experience in music education differs from that of children and youth, a brief examination of lifelong learning in community music settings is pertinent. Myers (1995, p. 22) cites Brookfield (1987) in outlining “six unique dimensions of adult learning [that] need to be recognized: (1) adults are largely voluntary learners; (2) participants must respect one another’s self-worth; (3) facilitators and learners should operate in a collaborative mode; (4) effective learning combines reflection and action; (5) facilitation should aim to foster a spirit of critical reflection; and (6) the aim of facilitation is the nurturing of self-directed, empowered adults (Brookfield, 1987, pp. 9-11)” . Meyers (1995) asks two related and pertinent questions: “What factors motivate adults’ music learning? How can self-perceptions of musical capability and achievement be enhanced?” (Myers, 1995, p. 25) Louth approaches these question and argues that the accepted definition of the term ‘music education’ should be broadened and that an examination of informal learning can provide new insights into learning and teaching that the study of school music teaching cannot. He approaches the learning histories of three internationally acclaimed jazz musicians from the perspective that music is a life-long learning process. In examining the informal learning of these three musicians, he uses Small’s (1977) notion of the growth model, “The syllabus is organized on the basis of logical, linear progression, one item of information proceeding from the preceding, in a manner which is in fact quite unrelated to the way in which we really learn. How we learn naturally if left to ourselves is much more like a network or jigsaw puzzle than any straight-line succession.” (Small, 1977, p. 188 quoted in Louth, 2006, p. 6)
Indeed, the members of the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band have had different musical trajectories in their lives; some have previously participated in formal music education, and others are self-taught. In the latter case, Louth’s article provides insight.

Louth notes that personal relationships had a great effect on the musicians’ learning, that their practice was unstructured (just a part of everyday life), and the musicians talk about their instruments as tools for understanding and playing music, as opposed to focusing on learning the techniques and musical canon of one instrument. In addition, he observes that all of the musicians he interviewed emphasized that they listened to a lot of music and that their listening was instrumental in enabling them to learn by ear first and then by note much later in their musical careers. Louth observes that all were highly self-motivated: they approached music with an attitude of exploration and discovery, and all of them self-identified as being obsessed with music. Louth concludes that the self/informally taught musicians he interviewed had an holistic approach to performing and conceptualizing music (Louth, 2006, p. 16). He goes further to conjecture that it was, perhaps, the musicians “lack” of “training” that led each of the musicians in the study to develop their own recognizable, sought after, and often copied “sound.” He notes that the institutionalization of jazz leads to the homogenization of jazz and states that, “It would not be unreasonable to conclude that the development of a distinctive style (be it performance or compositional) was facilitated, in each of these cases, by a variety of unique learning experiences and influences perhaps not easily acquired in formal settings” (Louth, 2006, p. 24). Louth presents interesting arguments regarding self-taught musicians who have had successful and long-running careers in music, and it may provide some insight into the educational processes of the musicians who are largely self-taught in the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band. However, he does
not examine why these musicians play with others, join bands, or consider whether or why they participate in Community Music, which is what I will be examining in this case study.

2.4 Improvising in a Community Context

As a part of the Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice (ICASP) project, my conceptual approach to this case study is influenced by an exploration of improvisation, defined broadly as a social practice in building community rather than just as a musical practice. Ajay Heble, ICASP Project Leader explains,

“Improvisation, in short, has much to tell us about the ways in which communities based on such forms are politically and materially pertinent to envisioning and sounding alternative ways of knowing and being in the world. Improvisation demands shared responsibility for participation in community, an ability to negotiate differences, and a willingness to accept the challenges of risk and contingency. Furthermore, in an era when diverse peoples and communities of interest struggle to forge historically new forms of affiliation across cultural divides, the participatory and civic virtues of engagement, dialogue, respect, and community-building inculcated through improvisatory practices take on a particular urgency.” (Heble 2011)

To help illustrate the ethic of improvisation that I have practiced and the one that I approach improvising with in the Carnegie Jazz Band, I will turn to Barrett, as quoted in Irwin (2003).

“Jazz improvisers cultivate an aesthetic that senses the dynamic unfolding of creative human action and appreciates the emergent, incomplete, mistake-ridden nature of human activity that often in retrospect leads to coherent, creative
production…. What is appropriate for grasping social complexity is an aesthetic of the dynamics of unfolding, an aesthetic that values surrender, appreciation, trust, and attunement as seeds that sprout dynamic, novel social action. (Barrett 2000, 241)” (Irwin, 2003, p. 65)

Irwin focuses on the “active space between the fold and the not folded” and states that this aesthetic of unfolding is a dynamic process in which a positive attitude of trust in the emergent is the propelling force of discovery. Key to this process is at once introspection and an attunement to exterior forces. When listening to the active space between the fold and the not folded, understanding can emerge. Improvisation is about being open to everything around you as well as inside you. Irwin and Barrett evoke my own understanding of improvisation as being “attuned to the aesthetics of unfolding in/sights.” (Irwin 2003, p. 68). Indeed, one of the most important things that I have learned through improvising is to listen.

George Lewis, the esteemed musician, composer, improviser, educator, and academic, writes about the values that performing improvised music provoke.

In performances of improvised music, the possibility of internalizing alternative value systems is implicit from the start. The focus of musical discourse suddenly shifts from the individual, autonomous creator to the collective – the individual as part of global humanity. (Lewis 2004, p. 149-150)

Because improvising necessarily happens in the moment and from an attunement to the present as well as to the emergent, the performer influences and is influenced by the environment (social and, I think, physical). The shift that Lewis writes about, from the discourse of the individual autonomous creator to the collective, is embodied in an ethics of its connectivity and of dialogue with the environments that the individual is part of.
The individual does exist in improvisation, but not apart from the social and physical environment. The dialogical relationship between the individual and the environment and the unfolding in/sights that emerge become a part of both. Lewis writes, “In my own view, the development of the improviser in improvised music is regarded as encompassing not only the formation of individual musical personality but the harmonization of one’s musical personality with social environments, both actual and possible” (Lewis 2004, p. 150). Lewis suggests that in Afrological improvisation this is in affect the development of a personal narrative and that sound (opposed to a Cageian approach), is not autonomous. “The importance of personal narrative, of “telling your own story.”…for an improviser working in Afrological forms, “sound,” sensibility, personality, and intelligence cannot be separated from an improviser’s phenomenal (as distinct from formal) definition of music” (p. 156). Heble and Waterman’s observation of improvisation (most often spoken of as a group activity in music) that “Improvisation demands shared responsibility for participation in community, an ability to negotiate differences, and a willingness to accept the challenges of risk and contingency” (Heble & Waterman 2007, p. 3). They insist that improvisation must necessarily engage with issues of relationality and with a diversity of communities of practice, and that with this engagement comes responsibility for participating inn and engaging with community. Their statement along with Lewis’ provokes me to ask a lot of questions, including one that I will address in this case study:

How is sound connected to community?

We all contribute to the sounds in our community. Sometimes we are aware of this and the affect that it has on other people, but often we are not. Some of these sounds elicit responses – emotional, reactive, thought and action provoking. We impact our community by making sounds and are impacted by the sounds that others make (some real-time
actions, others distanced through the production of sounds by fabricated machinery). As with improvisation, the responsibility for and awareness of the impact that our sounds have on our community is evoked.

Lines (2005) examines the cultural work of music and the capacity of music improvisation to intensify and heighten the dynamic qualities of the musical moment. He proposes that improvisation is at the ‘edge’ of musical creation, but also notes that (citing Christopher Small 1987), “all types of music involvement – music making, music listening, music use and music learning – are improvisational in a sense” (Lines, 2005, p. 72). Lines proposes that the cultural work of music occurs when new musical moments come into and change existing musical territories of context and meaning, and that in such instances, new spaces are opened and reveal new cultural work. He states that the cultural work of music is not only the act of musicking, but that it incorporates and reflects the relational dimension that makes musicking possible, and, also, that the cultural work of music is educative: “Music’s capacity to come forth as a sonic force brings forth qualities that enable us to appreciate and experience the emergence of cultural work in our life events” (p. 69). His work thus proposes that if the sociological study of music is approached with an understanding of improvisation as being woven throughout the cultural work of music, new and perhaps more fluid understandings will emerge.

2.5 Community Music, Communities of Practice, Community Development and the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band

In his examination of the importance of music education, grounded in Peirce’s pragmatic philosophy, Goble (2010) writes,
What we are seeking is to understand how the musical practices of different cultural communities can be said to be meaningful to individual human beings, and to the communities of which they are a part, as part of the universal *human* community. It is our intention that by coming to an understanding of the *effects* of different musical practices on the culturally diverse individuals and communities who undertake them, we may be able to identify that which is universal in the musical practices of all cultural communities, (Goble, 2010, p. 60-61)

Goble goes on to explain that those who participate in shared musical practices commonly undergo a heightening of experience—that is, a feeling of ‘loss of self’ and group unification—in their musicking that effectively confirms the worldview they share in some measure, and that that worldview is reflected in their musical practice (Goble, 2010, p. 65). He presents accounts from researchers in clinical psychiatry, neurobiology, ethnomusicology, and cultural anthropology to support this assertion (pp. 66-88). With this in mind, I will attend to the interviews with members of the Carnegie Jazz Band to establish whether they feel a heightening of experience and group unity in their musicking, and if they do, what the shared values are that are reflected in their shared musical practice. The paradigms of Community Music (Coffman, Elliott, McCarthy, Phelan, Regelski, Silverman, Veblen), Communities of Practice (Wenger, et al.), Lifelong Learning (Guy, Louth, Newman), Social Capital (Dillon, Fukuyama, Gordon, Jones) and Improvisation as Community Development (Heble, Lewis, Lines, Waterman) each provide unique insights into the nature of musicking within communities, of what, as Goble (2010) writes is the “universal” in music making. Though I have identified many commonalities among these paradigms, each provides a slightly different angle or viewpoint with which I
approach my research on participation and identity with the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band.
Chapter 3: Methodology

In this study, I examine the benefits that music making, specifically jazz and creative improvisation, provide for members of the Carnegie Jazz Band, a Community Music program for adult learners in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. I have used ethnographic methods, including participant-observation and interviews with band members and with Brad Muirhead (teacher and leader), to determine how they see themselves as music-makers within this program and the larger paradigms of community music and communities of practice, and to identify the challenges they face in participating in this open and accessible community music program. This research is an ethnographic case study, as described by Merriam (1998) and informed by methods of reflexive ethnography (Davies 2008), applied ethnomusicology (Sheehy 1992; Titon 1992; Araújo, et al 2006; Reyes 2007; Loughran 2008; Pettan 2008) and community music (Elliott 1995, 1997; Myers 1995; Mullen 2002; Veblen 2002, 2005, 2008; Coffman 2006; Dillon 2006; McCarthy 2008; Phelan 2008; Silverman 2009). Each of these paradigms emphasizes the importance of reflexivity in undertaking research, of attending to the local, particular situation, and of making the research “useful” for the communities involved.

3.1 Research Questions

3.1.1 The Carnegie Jazz Band as a Community of Practice

How do participants in the Carnegie Jazz Band understand their participation in this program?
How does the band’s existence and the social processes present within it relate to the
Communities of Practice paradigm? Can this band be conceptualized as a Community of Practice?

3.1.2 How Does ‘Community’ Function in the Band?

Elliott’s and Regelski’s praxial philosophies and the studies in Community Music explored in the literature review suggest that situation and community are integral to music making and to music education. Does a sense of community contribute to band members’ continued participation and learning? In other words, does the Carnegie Jazz Band foster a sense of community among its participants? If so, how do members’ take ownership of the community or identify with it? Do their relationships contribute to their participation? To their learning?

The work of Community Music scholars also suggests that the benefits of participating in a community music program are myriad and complex. How is the sense of community related to the music making that happens in the band? Savannah Walling (2008), a DTES artist, organizer, activist, and scholar writes about her experiences of organizing and participating in theatre productions in the neighbourhood. She presents compelling evidence in the form of testimonials from participants in DTES theatre productions that community arts programs in the neighbourhood have had a very positive impact for individuals and for the larger community. What are the benefits of this program to the participants, teacher, Carnegie Centre, and the larger community? How do the participants conceive of themselves as music-makers? How does their music making relate to other parts of their identity, to their sense of community, and to the DTES?
3.1.3 What are the Implications of This Research for the Fields of Community Music and Communities of Practice?

What effects do the participant observations and reflections on participation undertaken in this study have for the future development of this program and of other Community Music programs for adult learners in at-risk and aggrieved communities such as the Downtown Eastside? How do these findings contribute to the academic fields of Community Music and Communities of Practice?

3.2 Reflexive Ethnography

Ethnography is a form of research based on fieldwork and its written product; it draws “primarily from this fieldwork experience and usually emphasizes descriptive detail as a result” (Davies 2008, p. 4-5). Davies defines reflexivity as,

“a turning back on oneself, a process of self-reference. In the context of social research, reflexivity at its most immediately obvious level refers to the ways in which the products of research are affected by the personnel and process of doing research.” (Davies 2008, p. 4)

Reflexive Ethnography, therefore, is the activity of self-consciously placing oneself as an active participant within fieldwork, plus the subsequent documentation of the attendant experiences and reflections upon them. Davies approaches reflexive ethnography from a critical realist standpoint, one that “promotes creative tensions between the empirical, the actual, and the real to produce explanation without encouraging flights of theoretical fancy” (Davies 2008, p. 22), and she emphasizes that within this paradigm, “the purpose of research is to increase our understanding of social reality by developing explanations of social forms and events, as well as
critically examining the conceptualizations used in these explanations” (Davies 2008, p. 6). She explains, “Such a position is ideally suited to ethnographic practice, which in its knowledge-seeking activities is continually forced to evaluate and rework theoretical abstraction in the face of concrete experience” (Davies 2008, p. 22).

Davies emphasizes that reflexivity is important in doing ethnography,

“All researchers are to some degree connected to, or part of, the object of their research. And, depending on the extent and nature of these connections, questions arise as to whether the results of research are artefacts of the researcher’s presence and inevitable influence on the research process.” (Davies 2008, p. 3)

As a researcher, I inhabit many different positions. I am a graduate student entering the DTES as a non-resident to participate in and conduct research in partnership with the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band; I am a classically trained violinist who loves to improvise and is interested in learning jazz; I am undertaking this research as a member of a larger research project (ICASP); I am a music teacher who has facilitated community-run music programs; I am a young, queer, white woman from a middle-class family; and I am committed to research that has at its heart praxis connected to reflexivity, social justice, and community. These positions (perhaps not all, and possibly others) influence my fieldwork and the outcomes of this research, as I am, always, myself.

Davies argues that self-awareness and continual reflexivity is necessary when conducting research that is intended to be useful for the communities involved, and that it is of utmost importance that it is done ethically. In undertaking politically committed research, such as reflexive ethnography, Davies cautions, “All social groups contain a variety of perspectives,
some that conflict with one another, so the question of for whom one is advocating (or with whom one engages) is sometimes problematic” (Davies 2008, p. 38). In reflecting on the work I am doing with the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band, I ask myself these questions: In conducting this research in hopes of securing funds to help facilitate the existence of this music program, am I seeking to fund the arts or to fund community development? Am I striving to elevate the status of the arts, or am I striving to help the community of the DTES? In other words, am I doing this for myself as a musician and arts administrator or for members of the DTES community? And, though these aims are different, are they necessarily separate or un-related? I have not yet answered these questions for myself, but I do believe that whatever is given primary emphasis by the researcher and by the community studied determines the type of work that will be done and how it will be done.

Regarding the ethics of engaging in ethnographic work, Davies emphasizes the importance of informed consent. Considering the open-endedness of ethnography and the possibility of shifts in research interests when conducting this type of research, she explains that participants, “should be informed that research is always a process of discovery so that its consequences can never be fully known at the outset” (Davies 2008, p. 55). She emphasizes that informed consent must be sought in a culturally respectful and thoughtful way to ensure that “consent is based in understanding and free of coercion” (Davies 2008, p. 58). Of note for my project is that I made an agreement with Brad Muirhead that I would undertake this research. I recognized that I needed to take extra care to ensure that my engagement with members of the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band as both a fellow musician and as a researcher is respectful. (I conducted the research as a participant-observer in this study). Negotiating these roles necessitate intentionality on my part in clearly articulating and embodying the parameters around
these roles to develop a reflexive understanding of the people I study. In addition, I have ensured that, in negotiating informed consent, I articulated to participants “that there are some risks in any research, in that no one is able fully to control future use and interpretations of their research findings” (Davies 2008, p. 56). Davies states explicitly maintaining reflexivity in ethically gaining and maintaining informed consent is of utmost importance and that it should be included in the analysis of the fieldwork (Davies 2008, p. 57). This point is especially important to me because I have established relationships with the other members of the band over the past two years, and I hope to continue them with the completion of this study. Participant observation is multi-method in the sense that ethnographers employ many different kinds of methods including observation, interviews, and surveys (Davies 2008, p. 96). This approach, which is also referred to as triangulation, serves to enhance the validity of the study.

Davies states that good research is dependant on the quality of observation and the reflexivity of the observer: “[T]he ethnographer needs to be sensitive to the nature of, and conditions governing, their own participation as a part of their developing understanding of the people they study” (Davies 2008, p. 83). In striving for depth in my observations, and in order to take account of my feelings in regards to the research, I have kept a journal of personal jot-notes, reflections, and arising questions. These data, corroborated in interviews that I conducted with Brad Muirhead and members of the Jazz Band, allow me to compare my understandings with those of the people I am working with and to engage thoughtfully and reflexively with them in co-creating understandings and knowledge (Davies 2008, p.108). On this point, Davies cites Fairclough (1989) concerning the analysis of interviews.

“[T]he interview must be understood at three levels: the level of discourse produced, the text; the level of interaction, that is, the processes of
production and interpretation that go on between the individuals involved in
the interview; and the level of context, that is, the social conditions that
affect both interaction and text.” (Davies 2008, p.110)

Davies notes that these three levels are indeed not fully separable, but that an understanding of the various forces influencing dialogue is part of being reflexive. She argues that at times, in order to build trust and to actively participate in co-creating knowledge about the social world, researchers must consider self-disclosure. Davies cites Oakley (1981): “[B]oth for ethical reasons and for the efficacy of the interview, interviewers must be prepared to share their own knowledge; she suggests that the interviewing process can only develop effectively ‘when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her personal identity in the relationship’” (Davies 2008, p. 113). Indeed, I have already invested a lot in the band: I have attended weekly rehearsals for two years, participated in most performances, and built relationships with all of the regular members. Perhaps because of the relationships that I have built it is not surprising that with most participants, at some point during our three interviews, each member asked me to answer one or more of my own questions. I came face to face with the opportunity of self-disclosure and because I trust the members of the band and am grateful for their openness in sharing with me, I didn’t hesitate to share parts of my own experience.

3.3 Applied Ethnomusicology

In Titon’s (1992) paper, “Music and the Public Interest,” ethnomusicological research is presented as always having some guiding motivation or purpose. It is usually undertaken with the goal of benefiting a community or group and involves working directly in or with communities (Titon 1992). It can entail means by which cultural or
ethnic groups may gain political and social strength. Hemetek argues that these means are developed through trust-based methods, involving a researcher who works in partnership with communities in order to benefit them. In the case of Hemetek’s research, a concert to increase awareness of the Austrian Roma as a group was an outcome of using these methods (Hemetek 2006). Seeger (2006) broadens this definition by arguing that applied ethnomusicology is a humanistic approach to ethnomusicology and in this process, artists, agents, and audience are all involved.

Sheehy proposes that applied ethnomusicology is any application of music scholarship beyond research for research’s sake. His is a typical definition of applied ethnomusicology. Music is approached as a tool to accomplish political and social goals: to address issues of oppression and omission and to empower communities that partake in research. Sheehy suggests tools and strategies for accomplishing these activist goals:

1. Developing new “frames” for musical performance,
2. “feeding back” musical models to the communities that created them,
3. providing community members access to strategic models and conservation techniques,
4. and developing broad, structural solutions to broad problems. (Sheehy 1992, p. 330-1)

The possibilities in addressing issues of oppression and omission through the work of applied ethnomusicology that Sheehy proposes provide a useful frame in thinking about outcomes for the proposed project with the Carnegie Jazz Band. Currently, the band performs primarily at the Carnegie Centre and at the DTES “Heart of the City Festival” (see Figure 1.2, 3.1) all within the DTES and largely, for members of the DTES community. (Admittedly, the 2010 Jazz Festival gig and the band’s performance at Government House in Victoria, BC, in 2011, and the
Gathering Festival and Renfrew Ravine performances in 2012 and 2013 represent exceptions to this generalization.

Figure 3.1 Heart of the City Festival Program Guide, 2012. Produced by Vancouver Moving Theatre
Developing new performance “frames” would benefit this study and the Carnegie Jazz Band as it would raise awareness throughout Vancouver of the vibrant arts community of the DTES and possibly of the long history of jazz in the DTES (Jazz Street Vancouver, 2008). In regard to documentation and “feeding back,” upon completion of this thesis, I am interested in developing a half-hour radio show produced by the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band at Co-op Radio in the DTES that will demonstrate the kind of music created and the uniqueness of the community of the band (and of the DTES) once this thesis is completed. Empowering and supporting the self-determination of researched communities is paramount in the field and practice of applied ethnomusicology. Also noteworthy is the fact that, in doing this type of work, one’s research becomes transformative action and community building.

Working on a radio program with the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band could be an interesting project that would help participants learn new skills (recording the band, conducting interviews with each other, sound editing, leading/participating in group discussions, and consensus building, among others). In addition, this program, if played on the radio (locally and nationally), would provide members of the band with opportunities to present a more positive and nuanced understanding of the DTES. The shape that this project will take, and the exact process of developing the idea into a product that may or may not be distributed locally and nationally (a decision that would be made only with the agreement of all participants) is necessarily unknown and will be determined as it gets underway. I am interested in approaching the band with the proposal of working together to develop and present a radio show because such a project has the potential to counter the extremely negative media that historically and currently presents the Downtown Eastside as only a “skid road,” although I have witnessed, in addition, a vibrant, encouraging, and interesting arts community.
Gaynor and O’Brien, in their article, “Because it all begins with talk: community radio as a vital element in community development” (2011), state, “…while community development is about many things, above all it is about affording a voice to local communities. Therefore, as with all political projects, it begins with talk – talk about the everyday issues that confront us, talk about the decisions and actions that give rise to these issues, talk about how these should be addressed, and talk about whose responsibility it is to do so” (Gaynor and O’Brien 2011, p. 2).

They argue that the public sphere is monopolized by a select few in mainstream media, employing a language and debating issues which are often far removed from the lives of ordinary citizens and their communities. Ironically, at a time when the media exert a considerable influence over what we think and talk about, the increasing commercialization and privatization of its institutions has significantly reduced the space for public debate. (Gaynor and O’Brien 2011, p. 2)

Co-op Radio, a local radio station in the DTES would be a great venue for the proposed radio show project with the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band. The following statement appears on the station’s Website:

Vancouver Co-operative Radio, CFRO, 102.7FM is a non-commercial, co-operatively-owned, listener-supported, community radio station. Located in the heart of Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, Co-op Radio is a voice for the voiceless that strives to provide a space for under-represented and marginalized communities. Co-op Radio aims to increase community participation by encouraging examination of the social and political concerns of the geographic
The station’s mandate is very much in line with the ethos of community development and empowerment with which I am approaching this project. Gaynor and O’Brien emphasize the importance of working with and creating talk-based programs on local radio stations:

“Free from the coercive power of advertisers and commercial interests, and owned, managed, and run by local communities, community stations open up the space for local talk by local people on issues of local interest and concern. In doing so, community radio represents a key element in the empowerment, development, and consolidation of local communities – a key element in other words – of community development.” (Gaynor and O’Brien 2011, p. 2)

Maureen Loughran suggests that research projects should take their cues from the community itself in determining what should be researched. Loughran calls academics to work with community scholars to understand aspects of the community being studied and to address issues that are of real relevance to them. She suggests that a community scholar can play a role similar to that of a “gatekeeper,” but one who has more of an equal partnership in witnessing the diversity of people and problems within communities. Loughran argues that the only way to address complex issues is through grass-roots work. “By witnessing how a community reacts to problems through cultural work, applied ethnomusicologists can find ways to get involved without insisting they be the leaders of projects” (Loughran 2008, p. 55). She argues, “This stance allows us to observe how people in the community are already doing what we called applied ethnomusicology. These grassroots responses to issues of culture and community should be models from which applied ethnomusicologists take note” (Loughran 2008, p. 55). As noted
above, Brad Muirhead will act in part as a gate-keeper to the proposed project. He and Savannah Walling (Walling 2003; 2008), are what Loughran calls community scholars. They currently work in the DTES arts community, and their commitment to and advocacy for this community will greatly enrich and help to direct the proposed project.

What I find most compelling about Loughran’s (2008) article, are the questions she raises regarding researchers’ commitment to the communities with which they are working. She asks, “How long will you be involved in the community? What kind of assistance is most useful under the constraints of your project?” (Loughran 2008, p. 64) Though I am currently unable to answer the question of how long I will be able to participate in the Carnegie Jazz Band community, I can honestly say that I will be present and attentive in my work there, that I enjoy playing with the band, and that I hope to continue to play with them for quite some time. In regard to what kind of assistance is most useful to the community, I hope to meet with the band after the research is completed to have a brainstorming session and to develop a focus group to address that very question. As mentioned above, a radio show could be one option. Others outcomes of this research could be writing grants for performances in the DTES and in the greater Vancouver area, as well as writing grants that would help to pay for visiting instructors to lead workshops with the band. During an interview, one member of the band suggested that we present the radio show, accompanied by a slide-show of pictures, at the next Heart of the City Festival in the DTES.

3.4 Interviewing and Developing the Case Study
In her book, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education* (1998), Merriam explains, “A case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and
meaning for those involved. The interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation. (Merriam 1998, p. 19) She goes on to explain that case studies can be particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic (Merriam 1998, p. 29). The proposed case study will be an ethnographic and descriptive case study. Merriam defines a descriptive case study in education:

“[It] presents a detailed account of the phenomenon under study… [Such studies] are useful . . . in presenting basic information about areas of education where little research has been conducted. Innovative programs and practices are often the focus of descriptive case studies in education. Such studies often form a database for future comparison and theory building.” (Merriam, S. 1998, p. 38)

She also emphasizes that a case study is a form of research that is bounded in some way. This case study is bounded by the geography of the program – it takes places in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, at the City-run and funded Carnegie Community Centre. The rehearsals take place every Saturday in two different sections – the first, a beginners lesson from 11:30am-12:30pm and a rehearsal from 12:30-2:30 when charts, mainly jazz standards and occasionally one of Brad Muirhead’s own compositions, are played and improvised over. Approximately 6-15 participants come to each session on any given day, with a core group of about 13 people.

My orientation in undertaking this research is rooted in the fields of Education and in Community Music Education, specifically. This orientation is informed by my commitment to and interest in improvisation studies, feminism, social justice, improving my own teaching and playing practice, and in participating in the Downtown Eastside Arts Community.
I interviewed twelve of the fifteen regular band members (including Brad) who have attended at least 5 rehearsals, and a mix of participants who joined the band with no/basic music training, those who have had some training or who are intermediate players, and those who are more advanced players. In addition, I interviewed participants who have been playing with the band for a short while (less than a year), and those who have been playing with the band for much longer (since its inception or more than 3 years). With the ethics approval by the University of British Columbia Research Ethics Board and approval from the Carnegie Centre to conduct the research, I conducted semi-structured 1-hour interviews with each person who agreed to participate in the study and signed the release form. I asked Brad Muirhead to introduce my research and to endorse it once he read my proposal and we met specifically to talk about it and to address any questions or concerns he might have. I invited members of the band to participate by telling them all about my research at the end of one of our rehearsals and by asking them to approach me or to email me regarding their interest or concerns. I conducted the interviews at the Carnegie Centre, at a café, in four cases at participants’ homes, and in one case at my own home. I asked them to sign a consent form for the UBC Research Ethics Board, and informed them that the interviews will be audio-recorded and anonymous.

3.4.1 Interviewing Members of the Carnegie Jazz Band

3.4.1.1 Interview #1

The first interview focuses on the member’s musical history. It aims at understanding what brought the participant to the band and what musical knowledge they bring with them.

1. Can you give me a brief overview of your musical history?
a. What music did you listen to growing up?

b. Did anyone in your family play an instrument or sing? Can you talk about a musical experience you shared with your family growing up?

c. Did you take lessons before joining the band? Can you compare these lessons to your experience with the Jazz Band?

d. What were other significant musical experiences you had growing up?

2. Please give me an overview of your current musical involvement?

   a. What instrument do you play? What attracted you to this instrument? Did you play it before joining the band?

   b. Do you play any other instrument?

   c. Do you currently take lessons outside of the band? How do these support or conflict with your participation in the Jazz Band?

3. Do you listen to music? What kinds? How often? Where? Do you sing along?

4. Do you read music? How did you learn?

5. Do you practice or play outside of the band?

   a. Where?

   b. How often?

   c. What type of music?

   d. Can you describe for me your normal practice?
3.4.1.2 Interview #2

The second interview is an opportunity to fact-check with each member about the data gathered in the first interview. In addition, questions focus on the member’s experiences while participating in the band.

1. When and how did you hear about the band?

2. When did you start attending? When did you start participating?

3. Describe your participation in the band.
   a. How often do you attend?
   b. Do you attend the 11:30-12:30 lesson? The 12:30-2:30 rehearsal? Why/not?
   c. Do you perform with the band? With other bands?
   d. How did your participation this week compare to your participation last week?
   e. What do you do when you’re not playing during the rehearsal?
   f. What makes you want to take a solo? What makes you want to hang back?

4. Generally, What do you like about the band? What do you dislike about it?
   a. What exercises do you enjoy? What tunes do you like?
   b. Which do you find challenging? Easy?
   c. When do you feel most engaged?

5. Why do you come to rehearsals?
   a. Why do you continue participate?
   b. Will you continue to come? Can you talk about the reasons you will continue to participate in the band?
   c. For how long do you plan to continue with the band?
6. Imagine I’m someone who knows nothing about the band – how would you describe it to me?

3.4.1.3 Interview #3

The third interview is another opportunity to check with members on the accuracy of my understandings of what they have shared with me and to ask follow-up questions. This interview is the most open-ended and focuses on each member’s reflections on participation in the band and her or his hopes for the future of the band, or for musical participation and education generally.

1. What do like about the band?

2. Do you feel your playing has improved as a result of your participation in the band?
   a. How has it done so? Can you compare your involvement in music before you joined the band to your engagement with music now?
   b. How does the regularity of rehearsals impact this?
   c. How does your participation impact this?

3. What do you dislike about the band?

4. Imagine I’m someone who knows nothing about the band but has expressed interest in playing music – Would you encourage me to join the band? What would you say to me?
3.4.2 Interviewing the Director of the Carnegie Jazz Band

In addition to interviewing members of the band, I interviewed Brad Muirhead, the director.

3.4.2.1 Interview #1

The first interview focuses on the director’s musical history. It aims at understanding what has brought him to lead the band and what musical knowledge he brings with him.

1. Can you give me a brief overview of your musical history?
   a. What instrument do you play?
   b. How did you learn to play?
   c. Did you listen to music growing up? What kinds of music or specific artists do you remember hearing around the house as a child? Which were you particularly drawn to?
   d. Did anyone in your family play an instrument or sing?
   e. Did you participate in community music programs as a child?
   f. Did you participate in elementary and high school music programs? Can you talk about your experiences in these programs?

2. Do you have a degree in music? In music education?

3. What are some of the most poignant moments of learning that you can recall?

4. How did you go about developing your craft as a musician and as an educator?

5. What were some of the influential musical experiences you’ve had?

6. Can you talk about a teacher that you had who had a great influence on you?
   a. What values did this teacher or mentor impart? How did she or he do this?
b. What musical understandings did this teacher or mentor help you to grasp? How did she or he do this?

7. How did you learn to teach music?

8. What other teaching do you do? Is this different? How?

3.4.2.2 Interview #2

The second interview is an opportunity to fact-check with the director about the data gathered in the first interview. Additional questions focus on his experiences while directing the band.

1. Describe your historical involvement with the band.
   a. How did you hear about the band?
   b. When did you start playing with them?
   c. Were you asked to lead it? Did you apply for the job?
   d. Is it a paying job? Does it pay well?
   e. Why did you take it on?
   f. Is your leadership of the band primarily motivated by the pay or by the work itself?
   g. How long have you been teaching the band?

2. How do you prepare for rehearsals?
   a. How do you lay out the lesson? The rehearsal? Reasons for this?
   b. Do you follow what you’ve planned in advance for at rehearsals? If not, can you talk about why not?
   c. What are you currently working on with the band?
   d. How did you decide what music to include/feature with the band?
3. Describe improvisation’s role in your teaching.
   a. Do you use improvisation in your teaching? How?
   b. What’s your approach? What sorts of exercises do you do with the band to work on improvisation?
   c. How does improvisation work with teaching notation?
4. Imagine I’m someone who knows nothing about the band – How would you describe it to me?
5. Again, imagine I’m someone who knows nothing about the band. Can you describe your approach and your teaching practice to me?

3.4.2.3 Interview #3

The third interview is another opportunity to check with the director on the accuracy of my understandings of what he shared with me previously and to ask follow-up questions. This interview is the most open-ended and focuses on the director’s reflections on his involvement the band and his hopes for its future.

1. Did you have any expectations of what the band would become when you first started? Did these differ from your experience?
2. Can you talk about your philosophy of teaching? About your approach to the band?
3. What are some goals you have for the Band as a music group? How do you go about pursuing or facilitating these goals?
4. What goals do you have for the Band as a program at the Carnegie Centre? How are you working towards realizing these goals?
5. What do you hope individual members of the Band will get out of their participation?
   How do you go about facilitating these hopes?

6. Are there other teaching goals that you haven’t covered in the preceding questions that you’d like to talk about?

7. What are some constraints here that you find prohibitive of your teaching goals?
   Do you have any suggestions as to what might help achieve these goals?

8. Imagine I’m someone who knows nothing about the band but has expressed interest in playing music – Would you encourage me to join the band? What would you say to me?

All interviews were audio-recorded, and I took notes after each interview about my observations of important physical cues and body language that aid or raise questions about my understanding. Each interview was transcribed and coded for the following themes: participation, curiosity, learning, ritual, community, conflict, excitement, commitment, and hopes. These themes are inspired by Coffman’s (2006) paper *Voices of experience: Interviews of adult community band members in Launceston, Tasmania, Australia*. He categorizes the responses of band members in his study into three themes: Emotional Response, Limitations, and Commitment. Participation, community, and conflict, and hope are themes that reflect important aspects of Communities of Practice (Wenger, et. al, 2002) and ritual (Phelan, 2008) as an integral part of community building. In addition, other themes emerged through the process of conducting interviews. I provided each participant with transcripts of our interviews and invited each to make amendments or clarifications to what was said. In addition, I let them know which parts of the interviews I was interested in using in my thesis and again, asked if they had any concerns. I used self-chosen and participant approved pseudonyms to ensure that their
participation is anonymous. I checked facts from the interviews with my own observations, and with records kept of the Carnegie Jazz Band’s activities and performances, as a form of triangulation in order to identify discrepancies. In addition, I reflected on my own experience as a member of the band, drawing from journals written after each rehearsal during the research period in order to consciously place myself as a participant-researcher whose presence contributes to the social dynamics of the group.
Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter I will present the data collected during the research period of this project in order to give the reader a deeper understanding of the Carnegie Jazz Band. I will draw on my personal journals, my field notes, and the interviews that I conducted with members of the band. In the first section I describe a rehearsal when the band is not preparing for a performance. Following that, I give a brief description of the members of the band with whom I conducted interviews. The proceeding sections will draw on the interviews I conducted with 12 of the 15 regular members (including Brad and one long-time band member who hadn’t attended in a couple of months). In these interviews there were themes and experiences, and ideas regarding participation in the band that came up again and again. I will explore these themes in this chapter; they include the importance of a diversity of musicianship among band members, a commitment to learning, a commitment to attending regularly, acceptance, taking chances, cooperation, positive, encouraging and tough leadership, a love of music and the desire to be a musician playing with other musicians, social interaction in a safe space, camaraderie, and the band as a community within the larger community of the DTES.

4.1 Sketch of a Typical Rehearsal (i.e. Not Leading up to a Performance)

The Carnegie jazz band rehearses every Saturday afternoon. The rehearsals take place in the theater of the Carnegie Community Center that is at the heart of Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside at Main St. and Hastings St., a corner notorious for its drug dealing, prostitution, and violence. As I get off of my bus, which I catch further South on Main St., I am acutely aware of my surroundings. Though I have been coming in and out of this area for four years now, I am
still on guard as I walk past drug dealers and users just meters away from the front door of the community center. I hold my bag close and am aware of the violin on my back as I walk up the steps and through the front doors. The Carnegie Centre is a grand building with a winding marble staircase, vaulted ceilings, stained glass windows, and solid floors that have grooves worn in them from years of use. It is clean and drafty (since the front doors are always being opened), and people wear their coats inside to keep warm. The library, notice boards, and an open common space that is usually being used by community members from Chinatown to play mahjong is quiet and busy. I nod to the folks at the front desk who I have become familiar with on my way to the theater. I don’t let my guard down until I enter through the two glass doors to the theater where the band rehearses. As soon as I enter those doors, I am greeted by the other members of the band who have come early for the 11:30am to 12:30pm learning session, and the stress of catching my bus on time and walking through the crowd at Main and Hastings melts away. Everybody there says hello to me, and we exchange smiles and how do you dos. I am immediately grateful for the comfortable ease that has developed between us over the time we have spent together as members of the jazz band. The jazz band itself is more than the music we play together as a group of people. It is the community that we build every rehearsal through a shared commitment to learning, to encouraging one another, to being present, to doing our best, to respecting and learning from Brad (the band leader), to being at the Carnegie together, and of course to the music itself.

Rehearsals are structured as follows: First is a lesson, and following that is a full-band rehearsal. The lesson starts with warming up by playing long notes, moving on to scales or arpeggios, then to chord progressions (either 11-V-1 or twelve bar blues), and then occasionally each person gets a turn to improvise over the chord progression while everyone else continues to
play the root notes or arpeggiated chords. The lesson also includes instruction on how to practice these things at home, about the process of learning, and the importance of the exercise. This part of the rehearsal is attended by a core group of band members (usually seven members including myself) who also attend the second part of the rehearsal. This portion of the rehearsal takes place from approximately 11:30am-12:30pm every Saturday.

Around 12:30pm, the drummer arrives and gets the keys for the instrument lock-up from Brad (who has collected them from the staff at the front desk and to whom he will return them after the rehearsal is over and everyone has left the room). After retrieving the drums locked up in the room where the band rehearses, he sets them up while the lesson continues or we take a ten-fifteen minute break.

Other members of the band have arrive and set up their chairs and music stands, that is, if they can find one that fits together and will stand up – there are only five music stands that work well. If the working stands have already been claimed, members use another chair facing the one they sit in to prop up their binder of music. At this point, Brad hands out any new charts that he wants to play during the rehearsal. For those who don’t have music for a given song, Brad reminds us to email him or for those that don’t have email, to speak with him after the rehearsal so that he can send us the music or print it off for us. If there is time, and someone else has the chart in the same key, we use the photocopier in the library of the community centre to make a copy. There is also an envelope kept at the front desk with a number of the tunes that we play at the front desk that newcomers can photocopy. The band has built a repertoire over the years of approximately one hundred tunes, and, depending on the members who are present, there are usually twenty-five charts in rotation at a time.
Between 12:30pm and 1:00pm, everybody arrives. Once nearly everyone is set up, Brad sits facing the band and makes announcements regarding upcoming band performances or jazz shows that he is playing nearby and can get people into for free. Leading up to the announcements, people are greeting each other, joking around, and catching up on what they missed if they were absent from the previous rehearsal. Around this time, a member of the security staff comes by with a clip chart and stands outside the glass doors to take a tally of how many people are in the room.

We usually start the second half of the rehearsal by 1:00pm, playing a tune that everyone is very familiar with (i.e., one that the band has been playing for years, such as Autumn Leaves, Bye Bye Blackbird, or a Bb blues). Brad fashions an arrangement on the spot, indicating who will play the melody, who will embellish it, who will play pads (long chord notes), and who will take the first solo (i.e. improvise over the form with accompaniment from the rhythm section). (In determining solos, he often asks who would like one; if nobody speaks up, he will assign the first solo). For the most part, people only ever take one or two choruses for their solo, so other people will have a chance to solo on the same piece. The first piece is usually one of the simpler tunes from our repertoire, one that integrates the exercise that was emphasized during the lesson portion of the rehearsal.

After warming us up with a familiar tune, Brad asks members to take out one of the new charts he’s handed out that day (or at a recent rehearsal), and he explains the form of the piece, what mood it should portray, and often why he has chosen it for the band. He either tells us a story about the composer, the historical significance of the piece, or an experience he has had playing it in another band. Brad then demonstrates to the drummer what kind of a feel it should have, gives the bass player instructions on the bass line, and instructs the guitar, banjo, and piano
players on the comping style. Next, he demonstrates to the whole band what tempo he’d like us to eventually play it at (by playing a phrase from the piece), and he counts it in at what he calls “tempo de leorno” (a slower tempo to make sight-reading easier) by snapping his fingers to set up the drummer. All of the melody players (including the singer, though he rarely brings lyrics – this is something that has become the responsibility of the vocalist to seek out) will then play the head together. Once we have played the head, Brad stops the band, and we play it a second time. The second or third time through the head, Brad calls on the more advanced players to take a solo. It is usually not until one of the less advanced players is familiar with a tune that he calls on them to solo. Usually, if someone doesn’t want to take a solo, that person shakes her or his head no, and Brad calls on someone else. However, depending on the relationship he has with a certain individual, Brad sometimes insists that they take a solo even if they decline it at first. If nobody wants to take a solo (which sometimes happens with a new tune), Brad takes a turn and demonstrates what can be done. In all tunes during solos, especially new ones, Brad leads the rest of the band in singing the tonic of each chord to help the band become familiar with the form and with the chord progressions. This has become a common practice among band members. Without his prompting, the more advanced players often lead the less advanced players in this exercise. Most members of the band sing the tonic of the chords while some brave soul solos over a new tune, which in turn helps the soloist to keep their place in the form by reinforcing the chord progressions.

After work-shopping new tunes in this way, Brad asks the members of the band who didn’t get to solo what song they’d like to play (generally, a tune that we’ve played a lot recently is chosen), and we play the chosen song following the same procedure. Around this time, three or four tunes into the rehearsal (at about 1:45pm or 2:00pm), Brad sits down and tells a story
about music history, a famous musician, his experience working as a professional musician, or a joke. There is often a back-and-forth aspect to this part of the rehearsal when someone asks a question of Brad or he or she tells a follow-up joke. After five or ten minutes of this banter, Brad stands up and we get back to work playing tunes. The tunes gradually become more challenging until the rehearsal ends around 2:30pm or 3:00pm, depending on whether Brad has a gig to get to, if he needs to move his car, or if there is another group waiting to use the space.

Once Brad tells us we’re done, there are usually thank-yous all around. Members of the band thank Brad, and he will sometimes compliment a member on a solo, or on a noticeable advancement in her or his playing and understanding. The mood at the end of rehearsals is usually one of tired elation. People linger to chat and joke, or ask each other questions about one of the tunes we have just played. While everyone puts their chairs and stands away, the drummer packs up and locks up the drums, the bassist does the same (the bass and amp are kept locked up in the sound room in the rehearsal space), and people get their coats on. Everybody says “goodbye” and “see you next week” as they leave, and often people will pat each other on the back or hug goodbye as well. Some members head upstairs to the volunteer-run and very affordable cafeteria upstairs to eat lunch or drink coffee together.

4.2 The Members of the Band

As mentioned before, the jazz band is a program run by the Carnegie Community Centre and, as part of the centre’s mandate, it is open to anyone to join. There is a regular roster of approximately fifteen members who attend nearly every week. Occasionally, someone will walk into the rehearsal room and join the band for five minutes, an hour, the whole rehearsal, or a couple of weeks. But for the most part, the personnel has stayed fairly consistent in the last two
years. The regular group of members includes a drummer, two bass players (one who comes occasionally and another who hangs around the Carnegie Centre and plays with the band when the other one doesn’t show up), two pianists, a guitarist, a banjo player, two alto saxophones, one tenor saxophone, one baritone saxophone, a trumpet player, two violinists (myself included), and a vocalist. Since I began completing the interviews for this project, a clarinetist and another violinist have also become regular participants, one vocalist has stopped attending, and another vocalist has begun participating regularly. In addition, there are two people who come to the rehearsal space regularly to listen, but they do not participate in playing in the band. One sits quietly for fifteen minutes at a time in a chair (that he pulls up himself) at the front of the room facing the band. The other sits on the ground in the far corner facing the band and unpacks her bags of things, repacks them, brings her lunch down from the cafeteria upstairs to eat, does yoga, and occasionally sings along, cheers, or dances to the music. Others come just to listen, and they stand outside of the glass doors of the room and peer in, wave at somebody they know, or dance.

The members of the band come from diverse backgrounds and varying prior experiences in music, though all have explained that music has been of central interest to them throughout their lives. I interviewed three women and nine men (a discrepancy in gender that is representative of the DTES population and also of jazz bands in general). Out of these, four people currently or recently resided in the DTES; the others live in East Vancouver or commute from urban and rural areas east of Vancouver. Four members have identified themselves as having been professional or semi-professional musicians prior to joining the band, and all have previously played an instrument or sung before joining the band, though half had not had any formal musical training (lessons). Two have been members of the band since its inception, one
joined shortly after that, and the rest joined either around the time I did (January 2010) or within the last year.

In the following sections I will cite the members of the band who agreed to do interviews and who were especially generous in sharing their thoughts and reflections with me. These sections are organized by themes that emerged over the course of the interview period. I will draw on information gathered from each individual in the three interviews that I conducted with them: the first interview focused on their musical history and their introduction to the band, the second interview focused on their participation in the band, and the third interview focused on their hopes for their continued participation in the band and for the band itself. This final interview was also a time to reflect on and ask questions about what had been shared in previous interviews. I asked each participant in this project to come up with a pseudonym of his or her choice, but only three did so, I assigned pseudonyms to the rest of the members by drawing from the most popular names in the decades in which they were born (1950s, ’60s, and ’70s).

4.3 Learning

*Brad says, “There is something that you can always learn.” So I try to work from that attitude.*

---*Thelonius*

The intention to learn and the focused engagement with which everybody pursues learning is evident in how members of the band talk about their participation. All members of the band interviewed emphasized that the reason that they participate, and that they will continue to participate, is to learn. Life-long learning is something that is important to each member of the band. The specific aspects of learning highlighted by participants are: learning how to play an
instrument, how to play jazz, how to be in a band, how to perform, how to improvise, how to speak to other musicians using musical terminology, how to be a musician, how to listen, how to rehearse, how to take a chance and challenge yourself, how to be proud of your accomplishments, how to teach, how to be a student, and how to learn. Each member has a different relationship to learning and to music, but the one thing that is overwhelmingly evident and shared in this group, is the ethos of coming to the band to learn. Learning is the driving force that keeps members engaged in their participation, and keeps them coming regularly to rehearsals.

This dedication to learning is evident in a statement by Michael, a long-time member who sometimes leads the band when Brad is away:

I don’t care how good…I am, or anybody is at anything really. But if I am not growing, I am not very happy. Growing. I like growth, I like developing and so that [leading and participating in the band] is good for that. That is what I got out of it, and you know, seeing the sparks go off.

This attitude reflects his approach to participating in the band. It also reflects the structure and attitude of the band as an entity. Since the band is structured as a learning and teaching program, most of the enjoyment that participants speak about is the enjoyment of learning. Members acknowledge and believe that it is the open mind and willingness to try and experiment, together with Brad’s leadership and guidance, that is the most important aspect of their learning. Thelonius’ statement, “Every day when I go there, I feel like I am going to learn,” exemplifies the openness to learning that all members bring to their own participation. He goes on to speak about music as a paradigm that supports lifelong learning: “You think about lifelong learning, and music is … a form of creative expression that one can spend your entire life doing and
learning from. There is never an end to what you can learn.” This is an aspect of music making that Brad talks about regularly in rehearsals: with music, and especially with jazz because of the centrality of improvisation in this genre, there is always something more to discover or create. Mary expresses this sentiment most eloquently, “I want to learn. When I grow up I want to be a jazz musician.” The intention and desire to learn and the understanding that, to be a jazz musician, one must always be learning and challenging oneself and be able to improvise is reflected by many of the members of the band, and indeed, is embedded in the culture of the band.

The culture of the band is highly inclusive and encouraging; every now and then, new participants come to play. However, following the initial rehearsal, they either sit in with the band occasionally or never come back. In explaining why he thinks some people who come in to check out the band never return, Michael says, “You’ve got to be able to be a beginner. So if you’re not willing to be a beginner, you are not going to do it.” The way the band is led and the processes through which we move in rehearsals are not conducive to people joining the band who just want to play tunes or who want to be told what to do. Brad fosters this culture of learning through his approach to teaching: “I’m going to tell you what you need to learn, but you have got to do it yourself; I cannot do it for you.” His approach demands that participants take responsibility for their own learning. He sees himself as a guide, and indeed, members of the band take his guidance seriously because they regard him as an accomplished musician and teacher.

Many members of the band expressed their excitement about learning how to perform, how to be on the bandstand, and how to engage in the focused rehearsing that leads up to a performance. They emphasized the great feeling of accomplishment that comes from learning the
music, playing together, and getting positive feedback from the audience. One member, however, countered this trend. Michael prefers the freedom of experimentation in rehearsals that are not directed towards preparing for a concert:

I always didn’t like getting ready for gigs, because it is just getting ready for a gig. I don’t know, you don’t learn as much … [Whereas, during regular rehearsals,] it was more about learning the actual tunes, learning for learning’s sake … It’s more exploration but it can also be more time spent on going over how you might approach it or maybe a basic lesson about harmony … or else just an idea, hey why don’t we try it this way. So, some of it is people talking and going over things in a little bit more detail.

Michael’s preference for this kind of learning is not less goal-oriented. It is a preference for learning how to rehearse, experimenting and refining, and exploring the process of learning.

When asked about what they specifically learned, members did not speak about learning how to play their instruments. Instead, what came up time and time again was learning about the process of playing music, and more specifically jazz, learning about structure, and learning how to play and how to solo over chord progressions. Learning how to follow this process, how to be engaged in these procedures takes time. Wallace said, “… being engaged is something that develops, I guess. And so yeah, it is developing because I am remembering now to pay attention to the chord progression and know where the damn thing [the song] is in the cycle.” What Wallace is talking about is one important aspect of learning to improvise in the jazz band. To be able to improvise over a form, players need to be able to know where they are in the piece, what each chord sounds like, how to play those chords on their instrument, have an understanding of the rhythmic feel of the piece, be listening to themselves and the rhythm section, be able to
respond to other players, be completely present in the moment, and to have a vision of what they want to say musically. Each of these skills take a great deal of practice and each member of the band is working on every one of these skills at their own pace. Both Wallace and Mary initially attended only the lesson part of rehearsals. When I ask Mary why she decided to start participating in the rest of the rehearsal, the part when we play through tunes and improvise, she explains: “I realized that taking that time and trying to stick with the song the whole time was really actually valuable for all of my other music stuff.” She explains that not only has she learned something that is useful for enabling her to participate more in the band, she is learning things that are making her other musical experiences more fun because of her increased understanding, thus she is even more able to participate.

4.4 Commitment

*Everybody here seems to be committed. At least in their own lives they show up. And they do the work, to their capacity, and as long as everybody does that, you have a winning combination.*

--Frank

One thing I find remarkable about this band is the level of commitment that the members show. This commitment is evidenced by their regular attendance, by their attentiveness to what Brad is saying, by trying their best, by the positive dynamics between band members, and by the commitment to keeping the band a positive and nurturing space for learning. With the exception of the two longest standing members, who attend every single week without fail unless they are very sick, everybody else comes to at least 75% of the rehearsals.
Members’ commitment to the band is not monetary; members don’t pay more than their $1/year Carnegie Community Centre fee to participate. Instead, there is a sense of commitment and responsibility to each other, to the band, and to Brad. Thomas emphasizes how much he learns from Brad and the caring that he feels he receives from him and from other members of the band. He sheds some light on the responsibility that he feels to Brad and the rewards that are a result of his commitment to the band:

… I feel disrespectful if I don’t show up because he is trying to help me, but how can you help me if I am not there. So it is kind of a semi-obligatory inclination to come. But I do [show up every time] since there are rewards at the end of it; I always come away full of knowledge.

Thomas goes on to explain that in addition to feeling obligated to Brad, he feels encouraged to renew his commitment to the band when he notices that other members participate every week. In turn, he feels that his participation does the same thing for other members. “… If I bring participation and attendance, that indicates to other people that I am enthusiastic, so it carries them.” This sentiment was echoed by many members of the band and is central to the cohesion of the group. When members see that others are coming and giving it their all, they are encouraged to do the same.

There is a deep sense of caring within the band. This is expressed in many ways. For example, when a member doesn’t show up, others in the band ask if anybody knows why he or she isn’t there. When a member has been away, others follow up and pass on what was learned and accomplished during the rehearsal that was missed. Lori explains, “When I saw that there was an interest and a caring, and I thought, well at least I can learn.” The caring and commitment to learning and to each other that members of the band all express helps to build a level of trust.
and comfort, making it a place where mistakes can be made and where learning and confidence building thrives.

Commitment to regularly attending and participating in rehearsals also has to do with the importance of routine and of not wanting to miss a learning opportunity or to fall behind. Sam, the drummer, who has been a member for three years states, “We have some songs that it takes a long time before we get around to doing … That’s why I feel you pretty well have to keep up with it.” Others, mostly members who are beginners, elaborated on this theme, saying that they fall behind if they aren’t present when a new chart is handed out, because they don’t know what it sounds like and because it takes them longer to read. (Many members are currently learning to read music and are not yet accomplished sight-readers).

One thing mentioned by Brad and echoed by other members of the band is that the benefits of participating in the band are absorbed only through ongoing participation.

If you show up once you are probably not going to get much out of it … If you show up once and you are an experienced player, you’ll get to jam with us. Fine. But if you are totally inexperienced as a jazz player, you won’t get much out of it. If you are totally inexperienced as a jazz player and you want to become experienced as a jazz player, you need to come for a couple of years. You need to come regularly for a couple of years because that is how long it takes to get that shit happening.

Most members identified playing in a band, and playing the kind of music we play, as very challenging and emphasized that, to engage with that challenge, one must be committed in the long-run to attending every week, being fully present, listening, and coming with a good attitude (i.e., ready being to work hard even if you are unable to practice outside of the band). Wallace, a
newer member who joined about a year ago and who, for the first two months, attended only the lesson put it this way: “I think that if you’re going to be in this thing, you need to stick with it so that you are doing everything you can for the band, you know what I mean? And I don’t practice enough for that to be a true statement! [Laughs]” Wallace does practice more than some in the band, and he continues to give the band his all. He doesn’t let feeling like he should practice more stop him from participating as much as he can. Brad rewards this attitude and commitment: “There’s people who have been coming every day for six years now who I am going to make sure they get something out of it, even though they are slow at learning.”

Commitment to attending and participating in the band has its challenges for some members because of their work schedules and also because of the sometimes-heavy emotional burden that can be absorbed from being in the DTES. Michael is a long-standing member of the band who, during the time that I conducted interviews, was not attending regularly:

When I take breaks, it has nothing to do with the band … If the same band was at a different location but not on the DTES, if it was a different location I would go every week … The thing is that when I don’t [take breaks], sometimes I do find myself overburdened by the DTES.

Indeed, I have sometimes felt this way myself and have let it deter me from attending if I’m not feeling 100%. However, like Thomas mentioned above, I too feel a responsibility to the band, and this has encouraged me to deepen my commitment to participation and to my own learning, even though it is sometimes taxing and confusing. Lori, the longest-standing member who was identified by all members of the band as being an exemplary example of commitment to the band put it best, “I love it, and I put up with the ups and downs.”
4.5 The Importance of a Diversity of Musicianship Among Band Members

*There is all of the different levels, and personalities, all going at the same time. It’s not as controlled, so it is a little wilder, right?*

---Michael

The diversity of members’ musicianship reflects the diversity of their prior musical experience. Only a handful of the members of the band have had previous formal musical training. Those who have had some, pursued music throughout their lives as semi-professionals. Most of the band members speak about teaching themselves how to play by listening to records and learning from playing with, watching, and listening to their peers. Many expressed distaste, or negative experiences with formalized music education (e.g., individual lessons, school band). I think that most members’ positive musical and learning experiences with their peers and with others prior to joining the band are factors contributing to the acceptance of, celebration of, and respect for the diversity of levels of musicianship among band members.

Each member mentioned that they learn from other members of the band, whether it be listening and learning through emulation, from directly asking questions, or through learning about the musical process by helping less advanced players. Wallace emphasized this point:

Well, it [the band] is inclusive. I mean it doesn’t, perhaps the thing’s listenability is not so great … But, for all of the people there, it is a nurturing environment because you have the skill, the skilled, and unskilled, [and], because I am not very skilled, I am so lucky to be able to sit in with that … You think that your skill level is such and such, then you play with a better person and all of a sudden you are doing things that you
thought were too hard for you … You have an opportunity to find more within yourself … That is where the skill mix is doing an incredible job.

In this statement, Wallace accepts that, from the outside, a rehearsal may not be the most aesthetically pleasing or accomplished-sounding. However, he emphasizes the incredible work that happens within the band and asserts that the success of the band can be measured by how much people are learning from each other. This is, in part, accomplished through playing with people whose level of musicianship challenges him. Mary supports this view:

… There are some of us, quite a few who don’t know which notes [to play]. I think it is kind of normal to have, especially with the different abilities … some people really know the sound, some people really know other things, so I think that it is … It is interesting. For me, it is interesting.

But there is all different things being absorbed by different people from what he [Brad] is saying.

Members see this as beneficial to their learning, and many of them, like Mary, say that it positively impacts their engagement in rehearsals. It is interesting to hear what people at different levels do in solos on the same song, what people absorb from Brad’s teachings, and the bravery that it takes to take a solo if you are not the most accomplished member of the band, and how nice it is to hear the music being played well.

One example of appreciation for playing with more accomplished musicians is the emphasis that was placed, by many members, on the importance of having a solid rhythm section. An accomplished drummer and bass player who come every week provide a solid groundwork for other musicians to play along with and to experiment over during solos. Sam, a member of the rhythm section is equally enthused to play this role for members of the band:
I am glad there is a lot of good players because they could be at my same level. And I like to push the in-between players because they can understand what I’m doing right?.. I like to help the people that don’t even know, to try and push them into doing music because I want to encourage any person to play. It’s fun.

The diversity of musicianship adds dynamism to the band and players find this additional challenge engaging and enjoyable.

From a teaching perspective, leading a band with such a wide variety of musical understandings and technical abilities is very challenging. Brad explains why the diversity of musicianship exists in the band:

[The diversity of musicianship] is one of the things that made it challenging. That is one of the things I was told right after the very beginning, is that this program is inclusive, meaning that whoever shows up gets to do it. Somebody who causes problems or gets in the way … can be asked to leave. But somebody who shows up and honestly wants to be involved gets to.

The inclusive mandate of the Carnegie Community Centre, and of the band, is one of the unusual and positive things about it. However, it poses a huge challenge to Brad in preparing for lessons and rehearsals, and in trying to ensure that all members of the band will be able to engage with the material in a meaningful way. Brad explains how he prepares for rehearsals:

I try to make sure that everybody is going to have music for what we’re going to play … there is a variety of things, skills that are necessary to
play jazz. And I just want to work on those skills. So I pick tunes that are
going to do that for each individual in the band.

In response to this challenge, Brad decided to split the rehearsal into two parts: the lesson and the
playing session. He explains his decision:

At first we just got together for a two-hour playing session and that was
one of the things that was frustrating, was that there was already a diverse
level of musicianship within the band. I found that I was using a lot of
class time to explain some very simple concepts to the less experienced
players … after a couple of years I realized that I should be doing this in a
separate class and that was just around the time that the band started to
gain some momentum … and that was a really good thing because it took a
lot of that explanation out of the playing session … So [what] I try to do
now is start with something really basic and gradually build up towards the
playing session …

Structuring the rehearsals this way allows Brad to teach the basic elements of music, explain how
musicians talk about it, and show members what and how to go about practicing these things so
that they will be able to participate (play, listen, solo, understand and follow along) more fully in
the playing session. In his words, he is “Accommodating everybody [and] making sure that
everybody gets something out of it so that they want to come back.” Addressing this challenge is
something that Brad speaks positively about. It is interesting for him, and he feels that he is
learning how to be a better teacher. It has kept him engaged and coming back year after year to
lead the band.
The band members are acutely aware of the challenge Brad faces in leading this band, and all express their amazement at his ability to successfully integrate and guide each individual while, at the same time, leading the group as a cohesive jazz band. Many appreciate this ability, and some are also curious to understand how he does it, so in addition to learning how to play music, they come to hear and see how Brad teaches.

Another interesting consequence of having a diversity of ability levels is that egos get checked at the door. People who come to the band looking to solo all the time, to play tune after tune, and to play only with people at their level of musicianship or higher, rarely come back. This band, because of the diversity of levels of musicianship attracts and retains members that are genuinely interested in and committed to their own and to others’ amelioration.

4.6 Acceptance

Acceptance is a theme that is identified by band members as being closely related to Brad’s style of teaching, to the mandate of the Carnegie Community Centre, as well as to the wide variety of levels of musicianship within the band. Many of the members that I interviewed spoke about the positive impact on their learning of feeling like it is okay to make mistakes and to take chances. The members who spoke about this explained that they feel comfortable saying, “I’m not ready” or “I don’t know this,” or to ask clarifying questions of Brad and other participants.

Band members are encouraged to make mistakes and are never ridiculed or humiliated when they do. Members feel like they are given constructive feedback. Victor noted, “I like the fact that if I do something wrong and don’t know about it, that somebody is going to tell me, so that is pretty valuable.” This kind of acceptance makes the band accessible to people who are beginners and others who don’t have a lot of confidence in their abilities. Lori reflects upon this:
“I thought, “Is this a dream come true? Am I dreaming this?” and then when Brad came in it was like a dream come true [laughs] cause he, I still can’t believe it, I’m actually doing this! He’s letting me, with my skills …” Brad addresses this approach by stating his acceptance of the diversity of musicianship, of learning styles and speeds within the band. “I have had to go over step one with certain people for years … at one point I accepted that, okay, this is part of the reality of this situation. I just accepted that.” As well as accepting the diversity and embracing it in his teaching, he emphasizes that everybody makes mistakes and that this is a part of how we learn. He distinguishes between playing wrong notes (which are often seen by members as mistakes) and not understanding the process of playing jazz:

Wrong notes are always going to happen. I make tons of wrong notes. The mistake is different than not understanding … Learning the difference between understanding the process and a mistake [is most important].

Wrong notes are cool, but failure to observe protocol is not. You have to learn how the thing works and the notes will take care of themselves.

Acceptance of stumbling and of making mistakes as part of the learning process contributes to a positive learning environment where members feel like they can take chances. Thelonious explains, using skiing as a metaphor for taking chances and soloing: “Brad is great … in terms of always encouraging us to not be concerned about making mistakes but to just … It is really important to throw yourself down the ski hill rather than just stand at the top [in fear of doing the wrong thing]”. The band works on the different skills needed to solo, that is, to improvise over a prescribed form. What Thelonious explained, is that to improvise, no matter whether or not you have mastered all of the skills required, if you don’t try and fully put yourself into the improvisation, you’ll never learn how to improvise. Another facet to improvising that Brad has
emphasized in rehearsals and that is related to this is once you are improvising, it’s important not to get bogged down in thinking about every single chord and rhythm. He says that you have to stop thinking and just play and trust that the skills that you have developed will help you express yourself and that if you’re not satisfied with your solo, you’ve got to continue trying. Along with placing trust in themselves to improvise, players also place trust in the other members of the band to keep time and help them keep their place in the form, and to encourage them in their efforts. Thelonius mentioned repeatedly, in our interviews, that for a long time he didn’t feel comfortable making mistakes because of a previous negative and deep-seated musical experience he had, but that the acceptance and encouragement that he feels in the band is slowly making his fear of making mistakes less powerful. By facing this fear and being met with acceptance, he is taking chances in his playing, and, as a consequence, he is learning a great deal.

Another form of acceptance that was mentioned by members, is the acceptance of people as individuals, as themselves. Michael states that the freedom to explore [i.e. to make mistakes] in combination with the different individuals in the band gives the band soul, “[The band] is very unpretentious and I would say, it has got more soul that pretty much any band you are going to see … because it is a lot of exploration, or not being as pressured to just do anything, a lot of it is just the characters.” Because of this, he finds that the band is unpredictable and dynamic:

Some people are completely unpredictable and you are not going to change it, no matter what you do … And then that is accepted … so everybody knows that it is unpredictable anyway, and you never know what is going to happen.” (Michael)

He finds this unpredictability challenging, and fun. The acceptance of people’s individuality and level of musicianship is echoed by Frank, who says that he feels accepted on a social level:
I like the people. You know, I haven’t met any dogs down there, like, “I’m too good”. Everybody is friendly and helpful… we’re all into music so we all have something in common. And [it’s] interesting, there are people from all walks of life there. Like I said, everybody has a creative spirit… Acceptance of mistakes, acceptance of a diversity of musicianship, and acceptance of each other bring the band together and encourage cooperation and reciprocity among band members. When members feel like the band is working well together and the music sounds good, the enthusiasm in the room is palpable! These things, along with positive feedback from Brad and each other, are crucial to people take chances and to learn from taking those chances.

4.7 Encouragement and Enthusiasm

You have to have a lot of enthusiasm, and part of that enthusiasm is participation. If you feel comfort in the participation every Saturday, then you can encourage people to show up.

--Thomas

Encouragement and enthusiasm build confidence and contribute to members’ participation and commitment to the band. In one of the interviews that I did with Lori, she said, “it’s bringing me back, opening me back up to being more confident and doing.” When I asked Michael to describe the band he said, “It is a very positive encouragement for growth … [It] is probably the least pretentious band you’ll ever find in the world.” I asked him to explain what makes it such a positive and encouraging environment for learning. Initially, he said, “Brad says, ‘that is just Carnegie Centre.” When I asked him to explain this, Michael elaborated.
[Positivity and encouragement] is more like old-school broader Carnegie because in [other parts of] our music program in Carnegie it can be competitive … But it is more the encouraging and trying that’s kind of a Carnegie thing … and trying not to be too judgmental, and positive, and encouraging people to do something that is positive, that is up. That is kind of a Carnegie thing.

He went on to explain that other components of the Carnegie music program have been very competitive and not nearly as open and encouraging of growth. When I asked him what the difference is between the other programs and the jazz band, he explained, “It is just people that are wanting to grow, and they like it when other people grow, and they are not too threatened, and they don’t have to be better than everybody else.” Part of this comes, again, from watching other people in the band give their all. When asked about the atmosphere in the band, Mary validates this view.

[The atmosphere is supportive] … because there is lots of us there trying to do our best solos and so you feel like everybody is doing that. It feels like a comfortable place to be trying that out because everybody is pushing themselves, everybody is trying to do their best to their ability …

Often, band members cheer each other on. There is clapping, hooting, and hollering when someone has done a good solo (i.e., because it sounded really good, they did something beautiful and interesting, or they really took a chance and put themselves out there). This is generally something that gets everybody feeling good, smiling, and joining in. However, it is also a bit more complicated. Through the process of conducting interviews, I learned that this encouragement is sometimes read as condescending. Lori says,
I’m sure that there are some snippers that say, “What is he doing? What is he doing?” I’m sure that goes on whether they mean it, but still it is kept to themselves to a certain extent, nobody saying, “Ha ha, look at you! Get out, you can’t play.” But they are still being polite, they still appreciate, because you can clap at, like a little kid, they are dancing and they’re cute, but it’s not real.

Even though this member appreciates the cheering, it feels condescending because the member knows that in the aesthetic and technical sense, the solo played was not the best or the most interesting. This response surprised me. I think that it reflects self-doubt, a keen observation of interpersonal dynamics that they have experienced in their life before, and in this band as well, and a recognition that, though everybody is polite in their encouragement, perhaps there is an element of competition and charity (doing good or saying nice things to make others feel better) in the band. This was the only time this issue came up in the interviews. As a band member myself, I will be aware of it in the future and reflect on my intentions when I am cheering somebody on.

4.8 Brad’s Leadership

[This] is how I teach: Getting to know the individuals in the group and throwing what I think they need to know [at them], what you need to work on, and what they need to learn in a way that I think is going to work for them. It is all an experiment.

--Brad

Brad gets to know every individual and pushes each one to her or his ability, while still making sure that the group functions as a band. He is a storyteller and he uses story telling and humour in
his teaching to put people at ease and to share what most musicians know, which is that there is a lot more to do in making good music than just making sounds. He shows rather than tells, and if someone doesn’t understand, he explains it (sometimes for the 100th time). He is very tall, and, when I first met him, I found him a bit intimidating. But over the years, I have learned to appreciate this about him: People listen to him and if ever somebody comes into the rooms and is threatening, all he generally needs to do is stand up and ask them to leave. He keeps the band a safe space for people, both physically and emotionally. I have learned a great deal from participating in the band and watching him teach. Like many of the members of the band, Brad learned by doing and by teaching himself. He doesn’t have a teaching degree, although he did attend Capilano College as a Music student. After leaving college, and working for a year (not as a musician), trying to make ends meet, and finding himself completely miserable, he decided to become a jazz musician and largely taught himself how to play, practice, and learn jazz. Teaching yourself is something that Brad talks about a lot in band and in the interviews he did with me. His approach is this: I can show you the process, but you have to do the learning yourself. He demands that members of the band take responsibility for their own learning, and this approach works with mixed results. Many people in the band respond well because of their own experiences of teaching themselves, but others don’t respond as well. Some expect to be told what to do and when to do it, every time. These members are slowly catching on and are gradually taking more responsibility for their own learning. When I asked him how he learned to teach, Brad said this:

A lot of trial and error, watching other people teach, how other people taught me, knowing what other people said to me that worked for me…It is different for each individual but there are certain things that can be
universal. Some trial and error. Intuition. I have always been a nonconformist…I just refuse many of the traditional teaching methods from the establishment…a lot of where this is coming from [is] turning my experiences as a bandleader into teaching jobs.

Brad joined the band after he was asked to lead a couple of workshops with the band by Earle Peach, the community musician who founded it. About a year later (2006), Earle asked him to take it over. Brad was not involved in the DTES community prior to leading the band, but his involvement since joining the band has continued to grow. As the leader of the band he has greatly expanded the band’s involvement (and thus his own) in the larger DTES community.

Brad explains that his initial goal for the band was modest and hard-won: “I was trying to take it from this group of people sitting there with horns in their hands, looking at me with expectation … to be able to count in a tune. And that took almost two years to the point of being able to just count in the tune and play.” Brad describes how new members became involved:

[E]verybody actively recruited people that they knew from the community who could play something. People came and went and that has been pretty normal I think down there … until we kind of reached this critical mass point of it being this thing that was kind of happening … [And we got the] the interest of the people so that we had a bass player and a drummer coming every week.

Brad explains that having a rhythm section (bass and drums especially, and guitar) that attends every week is crucial to the growth and cohesiveness of the band.

When I asked Brad about why he leads the band, he gave me three distinct reasons. The first, his initial reason in deciding to lead the band, was that it was a chance to do charity work:
It was kind of a little bit of charity work that I had not been doing before, but I guess part of my upbringing was that that was the thing that you should do is give back to the community on some level… and this was an opportunity to get into that. Partially yeah, okay, sure, there was a little bit of keep my karma good.

Brad is paid a third of his usual teaching fee for working with the band, and he made it clear in the interviews that much of what he does for the band is on a volunteer basis. With respect to the band feeling beholden to him because of his volunteering most of his time, the only thing that I have noticed is that members like Thomas, who (as quoted above) feel that because he is there and willing to teach them, they should be putting in 100% of their effort into their learning and playing.

The second reason that Brad leads the band is that it is a chance to be part of and to contribute to the positive work that is being done in the DTES:

It is that place where all of the shit that you hear about that goes on down there is there, all of that and more. But then there is all of this really great shit going on at the same time … I guess personally I also started thinking, okay, also a little chance for me to start being part of the good stuff that was going on down there. That is what kept me there after I started: Realizing that there is some pretty cool stuff going on down there and contributing to that.

The third reason, as mentioned above in regards to the diversity of musicianship in the band, and perhaps the most current reason, is that it is the most challenging teaching situation he has ever encountered, and for him the challenge is extraordinarily engaging. The few times that
Brad has asked me to lead because he couldn’t, I have had a taste of what it is like to teach and lead the band. Brad states, “All of my teaching is improvised,” and indeed, I found that I needed to improvise what and how I was teaching throughout. Brad explains that he has broad teaching goals but that he never prepares a lesson plan:

I go in there with an idea of what I want to work on this week … [but] I learned a long time ago … never to waste my time planning our [session], or the teaching because the couple of times I did that, I had to abandon my study plan, or my class plan after about 3 minutes.

His response seemed to be grounded in an understanding of lesson plans being systematically written down and adhered to with no relation to the students being taught. In other words, teaching to a curriculum rather than teaching to students. My observations of Brad’s teaching are that he does indeed have teaching goals and that he leads students to attain these goals by teaching to each individual. In response to his comment above and in order to understand more fully what he meant, I asked Brad if he had any teaching goals. He responded by telling me that his goal is to teach members of the band “to understand the process of making music and to cross-reference that with some of the specific parameters of jazz, of what is generally accepted to be jazz.” However, later in the interview, he said, “What a really good teacher wants is for their students not to need them anymore.” All these goals are embedded in his teaching. The latter goal is a bit more subtle in its meaning. In order for a student to not need a teacher anymore, the student must first have enough confidence to take responsibility for her or his own learning. In addition, the students must have enough belief in themselves and in their ability to learn, to make the choice to practice, and to take chances (i.e., they must be willing to fail at first and then try again). Brad spoke about the varying levels of confidence in the band, and when I asked him
how he develops a safe and encouraging environment to build members’ confidence, he responded by saying that it is intuitive. He just does it and doesn’t think too much about it.

Wallace talked about this and made reference to a metaphor that Brad used in a recent rehearsal. This metaphor was Brad’s way of asking the band not to just wait and follow directions (like sheep), but to take a chance, stand alone, and go for it (like a wolf).

He actually starts to work on your personality. You know, with this sheep versus wolf stuff. So he really wants people to change the way that they look at themselves so that they will stand taller. Step up, man up! Do the best that you can! It is amazing.

Every member appreciates this attitude and approach to the band and sees it as a valuable, if not rare, approach to teaching.

Much of what they are up against is their own selves, we are up against our own selves and he is sitting there watching us, and from his perspective, he can see when you are just not forceful enough, you are not confident enough … I just have enormous respect for how much that man cares about what he does. Man, that is rare in this world!

The band responds positively to Brad’s insistence that members take responsibility for themselves and take chances because they sense that he cares about them; he cares about their participation, about their engagement, that they are challenged, and that they have a fun time learning.

Many members spoke to me about the personal connection that they have with Brad. This really is remarkable in a big band situation. Brad makes these connections with individual member of the band by pushing each one to their ability and confidence level, by joking around
with them, and by making himself vulnerable through telling stories about his own learning experiences. Thelonius explains:

He’s providing professional rigour, incredible professional rigour to the music and what he’s asking people to do. But he’s also very cognizant and sensitive to the levels that people are at. And he has this innate ability, and much appreciated ability to work with people at the level that they can work at but able to push them above and beyond what they’re doing … And to do it in a way that is also fun, he’s got a great sense of humour, he’s got a great command of the room because he knows his music so well.

The earnestness and passion with which Brad approaches his role as teacher and band leader is essential to the commitment to and enthusiasm towards learning that every band member identified as important to their participation and learning, as well as to building community.

Brad’s approach is deeply invested in the learning and amelioration of each individual. It is a combination of nurturing and of pushing the group to keep learning in every moment. As Michael observes, “He kind of leads and he crashes through any obstacle … He does things really fast and people figure it out … He is good at keeping momentum.” At times, certain members are unable to follow what he is saying or to keep up with the rest of the band. Brad will sometimes stop and explain what is going on (mostly in the lesson portion of the rehearsal), but he often pushes the band to continue on and in this way, demands that each member take responsibility for learning in order to fit in where they can and to motivate them to get better so that they can keep up with the others.
When I asked members what their frustrations were in the band, (if they had identified any), they spoke about not being able to keep up. However, this was always followed by a statement about how they should keep practicing, that they see that they have advanced greatly in being able to keep up, and that one day they hope to be able to follow along and to solo like the rest of the band.

I’m incredibly appreciative of Brad for opening that door [for me to to start playing again], for welcoming me in …. And picking me up and saying, “fly”, and it doesn’t matter if you crash, this is a situation that you can do that.” (Thelonius)

His approach is appreciated because it is comfortably challenging for most.

4.9 Cooperation, Reciprocity, and Building Community

I love the band! Like, is too small a word! ... Meeting people like you and other people who love music, and playing with other people, [it’s about] connecting to community.

--Thelonius

One of the things I was struck by when I first joined and that I continue to be intrigued by and thankful for is the feeling of community within the band. Many of the members I interviewed expressed similar feelings: Lori described the band as a family: “We are all brothers and sisters…whatever anybody else thinks about me, but I feel like we are family. We are together…we just help each other and we love one another, take each other’s shit once in a while, yes yes, well you know.” Thomas likened the band to a team: “… We are part of the team, and being a part of the team only works if you put [in] 100%. Well, I am drawn to put in 100%
with this group.” Thelonius compared the band to a church: “[I]t is a very positive atmosphere on so many different levels. And then on a deeper level, this whole thing about the church of jazz … That is the place that I go to, to go to church.” I am curious as to how these feelings develop and what the different backgrounds and experiences of the individual members are when they speak about the band in these terms.

Members identified many things that have contribute to the development of these feelings: Helping one another find their place in the music; counting, listening, sharing knowledge: encouragement from each other, from Brad, and from the larger community; camaraderie; curiosity about each other, sharing stories and jokes; supporting each other learning and in playing; having a critical mass; experiencing ‘flow’ together; the band as a social hang out; the experience of togetherness; being a part of a team; and respect for one another. There is indeed a sense of camaraderie in the band. People greet each other and ask each other how they’re doing; they go out for cigarettes together and chat; they get coffee for one another and eat lunch together after the rehearsal; and some of them socialize and play music together outside of the band. In addition to playing together, the band is a social experience for members, and it motivates them to participate as fully as they can. Frank describes his experience:

Saturdays are my days that I get to be with other people … This gives me the excuse to get out and come down and meet people, socialize. It’s not very social if you don’t know what you’re doing and you make everybody else sound bad. You know? And that’s something else I want to avoid as much as possible. So, that involves … I have to practice a lot on my own but I also have to try to play with people.
Working hard for the rest of the band was something that came up repeatedly in the interviews. Wallace explains:

Well, if you don’t try your best, then it’s not going to be as much fun for other people. You know, the drummer is there working his ass off, the bass player, the guitar player, working their asses off doing a fantastic job. The harder people work, the more they try to do the best that they can, the more fun that it is going to be for everybody.

I asked the members about their role in the band, about what they bring to the group, and about what contributes to the feeling of togetherness. Victor emphatically said, “Cooperation.” He explains:

Cooperation. I think that the band can, well, the same way that when the fiddle has a solo, that they rhythm section will come down, okay? Well, in the same way if … one of the less experienced players is playing a solo, then the rhythm section will be a little bit less flamboyant and point out where the top of the bar is, every four bars or every eight bars.

In addition to asking members about their roles, I asked why they choose to take a solo sometimes and choose to lay out at other times. Sam said, “Well, just let everybody else play, you know? A saxophone player, he only gets to play the head and his solo, and then that’s it.” Michael echoes this in a slightly different way: “Sometimes it is that I have heard enough of myself and I’d rather hear, the arranger in you would like to hear something different.” The importance of leaving space for others in the group to express themselves during solos reflects members’ view of themselves as part of a team. Thelonius describes it this way: “My role in the band … [is to be] a good contributing member ... and to be a good ensemble person, somebody
who is part of the team.” Part of being a member of this particular team is the importance of listening to and leaving space for others. Sam notes that, since there are so many people, everybody has to really listen to each other: “If you’re in a big band, then it’s harder to trade solos than in a small quintet or something in order to hear them, because the guy might be 20 feet away at the far end of the line.” Every interviewee mentioned that they know to never play over somebody else’s solo. This point was usually made in a joking way, accompanied by laughter, because it is something that Brad is adamant about and at times becomes exasperated with, to the point of singling people out in front of the band and telling them it is not their turn. He reminds them that they will get a turn, but they need to listen to others in the band.

Listening to each other and playing together give rise to bonding, and they contribute to the feeling of community in the band by making people feel that they belong. Lori says, “I am feeling wanted. Maybe I am feeling like it is about musicians helping each other and coming together, and performing in a band, and being serious about it.” In addition, the shared experience of playing and performing together also contributes to the band as community. Thomas calls it “a collective sharing of accomplishment.” This sentiment is echoed by Thelonius, who refers to “the sense of that very powerful shared experience that people are having together through music.” He explains that the band reflects the same values inherent in his community work: “Certainly the values of the band and the way that the band is being taught and run is very compatible with the values that I have within the community.” Thelonius is the member who spoke about the band as church. When I asked him to explain this, he responded:

… When you think about church and what church is, it is a place to be thankful, it is a place of gratitude, it is a place of love, is a place of sharing, is a place of community, it is a place of learning, it is a place of wisdom, it
is a place of reflection, it is a place of feeding one’s spirit, and sharing that spirit with other folks. And the jazz band, that situation does that! And it is free!

Though different members defined their relationship to the band in slightly different ways, and Thelonius was the only one to identify it as church, all of the aspects of church that he identified are present in rehearsals. Each member expressed gratitude for the cooperation, reciprocity, and community that the band embodies and enacts.

The jazz band program, as Thelonius mentioned, is free. Part of the mandate of the Carnegie Community Centre is to make their programs accessible. In the DTES, in the most literal way, this means to make programs free. Lori explains that, “…if it cost me, I probably wouldn’t do it. Couldn’t do it.” Thelonius reflects on the accessibility of the program and states, “I don’t know of any other situation in the city where I could have this kind of experience.” It is indeed a unique program in Vancouver. Members are aware of this, and they also recognize the importance of a program like the Carnegie Jazz Band existing in the DTES for members of the DTES community. Sam, who doesn’t live in the neighbourhood, expressed his respect for this aspect of the program:

If some guy from the neighbourhood … if there is a capable drummer and he wanted to do it, I would give it up, yeah. Because it is more for that community anyway… So if the guy was from the DTES, he deserves the seat more than me.

Sam’s personal conception of the band is nuanced. He acknowledges and respects that the band is in existence primarily to serve the DTES community. But, as a central member of the rhythm section, he also honours the importance of his role in the jazz band. He knows that his level of
accomplishment on the drums and his contribution to the band (coming every week and providing the rest of the musicians with a consistent and sensitive rhythmic bed) is of central importance to the band’s continued success.

4.10 Relationship to the DTES

_We are the Carnegie Jazz Band and don’t you forget it!_

---Brad

Over the years, the band has become a visible and central part of the DTES community. Band performances at first were held solely in the DTES. But since 2010, when we played at the Vancouver International Jazz Festival (see Figure 1.2), we have also played in the Renfrew community for the Moon Festival, downtown at the Gathering Festival, and in Victoria at the Government House by invitation of Governor General Stephen L. Pointe (see Figure 1.3). The band still performs regularly in the DTES at The Heart of the City Festival (see Figure 3.1), The HomeGround Festival, on Christmas Eve at the Carnegie, and at festivals held in the neighbourhood throughout the summer. The band has been featured in _Megaphone_ (see Figure 4.1), Vancouver’s street paper (sold city-wide by people by from the DTES), in the _Georgia Straight_ (see Figure 4.2), a free newspaper distributed city-wide, and on the cover of the 2011 _Heart of the City Festival Program Guide_ (see Figure 1.2). In large part, this visibility has been sought out and provided by the Carnegie Centre, by Brad, and by one of our members, a long-time arts organizer, programmer, in the DTES.
Figure 4.1 Photograph by Natasha Kanji, Megaphone, Sept. 16, 2011. Issue 87
Music gets at heart of ‘hood

> BY TONY MONTAGUE

We all know that live music can unite—and even create—a community like nothing else, bringing people together in happy and sometimes healing shared experiences.

It’s certainly provided a glue and balm over many decades for residents of Vancouver’s original entertainment district along East Hastings Street. So it’s no surprise this year’s Downtown Eastside Heart of the City Festival, which runs to November 4, is full of music of all colours and stripes.

Much of it is free, including all the offerings from the Carnegie Jazz Band, a group of local musicians that has indoor and outdoor variants, and stellar guests. “I took over leading the band about five years ago as a way of giving back to the community,” says multi-instrumentalist and composer Brad Muirhead, one of the pillars of Vancouver’s jazz scene. “This year we’re doing something—playing as a parade band, the other performing the second set of the big concert, which opens with Dal Richards’ six-piece band. Hopefully, there’s going to be some crossover, sitting in between the two outfits.”

For the concert the CJB will be playing songs of Louis Armstrong for blues and jazz vocalist Dalynnah Gail Bowen, and also feature trombonist and bandleader Hugh Fraser, adding up to some 16 musicians, according to Muirhead. “I usually bring in one pro player for the horn section. And there’s James Dekker, a 16-year-old tenor-sax prodigy I’m bringing in for the educational experience. Not everyone from the jazz band will be able to go on the street, or at least certain instruments shouldn’t unless it’s dry. We have a couple of violins, a guitar, and an upright bass in the CJB—so I play the bass lines on a saxophone. It’s like a New Orleans street band.

“We’ll be parading from Oppenheimer Park to Gallery Gachet on Friday, October 25, and also doing little strolling things around the neighbourhood on several days. It won’t be hard to find us—we’re loud.”

Among the festival’s other eclectic musical highlights are a special screening of Bloodied but Unbowed, Suzanne Tabata’s documentary about Vancouver’s early punk scene, with a live solo performance and Q&A by Joe Keethyl, founder and lead guitarist of the notorious D.O.A. (on Saturday, October 25 at the Carnegie Theatre); a Barenaked Ladies evening on Friday, October 25 at the Carnegie; and the Wayne Lavallée Band’s fusion of acoustic folk-rock and core music on Sunday, October 25 at the Urban Arts Gallery; and a concert, supper, and community dance at Ukrainian Hall on November 4, featuring the Baltic Choir and Alex Catoeira’s Brazilian martial-art dances and percussion, as well as gamelan music, bagpipes, and Ukrainian singing.

For those of literary bent, Dream of Words is an afternoon concert with Chinese Canadian writer and Vancouver poet laureate Evelyn Loi, poet and historian Jim Wong-Chu, and the core artists of Silk Road Music in the lovely setting of the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden on Sunday (October 28).

“Both writers have a great reputation, and they’ll be reading from their works while we provide interludes of traditional music and song,” says Qin Xia He, who plays the pipa, a tear-shaped lute, in Silk Road Music, with husband André Thiébault on acoustic guitar. “I’ve worked before with Jim Wong-Chu’s writers’ workshop in Chinatown, and I’ve performed with many authors in the community, including Wayson Choy and Paul Yee, but not yet with Evelyn.”

Though, like Muirhead, not a DTES resident, He has often played in the neighbourhood since arriving here from China some 20 years ago, and has been part of earlier festival editions. “One of the top things I really like about Heart of the City is that they put the music into places that aren’t regular venues, like schools and community centres. It’s a strange thing for us to play in such settings, and to a different audience from what we’re used to. In Strathcona there are a lot of older Chinese immigrants, and it’s so great when we’re able to sing a song that people recognize from long ago.”

In other words, the musicians of the DTES are helping bring the heart of our city beat louder.

The Downtown Eastside Heart of the City Festival runs at various locations until November 4. More info is at www.heartofthecityfestival.com.

Figure 4.2 Article by Tony Montague, in The Georgia Straight. Oct. 25-Nov. 1, 2012.

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Community performances are a way for the band to contribute to the vibrant arts community in the DTES, for members to gain experience performing, and for them to celebrate their hard work in front of a supportive audience. Mary expresses the joy of performing in the DTES:

I really like the community performances … playing music in places where people aren’t normally hearing it … I like that community performance … I think it brings joy to a lot of people. It’s great hearing music like that; it’s spreading around, and sharing it is fun. And it is good for everybody, I think.

All the members I spoke with enjoy performing, and most of them expressed interest in wanting to perform more with the band. The member who is the co-founder of the Heart of the City Festival and of the Vancouver Moving Theatre explained to me that,

Because I am a producer in the community, specifically producing art and productions, and contributing to the culture of the community, [one of my roles] is to find opportunities for the band to perform and be profiled … I am looking for opportunities to, for employment for people…[and] provide them with an opportunity where they can do it on not such a demanding schedule basis, but something that they can do that they love doing …

He sees incredible potential for this in the band and has worked with Brad to get members of the band performing in the community as much as possible. One way that this has been developed is through the creation of the Hastings Street Band, an offshoot of the jazz band (see Figure 4.3).
THE CARNEGIE CENTRE STREET BAND
IS LOOKING FOR MUSICIANS!

Percussionists, Horns, Noisy Music Makers
JOIN US!
3:30PM ON SATURDAYS

Figure 4.3 Recruitment Poster for the Street Band, by Gary Wildeman
The street band gets hired to walk around the DTES playing music mainly during the Heart of the City Festival (see Figure 4.4), and has also been hired for festivals outside of the DTES in the last couple of years to bring music to the streets of Vancouver.

Figure 4.4 Heart of the City Festival Program Guide, 2013 (p. 33). Produced by Vancouver Moving Theatre
In addition, with Brad’s initiation, he and Brad have worked together to encourage members of the band, and members of the larger DTES community to write music for the band to perform at the 2013 Heart of the City Festival in October (see Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5 Heart of the City Festival Program Guide, 2013 (p. 15). Produced by Vancouver Moving Theatre
There is great value in this project:

Creating opportunities for residents to create music but also very importantly from my perspective as a resident of the community, it is important that this community has an opportunity to create songs that come out of this community …

Creating and playing music by fellow band members and composers from the community has given the band an added challenge and boost in confidence as seeing themselves not only as interpreters of other peoples music, but also as composers of music. For the larger community, it is a way for people to participate in the band without playing an instrument or coming regularly to rehearsals. It is a chance for them to get to work with Brad, a professional musician and composer, towards an arrangement of their piece, to get constructive criticism on their work, and also to hear their work realized in a supportive environment.

The DTES is a complicated place. In addition to the vibrant arts community that I have mentioned, there is, a great deal of poverty, violence, drug trade and addiction, public and mental health crisis, and prostitution (as reported ad infinitum in national and international media). The Carnegie Community Centre, where the band rehearses every week is geographically right in the middle of all of this activity, at the corner of Main and Hastings streets. This location is a good one, in the sense that the band is accessible and close to many of the people residing in the neighbourhood, but it is also challenging in many ways. Even though the band is a safe space, occasionally people come into the rehearsal room and are disruptive. (The Carnegie has a policy of zero tolerance for violence, and Brad asks people who are disruptive to leave.) Another consequence of the location, is that some people will not come to the Carnegie and participate in the band because of the volatile nature of the neighbourhood. Two members spoke about trying
to recruit new members, but were unsuccessful because of the stigma and danger they associate with spending time in the DTES. When I asked Victor what he would say when encouraging someone to join the band, he said, “… You have to be able to handle the neighbourhood. And so I guess I would have to mention that.” Part of what makes the Carnegie Jazz Band what it is, is that the members who participate on a regular basis are accepting of the many different facets of the DTES. These facets might even serve to maintain the diversity of membership. When I asked Michael about his hopes for the band, he expressed his concern that, like other community bands in the city, semi-professionals and professionals from elsewhere in the city would come in and raise the level of musicianship to a point where many of the current members would feel excluded: “… Then people don’t get to play as much or a lot of people might get discouraged … I was hoping that wouldn’t happen. It hasn’t happened. That’s good.” Expressed tacitly in this statement is a deep concern that the band stays accessible to people from the DTES who are at different levels of musicianship. Also embedded in this concern is a sense of ownership of the band. This sense may be best expressed by Lori, who emphatically quotes something Brad says at every performance, “We are the Carnegie Jazz Band, and don’t you forget it!”
Chapter 5: Conclusion

In this case study of the Carnegie Jazz Band, I examine the factors that motivate members to continue to come to rehearsals (that is, why they participate), in hopes of contributing to the under-theorized dialogue in Community Music about participant recruitment, retention, and what participants look for in a CM program in aggrieved and marginalized communities like the DTES. I have found that the participants conceive of themselves primarily as learners of music and as part of a community of people with diverse levels of musicianship who come from a diversity of musical traditions who care about and are committed to one another’s learning and the continued success of the band as a part of the positive things happening in the DTES. As many of the members have said, “We’re the Carnegie Jazz band and don’t you forget it!” They take pride in the band, and many are reclaiming music for themselves after having negative experiences in more formalized educational settings by playing in this band, taking risks, and growing as musicians. In addition, their participation in the Carnegie Jazz Band contributes positively to their other musical experiences outside of the band.

The participants of the Carnegie Jazz Band speak about their participation in this program in many of the same ways that they articulate their conceptions of themselves as musicians: that is, primarily as learners, as members of a jazz band that is like a team or a family, as students of music, and, at the same time, as musicians. Most members joined because they wanted to make music; some of them did so specifically because it is a big band that plays jazz, while others joined because they wanted to learn the ins and outs of being a musician. Some became members because they sought to perform and to work with Brad Muirhead. All of them expressed their love of music and of learning. Current members that I spoke with either heard about the band
from people who are part of the larger Carnegie community, literally heard the band playing and decided to join, or they became members with the encouragement of friends who were already regular members.

The fact that the band rehearses at the Carnegie Community Centre makes the program physically accessible to many members who live in the DTES and surrounding neighbourhoods. In addition, the annual fee to be a member of the Carnegie Community Centre is just $1, and this minimal outlay allows members to participate in all of the programs offered at the Centre. Essentially, the band is free to anyone who would like to participate, as long as they are not disruptive. Members emphasize the importance of this to their initial and continued participation. Additionally, the availability of instruments for band members also contributes to making the band financially accessible to members over the long term. Every member I interviewed emphasized Brad’s approach to teaching as one of the main reasons that they continue to participate in the band. His ability to identify each individual’s learning style, needs, weaknesses and strengths, and, above all, his exceptional care and commitment to the band were cited by all members as reasons for their continued participation. All of the members identified their relationships with other members (many of whom know one other outside of the band) as contributing to their interest and dedication in their continued participation.

5.1 The Carnegie Jazz Band is Community Music

Although community music is not new, Community Music is a relatively new field of inquiry. What is new is educators’ interest in and awareness of community musicians, their music making, and education – that is, their recognition that community musicians are actually educating when they make music in communities (Veblen, 2005, p. 312). The International
Journal of Community Music, the leading journal of the field, defines Community Music (CM) in the editorial to the inaugural issue as follows:

Community Music has many meanings and takes many forms depending on several variables. For example: (a) the people involved (e.g., ‘community music workers’ and/or musicians, clients, or students); (b) the communities and institutions involved; (c) the aims, purposes, or needs that a Community Music program intends to achieve; (d) the relationships between a given Community Music program and its geographical, social, economic, religious, cultural, and/or historic circumstances; and (e) the financial support a Community Music program receives, or not. (Elliott, Higgins & Veblen, 2008, pp. 3-4)

The Carnegie Jazz Band is an example of Community Music as defined by Veblen (2008 pp. 6-8), associate editor of the International Journal of Community Music. In Veblen’s conception, CM involves active music making and applied musical knowing with an emphasis on lifelong learning and access for all; CM is distinguished by the diversity of people it serves; participants choose to take part in CM and thus accept responsibility for their part in it; community is conceived of both as an ideal and as a reality; CM is grounded in community, that is, it is made in specific communities for those communities, and it in turn contributes to the building of community; and CM cannot be understood as separate from the context in which it occurs. The Carnegie Jazz Band members come from diverse backgrounds. They have diverse musical experiences, they come from a variety of neighbourhoods in Vancouver, and they have varied levels of time, money, and energy to commit to the band as well as to the larger community of the DTES. In addition to the diversity of musicianship and musical traditions within the band, the band “serves” a diversity of people in the greater DTES and Vancouver through its
performances. The residents of the DTES include new immigrants, retired/injured resource workers, artists, Chinese and First Nations people whose families have populated the area for years, people released from or kicked out of the closing mental health facilities, social workers, those with a mind towards community development, and sex workers. It also has the highest proportion of men to women in the city. The band itself, reflects this population to some extent. Half of the members either live or work in the area, some are on disability or other government assistance, others commute into the area to participate in the band. Like the DTES, members come from diverse cultural backgrounds, and there are many more men than women participants. All members are adults. (At thirty, I am the youngest member.) All are committed to lifelong learning through music and are dedicated to applying themselves musically in their participation. Each member spoke about the responsibility that she or he feels to learn how to play their instruments, the tunes the band plays, the protocols of playing in a jazz band, and to attending and participating regularly as integral to the success of the band as a whole. These things contribute to the conception of the program as a community. The ideals that define the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band, according to its members are that every member gives the band 100%, they practice on their own at home and come prepared to each rehearsal, everybody is friendly and encouraging, and nobody thinks or acts like they are better than anyone else. In reality, the band does function as a community in these ways. In fact, however, many members don’t actually practice on their own outside of the band but they still show up and participate and contribute positively to the program by being friendly, enthusiastic, encouraging, respectful, and by making themselves vulnerable through the taking risks musically.

Through the musical praxis that the leader Brad has developed over the years, and through the contributions of each member, community has been built within this band. This, in
turn, contributes to band members’ continued participation and learning. Band members spoke about the band as a team, as a family, and as church. Each one of these words can be used to describe a community. The community of the band is based upon a shared musical praxis, which is nurtured by Brad’s understanding and awareness of each musician’s individual praxis and the importance of getting each student involved in the group praxis: the “action of music.” Through this music-making a sense of “togetherness” is created and the musical praxis particular to the band is created anew.

Veblen’s concept of CM is grounded in Elliott’s and Regelski’s praxial philosophies. These philosophies, as well as the studies in Community Music I explored in the literature review, suggest that situation and community are integral to music making and to music education. Indeed, the situation and neighbourhood that the band exists within are integral to its existence and the educational work and community building that it does. Many members said that they could not imagine the band being what it is anywhere else. Implicitly and explicitly, members identified the Carnegie Centre, the DTES, Brad Muirhead, and the individual members that make up the band as being integral to making the band what it is. Indeed, like all CM ensembles, the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band cannot be fully understood apart from the context within which it exists.

Members’ take ownership of the community and identify with it. Members feel like there is a place for them in the band, that they are seen as valued individuals, that they fit in, and that their contributions are important. Thus, they encourage each other, help each other, and encourage others to join rehearsals and to attend performances. They identify themselves as members of the band and take ownership of its success. They are committed to participating as much as they can, and in the interviews, they expressed their hopes for the band, that it continues...
as it is, that they continue participate, and that the band expands its musical ability and performance scope. Many of the members expressed that their participation in the band is helping them to reclaim their relationship to music. They spoke about negative experiences that they’ve had in public schools and private music lessons: they were not given the opportunity to learn what they were interested in, the style of teaching didn’t allow them to learn at their own pace, they felt left behind and were reprimanded harshly for mistakes made. This band with its improvisatory approach to music education is structured in a way that encourages flexibility and self-directed learning. The band’s open door policy allows members of all levels to participate when they are able to the best of their ability. No one is turned away for lack of funds or experience and Brad makes a deliberate effort each rehearsal to ensure that every member who attends can participate in some way (playing tunes at a variety of levels of difficulty and having at least one chance to solo), and that each member has the opportunity to learn something (gradually building in difficulty upon the material covered in the lessons).

The work of Community Music scholars suggests that the benefits of participating in a community music program are myriad and complex (Souza & Müller 2002; Coffman 2006; Phelan 2008; Silverman 2009). The sense of community experienced by members of the Carnegie Jazz Band is an outgrowth of the music making that happens in the band. We play jazz standards, compositions by Brad and his peers, and (most recently) compositions by members of the band and the greater DTES community. In playing this music, all members do their best to follow the protocols of jazz: to follow the melodic form, to play within the rhythmic and melodic styles, to play together, to listen, to solo over the form, to support each soloist, to trade solos, and to come in at the right time. Not particular to jazz, but important in the protocols of this band, is to help each other find the right place in the song if someone is lost, to sing the tonic of the
chords throughout the song, to help each other read music, and to encourage each other by respectfully listening, providing musical accompaniment, and applauding members when they’ve taken a solo. This last practice, the practice of applauding after a solo is typical to jazz, but, based on my experience in other jazz ensembles, the Carnegie Centre band is especially enthusiastic in its level of encouragement: the band hoots and hollers when someone has her or his best and taken a chance. Taking a chance and trying to play the head, embellish, or solo in front of each other can be scary, and this kind of vulnerability is collectively supported. Members are not just taking chances musically (i.e., in a strictly technical sense); since music making is social, they are also taking chances socially. Musical risk-taking is encouraged and Brad talks about it regularly in rehearsals; he and all members of the band identify it as being important to learning and to community building.

In his (2006) study of CM bands in Lanceston, Australia, Coffman found that CM participants often depend on CM programs to provide them with an instrument and that they rarely have a choice in what they play, but that they enjoy playing their instruments regardless. In addition, their decisions to join are influenced by the desire to re-orient their free time, family, and friends. Coffman describes the experience of participants as being one of serious leisure where the importance of building and participating in community is recurring. Like the participants in Coffman’s study, many of the members of the Carnegie Jazz Band depend on the program to provide an instrument for them, they are influenced by friends and family to join the band, and they are looking to re-orient their free time. The notion of serious leisure fits well with the way that members of the Carnegie Jazz Band talk about their experiences within the band. The band is something enjoyable and enriching to do with their free time and they take it very
seriously: they show up regularly and more-or-less on-time, they work very hard during rehearsals, and they treat each other with a high level of respect and care.

The themes I identified before conducting the interviews are: participation, curiosity, learning, ritual, community, conflict, excitement, commitment, and hopes. These themes were inspired by Coffman’s (2006) article and by Wenger, et al (2002), and Phelan (2008) and my own prior experience as a participant in the band. Members identified several benefits (goods) of this program: They learn how to play jazz and develop musicianship; they are building their self-esteem through socializing; they feel like they belong, work with others, and learn how to perform; and they experience moments of transcendence and incredible excitement while playing music. For Brad, the program is the most challenging teaching situation he’s ever encountered, and he is developing his craft as a teacher and band leader through this experience. For the larger community, the band is bringing music and positivity to the Carnegie Centre: music is created and being performed in the DTES and in other areas of the city. Through the process of interviewing members of the band the benefits of participation that members identified reflected new and emergent themes: the importance of a diversity of musicianship among band members, acceptance, encouragement and enthusiasm, Brad’s leadership, cooperation, reciprocity, building community, and the band’s relationship to the DTES. These themes along with learning and commitment, became the most consistently mentioned issues in the interviews and as a result, the themes that I focus on in the Findings section.

Coffman (2006) categorizes the responses of participants that he interviewed in community band members in Lanceston, Tasmania, and Australia into three themes: Emotional Response, Limitations, and Commitment. Emotional responses include participants’ experiences of music as being embodied, as eliciting a “high,” and as sometimes provoking nervousness. In
my interviews with members of the Carnegie Jazz Band, participants spoke about the same sense of a “high” that they experience when they’ve taken a musical chance, like trying something new, performing, or taking a solo. The participants also spoke many times about the enthusiasm that they feel themselves as being reflected by other members of the band, and that enthusiasm is encourages them to continue participating. The limitations that Coffman notes arise when participants are unable to practice as much as they feel they should and with difficulties they have in securing an instrument. Members of the Carnegie Jazz Band spoke to me about not practicing as much as they feel they should as well, either because they don’t have the time or a place to practice. In addition, members spoke about the cost of participating as a potentially limiting factor. If the cost of participating in the band was more than the $1 annual Carnegie Community Centre membership fee, they would be unable to afford to participate. In contrast to Coffman’s study, where he states that Commitment is expressed in participants desire to improve, no matter what level they were at, members of the Carnegie Jazz Band expressed commitment not only to their learning, but also to the learning of the other members of the band. Many also expressed the commitment to the leader, Brad and that they feel a sense of obligation to participate as much as they can because he gives of himself to be there and to lead the band. Perhaps most closely related to Coffman’s study is the importance of community that members of the Carnegie Jazz Band spoke about in the interviews with me. Like in Coffman’s study, finding a community in the band and contributing to the larger community beyond the CM program are values that most of the respondents emphasize in the interviews conducted.

Members of the Carnegie Jazz Band have come to the band with a wide variety of musical experiences and levels of musicianship. Through the shared experiences of participating in the band, a way of doing things has developed, participants identify as practicing musicians
and as members of the band. They identify the band as working as a family, a team, and as a community itself. Phelan (2008) argues that through playing (musicing) together, people engage in already existing communities and in the construction of community. Phelan argues that CM is related to identity because actions and decisions in CM programs are strategic (i.e., performance choices and participative choices). These strategies are part of the “tacit knowledge of performance, rather than the conceptual knowledge of ideology” (Phelan, 2008, p. 149). People create knowledge and patterns – patterns and knowledge that are shared, and community is created through this process. Within the Carnegie Jazz Band shared knowledge and patterns that are created. Together, with the leadership of Brad, members learn how to be in the Carnegie Jazz Band: they learn how to perform, how to improvise, how to speak to other musicians using musical terminology, how to be a musician, how to listen, how to rehearse, how to take a chance and challenge yourself, how to be proud of your accomplishments, how to teach, how to be a student, and how to learn. These things are often explicitly spoken about in rehearsals and at other times, I have observed, there is a tacit understanding of how these things are done in this band. Each member has a different relationship to learning and to music, but the one thing that is overwhelmingly evident and shared in this group, is the ethos of coming to the band to learn. Learning is the driving force that keeps members engaged in their participation, keeps them coming regularly to rehearsals, and that binds the band together as a community.

Phelan echoes Silverman (2009) in her proposal that ideals of social-justice and the positive influence these ideals have on identity are transformational and are central to what can happen in a CM context. Silverman examines what three different CM programs in New York teach and how they teach. She argues that the commonality between each program is the “focus on community as hospitality, fellowship, and emotional and social betterment for the individuals
and groups, among other values” (Silverman, 2009, p. 182). I was very inspired reading Silverman’s article and felt a resonance with it from my own experience of playing with the Carnegie Jazz Band, and indeed, other members of the band echoed the commonalities that she identified in her study. When I asked members about to describe the atmosphere of the band, members spoke about the friendliness and openness within the band, and the feeling that no one believes that they are better than anyone else. Members acknowledge and believe that it is the open mind and willingness to try and experiment, together with Brad’s leadership and guidance, that is the most important aspect of their learning. There is a deep sense of caring within the band. This is expressed in many ways. For example, when a member doesn’t show up, others in the band ask if anybody knows why he or she isn’t there. When a member has been away, others follow up and pass on what was learned and accomplished during the rehearsal that was missed. Acceptance of mistakes, acceptance of a diversity of musicianship, and acceptance of each other bring the band together and encourage cooperation and reciprocity among band members. When members feel like the band is working well together and the music sounds good, the enthusiasm in the room is palpable! These things, along with positive feedback from Brad and each other, are crucial to people take chances and to learn from taking those chances.

5.2 The Carnegie Jazz Band as a Community of Practice

In my review of related research literature I highlighted the connection between praxial philosophy and CM. Regelski (1996) argues that praxial philosophy is a down-to-earth, inclusive, and encouraging approach that, unlike the aesthetic paradigm, has at its core action learning – getting students to partake in the action of musical practice. Like, Community Music, praxial philosophy establishes that music is no longer just for a few to understand and practice
“well” – it is for everyone, and the world’s diversity of music practices should be honoured and respected. In addition I proposed that the concept of a Community of Practice is useful as an analytical tool for developing practical examinations of CM programs. The Carnegie Jazz Band is an example of Community Music, and the Community of Practice (CP) paradigm is useful in understanding the Carnegie Jazz Band specifically and CM broadly. This case study places CM as a Community of Practice, adding a new category to the typology Veblen fashioned in her (2002) examination of CM programs: *Apples and oranges, solar systems and galaxies: Comparing systems of community music*, where she explains that in some places, CM connotes webs, networks, or pathways through which music making happens. She clarifies that CM is also used to distinguish between informal and formal musical settings and music teaching processes. In some countries, CM signifies therapeutic, social, or educational contexts in which a facilitator works with various kinds of “clients” (Veblen, 2005, p. 311).

As an analytical tool, Communities of Practice is useful in understanding the different layers and interactions that exist in the Carnegie Jazz Band. Each community of practice can be expressed as having three elements: domain, community, and practice. (Wenger, et. al 2002, p. 4) In the Carnegie Jazz Band, the domain is learning in a jazz band. The community is threefold, radiating out from the centre: the band, the Carnegie Community Centre, and the DTES. The practice is learning how to play in a jazz band with diverse musical abilities. There is a shared passion to learn music (specifically jazz), and we meet regularly every Saturday to deepen our knowledge and expertise.

The seven key principles of a Community of Practice (Wenger, et al, 2002) and how they relate to the jazz band are as follows:
1) Design for evolution: Brad’s improvisatory approach to teaching, performing more in the DTES, and widening the geographical and social scope of where and for whom the band performs each year. Most recently, this has evolved through the development of a project where band members and members of the larger DTES were solicited to compose pieces for the band to play at the 2013 Heart of the City Festival.

2) Open dialogue between inside and outside perspectives: Performances offer a great opportunity for dialogue with outside perspectives, as do the people in the Carnegie Centre who come into the rehearsal space to listen, dance, and applaud us. The recent project to play compositions by members of the band and from the DTES community also offers a space for dialogue between inside and outside perspectives. This project demands that people interact with the band, share their ideas, write music specifically for this group of people, and work with Brad and the band to develop an arrangement that is playable, and to hear the band perform pieces that they have composed. On another level, dialogue is created by how Brad leads the band, through his storytelling, humour, and direct questioning regarding the music being played: He invites members to participate by asking questions, by joking around, and by talking with each other about the social, theoretical, and technical aspects of music.

3) Invite different levels of participation (core, active, peripheral): The open-door policy of the Carnegie Centre programs, that anyone can join and participate, allows people to participate on all levels. Core participants are members of the band who come very regularly, who take solos, who sometimes take turns leading the band, who perform with the band, who encourage others to participate, and who help others in their participation. Active members are those who attend regularly and play along with the
tunes, who ask questions, and who participate in the social aspects of the band, as well as performing with the band on occasion. Peripheral members are those who come once, or who come sporadically, as well as those people who stop by rehearsals to listen. Each of these levels of participation are permeable and members move between them depending on their ability and desire to participate. One of the members whom I interviewed no longer attends rehearsals but is still considered a core participant because of his long-term commitment to the band, his expertise in leading the band, and his intention to return when he can. Everyone who comes up to the door of the rehearsal space is encouraged to become a peripheral member, and if they express interest in playing, they are invited to deepen their participation by becoming an active member who plays with the band.

4) Develop both public and private community spaces: Public community spaces are created through the bands performances in the DTES and elsewhere. Private community spaces are developed within rehearsals, during breaks and on the bandstand in performance.

5) Focus on value: Brad’s approach to teaching individuals and his goal of making this program a jazz band that can play tunes and perform in public as well as keeping it a positive and safe learning environment are all central to the focus on creating a valuable and enjoyable learning experience for everyone. He makes sure that each individual gets something out of each rehearsal and that everybody has a chance to solo in rehearsals and in performances. Each member of the band that I interviewed is concerned with making the band the best that it can be and with learning as much as they can at their own speed and because of this, one of the band’s main focuses is on
value: The value and the “goods” of this band are learning, developing skills, self-esteem, community, and on playing great jazz.

6) Combine familiarity and excitement: Rehearsals are loosely structured in a way to combine familiarity and excitement. We start by playing songs that the band has played a lot over the years and follow that with newer songs that are more challenging. This practice provides each member of the band with an entry point and a diversity of levels at which they can engage with the music and with other members of the band. Rehearsals held when we are not getting ready for a performance tend to allow the band to play familiar songs and allow us to become more familiar with newer repertoire. Rehearsals held when the band is preparing for a gig require that members become familiar with performance protocol and with the pieces to be performed. The opportunity to perform adds pressure and excitement to rehearsals. Our performances also mix familiarity with excitement. During the Heart of the City Festival, we perform in our rehearsal space. When performing at the Vancouver Jazz Festival, at the Renfrew Ravine Moon Festival, and at the Government House in Victoria, excitement is renewed by playing in other, unfamiliar venues.

7) Create a rhythm for the community: the Carnegie Jazz Band literally creates a rhythm for the community by bringing music to the Carnegie Community Centre every Saturday, through our performances in the neighbourhood and outlying neighbourhoods, and with the Hastings Street Band, an offshoot of the Jazz Band who walk around the DTES streets and play jazz. In addition, our rehearsals are held at a regular time and many of our performances take place annually, such as the Heart of the City Festival, the HomeGround Festival, the Chinese New Year Parade, and more
recently, the Renfrew Ravine Moon Festival. Every year our performances are better attended as people get to know the jazz band and realize that it is a regular and ongoing program in the community that puts on a compelling show.

In the exposition of his praxial philosophy, Elliott identifies stages of musicianship which can be related to the three elements and seven key principles that Wenger et al (2002) identify and that I relate to the Carnegie Jazz Band above. Elliott observes that there are different stages of musicianship: novice, advanced beginner, competent, proficient, expert/artist. These can be used to expand our understanding of the Carnegie Jazz Band as related to Wenger et al’s levels of participation: Peripheral, Active, Core. Each stage of musicianship can be found in all levels of participation within the band, though the core participants with the exception of one of the longest-standing members have attained a competent to proficient level of musicianship. To develop musicianship it is important to make music with other musicians, and often, as members of the Carnegie Jazz Band identified, it is useful to play with members who have a higher level of musicianship and who demonstrate a deeper level of participation. If the Communities of Practice paradigm is to be used as an analytical tool, it must be related to development of musicianship and to the process of making music with others, that is, music made within community, and creating community, through this practice – through musicing. The Communities of Practice paradigm is essentially about the social process of enacting a shared passion with others with varying degrees of participation, and with varying effects on its participants and the community that it is rooted in, with learning and community development as central to its existence. Because the Carnegie Jazz Band is a CM program where these processes and values are present as demonstrated above, the Carnegie Jazz Band can be considered a
Community of Practice, and by extension, Communities of Practice is a useful analytical tool to frame our understanding of Community Music programs.

5.3 Improvisation in Community Music and Communities of Practice

This research is a step toward testing claims made by the organization Improvisation Community and Social Practice (ICASP) that participation in the improvisational arts can bring connectivity, self-awareness, creative thinking, and transformation to populations in need. The Carnegie Jazz Band is successful because it satisfies the “goods” that it intends to, and the band as a whole has developed into the culture, into the Community Music ensemble, and the Community of Practice that this case study presents. As I demonstrated in the findings chapter, improvisation is central to the success of this band and is woven throughout its various musical and social processes.

ICASP Project Director Heble writes, “Improvisation demands shared responsibility for participation in community, an ability to negotiate differences, and a willingness to accept the challenges of risk and contingency.” (Heble 2011) Many members of the band spoke about how imperative improvisation is to the existence and success of the band as it has developed; they spoke about the wildness, the unpredictability, and the dynamism of the group. They note especially that if each member wasn’t accepting and adaptable to the variability of the band, and most importantly, if Brad weren’t so adept at teaching and leading under these conditions, the band wouldn’t succeed. Indeed, Brad’s many years of experience as a professional improvising musician and his commitment to the practice of improvising in all that he does make him an ideal leader for this band. Irwin explains this “aesthetic” in a way that resonates with my understanding of how improvisation works within the band:

“Jazz improvisers cultivate an aesthetic that senses the dynamic unfolding of
creative human action and appreciates the emergent, incomplete, mistake-ridden nature of human activity that often in retrospect leads to coherent, creative production …. What is appropriate for grasping social complexity is an aesthetic of the dynamics of unfolding, an aesthetic that values surrender, appreciation, trust, and attunement as seeds that sprout dynamic, novel social action. (Barrett 2000, 241)” (Irwin, 2003, p. 65)

Indeed, the Carnegie Jazz Band fosters dynamic social action. It brings together a diverse group of people within a marginalized and sometimes volatile community and creates a safe space in which they can take chances, build self-esteem, and develop musical and social skills. This finding echoes that of Souza & Müller (2002) who explained the effect of improvisation in a CM program for youth in the aggrieved community of Porto Alegre as follows: “When they improvised, the students had the opportunity to face something unknown – the not planned musical and body contents – without the familiar feeling of fear” (Souza & Müller, 2002, p. 5). Souza & Müller’s case study has interesting parallels with this study of the Carnegie Centre Jazz Band, and together they provide compelling evidence that approaching CM with improvisation as an essential principle of operation is central to the success of such programs in at-risk and aggrieved communities. Similar to Souza and Müller report, members of the band spoke about feeling accepted even when they improvise and take chances and that this is helping to build positive self-esteem. Members spoke about the novelty of not worrying about doing something wrong. Brad encourages each member to improvise and pushes each individual to take musical chances by emphasizing that it is okay to make mistakes, that everybody does. The band is a safe space for people who in other parts of their life (for some, specifically in music) face the feeling of fear daily.
5.4 The Importance of Community Music

The Carnegie Jazz Band is doing important work in overturning negative self-identities and building skills and community through learning. As I have shown in the literature review and in situating this case study among others that have also explored CM programs and Communities of Practice, CM programs are extraordinarily important and valuable to the communities that they build and to fostering the greater community of humanity. Guy emphasizes that social change through adult education is important because mainstream education (Kindergarten to Gr. 12 which teaches white, middle-class values) results in negative and destructive identities being internalized.

Because learning is essential to cultural reproduction, learning is also a central way of combating cultural domination and oppression ... Inclusion does not guarantee equity. Rather, educational norms, processes, and goals must be reevaluated for their potential to assist learners whose individual and group identities are most at risk in terms of the dominant culture’s definition of success.

(Guy, 1999, p. 12)

Programs like the Carnegie Jazz Band offer a point of entry into learning environments rooted in and committed to the communities they serve. This is important when engaging learners who have had negative experiences in formal education and whose experiences aren’t reflected in the teaching methodologies within formalized education. This community music program provides an essential service to people who have otherwise been alienated in formalized music education. The commitment of members to their participation and to each other’s learning demonstrates the success of this program. The implications of this for formalized educational
settings like music schools, public schools, and academia are first, that students who have a passion for music and who want to learn are abandoning music education because of the inflexibility of teaching to curriculum rather than student-focused and flexible, improvisatory teaching approaches. This program demonstrates that improvisation builds trust, acceptance, self-confidence, and community, and, at the same time, it is required that these things are present for students such as those in the Carnegie Jazz Band to feel comfortable improvising, and to learn from the process of improvising. Second, the members of this program are very knowledgeable in regards to what continues to make this band a successful music education program. They identify the importance of community building in music education. Through participation in programs like the Carnegie Jazz Band, participants build new ways of learning, being in, and building community. Social skills like listening, learning to work as a valued member of a group and accepting the responsibility that comes with it, and improvising musically and in the processes of rehearsal and performance contribute positively to other areas of individuals’ lives and into the larger communities that they are a part of. School music educators who have not been successful in facilitating the musical and personal growth of their ensemble members could learn a great deal from the ways in which Brad attends to the individual strengths and needs of the members of the Carnegie Jazz Band. An improvisatory approach to teaching, especially with adult learners, allows students to engage more fully with the materials being studied and with each other in a dialectical and supportive way.

In this case study I have presented evidence that CM programs are very valuable to the individuals who participate in them and to the communities in which they are situated. I have attempted to create a theoretical framework for understanding the Carnegie Jazz Band through connecting Community Music and Communities of Practice. Perhaps the most important finding
of this case study is that approaching CM with an aesthetic and ethos of improvisation is central to its success in an environment such as the Carnegie Jazz Band, in the heart of Vancouver’s DTES: Improvisation is central to the jazz, the genre of music that we play, the band’s leader Brad is a consummate improviser and states that all of his teaching is improvised, members are open to and revel in the sometimes unpredictable learning environment where anyone can come into the rehearsal space and participate and the process of playing through tunes demands that everyone is highly attuned to what is going on and able to change directions in an instant. The factors that motivate the members of the band to continue to participate in this band are myriad. They come to the band to learn: how to play an instrument, how to play jazz, how to be in a band, how to perform, how to improvise, how to speak to other musicians using musical terminology, how to be a musician, how to listen, how to rehearse, how to take a chance and challenge yourself, how to be proud of your accomplishments, how to teach, how to be a student, and how to learn. Member’s commitment is evidenced by their regular attendance, by their attentiveness to what Brad is saying, by trying their best, by the positive dynamics between band members, and by the commitment to keeping the band a positive and nurturing space for learning. Members’ commitment to the band is not monetary; members don’t pay more than their $1/year Carnegie Community Centre fee to participate. Instead, there is a sense of commitment and responsibility to each other, to the band, and to Brad. They are committed to their own and each other’s learning. Members spoke about the encouragement, enthusiasm and acceptance and community that they find in the band and that many things have contributed to the development of these feelings: Helping one another find their place in the music; counting, listening, sharing knowledge: encouragement from each other, from Brad, and from the larger community; camaraderie; curiosity about each other, sharing stories and jokes; supporting each other learning
and in playing; having a critical mass; experiencing ‘flow’ together; the band as a social hang out; the experience of togetherness; being a part of a team; and respect for one another. Through the process of playing in this band, a community has been built where the processes related to all of these factors are improvisatory in the way that participants enact/music them. The ‘goods’ identified by members that contribute to their continued participation in the band are also grounded in the larger Carnegie Community Centre, whose mandate of accessibility and acceptance the band follows, and to the DTES where the band regularly performs and literally brings music to the streets.
References


