



NUI MAYNOOTH
Ollscoil na hÉireann Má Nuad

Four Festivals and a City: A critique of Actor-Network Theory as an
approach to understanding the emergence and development of Flagship
Festivals in Kilkenny from 1964 to 2004

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There is no absolute space (just as there is no absolute nature, no absolute society, no absolute time); only specific space-time configurations, conditioned by the rationalities and relations that run through networks (Murdoch, 2006, p.74)

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Abstract

This thesis is a critique of the suitability of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as an approach to understanding the emergence and development of four flagship festivals in Kilkenny from 1964 to 2004. The thesis compares Kilkenny's four catalyst festivals (The Kilkenny Beer Festival, Kilkenny Arts Week, The Confederation of Kilkenny Festival and the Cat Laughs Comedy Festival) and assesses the ability of the ANT approach to analyse the festival product, organisation, and power flow of each. It examines the ability of ANT to understand the socio-cultural impacts of the festivals on the city of Kilkenny, its tourism infrastructure and built heritage. Utilising two subtly different interpretations (Fox, 2000 and Porsander 2005) of Michael Callon's phases of emergence (1986, 1991), ANT is used to trace the differences in the origins of these festival committees, their emergence or translation from, and into, other networks and the actor-networks that reach beyond Kilkenny. It highlights the multiple organisational variations in the festival committees that become visible through the selected approach and its suitability for interrogating the varying contexts and topologies of these city-changing festivals.

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Over the course of this study information was lost, information was found, great ideas fizzled out when put to paper, great stories never made it to the final draft, peels of laughter never made it to the transcripts and neither did the curses after midnight when software was non-cooperative and backups were nowhere to be found. I've had a lot of support on this journey and I would need another thesis to properly thank everybody.

In one sense this thesis took up to forty years, four festivals, and an army of volunteers, organisers and revellers to assemble. Over one hundred and twenty people were interviewed, (and some re-interviewed), and even more people spoke to me off-the-record. Thank you to one and all for giving your time and sharing your stories.

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pizza mafia, and the 7 Beaufield Gardens residence association (a.k.a The NUIM Biology Department and NUIM Psychology). Thank you for all the laughs and two euro bets.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

This thesis is a critique of the suitability of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as an approach to understanding the emergence and development of four flagship festivals in Kilkenny from 1964 to 2004. The thesis compares four catalyst festivals that operated in Kilkenny at different scales and different time periods.

- The Kilkenny Beer Festival, (KBF) was held each year from 1964 to 1974.
- The Kilkenny Arts Week (KAW) began in 1974 and was re-imaged between 1997 and 1999 as the Kilkenny Arts Festival (KAF).
- The Confederation of Kilkenny Festival (CKF) existed for three years between 1992 and 1994.
- The Cat Laughs Comedy Festival (CLCF) replaced the CKF in 1995 and is still operating in 2010.

This thesis assesses the ability of the ANT approach to analyse the product, organisation, and power flow of each festival. It uses ANT to follow the topology of each festival and its actors and actants and the translations that are required by each festival to function. It critiques the ability of ANT to understand the socio-cultural impacts of the festivals on the city of Kilkenny, its tourism infrastructure and built heritage.

Utilising two subtly different interpretations (Fox, 2000 and Porsander 2005) of Michael Callon's phases of emergence (1986, 1991), ANT is used to trace the differences in the origins of these festival committees, their emergence or translation from, and into, other networks and their connections that reach beyond Kilkenny. It highlights the multiple organisational variations in the festival committees that become visible through the selected approach and its suitability for interrogating the varying contexts and topologies of these city-changing festivals.

1.1. Contextualising Kilkenny

The following section contextualises the key actors, agencies and organisations in operation in Kilkenny. This also contextualises some of the effects national agencies had on local agencies operating in Kilkenny. Lastly, it concludes with a brief running order of the following chapters and their key points.

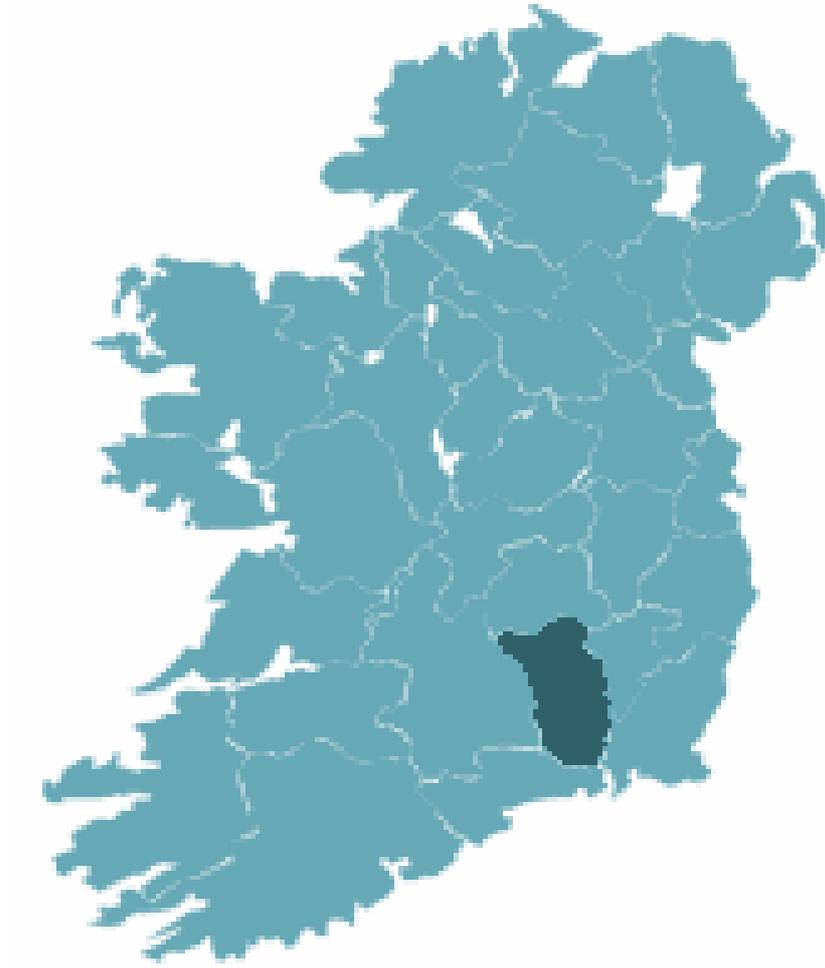
This section describes the many geographic, historic, and economic elements that make up the city of Kilkennyⁱ. It summarises the origins of this ninth century settlement, and some of the historical events that have converged on Kilkenny to produce elements that would later play crucial roles within the festivals, tourism projects, and marketing strategies (e.g.: Kilkenny Castle, St. Canices Cathedral, The Black Abbey). The origin and history of these buildings, so intertwined with the city of Kilkenny, imbues them with such a historical wealth as to transcend venue, and become integral to the experience of the festival. It also illustrates how the current tourism agency developed within Kilkenny.

1.2. Kilkenny: Facts and statistics

Heritage and environmental harmony are recurring themes throughout the history of Kilkenny City and County. With Ireland's mediaeval capital at her heart, County Kilkenny offers an abundance of fascinating festivals, historic sites, abbeys, forest parks, natural wonders and scenic locations (SouthEastTourism 1997)

Kilkenny city (Map 1.3) is a comparatively compact city approximately 70 miles from Dublin, and is within a relatively short commuting distance from Carlow, New Ross, Clonmel and Waterford City (see Map 1.1). The four main county towns outside of Kilkenny city are Callan, Castlecomer, Graiguenamanagh and Thomastown (see Map 1.2). Each of these towns has been incorporated into past festivals.

Map 1.1: Map of Ireland with Kilkenny County highlighted



Source: Ireland.events.com

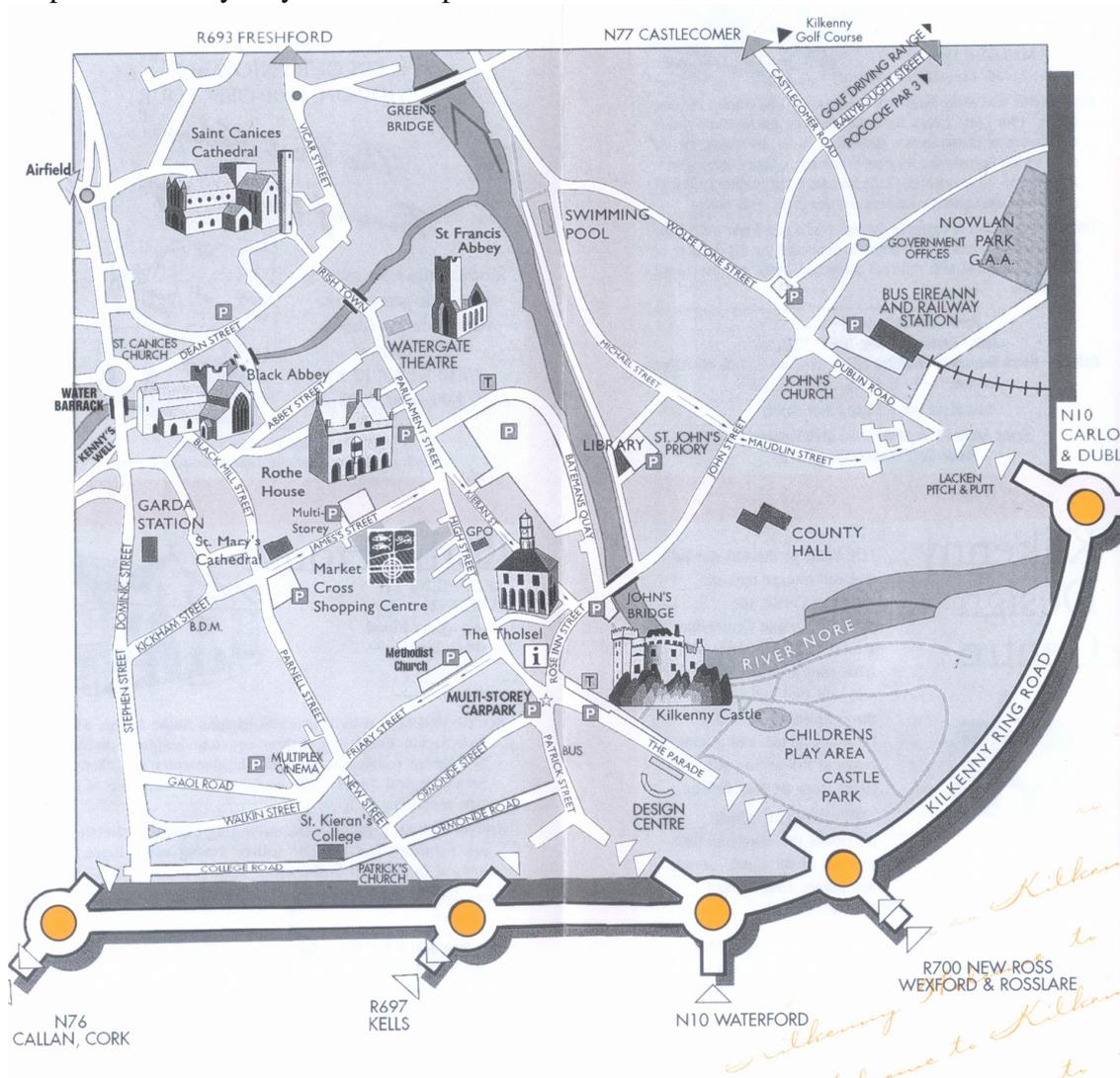
Kilkenny shares borders with Laois, Carlow, Wexford, Waterford and Tipperary. It has a natural harbour at its southern-most point, Belview, and stretches into the Irish Midlands at its northern-most tip. The rivers Barrow, Nore, and Suir are largely responsible for defining the county's shape. The river Nore bisects the county on a north-south axis. The rivers Barrow and Suir form natural boundaries on either side of the county. The county has many finely preserved heritage sites and is festooned with medieval castles, churches, forts and other ruins.

Map 1.2: Kilkenny County



Source: www.BallyKeefe.com

Map 1.3 Kilkenny City Tourist Map



Source: Kilkenny Tourism

The 2006 census recorded the population of Kilkenny city as 22,179 people, and Kilkenny county as 85,558 (Census 2006). Kilkenny countyⁱⁱ (pop. 80,421 in 2001) is a medium sized county (796 sq. miles). The population figures for 2001 are best representative of the time period leading up to 2004. These break down as 80,421: males 40,258; females 39,893 which showed an increase of 5,085 on the 1996 recorded figures, an increase of 6.7% overall (source: 2001 census). Kilkenny city'sⁱⁱⁱ population in 2001 was 20,735. In 1991 the population of Kilkenny city totalled at 17,669, 8,515 within municipal borough area and 9195 residing in environs, (1991 census); 1996 the

population of Kilkenny City had increased to 18,696, 8,507 within the Municipal Borough area and 10,189 residing in environs (1996 census).

1.3. Kilkenny: Medieval Capital

Kilkenny has a rich heritage of medieval and historically significant buildings, two hundred and thirty-nine of which are listed in the record of protected structures (appendix 1 of Kilkenny Draft Development plan) and are situated within the city borough. This built environment provides festival directors with many unique backdrops. Therefore it is important to understand the history of Kilkenny, especially the history of its most prominent feature, Kilkenny Castle, and the events of the Confederation of Kilkenny.

Kilkenny's rich medieval heritage is evident in the city's treasure trove of historical buildings and landmarks, exemplified by the magnificent Kilkenny Castle. Kilkenny is arguably the pre-eminent medieval city in Ireland, with the current layout of the city clearly grounded in the city's medieval roots. (www.kilkennycityonline.com, accessed 20.4.04)

Kilkenny developed around two key focal points: a monastic settlement founded in the sixth century, and a militarily strategic site overlooking the river. The monastic settlement grew up around a small church, or in Irish: a C(h)ill, which was known as the church of Canice, hence the name Chill Cheannaigh. When Irish place names were anglicised it was re-christened Kilkenny. The round tower beside the cathedral dates back to this settlement and is currently a popular tourist experience. Kilkenny's function as a key crossing point over the river Nore in an agriculturally rich hinterland, meant that by 1169 it was considered to be the most powerful inland town in Ireland (Bradley 2000). Power was divided between the church and the local chiefs. In 1173, Norman invader Lord Richard FitzGilbert de Clare, known as Strongbow, established a fort on the site where Kilkenny Castle stands today, a traditional site of forts dating back to 888AD. The arrival of the Normans had serious consequences for the continued prosperity and development of Kilkenny. In 1199 Strongbow's brother-in-law Geoffrey Fitz Robert was

appointed Seneschal of Leinster. Subsequent to this event, William Marshall (Strongbow's son-in-law and Earl of Pembroke) oversaw the building and maintenance of fortified city walls thus consolidating the Norman foothold in the city. All the while, a densely populated shantytown developed outside the walls. Thus *the medieval city grew as two densely developed abutting towns (Kilkenny Draft Development Plan, p.1)*; one town developing around the Cathedral, called Irishtown, and the other around the Castle, called Englishtown.

The fourteenth century was a time of recession, division and death for Kilkenny and Ireland. The Black Abbey (1225), originally the Convent of the One and Undivided Trinity, came to prominence in this time as a refuge for the sick and dying (especially during the Black Death 1348-9). Throughout this century and peaking in 1366, the City was famous for its laws against Gaelic peoples, principally on the introduction of the Statutes of Kilkenny. The Statutes of Kilkenny were laws that punished any interaction between the native Irish and English. These laws were finally lifted in 1391 when the Castle became the home of James Butler, 3rd Earl of Ormond. The Earl was a fluent Irish speaker and one of his first acts on arrival in Kilkenny was to contravene the statutes of Kilkenny. Under his rule, Kilkenny Castle and its surroundings grew in size and splendour.

In 1609 Kilkenny was awarded City status and in 1641 the parliament known as the Confederation of Kilkenny was founded. One of the parliament's main objectives was to unite resistance against English persecution of Irish Catholics. With the emergence of this parliament, Kilkenny entered a period of unparalleled economic prosperity and political success. In January 1649, six months after the execution of Charles I, Oliver Cromwell and his parliamentary army arrived in Dublin. In March 1650, Kilkenny surrendered after a week-long siege by Cromwell's army. Oliver Cromwell's arrival in Kilkenny heralded the dissolution of the parliament. Although the fourth wall of Kilkenny Castle was destroyed by canons the rest of the castle, and the majority of the castle lands, were spared destruction. (Cromwell's arrival would also see the start of Kilkenny's association with cats. On approaching the City Cromwell saw two cats tied together by their tails and

hung over a rope between two houses. The resulting limerick by one of his entourage cemented the association between the city and cats, an association that thrives today with sports teams, the county nickname and the comedy festival.)

During the Restoration (1660) James Butler set about improving the cities schools, inns, drinking establishments, roads, walls, and the Castle (which he had re-imaged to imitate a French chateau where Butler and his King had stayed while in exile.) Catholic priests also returned to the city.

The 18th century saw the full time quarrying of Kilkenny limestone, which after polishing, appeared to be marble. This caught the imagination of the public who began referring to Kilkenny as *The Marble City*, a title that is still synonymous with Kilkenny to this day. This economic growth lasted until the early 19th century. But without developing or being part of a canal development the City was unable to compete with other growing towns that were connected to canal systems. The resulting fall off in business growth was then compounded over the next century by famine, plague, cholera, civil war and a fall in population numbers that did not ease until the 1950s.

1.4. Kilkenny: Tourism

Now, when we look at Kilkenny, way back in 1969-70-71, I... came here as a young tourism officer and at that stage Kilkenny was, I suppose, having its beer festival and was rapidly becoming a sort of a place where people went for a good old booze-up and not much more. ... The start point was, tourism is what happens in Killarney and Dublin and has nothing to do with Kilkenny. That changed, quite dramatically, when Bill Finnegan came to Kilkenny and he introduced the beer festival, which was a manufacturer's marketing festival. There was no background to it. It was created by the image-makers, the marketers. Kilkenny suddenly found itself in the tourist industry. (Pat Nolan, Kilkenny's first tourism officer)

Kilkenny Tourism Council was an initiative set up and managed locally by Pat Nolan in the early 1970s, to deal with the influx of tourists as a result of the popularity of the Kilkenny Beer Festival. Its mission was to provide information for the thousands of tourists visiting the city, and to create a common tourism strategy platform for the interested businesses of the city and county. What started out as a small, loosely structured semi-professional body increased dramatically in size by the 1980s. Funded mainly by membership fees, the council was predominantly city based in composition which was evident in the city-orientated nature of its marketing strategies. The attendance at the committee meetings fluctuated and could range anywhere between fifteen and fifty people at any given meeting. The structure lacked efficiency and internal communications often broke down. The plans they produced, while being practical, were basic and short-term. Disagreements soon arose over what was seen by some to be a bias towards promoting the city in favour of the county. An alternative county-based tourism group, Kilkenny County and Heritage Co-op, was created in opposition to the city-centred council to function as an umbrella group to represent a multitude of small towns and rural tourist sites. There were no structures in place for committee selection: it was open to anyone with rural tourism interests. The Kilkenny County and Heritage Co-op committee numbers swelled, rapidly becoming as large and as cumbersome as their city counterparts. Though rivalry existed between the city and county groups both co-operated occasionally on a short-term basis. But the initial city/county schism when combined with the difficulty of mobilizing a few hundred committee members critically limited what could be achieved.

The introduction of the statutory *County Tourism Council* Government body (1994–96) created a third tourism agency in Kilkenny. The Irish Minister for Tourism, in co-operation with the *Regional Tourism Association*, introduced the statutory *County Tourism Council* as part of a national government tourism strategy. However, this was not warmly received by the existing tourism agencies in Kilkenny as this body did not seem to display respect for the groundwork already in place. The assumption of this new group seemed to be that the other groups would cease functioning after its implementation. The pre-existing *Kilkenny Tourism Council*, however, had assumed that

it would be simply a matter of renaming their organization and turning them into the official government tourism body.

By 1997 the promotion and organization of tourism in Kilkenny was reaching crisis point. Three agencies were now operating on behalf of Kilkenny: *Kilkenny Tourism Council*, *The Kilkenny County and Heritage Co-op*, and the newly introduced *County Tourism Council*. Though tensions already existed between the city-based *Kilkenny Tourism Council* and its rural rival, there was still a certain amount of co-operation and linkage. Despite limited co-operation Kilkenny now had three separate organizations, three (insufficient) budgets, and three different promotional strategies selling the one product. To strain tensions further, the existing images of *The Medieval Capital* and *The Marble City* were being generally perceived as exhausted and dated. The city needed to attract new investors, utilizing new techniques, new concepts and new images. But the task at hand was more complicated than simply redesigning a new image for Kilkenny and promoting that image. A unification process was desperately needed.

After months of discussion led by key local actors a new streamlined professional body was formed: *Kilkenny Tourism* (1998-9). Composed of three members from each tourism group, with a county-wide perspective, the proposed merger was well received by the tourism agencies. The *Regional Tourism Authority* (RTA) was informed and, after the matter had been discussed, the new board was allowed to proceed. (The chairman of the new body thus receives the seat reserved for the chair of the statutory *County Tourism Council Committee* on the RTA board.) The success of the new approach in festival management, and Kilkenny's new professional tourism board made it increasingly obvious (by highlighting absences and deficiencies) that Kilkenny had very limited structures in place for industrial promotion or any unified inward investment capture. Thus a board was assembled by interested parties to unify the various independent local business interests promoting Kilkenny.

1.5 Kilkenny: Selling Kilkenny

Kilkenny Industrial Development Company (K.I.D.Co.) was created in 1997 to attract potential inward industrial investment for the county and promote industries in Kilkenny. Those involved in streamlining the tourism agencies selected a highly specialized and resourceful coalition, and together they proceeded to outline K.I.D.Cos' objectives. The new body arrived on the scene without incident and with this a new situation had evolved, where only two organizations, Kilkenny Tourism and K.I.D.Co, were marketing the city and county. However, a further step was taken to produce a unified and effective marketing strategy. The Kilkenny Marketing Strategy Group was set up a year after the formation of KID.Co. to develop a common marketing strategy and facilitate and co-ordinate interaction between the local authority, Kilkenny Tourism and the industrial development group. In order to address marketing fragmentation, this steering committee was assembled with heavy emphasis on networking, forming coalitions and developing public/private partnerships. Those involved in the tourism talks were once again central in the selection of the initial board which consisted of representatives from KID.Co, Kilkenny Tourism and the local authority. Combining their resources and aided by a local authority budget, the Marketing Strategy Group facilitated the creation of a new pooled marketing fund which would reduce overlapping in 'market spend', and the development of an inclusive and cohesive marketing strategy.

By December 2000, Kilkenny had a unified place promotion network and professionalised organisations in place to address the marketing of the city. These changes were orchestrated and managed by a group of key actors within Kilkenny. These same actors were also heavily involved in the professionalisation of the festival groups in Kilkenny prior to the changes within Kilkenny Tourism. Almost all of the key actors involved in this radical new approach to tourism worked together on two, if not three, of Kilkenny's modern festivals and had been apart of the changes which revolutionised the organisation of festivals and tourism events in the city and county.

1.6 What's next? Ordering chapters

Chapters two and three focus on the Literature and Methods and Methodology that apply to this thesis. The chapters that follow after these relate to

- The Kilkenny Beer Festival 1964 – 1974 (Chapter Four),
- The Kilkenny Arts Week 1974-81, with brief accounts of 1981-1989 (Chapter Five)
- The Confederation of Kilkenny Festival 1992-94 (Chapter Six)
- The Cat Laughs Comedy festival covering 1995 -2004 (Chapter Seven).

These chapters describe the workings of each festival and explore the ability of ANT to explain how these festivals operated and the orderings involved in their becoming. The narratives related here are from interviews and conversations with those who partook in the festivals. Each festival account is comprised of many festival years, perspectives and voices, and illustrates the multiple levels of processes involved in producing these catalytic festivals. As with Law (1994), these historical narratives explain where the current festivals, and hence the current organisation of festivals in Kilkenny, come from:

These histories tell us much more about the current ordering than they do about the past. For one way or another, the past is related to the present: it justifies the present. Or it explains the present. (Law 1994, p. 52-3).

Each chapter focuses on the selected festival in terms of Product, Promotion and Organisation, documenting the step-by-step changes in organisational practises from 1964 to 2004. The chapter sections under the title of Product outline the eclectic combinations of bands, writers, musicians and works of art that were assembled to present the festival as a product. This also indicates the number of factors, actors, agents and agency that organisers had to coordinate to ensure the smooth running of the festivals.

The chapter sections titled Promotion are divided into internally organised and externally organised dimensions dealing with internally developed and controlled promotional devices/stunts, and external factors or persons who influenced the promotion of the festivals outside of committee controls.

The chapter section titled Organisation has been subdivided into the areas of management and power to better illustrate and understand the workings within the festivals and the properties and relationships developed within them. Management contends with the style and structure of management within the festival. Power discusses the mode and nature of power control within the festivals as displayed by the committee and organisers.

These categories not only provide a comparative benchmark with which to judge the four festivals against each other but they also highlight the difference in organisational approaches after the *Confederation of Kilkenny Festival* (Chapter Six). This rigid application of the same chapter format for each festival illustrates the emergence and development of festival management technologies and festival professionalisation from festival to festival.

Chapter 2. Literature Review: Tourism, Artists, Actors and Networks

Beginning with a brief overview of why place managers are compelled to engage in place promotion and place marketing strategies, this chapter reviews what tools and strategies are available to competing place managers. What follows is a brief introduction of image analysis and promotional image deconstruction, place promotional strategy options and trends, and their management. These issues lead into deeper explorations on the role of tourism, heritage promotion, and festivals within place competition. Lastly this chapter introduces Actor-Network Theory and the key concepts involved in the Actor-Network Theory framework.

2.1 Why promote places?

Over the last decade and a half, Western cities have undergone dramatic restructuring as they have adapted to new economic, social and political realities. Geographers have suggested that a major factor underlying this restructuring is that the economic fortunes of western cities are increasingly tied to global economic trends (Hubbard 1996, p. 1).

The successful urban region is one that evolves the right mix of lifestyles and cultural, social and political forms to fit with the dynamics of capital accumulation....Urban regimes racked by class struggle or ruled by class alliances that take paths antagonistic to accumulation...at some point have to face the realities of competition for jobs, trade, money, investments services and so forth ((Mollenkopf 1992) quoting Harvey in Legates and Stout p.261)

Place managers need to promote their city or region to compete for trade, globally footloose investment capital, potential tourists and high skilled residents (Sassen 1991; Hubbard 1996; Jessop 1997; Jessop 1999; Castells 2000). Competing on the international level requires global vision and ambition. Place managers need to competitively

restructure how places are promoted to stay abreast of changes in global economics. Shifts in economic trends have made it necessary for place managers to place themselves on the market and promote their region or city, communicating the 'right' image to the 'right' audience. The methods used in place promotion/marketing can be quite diverse. They range from basic brochures, guides and tourist information booklets, web pages, television advertisements and property pull-out supplements, to the design, development and delivery of elaborate event arenas, iconic cultural centres, seven-star hotels and internationally anticipated Hallmark events and Mega events.

According to Getz (1997) the term "*hallmark event*" is used to describe a recurring event that possesses such significant, in terms of tradition, attractiveness, image, or publicity that the event provides the host venue, community, or destination with a competitive advantage. Over time, the event and destination can become inseparable (D. Getz, 1997, p.5) For Hall (1989) a hallmark event refers to *major fairs, expositions, cultural, and sporting events of international status which are held on either a regular or one time basis* (Hall, 1989, p. 263). Hallmark events are generally thought to help position a host city as an international-tourist destination and facilitate *touristic activity* in the years following the event (Hall, 1992b; Ritchie, 1984). While some of the literature has characterized the impacts of hallmark events as positive (Gratton, Shibli, & Dobson), others have recognized the downsides associated with these events (Matzitelli, 1989; Orams & Brons, 1999).

A mega event should exceed one million visits, capital cost should be over £500m, and the reputation should be no less than 'must-see'. The prestige factor would also have immense input into political decisions. A mega event must be able to achieve/attract/ be worthy of world wide publicity. Roche (1994) argued that mega events tend to be short lived but have long-term consequences for a community that may not always be positive. Other scholars argue that these events frequently result in huge debts for host communities (Roberts & McLeod, 1989; Whitson & Macintosh, 1993), possible corruption during the bid process (Jennings, 1996), and frequently lead to the

displacement of local residents because of new infrastructural improvements (Hall & Hodges, 1996; Hiller, 1998).

Getting the most effective image strategy and communicating it correctly is a very complex and resource consuming task which must be handled and developed properly for maximum investment return. City managers must become adept at marketing their products in the global economy or lose out to their neighbours. The phenomenon of places managers competing for resources, future residents and investors is not new. American place marketing is well documented (Relph 1976; Tuan 1976) with city promotions stretching back over two hundred years (Gold and Ward 1994; Short and Kim 1998; Short and Kim 1999). While US cities have a strong tradition of place promotion (Gold and Ward 1994; Ward 1998) the use of more professional marketing techniques and the approach to places as products did not really emerge until the late 1980s (Ashworth and Tunbridge 1990; Ashworth and Voogd 1990) with the approach of city branding (Klein 2000; Seaton and Alford 2001). What is new is the range of services, light industry, communications technologies, higher-order personal services and place-product strategies available for utilisation. The distinctions, boundaries and responsibilities that have existed between public and private goals in the past have blurred; becoming intertwined, co-dependent, and entangled. These factors create new relationships between competing locations, locals, regions, countries, and businesses. In the promotion of these projects there will always be a 'mismatch' between the lived experience and the glossy image of a place as a product. Hence place marketing involves a *battle for hearts and minds*, selling diffuse, complex and sometimes vaguely defined place-products, to a range of customers (Neill 1993; Philo and Kearns 1993; Hubbard 1996; McNeill 1998; O'Neill and Whatmore 2000; Thrift 2000). The success of these hearts and minds campaigns is very difficult to measure empirically. Such 'image marketing' often ends up trying to manipulate customer behavioural patterns for political, social and economic reasons.

2.1.1 Analysing images

Place images are more than a simplistic mode of communication. They are a vital currency to many industries and lifestyle-consumer product designers in the western world. Through the evolution of the Kilkenny festivals the utilisation of images becomes more pronounced.

If the right “image” will elect a president, or sell an automobile, a religion, a cigarette, or a suit of clothes, why can it not make America herself – or the American way of life- a saleable commodity all over the earth? In discussing ourselves, our communities, our corporations, our nation, our leaders, ourselves, we talk the language of images (Boorstin 1961 (1992), p. 183).

Images often shape decisions made in the world we live in. We create images out of our surroundings to make sense of the world we live in, reducing the complexity of reality to manageable images (Relph 1976; Crilley 1993; Thrift and Glennie 1993; Williams 1998). One city can have any number of different images, both global and local all at once (Massey 1991) and both positive and negative (Neill 1993; McNeill 1998; Short and Kim 1999). Some images evolve organically; other images are fabricated at tremendous expense. At the core of an image is its ability to communicate and attain/sustain recognition. This recognition and subsequent attention are invaluable when produced and handled properly. Boorstin (1961) believed that there are six key aspects to *image* and images and their ability to communicate and initiate a dialogue between the designer and viewer: *synthetic, believable, passive, vivid, simplified, ambiguous*. A model developed by Russian Linguist, Roman Jakobson outlined how a word or sentence can have multiple significance's owing to five basic factors:

Context: The social situation of the communication.

Code: The language used, (street slang, dialect or Spanish) or signs that society understands (fashion, expected space related behaviours).

Message: What they/it/he/she say/says.

Contact: The channel of communication. How you are receiving the message (visual, tactile etc)

Addresser and Addressee: the two people communicating, and their relationship to each other etc.

Barthes observed how signs are given (or take-on) values of the dominant ideology of a particular society and make these values seem natural or *common sense* (Barthes 1972). These sign relationships can also give rise to yet another sign-relationship with one that symbolizes their exact opposite, binary oppositions, and revolve around the tension between the existence and connotations of one side and the other. These opposites become the reverse definition that the other is measured against; city: countryside; insiders: outsiders. These binary oppositions often form the key tenets behind a marketing strategy designed to capitalise on competitor weak-spots. (Actor-Network Theory utilises these binary oppositions but only as a means to deconstructing and removing them when exploring a networks components so to better understand its orderings.)

Umberto Eco discusses object-myth-images which become sign-values that may have once operated in a purely media medium but then transfer into real texts, creating a world of self-referencing, inter-textual, sign spectacle stimulations: creating hyper realities (Eco 1986) where *everything is a copy, or a text upon a text, where what is fake seems more real than real* (Urry 1990, p. 85). Jean Baudrillard's viewed signs as a *mediation of consumption and consummation* (1996, p. 203), giving rise to simulations, codes and images becoming more real than real, to such an extent that they constitute *real: simulacra* controlling urges, instincts, consumption and perception. Swamped by media, all signs become entangled, interconnected intercommunicating through a mediascape *saturating people with information, images, and ecstasies* (Peet 1998, p.213) creating social identities and multiple new geographies of representation.

These approaches explore how we create place-texts, place-images, and our understanding of our role and relationship in places and our interpretation of place

images. *Like a book, the landscape is created by authors, and the end product attempts to create certain meanings* (Cresswell 1996, p13). These meanings will either catch the collective cultural imagination or be dismissed out-of-hand and forgotten. So, although cities have been depicted in multiple ways, unless properly marketed, managed and maintained a city's image will fade and be replaced. Positive images may linger on long after their relevance has passed but if an image portrays the city in a negative light, and maintains a level of coverage on tabloid agendas (Avraham 2000), then something must be done to change that image before business and local morale suffers.

The popularity of the city has never been stable. Literature and society have alternated between the image of the good healthy countryside and the foul smelling, heavily industrious, dirty, city (Raymond Williams). The city has been portrayed as civilised and *urbane*; exciting and youthful; a source of employment and hope; foul, crime-ridden and full of despair: From Joyce to Roddy Doyle, from Dickens to Conan Doyle, from Salinger to Rushdie to Irvine Welsh to Neil Gaiman and beyond, the City has had its essence and impression portrayed a hundred different ways with a thousand different words. In cinema the city-scape has been depicted in a variety of ways from socially vibrant (Notting Hill, Swingers), and eccentric (Amelie), to Gothic (Seven), corrupting (L.A. Confidential), impoverished (Angela's Ashes), Sentient (Dark City, The Matrix) and nightmarishly dystopian and neon (The Fifth Element, Sin City, Blade Runner).

By re-imagining the city, the aim is to change insider and outsider perceptions of a selected place through image manipulation and communication. It is a costly and unpredictable business where the landscape becomes a product, history becomes a commodity and landmarks become icons (Ward 1998). One possible re-imagining strategy revolves around the creation of a flagship project. Flagship events, developments and projects *can act as central icons in the apparent transformation of a city's fortunes, image and identity* (Hall 1998, p. 93). A flagship development promotes the city as progressive, capable and innovative, and can generate massive quantities of support, hype, objection and controversy; mobilising (directly and indirectly) local media, conservationists, local politicians and support networks. The promotional juggernaut that such developments

unleash combines multiple tried and trusted promotional strategies. In this context, analyses of the images and myths that are sold to tourists about particular places have begun to achieve a momentum (Brunner, Flaschner et al. 1993; Dann 1996; Crang 1998; Cloke and Perkins 1998A; Cloke and Perkins 1998b)

While earlier work on promotion typically explained imagery in terms of economic interests of advertising, destination evaluation models (Goodrich 1978), destination choice models (Woodside and Lysonski 1989) or the social psychology of consumption (Urry 1995; Woodside and Dubelaar 2002), this more recent tradition identifies the importance of deconstructing the cultural discourses of destinations in the wider context of social and political processes. Morgan and Pritchard (1998) comprehensive account of promotion and power succinctly summarizes the contributions in this field and calls for further examination of the cultural significance of tourism. Throughout their work, they illustrate how meanings which are produced and consumed by tourism imaging *represent certain ways of seeing reality, images which both reflect and reinforce particular relationships in societies. These relations are grounded in relations of power, dominance, and subordination which characterize the global system* (1998, p.6) and how they need to be studied *One needs to situate tourism representations politically, examine what they include and exclude, and expose whose interests they serve* (1994, p.776). More recently Morgan and Pritchard have delved deeper into the mechanisms behind the branding and advertising of places for tourism purposes on a global mass-market scale (Morgan and Pritchard 2001; Morgan, Pritchard et al. 2002).

This hegemonic approach to mass marketing has rekindled interests in Gramsci's approaches which have been re-introduced by cultural geographers in their studies of place promotion (Burgess and Gold 1985; Kearns and Philo 1993; Gold and Ward 1994). By using Gramscian ideas of negotiation, the role of both structure (production processes) and agency (consumption practices) in image making can evolve into an interconnected (re)production. Producers and consumers network between each other in multiple contexts and together form an (unequal) hegemonic relationship thus maintaining hegemony by consent and coercion, rather than by domination, but through

complex communication and re-negotiation (Gold 1994; Gold and Ward 1994). As different producers and audiences are involved, different meanings are created, encoded, communicated, interpreted, decoded, and re-communicated over time and diverse contexts. Producers and consumers negotiate through this communication in continuous acts of interpretation by (re)imaging and consuming the (con)text. As a different audience is targeted readers employ a range of interpretative skills, or *cultural capital* (Bourdieu 1984) to construct an intelligible narrative from the tourism discourses presented for their consumption. Structural forces (nationality, ethnicity, gender, age, lifestyle, education, work, etc.) condition the skills and abilities that mediate power relations and appropriate behaviours in society (Foucault 1980; Clegg 1998; Fox 2000). Harvey debates the sustainability of such ‘eggs-in-one-basket’ flagship developments as he fears an unfavourable *flagship saturation* scenario where city development is concentrated in services and tourism sectors to the detriment of unprofitable, underdeveloped poverty stricken areas of social exclusion (Crilley 1993).

In the world of perception the image is more important than the reality...an urban image can be cleverly manipulated and transformed by city marketeers without the trouble of having to affect substantial change in that locality (Hall 1998, p.111).

Marketing campaigns can target a specific audience, concentrating on images of lifestyle, environment, culture and opportunity (Mellor 1997) without actually building or physically impacting on the landscape. As Gold and Ward point out: *Place promotion* [is] *defined as the conscious use of publicity and marketing to communicate selective images of specific geographical localities or areas to a target audience* (Gold and Ward 1994, p. 35). Cities can conjure representations of art, cultural embodiment or global icons (Donald 1999). It is in this collage that marketeers bring to the foreground those elements worthy of selling, creating regimes of representations. In Sort and Kim (1999) *Regimes of representation are discourses of meaning which include whole sets of ideas, words, concepts and practices* (1999, p.36). The word *regime* is used in the sense of a paradigm, a discourse; they consider it able to address the control/contestation involved in

representational creativity and that creativity's involvement with power, knowledge and control. Short and Kim (1999) favour a more open, fluid and less rigid case-by-case approach where *Space is turned into place through acts of discursive representation* and *Each selling has a common repertoire of themes and images that emerges from selling the same basic commodity, sharing the same message and using similar iconography, albeit tailored differently to specific places* (Short and Kim 1999).

Added to these *hardware* approaches to place promotion there exists a very strong *software* approach. The rise of the internet allows these multiple strategies to combine with the gloss and spectacle of flagship developments and carefully selected images to form the (now obligatory) promotional website (Urban 2002). There are also campaigns that have tried to mobilise support by accentuating their bad points (Ward 1998) but with no success. These promotion-heavy projects rely on trickle-down factors and processes to redistribute their benefits into the local communities. The by-products attached to these projects and their aftermath can be quite lucrative if properly managed and co-ordinated but there are no guarantees. The never-ending struggle to promote, compete and stay in touch with the latest technological developments, fashions and urban issues is arduous, filled with many gambles, obstacles, and pitfalls. Flagship projects do not always see fruition, do not always meet widespread acceptance and do not always benefit those that need help the most (Neil 1993; Byrne 2001). Hence the leisure and culture industries are major growth arenas that entice more than just tourists: they are a source of economic and revenue development that can become part of the local experience, local identity, and local economy. Hosting a festival may provide solutions, beyond tourism generation, to the problems facing place managers and place marketers. Having a working and informed knowledge of global trends and forces (Taylor, Evans et al.; Massey 1991; Morley and Robins 1995; Gertler 1997; Short and Kim 1999; Short and Kim 1999; Thrift 2000) is crucial for mapping larger external flows and understanding the views the directors or managers may have and how this essential information can assist in retaining viability, edge and style in the competitive festival market.

To address the images of agents and actors enrolled by festival brand designers, a selection of semiotic ideas were incorporated to facilitate the deconstruction and analysis of familiar objects and images (Barthes 1972; Barthes 1977; Barthes 1977; Derrida 1978; Culler 1983; de Saussure 1983; de Saussure 1983; Eco 1986). As semiotics explores the way signs communicate in social life it was enrolled to examine festival-related advertising paraphernalia. Semiotics was applied to the various posters, some of which reach local, national and global levels, becoming universally understood and instantly recognisable and therefore malleable in the eyes of branders and marketers. Semiotics, also held that all signs and images are constructed, and therefore open to manipulation, approachable through a tripartite categorization of Iconic signs, Index signs, and symbolic signs^{iv} (Lacey 1998).

These categories were considered as each of the programmes and brands were examined and became the core checklist for approaching the analysis of all festival images. In addition to the images, the type of language used in these promotional texts further layers the posters with meaning. Slang, ideology, rhetoric, puns, slogans, business buzzwords, specific life-style and historic/regional references can be enrolled to various degrees to enhance the appeal and capacity of the brand/advertisement to communicate (Boorstin 1961 (1992); Tuan 1976; Barke and Harrop 1994; Short and Kim 1998; Landry 2000). Such elements have also got culturally specific significances that rely on common cultural signifiers making a direct connection with the reader. These additions, especially the fondness the comedy festival promoters have for puns, were also incorporated into the study.

2.2 Tourism

The tourism landscape was transformed between 1964 and 2004 due in part to changes in society, infrastructure and technology on a global level. Increases in disposable income levels, two income families, employment figures, supplementary part-time jobs, new lifestyles and life style choices (Holloway and Hubbard 2001; Valentine 2001) have

resulted in new tourist time-management patterns (Williams 1998; Hall 2005; Page 2005). New patterns in how people use their discretionary time affects tourism spend and seasonality. This creates new patterns in what tourism promoters and providers offer, which in turn creates new patterns of concern and debate for city managers engaging in tourism-generating projects. The old pattern of only having two weeks in August for holidays is no longer the sole rationale behind holiday purchases, and as such the tourism-orientated city needs to adapt (Fretter 1993; Evans 2001; Seaton and Alford 2001; Cohen 2005; Crouch, Jackson et al. 2005; Hall 2005).

The effects these shifts in societal norms have on tourism operators are numerous: new levels of quality and value are demanded and expected; expectations are higher; experiences are to be highly rewarding with maximum convenience and minimum time-wasting. Some elements of the public may be richer than ever, yet they are just as concerned about how they spend their limited free time. This increase in financial independence coupled with improvements in infrastructure provision and advancement (Crouch, Jackson et al. 2005; Page 2005) has opened up the world to tourists on unprecedented levels. This makes tourism prediction a difficult, if not an impossible, task:

Mules and McDonald (1994) cautioned that a generalized model for forecasting event impacts is impossible, and that 'multifactoral noise' tends to confound all such forecasting, even for periodic events. ... It might be added that no one will be able to prove the existence or size of 'induced demand' (Getz 1997, p. 49)

The knock-on effects of these demands and standards leads to higher levels of competition, and an even higher need to succeed. The changes have been met with new standards of professionalism within tourism, new management-style structures and strategies, higher levels of accountability guaranteed through new structured safeguards. Professional managers and professional image consultants are incorporated with highly efficient, highly supervised staff to increase product capability and profitability to meet

the demands of manager accountability (Bacharach, Bamberger et al. 1991; Getz 1997; McKinlay and Starkey 1998; Landry 2000; Getz 2002)

Event managers and planners are increasingly being required to do competent feasibility and impact studies, use experts to evaluate costs and benefits, prepare detailed accounts of all impacts, and justify their activities within a complex field of goals and expectations. (Getz, 1997, p. 24-5)

Multiple intentions, activities and tourism motives, (Pearce, 1997), can be conceptualised as characterising different forms of tourism or consumption styles, and different regional characteristics can be marketed for different tourism segments to meet these multiple demands. Areas that are locally so complex as to be unmanageable as regards marketing are simplified and snappily contextualised to capture the tourist, if not the truth (Getz and Cheyne, 1997).

Tourism can have both positive and negative outcomes for residents in communities and there is an extensive literature on the benefits of recreation and tourism (Driver, 1996; Kraus, 1997; Sefton, 1995; Stein, 1994). Whether the role this industry plays in providing benefits to a culture has not been fully explored. Traditionally, cultural resources have been used as a method for enhancing economic stability while minimal research has been conducted concerning other possible benefits that tourism can provide to local communities. Cultural tourism also has the potential to negatively impact the character and traditional culture of small communities (Keogh, 1990; and Johnson, Snepenger and Akis, 1994). Tourism can lead to acculturation and assimilation. One of the strongest indicators of such impacts is loss of native language as a result of an influx of tourist languages (McLuhan, 1962; Cybriwsky, 1970; White, 1974; Coppock, 1977). However there are also positives as studies examining impacts of festivals found the major benefits to be the establishment of community pride, social interaction, sharing of ideas, community identity, and community wellness (Delamere and Hinch, 1994; McKean, 1978). In general the development of a tourism body or agency within a region predates the design, organisation and hosting of a festival or special event. This was not the case in

Kilkenny. In Kilkenny a festival acted as the catalyst to the inception of tourism. A similar inversion existed within Kilkenny city's heritage marketing narrative.

2.2.1 Elements within tourism: Heritage

History has become the living exhibit, the living spectacle of the mythic past, an attraction that has abandoned the old 'static' approach for something new, fresh and interactive (Brett, 1996; Hetherington, 1999). At the core of this popularisation of historic events is (what some may view as) the loss of authenticity and a new glorification of events which necessitates ignoring the hardships of day-to-day life. These sanitised and reconstructed histories have to swap educative authentic qualities in favour of razzle, dazzle and pizzazz (Hannigan 1998) thus issuing in a McDonaldisation of history (Relph, 1976) ignoring harsher elements of history in order to indulge in cultural nostalgia and 'popcorn' history. Some place managers adopt a 'tourist-historic city' (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1990; 2000) approach to selling the city as a heritage product. These heritage cities are festooned with national images that, while they may benefit the city and the perception of its culture to the tourist, often do so at the expense of local traditions and their distinct local heritage. There are cases where governments have set up national heritage cities and heritage parks as symbols of a unified national historic cultural identity (Taylor, 1986; Tunbridge, 2002), some removing local distinctiveness to portray unified 'traditional' costumes and dress (Crang, 1998; 2000)^v. While heritage can supply a place with a much needed selling point it runs the risk of becoming hijacked by nationalism (Brett, 1996). Analysing the motivations and coalitions behind the globally marketed (almost single-function) heritage-city (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1990; 2000) is essential to understand the production of images involved and their desired message.

The tourism departments of many countries now actively seek global heritage status from organisations such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the World Heritage Centre and associated branches: International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), International Council of Museums (ICOM), and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Tourism site managers and

heritage managers actively seek World Heritage Site designations as they add to its marketability, prestige and pseudo importance (Boorstin, 1961). As Prentice and Andersen point out *other European cities can offer a feeling of ethnicity to tourists largely unconcerned with where they are going so long as a desire to consume the diversity of European culture is met. These tourists may be characterized as Ooi's (2002) versatile tourists, utilizing a repertoire of social behaviors in response to mediated consumption opportunities* (Prentice and Andersen 2003, p3-31).

Re-conceptualising composite product offerings in heritage townscapes encourages multiple uses of the same space *the recognition of multiple audiences potentially extends into conceptualisation, how one thinks of festivals. The festival is foremost a composite experiential product, consumed by an elite with international tastes, seeking gregariousness, excellence, and familiarity* (Prentice and Andersen 2003, p. 3-31).

It is this ability of the festival to transform or subvert space, urban or rural, and its everyday geographies that fascinates. Gimmick or not there are more aspects to festivals beyond just an excuse for hi-jinx and merriment. Their transformative impact on place use, place image, community networking and the local impact on the economy make festivals an intriguing study for those interested in studies of place and space. Not surprisingly the literature produced by those interested in the study of festivals is broad and varied.

2.2.2 Elements within tourism: Festivals

We've treated our cities shabbily ... if ever a thing needed a catalyst, a vision, a promise, a reassurance – it's the city. And the festival that delivers the catalyst, the vision, the reassurance will be hugged and cherished by the citizens of that community (Golden 1990)

In 1994, just over one quarter of the population [of the republic of Ireland] attended an arts festival, a summer school or arts week (Clancey et al., 1995, p. 38 quoted in (Quinn 1996, p. 91).

Performing arts, and other festivals, are a worldwide tourism phenomenon and in its current imagining the festival has acquired the characteristics of a destination in its own right, even where it is nomadic in character. When the essence of a place is entrenched in the makeup and conception of a festival it creates a marriage of event and place that can be very valuable in promotional, tourism, heritage and local management/power terms (Getz 1991; Quinn 2000; Bowdin, McDonnell et al. 2002; Prentice and Andersen 2003)

Conceived of as agents of community development, festivals, which are rooted in communities can promote social cohesion, offer positive development experiences for both individuals and communities, enhance civic identities and strengthen communal resources when any profits made from the festival activity are re-invested in the community (Getz and Frisby, 1988, quoted by Quinn 1996, p. 96)

The boost in the number of festivals held annually is just as multifaceted in cause, ranging from supply factors such as cultural planning (Barke and Harrop 1994; Evans 2001), rural tourism development (Chhabra, Sills et al. 2003; Fleischer and Tchetchik 2005; Frochot 2005), and civic re-positioning (Kotler, Haider et al. 1993; Landry 2000), through to demand factors such as serious leisure (Stebbins, 2007), lifestyle sampling, socialization needs, and the desire for creative and "authentic" experiences (Relph 1976, Tuan 1976, Urry, 1995). Special interest and niche tourism events have become increasingly popular (Weiler & Hall, 1992) not just in arts, comedy, culture or ethnic-pride festivals but in broader speciality music festivals and sports festivals.

The approaches taken to examining festivals is as varied as the festivals themselves. (Turner 1982) and (Tomlinson 1986) investigate the essence of festivals, their liminoid values, especially in villages, on an anthropological level as a 'performance' reflecting local symbols, imagery and traditional values (purity, beauty, religion, etc.). These

studies focus on the roles played by participants, the festivals themselves, and the reversal of norms that are sometimes triggered within the community. Crompton and McKay (1997) queried the motivation for festival visiting and offered six factors of which Cultural exploration was only one. The enjoyment of company as gregariousness is a recurrent motive, and socialization, family and other, has been found frequently as a dimension of festival consumption. Chacko and Schaffer (1993) described the sharing of experiences as a particular form of socialization which may ultimately be independent of any specific place (Getz and Cheyne 1997). Landry (2000) approaches festivals as economic and place promotional catalysts, where local culture is a natural and inexhaustible resource of great potential. Evans (2001) in his examination of cultural planning notes the multiple characters of festivals and mega-events from *politically and economically high risk ventures* (p. 236), and *instant heritage, to formulaic devices for tired venues* and monuments *supporting and reinforcing the image of power, whether religious or secular* (quoting Bonnemaïson 1990, p. 25). Hall (1998) subdivides events and heritage festivals into themed retailing, manufactured nostalgic kitsch, and urban culture injections through drama, lifestyle and other *cultural animations*. Relph (1976) saw what he called *museumisation* as anti-place, placeless, and a crass contemporisation of a *plastic past*, whereas John Hannigan's book *The Fantasy City* (1998) unveils the most bizarre and original cultural commodities and festivals with understated irony. Many others have taken different angles to the use and abuse of events and festivals: local authority perspectives (Fretter 1993), the city as commodity (Goodwin 1993), or spectacle (Kearns 1993), or consumption super-site (Thrift and Glennie 1993).

David Byrne (2001) approaches the political economy of branding culture with cautious disappointment and illustrates the effects the Internet has had on the themed city and its satellite events. Kotler et al. (1993) see festivals as another component to place marketing, acknowledging their marketability, drawing power, and (sometimes) ingenuity yet fails to delve further. Falassi (1987, p. 1) saw five meanings/categorisations to festivals (holy celebration, annual celebration of an important figure or harvest, a cultural arts celebration, a fair, or an occasion of "generic gaiety"). Indeed the idea of having fun can itself become subverted into *serious leisure* (Stebbins, 1992; 2004; 2007),

where festivals attract serious tourists, actively consuming the familiar as art form or socialization, with an intensity one would not normally associate with relaxation. For Stebbins, serious tourists are those for whom cultural pursuits are a form of identity creation, more than a hobby, more than just leisure but a pursuit of character building through creative-experience tourism. Some 'serious tourists' are employed in cultural occupations that, in a way, are extensions of their leisure employment. These serious festival goers fill the role of a particular type of consumer to whom the arts festival is an integral part to the purposive, intellectual and *high* cultural shaping of their identity.

Consumption of the exotic in these cases manifests in the search for the sincere or the authentic (Urry 1990; Urry 1995; MacCannell 2001) cultured experience. Authenticity as verisimilitude is achieved through meeting tourists' expectations about what a place looks and feels like. Authenticity through involvement (and ultimately through reflexivity) requires a different product mix. If festivals are considered as destinations, one needs to understand how performing arts festivals (quite literally staged productions) are felt to be real by their participants (Boorstin 1961 (1992); Meethan 2001).

In particular, how much does actual location matter? For those seeking an arts essentialism, how does the ethnicity of the location matter? For those seeking an ethnic essentialism, how do contemporary arts affect the realization of this search? For the latter tourists, what, if any, are the tensions between familiarity and strangerhood? Indeed, how important is the particular ethnicity of a destination? In marketing terms, how do the symbol-systems of tourists differ between segments? Thinking of festivals as destinations not only sets a research direction, it has great practical application in defining the unique selling points of particular festivals (Prentice and Andersen 2003, p. 3-31).

Urry (1990) incorporates festivals into the larger tourism bracket, reciting many examples of festivals yet differentiating them from the overall tourist orientated destination product. This mirrors Hughes' (1997) warning that not everyone at a destination during a festival can be assumed to be a festival-goer especially if a place attracts tourists

throughout the year, with a wealth of heritage and popular cultural sites to exploit. Here again then is a need to recognize a potential range of motivations and behaviours, and their manifest combination. These forms are also of interest in terms of multiple uses of space and for market-based product development. Prentice and Anderson (2003, p. 3-31) see the festival as *a polyphony of attractions, individually competing, but offering opportunities for joint consumption through the sheer range and volume of performances on offer*. Others bring their understanding of festival to a higher level and see it as *experience theatre, in imaginary space into which tourists enter and through which they negotiate a physical and conceptual path* (Bruner and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1994, p.449).

2.2.3 Elements within tourism: Hallmark events, mega events and sports festivals

Some festival organisers prefer small attendances composed of core enthusiasts, others prefer their festival attendances to grow in size. Some festivals or special events become popular enough to be deemed hallmark events. Given the challenges associated with hallmark events, (Hinch and Hingham 2003; Hingham 2004) suggested that small-scale sports events might result in more positive effects for host communities. Considering the similarities in scale, organisation, and levels of professionalism these small-scale sports event make excellent comparison case studies for festivals and small-scale special events (especially those under scrutiny here). Furthermore, Hingham (2004) explained small-scale-sports events usually operate within existing infrastructures, require minimal investments of public funds, are more manageable in terms of crowding and congestion compared to hallmark events, and seem to minimize the effects of seasonality. Studies of sports festivals have multiple positive similarities to Kilkenny's arts festival, cultural festivals and comedy festival. In terms of organisation, scale, composition and goals, sports festivals provided excellent guidelines for studying other single focus festivals and the difference in impacts and inputs between events of varying scale.

The distinction between small scale and hallmark events is not simply related to the size of the event, but is also related to the fact that regular events do not tax the resources of

the host region in the same manner as hosting a hallmark or mega-event. To date, the literature on small-scale-sport events is sparse (Weed and Bull; Scarrot 1999; Standeven and De Knopp 1999; Gammon and Kurtzman 2002; Hinch and Hingham 2003; Hudson 2003). They suggest that small-scale sport tourism events may hold more benefit for a community than hosting mega events by avoiding straining local resources, capital and goodwill. This is also heavily reflected in the festivals under study (eg. the large numbers attending the Kilkenny Beer Festival as opposed to the Kilkenny Arts Festival). Faulkner et al. (1998), suggests that many tourists are interested in little else besides socializing with their friends and family, thus ignoring all other attractions.

Increased growth in American nostalgia sport tourism has been quite dramatic (Gammon and Kurtzman 2002). The results of Heather J. Gibson, Cynthia Willming and Andrew Holdnak (2002) suggest that college sport and (similar small-scale sport events), hold potential for tourism development in the host communities/town. In studies of small-scale-sports events in New Zealand, Hingham and Hinch (2003) found that the tourism associated with rugby *Super Fifteen* games helped to establish a distinct regional image for cities hosting a professional franchise.

The most in-depth explorations of the nature, structure, strategies, inputs, outputs and varied potential of festivals and special events are by Getz (1991; 1997), Bowdin, McDonnell et al (2002) and, Quinn (1996). Getz's mirco-scrutiny of the governance and new management of these politically and economically devised consumption events is well documented (1997, 1995). Furthermore, Getz's chapter layout (1997) was adapted as a guideline to structure and order each festival chapter to cope with the wealth of information coming from multiple sources and provide a comparative outline for the festival chapters (See Methods and Methodology). However, although Getz (1995, 1997) was utilised extensively throughout this study, his suggestion to use Population Ecology (2002, and in personal conversation) was not incorporated. Getz and others use this theory to *examine whole "populations" of organizations, such as the festival sector in general (Hannan and Freeman 1977, 1984) (Getz 2002, p. 215)*, why some festivals succeed and others fail being due to population dynamics rather than the individual

festival organization and product. Failures might arise from a poor 'fit' with the environment (ie. being unable to attract interest or support from its host community (Donaldson 1996) and how an organisation adapts to accommodate environmental contingencies).

Although his article *Why Festivals Fail* (Getz 2002) would provide numerous insights into analysing festival management strategies and survival, there were discrepancies between the theory and the narratives. Where the Beer Festival did in fact bow to public pressure from a vocal and mobilised minority they did not face a backlash from the larger population as a whole. They did not fail due to changes within the "dynamic environment" (p.215) or on their "fit-ness" and they most definitely were not a 'highly specialised organisation' or 'less able to adapt and therefore more likely to fail' (2002, p.215). And although in most cases *Survivors* [festivals] *demonstrate the best 'fit' by occupying a 'niche' for which they are especially suited and by adaptation to environmental changes* (2002, p.215) this was once again not the narrative coming out of the Beer Festival. Likewise the Arts festival narrative did not support Getz (2002) theory: it struggled to achieve the popularity of its predecessor, met with hostility from key opinion formers and in later years displayed organisational misjudgements and inefficiencies that should have seen it collapsing in on itself. *Unfortunately, many festival managers fail to see they are in a competitive environment and tend to act as if their product was both indispensable and cannot be substituted* (Getz, 2002, p.214) This criticism is uncannily appropriate to the *Kilkenny Arts Week* organisation in the 1980s, yet still that organisation survived. The internal restructuring that did occur within the *Kilkenny Arts Festival* around 1997 did fit with the population ecology theory yet was never reflected in the product or any change in popularity of the festival or changes in demand. There were further problems applying the theory to the *Confederation of Kilkenny Festival* as its popularity was extremely high and growing when it was discontinued.

Lastly, under scrutiny population ecology did not address the role of the networks that Richard Cook had created and developed in the *Confederation of Kilkenny Festival* that

were so formidable when tested during the *Cat Laughs Comedy Festival*. In his rebellion against Guinness Cook made decisions that, in population ecology terms, should never have happened (or should have resulted in failure). His decision made him an extremely unpopular 'fit' with the Vintners Association within Kilkenny, yet both Cook and the festival survived. Once again population ecology did not appear to be the best 'fit' for analysing Kilkenny's festivals.

Despite this, other elements from Getz's *Event Management and Event Tourism* (1997) were inspirational for ordering the incoming information and subsequent chapter structure suggesting the following as a possible blue print for analysing the organisation's management:

- Organizing and coordinating
- Leadership
- Planning
- Evaluating and controlling
- Human resources (or staffing)
- Financing and marketing (1997, p.11)

Furthermore Getz outlined how staff/volunteers rise within the hierarchy and gain responsibility, skills, experience and knowledge. As well as becoming technically proficient, these agents become skilled people-managers, their human management knowledge and local know-how combining with conceptual knowledge and methods (contacts, resources, personal skills, commonsense). Getz utilises Kavanagh & Woods, (1993) to expand to include such skills as key components of the Event Management System:

- Communication skills – writing, speaking, listening and interpersonal
- Intelligence – problem solving, goal setting, critical thinking
- Integrity – commitment, ability to inspire/ create loyalty / leadership qualities
- Experience

- positive attitude

Getz saw the festival as *a set of interdependent or interacting elements. Any change in key environmental factors will affect the event and its management, whereas the event's impacts on the community, and environment are equally important. Managers must understand the dynamics of the interdependencies, anticipate change, and adapt through various strategies...a system, interdependent or interacting elements, dynamics of the interdependencies, adapt through various strategies* (Getz, 1997, p.14). Hence Getz was utilised as both a key influential thinker within the study of special events and event management and as blueprint on ordering structures and how the chapters could be individually organised.

Bernadette Quinn's (1996) seminal article *Re-thinking Arts Festival Policy in Ireland* analyses the rhetoric and strategies formulated in the *Arts Council Arts Plan 1995-1997*. Her conclusions echoed my own reading of arts festival policy documents and her articulation helped shape my own analysis of Kilkenny's flagship festivals. She notes that the council claim *to support and encourage arts festivals as points of energy which give a significant boost to artistic life, community life and the local economy* (Quinn, p.92, quoting *Arts Council Arts Plan 1995-1997*) yet it does not state how these points of energy are fostered or controlled. It does not try to understand these points of energy or what manner of *boost* it gives. These points are taken as given and seemingly expected to self manifest. There are no Arts Council suggestions to the control, ignition or tracking of these points of energy, no mapping of its power flow or how to approach the understanding and explaining of these points of energy. Unfortunately this pattern of proclamation without education returns as Quinn examines the strengths and weaknesses in the Irish festival sector noting that two elements were central to addressing key issues within creating self sustaining popular festivals:

- Voluntary management
- Festivals as commodified arts activities

Voluntary management being typified by high levels of enthusiasm and committed, around the clock support and dedication had their share of bonuses and drawbacks:

- Arts festivals require community integration – organisers are so tapped out from concentrating on the festival they are unable to channel energies towards community/region integration of the arts
- Sponsor demands for high impact sensational events to increase brand popularity may detract from integrity, status and seriousness of other works.
- Committee dependency on limited members breeds elitism and an image of exclusivity, low turnover can create stagnation among committee members, leading to member burnout and frustration. Inability to attract new blood leads to difficulties in finding successors for key positions

To address these shortcomings, the Arts Council committed itself to supporting *the professionalisation of a number of arts festivals to assist continuity, improve standards and development* (Arts Plan 1995-1997, Arts Council, 1994, p. 23) (Quinn 1996, p.103). Unfortunately, the *how* part of this professionalisation process was not explained, the problem was identified, but no solution was stated, or any procedure recommended. Workshops were developed to train festival volunteers in *a range of performance and administrative skills* (Quinn 1996, p. 103) yet no set criteria or solutions were developed. Quinn continues to point out that this lack of professionalisation is so pervasive that a centralised system to tackle these issues needed to be developed.

Whereas some of these events are highly professional and commercial, operating on vast budgets, the great majority are amateur and run on a shoestring (Waterman, 1996, p. 3 quoted by Quinn 1996)

While acknowledging that some festivals are held for the sole purpose of bringing the arts to wider audience (thanks to grants and funding they are free to do so) some are held to make money leading to issues of authenticity and festivals as commodified arts activities. As every festival has to seek sponsorship, external demands are expected on some of the

festivals features and programmes. Arrangements with sponsors can place pressure on festival organisers. Quinn emphasises the need for tourism promoters to be aware of tourism-arts tensions and the impacts tourist-directed arts events could have on the future of local arts developments if the arts events are driven by a non-arts agenda. Once again the aspect of festival control festival professionalisation and festival energies become issues of concern: which agenda has dominance? Who is in control? And how is this control exerted?

In the course of the article more questions are asked than are answered: arts festivals are described as *points of energy* but with no explanation of how these points manifest, are to be manifested, controlled, harnessed or tracked; that festivals should professionalise yet with no guidance, instruction or solid strategies on how to do this; as festivals are forced to seek sponsorship and partnership with other interests questions of who governs the festival come to the fore. However, as Quinn points out, there are no answers to these questions within the Arts Plan (or seemingly the Arts Council).

The need for a re-focused and invigorated approach to festivals is heightened by the growing pressures which festivals face as the arts become increasingly commodified. It is appropriate that the Arts Council re-thinks its policy on festivals and, in partnership with other local, regional and national agencies, develops means of ensuring that this potential is realised. (Quinn 1996, p. 106)

2.3 The Arts in Ireland

Durkan (1994) concluded that there were economic, efficiency, equity and tourism arguments to justify state expenditure in the arts and the production and utilisation of the arts in Ireland. At the time the arts directly employed approximately 14,500 people along with 4-5,000 jobs being created indirectly (Durkan, 1994, p.21).

On the wider definition of the arts sector contained in the Coopers and Lybrand study: total revenue of the arts is about £450 million; export earnings are approximately £100 million; State grants amount to £50 million; total full-time equivalent employment is about 21,500 (Durken, 1994, p.15).

Durkan (1994) lists national pride, societal improvement through continuous education, and an expansion of a society's human capital as other non-quantifiable benefits of supporting the arts in society (1994, p.8-9). He points out that tourists rarely pick a destination based on a single attraction, and that a strong arts culture directly and indirectly contributes to an area's pulling power. This strongly echoed findings from the Arts Council commissioned study *The Public and the Arts: A survey of Behaviour and Attitudes in Ireland* (Clancy, Drury et al. 1994) a study carried out to gauge the impact of policy development on levels of participation in, and attitudes towards, the arts:

A second issue and a new strand in cultural policy which has recently been identified as a tributary to the mainstream and flowing from changes in the economic circumstances in developed countries has been defined as "instrumental" cultural policy (Vestheim, 1994). It involves using cultural ventures and investments as a means to obtain goals in areas other than the cultural. Such goals can relate to investment and profit, attracting tourism, creating employment, or urban renewal and their instrumental aspect lies in emphasising culture and cultural ventures as means rather than ends in themselves. These policies generally involve partnerships between the public and private sectors. New alliances between the arts, public administration and private financial interests are emerging both in Europe and the U.S.A. where such partnerships are involved in revitalising inner cities, stimulating economic growth and supporting the arts. (Clancy, Drury et al, 1994, p.31)

This study revealed that although 85% of the population surveyed value the contemporary arts as much as our cultural heritage, only 46% believed that the arts were an important employer, and that those who support the arts do so mainly in recognition of

their social and cultural value (Clancy, Drury et al, 1994, p.92). There was little perception of the arts as a significant employer in Ireland, but strong agreement on the importance of the role of the arts in the tourist industry. Durken points out that there are difficulties associated with trying to sell the ‘Arts in society’ product. In the case of the arts, ignorance or a lack of information about the arts means that potential consumers are disadvantaged when it comes to availing of/participating in/appreciating the arts (Durken, p.10-11). (See Table 2.1)

Table 2.1: Percentage of national population of attendance at selected Arts events in selected countries

| | Ireland (1994) | Britain (1991) | Scotland (1991) | Wales (1993) | N. Ireland (1991) | Finland (1991) | France (1989) |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Cinema | 54 | 45 | 57 | 38 | 35 | 35 | - |
| Play/Theatre | 37 | 24 | 34 | 19 | Up to 20 approx | 37 | 45 |
| Popular Music | 22 | 18 | 31 | 18 | 17 | - | - |
| Classical Music | 14 | - | 15 | - | 4 | - | 21 |
| Opera | 6 | - | 11 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 18 |
| Art Exhibition | 23 | 18 | 37 | - | 7 | - | - |

1) Notes to Original table: All figures in percentages representative of total population in each country

2) Source: Table 28, *The Public and the Arts: A survey of behaviour and attitudes in Ireland* (Clancy et al, 1994, p. 102)^{vi}

A full European comparison by Clancy et al. revealed the following:

A comparison of aggregate attendances in 1994 at those artforms for which data was collected in 1981 shows that overall attendance is up from 60% to 78%. This increase is found for all artforms, with the exception of ballet where there is no increase in attendance, and performances of traditional music, where there is only a marginal increase from 21% to 24%. In the case of some artforms the increase is quite dramatic. For example, the proportion of those attending a performance of popular music has jumped from 17% in 1981 to 39% in 1994

while attendance at an exhibition of paintings or sculpture has almost trebled, with an increase from 8% in 1981 to 23% in 1994. This increase in attendance at live events across all artforms is impressive given that the 1981 survey had concluded that support for these kinds of event was “relatively low” and did not “suggest a healthy situation”. (Clancy et al, 1994, p.38)

Yet two-thirds of the population regarded the arts as having the same value as sporting activity to the community. The arts, for a significant minority of the population, are regarded as an important social outlet in that 27% disagreed or disagreed strongly with the statement that *for me the arts are more about individual interest than a means of socialising with other people* (Clancy et al, 1994, p.91). There is also a strong recognition of the role of living arts and artists with the vast majority of respondents (85%) agreeing with the statement that *arts and artists of our times are as important to our society as the legacy of the arts and artists of the past*, and only 6% actually disagreeing (Clancy et al, 1994, p.92).

Other complications that were highlighted by Durken (1994) included that not everyone has had the same exposure to, education of, or experience with the arts, and *it is not always clear what exactly constitutes the arts. The boundaries of the arts are not obvious, and changing technology is shifting even well defined boundaries in some sub sectors* (1994, p.11). Similar to Crang’s (1998) problems with finding one definition to define culture, it is difficult to delineate the arts, and what constitutes the arts sector and its boundaries. Some arts fall within neat categories, which are staunchly entrenched and defined (e.g. theatre, opera, visual arts), but Durken points out that frequently artists enjoy blurring boundaries and subverting genres, exploring what can be created from the collision of many art forms at once (eg. Post modern installation pieces, street theatre).

Durken also noted that the retail side of the arts sector was producing a flow of goods and services including literature retail, music retail and video/DVD retail and forecasted that production in the arts would soon involve new techniques, new recording technology (CD’s, PC’s etc) new interpretations, innovations, new visions, new ways of expressing

and putting into media the experience of modern life, all driven by the creative spark of the artist(s). Art would see the arrival of advanced technology, which would help develop new levels of interplay between the artist and technology, not only in production, but also in reproduction with *obvious implications for the arts in terms of the ability to provide high quality works, ...* (p.26). This was also echoed in the Clancy et al. study:

One such issue is that associated with technological development: above all, the enormous popularity of what might be described as the personal culture centre, located in the home and equipped with television, radio, video, hi-fi. As this home-based technology continues to develop, thinkers and policy makers are framing plans for a future which has been defined in terms of "the privatisation of pleasure" (Mulgan and Warpole, 1986). Rapidly growing, easy and inexpensive access to technology has even greater significance in relation to the arts in a society with high levels of unemployment and enforced leisure (Clancy et al, 1994, p.31).

The importance of this focus on the role of technology in the arts to this thesis is two fold. Firstly, the role of technology and how new technologies are introduced to existing systems. Secondly, the ability to embrace and utilise new technology becomes significant in the development of two of Kilkennys' festivals, and the inability to adapt hinders other festivals. A key point to note here is how certain technological adaptations made by festival committee members pre-dates Arts Council recommendations.

2.3.1 The Arts Council of Ireland

Understanding the restructuring of the Arts Council of Ireland through the 1990s and its role in the funding of festivals in Ireland is vital to understanding how the perception of multi-genre and mono-genre festivals were being viewed in Ireland by those paying the bills. As the decade progressed, the Arts Council tried to impress upon their dependents the need to professionalize, and to support and encourage "points of energy". But as Bernadette Quinn (Quinn 1996) points out *identifying precisely what is meant by "points*

of energy”, and communicating how exactly such a point of energy might be created, are matters which the Arts Council has not thought to prioritise. Encouraging these enigmatic “points of energy” was only one of the many influences The Arts Council of Ireland held, and had the potential to hold, over the *becoming* of many festivals in Kilkenny and Ireland.

The following is a brief summary of the Council’s approach to its own *becoming* as Ireland’s chief arts development agency, and the professionalisation and restructuring of its own internal structures and external grants system through new managerial technologies. It outlines the rise in the number and type of festivals funded by the Council and their official stance on the role of festivals within Irish arts, and Irish society. This segment finishes with a review of the main outlines from the 2001 evaluation of *The 1999 – 2001 Arts Plan*, a key Arts Council publication released after festival committees in Kilkenny had already devised, developed, initiated and completed their own plan.

2.3.2 The restructuring of the Arts Council of Ireland

Formed in 1951 as an independent body, An Chomhairle Ealaíon/The Arts Council, has supported numerous festival organisers, artists and arts organisations financially and through the provision of resources and facilities. The Council operates under the arts acts of 1951 and 1973 and provides a wide-ranging platform of grants, awards, and archives to promote and assist the arts through performance and education. Consisting of not more than seventeen members, the board is appointed by the Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism (formerly by the Taoiseach) and meets eleven times a year. Directors are then appointed by the council to manage the day-to-day workings of the staff and oversee the implementation of Council policies and initiative. As a publicly accountable body, it publishes an annual report and financial statements to provide the Oireachtas and the general public with an overview of the year's work.

These annual reports outline the changes the organisation underwent from 1991 to 2001 and how its efforts to restructure itself met with internal protests and resistance. At the

centre of these reforms are the managerial and business technologies that were adopted to handle the growing levels of applications and revolutionise the internal working of the council. In 1991 a management development committee advised the Council on various measures to help support the professional development of Irish arts managers. Its recommendations included *arts management training, the publication of a series of handbooks on practical aspects of arts management, and the promotion of an arts management conference* (*The Arts Council Annual Report 1991, 1992, p. 41, (ArtsCouncil 1964 - 1998)*). The Council were advised to change to avail of new management technologies and strategies. They were also advised to re-think their approach to the awarding of grants and funding. The development committee proposed a professionalisation of the councils structures, but stopped short of actually suggesting how the council would go about it. In 1992 the Council's state funding rose, the first in a series of increases that would continue throughout the decade. However as the funding available increased, the number of staff reviewing and awarding grants remained the same. By 1994 the increasing pressure caused by the growth in funding and received applications was starkly pointed out in the annual report:

The Arts Council of Wales with a budget of £14.5m has a staff of 70; the Arts Council of Northern Ireland with a budget of £6.6m has a staff of 37. An Chomhairle Ealaíon with a budget of £16.25m has a staff of 27 of whom a significant number are on short-term contracts and are generally paid at a lower scale than their equivalents elsewhere in the public service. (The Arts Council Annual Report 1994, p. 11)

To combat this imbalance the council looked to technology to provide an answer, or at least a short-term solution. Beginning in 1993 the Arts Council chairperson, Ciaran Benson, announced the intention to develop the use of business technologies:

The arts sector is growing ever more sophisticated and will be a central part of the high-technology information and experience industries of the twenty-first century. How these control or are controlled will be one of the great cultural

issues of the coming years. Now is the time to think imaginatively and flexibly about how best to ensure that Ireland is well equipped to reap the cultural benefits of these technological and economic developments while avoiding their snares (Ciaran Benson, The Arts Council Annual Report, 1993, p. 8).

Following on from this in 1994 they set about restructuring their internal operation, although this did not conclude as smoothly as the council originally hoped:

In March 1994 the Management Services Unit of the Department of Finance issued a report and recommendations in connection with an improved staffing structure. The Council accepted the report in February 1995, subject to reaching agreement with SIPTU, representing the Council's staff. The report recommended an increase in staff and the establishment of a new Assistant Director grade. The staff expressed reservations about parts of the report and suggested some modifications. Following protracted negotiations, in March 1996 the Labour Court supported proposals already put forward by the Labour Relations Commission, which included the appointment of three Assistant Directors. The position at September 1996 is that the Council, Staff and the Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht all accept the Labour Court's recommendation. However, the Department of Finance continues to withhold approval on the grounds that to implement the Court's recommendation would breach Government guidelines on pay and numbers employed in the public service. The Council regards this delay in implementing a very reasonable compromise, reached after two years discussion, as being a grave hindrance to its work. (The Arts Council Annual Report, 1995, p. 16)

During this time they upgraded their technological approach to servicing the arts industry of Ireland:

During 1995 thirty-five PC-based workstations were installed and connected to a Local Area Network, replacing the UNIX-based network in use since 1990. Some

multimedia PCs were also installed. Work commenced on the conversion of the existing Grant Reporting System to a Grant Management System, which will track the progress of all applications for grant-aid received and ultimately provide vital quantitative data relating to the entire grant-giving operation. New technologies will be implemented and the existing information system modified as necessary to cope with the Council's expansion and strategic initiatives and to improve the level of service provided. (The Arts Council Annual Report 1995, p. 16)

The Arts Council's technological revolution did not stop there. Throughout 1997, the Council continued to develop a computerised grant management system. With funding seemingly ever increasing and an ever-growing volume of grant applications and other business the council found its old processing methods grinding to a halt. Thus a computerized system was introduced to meet the demands placed on the old system. All revenue applications were processed on this new computerised system in 1997 (see *The Arts Council Annual Report 1997* p. 10 for details). Those observing the upgrade noted that without a full blown revamp of the entire Council the new systems would become redundant and so steps were taken. In 1998 a new-look Arts Council with fresh members tried to balance artistic excellence with full inclusion for all communities, as inclusion was fast becoming important on the political agenda. It also saw the first steps by the new Council to move beyond the out dated and restrictive annual approach to funding.

Beginning in 1999 the council, under advisement from consultants, various European councils, and Irish arts festival managers (including Kilkenny representatives), initiated *a prototype exercise with about 16 organisations, representing a gamut of artistic interests*, (Patricia Quinn, *Arts Council Annual report 1999*, p. 3), to set up a *multi-annual* three-year funding system. The same year saw the appointment of a Head of Public Affairs to marshal and co-ordinate the council's message within the media, and the backing of a second Arts plan to restructure the council further between 1999 and 2001.

More importantly in 1999 the arts took a partnership role in local authorities. Public sector reform trends in public governance in Ireland were placing demands for strategic

planning on public sector bodies such as the Arts Council. The principal manifestation of this was seen in the appointment of a position of professional arts officer as part of the core staff of the local authority (although one had been operating in Kilkenny for years previously). All of the appointees, both new and old, received training sessions in arts programming and practise.

In 2000 more professional restructurings took place. Assisted by the Institute of Public Administration and others, The Arts Council reassessed its internal structures, and began restructuring its committees: forming one for awards, projects and initiatives, one for grants, and one for business and finance (Arts Council Annual Report, 2000 p.32). In 2001 the council finally introduced online services for the public, organizations and artists after successful tests the previous year. This streamlining of the grant management processes increased notification times, and staff efficiency and was such a success plans were drawn up to expand the online operation to include the granting of awards and other online information services (2001, p.40-41). Mayday Management consultants were commissioned to help assemble ‘development needs analysis texts’ for venue managers, and to enable the council to set up support networks for new venue managers (Arts Council Annual Report, 2001, p. 39). The Council also announced new key aims and objectives centred on their findings and dedicated to better management within the organization through improved use of new and existing managerial technologies:

- *We aim to improve the professional formation, practice and career development of artists, to support them in achieving their full artistic potential, and to improve the viability of the arts as a career in Ireland and abroad (Arts Council Annual Report, 2001, p. 9)*
- *We encourage excellence and innovation in the promotion of the arts in Ireland and abroad by directing funding towards strategic planning by arts organisations (Arts Council Annual Report, 2001, p. 11)*
- *We work to improve the professional, managerial and organisational development capabilities of the arts sector (Arts Council Annual Report, 2001 p. 39)*

As changes were being brought in across the Arts Council, one area which the council supported was no different – the arts festivals. . But where the Council was shaping what

was happening in the lives of artists and musicians in Ireland with their sweeping new changes, the festivals were affecting the Council with their changes

2.3.3 The Arts Council and Irish festivals

In the course of a decade as the council's funding increased from £9,755,100 in 1991, to €45,700,000 in 2002 (see table 2.2). Its support of the Kilkenny Arts Week/Festival exploded from £20,000 to €229,375 (see table 2.3). In 1997 the Arts Council supported twenty-five multi-genre arts festivals and fifty-five single-genre festivals. In 1998 the number of multi-genre festivals funded had increased to thirty-three. In response to this growing demand for funding the total allocation to multi-genre festivals that year was increased by 25% (from £319,000 to £424,000). That year also saw the first funding of Dublin's *St. Patrick's Day Festival*. While this festival is predominantly celebratory and not an arts festival as such, funding was provided in support of the high quality, cross-community arts-activity involved.

Table 2.2 Money received by Arts Council for redistribution 1990 -2004

| 1) Year | 2) Money received | 3) Information source |
|----------|-------------------|--|
| 4) 1990 | 5) £ 9,755,100 | 6) The Arts Council Annual Report 1992, p.9 |
| 7) 1991 | 8) £ 10,666,100 | 9) The Arts Council Annual Report 1992, p.9 |
| 10) 1992 | 11) £ 10,425, 000 | 12) The Arts Council Annual Report 1992, p.9 |
| 13) 1993 | 14) £ 11,556,000 | 15) The Arts Council Annual Report 1994, p. 9 |
| 16) 1994 | 17) £13,303,000 | 18) The Arts Council Annual Report 1994, p. 9 |
| 19) 1995 | 20) £16,250,000 | 21) The Arts Council Annual Report 1994, p. 9 |
| 22) 1996 | 23) £18,409, 000 | 24) The Arts Council Annual Report 1996, p. 8 |
| 25) 1997 | 26) £21,132,000 | 27) The Arts Council Annual Report 1998, p.16 |
| 28) 1998 | 29) £26,474,000 | 30) The Arts Council Annual Report 1998, p.16 |
| 31) 1999 | 32) €35,936,000 | 33) The Arts Council Annual Report 2000, p.35 |
| 34) 2000 | 35) €45,100,000 | 36) The Arts Council Annual Report 2001, p.44 |
| 37) 2001 | 38) €48,200,000 | 39) The Arts Council Annual Report 2001, p.44 |
| 40) 2002 | 41) €45,242,152 | 42) The Arts Council Annual Report 2002, p.39 |
| 43) 2003 | 44) € 40,529,469 | 45) The Arts Council Annual Report 2003, p.145 |
| 46) 2004 | 47) € 48,884,652 | 48) The Arts Council Annual Report 2004, p.155 |

By 1999 the support for festivals and public spectacles had grown even stronger as the Arts Council established the Small Festivals and Events Scheme to fund twenty-three smaller scale festivals. Designed to be more responsive to smaller events, the scheme provided opportunities for communities in remote areas to organise and run high quality professional festival events and activities.

Table 2.3 Arts Council funding for theatre and arts in Kilkenny 1991-2004

| | Kilkenny Arts Week/Festival | Galway Arts Festival* | Bickerstaffe | Side notes on Watergate theatre | Notable once offs | Combined Source |
|------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1991 | £20,000 | £45,800 | -- | £6,100 | | ACAR** '91 p. 45, 47 |
| 1992 | £24,000 | £48,500 | -- | £355,750 | | ACAR '92 p. 10, 45, 52 |
| 1993 | £26,000 | £60,000 | -- | £331,000 | | ACAR '93 p. 24, 54, 56 |
| 1994 | £45,200 | £96,500 | £34,500 | | | ACAR '94 p. 80-2, 84 |
| 1995 | £46,000 | £112,000 | £29,000 | | Cleeres: £4,000 | ACAR '95 p. 53-6, 79 |
| 1996 | £60,000 | £115,000 | £62,000 | | | ACAR '96 p. 46-7, 84, 94-5 |
| 1997 | £55,200 | £120,600 | £45,300 | | | ACAR '97 p. 50, 58 |
| 1998 | £62,000 | £145,000 | £75,000 | | | ACAR '98 p. 31, 39, 42 |
| 1999 | £71,500 | £175,000 | £82,500 | | | ACAR '99 p. 20, 25-6 |
| 2000 | €209,092 | €355,297 | €3,200 | | | ACAR '00 p. 45, 47 |
| 2001 | € 229, 375 | €303,000 | €106,400 | | | ACAR '01 p. 77, 80, 81 |
| 2002 | €311,000 | €333,000 | €95,000 | | Cartoon Saloon €15,000, Barnstorm €331,000 | ACAR '02 p. 23, 24, |
| 2003 | €300,000 | €331,000 | € | | Cat Laughs €90,000, Barnstorm €220,000 | ACAR '03 p. 127, 129, 133 |
| 2004 | €340,000 | €380,000 | € | | Cat Laughs €95,000, Barnstorm €290,000, YIFM €60,000 | ACAR '04 P. 133, 138, |

*Galway figures included for comparison purposes.

**ACAR = The Arts Council Annual Report

In total, the Arts Council allocated £517,831 to festivals, including a grant of £70,000 to Kilkenny Arts Festival and £155,000 to the Galway Arts Festival. But that was not all. With the much hyped millennium drawing closer Millennium Festivals 2000 was set up to support six national festivals in a year long 'party' to celebrate the arrival of the millennium. This provided a further £1,400,000 in additional funding to the six festivals, one of which was the Kilkenny Arts Festival. Festivals across Ireland were developing faster than the Arts council could manage. Fortunately for the Arts Council, those at the

helm of these evolving festivals were only too willing to share their changes with them. These changes were incorporated and a new direction was set for the Arts Council.

2.3.4 The Arts Plan 1999 – 2001

A combination of political, economic and social developments have bred a new sense of capability and an enhanced level of expectation in a society conscious of a long and distinguished heritage. This is an entirely opportune time to re-evaluate, re-organise and radically reinvigorate the place of the arts at the heart of Irish society and the larger world (Brian Farrell, Chairman's Preface, Arts Council Annual Report 1999, p. 5)

Aware that more changes were needed, and doubly aware of its role as the State's official development agency for the arts, the Arts Council initiated a radical plan to restructure and professionalise its internal workings. The Arts Plan 1999-2001, was launched to examine ways of incorporating new technologies, new management techniques and new approaches to art management into the soon-to-be fifty-year old organization and was aimed at refining or replacing existing programmes, systems and structures to new ways of working. The Arts Council chairman Brian Farrell said that the plan was *a radical proposal for a new era, harnessing the techniques of strategic management initiatives in the service of the arts* (1999, p.6). Although this was not the first structural shake up within the Council it was the most professionally and technologically advanced. The Arts Plan was devised to ensure that the full potential of new technologies could be harnessed for artistic expression, dissemination, and for a new means of opening channels of access for all audiences, from all backgrounds – with all abilities. The initiators of the plan were also aware of technologies that could improve management in arts organizations, improve communication and co-operation, not only internally within the arts council, but also nationally and internationally between the council and the arts community it supported. One of the tasks put to the Arts Plan was to explore the best way to exploit the potential contribution emerging technologies could make to the arts as a tool for greater efficiency.

The plan also targeted the training of new and veteran personnel as a weakness within the greater arts infrastructure:

The education and training of people who work in the arts - as artists, technical specialists or managers, is inadequate to the needs even of the existing infrastructure; this deficit will become more acute as new venues open and as companies and artists operate in an increasingly competitive environment. (The Arts Plan 1991-2001, 1999b, p.11)

The dynamic nature of the arts requires the Arts Council to improve its systems and structures on a continuous basis. This will involve a review of the existing structure of the organisation, followed by the introduction of an improved management information system, and an enhanced programme of staff training and development, to ensure that the competencies and skills required for implementing the plan are in place. (ibid., p.26)

Other elements under inspection from the plan included the promotion of *excellence and innovation* in the arts, improving *career development of artists*, increasing audience numbers and increasing recognition for the role the arts play in society. All of these new changes, technologies and managerial strategies are at the core of ANT studies. These new operation systems, strategies and technologies reflect a newfound professional approach to festival management in Ireland, one that is mirrored in the festival committees operating in Kilkenny.

2.3.5 Art festivals and combined Arts

By 1999, multi-disciplinary arts festivals had become a popular element of the arts infrastructure in Ireland. The interaction of amateur, voluntary, community and professional artists, arts managers, venue managers and local officials was seen as contributing to the dynamism of not only the Arts sector but local tourism, community identity and public landscaping. More than forty-five festivals were being funded by the

council, seventeen of which were single genre festivals (ArtsCouncil, 1999b). Of those twenty-eight multi-genre arts festivals the council support ranged from 14% to 35% of the funding (p.47). The Arts Plan would hopefully speed up and streamline the processes these festivals would use year by year. Throughout the Arts council annual reports, Arts Plan and Arts Plan reviews, the introduction and need for new managerial technologies, and more efficient professional organisational practises in the arts and festivals is never questioned and always championed. Unfortunately, for all of the reports and recommendations, there is no discussion of what exactly these new technologies are, or how exactly un-established festival committees are supposed to incorporate these revolutionary wonders.

2.4 Mapping Networks

Festivals in Ireland represent an area of artistic activity which has developed largely on an ad-hoc basis. They have emerged where committed activists, working on a voluntary basis, have developed their own artistic initiatives in pursuit of particular agendas. (Quinn 1996, p. 91)

Place promotional products, heritage marketing and festival events require local support networks, intensive development marketing and the allocation of specialist assistance and funding. The processes involved vary geographically and socially yet in most regards requires essentially the same elements: private and public resources; efficient management techniques; experience; a firm understanding of market conditions; blood, sweat and volunteers. The city and its promotional mechanisms is now a product of the post-modern global economy and how a city is perceived is as important as what it produces:

Because trademarks and many of the other images flooding our experiences are, like most other pseudo-events, expensive to produce, someone always has an interest in disseminating, reinforcing and exploiting them (Boorstin 1961 (1992), p.185).

Different promotional projects require different partisan groups, depending on the current socio-eco-political climate and the area under scrutiny. Instigators need to mobilise different groups of activists and residents and their untapped resources. Actor-Network Theory was selected to understand how the flagship festivals in Kilkenny mobilised their activists and untapped their resources.

2.4.1 Actor-Network Theory

Actor-Network Theory (ANT) is a research framework for understanding the workings of organisations, organisers, non-organised agents, and other non-conforming characters, actors, agents and agencies that may become enrolled (or resist), and their relationship with one another^{vii}. Actor-Networks are

the chains which give rise to natural and social realities, realities which can only be understood as stabilised sets of relations which allow the construction of centres and peripheries, insides and outsides, humans and non-humans, nature and society, and so on (Murdoch 1997, p. 743).

Actor-Network Theory is an approach that tries to understand and trace the relationships and inter-reactions within these networks. It tracks the development of new networks and the constant enrolment and application of various heterogeneous elements which require management and continuous ‘tweaking’ until that network is no longer required or has been supplanted by another network. ANT traces the roles of scientists, entrepreneurs, concerned social workers, images, practises, devices, and technologies and their reconstruction of social contexts and conditions (of which they form a part) in labs, reports, social centres and elsewhere, where they try to understand, develop, or change the relationships linking the social or natural contexts upon which they act.^{viii}

ANT was devised within the field of Social Studies of Science and Technology. *The term started in French as ‘acteur reseau’. Translated into ‘actor-network’ the term took on a*

life of its own (Law 1997, p.5). As it was anglicised (and therefore introduced to a wider audience) it began to lose its edge^{ix} (Latour, 1999). A concept that originally saw itself as opening up corridors for future academic exploration found itself rendered impotent by constraints imposed through linguistic crutches and academia's theoretical determinism and obsession with bite-sized definitions that it had tried to escape in the first instance (see Law and Hassard, 1999).

For these attempts to convert actor-network theory into a fixed point, a specific series of claims, of rules, a creed, or a territory with fixed attributes also strain to turn it into a single location. Into a strong point, a fortress, which has achieved the double satisfactions of clarity and self-identity. ... Only dead theories and dead practises hang onto their names, insist upon their perfect reproduction. Only dead theories and dead practices seek to reflect, in every detail, the practices which came before. So there is, there should be, no identity, no fixed point (Law, 1999, p.10).

This 'no fixed point'^x allows for the unpacking and backtracking of relationships and networks and their outcomes and utilisation of available capacities in the production of an end product without bias (Murdoch 1998; Murdoch 2006). ANT has been described as *a ruthless application of semiotics*^{xi} (Law 1999; Law and Hassard 1999), yet it offers far more than analysis of texts or a post-modern dismantling of socially constructed dualisms. *In emphasizing description* (and the concomitant need to follow the network builders) *ANT claims it does not seek to provide a metalanguage – that is “a language which unveils and denounces falsity”* (Latour and Crawford, 1993, p.250) – rather it proposes an *infralanguage* (ibid), defined as *a symmetrical combination of theoretical repertoire and insights gained from the field or text being studied* (Murdoch, 1998, p.751).

2.4.2 ANT: Translation

Latour (1986) introduces the idea of translation to explain how scientific networks extend out of the laboratory into different scales or arenas. Translated or transplanted projects are not guaranteed to succeed. Not all actors think the same; their goals may be variants of the same theme yet different enough to have unique demands. Not all resource pools or raw materials will be the same. Adjustments must be made. Network managers, somehow, must align scientist, actor and actant. All of the festivals in this dissertation are translated ideas. They are all copied from other cities and transplanted into the context of Kilkenny. Changes are made to fit the festivals to suit the culture and landscape of Kilkenny and vice versa:

[T]ranslation networks' weave a socio-nature, an in-between that is inhabited by actants whose competence and identities vary along the translations transforming them (Latour 1995, p.58).

These translations involve a complex series of negotiations and re-negotiations within the networks whereby identities are fought over, roles ascribed, and power relations temporarily fixed (allowing for later fluctuations). As each network displays mobility, durability, capacity to exert force, and ability to return the identities of actors or actants are determined through negotiations within the networks *in relation to one another* (Callon, M., p.740). There is no promise of stability, even the most solid of hierarchies is merely *a set of connections is made for a moment, a reality that might hold together for a time* (Law, 1994 p.21). This ethic suits the early Kilkenny tourism committees and the fledgling professional boards on one level (finance, members, facilities, resources) and compliments the more advanced hierarchies that have assembled organizations and boards within their sphere of activity. Each element renegotiates its own agency, its agency within the group network, and its newly acquired agency as part of a group dynamic affecting other flows, all resulting in *ceaseless making and linking and clashing* (Law, p.21). This is mirrored in the need for boards and management teams to stay one

step ahead of the competition with a constant flow of new, fresh, exciting ideas, images and productions. This drive for success has its own agency too, and power.

In *The powers of association*, Latour (1986) distinguishes two very different models of power: a diffusion model of power and a translation model of power. With a diffusion model of power a central source gives an order/makes a decision, and this verdict moves downward through the hierarchy (through the necessary channels) until it is received by those responsible for implementing the order. This leader would fall under the description of a macroactor. On the other hand, a translation model looks at the network and how at every node/command point along the line there exists the potential for local agency intervention:

...when you simply have power – in potential - nothing happens and you are powerless; when you exert power – in actu – others are performing the action and not you Power is not something you may possess and hoard... (Latour 1986, p.265, quoted: Fox, 2000, p.861).

The translation model also introduces the concept/idea/possibility/potential of competence and incompetence; and the transfer of power into the capacity of other entities, separating the power itself from potential power, the entity from its transferable ability. This is active and tangible power, observable, quantifiable and not just abstract, passive and unknowable. Passive is not directly mirror opposite to active, the word 'inertia' would be more suitable. This concept of translation not only assists in tracing the transplantation of one city's festival idea to another city but it also supports the analysis of power transfer and other changes that occur with the handover of one committee to another within a festival.

2.4.3 Framing and disentanglement

Framing is an operation used to define individual agents which are clearly distinct and dissociated from one another. It also allows for the definition of objects, goods, and merchandise which are perfectly identifiable and can be separated not only from other goods, but also from the actors involved, for example in their conception, production, circulation or use (Callon, 1999 p.188).

Framing and disentanglement entail the more practical application of the ANT methodology to the Actor-worlds in circulation and simultaneous scrutiny. It isolates the debate points of what is worth including in calculations and what is not that has dogged discourses on ontology and where ANT strives to deliver on achieving an understanding of networks and their components (Murdoch 2006). In a rigid application of theoretical boundaries and discourses valuable ontologies can be lost or misunderstood and mislabelled. In theory it is difficult for properly applied framing to ever reach a full conclusion, and questions apply as to whether framing would or should continue infinitely (Latour, 1999). What would result from framing to an indefinite degree to include all discourses and elements? Would the information become as theoretically distorted as reducing connected elements to mere economic externalities? What would be the ontological application of such information? Callon suggests using the term ‘overflowing’ to denote this impossibility of total framing (1999 p.188). He proceeds to argue that though total framing is a contradiction in terms, it is still a vital display of awareness of the simple principles of cause and effect and that adequate calculation could not occur without its insights:

No calculation is possible without this framing, a framing which makes it possible to provide a clear list of the entities, states of the world, possible actions and expected outcome of these actions (Callon, 1999 p.190).

It is in this process of framing, and all that is interconnected to the common departure point that commodity and commodification become traceable. Commodities are here

understood as *objects, persons, or elements of persons which are placed in a context in which they have exchange value and can be alienated. The alienation of a thing is its dissociation from producers, former users, or prior context* (Callon, 1999, p.39). In the creation of a commodity it is decontextualised, dissociated and detached. If the thing remains entangled, the receiver cannot break free, cannot escape the web of contacts and relations, the framing not only never ends but in some contexts will be stuck in a loop, it cannot just be bought, used/experienced and left at that. It is in this escape that a commodity manifests, emerges and becomes the commodity it is (Murdoch 2006).

2.4.4 Past applications of ANT

ANT has explored the networks behind the creation of Louis Pasteurs' modified anthrax bacterium (Latour, 1988b), guidance systems on intercontinental missiles (MacKensie, 1990), and failures in new scallop farming practices (Callon 1998). Those not interested in bacteria, missiles or scallops may be forgiven for dismissing these subjects out of hand, but there is more enrolled and mobilised behind these papers than their subject matter suggest: within these papers lie processes which uncover the network of elements involved in the initiation (or resistance to the initiation) of revolutionary new aspects to our realities. These studies stretch beyond simple discipline boundaries. They illustrate the scope of ANT's applications. From Leigh Star's McDonalds case study (Law 1991) to Akrich's Swedish-Nicaraguan pulp machine (Law 1986) ANT has been applied to a variety of subject matter. In the edited books of Czarniawska and Hernes (Czarniawska and Hernes 2005) and Law and Hassard (Law and Hassard 1999) a total of 28 articles and 43 authors utilise ANT in the analysis of a range of divergent topics such as organising museums (Hetherington 1999), the perpetuum mobile and early philosophy (Brown and Capdevilla, 1999), the reimbursement of assembly-related emotional labour (Lee and Stenner 1999), policy making (Dugdale 1999), physical disability (Moser and Law 1999), the power associations grant institutions (Hernes 2005), an ethnographic study of the post-acquisition process at a chemical plant (Vickers and Fox 2005), the internet as an enrolment device (Noren and Ranerup 2005) and the controlling role played by 250-tonne diesel engines in the translating of power plants from blue print to reality (Lindahl 2005).

In these articles ANT is applied to trace the linkages, overlaps, and convergences that enrol a variety of elements to manifest innovatively in a new manner.

Using ANT, Latour (1993, 2005) draws connections, dispels dualisms, and analyses the social processes behind scientific *uncoveries* and the social networks and micro worlds created in the intersection of the realities of the laboratory and the earth. Latour pursues a study of Pasteur's laboratory and the ability/possibility of science reaching the masses from the micro-network-world of this controlled and highly ordered environment. Latour is at pains to argue that what makes science such an effective source of power is its ability to act at a distance within scientific networks. Thus one microlocale – whether a laboratory report, a committee, or a government directive – can send its facts and artefacts out into the world as long as other microlocales are first modified to accommodate the scientific products (Murdoch, 2006, p. 61-6).

As the networks are consolidated scientific facts and artefacts can spread outside the laboratories in conditions which ensure their proper functioning (Latour, in Murdoch, 2006, p. 62).

Their proper functioning is dependent, unfortunately, on everything running smoothly in the microlocales in which these artefacts are translated. The uncontested faith some actors have in the practise of transplanting clinical, sterilised ideas outside of the safe confines of a secure environment into new territory and find full, unconditional acceptance and accommodation by existing networks is not taken for granted by ANT. (Callon 1998; Callon 1999; Wijnberg, Van den Ende et al. 2002; Law 2003)

Akrichs (Law 1986) Swedish-Nicaraguan pulp machine narrative is released with one designed function by its' designer/author(s) and destined for reinvention/reinterpretation/customisations by its new readers/users. This mirrors the notion of architects not knowing how people will come to use their creation, or how it will be seen within the local community (or how well a festival will be received). The design team may try to ensure that conditions are suitable and that the outside world is

stable enough for the introduction of this new artefact, yet it is impossible for them to completely guarantee the conditions that *ensure their proper functioning*:

Effectively, Latour adopts a Foucauldian microphysics of power in which forms of domination and control are established within multiple and complex associations or networks, where power lies not in the properties of actors but in the relations established between them. (Murdoch, 1997, p.737)

This adaptability is brought, by Law, (Law and Hassard 1999), to the vitro studies of Charis Cussins:

At any rate, from the point of view of the principles of Actor-network theory (whatever these may be) Cussins story indeed performs a lot of differences, differences in translation ... it shows an abundant concern with noise, with things that don't fit together well into single narratives.

In her study the aspects of centring and decentering are not the only aspects of concern, it is not just about things being drawn into unison and functioning together. She examines how elements resist, refuse, or blatantly defy translation into networks. By examining the various conforming components and non-conforming components she unlocks another aspect of how the completed machine functions. Into this melting pot of elements, factors, things and actors she adds temporality and (more importantly for geographers), spatiality to show that at some other moment, in some other place, things work differently:

Topology concerns itself with spatiality, and in particular with the attributes of the spatial which secure continuity for objects as they are displaced through a space. The important point here is that spatiality is not given. It is not fixed, a part of the order of things. Instead it comes in various forms elements retain their spatial integrity by virtue of their position in a set of links or relations (Law 1999 p.6).

Spatial location and temporal location are vital in such a kaleidoscopic combination of unravelling factors, actors and actants yet ANT also allows for the examination of *outside and inside*. This is a dualism, and one which exists despite ANT's best efforts to remove dualisms and socially constructed boundaries from its vocabulary. This split admirably addresses the concept of 'in the laboratory', 'in theory', and 'on paper'; juxtaposing it to the outside of the real world, and the unique extras specific locations can bring to a formula, or the unique extras a formula can bring to a specific location.

Hetherington (1999) in his broader interpretation of actor-networks includes space, place, and history (and its lesser incarnation: heritage^{xii}) as all being part of a network. Objects bring other times and other spaces into the here and now. As Ashworth says *it is worth stating unambiguously that heritage is defined here as the contemporary uses of the past. It is defined therefore by use and thus by users and exists only in the present* (Ashworth paper given at a GMIT NIRSA conference, October 2002). Hetherington's use of ANT maps the actions of its users, the actors (the customers) who are part of the network while at the same time gauging their susceptibility to messages and further information contained within the images/objects of this immediate network yet pertaining to cultures and events outside of this place and on a more international (if not global scale). This directly relates to museums, heritage towns, tourism, and most importantly *images* where there is the attempt to *establish specific relations between viewing subjects and viewed objects* (Hetherington 1999 p.51). Everywhere that materials and images are created and constructed/renovated to order the space into a 'tourist-friendly' arena gives rise to an agency of space and time, but this agency *is now mediated by the spaces itself and the semiotics of its heterogeneous materiality* (Hetherington & Murdoch p. 361).

These materials and images can be compared, contrasted, judged and the verdict will impact on the tourist's desire to revisit and recommend. These places become abstract spaces, created or redesigned to meet with the 'new cool'. Where this connects with the metaphor of scientist and laboratory is in the creation of these images, strategies and trends. All are created in an *inside* environment, and directly impact on an *outside* reality,

an inside laboratory environment which may not have the ability to fully register the impact severe changes to unquantifiable factors like festival atmosphere may have on the product as an experience. Narratives relating to the introduction of new ideas into the CKF, KAF and CLCF festivals from boardrooms and some 'distanced' committee members are plentiful. All of the festivals, at one point or another, introduce new ideas into the business community, tourism community and everyday lives of the citizens of Kilkenny.

Ideas were not the only things that underwent change as devices, buildings and rooms also change roles becoming galleries, installations and museums; old places with a new narrative (Hetherington, 1999, p.53). Museum-space is a highly ordered, socially controlled, set environment (Brett, 1996). This order is maintained and organized through multiple classificatory, aesthetic, and narrative means, designed by insiders to be strictly obeyed by outsiders:

In effect, the museum display performs some kind of a homogenous relation between things on display through an ordering of material elements and their semiotic effects (Hetherington 1999 p.51).

This highlights the role of objects and images and the strategies subjectively channelled into and through them (even for those unable to see them^{xiii}). By examining the subject-object relationship within the confined space of the exhibit room, we see not only a social process in operation (ranging from educational to propaganda), but a fluid space made all the more real and solid by the constantly shifting ebb and flow of society, technology and culture:

The history of the museum, then has always been in some way defined by the relationship between subjects and objects. It constructs, at different moments, a 'point of view' through the constitution and arrangement of material 'heterogeneity' and in relation to it, the viewing subject (Hetherington 1999, p.53).

Emilie Gomart and Antoine Hennion, (1999), illustrate in their explorations of attachment and music amateurs the *active passion* of the music amateur and the *tentative techniques of preparation to produce*. In a piece which has strong resonance with the first KAW committee they explore how these actors emerge entangled by objects, collectives, techniques and constraints through their attachment to music and their participation in music related events. Their accounts of ‘subject-networks’ are:

...an attempt to offer an alternative account of the ways in which subjects may be seized, impassioned and swept away. How to describe the devices by which amateurs (in the widest sense) are able to put their passion into practise (Gomart and Hennion, 1999, P. 221)

They capture the enthusiasm and passion of music-lovers: *a surprising consensual self-abandonment entering into a world of strong sensations; of accepting that external forces take possession of the self* (Gomart and Hennion 1999, p. 221). They are aware of theories, methodologies and approaches that obsess on the dissection of actions and *the fabrication and validation of objects and theories “that work”* and they wish to shift the field of study in order to focus on events that “just occur” (p.225) thus showing an understanding of the random and sometimes unpredictable manifestation of a festival experience that so often happened by chance in the first years of the festivals. These are often experiences that can never be re-created or re-captured and become part of festival folklore and mythology. This wish to study happy accidents and lucky breaks truly resonated with festival narratives of luck and coincidence *and these are effects which occur at moments when amateurs enter a certain dispositif and are transformed by their attachment to that collective* (p. 225).

Their approach moves into an ‘event-network’ frame of mind. Their idea of events is a prolonged series of actions (already initiated elsewhere) with transformative outcomes:

...first, delegations and inscriptions into objects render these as prolongations of actions already initiated elsewhere; and second, these object-mediators do not just relay actions but also transform these in surprising ways (p. 225)

A rock concert, or a sculpture exhibit, does not bring together already existing objects subjects and social groupings – rather, this is a conjunctural event, in which the relevant objects, subjects and social groupings are co-produced (Hennion and Grenier, 1998, in Gomart and Hennion, 1999, p.228)

They point out that expert users locate the source of their pleasure between personal choice and the mimicry of other experts. Thus musicians try out diverse sociologies of taste based on rational choice, on cultural determinism, and on personal influence:

The music amateurs attempt to co-ordinate with other people in a setting in which tastes, preferences and appreciations as effects of the individual within the group are tied and constituted (Gomart and Hennion 1999, p. 234).

Their ability to utilise the strength of the self motivation and abundant enthusiasm not only explains the strength of the actors relationship with the committee and the festival but they open up *the mechanisms through which this kind of active passion is performed*, expanding the range of actions and devices that allow and facilitate the action of participants. This expands the potential to include devices, networks and energies which facilitate self-enrolment without the need of a singular powered-up (human) enroller which balances out those voices which want to remove such motivations:

ANT theorists are unwilling to enter into discussion of motivations, intentions and the like... (Murdoch, 1998, p.746).

In their desire to reject any qualitative distinctions between humans and non-humans, Callon and Latour wish to steer clear of any specifically human motivations and are concerned to show that humans and non-humans alike

behave in similar ways, ways which depend upon the relations within networks
(Murdoch, 1998, p. 747)

The issue of motivation leads to the question of whether ANT (and by extension this dissertation) should explore *intent* as another form of sequences/networks instead of dismissing/discounting it in order to preserve a human-nonhuman semiotic symmetry and retain objectivity? Humans differ from nonhumans in many ways, and it would seem that it is this intentionality that separates them, instead of merely being another faculty at the disposal of human agency. Human actions have intentions behind them, which manifest in the setting of goals, supporting them with further networks of experience, learning, memory and choice: the performances of materials it would seem do not have a similar counter part. Humans live in time with material actants, yet we also exist in thought outside of time in a not-yet-existing possible future: a present to prepare for. *We construct goals that refer to presently nonexistent future states and then seek to bring them about* (Pickering, 1993 p.566), these goals are also temporary in nature *a relatively fixed image of some future state of affairs at which temporally extended passages of practise aim* (Pickering, 1993 p.578).

It is through this ability to project thoughts into the future that we are able to initiate paths toward, and even bring about, this potential future. We select objects based on strategies, meanings and intent that we infuse these objects with. But this ability should not be allowed to overshadow material agency. It is in overshadowing material agency that the full extent of network flows are over looked and left unseen in the examination of a sequence. Traditional ontology does not sufficiently explore this human/nonhuman balance and thus have allowed humans to dominate as the central agency, a self-granted promotion to a position of single priority and ignoring any possibility of agency in the material world. Callon and Latour (1992) rejected this one-sided approach and insisted that there are more than two opposing sides to the treatment of nonhuman agency. This encourages movement beyond an “either/or” clause that’s strictly enforced by either humanist sociologists or scientists:

...if we explore the networks along their full extent, their links, and associations, we shall not require any 'external' cause or 'internal' motivation (Murdoch, 1998, p.747).

What humans intend to happen does not always win out. Humans intend to do things that they never get around to or change their minds at the last moment. In tracing the networks and actions of the actor-network social scientists follow what happened and not what was intended to happen and did not. Intended plans that meet with resistance will be traced, if important, and followed to their conclusion.

Lastly, John Law's *Organising Modernity* (Law 1994) provided key concepts that aided in articulating on the narratives coming from the interviewees including: Heroism, Hero-scientist, Cowboy-hero, Civil Servant/Zombie and a different opinion on the immutable mobile argument. Tales of heroism and heroic stories are oral histories, peopled with heroes, discontinuities and qualitative leaps (p.56). They are frequently monovocal (p.55) tales of activity and creativity, displaying the actor as both an opportunist and a match maker who manages to *mobilise the mundane* (p.62):

But here, I think, is one of the Keys to the stories of cowboy-heroism: they have to do with effective decision making and so with Judgement. Cowboy-heroes have the power to match-make. And they are effective because they have the knack, the luck or the capacity to make good decisions – decisions that will attract resources and keep the show on the road. (Law, 1994, P.65).

Cowboys also have near mythical powers to cut through red tape (ibid p. 73)

Examples of these heroes include the Hero-scientist seen as two possible models under one definition (worldly entrepreneur or unworldly visionary p.69), the cowboy entrepreneur/hero/scientist, and other variations including the manager-hero (p.62) which is a civil servant/cowboy hybrid. The opposite figure to the hero-scientist is the civil servant or Zombie: Someone who does not contribute to the project in any meaningful

way, and is strictly nine-to-five in their commitment to the project. (Symptoms include indifference, lack of initiative, failure to perform or incompetence.) These *day drones*, (p.130), are also rule followers and lack any passion or attachment to the project. (Law, J. 1994, p. 121-3)

Law points out that some people may fluctuate between hero and civil servant: on some days an actor is a Visionary (scientist with distant scientific visions) and on others they are more of a manager, a hero/civil servant hybrid (p.62). Law also dismisses Latour's concept of Immutable mobiles which was also beneficial to the case study:

The argument is that large-scale attempts at ordering or distancing depend on the creation of what Bruno Latour calls 'immutable mobiles', materials that can easily be carried about and tend to retain their shape (Latour 1987, p. 227). But to put it this way is too simple.Mobility and Durability – materiality – are themselves relational effects.Texts order only if they are not destroyed enroute, and there is someone at the other end who will read them and order her conduct accordingly. (Law, J. 1994, p. 102)

There is no economic, political or academic determinism vying to claim victory with ANT. ANT does not require a 'victory', or to be 'right'. ANT simply follows the actors through their networks, and the networks through their actors. Thus it was hoped that this made ANT an ideal approach for studying the emergence of the four diverse festivals, the relationships that produce them and the ideas and new technologies within the festivals that were translated from theory to practise by the actions of their committees and volunteers. Fifty-three individual festivals from the four festivals under scrutiny take place during the time period from 1964 to 2004. Although information was gathered on every festival from the four festivals not all of the years could be analysed in depth.

Chapter 3. Methods and Methodology: Applying theory to practise

To stand at the gates of the laboratory felt like an achievement. Indeed, it was an achievement. But how did I get to the gates of the laboratory? And how did I get the funding? The story is one of ordering bits and pieces to create the possibility for a project. And that process is important if we want to understand the context of the project (Law 1994, p. 34).

This chapter introduces the methods and methodology used in this thesis. It leads the reader through the five information gathering techniques utilised (see below) and the application of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) to these information sources:

1. Fifteen in depth loosely-structured interviews with key members of the festival committees
2. Thirty informal group interviews with festival tourists, revellers and volunteers
3. Content Analysis of festival coverage in weekly newspaper, The Kilkenny People, 1964-2004
4. Image analysis of souvenir programmes and other promotional paraphernalia
5. Observation, participation and informal interactions with festival staff

Key actors were selected through researching local media and festival paraphernalia, listings and credits. Interviewees were also selected on the strength of what was said about them by other actors. Interviewing the key actors working behind the scenes was essential to understanding the composition of the body of actors behind the revival of festivals in Kilkenny. Interview topics were broadened to include the goals of the festival committees, the launch of their product, the organisational and promotional strategies enrolled, and reveller experience of the product itself.

Interviewing key actors provided valuable insight into the personal dynamics that influence the committee's internal and external interactions. Interviewing the revellers

(whether local or tourist) presented an opportunity to measure and understand the relationship between the festival and the customers. These interviews explored customer interpretations of the events, and gauged the first hand experience of the festival product, its organisation, and promotion from the customer's point of view. As the customer was dealing with many of the festivals booking systems, marketing strategies, and information networks their experiences were an important gauge of the efficiency of the new technologies employed to make booking, searching for information, and partaking in the festival easier. Understanding the customer's position and relationship within the professional festival network is essential for gauging the success and efficiency of measures put in place by the festival managers and the future of those measures. Measuring customer satisfaction and their (conscious/unconscious) relationship within the festival as a network also enables further understanding of the role of the reveller in the creation of the festival space.

Researching *The Kilkenny people* provided a source of local feedback, tourist feedback and officially released commentaries from all of the organisations involved and independents alike. It provided a platform for festival experiencers to express positive and negative feedback, and to comment on experienced or perceived faults and triumphs. This information source also ensured that interview questions were informed and topical.

To further examine the shift in management technologies being utilised by the festival organisers, analysis was carried out on the change in promotion strategies and technologies. Brochures which mention the festivals, souvenir programmes, posters, and other paraphernalia promoting the festival are responsible for the majority of customer first-contact. ANT allowed for such networks to be taken into account as another important element in the professionalised festivals success over lesser-advanced 'cover the basics' campaigns produced by previous amateur groups.

Elements of the event product were explored to complete a balanced analysis of the networks that converge to produce the event and the atmosphere created for the customers. Through a mix of participation and observation the customer's experience of

the festival and the *behind-the-scenes* experiences of festival performers, ground staff and backstage crew were explored. This approach granted an insight into the effect of changes in managerial technologies on customer and staff practises alike, and their impact on the delivery of the event product.

This chapter also examines the variation in interview responses, interview feedback, and interview-relationships between key members and the interviewer when the interviewer was perceived as a 'local'. It explains how prospective interviewees were selected and contacted and explores the various complications and obstacles encountered when the interviewer and interviewee are known to each other or have had informal dealings and connections in the past.

In the interest of interviewee privacy those who gave sensitive organisational or personal information were not identified. (These sources are referred to as Anon. All private and delicate personal matters mentioned during interviews were removed and remain off record.) All group interviews were conducted on a first name basis only, surnames were only recorded when group interviewees expressed a wish to keep in contact.

3.1 Doing research: Finding the right approach

This thesis began as a *Regime Analysis of the discursive regimes that shape the production of space in Kilkenny*. It was this approach that first shaped the initial wave of interviews. Key actors within the various festival networks were identified and selected for interviews with the aid of frameworks and guidelines developed through applying this theory (Stone 1993; Stoker 1995; Stone 1995; Collinge and Hall 1997; Painter 1998). The focus on regime members and regime alliances did not sufficiently explain the multiple changes that occurred in the processes that transformed the amateur, ad-hoc festivals into professional, highly organised festival-businesses. It did not adequately address the success of the product, the roles played by the resources incorporated into the product, the elements used to promote the product, or the impact new managerial technologies can

have on (a) those enrolled into the festival's governing committee, (b) the day-to-day running of the festival and (c) the customer's experience of the festival.

ANT was initially considered as a nul-hypothesis, against which to display the potential of Regime Analysis Theory (RAT). As it was applied to each festival in turn it proved to be more and more capable of an examination of each festival's three core operations: management, promotion and product. It brought the unique setting of Kilkenny into the equation as active role-playing resources and not just the leftovers of past developmental phases. Most importantly it provided a platform from which to examine the impact new managerial technologies had on the festivals as professional businesses. Older interviews were re-examined from an ANT perspective and more items of interest were unearthed. *ANT helped to render visible something of what is involved in establishing and maintaining ordered lines of conduct at a distance* (Murdoch, J. 2006, P.74)

3.1.1. Doing research: Beginning

When interviewing commenced, the aims and objectives focussed on RAT. The first step in the context of standard RAT procedure is to assess how many main actors are involved and develop an understanding of the scope of the targeted organisations. Committee lists, minutes from meetings, tourist brochures, festival programmes, newspaper articles and other festival paraphernalia were collected, and examined. The most frequently recurring names were identified and selected for interview. This main list of initial interviews had a double function as it provided direct information about the festivals and was used to confirm whether the names selected were involved in the management of the targeted festivals, and whether being 'involved' and being 'listed as involved' were the same thing. All of the first interviews were open and loosely structured. Follow-up interviews were more structured with emphasis placed on key aspects discussed in the first interview. All one-to-one interviews took place at sites selected by the interviewee. These included offices, dining rooms, kitchens, restaurants, public houses and hotel lobbies.

The five key topics addressed in the interviews revolved around (1) festival committee enrolment, (2) the role played by the actor within the festival unit, (3) changes (structural, personnel, or managerial) encountered/initiated by the actor during involvement, (4) use of resources, and (5) the capacity of members to deliver on their assigned tasks.

Contacting these individuals was less straightforward. Varied approaches were used to make first contact with those drawn up on the main list, including using family members to ask on my behalf. Some interviewees were contacted by other interviewees who found the nostalgia of re-telling old stories so enjoyable that they agreed to further interviews without hesitation. The majority of interviewees confirmed through their anecdotes, and through their intimate and colourful way of re-telling their experiences, that their status as key members was unquestionable, and that their presence was essential to the developments underway in Kilkenny's prominent festivals.

The tactic of opening interviews with an explanation of the thesis helped by-pass questions revolving around the interviewer's family, and ensured that the interviews proceeded faster and established a more academic sense of purpose. The interview process did not proceed without obstacles. Some earlier participants were sensitive to recent changes within the festival community in Kilkenny and reacted negatively to some current committee names and the direction taken by some elements of the new Kilkenny Arts Festival committee. The passage of time between occurrences of note and the interviews had an enormous impact on the willingness of past and present-day festival members to disclose behind-the-scenes information. The passage of time also mellowed actor's attitudes towards fellow committee members and associates. Conducting the interviews a reasonable distance of time after the changeovers was greatly beneficial. Approaching those involved in the shake up of Arts Week ('97-'99) initially in 2003 (and continuously in 2004, 2005) allowed for a gap of almost five years. Being able to trigger this nostalgic walk down memory lane was enormously beneficial in unearthing narratives for many festivals. As interviewees began to reminisce about past festivals and past events at those festivals, they became flowing in their story telling and more informative. Interviewees were also encouraged to remember various management

technologies and communications technologies that helped them with their festival/committee duties. Many interviewees found expounding on the role played by memos, the minutes of meetings and mobile telephones unusual at first.

While an ANT approach requires that all networks are followed equally it does not over-suggest any particular approach when initialising first contact. Knowing *who-to-know* and *how-to-ask* became very important in securing interview time. First impressions, previous interactions between family members and other connections influence replies and disclosure. Being 'a local' and having performed and taken part in previous festivals became an important angle in breaking conversational ice, and understanding the areas, and personalities involved. In utilising local knowledge and networks to bypass the usual obstacles encountered in interviewing elites, other elements arose through these activated connections to shape the interviewer-interviewee relationship, thus inserting the author, and the networks utilised by the author, into the interview process.

Networks and relationships had to be created or tapped into to contact those I wished to interview. Approaching through these routes provided necessary information about the organisational structures and various buffer strategies used by those managing and working in the festival. Where timetables were too busy to allow for interviews with strangers, they did allow for interviews with the son of their mother's bridge partner, the son of someone they worked with on previous committees, next-door neighbours, or an old friend's son. An outsider may have had to resort to other strategies to acquire interview time with these key actors.

However, an outsider with no involvement in the festivals may have received a different reaction from the interviewees. Certain topics became quite guarded as underlying tensions between ex-colleagues put them on edge. Some did not wish to 'go on record' for certain discussions, others came across as excessively complimentary of ex-colleagues. My own past history of being involved with youth theatre, youth art groups, and youth art festivals meant that I was familiar not only with the key people involved; but also the venues, the proprietors, the stage managers and also a strong contingent of

the volunteers beyond an interview-interviewee basis. Yet in my status as a local some interviewees became guarded and were obviously self-editing their answers. In an attempt to distance myself from any associations that might prevent the interviewee from talking freely, I frequently mentioned when arranging interviews that I no longer lived in Kilkenny and was thus out of the festivals 'loop' or 'clique'. This distancing was also helped by the decision not to play an active role within the actual festivals to maintain a sense of objectivity.

Frequent walks and '*shadowings*' (Czarinawska 1999, 2005) were carried out through festival sites with staff members. By accompanying them from venue to venue some of the chaos occurring backstage was observed. This presented an opportunity to discuss management with the volunteers themselves and revealed significantly different organizational approaches taken by the different festival committees and the managerial technologies employed by each.

3.2 Doing research: Group Interviews

Between the summer of 2001 and the summer of 2003, twenty-four informal group interviews took place with festival tourists, revellers and ground troops working on the festivals. In 2006 a further six groups were interviewed. Group interviews with tourists, revellers and comedy enthusiasts were conducted differently to one-to-one interviews. Although the interviews were open and unstructured as with the one-to-ones, all conceptual language was removed. The interviews were time sensitive with only one window of opportunity provided to interview revellers each year, totalling thirteen days per year. Group sizes varied, with the largest consisting of six males, and the smallest consisting of a married couple.

Three main sites were chosen for the KAF interviews – The Tholstel on High St.; outside the Courthouse on Parliament St.; and Mayors Walk beside the Castle Park. All three sites were traditional exhibition areas with a large number of on-lookers, buskers, hair wrappers, and jewellery vendors etc. Three main sites were chosen for the comedy

festival – Cleere’s Theatre; the steps outside the Watergate Theatre, and outside Langtons Nightclub. These venues host the most popular comedians and provide space for waiting customers to relax and wait for their show. Interviews also occurred as opportunities arose in The Venue, The Widow McGrath’s and the Rivercourt Hotel. Notes were made during the course of these group interviews and any groups, or members of groups, who were re-encountered were asked how they were continuing to experience the festival.

The KAF daytime crowd dynamic was not the most conducive to gathering group interviews as it consisted mostly of families, and those who wished to maximise their festival experiences by attending all possible activities and exhibitions. The majority of these groups could not afford to engage in group interviews of unspecified length due to family obligations or festival timetables. The most frequent excuse received for being unable to engage in discussion was the presence of children. Some of those who were approached were reluctant to discuss the arts or other highbrow topics lest those who were attending out of curiosity were ‘exposed’ as being less informed than they wished others to think. A distinct impression received during initial contact with floating groups at the KAF was that they felt they would not know enough about the ‘high culture’ of the festival and would not be able to participate significantly in interviews. This reflects the elitist image that some have of the KAF and that this reluctance to participate in interviews was a manifestation of this image and the festival’s relationship with some attendees. The other side of this became apparent when some interviewees wished to appear appropriately cultured and sophisticated. This became quite obvious with participants answering questions in a manner, and to a level, that they deemed to be socially desirable. Some replies were direct quotes of reviews and brochure blurbs, or opinions voiced on the local radio earlier that day. These replies were not given to deceive out of malice, but as an attempt to cover-up and come across in a manner they deemed to be ‘suitably’ knowledgeable and ‘appropriately’ cultured.

In contrast, CLCF matinee audiences were generally less guarded and very willing to engage in group interviews. They were very open, straight forward and quite gregarious. Participants had no qualms about admitting that they had never heard, or heard of, a

comedian or improvisational comedy act. CLCF interviewees were under no social pressure to appear suitably cultured or knowledgeable of the history or culture of stand up comedy. With fewer families in attendance, and with no prior commitments or appointments, these groups had more time to provide a more detailed response. Late show audiences proved less informative due to alcohol consumption and the level of noise in the pubs themselves. Most 8 o'clock show attendees had also booked tickets for 10.30pm and 11.15pm shows and were unable to stop. Interviewing larger groups after 9.00 pm proved unproductive and uncomfortable, and was not overtly pursued after the first year.

Group interviews explored how revellers organised themselves to attend the festivals using websites, credit cards, phone lines, online bookings and other communication technologies. These technologies were applauded by all of those interviewed, although some missed the interaction of queuing in person and the spontaneity of just heading off without pre-booking, accommodation etc. Overall the booking technologies appealed greatly to the more cautious and restrained members of the groups.

3.3 Content analysis of local print media.

The aim of the initial newspaper study was to identify the names most promoted and associated with the festival and assess how these media pieces reflected internal festival politics. Eli Avraham's (2000) micro-analysis of the representation of cities in print media was reworked to accommodate the scale of the project and the relationship between the paper, the festivals and Kilkenny's image as represented by these. ANT further supported this approach, especially on the significance of how the newspaper was edited and assembled as factors to indicate the esteem (if any) in which the editors held the festival.

Avraham's (2000) criterion for assessing print media coverage is quite extensive. It draws together a multitude of factors and elements to illustrate the importance of the

topic and the esteem with which it is held over other articles. The physical layout of the space allotted to the articles can infer special treatment and priority of topic. Dimensions and font sizes, page positioning and page number, presence of photographs and photograph type, are factored in to gauge the importance of the article topic within the issue. This approach of breaking down the articles various components and their positioning significance within the network of each issue was well suited to the ANT approach and was most informative. But some of these factors were rendered inconsequential when utilised to assess *The Kilkenny People* newspaper because over the course of the years of the study time period, facilities, premises, presentation, and size of the Kilkenny People newspaper changed. The most significant change came in 2000 with a change in ownership (30th June 2000, *The Kilkenny People*, p.1, p.5) thus making strict comparisons stretching over any time period longer than 3 years difficult. (The paper had undergone changes in print quality throughout the late nineties including increased pages and supplements in 1998.) Within Avraham's structure the descriptiveness and subjectivity of the writing within the individual articles themselves was scrutinised for excessive favour, excessive negativity and the general representation of the event and its location.

Eli Avraham's approach to analysing editorial relationships with the target market also did not apply directly to studying *The Kilkenny People*. From the beginning of the study period in 1964 up until 1999 the editorial staff didn't alter significantly, and had life long connections to Kilkenny and many of the restoration and historical projects within the town. They had built up strong ties within the community with several of the festivals in the early years relying on *The Kilkenny People* printing press to print their actual souvenir programmes and paraphernalia with many mutually beneficial agreements and informal connections between them and the various committees.

Lastly, the relationship that *The Kilkenny People* enjoys with its target market revolves around the individual issues of the newspaper itself. The Target audience, the people of Kilkenny, were relying on the paper to keep them informed of activities, events and other significant community news. Marketing principles at *The Kilkenny People* were simple

and effective requiring very little strategising to sell a paper that played such a fundamental role within the community.

3.4 Analysing festival programmes

The following section explores the promotional images used in the core four festivals, examining the roles played by the agents chosen to represent the festival visually. With every new development modern technology facilitates the design of more innovative images and advertisements to capture the public's imagination (Boorstin 1961 (1992); Barthes 1972; Morley and Robins 1995; Urry 1995; Hannigan 1998; Landry 2000; Urban 2002). However technology is not the sole element involved in the construction and collage of signifiers enrolled to communicate the desired message. Images, folklore and cultural signifiers play pivotal roles in the final communication collage (souvenir programmes, pamphlets, brochures and later websites) decided on by event brand managers.

The evolution of the professionalized management structures in Kilkenny's festivals are paralleled by the increase in sophistication, design styles and significance-laden imagery enrolled into the branding and advertising of these event flagships. The brochure is the key image vehicle and first contact point between the festival product and the potential customer. The image construction process and programme's role as chief promoter and contact point with the festival was integral in many ways. To exclude the study of such a dynamic and essential festival actor was to ignore the central image of the festivals and the main vehicle for advertisement circulation.

By examining the mobilization and enrolment of agents and actors in this manner, the assembled collage of images, agencies and cultural signposts display a sophistication and efficiency that mirrors the professionalisation of the festival management structures. Moreover the programme performed other roles beyond advertising: inclusion within the official programme created artist status and held great significance for participating

amateur artists. Programme inclusion becomes an important right-of-passage in itself, and crucial for curriculum vitae building. Rewarding dedicated amateurs with programme inclusion became a form of compensation in the earlier festivals. The associated status gained from having their name printed alongside prestigious world figures creates a cultural currency and an extra incentive to participate. New Programme layout also meant new festival layout and timetabling. In assembling the festival organisers were also assembling the programme and visa versa. Many of those interviewed said that the programme was not just a promotional vehicle but an ordering device which could help shape new festival ideas and concept themes. Most organisers felt that by ordering the brochure they were ordering the festival.

3.4.1. Souvenir programme image analysis

ANT facilitated the analysis of brochures images in the selling of the festivals and Kilkenny. By utilising ANT it was possible to analyse the changing nature of the images used in the festivals; as they moved from the most basic of souvenir programme covers to iconic brands. Festival paraphernalia and brands^{xiv} were deconstructed and analysed, mapping the agency and communication capacity of the assembled actors and images. Promotional paraphernalia relating to individual artists were exempted as they were generically composed by their agents and promoters, and not created by the festival promoters. The move by the CLCF to distribute and host their souvenir programme on the internet was unprecedented in Kilkenny's promotional history. Merging the roles of booking agent, brochure/programme, tour guide, hotel receptionist, artist, host and providing the ability to sample some of the goods on offer (artist blurbs/samples/sound bites/writings) exploded the range of possibilities and definitions of festival promotion. The webpage manifests a truly immeasurable network in terms of promotional value but this has not significantly decreased the popularity of the physical souvenir brochure.

3.5 Doing research: Attending the festival

The final area of fieldwork to be addressed in this chapter is the actual observation of and participation in the festivals. Three approaches were used: participant, observer and reveller. The majority of these experiences did not fall under the remit of the RAT analysis approach. Under ANT these experiences have agency themselves in multiple ways including the agency of writing and interviewing (Law 1994). These approaches fill-out the picture from which the interviewer works, and the various network threads that are netted to complete the study. In total, seven festivals (four KAF and three CLCF festivals) were studied over the course of the initial fieldwork period. However this figure increases when inclusive of previous pre-research experiences within the festivals: *participating* as a teenager (three KAW festivals, and two CKF festivals), *observing* as a masters student (one KAF and one CLCF festival), one year while lecturing in U.C.D. (one KAF and one CLCF festival) and attending on other years, as a child, a teenager, and later as an adult. These various interactions with the festivals each contain useful perspectives on attending and experiencing the events through different lenses.

3.5.1. Doing research: Participating in the festivals

Experiences as a participant became invaluable for creating connections with interviewees, venue managers and event co-ordinators. It also provided a valuable insight into the organisation of several medium-sized acts that took part in earlier, amateur festivals. Personal experience of how chaotic and *last-minute* these events were also created a common link with which to engage interviewees. Shared experiences, and the sharing of similar crisis-containment backstage stories were used as conversational ice-breakers. (As a teenager I was a member of two youth arts groups: Kilkenny Youth Theatre (KYT) and The Kilkenny Young Writers Group. As a member of KYT I performed in two Confederation of Kilkenny festival opening parades (1992, '93). As a member of Young Writers I performed in two poetry-reading shows (held in Cleere's

Theatre) during consecutive Arts Weeks (1992, '93) the second of which made the official festival programme. These experiences were also used in the devising of interview questions and assisted in interpreting obscure references used by respondents.)

In observing the festival the key interest points were reveller practise, reveller reaction and their interaction with the local environment. Vantage points were chosen to observe popular venues and customer reactions before, during (intermission) and after events. One key point centred on the area outside the Watergate Theatre and Cleeres Theatre/Bar. This also provided the opportunity to observe how revellers interacted with friends who had not attended the shows. Further observations were made when walking the festival routes and the exhibits with festival staff.

By attending actual festival events with other revellers, a connection was established wherein observations could be shared in after-event socialising. It also provided first hand experience of the comedians, their shows, and the audience reactions to them. Many groups re-enacted and re-told performance experiences and enthusiastically replayed reactions and shocking reveals. These re-enactments further strengthened group unity and created experience-bonds that could be re-shared from the festival thus creating social interaction souvenirs that are re-enacted at later dates. These re-re-enactments further the spread of successful performances by word of mouth and strengthen the ties between the happy customer and successful festival product experience.

3.6 Ordering and communicating

A more compact version of the narrative layout from the event analyst Donald Getz (1997) was developed to order the wealth of narratives within each festival. This approach helped shape the fluid relationships and narratives into an orderable and comparable format. The central method for ordering the analysis of ANT's suitability to understand the processes and topology of the festivals was based on Callon's four stages

of emergence and was brought to my attention by Stephen Fox (2000) and Lena Porsander (2005)):

- 1) *Problematization* – one set of actors realise they have a problem, then objectify and rationalise the problem, defining it so other parties can see and understand the situation, and in the process a solution is indicated.
- 2) *Interessement* – allies are locked into a course of action, roles are prescribed and goals set.
- 3) *Enrolment* – allies are defined, drafted/coerced if not already onboard, and coordinated;
- 4) *Mobilization of the Allies* – leaders, organizations, communications, an assembled network, the chain is in place with its various (and unique/distinguished/distinctive) links and nodes. Some are forced, others persuaded, at the centre the leaders have *translated the interests of others into their own* and gained full (if only temporary) support and cooperation. (Fox 2000)

Lena Porsander (Porsander 2005) utilises this framework in her study of Lifebuoy, the administrative computer database system for the Year of Culture in Stockholm in 1998. Porsander takes the work of Latour, and Law (1994 p.23) to show that they all *play pivotal roles in organizing* (Porsander 2005 p.14). In Porsander's study, Stockholm '98 is the Actor-Network representative of multiple action nets^{xv} operating under its umbrella. Lifebuoy was an actant recruited to create a network that would stabilise the precarious net of action constituting Stockholm 1998, ie: an action net over an action net of action nets. To academically order this she takes Callon's work (1986a, 1986b, 1991) and reshapes it to act as a checklist:

- 1) *Entering the Obligatory Point of Passage*
 - 2) *Forming a Pact: Locking other actants into roles and forming a power base*
 - 3) *Performing various Negotiations*
 - 4) *Finding (becoming?) the Spokesman (strengthen the illusion of a single Actor)*
- (Porsander, p.20)

Having a framework that allowed for variations in categorising the assembly of the network, a solid double element in the construction and maintenance of the network and a choice in categorisation of the current position of the network was enormously beneficial and reflective of the narratives assembling through the interviews.

Finally it became apparent that there were editing issues when the word count exceeded 180,000 words exclusive of any introduction or a conclusion. Four chapters alone accounted for 110,000 words. The first cull was a chapter on perceptions of elites and community participation within the festivals. Although following flows of power would still remain within the study, the aspects relating to community unity, community polarisation, the role played by community units, agencies and youth groups within the festival and the importance of the festivals in fostering local interest within arts and culture and establishing community groups in deprived or marginalised areas were removed. Twenty individual years from the thirty years of history of the KAW and KAF were also removed. Although great narratives and interesting events abounded in those years, the study needed to focus on the years revolving around major organisational changes and re-orderings. Focus fixed on pivotal years of change. With the KBF and coverage of the CLCF lasting only ten years and with only three years of the CKF to cover there were no slack or dull years that were 'self selecting' for removal. There were no years that didn't involve re-orderings, changes in personnel, negotiation performances, spokesman selection, pact formation and moving through similar points (Callon 1998; Porsander 2005). In every year there was enough material for a thesis.

And when you begin to write in earnest, finally pleased with yourself, you have to sacrifice vast amounts of data that cannot fit in the small number of pages allotted to you. How frustrating this whole business of studying is. (Latour, B. 2005, p. 123)

Chapter 4. The Kilkenny Beer Festival 1964-1974

The Kilkenny Beer Festival (KBF) was the brainchild of Alderman Michael J. McGuinness^{xvi} and the Liverpoolian sales manager of Smithwicks brewery Mr. Bill Finnegan. Costing £30,000 on its first year (1964), and achieving an attendance of 200,000 people, this was the first festival of its kind in Ireland. Based on the Munich “Oktoberfest”, the festival was promoted as a seven day community based event (which in actuality lasted nine and ten days over different years). The eclectic extravaganza entailed a broad cocktail of events including two day racing at Gowran park, greyhound racing, boxing tournaments, Midget Basket ball, Bavarian bands, ballad singing contests, cat shows, beauty pageants, showbands, and a German beer tent with a capacity to hold over 3,000 people.

The Beer festival was enjoyed by very many and much hard work and admirable organisation went into it. Perhaps the dregs of drunken youth, picked from sodden piles in the High St. and wafted on trucks by the Gardai, to recover in the fresh air on the gorse prickly slopes of Ossory hill, caused the more thoughtful of the citizens to pause and think; was art, rather than booze, just probably the answer for a city celebration? (Susan Butler ‘Birth Pangs’, Kilkenny Arts Week programme, 1995)

The legacy of the Beer festival may have been tarnished by tales of drunkenness and rowdy crowds but socially and culturally it was to be the catalyst of Kilkenny’s rebirth, its re-imaging and its re-growth. With yearly attendance figures reaching peaks of two hundred thousand from a purely economic study the impact of the festival on the area was unlike anything Kilkenny had experienced before. Architecturally it would trigger the restoration, floodlighting and upkeep of many of the city’s oldest buildings, which would later be the inspiration for the title *The Medieval Capital of Ireland*.

4.1 Product

Although the Beer Festival line-up changed frequently over the course of the ten years, it remained complex, fragmented, multi-faceted, and comprised of multiple acts, instruments, props, sets, actors, musicians and celebrities. Despite the inclusion of the word beer in the festival title, the festival did not focus solely on beer: there were international cat shows on par with Crufts dog show; Doll shows, celebrity charity football matches, midget basketball matches, horse racing, greyhound racing, pipe and cigar smoking contests, and even a world tiddlywinks record attempt. The amount of participating actors and agents that had to be orchestrated, managed and supervised was staggering:

Now we were into all ideas for amusements, German bands, we went out there [Germany] and got them into a tent, paraphernalia - you had to experience the tent for the drinking, under canvas, following the bands, pipe bands, German bands and the modern bands of the time. There were doll shows and cat shows and pipe smoking shows and anything we could think of ... Then sure we started the international Dolls Conference... and there were people and dolls and more dolls and it was all held in the long gallery. Its a little different today, I mean the dolls that they make today are all plastic, back then it was real craft, a great craft, great care taken and great detail. Anyone can make a doll but the finery and jewellery of these dolls takes some doing ... And the pipe smoking competition was great, judged on many fine points: length of time smoking, puff, style, gratitude, enjoyment, amazing pipes, shapes of pipes and all that sort of thing and I'll tell you there was no few number that took the contest seriously, and the cigar one then was similar ... [We] introduced the German folk dancing and there [were] the German costumes and this brought in a flood of ideas and there was their culture and we had ours but it wasn't on show and people realised the significance of our own culture being there and so things began to happen in the town. This revitalised the Irish dancing and the Irish music with the Irish showing

off our stuff, that we had dancing and costumes and our own distinct culture of our own too (Mick McGuinness).

Apart from the German pavilion beer tent, the Long Gallery in Kilkenny Castle, and one or two of the more popular dance halls, all of the venues were matched to their performers or events on a *first come, first served* basis (McGuinness). No extra thought was given to the relationship between act and venue. Personal relationships between performers, land lords, community hall committees and McGuinness were vital in securing good venues, and pairing off act and site. Disagreements resulted in quarrelsome venue owners receiving poor acts, or difficult acts being allocated to remote or unpopular venues. Thus the shape of the product altered from year to year, at the discretion of key actors.

No formal evaluations were undertaken by the committee to assess the audience reaction, gauge the effectiveness of the festival organisation or to further improve their product. No steps were taken to judge the popularity of new acts, or new ideas. In theory new ideas were internally approved by the majority of the committee^{xvii}. In reality new ideas were internally approved by McGuinness, Finnegan and Farrelly.

When McGuinness and Finnegan embarked upon organising the festival there was no tourism infrastructure, services or facilities in the county of Kilkenny. There were a number of small hotels, but nothing that could accommodate the numbers both entrepreneurs had in mind. They set up was a small information kiosk to direct arrivals to the makeshift network of B&Bs that they organised and other points of interest. Mick McGuinness manned the kiosk himself on many occasions as the need arose.

We had to rev up the B&B's and the ordinary local people, we went to a few of the people and asked would they bed and feed the Germans and some said yes and some said no and the ones who kept some kept keeping them every time they came back and would go out to hear their guests playing and take the Germans around the town.... (Mick McGuinness)

The atmosphere of tolerance and goodwill began to wane at the turn of the decade, '69 - '71. As evident from interviews, news paper articles and letters to the editor it was for these three years that the festival would be most remembered locally. Reports of indecency, theft and violence led to the formation of a protest committee in 1970. Though official Gardai reports stated "no serious problems" (Kilkenny People, 5/6/70) and other reports stated that less than 2% of the 200,000 strong crowd actually caused trouble (5/6/70) popular opinion began to weigh against the festival. Continuous public displays of misconduct provoked the formation of an anti-festival committee which set out to have the festival stopped and prevent further incidences of immorality and misconduct occurring on the streets of Kilkenny. While their campaign to seek an end to the Festival was not popular, their provision of sandwiches to help revellers 'soak up the beer' was. Despite a remarked improvement in 1971 and 1972 the festivals days were numbered:

Basically what happened was that it was the most successful festival in Ireland by a long chalk ... but too many people started coming which couldn't safely be accommodated in terms of venues or in terms of the physical size of the city at the time and we were too near Dublin where as the other major festivals at the time were say Galway and Tralee, Galway, Tralee, there was one other but, it was probably the Jazz Festival in Cork had started, but Kilkenny had easier access to Dublin and unfortunately the wrong types started coming down. It became too big for a voluntary committee to do the job that was necessary, it became extremely hard and they, the volume of opposition to it developed because of incidents that happened, because of the fact that, all I can say is, too many people from Dublin came down, but too many people of the wrong type came in (Mick Lanigan snr.)

In later years ('71 - '73) the festival product was 'toned down' to reduce local/reveller tensions, improve community/committee relations, and as a goodwill gesture to those who opposed the festival. McGuinness wasn't unduly bothered or put out by the minority voice of protest yet did not want Kilkenny to receive a bad name from its association with the festival. Any acts that were deemed too risky, which may have been approved in the

late 60's were not included. The festival itself was still largely popular both locally and nationally when it was wound down and discontinued. Although a vocal minority had applied pressure on the committee the decision to stop was not influenced by their protests or angry letters to the local paper.

4.2 Promotion

The following outlines both the internal and external promotional narratives surrounding the ten years of the *Kilkenny Beer Festival*. Promotion, marketing and branding are now integral components of all modern festivals worldwide. However, promotion was not a priority concern of the KBF committee. Over the course of its ten years, promotion for the beer festival did not change greatly and was not overly done. As only so much is ever under the control of the promoters, this dissertation probes beyond what happens to the message after the promoters have finished with it, especially when it catches the public imagination in an unexpected way.

4.2.1 Internally organised Promotion

The promotion strategy of the festival committee remained basic throughout the entirety of the festival's ten year existence and relied heavily on the local weekly newspaper, *The Kilkenny People*, and word of mouth. The festival schedule was printed in black and white on the centrefold page of the Kilkenny people newspaper. This acted as the festivals main promotional device and reveller contact point. Locals continuously referred to it, newcomers and festival revellers purchased the paper to access the programme, and publicans and shopkeepers would remove the centre-spread and place it in their window or behind the counter, where those without a copy could consult it. Modern-style brochures and souvenir programmes were non-existent with individual acts expected to provide most of their promotional paraphernalia themselves. Many bands had to self-promote their involvement in the festival in the weeks leading up to the festival, encouraging followers that could travel to support them at the festival.

There was no effort made to develop a festival brand, or brand the festival with a logo, outside of those proffered by Bill Finnegan in relation to Smithwicks. When asked why no festival logo or brand was developed Mick McGuinness shrugged and mumbled that it “*just wasn’t*”, and that they didn’t think of it as being necessary on top of what Smithwicks provided. Smithwicks did produce a series of soft-focus posters yet no consultation was entered into between the organisers and the brand manufacturers^{xviii}. Flags, bunting, and banners were erected but they were not themed or coordinated. The majority of the bigger acts provided their own posters, though some exceptions were made for newly formed acts. Though some acts were well known, regionally, none would have had a strong enough popularity to draw huge crowds just to see them. Some groups had the resources for a publicity agent or public relations manager, and a handful of the bigger acts did have managers^{xix}. The promotion networks developed by the KBF committee were basic. The main method seemed to be an unofficial reliance on face-to-face word of mouth. The spread of this word of mouth was beyond the control of the committee. It was a network, spreading like wildfire.

4.2.2 External Promotion

The internal promotion of the festival was heavily reliant on externally generated word of mouth. Word of mouth was highlighted by all of those interviewed as the single biggest external advertising influence in festival promotion, bar none. All of those interviewed, whether involved in 1964, 1984, or 2004, described it as *essential* and *enormously beneficial*, but also as *uncontrollable* and *unpredictable*.

During the run of the *Kilkenny Beer Festival*, Kilkenny’s reputation was greatly affected by tales of drunken antics that grew in their telling and retelling. The unique situation of such a small city becoming notorious over the space of a few years generated enormous word of mouth that no organised festival stunt could have hoped to equal. This negative image and the near mythic stories of drunken abandon mobilised more conservative members of the Kilkenny public to object to and protest the continuation of the festival.

The more negative images spread by word of mouth in turn lead to the festival receiving considerable resistance, causing those involved to re-evaluate their participation and the festival's role within the community.

Other autonomous external promotion vehicles included television documentaries and weekly news reports filmed by the national broadcaster RTE. An episode of the television serial *The Riordans* was filmed in Kilkenny with the episode's story line featuring the festival. Radio programmes were broadcast from the festival in earlier years. Several television and radio celebrities took part in a locals-versus-celebrities fancy dress soccer/wrestling match. Besides being an event in itself this also promoted the festival through the agency of celebrity. These personalities promoted their participation within the festivals in the weeks prior to the festival that further promoted the festival itself. Their participation helped to strengthen their fledgling celebrity myth, increased their profile and fame in a unique community framed event, won new listeners, and in some cases new viewers. It also increased the myth surrounding local personalities and local characters as years later they still remembered 'nutmegging' the likes of Terry Wogan, Gay Byrne and Mike Murphy. Where the local newspaper centre-page pull-out proved to be the most important internal promotional vehicle, the radio broadcasts were unquestionably the most valuable external promotional device. Their enrolment within the festival was a mutually beneficial relationship with all parties (festival, broadcaster and station) increasing in popularity.

Although McGuinness, Finnegan and Farrelly maintained a monarchic surveillance of every inch of the festival, no attempts were made to regulate or restrict how external elements reported on the festival. The festival had achieved a mythic image very quickly. The image of the KBF surpassed the reality and generated a hyper-reality that caused expectation and trepidation alike. The idea of the KBF developed agency, pull, a power and status beyond the control of its 'owners'. The speed at which it captured the imagination of the young people of Ireland was impressive for its time and the technologically limited information networks available to it.

4.3 Organisation

The KBF committee (1964) was composed of representatives from a variety of public, sporting and other organisations in the city and county and was heavily influenced by political figures.^{xx} Members were not chosen for their skills and personal ability but were selected as representatives of business and community institutions. They were chosen for positions they held as nodal gatekeepers to resources and facilities that were required by the festival. The committee needed the facilities and resources that these people supposedly could deliver and were willing to work with those appointed to the task to secure the participation of the institution or facility in question. Common public perception held three members as the principal operators: Mr. Peter Farrelly, Town Clerk. Mr. W.A.L. Finnegan (Chairman), Alderman M.J.McGuinness^{xxi}. Throughout the ten years there were alterations in the committee composition. Some members stepped down for personal reasons and others were replaced on other committees and were no longer responsible for key resources and therefore of no use to the committee. A determined core group remained with notable later members, Senator Mick Lanigan and Smithwicks' Ron Girdhman, joining as active members rather than just as representatives for other bodies:

But we had a core group of a committee at it for the guts of thirteen years around the festival; they included all sorts from the G.A.A., here across the way^{xxii}, and Gowran for the races meeting that we ran as part of it all, and the greyhounds and the traders and Smithwicks. There were just some people who had a gift, and then there were those who could get anything, and others that could still be mannerly and smiling with no sleep for days, and they were there to do what they did and others there to tell them what to do and others there to be told what to do. And those that were just there to be seen to be there were not there or anywhere long (Mick McGuinness).

4.3.1 Management

In the beginning the festival was directly controlled by McGuinness and Finnegan, there was no discretionary power given to subordinates other than Farrelly^{xxiii}. McGuinness and Finnegan made sure they were involved at all stages of the festival and rarely delegated responsibility. Messages were delivered face to face; there were few phones in Kilkenny in 1964, with only one phone number of note (Gowran race park) that was of any use to the organisers. Crisis management was the order of the day with bicycles being one of the key actants for information distribution. Those with cars were mostly conscripted for moving props, instruments and costumes rather than merely passing on messages.

4.3.1.1 Coordination

Coordination among the three key actors was informal and intense, yet reliable and constant. Networking and forging alliances to avoid duplication or needless competition within the committee came naturally, during and outside meetings. The small, dense and tightly compact size of the town made the experience of orchestrating the festival's various components less difficult, as most venues were within a ten-minute walking distance. A common thread in all of the festivals studied here was the almost magical and essential ability of the key organisers to 'be everywhere at once'. This is a reflection of their dedication and 'knack' for being in the right place at the right time. Obviously since there were no emails, faxes, mobile phones or pagers with which to keep in contact with committee members, volunteers or revellers, on-the-ground communication relied heavily on foot work, bicycles, person-to-person contact and was intensely time-consuming.

4.3.1.2 Leadership

McGuinness, Finnegan, and Farrelly ensured that they were the first on the scene in the morning, and the last to bed at night. Their intense hands-on approach and massive investment of time ensured that the three men kept in contact with all those under their

control. The lack of communication devices was compensated by the intensity of the time and person-to-person contact hours that the three men expended every day. This approach was helped by the fact that Kilkenny at that time was still a relatively small, close-knit community. A personal relationship existed between the majority of those working the festival which came from knowing all of the people working with them from everyday socialising (Brown, O'Connor et al. 2000), family and family connections. The lack of management structures and management technologies were compensated for by the arsenal of sheer force of personality (Law 1994, p.66), charisma, and leadership abilities displayed by McGuinness, Farrelly and Finnegan, (and by Mick Lanigan and Ron Girdhman in later years). Later years saw the input given by these three men dwindle and this was not replaced, nor compensated for, resulting in a noticeable increase in mistakes and misunderstandings. A tradition of dependency had developed where little-to-no initiatives were undertaken by, or encouraged in, subordinates.

4.3.1.3 Planning

The committee as an organisation never moved beyond the basic duties of running the festival. The festival committee approach was on a year-to-year basis with no long term planning. There was no organisational address of issues such as franchise development, a business plan approach to event management, or the setting and achieving of long term goals. There was no plan that could provide structure, precedent or solid set targets. There was no plan to rely on for controls or guidance. There was no plan to assist newcomers to the committee in their role within the network. All issues were addressed as the need arose.

No brand recognition was planned or developed. The Smithwicks brand was developed independently of the festival by Guinness breweries and the festival was able to capitalise on the popularity of Smithwicks to a degree but no clear KBF brand was devised or developed. As most of the earlier committee members were stand-in representatives for other committees so that McGuinness and Finnegan could access the resources managed by those committees they were not consulted on plans to the depth that McGuinness,

Finnegan and Farrelly did with each other. If these three men did in fact develop or discuss at length any long-term plans (5-7 years) it wasn't discussed. The committee were not always privy to this information. Any spur of the moment planning that one of the three had to do was not discussed with the wider committee unless they happened to be on-site when issues arose. Interestingly there was no interview evidence to suggest that committee members had a problem with this or felt overly slighted by it. Some of these committee members served on the committee on two or more occasions. As positions on the Gowran Park and Nowlan Park committees rotated so did their representative to the KBF committee. It is thus understandable that they may not have been consulted on long term plans when it was known that they were short-term members. The lack of a guiding plan or any long term targets suggests that the core actors may not have expected the festival to last as long as it did. From an ANT perspective the absence of plans or guidelines to build a structure around is quite significant. The three key actors had to continuously react to situations and developments. When situations arose where no guiding structure or plan had been set in place it was up to the first of the three men on site to improvise a solution. This was heavily time consuming but did increase the reputation of the key actors and further solidified their authority.

4.3.1.4 Evaluation

There was no evidence from interviews or chance conversations that any of the acts, performers, or volunteers being formally evaluated. Perceived troublemakers or performers who did not behave themselves weren't invited to return to the festival. Volunteers were expected to perform to the best of their ability, especially the younger members. Although there were no accounting technologies applied to the reporting of standards or volunteer discipline, McGuinness and Farrelly knew all of the parents or the spouses of their staff. The constant threat that any misbehaviour could be communicated to those at home, often held in an unspoken agreement, guaranteed self-discipline and self-surveillance among the ranks. This informal evaluation system illustrates the social power, force of personality and connectedness of those core committee members. The

lack of any formal modern evaluation of the product is interesting and reflects the amateur and ad hoc approach of those characters at the epicentre of the KBF experience.

4.3.1.5 Human resources

Volunteers in the earlier years consisted mostly of family, friends, pupils and brewery workers. Interaction between organisers and related officials were not conducted professionally and fraught with personal issues. Many anecdotes and tales revolved around falling outs and misunderstandings the most colourful being characterised by spousal relationships. A key component here remains the agency of Mick McGuinness: most notably his charisma and his ability to intimidate (see Law, 1994, p.66. Interviews). His magnetic agency was often the bridge between reluctant facility gatekeepers becoming participants or remaining outside the festival. His blend of charm, intelligence, strict control and personality was crucial in managing all of the various human elements under his control.

Several volunteers who were asked why they got involved in the festival stated that they did so for ‘the craic’, for ‘the laugh’, and often because friends had been involved and had many anecdotes that made volunteering a social must. Brewery workers were conscripted to act as ambassadors and tour guides.^{xxiv}

Oh Jesus leave me alone! Sure we used to, see there'd be groups of publicans coming from all areas, we'd have to look after them, meet them and bring them down to the cellar and drinks and go out to the hotel with them and have a meal with them at lunch or an afternoon meal and go out to the beer tent. [Laughs] It was insane, that is all I can say about it. (Interview, wished to remain unnamed)

Families asked to house German guests also entered into the role of tour guide and drinking partner with spirit and gusto. Some of those involved in providing bed and breakfast for the festival continued to do so professionally.

Managing human resources is of key importance for all of the festival managers from 1964 to 2004. Of all four festivals the KBF was the loosest in formally organising their volunteers yet due to the very personal nature of the ties between those working for the festival and those in charge the response, loyalty and hours 'put in' are beyond anything recorded by volunteers in the later festivals. The novelty factor combined with enthusiasm and 'craic' made volunteering a social exercise. For both approaches the management of human resources during the KBF prompts many questions. As unstructured and informal as it was, it was effective. The last-minute-reaction style of the management worked, not through design, but through sweat, enthusiasm, and luck.

4.3.1.6 Non-Human resources

Abandoned buildings, ancient courtyards, and every conceivable entertainment proposal was considered including cat shows, smoking pipes, chess tournaments and fancy dress celebrity football matches. But more significantly all of the old buildings that were utilised as festival clubs and venues were renovated, illuminated by floodlight and *shown off*. These were the first floodlit buildings in the history of Kilkenny. The suggestion to floodlight them was seen as completely aberrant by local politicians and business leaders. This was seen as something practised in areas of a higher tourism status. A mix of a sense of inferiority and lack of appreciation prevented the corporation or council from green-lighting such an endeavour. However, McGuinness independently approached Solas^{xxv} and utilised the weight of the KBF's fame (agency) to strike a deal. The resulting tourist attention shown to these largely disregarded buildings changed local perceptions and added vital weight and support to the struggling archaeological society that was trying to fund full-scale renovations:

The castle was falling apart, falling down around its ears. This was after the Butlers and things weren't underway with any renovations or the like. ... There was dry rot and weeds all over the walls and not at all like it is now, the rafters were coming down, it was a shambles,... And really it should have been the centre piece of the city, it is the centre piece of the city now but not back then, but then

things got going and in the festival we got Solas bulbs , the Irish light company, to sponsor to floodlight the castle then the cathedral and later on the Black Abbey and it was the first lighting up of the city of that kind and it looked super and more and more the people wanted the lights on all the time and now its on all the time and no one notices. (Mick McGuinness)

Although very little thought was given towards matching venues with performers, some care was taken to ensure that the better venues were allocated to appropriate acts. No training was provided to newly appointed (normally by Farrelly) venue managers who were selected from festival volunteers, and few resources were given much more than the most rudimentary of maintenance. Venues that were controlled by large social groups or significant local organisations were enrolled through the inclusion of their gatekeepers onto the committee and did have a say in appointing venue staff. Those appointed to assist at these venues were under no illusion as to who was in charge and that they reported directly to either Farrelly or McGuinness.

4.3.1.7 Business and managerial technologies

McGuinness and Farrelly conducted all of their festival business face to face. Finnegin entered into written correspondences to secure the German element of the festival but the finer details were secured in person at the beginning and end of the festival. The technologies were simply unavailable to manage the festival from a distance. More importantly the mentality with which the three key men governed the festival didn't allow for anything less than face-to-face negotiation, and secured agreements.

4.3.1.8 Financing

A medium level of respect was given towards financial concerns but none held more than a passing sway over the actions of the committee or the venue managers. Committee financial management systems were rudimentary, typified by the phrase 'calculations on the back of an envelope'. Few noticeably advanced accounting technologies were

enrolled, and none were developed further as moderators or managers of personnel or financing, or power nodes in themselves. Funding came largely from sponsorship from Smithwicks Brewery, of which Finnegan was a senior officer. Costs were relatively low due to the truly impressive amount of people who volunteered, or donated goods/props/materials to the festival.

4.3.2 Power

The *Kilkenny Beer Festival* was, to all intents and purposes, a three-man show. From the beginning decisive power rested with three people, even though the actual committee fluctuated between 12 to 15 people. Power sat firmly with McGuinness, Farrelly and Finnegan. All decisions, suggestions of note, bookings and upsets were dealt with by these three men. The three men were as omnipresent on the ground during the festival as they were in the committee room, a foucauldian monarchic (McKinlay and Starkey 1998) system in all but design. The three men came to symbolise a very visible power but this power was only apparent during moments when it was exercised. *Power over* was constantly exercised by these three actors. There were no remembered instances of these actors delegating major responsibilities to others and thus enabling others to exercise power.

The festival was intensely micro-managed to such an extent that no festival or venue decisions could or would be made without one of the three key members being involved. Although several venues had teams of volunteers with appointed staff managers, all venues were visited regularly by at least one of the trio. This coincidentally meant that one of the three were on hand to make decisive decisions as problems occurred. The three characters fast became associated with the festival, so much so that the festival and their identities were deeply intertwined during those weeks. Of the three, McGuinness was perceived by volunteers and locals alike as the dominant force behind the festival. McGuinness was perceived more as the festival owner, rather than as a manager or committee member. Many of those interviewed in the last five years referred to the festival in the modern sense as his 'baby' (whereas in relation to Finnegan locals referred

to the festival as *Finnegan's wake*). The force and agency of his personality, charisma (Law 1994) and reputation was a power in its own right, which it would seem from interviews, that he had no qualms in unleashing when necessary. The atmosphere created by the intense person-to-person supervision of the venues promoted self-surveillance among the ground troops, and ensured that energy levels were maintained, and that idleness was minimised as neither McGuinness nor Finnegan adhered to a particular routine as such, and their visits were difficult to predict. Unfortunately ten years of reliance on McGuinness bred a tradition of dependence within the festival structure and a weakness that created a need for McGuinness and company to resolve every problem. The frequency of cowboy-hero narratives does point to a single figure in control and not three. ANT is quite capable with following McGuinness as an actor but questions over the equality of power within the trinity of the three core members and their relationship among each other in private are hard to answer.

Boundaries blur significantly on categorising the relationship between the core three actors. McGuinness was part of a political family and held the mayor's title multiple times during and after the KBF. Peter Farrelly was the town clerk for eight of the ten years of the festival. Finnegan's agency as head of the Smithwicks brewery is quite significant. Outside of these notable positions these key actors had, or made, other links with corporations, councils and elected officials across many organisations and local groups. There are no clear boundaries to define when any of the core three members are 'wearing their festival hat' or speaking from other positions, when these connections are established. Using ANT to trace the networks each member developed the picture that emerges is of one central character with two almost-equal members at the centre of a continuously revolving and evolving committee centre-point.

Their 'hands on' approach breaches any notions of aloofness. Their face-to-face approach to alliance forming was the only option open to them at the time and their presence on the ground during the festival was once again the only option open to them to ensure the smooth running of the festival. These three core members continually enrol temporary committee members to deliver on a varied and eclectic mix of resources. Their positions

are not distanced. Their positions are not merely figureheads. All three display *possession of strategic knowledge of social transactions and a capacity to act on the basis of that knowledge* (Stone 1986, p.91) All three are referenced in interviews as having the capacity to act. These men possess ‘know-how’ in vast quantities and they also possess inexhaustible levels of ‘know-who’. Yet local interviews consistently rate McGuinness as the main festival engine. Having interviewed McGuinness twice^{xxvi} the author is of the opinion that McGuinness was a charismatic force of nature and could have easily assumed the responsibility of running the festival single handed. It is also the opinion of the author that a deep friendship existed in those days between Finnegan, Farrelly and McGuinness and that the bond they formed was key to the festival’s ten years of organised mayhem.

4.4 An ANT analysis of The Kilkenny Beer Festival

Both optional interpretations of Callon’s four steps of emergence were applied to the collected narratives of the KBF (see Table 4.1) to measure and assess the ability of the ANT framework to examine and understand the emergence of the festival.

There was no actual problem that inspired McGuinness, rather an opportunity. The Porsander interpretation of the launch point serves best here. In keeping with Law’s vocabulary, McGuinness was the cowboy entrepreneur who saw opportunity and potential in the transplant of the Oktoberfest festival to Kilkenny. The problems facing Kilkenny’s meagre tourism industry were greater than one solution, and it was not a top priority within the Kilkenny network. McGuinness combined his political network and his family roots network, with Finnegan’s Brewery network and Farrelly’s civil connections to create a convergence of never-before assembled parts that they defined, and created a web where each was indispensable to the other actants they wished to lure in (Callon, 1986a). They define themselves and therefore the relationship that is to follow. It is quite clear from the start that each actor within the inner circle represents their own network and resources.

Table 4.1 Application of four steps of emergence to KBF

| | Callon (Fox, 2000) | KBF | Porsander (2005) | KBF |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------|--|---------|
| 1 | <i>Problematization</i> | Unclear | Entering the Obligatory Point of Passage | Present |
| 2 | <i>Interessement</i> | Present | Forming a Pact | Present |
| 3 | <i>Enrolment</i> | Present | Performing various Negotiations | Present |
| 4 | <i>Mobilization of the Allies</i> | Present | Finding the Spokesman | Present |

In assembling the committee (step 2 in table 4.1 above) the majority of allies are enrolled not as equals with the capacity to deliver but as ‘interchangeable intermediaries’^{xxvii}. Intermediaries who will communicate between McGuinness and the committee they temporarily speak for. These are not disposable members, as their communication back to the committee (and in extension the resource they are acting spokesperson for) is highly valued. But they are identity-less. It is the position that is filled rather than the person that is selected. Many would be classed as *civil-servants* or *zombies* (Law, 1994). They are not as committed or attached (Gomart and Hennion 1999) as McGuinness, Finnegan and Farrelly. They are merely present as temporary gatekeepers, interchangeable nodes, representing one voice on an external committee with no power to make decisions for that committee. These were never meant to be equal partners. They are interchangeable intermediaries: they are enrolled as the voice of the resource. These speakers, as individuals, are allied briefly as their position on an external committee with external voting procedures assigns them to represent them. Some re-enrol into the KBF network in later years in other positions or return to former positions without disrupting the three senior actors at the top.

McGuinness wanted Nowlan park, the castle ruins, Gowran Park, the use of halls, pubs and a field for the beer tent. The intermediaries put forward by committees external to his were his access point to these facilities and his respect (and that of Finnegan and Farrelly)

was towards the position and its power rather than the person holding it. Finnegan never became a mere interchangeable intermediary for the Smithwicks brewery as he brought extra charisma to the mix and proved to be a very smooth cowboy-entrepreneur on par with McGuinness with different skill sets and connections. Although there is an overlap between Farrelly's circles of influence and McGuinness, he was an ally and not a zombie or interchangeable intermediary. Once this process of realising the difference between actants and actors within the committee is accomplished business commences.

The next step involves the enrolment of the individual components to form an overnight industry (see table 4.1). The three key actors negotiated the development of a loose, yet functioning, Bed and Breakfast (B&B) network^{xxviii}, developed a tourist information network, encouraged increased infrastructural provision, engaged outside forces in heritage development, and enrolled and mobilised temporary ambassadors who are rudimentary tour-guides, escorts, and drinking companions combined into one person. This is the collecting of multiple scraps of networks and their unification. This mammoth task does not end until the very last day of the final festival concludes. The scale of this feat is even more extraordinary when accomplished without modern communication networks. Most of it is completed in face-to-face transactions and by hand written correspondence with those festival actors in Germany. McGuinness utilises his own reputation and political currency to mobilise allies and networks that had been dormant or under used in Kilkenny. His dictatorship or monarchy fits the diffusion^{xxix} model of power like a glove. Although Farrelly and Finnegan both command considerable agency they do not exercise any real local agency of their own that would suggest a translational model of power (Latour, 1986).

Lastly in finding a single actor in the KBF, on a local scale, has McGuinness firmly entrenched in the perceptions of the local residents as 'the man behind the festival'. On a national level there is no spokesperson, spokes-icon or spokes-image to solidify the decentred chaos that becomes the KBF circus. Business wise, and later on in infamy, McGuinness is known as the epicentre of the network and the actor with the final say on process and procedure. In tracing the flows of information, ordering and control all of the

threads in the web return to McGuinness. Even those attached to his seconds-in-command are linked back to McGuinness. Such is his agency in the festival myth and folklore that his part supplants all associations to or inspiration by the Oktoberfest. The translation of this festival model to the small Irish city is subsumed by the now near mythic Mick McGuinness and his legacy. His is the agency which envisions and installs a new *narrative of historical sequences* (Hetherington, 1999, p.51). His agency catapults a new heritage agenda into the local spotlight with the flood lighting and preservation campaigns so central to the survival of Kilkenny's historic buildings. His legacy also extends to the networks he created and that are still operating in Kilkenny – The tourism office and the Bed and Breakfast networks – both of which are vital cornerstones of modern tourism in Kilkenny.

ANT acquits itself well in this case study. It provides valuable insights into the orderings and operations behind the festival committee's struggle to deliver a first-ever for Kilkenny and survive from year-to-year. There are many points of note: although the organisation of the festival is largely human-to-human with very few intermediaries, multiple non-human actants and actors are incorporated into the festival. In key instances some human committee members are there solely to negotiate on behalf of non-human actors and actants. These voiceless humans are tied enrolled with no real capacity to deliver, merely function as a go-between.

The managerial technologies are weakest in this festival compared to those that follow; orderings are formed on scraps of paper, perform their short lived service and are disposed of and forgotten. The majority of alliance building is done one-on-one between the humans. It is important to note how it is the actants and non-human actors that McGuinness assembled when building his festival network that have out-lasting all others and remained in-contact, connected and still functioning: the bed and breakfast network, the floodlights on key heritage sites, the restoration of key heritage sites, the tourism information network (based on principles discovered through trial and error during the festival) and the agency of the tourism industry in Kilkenny itself. Not only did he put in

place tourism structures but he also developed practises whereby key resources had interchangeable intermediaries operating on local committees throughout the county.

ANT covers the emergence of the KBF comprehensively and with depth. ANT provides insight into the physical and social impact of the festival, it highlights the birth of Kilkenny's tourism network and it notes the beginning of Kilkenny's agency as a domestic tourism destination. When the KBF began Kilkenny was not considered a tourist venue, by itself or any organisation. It did not bare the legend of 'Medieval Capital of Ireland', nor was there a large arts and crafts culture present in the city. The castle was a fast decaying annoyance, there were few Irish culture appreciation societies of any nature, there was no tourism officer, no tourism agency, and no international events. The KBF was to act as a catalyst of change and inspire a range of developments and institutions. ANT comprehensively follows these networks to their full disclosure.

4.5 Festival Legacy

The start point was, tourism is what happens in Killarney and Dublin and has nothing to do with Kilkenny. That changed, quite dramatically when Bill Finnegan came to Kilkenny and he introduced the beer festival, which was a manufacturers marketing festival. There was no background to it. It was created by the image-makers, the marketers. Kilkenny suddenly found itself in the tourist industry. (Pat Nolan)

The KBF was a radical step for the actors within Kilkenny at this time. It was the first entrepreneurial place marketing event of the city. It presented the people of Kilkenny with a multitude of tourism, information and service possibilities. It sparked off the development of what would become two of the most synonymous icons of the city; Kilkenny Castle, and the Kilkenny Design Centre. A new awareness of the castle's potential for both Kilkenny's tourism image and city social life became infectious with an official launch by the Chamber of Commerce to seek funding to preserve and develop the castle. The castle today is considered the 'gem' of historic Kilkenny by locals and visitors

alike. The festival started a bed and breakfast industry and network in Kilkenny. Resurgence in Irish culture, crafts, and heritage spawned many interest groups and new vision was applied to restoration development in the city. More importantly a tradition of festivals had been started, and many people had come to realise the potential of the city to host bigger events:

But as far as festivals are concerned and again, if you get back to festivals, I think that the proof that Kilkenny could be a festival sort of a place was successful.
(Mick Lanigan snr.)

But by the time the Beer Festival had finished it set people to thinking see? About B&B's and hotels and refining the whole idea. Events were to be more cultural but sure we had that, but there's a question of whose culture was best we had the dolls and the ballads but they got in more with going for the arts and then the fringe later on to get the punter. (Mick McGuinness)

Chapter 5. The Kilkenny Arts Week 1974 – 1981

Because the beer festival had been there and had been of immense value to some people and of immense “shag all” to other people, to the point that it was financially a very good development for the city now I didn’t live here, this is the first year I lived in Kilkenny in 1974, and it would appear that some things are out of hand in relation to the beer festival and that there were excesses in the street which caused a little bit of eyebrow raising to say “was it worth it”. And the content of the beer festival programme seemed to be running down a bit at that particular time. But people were anxious that a festival of some kind should take place and these guys that I just mentioned would have an orientation towards things artistic and towards the arts. So wedding the two concepts together - the festival and the arts - ... It became feasible to talk about it, and also there were a great number of people who would be a guaranteed audience, who were willing to attend things in Kilkenny ... (Brendan Conway, Finance Committee Chairman, Arts week 1974).

The Arts Week almost, almost evolves from a desire, from a group of people to entertain themselves, and if somebody else wants to come along they're very welcome as well. That's almost, almost, the sort of, the ethos of the Arts Week: “This is going to be lovely, we can't really have these lovely bands to entertain ourselves unless we get other people to come as well to help pay the bills, so let's get other people to come and pay the bills” (Pat Nolan)

The following details the elements involved in the running of the festival from its first year in 1974 up to and including when the first major personnel change occurred within the committee (1980/1). This will focus on the original setting-up of the festival. A later section focuses on the major committee changeover in the late nineties and the actors involved in this as Kilkenny Arts Week (KAW) becomes The Kilkenny Arts Festival (KAF). Although the festival continued to run and changes in the make up of the organisation were continuous between '81 and '92/93 these years are not overly detailed.

Key points in time are isolated and discussed but it was simply unwieldy to detail thirty three years of the KAW. Additionally the composition and structure of the voting committee during the 1980s had reached a standing of fifty-two voting members. Mapping and tracing the input of all of these actors became unwieldy without providing any valuable insights into the lack of structure and ego-driven chaos that reigned in this time. As with the KBF this overview will concentrate on Product, Promotion, and Organisation.

We had to expose a lot of people to their first arts experience. That was the reality of it. And there was very little music in schools at the time.

(Brendan Conway)

KAW was modelled on the *Edinburgh Arts Festival* and held in August. The original committee in 1974 consisted largely of *Artists, teachers, musicians, teachers and then more teachers*^{xxx} (Brendan Conway). There was no structured or systematic approach to the initial committee selection and most of the members were friends or fellow teachers that did not include a broad representation of the community. All had interests in classical music and the arts, with the majority of committee members having little or no organisational skills or resources at hand. The exceptions being Ron Girdhman (Smithwicks), Jim King (Kilkenny Design Centre) Rev. Brian Harvey (see below) and Susan Butler. The committee was compartmentalised into different arts interests, with each subdivision responsible for that area. A finance committee and a venue committee^{xxxii} were also established.

I didn't set myself up as being a financier or whatever. My friends who were George Vaughan, who is an art teacher in Thomastown; David Lee, then organist of St Canice's Cathedral; Larry Cooke, who is an artist of note, then resident in Thomastown; and Raymond Leahy, a teacher of art in Thomastown. These were all friends and colleagues of mine and they proposed the idea to each other I think, and then I was very early on approached would I be of assistance to them in putting the programme in place. (Brendan Conway)

5.1 Product

The KBF was essentially an ensemble of activities and events loosely connected together by the fact that they were on in the same place, at the same time. The KAW did not follow in that mode and was in fact an integrated product. Where the KBF was a fragmented and eclectic mix-and-gather-um of events and stunts, the arts event was a tightly choreographed coherently themed event. The product consisted of orchestras, quintets, nomadic theatre troops, artists, writers, singers, aficionados, lords, ladies, reviewers, humble playwrights, not-so-humble playwrights, reviewers and an entourage of canvases, paints, craft supplies, brushes, instruments, strings, sheets of music, stands, costumes, tuxedos, batons, posters, tickets, time tables and any other special needs the various acts required. The festival also included the participation of the bemused and bewildered local residents. The KAW product also benefited from two external factors: Ireland's close proximity to Britain and the ease with which acts could travel to Kilkenny, and the timing of the festival itself which coincided with the *Edinburgh Arts Festival*. World class touring orchestras and musicians attended Kilkenny as either a warm up to the main event of playing Edinburgh, or as a little aside after the bustle of the competitive Edinburgh environment. Some world-renowned acts simply took the opportunity to perform in Kilkenny as an excuse to visit Ireland. Through the use of the committee's own personal contacts, big figures in literature, classical music, and Irish political life were secured to partake in the opening year. Brendan Conway was not wrong when he said: *And there were people of note who came in behind us as well.*

For example Robert Lowell, poet, very seriously regarded poet in the 50's, 60's, 70's and American writer. He had volunteered. He would be visiting in Ireland, and he agreed to do a reading for us. Now that was a tremendous captive. We also had a commitment via Barry Cooke from Ted Hughes, the recent poet Laureate... one of the people who was with us and did a reading, to my best recollection Seamus Heaney did a reading the first year... We had Paddy Hillary

and Cathal O'Daly. Cathal O'Daly opened it one year and Eugene Nevil. But Childers, he did give again a dignity to the event. (Brendan Conway).^{xxxii}

Tremendous care was taken to present every performance and exhibit to its fullest advantage. Every venue was assessed for acoustics, back stage space and any special requirements the acts had requested. Great efforts were taken to marry their finest venues with the most appropriate performances. And behind the scenes even greater efforts were being made to secure the best potential venues that Kilkenny had to offer:

Now around that time also the restoration of the castle had been taken in hand. It was agreed as a national policy, it was inching into place and there was a desire to have, I suppose, a show, a shop window or a showcase for the castle ... We also had eyes of love on St Canice's Cathedral as a music venue because it was already recognised as a place of supreme acoustics for choral theme, for orchestral music. It had a reputation already by that time. So we had to tread gingerly with the Anglican community to gain access to it as a venue. And therefore we invited on board to the committee Dean Harvey, the Dean of the cathedral. So he came on board and he was chairman of events which took place subsequently. We needed him on board so that we could have access to the Cathedral on an on-going way... I personally had no worries so long as our public got the product for which they paid, but some of our people edgy that they – we need to plan ahead for two or three years ahead based on the availability of the Cathedral. But serious negotiations were going on in the North of Ireland, you know, year in year out about the availability of the Cathedral. Sometimes it would be available, but then if there was a religious ceremony taking place the morning after, we had to clean it up at 12.00 at night. That kind of irritation really, like, you know, it was a militating factor, as I understand it now the Cathedral is readily available the whole time. (Brendan Conway)

The organisers soon realised that they not only had a great product in the festival, but also in Kilkenny. Various actors and agents were combined uniquely in Kilkenny to present new and unrepeatable once-off products. Their approach of painstakingly pairing performance and venue together was proving remarkably successful. Great lengths were taken to assess compatibility of resource and performer.

But we had [a concert] in Church of Ireland Church, you know, and also in subsequent years we had a lunch-time concert in the Black Abbey, and we had lunch-time concerts in St Mary's Cathedral and also in St Canice's Cathedral. We had lunch-time concerts in all of those places in subsequent years. (Brendan Conway)

They asked me so many questions I nearly killed them. "Off" I says and "don't be bothering me". And he comes back with a tuning fork. "We'll take it he says" Well I nearly thrun [sic] him out. Ten year of bands played there and in comes that scut with a tuning fork for a poetry reading. (Former Kilkenny Publican)

After the first year the product took shape around the built environment of the city itself. Not only were particular orchestras booked for set venues, they were also booked for set nights. In later years these bookings would write themselves and form the staple and back bone to the festival:

... on the Thursday night of the Arts Week when we had the New Ireland Chamber Orchestra. The New Ireland Chamber Orchestra was a new phenomenon at the time. It was a sub-set of the National Symphony Orchestra really. And they played to a full house ... we had the National Youth Orchestra rally summer school in Kilkenny, housed in Seville Lodge, and gave a performance on the Friday night of Arts Week. That would be to a bulging audience now of about 1200 people in the Cathedral. (Brendan Conway)

In the first years organisers had an extra worry in presenting the product on show. While most festivals have only to contend with presenting the product, this festival had to contend with the possibility that could encounter heavy local resistance that may have negatively affected future Arts festivals.

... and I think that initially that it was going, the idea was that it was going to be a high-class, high quality, high-brow, now that has worked, initially that worked, but then I think that people realised that you had a limited audience for listenership, for that, the high-class, high-brow high quality. (Michael Lanigan snr)

And yes, we were the first pioneers in the concept arts festivals. And then we were, I suppose, challenged as the elitists and there was public controversy saying that we were not reaching the people. (Brendan Conway)

And the classical music, remember now that's 25 or 26 years ago, we were that much younger of a nation, and we were continuing to identify classical music as something Britishy, kind of thing, you know, upper class, and something pertaining to the great house ... and a very eminent churchman, now he'll be nameless, he referred to our festival as 'a Protestant festival'. A sculptor who was exhibiting a sculpture told me that that was what this eminent churchman said to him...The sensation was that we were being re-taken over by the invader and that he was capturing our minds through the medium of the esoteric music.....It was a very enlightening [sarcasm] kind of sentiment to encounter and one you could throw up your hands and say, "to hell with the lot", like you know. But we felt that there was a demand there and in my professional role I saw it as a challenge as an adult education programme. I saw the whole thing as adult education anyway. Because people were going to broaden their minds through it

... the first mayor was Tommy Martin, ... Tommy Martin was totally gob-smacked or frightened by the arts week, he didn't know the hell what it was, and a lot of them were afraid of it, you know of the corporation members.....

People, you see, they are still frightened and say that it is over indulgent in classical music, and who wants classical music anyway. Its elitist now we said, unashamedly, yes, it is elitist, but it isn't a sin you know, it isn't illegal to be elitist ... (Brendan Conway)

This mixture of emotions added to the product for some and created situations where to avoid embarrassing both the artist and the festival some people were dragged in from the street to make up attendance numbers:

But we also had to get people to go because the likes of Aucher and those, the writers and the reviewers would [attend] ... this wonderful artist came from Belfast to perform to an audience of three, but we made sure that every artist that performed had an audience of 30 anyway, because we brought men, women and children in off the streets to come in to this kind of thing. (Brendan Conway)

Knowing that everything they booked and presented would come under excess scrutiny, the committee took extra steps to ensure the festivals accessibility. Due to this tension a comradely bond had developed within that initial committee. As the years progressed tensions, between locals and organisers, decreased and acceptance of the festival increased. Compromises were made by the committees to engage and interact with all interests, bringing in accessible acts that would appeal to a broader community.

I think there's, that the public perception of the Arts week has come down now to, in a lot of cases, very successfully too, people think that visual arts, that's painters and sculptors and these people, are not people outside society, that it's not something for the hoypaloy. They see art shows in every pub in Kilkenny, they see sculpture exhibitions, they see woodturning, they see all the diverse elements of the visual arts and that doesn't mean there's been any dilution in the quality, but it has changed the emphasis and that is good. (Michael Lanigan snr.)

The importance of matching exhibits with the venues that were available were not just a matter of lighting but of space and its pliability. As the importance of the venues increased the importance of the resource keepers increased. Key performances of the festival product were reliant on cooperation and successful negotiation between different parties. In comparison to the KBF this was a more ambitious festival and introduced new standards (complexities) in producing festivals in Kilkenny. The dedication to matching the right venue to the right sound was a departure from KBF practise. The extra special care in transporting instruments, sculptures, paintings, and special edition books was unprecedented. Exhibits were not thrown together in an ad hoc fashion. Many exhibits, installations and sets were meticulously planned concepts that were designed, re-designed and re-designed again. How these things were assembled was very important to those involved in the KAW festival. Ordering their arrangement was of paramount concern to all on the committee, all of the participants and all of the venue managers.

5.2 Promotion

The internally organised promotional drives for the KAW 1974-81 festivals were highly ambitious and targeted a specific audience with the best quality material affordable. New ideas in promotion abounded internally, and at all stages, reflective of a committee with vision, long term goals and infectious enthusiasm.

As with the KBF, the external promotional actors were beyond the authority of the committee per se. However, due to the use of arts supplements and arts review columns, these reviewers and authors were known to, and often friends of, some of the committee. Favourable reviews that may have eluded committees composed of strangers; were granted to committees composed of friends. The eagerness to share in the excitement of hosting some of the biggest names of their time led the committee to welcome all requests for information with a contagious gusto.

The agency of the committee's eagerness, excitement, enthusiasm, unbounded dedication and love of the music and literature in the festival is a noteworthy force in itself. In

comparison to the KBF the enthusiasm of the original KAW committee was on par with the driving personality McGuinness brought to his committee. Genuine in their love for the subject matter, the committee was known to 'win over' more seasoned festival reviewers, participators, and some of the biggest names of the arts with enthusiasm rather than prestige or financial compensation. Frequently in interviews those members described the entire experience as a dream, a fantasy come true. Many referred to the experience as being like 'kids in a sweet shop'. They continuously felt in awe and overcome with privilege when able to book acts that they had marvelled at when attending Dublin theatres and other festivals. This passion translated and transferred through their person-to-person dealings with guests, creating an agency beyond charm and charisma (Law, 1994), influencing and winning over reviewers, stars and locals alike.

The promotional agency of this 'infectious enthusiasm' is still present in some of the original committee members and comes across well in interviews even though they are 'selling' a festival from over thirty years ago.

5.2.1 Internally organised Promotion

...from the word go, the local paper got in there and John Kerry-Keane was extremely helpful. And he covered his edition of the Kilkenny People. We advertised fairly well, we got a lot of printing done with him. (Brendan Conway)

The arsenal of promotional material and vehicles that the original KAW committee produced was staggering in comparison to the KBF. They produced souvenir brochures, flyers, posters and a logo that would adorn official festival promotional material, meetings minutes, official stationary, and any correspondence committee members entered into to with potential guests. The committee also availed of the notice boards in several popular Dublin theatres, knowing that if authors or musicians of world renown were to visit the festival, that there would be a sizeable amount of interest in travelling to Kilkenny. Impressively all of the networks targeted by the committee are networks each of them had access to, belonged to or were set up by themselves, for themselves. Each

member had the capacity to deliver on promotional responsibilities and each member had the talent and status to negotiate and support (as far as agreement within the committee was concerned) all agreements reached. Although they promoted themselves intensively there was no consistency in style, recognisable icons, or distinguishable trait after the second year. The sheer wealth of communication actants and actors designed and developed by the committee adds new dimensions to an ANT study that were never present in the KBF.

5.2.1.1 Logos, Catalogues and Brochures

Throughout its' history the KAW programmes, brochures, catalogues and other advertising paraphernalia have changed from year to year, no two years are alike and no common themes were developed outside of the KAW Eye Logo ('74 and '75, for a sample of covers see^{xxxiii}). The first KAW catalogue cover was of stark and minimalist design. The cover was dual coloured, black with gold markings, denoting the KAW Eye Logo with a loose border. The logo itself, a centre circle (pupil) with five waved lines above it and five waved lines below it (eyelids), dominates both the 1974 and 1975 catalogue covers. Over the course of the next thirty years this logo resurfaces on stationary, on posters, and incorporated into the fabric and design of actual poster art. For many years during the late '70's and 80s the Eye was left out of the arts week programmes and paraphernalia (see^{xxxiv}) yet in '91, when the need for a recognisable, iconic, logo was acknowledged it was resurrected. On its second year the catalogue cover was plain white and completely featureless bar the enlarged representation of the logo. The logo was drawn in gold, tilted with the lower tenth cut off by the bottom of the page.

The Kilkenny People newspaper was used extensively to advertise events, as were all of the other national broadsheet newspapers with respected cultural segments, and other artistic, theatre, and culture publications. Private newsletters from associations interested in the arts, of which many committee members were members were also utilised.

5.2.2 Externally organised Promotion:

All of the committee were either artists and musicians themselves or avid collectors and arts enthusiasts. They were not novices to the arts circuits. Nor were they unknown in artistic scenes in Dublin and Cork. They had connections previous to their committee duties with those involved in the reporting, reviewing, judging and exhibiting of work. These connections proved to be invaluable in promoting the festival, but even more so in making an impression with the reviewers.

In the first years reviewers were treated to the best that the festival had to offer, and were chaperoned to whatever performance most intrigued them:

There was acres of newsprint, Charles Acton, the then music critic of the Irish Times came and stayed for a whole nine days. And he wrote exultingly about the festival, and about all of us, you know, what wonderful people we were to organise the festival, and it was very flattering and whatever, and it was good for the image really. And he gave us a platform by which we could approach people for sponsorship in subsequent years. (Brendan Conway)

No interviewee suggested that reviewers were harassed or that any reviewer was tightly reigned in. Early reviewers were important assets in themselves, and even more important as gateways to other reviewers and artists. Even reviewers like John Kerry-Keane, the owner of the Kilkenny People newspaper, who was frequently owed money for various advertisements and printings, waxed lyrically when the content of the festival was in question:

When we came to pay out bills at the end of the year, at the end of the festival in September, we paid the small people first and we kept the likes of John Kerry-Keane waiting for two or three months until we got in all our money. But he was very good about the whole thing. And he gave us extremely favourable write-ups every year. (Brendan Conway)

The written reviews were a very specific form of promotion. A more advanced print variation on word of mouth, these reviews were read by those with more than a passing interest in the subject matter, and in the language that review readers had grown accustomed to. This ensured that a specific audience were informed of all the festival had to offer, and could discuss it with like-minded people. The reviews connected the festival to a very specific audience and rather than aiming for attracting the attention of a broad spread of potential customers they focussed on those with similar interests.

When the festival's popularity and standing increased more reviewers arrived, most expecting the royal treatment afforded to their colleges, however by then the small committee were unable to ensure that each one received the red carpet treatment. Though the first class treatment changed for the reviewers, the calibre of the established acts ensured the continuation of positive reviews. Established and respected literature and classical music based arts radio show presenters and producers were likewise wooed by the line-up presented on early editions of the programmes. The first tentative requests to the arts committee for more information on behalf of these radio shows were met with an avalanche of information, willing interview guests, and invitations to attend the festival and stay in the homes of the committee members themselves. This enthusiastic, genuine and immediate response ensured the participation of the radio presenters and their crews. Their experiences at the festival won continued praise for the festival and repeat goodwill in the build up to many of the following festivals. There was no evidence to suggest that the radio stars promoted and attended the festivals to gain new listeners. In fact, there was anecdotal evidence suggesting that they did not expect to gain any new listeners at all, and that if there was an agenda on their part it was geared towards meeting with long time fans, with artists they had admired from afar, and cementing their already established position as important national arts outlets.

The relationships formed between the various committee members and reviewers or presenters remained strong for the initial seven to eight years of the first committee's involvement. With the retirement of the original committee and the knowledge held by

their successors that the immediate future of the festival seemed to be in no danger, efforts to continuously woo arts connections dwindled. Personnel changes among radio crews also diminished the connection between the wireless and the festival somewhat. ANT illuminates multiple external networks and resources that become vital to the promotion of the KAW. The stark contrast between the effectiveness of the original buddy committee and their replacements is not obvious at first.

5.3 Organisation

From the onset the festival committee was compartmentalised, with each sub-committee having full autonomy over their set niche. A crucial decision was made at the very beginning to create an accounting and finance committee separate and independent to the other event related sub-committees. From day one the festival was set up as a “friendly society”, with aims to become a limited company (which they did 7 years later). There was a classical committee, a visual arts committee, a literature committee, a promotional committee and a finance committee. Other musical genre-specific committees were created in later years when demand warranted it. Each initial committee member was selected from friends and those known to have an interest in the area. As the festival grew these committees became bigger and bigger. Each committee prepared their individual wish-lists, approached the necessary agents and contacts, booked the acts, arranged the venues and prepared the final programme entry virtually independent of outside interference or controls. The only controls imposed were financial ones set by accounts and finance.

In theory the roles of each committee were strictly defined, with no need for overlaps; in practise the entire organisation was fluid and flowing with an ‘all hands on board’ attitude to securing the acts and people required for the festival. Those with ideas pertaining to other committees shared them. Contacts were exchanged, budgets moved around, ideas discussed in the pub. If one subcommittee required a member of another subcommittee to assist in negotiations there were no issues or trouble with bringing whoever was required on board.

It would be a programme decision really, it would be a programme committee of which I suppose David Lee and George Vaughan would be the big players in that. And I would have been the person negotiating the fee. And I drew on my friendships, Sean McRaymond and people like that... (Brendan Conway).

Though entire details wouldn't be discussed at length, committees would be informally aware of each others 'wish lists', their progression, and any other major difficulties or developments. This was not due to any formally structured accountability reporting that insisted on inter-committee communication or some bi-monthly debriefing. The committee members were able to keep abreast of developments in other committees because they socialised together. They were friends previous to joining the various committees and successful signings were celebrated and talked about enthusiastically, and at some length, outside of committee meetings in social gatherings. The lack of communication actants and technology did not impede communication amongst the organisers, and due to their friendly relationship no structured organisational devices were required to create a team spirit, or a unified sense of purpose and direction. Desire (Starkey and McKinlay 1998), combined with 'pleasure at work', ensured that energy levels remained high enough to overcompensate for any shortcomings in the festival's organizational structure.

No single definitive figure became over-associated with the festival, as all of the committee participated actively when the festival was on. Duties were either rotated, or evenly distributed. No set hierarchies developed among the individual members on sub-committees, but members of the classical music committee quickly became convinced that their committee held a superior position among the other sub-committees. According to multiple interviews they claimed the lion's share of the budget, the venues, the timetabling and accommodation. This self-elected self-importance did not create any ripples among the original committee as everyone was in favour of a strong classical programme and saw the other areas as a means to this end. This superior attitude would translate on through to later KAW, regardless of how many turnovers occurred, yet

would not be met with the same acceptance. This attitude would later become a factor that would lead to misunderstandings, disgruntlement, and division.

With the introduction of new members (1981) came new interests, new priorities and new demands on budgets, accommodation, resources, venues and manpower. These strains on the festivals facilities led to tensions for which the festivals organisational structures were not prepared for. Lack of communication and an inability to develop cross-committee relationships became increasingly pronounced after the departure of the initial committee. Complications arose with the introductions of competitive egos, secretive natures, uncommunicative rivals and other factors that further complicated the running of the festival. Without the bond of friendship that had held the first committees together, the lack of structure supporting the festival became increasingly pronounced. Interviewees mention that as the committee grew in numbers that it was difficult to *keep track of everything*. As information networks faltered, misunderstandings festered.

5.3.1 Management

When festivals become larger and more sophisticated they require the implementation of more formalised and professional management structures. Learning from the KBF's many trials and errors the KAW committee was determined to be the exact opposite of its predecessor; in content, timing, audience, image and management. It would be erroneous to describe the KBF as inferior to its highbrow successor but its organisers were more naïve, less experienced, and less structured.

The KBF had a large following, a large and varied complex product, multiple venues and a large, loyal volunteer body. With the introduction of the KAW a stylised, themed, structured event was set in place. Underneath this obvious difference the two festivals had similar components: both had music, international acts, the same venues and built environment, both portrayed images that alienated some locals and prompted varying displays of local resistance, and both were run by amateurs. One of the key differences in

the two festivals was the management structures implemented by those involved in the initial KAW committee.

5.3.1.1 Coordinating

Coordination among the first KAW committee (1974-1981) was informal, yet reliable and constant. Networking and forging alliances to avoid duplication or needless competition within the committee came naturally among the friends, during and outside meetings. Various committee members who worked well with public services and voluntary sectors often did so because they had previous connections to their contacts. Coordination among members of the second KAW committee (1981-89) was increasingly tense and less reliable. It was also fraught with ego negotiations, misunderstandings, and frequently prone to failures in communication. Disputes and grudges lingered. Networking among those perceived as equals proved to be uncomplicated. Forging interconnecting sub-committee alliances to avoid duplication or needless competition did not occur regularly. Some committee members operated an office-hours approach to the festival unlike the twenty-four-hour commitment previous members (1974-81) had given; others only discussed festival items when it suited them to do so. Dealings between public service, voluntary sectors, and certain committee members did not always proceed smoothly. Misunderstandings and disagreements were not uncommon.

5.3.1.2 Leadership

There was no single leader-figure in the KAW structure. Each crisis was dealt with as it arose and either by those who were on the scene at the time, or by those known to have the necessary contacts. The festival wasn't dominated by a core regime of three or four members. This began as a collaborative effort where leadership qualities (communication skills, problem solving, goal setting, critical thinking, displaying integrity, ability to inspire, enthuse, create loyalty) were displayed by each member at some point. In later years each sub-committee was dominated by certain members with strong personalities

but not necessarily highly skilled or charismatic. Although in the KBF McGuinness' strong personality was an asset with its own agency this was not always the case for the KAW committee. Some interviews do not paint these characters in a positive light. Some narratives depict them as bullies rather than leaders, and note that big talkers in committee rooms were not necessarily the best people to depend on during the festival run. So impressed with one of the new chairman's communication skills one interviewee summed up the approach as *shout, and then shout louder*.^{xxxv}

5.3.1.3 Planning

As with the KBF, the initial festival plans were drawn up solely on surviving to a second year. However, in years four (1977) and five (1978) plans were developed for several years in advance. Goals and objectives were set for three to four years, including the inducting of new members, and smoothly handling the committee changeover^{xxxvi}. Planning became micro-managed on a committee-to-committee basis in later years. In later years plans were developed to accommodate criteria demanded by funding bodies and expected in grant applications.

5.3.1.4 Evaluation

Unlike the acts in the KBF, all of the musicians and acts participating in KAW were evaluated and reported on after the festival to the main committee. According to interviews as the years progressed less and less criticism of the classical programme was allowed, or tolerated. Strong dominant egos controlling the classical committee saw their programme as the main attraction and therefore beyond reproach, even if losses were suffered. Less established committees would face severe criticism for minute losses and minor glitches. Improvement resulting from evaluation was a strong feature in most of the other committees, yet varied greatly within the classical committee depending on mood and what was being suggested.

5.3.1.5 Human resources

The total product that compromises a successful festival is made up of an almost unlimited number of components. A successful internal marketing plan will encourage the involvement of as many sectors of the community as possible and present each with the opportunity to benefit (McCleary 1995, p. 2)

The festival staff began as a tight knit group of friends and associates at the top level, supported by a volunteer base consisting mostly of mobilised secondary school teenagers (several board members were school teachers/principals), enthusiastic music lovers and unsure venue managers. Family members, neighbours and friends were drafted in as required. All of the committee members were visible at various points and times during the festival. Some took their summer holidays to coincide with the festival. No community groups or large sectors of the community were engaged to assist in the ground-level running of the society. Volunteers did so to experience acts and performances they would never have been able to, meet the musicians/artists afterwards, and even learn from them. Many of the pupils drafted by their school masters initially had no choice in whether they assisted or not. Thirty years later those interviewed stated they volunteered to be involved in subsequent years and enjoyed doing so. Many claimed that working on the festival in the early days *stood to them* and *built character*.

By the mid-eighties the committee boards and sub-committee numbers had swelled beyond 25 voting members, with an army of staff supervisors, venue managers, ushers and assorted ground troops. Despite the larger numbers, staff control did not always flow smoothly, drop outs occurred, and communication was prone to failure. The introduction of the student summer job scheme and the Fás *Return to Work* schemes provided much needed posts within administration and on information desks yet enthusiasm or appreciation were not guaranteed. Also committee participation at ground level was lessening as some saw it as *below them*. Despite their other differences both the original and subsequent committees encouraged the volunteers to participate at higher levels, to

develop an appreciation for the art, and to develop any skills which experiences within the festival exposed them to:

...as well as becoming technically proficient, these agents become skilled people managers, their human management knowledge and local know-how combining with conceptual knowledge and methods (Getz, 1993, p. 14)

Both committees acknowledged that if an actor had the capacity to deliver necessary facilities or resources then they were to be approached and their co-operation secured, no matter how difficult they turned out to be:

One of the tender and thin ices at all stages was the identification of the Cathedral to be readily available and permanently available as a music venue. That was totally anathema to Dean Harvey. He wanted to have the control of everything taking place within the Cathedral (Brendan Conway).

In 1981-1989 the committee increased in members with noticeable changes in connections, abilities, resources and know-how. The lessening impact and ability of each new member was noticeable. The rigid delineations of what a committee should be were no longer visible. The committee became a mass; a sprawl of subcommittees. The organisation was no longer functioning efficiently or effectively. It became a loose collective with sprawling, failing networks. Support networks that were built up over six years were neglected or simply unused. Contacts cultivated by the first committee were no longer used by the second. Despite the human-to-human nature of these connections ANT effectively follows these networks and is capable of tracing their developments and failures. ANT is able to trace lines of communication to their destination or cessation, especially when those lines of communication become overcrowded in the second decade of the festival. As extra sub-committees are created to develop different genre-specific aspects of the festival a great strain is placed on the informal structures which had functioned previously.

5.3.1.6 Non- Human Resources

Acquiring adequate resources is a major management function and often a preoccupation, (Getz et al., 1993).

Every room in Kilkenny that could host a recital, concert or be transformed into a gallery was enrolled by the arts committee including the Castle Park, Kilkenny Castle itself, the city's Cathedrals, participating schools, pubs, and hotels. Co-ordinating limited facilities, the upkeep and repair of lighting, props, stages and other equipment was a mammoth task. Anecdotes abound about the securing of last minute replacements for essential items and equipment which had suddenly ceased functioning. Last minute fix-its, using the most eclectic of items, become mythic within the backstage festival fraternity. In the early years equipment was a secondary concern to attracting performers and artists. Negotiations took place with multiple amateur drama groups to secure equipment. In later years KAW had developed understandings within various theatre groups and venues that secured all of their needs without fuss or strenuous re-negotiation. ANT excels in mapping and tracing the ordering and movement of these very things within organisations and assigning importance to non-human resources.

5.3.1.7 Business and managerial technologies

The first years of KAW did not rely on formal business or managerial technologies but they did have access to an office:

Now I suppose the grounds in which I was invited was that I would have reserves at my disposal by way of the office and then I had a certain ... the office would have been of value to the proposal. (Brendan Conway).

Meetings were set in informal locations for the most part. Any typewriters, stationary and experiences with procedures and formalities were seized or donated as the need arose.

Two interviewees described their approach as *flying by the seat of your pants* and one interviewee phrased it as *the tune that they were following was being played by ear*.

Business technologies (Pre-1981)

There was no official decision made to keep the committee contact-focused and neglect more managerial, at-a-distance, technologies. Most negotiations with local venue owners occurred in contact situations. Committee meetings were all carried out face to face. Pre-1981 meetings were followed by socialising; members who missed the meetings were briefed in public houses, or the next day at work. If something important required urgent attention house calls were made. First contact with intended guests, reviewers and performers were mostly conducted in person through mutual friends or associates.

There were no guidelines to approaching potential acts. Many of the committee members dedicated considerable resources to create the conditions to secure the co-operation of important acts and highly regarded musicians. This work was not only channelled towards securing the right act, but also to impart on the intended artist a sense of what the festival was trying to achieve and the atmosphere and experience Kilkenny generated. Artists were sold the product of the festival in Kilkenny as much as potential audience members were. Curiously none of those selling the festival considered themselves as trying to build a better festival product so much as really wanting to share the performer (and the experience of their performance) with many of their friends, colleagues and total strangers. The committee members had different styles of approach and all of them seemed to be successful but there was no formal strategy or technologies used simply overflowing enthusiasm. This enthusiasm came across clearly in interviews.

There was a dedicated twenty-four hour commitment to the festival. There was no delineation between being at work, at home and being a member of the committee. There were no structured brainstorming sessions because committee members found themselves constantly thinking of new acts, new approaches and listening out for possible

connections to use when enticing new acts. Ideas were frequently worked on spontaneously in smaller groups in public houses and at lunch breaks.

Accounts and the festival budget were the only technologies used to reign in more exuberant members. Telephone calls were made and letters were written but these elements were supports to the central contact techniques the committee utilised. Other aspects of the managerial technology culture were also absent; members weren't driven to finalise and close relations with customers or performers and instead continued contact on a friendly-informal basis after the festival; work was never actually seen as accomplished or really finished as preparing for the next festival sometimes began immediately; projects and deals were followed through their full assembly – there was very little black boxing.

The committee's approach may seem informal and unstructured but their knowledge of the formalities, structures and management hierarchies involved in the business management of their targets was extensive. The 1974-81 KAW committee knew exactly how agent/artist, artist/company, and artist/publisher relationships worked. They knew who had family illnesses and other valuable gossip/information that meant they knew who to push, who to gently ask, who would be within range of Kilkenny and who to send goodwill to in the hope that next year situations would improve. They made it their business to understand other people's business (professional and private) and they displayed a full working knowledge of what links to pressure or whom to ask first. They understood how their targets' decisions were arrived at and produced. These men had an impressive understanding of how other systems worked beyond their own. They may not have employed many business technologies of their own but they did manipulate and enrol the business technologies of others to their advantage.

Business technologies (Post 1981)

Post-1981 saw informal internal meetings becoming less regular with some members having no means of direct contact with other committee members. Records were kept but

not adequately circulated as committee numbers increased beyond all precedent, numbering in excess of fifty voting members. Even though there were more and more technologies available to the committees to keep in contact there was less and less coordinated internal communication. Sub-committee internal communications were not as difficult.

Although telephones were more common in the 1980s than the early KBF years most of the event organisers preferred to initiate contact through letters before resorting to telephone to secure final agreements and formalise any last details. Most of those involved had some personal connections to call on to contact prospective guests and performers. By 1981 some interviewees felt that a significant reputation had been built up by the festival and that this opened more doors for the committee making it easier to make first contact with bigger acts and musicians.

5.3.1.8 Financing

Finance was micro-managed from the first day of KAW's inception. Brendan Conway was chosen by his friends to become finance manager to the festival. With meticulous efficiency he and fellow arts enthusiast, accountant Michael Gould^{xxxvii}, set about structuring the festival to be as financially self-sustainable as possible. Three categories of potential income source were identified, and a strategy was developed outlining the costs and benefits available to each:

Now we planned to have a budget of £7500 for an eight-day festival, and there would be three main sources of income, three headings under which income would come in. That would be sponsorship, where we would ask people to sponsor events, costs, and have their name attached to the programme. Donors, people that would give a substantial sum of money, but it wouldn't be as much as a sponsorship, and their names would get listed on the programme. And then Friends of Kilkenny, that would be people who would buy a season ticket, which was set at £7.50 at the time. And £7.50 was a lot of money, you know, I suppose

the average industrial wage at that time was £17.50 perhaps, you know. And things changed dramatically since all right, but £7.50 was a good round sum, and it was only people of a certain commitment who were prepared to pay that, you know. (Brendan Conway.)

Accounts were set in place, financial plans were drawn up, and it was decided between Conway and Gould to apply to set the festival up as a friendly society, with an aim to ensure it progressed as soon as possible to become a limited company.

[W]e were a friendly society from day one, and then after about 7 years we became a limited company. We all took shares in it and whatever. To be honest we only regarded that as an assurance of continuity. And it didn't make us feel any the wiser or richer or more limited or more expansive. It had to be given some entity.

Every financial loophole was explored by both committee members. All possible contacts and connections were utilised to the fullest level. A reverence and freedom was given to the two financiers to make the necessary choices for the festival to survive from year to year:

And it was hilarious wheeling and dealing and that kind of thing, you know. But it was ensuring that programmes of quality were put in place ^{xxviii} (Brendan Conway).

Favours were cashed in and friends were approached, pestered and coerced until securities against losses were set in place.

The Arts Council existed and was chaired by perhaps Fr O'Sullivan. He was a great old friend of mine anyway from my Dublin days, and we went to him, and we were met by the Arts Council, and the best we could get out of them was a guarantee against loss. We wanted money up front, you know, but we got a

guarantee against loss of £1500, which meant – it was conciliation – it was a buffer against imprisonment anyway. But it did mean that we had to maintain good books for the presentation afterwards. (Brendan Conway)

There were difficulties in the first years due to finance and local support yet the introduction of Arts Council grants, at first solely to secure against loss and then in later years in advancement, were to ensure its survival:

In subsequent years we would find ourselves spending the winter with an overdraft in the nature of £1800 or £2000 which was a lot of money at the time. But that would be waiting completion of our end of year returns to claim what we had lost from the Arts Council. When the Arts Council money came in they would agree eventually to give us some money up front for the coming year. And between the two things we paid off our debts every year. (Brendan Conway).

Considerable discretion was left to those involved on the finance committee. Although the finance committee did experience turnover in members it continued to receive committed and gifted members. During the first three years the festival experienced small losses but clever repayment patterns ensured that patient and considerate creditors would be paid back. The late seventies and early eighties saw the festival begin to profit which was reinvested back into the festival. Unfortunately by the late eighties profits were lowering once again. The finance committee were empowered to make independent decisions without interference or influencing from other committee personalities. Brendan Conway thought that several of the arts committee members feared the perceived workload and feared repercussions of mistakes made in balancing the accounts. He theorised that even the most confident and well read of the arts committees feared the number columns *like a trip to the dentist*. Thus it would appear that the self-determination and autonomy that the finance committee enjoyed was not a deliberate decision on behalf of the senior committee members to empower those within the finance committee but in fact a reluctance of the senior committee to engage with the book balancing. It was through a combination of discomfort with mathematics, a reluctance to

'battle the books' and a perception of taking a more background role within the festival that led most of the prominent committee figures to empower the finance committee with the amount of independence they enjoyed. The power of 'the books' and financing gave agency to those who spoke for the finances.

5.3.2 Power

One of the most striking differences between the organisation of the KAW and its predecessor, the KBF, is the fragmented and nodal power distribution. From the outset, discretionary power was evenly distributed among the various sub-committees with no single over-riding personality governing the festival. The result was a fractured and uneven power structure. With the committee compartmentalised into various sub divisions, each specialising in a different aspect of the festival, power became more decentralised, communication decreased between the groups, territories became more pronounced and defended, and co-operation between competing committees lessened. The onus was on each sub-division to prepare and organise their part of the programme. Though the bond of friendship in the first generation of committees prevented any excessive power tripping, in later years the poor structuring and lack of a central ruling committee that could actually reign in the more difficult of committee members, bred dissention, petty rivalry, internal competition and sowed the seeds for many misunderstandings.

On an overall scale the budget and financial constrictions that several of the festival compartments were under also dictated how power flowed within the organisation:

Budgets were making cowards out of a lot of people, you know, budgets had to be dealt with and that was a fact. (Brendan Conway).

The budget restrictions and financial restraint under which the organisation had to operate also provided less vocal or socially skilled committee members with a back-up when facing down extravagant demands from demanding members. Whether utilised as an excuse or valid point, the budget became a surrogate manager in its own right, imbued

with legitimacy, and power. The tightness of the budget (a reflection of the festival's financial situation) mobilised the budget into a lurking, panoptican-like agent that indirectly provided operating guidelines that had to be adhered to. The financial controllers were able to utilise the agency of the budget to impose a sense of self-regulation on all sub-committee members. By simply alluding to the budget, long arguments were circumnavigated, allowing time to be spent on more important matters, yet at the same time remaining congenial with all involved. By blaming legitimate budget restrictions difficult negotiations were by-passed. By using the notion of such a rigid, all-important, dominant budget, many difficult decisions were quickly made.

The budget also generated post-event dynamics through the presentation of sub-committee accounts and receipts, and discussions regarding targets. Although the budget did impinge on most members, one or two stronger and more contrary individuals either blatantly ignored the budget or saw it as merely as something that others had to obey and that they did not.

5.4 An ANT analysis of The Kilkenny Arts Week

Both optional interpretations of Callon's four steps of emergence (see table 5.1) were applied to the KAW to assess the ability of ANT to track the emergence of this festival. As illustrated in table 5.1, step one introduces a cornerstone for the following festivals to build on and compete with: both departure points above are entrenched in the origin narrative of this Festival. There is one set of actors that realise that they have a problem, they present it to other parties so that they understand the situation and in the process a solution, or and alternative, is presented, in an almost complete form. This group of friends mobilised themselves to create a replacement festival for the city, to continue the tourism momentum brought by the KBF but to shape it differently and attract a different form of clientele. Multiple interviews, print sources and radio interviews convey that there was an active drive from the KAW committee to create a different festival experience for organisers, participants and revellers alike.

Table 5.1 Application of four steps of emergence to KAW

| | Callon (Fox, 2000) | KAW | Porsander (2005) | KAW |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------|--|---------|
| 1 | <i>Problematization</i> | Present | Entering the Obligatory Point of Passage | Present |
| 2 | <i>Interessement</i> | Present | Forming a Pact | Present |
| 3 | <i>Enrolment</i> | Present | Performing various Negotiations | Present |
| 4 | <i>Mobilization of the Allies</i> | Present | Finding the Spokesman | Absent |

There was active questioning and challenging of the repercussions of the KBF and the ability of those organising it to control and contain the festival and the image it was creating for Kilkenny. There were firm convictions among the KAW committee and others that no real goals existed within the KBF camp and that change was necessary. There is a clear line of dialogue among the KAW committee members in questioning the KBF festival's purpose, its impacts and its organisers' capacity to control it. This ties in exactly as the Fox interpretation of Callon favours, yet the Porsander point is also valid. Each actor within the committee pushes the committee onto the Kilkenny scene, gaining acceptance to commence the festival and undergoing cultural, social and religious scrutiny to breakout/break through into a fully recognised, (which is more important than merely formed) unit.

There were no formal or informal re-organisational conflicts between the old KBF committee and the fledgling KAW group. In fact McGuinness publicly wished them well. They were offered any advice they needed and the hand of friendship was clearly genuine between the old and the new. While there were no re-organisational difficulties the new ideological outlook proposed by the KAW crew did stir up resistance and objections yet none ever became serious. It was a complete departure from what had gone before in style, theme, content and character. It was a revolution not just in culture but in substance and organisational terms.

As both steps are applied it becomes apparent that the cowboy entrepreneur who saw opportunity and potential in the transplant of the Edinburgh Arts festival model to Kilkenny is not an individual and not a non-human but a 'They'. As becomes further apparent in step two (see table 5.1) they display an amalgamation of fully formed networks. Lacking heavily in actual physical resources and lacking business and managerial experience and know-how, the key element shining through from their power base is the sheer library of personal knowledge each member possesses of their hobby. They adore this art form (classical music) and are incredibly informed on the artists and the mechanisms they employ in the re-interpretation and re-representation of classical works. But their spheres of knowledge do not stop there: they display knowledge on operations within the orchestras, quintets and quartets, within the social circles surrounding the musicians, within the industry and organisational networks surrounding the industry-focussed decision makers. Their attachment borders on obsession and is remarkable considering their location, the context of the culture, access to their preferred social outlets etc. Each member brings a network of contacts, knowledge and most importantly (outside of the fact that all are already known to each other) they speak a common language. Each is fluent in speaking in the vocabulary of classical arts genres.

Due to their success as a unit it is very hard to tie down what it was each member did. It is also awkward to describe them as being prescribed roles or being locked into set defined slots. Not many of them represent personality types that slot in easily. These are awkward actors to categorise or compartmentalise, but they are effective, highly energetic and overflowing with positive agencies. They do combine to create a convergence of never-before assembled parts that they defined, and created a web where each was indispensable to the other actants they wished to lure in (Callon, 1986a). It is extremely clear that there are no 'civil-servants' or zombies here (Law, 1994), but they are identity-less. They are as committed and attached as each other (Gomart and Hennion 1999). It is quite clear from the start that each actor within the committee brings their own network and resources of which they control and are not controlled by. But they do defy easy categorisation or description. In assembling the committee (step 2, table 5.3)

the majority of allies are enrolled as equals with the capacity to deliver and not as interchangeable intermediaries. These men are dreamers, powered by positive ambition and willing to engage in any travelling, meeting, writing or walking to achieve the goals of the festival. As is apparent throughout the interviews they threw themselves selflessly and with great enthusiasm into their roles. They sacrifice annual holidays, personal collections, time, and money to secure the success of the festival.

The third step targets the enrolment of the individual components to form venues, accommodations and an office. Once more every venue Kilkenny has to offer is conscripted, yet this time they are carefully matched with what the most suitable act that will hopefully create the perfect atmosphere to experience the festival. This committee will eventually be responsible for the definition of new *narrative of historical sequences* (Hetherington, 1999, p.51) in Kilkenny as regards high culture, theatre, music and a wealth of other art form appreciation groups. This agency catapults a new cultural agenda into the local spotlight to further the heritage agenda set a decade before. It also attracts resistance. Such small nuisances unite the committee more and accentuate their cowboy-hero story. This is a story where the committee (David) are facing prejudice, bigotry, misguided patriotism and intolerance (Goliath). There is no convenient incident to point at and declare victory (as observable in other festival stories). It would also be erroneous to conclude that since the festival survives it has vanquished ignorance and mistrust. This is a cowboy-hero story with no clear winner or loser which is incredibly fitting as there is simply no clearly defined cowboy-hero leader in the KAW committee, or defined Goliath against which to fight.

In trying to apply Porsander's fourth interpretive step one problem is evident: there is no spokesman, spokeswoman, spokesthing (Porsander 2005). There is no single icon, no effective marketing symbol, no banner, slogan or gimmick to unite behind or communicate on behalf of the festival. And although the committee were fantastically successful in achieving what they did there is no identifiable human actor that emerges as a focus. They formed a highly motivated and effective unit. Their planning may not have been their strongest point yet as a unit they were able to control and contain any issues

that arose. This is an intensely loyal, dedicated and selfless committee but there is no symbolic figurehead focus.

The power flow is direct from the committee to the rest of the network. Little interpretation or re-assessment of the flow takes place. Yet the origin point of the flow of power doesn't have a centre point. Power manifests through the committee collectively. These are collective decisions born from the specific way the committee communicates: as an enthusiastic group of friends rather than an assembled hierarchy. In almost all dealings this friendly agency communicates itself positively to guests, volunteers and performers. There is agency in charm, in freshness, in enthusiasm.

There are many points of note. The organisation of the festival is largely human-to-human with one intermediary and no multiple non-human actants. The managerial technologies are weakest in this festival compared to those that follow. The majority of alliance building is done one-on-one between the humans. Classical music was the core attraction with limited sculpture, art or abstract installations to detract from the music and its interpretation. None of the human actors stand out. The committee devotes seven years of service before an amicable and concerned decision allows new members to take over. (There are grounds to argue that the committee had the potential for incredible longevity). This is a very human-centric festival but the human committee members do not create a legacy for themselves but rather for the arts in Kilkenny.

The utilisation of managerial technologies was meagre and inconsequential. Although review networks are accessed the committee target the writer with hospitality and great warmth knowing that by winning the writer they win the review. The review no longer operates as a mechanism to assess the performance but instead to assess the experience. In this regard it no longer represents the mechanism of objective analysis and assessment of a show but of a human-voiced subjective memoir of the festival experience and the reflections that this brings. Through the agency of passion, culture and the artist, ANT unlocks this festival's structure, organisation, design and delivery. The power stems from the committee's passion and united agency becoming the cowboy-hero. It is the group,

the unit, the committee that unlocks the potential in Kilkenny to host such a festival and it is this success that sets the tone for the next generation of festival organisers to follow. ANT uncovers a unit approach to festival management that was unplanned and untranslatable to another committee. The bonds and networks developed are beyond guidelines and strategy and involve taste, passion and experience. They are not interchangeable intermediaries. They are crucial components. And there most definitely was a failure to translate from the original committee to the following KAW committees.

5.5 A foreshadowing of things to come

In '80 and '81 most of the original group of friends who formed the first committee stood down and let others inject fresh blood into the festival. The change-over was largely amicable, but there was a sense of loss with the departure of the intimate, passionate energy that these enthusiasts had brought to the festival. When the second committee grows in number it no longer resembles a group of friends but something clumsy and awkward. ANT presented no such difficulty in following the committee as it morphs into an unrecognisable entity. In the late 1980s and early 1990s the KAW committee continued to grow larger and larger, attracting notable business, tourism and local authority interest. Not all interests had the same agenda. The Committee's numbers remained in their high thirties and forties, creating new difficulties in organisation and management. By 1993 festival attendance and interest had waned. By 1995 there were serious concerns that the festival's days were numbered. And in a sense they were. With the pressure to acquire funding ever increasing, some committee members realised that a new style of governance was required. Other members resisted. Tensions developed. In seeking new government grants KAW was under external and internal pressure to develop a new business-like efficiency in its dealings to meet with the criteria set by the awarding Government body, the Arts Council of Ireland. In response to these pressures the *Kilkenny Arts Week* changed over the course of two years (1997-9) and *became* the *Kilkenny Arts Festival*. This changeover will be covered in the *Cat Laughs Comedy Festival* chapter.

Chapter 6. The Confederation of Kilkenny Festival

The Confederation of Kilkenny Festival (CKF) (1992-1994) was modelled on the KBF and was a free-of-charge extravaganza of bunting, outdoor music, street entertainments, and fancy-dress sports events. The city streets underwent a transformation as three city gates were erected on the sites of the old city walls where guard changing ceremonies were enacted daily by costumed soldiers from the local army barracks. The second year (1993) provided a full programme of street events, castle spectaculars, parades and late licences. It was believed by those involved that although all the events were well attended the festival was not attracting tourists. The majority of attendees were local residents which was not what the tourism body had intended. The third year (1994) would prove to be the last CKF and included a production of Macbeth incorporating the castle itself as the backdrop to the play. This ensured a very memorable final bow for the festival.

The initial idea of hosting another festival was proposed by members of the Kilkenny tourism council in 1991. They believed that Kilkenny needed a permanent festival on the June bank holiday weekend to lengthen the tourism season. A series of attempts to attract *Fleadh Ceol Na hEireann* on a permanent basis had proven unsuccessful, and so it was decided to develop a festival for Kilkenny. As the 350th anniversary of the Confederation of Kilkenny was approaching a decision was made against following the path of the *Dublin Millennium* or *Limerick 750*. Instead a festival was agreed on, unfortunately due to the size of the tourism organisation operating in Kilkenny at that time the assembled body charged with producing an anniversary festival was difficult to manage and organise.

They were aware of the celebrations you know, 'round the time of the three hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Confederation was happening and a committee was pulled together, there was a lot of talk and with all due respects to that committee there was lot of talk and probably no action. (Tony Walsh)

Paddy Friel^{xxxix} (Kilkenny Castle administrator) decided to undertake the position of festival chairperson under one condition: that she was allowed to form a small select committee independent of the large and unwieldy tourism group.

I remember Pat Nolan put together a big committee like a brain storming session, and I was sitting there and thinking, no way would this work, you'd never get a festival going, so I said to him "I'll do this and I'll do that and put up the gates and get the army and all that kind of thing if we can have a very small group". And he said fine, anybody who's going to organise a festival in Kilkenny, he'd be grand. I thought about it and I think I put it to one of the Tourism Council meetings and said I'll do this on your behalf, and this will be a Tourism Council initiative. See all those different people were constituent members of the Tourism Council anyway, so there wasn't a problem with that, and it would market Kilkenny. So I would have been very definite about a small group, it's too much, you can't work with a big group, it's too slow. (Paddy Friel)

Committee selection was calculated and members were chosen and incorporated to carry out specific objectives. At the time, 1991, the KAW and the two tourism bodies had very large committees. In deciding to opt for a compact committee Paddy Friel was changing how things were done on Kilkenny's festival scene. She began by excluding certain city actors who expected to be automatically included in the new festival committee. In its short three-year run the committee had a few notable alterations, those that did occur occurred for personal reasons. Although this festival had the shortest run of the four festivals covered in this dissertation its networks were harder to separate out and compartmentalise. This was largely because of the extent of the layered relationships it tapped into and utilised and the locally perceived rise in the importance of tourism. The legacy of this festival is the relationships, partnerships and networks formed during its brief run which are the foundations that the later comedy festival is built upon. These foundations included a select core of committee members with capacity to deliver, extensive networking, new managerial technologies and the injection of new people into Kilkenny's festival scene.

6.1 Product

The CKF was a multi-genre, high visual impact family-orientated celebration. Held over ten days in 1992, seventeen days in 1993 and nine days in 1994 this festival hosted many diverse acts and performances. Fully backed by the various tourism organisations operating in Kilkenny, supported by key members of the local authority and generously sponsored by local businesses, the festival committee had access to resources and support previous festivals in Kilkenny could only wish for. Bar a minority of disgruntled traders, affected by the temporary one-way traffic system, this festival was very well received.

Centred on the Parade, the Castle Park, upper John street, High street and the Market yard the festival hosted many large, free of charge, open air performances featuring Irish musicians and street discos. During the day large areas of the Castle Park were transformed into performance areas for Macnas, medieval jousts, rock bands, circus performers, street performers, comedy cricket matches and jazz sessions. The streets were closed to traffic at night to allow for street performers, buskers, puppeteers, magicians and novelty acts to move freely across the city and gather crowds wherever they wished. Turn-of-the-century style hurling matches were played by veteran Kilkenny and Tipperary hurlers. The local radio station organised a rodeo and linedancing event. Regional towns also participated in the events programme with horse racing in Gowran Park and multiple cultural and specially organised sports events in Thomastown, Callan and Inisteoige. Although this is not a complete listing of the festival attractions no themed events were omitted. Bar the tenuous link with jousts and the changing of the guard there were no acts that linked in with the actual Confederation of Kilkenny.

Although the festival was not actively advertised as a family event, the quality and wide-ranging content of its programmes appealed to families. In later years some radio advertisements would mention the festival's suitability for all ages, but there was no specific targeting of families through advertising. No demographic studies were made of the attending audience. However, organisers estimated that the family festival image (generated by the atmosphere of the festival and the festival events) secured

approximately 70% of their attendance with a very high level of response from the local community. The consumption of alcohol on the streets at night during the street concerts did not prevent families with young children from attending the street parties, or have any adverse effects on the festivals image or attendance.

Each year the festival began with a parade, a tradition which began in honour of President Robinson who opened the first and second festivals^{xl}, which included marching bands, costumed soldiers, knights on horse back, the Kilkenny Hunt, the Kilmoganny Hunt, street performers, historical re-enactors (portraying ‘Oliver Cromwell’, Kilkenny’s medieval witch Dame Alice, Papal Nuncio Archbishop Rinuccini, Strongbow and Norman warriors) and local community theatre and activity groups. On the first year it also contained the Garda Band, the Defence Forces Pipe Band, and a Garda motorbike escort.

For the first two years the festival lacked a centrepiece performance. The festival committee, various pubs and nightclubs all advertised bands and acts without any coherency, united theme or coordination. As a product the festival presented a fragmented and mismatched collection of activities, events, and late night bar extensions. However, on the third year Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* was staged in front of Kilkenny Castle by the Bickerstaff theatre company. This spectacle performance captured the imagination of locals, tourists, and avid theatre goers alike and proved to be the most talked about event of the festival’s three years. Other theatre groups had produced elaborate stage productions in the previous years including a very successful run of *She stoops to conquer* in 1992, and *Separation* in 1993, but Bickerstaff utilised the very castle itself as its stage. The locally iconic edifice of Kilkenny Castle was not only an effective backdrop for *Macbeth* it was used as stage and prop, with its balconies, battlements, great gates and lavish gardens included in the performance.

Although the festival as a product did not have any singular headlining act or flagship concert, it did have an iconic and striking centrepiece event of a different kind. Gates made out of Papier-mâché, Styrofoam and plywood were erected on the site of three of

the old medieval gates and were the centre piece of a changing of the guard performance which was enacted by soldiers from the local barracks in accurate period costume. This consisted of soldiers from the 30th battalion stationed locally at the James Stevens Barracks leaving their barracks in full period costume and marching to each gate in turn before returning to the barracks by a different route.

I came up with this idea that that was the time when Kilkenny has walls and gates, and there were all different people of different nationalities in the town and to simplify that very basically we got the gates built, do you remember those, there were three gates built, and that was to set the scene that here was Kilkenny, it was an enclosed city, and then within that the one fixed feature that took place was the soldiers, the army doing the changing of the guards twice a day at each of those gates, and that was hugely popular. (Paddy Friel, Festival director)

While the festival was originally designed to attract national and international tourism it became a local festival for local people. It is remembered very fondly by young and old as an inclusive, free festival that quickly became accepted as a *Kilkenny Festival*. There are many anecdotes from festival attendees, volunteers and committee members detailing many unplanned events and incidents which made their experience of the event more intimate, memorable, and personal. Although it did encourage a high domestic spend, it failed to *put Kilkenny on the map* which was one of the festival's chief objectives.

6.2 Promotion

On the first year we also, maybe the second year too, we set up, we put a lot of money into promotion, and we used Denis Bergan here in town, who is a professional PR person and drew up ads and we advertised on the radio. There was serious money spent on that That was a big expense in the first year, I am just thinking now all those ads, it's very dear to buy direct time. You see even Cat Laughs now has joint agreements with newspapers and with RTE, you hear

RTE sponsoring the arts. A lot didn't exist whenever we were doing the confederation. You couldn't get that, you had to just pay, you were treated like a commercial operator. (P. Friel)

Denis Bergin was specifically targeted by Friel and Moran to manage the festival's promotion. A long time Kilkenny resident Bergin had worked with the Newpark Hotel group, the tourism council and many of Kilkenny's businesses through his own PR consultancy. For the festival he scripted the radio advertisements, the print media advertisements and press releases. He was involved at all levels of negotiation with the various groups and businesses being utilised. With a limited budget and limited resources Bergin designed a campaign to target the basics for the first two years. Bergin was a known operator within the small business community of Kilkenny and was able to capitalise on previous business relationships to secure favourable deals.

Bergin was the first designated Public Relations (PR) professional brought on board by a Kilkenny festival. Previous festivals had taken an ad hoc approach to promotion and public relations. Members with any exposure to advertising or design, no matter how meagre, were assigned the task of promoting festivals and were sometimes over-ruled on their decisions. The confederation festival committee broke with this trend and chose to enlist professional expertise. Denis Bergin was hand selected and then given almost total creative control over the direction the promotional campaign would take. Although supported by a considerable percentage of the festival budget his funding was actually rather humble. Bergin and his staff were trained public relations operators. They had experience in working on a multitude of various products and approached the promotion of the festival as professionally as they would with any other clients. Bergin consulted with other committee members to capture a flavour of what they wished to convey and was never over-ruled by them. His task was his alone: committee members assisted when asked but did not interfere. Understandably, Bergin was quick to inform press agencies and interested parties of the involvement of President Robinson and controlled most of the resulting promotional ripples that came with her involvement. As with previous sections detailing the organisation within the festivals, promotion has been divided into

internal and external categories: internal covering in-house, confederation-launched and internally controlled promotional strategies, and external detailing with promotional activities and coverage that is launched by actors and organisations external to the committee.

6.2.1 Internally organised promotion

The decision to include community action groups, local theatre groups and arts and crafts groups generated an almost tangible amount of goodwill among both participants and committee. Unlike the KAW committee who many perceived as aloof and elitist, the confederation group actively encouraged a high response rate from all of the local groups that approached them. Although the decision to include these groups was solely taken from an entertainment perspective, where the extra bodies were expected to add colour to the parades and nightlife, there was another distinct advantage. The goodwill and excitement generated by the local groups spread among family and friends, as more and more bodies were conscripted by the groups themselves into assisting with costumes, props, heavy lifting and transport. The addition of local groups added to the number of potential spectators and festival attendees and more importantly created a sense of ownership and inclusion through participation. This created a strong word of mouth 'buzz' which promoted the festival locally and built up a sense of anticipation which no advertising campaign could match.

6.2.1.1 Use of local print media

As with the previous festivals *The Kilkenny People* newspaper was pivotal for print media promotions, both as a printer and as a local newspaper. The newspaper printed the festival brochures, pamphlets, posters, beer coasters and stationary. The newspaper also covered their preparation activities, advertised and printed the festival schedule, covered the festival events and printed photographs of the events and those in attendance. In return the festival paid a reduced fee, provided free advertisement and granted those involved in the paper full access to all events, organised meetings with artists and

donated a number of event admission tokens to the paper^{xli}. The *Kilkenny People's* role within the community as an actant of community identity and social connectivity had not diminished since the early days of the KBF and the KAW.

6.2.1.2 Use of local radio

The CKF advertised on RTE radio stations and selected regional radio stations across Leinster and the south east region. Advertisement space was purchased and the advertisements recorded. *Radio Kilkenny* were incorporated as the local broadcaster to not only advertise the festival but to support its acts, activities and the atmosphere of the festival through interviews, giveaway competitions and playing the music of those involved in the free public performances. Although radio adverts were recorded and bought for the standard rate, additional mentions and subsequent follow on reports were done free of charge. The relationship between the festival and the radio was amicable with the radio covering public interest pieces from the festival, and in return the organisers receive free air time and extra coverage. Although the radio had only been broadcasting for less than two years it had built up a loyal and responsive county-wide listenership. A number of *Radio Kilkenny* board members had served on other committees with those involved in the festival and were known qualities locally from their involvement in other committees and dealings between the groups ran relatively smoothly. The radio station was equipped with state of the art outside broadcast trailers and units and all of the necessary equipment to broadcast live from the festival events. This had never been done on a local scale before. Unlike the broadcasts that were done during the KAW these contained local interaction and focused on the street atmosphere and the enjoyment of the crowds rather than sealed off in-studio recitals from the festival headliners or famous performers. *Radio Kilkenny* interviewed people on the street and broadcast their experience of the festival.

In some ways this resembles the newspapers approach to printing photos of locals and mentioning locals in festival reviews as their inclusion sells papers. By putting the voice of local revellers on the radio they ensured that neighbours and friends would tune in to

hear them. As the confederation festival was quickly accepted as a local festival for local people, the radio capitalised on this when covering the festival events, organisers and volunteers.

The ambition, professionalism and know-how visible in the CFK promotional campaigns were unlike any previous festival marketing campaign in Kilkenny. Bergin had access to new promotional technologies that were unavailable to previous committees. He had access to professional PR networks, experience, freedom to initiate PR campaigns, and independence to make PR decisions without committee interference.

6.2.2 Externally organised Promotion

We were a bit ambitious thinking about what we were going to create in sort of an international impact. Really t'was a local festival at the end of the day, but a highly successfully local festival (Tony Walsh^{xliii})

Although a large amount of time, money and effort had been channelled into the promotion of the festival, the uptake of interest prior to the announcement of the President's involvement was “*weak, weak, weak at best*” (John Keane). Post-announcement saw the number of external autonomous news units (print, radio and television) rise significantly.

One of the many ways the CKF varied to the KAW was in its lack of product specialisation. It was not a single-genre specialised event. The product was an eclectic collection of anything and everything with a carnival atmosphere. Being so broad and so general the festival did not fit into any defined categories that would have had their own special interest publications. Limited focus due to lack of specialisation and not catering to a speciality market with specifically marketed branded music genres and dedicated media sources, meant that the confederation festival was too general, too catch-all, too generic. In the first year it had no gimmick or flagship event to entice a niche following. Although the committee did put a lot of effort into promoting the festival the lack of a

focal point could not be countered. This lack of focus was seen by some as a reflection of poor target marketing. There was also a perception within the local media that anniversary-fatigue would deter potential customers:

First Dublin millennium, then Limerick, Cork had something and some other place ... now Kilkenny 350 - it wasn't going to work. (John Keane).

Without a unique selling point it seemed that the festival was never going to pick up any special interest from the national media. Suddenly this changed with the announcement that the newly elected president of Ireland, Mary Robbinson, was 'on board'. Once the president's presence was announced national and international attention towards Kilkenny and the festival increased:

The eyes of Europe were on Kilkenny on Friday with no less than four national TV stations from different countries recording the Confederation celebrations (Euro eyes on Kilkenny, The Kilkenny People, p. 3, 1992)

Even though the festival committee selected a PR professional to oversee their promotional strategy, the biggest promotional coup came from the free coverage centred on the President of Ireland. Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF), Germany's national public television broadcaster, were making a special called *Three days in the Life of the Irish President*. France was represented by a crew from *Visages Realites du Monde*. The BBC were also represented as well as the national broadcaster of Ireland, RTÉ. Aer Lingus were also filming the festival as part of an in-flight promotional video. A film crew from the Nottinghamshire town of Newark were also filming as it was preparing to host its own celebrations to mark the start of the civil war and the town's role as a focal point of resistance to Oliver Cromwell. Although only one of these broadcasters was there to intentionally film the festival, they did capture the flair and colour of the city and the Presidents' attendance at several of the festival events. There are many commonly held reasons among the print media and key festival actors for the level of attention received by the president. Most of which revolve around the fact that President Robbinson,

Ireland's first female president, was only recently elected and was under abnormal European scrutiny as Ireland was also increasing its level of participation within the forming European Union (Maastricht). The festival director was able to secure her participation through the president's husband as they had served together on a number of heritage and historical preservation committees.

I said I'll ask the President [Mary Robinson] would she come down to open it. And so I did, and she did! But people were like: "ohmygod ohmygod" y' know?

....

And it all came on like that..... The guards, when the army were involved the guards were happy to be involved then because they wouldn't let the army get ahead of them. So, I mean I remember that well, when the President came, when the guards heard that they sent down a motorcycle escort, I don't know how many guys in black leather and all that. [Laughs]. It was something else, and when the army heard that they sent another band! I couldn't believe it.

....

Who else? All those bodies, south east tourism; well we were the office of public works, then, the chamber of commerce, the vintners, the local authorities, the mart, any body you could think of! We had, you name it, if we could make some energy out of joining with them they were there.....

Now, um, and then because we had got the President for the opening we got huge tv coverage because there was Maastricht. The opening, the Maastricht vote, and she let, the word went out. I mean, she wasn't that long President at the time I know, the word went out that she was gonna speak on Maastricht so there was huge coverage for it. Which was grand. Historic. It was all grand! (Paddy Friel.)

The resulting domino effect is quite fortunate for the festival. Once the President of Ireland is involved organisations, groups and bodies rush to become involved. The Presidential involvement places the festival at the epicentre of a new network of contacts.

The capture of one nodal point secures the participation of more networks, resources and television coverage than Friel ever thought possible.

With the introduction of the Bickerstaff production of Macbeth the festival finally received its front page pictures from the national media, and notice from the more elite reviewers and arts critics. Becoming more than just a performance of a Shakespearean play, the incorporation of Kilkenny Castle to Macbeth gave it an awe-inspiring impact, and the novelty focus factor which external media could latch onto. Where the arts festival had many classical and theatre reviewers and followers dedicated to very specific areas of interest, the CKF was not able to fit into any special interest networks and therefore unable to tap into that form of external promotions. With the marriage of Macbeth to Kilkenny Castle and the Castle Park Grounds an outdoor performance of national interest was created. Interest increased when the media learned that the fledgling theatre company were all Dublin actors who had recently set up their company in Kilkenny.

Despite having the right people on board there were still problems with printing, poster distribution and print quality that rendered some promotional pamphlets and paraphernalia redundant or sub-standard. Denis Bergin did all that he could within the amateur confines of the festival and the resources he had at his disposal. In retrospect all of those interviewed agree that the festival was an amazingly popular local and regional event, but that it did not have a focus event or flagship item to draw in national or international interest. Many interviewees quipped that Denis Bergin could only *sell what was on show* and although a lot of effort had gone into the organisation of the festival the product lacked imagination and failed to aim for a niche market. With no special event to sell Bergin had to resort to a *back-to-basics* approach to sell a programme which was quite similar in content to the KBF. Michael Lanigan snr pointed out that the blue print line up for both festivals were identical, but that what was popular in the past had been overlapped long ago. He even joked that he almost expected to see the same acts perform. Although the outdoor production of Macbeth did capture the interest of all involved it came as too-little-too-late and the festival remained *a local festival for local people*. ANT

required no adjustment in following the multiple campaigns and coincidences that brought together the actors and actants enrolled into promoting the CFK. The CFK committee got lucky and found themselves in the centre point of various convergences.

6.3 Organisation

Tourism officer Pat Nolan and the tourism council assembled a large committee (over twenty-five members) to organise a festival for the June bank holiday weekend. It fast became obvious to several committee members that the committee needed to be streamlined and that the approach to managing festivals utilised by the KAW and KBF was inefficient and clumsy. The following quotes describe what happened next, in the words of those that made it happen:

They were aware of the celebrations you know, 'round the time of the 350 anniversary of the Confederation was happening and a committee was pulled together, there was a lot of talk and with all due respects to that committee there was lot of talk and probably no action. (Tony Walsh)

Now Kathleen Moran and Paddy Friel were also members of that committee and they felt "look this needs to be narrowed down to a small number of drivers" so they, themselves obviously did all this deliberation for a while and, I hope they won't give out to me for exposing their discussions or whatever, but obviously they talked to a few people that they would pull together with them to work on this thing so you always have to worry when you're invited to lunch in Kathleen Moran's office and what happened and next thing you're roped in as it were (Tony Walsh).

Once cleared to proceed Friel went about assembling and enrolling her ideal committee.

6.3.1. Committee Selection

Committee selection was calculated and members were chosen and incorporated carefully^{xliii}. In its short three-year run the committee had some notable alterations, but these actors stepped down of their own free will for personal reasons. They were not evicted or coerced to quit by any other members. The most striking thing about the committee selection process was the departure from the past committee selection methods, and the amount of control given to and exercised by Friel over committee selection. Though loosely structured as an amateur festival without profitability or managerial techniques the committee selection process, though informal, was precise and selective.

Paddy Friel's first choice of committee member was Kathleen Moran who had worked with her during the KAW and was manager of the *Kilkenny Design Centre*. Most of the other first year members were tourism council members, and had no practical festival experience. Illustrated in the following quotes are first hand accounts detailing why and how committee members were selected and what resources and capacities they would introduce to the committee based on their personal skill base rather than who they represent:

The Gates, which I was personally responsible for, you know, took a lot of work from the County Council and Corporation but that wouldn't be surprising given where I come from myself, but they had a huge visual impact. (Tony Walsh)

.....and Liam Condon, a captain in the army, whose own background was in archaeology, he was a member of the Archaeological Society, so he was interested in all of that... (Paddy Friel)

The only person that did anything [from the vintners society] was Eamon Langton, and Eamon was great. There was a vintners festival committee but my experience in those days was it was Eamon, and it was he booked the different

things that they put on at night. That was his area of responsibility to look after what was going on in the evenings and at night (Paddy Friel)

...and they took on Roisin McQuillan who is Kilkenny Secretarial Services as the head administrator, and she really worked basically from February right through and more and more full time towards the end. (Tony Walsh)

..... there's Denis Bergan, who's in Kilkenny for a long time and has a tradition of working with the Tourism Council, does a lot of work with the Newpark and different firms. (Paddy Friel)

Friel's enrolment procedure was unlike previous committees. Some local personalities, who were known to consider themselves 'vital' to every committee in Kilkenny, were informed that the committee was full and they were politely thanked for their concern. Certain characters in Kilkenny were notorious committee-joiners and known to be difficult during decisive meetings. They were not invited to join. It is interesting to note that Friel accomplished this without insulting anyone, alienating anyone or creating bad blood. In a tight operating arena like Kilkenny, alienating past members is often easily done and the damage is difficult to repair. Friel's skills as a negotiator and a practiced facilitator are highly visible in the committee selection process in both how she enrolled specific desired actors and sidestepped the almost inevitable inclusion of less-than-desirable actors. However interesting her selection process was, her real skills are prominent in her ability to avoid being weighed down with free-riders and excess baggage. By cutting down on the number of people involved Paddy Friel streamlined the organising committee and compartmentalised all of the tasks involved. This committee was unlike previous festival set-ups as it had strongly incorporated business management techniques. The festival was designed to be self-sustainable and so each committee sub-division was set up to operate without interference.

The festival proved to be very popular on its debut, and remained popular with the local public throughout its three-year run however energy levels within the festival committee

began to wane. Despite a seemingly perfect selection of members who were text book examples of resourcefulness, networking skills and intuition, even with high levels of commitment from local resources with high degrees of professionalism, the festival committee became “*tired*” (Pat Nolan):

So, while they absolutely put their back into it the first year, there wasn't the same energy or commitment the second year, which meant that people started getting a bit narked with each other and there was quite a lot of, heh, people leaving committees... and rows on committees and there was a difficulty in finding a new Chairman and some of the people who had put the effort in the first year said, that's it other people came in with different agendas and different views.....
(Pat Nolan)

It was meant to work on a local and regional basis for the first year, spread out beyond that to kind of provincial level in the second year, and then the potential to go bigger than that for the third year, but by the second year - I didn't want to chair the second year at all, I really burning myself out in the first year, and I thought, right, here it is, it's a terrific package for somebody else to take and run, but sure nobody else wanted it. (Paddy Friel)

But at the end of that year we ended up and we decided to call a halt. Discussions were happening at that stage as well about a proper Festival in June, the Confederation is a very local thing, it doesn't capture the imagination outside Kilkenny and Kilkenny needed a festival of some theme or other. (Tony Walsh)

They made the decision not to appoint a full time administrator and for a voluntary committee to do it was a killer. (Paddy Friel)

As the second year began some of those involved were soon to become burdened with personal issues which impacted on the level of commitment they could give to the festival. Outwardly things ran smoothly as all festival entertainments were hired-in

through the agents representing entertainers, artists and musicians. Other concerns revolved around acquiring licences, organising a second Presidential parade, horse racing, accommodation and dealing with renewed calls from a minority of traders in Irishtown to prevent the erection of the medieval gates and re-introduction of the subsequent one-way traffic system.

The third year was the last CKF but as far as festivals and place marketing were concerned it was the beginning of a new era as new actors and partnerships were meeting and forming. Without Friel at the helm the committee selection process was less strict but the advantage of 'keeping it tight' was still appreciated. Though aware of the festival's demise Richard Cook still initiated the aforementioned production of Macbeth. This production ensured that those who worked with Richard Cook on the Confederation Festival would do so again, assured of his capabilities.

The third year, probably the most exciting thing we did was the production of Macbeth in the front of the Castle with Richard Cook. That's when Richard joined us and that's when we saw first hand the capability of Richard. He's quite an amazing operator and it was a Bickerstaffe production. Hugely successful, free event. (Tony Walsh)

Well my memory of the Confederation Committee, I think it was 1994, it was in '94 and what happened is that Pat Crotty used to come in and see quite a lot of plays in Cleere's and he was a member of the Confederation Festival Committee, and he recommended to the others that I get involved, so they said fine and, 'cause it was a fairly loose association of individuals, so it wasn't like there was a huge meeting to decide whether to allow me in or anything. (Richard Cook)

In a study dedicated solely to the CFK, Cook would not qualify for more than a brief mention and a footnote. He was not involved in building the committee, challenging the tourism council, bringing in resources nor had he the capacity to deliver on a local scale.

ANT does not miss Cook's input into the last year of the festival or the signs of the burgeoning network development surrounding him.

6.3.2 Management

In the CKF managerial technologies were enrolled to a degree that no festival had used before. The technologies had been available to other festival committees but they weren't being used to this extent. Friel's approach to the festival was a professional one. This wasn't a hobby. This wasn't a tree house club. This wasn't an ego trip. This was a business and was managed as such. The usefulness of the ANT approach to track the introduction, function and integration of these managerial techniques and technologies is clearly visible. As will be said elsewhere, and in other contexts, this brief 'local' festival was a pivot point in many ways; the introduction of new management thinking, techniques and technology is only one aspect of how influential this festival was.

6.3.2.1 Coordination

Friel and Moran took internal communication and coordination very seriously. Both actors were aware that miscommunication and lack of coordination were frequent obstacles within the KAW. They decided to prioritise internal communications to ensure that it would not be a problem within the CKF committee. Despite the lack of emails and websites, committee members who missed meetings were kept informed through an extensive and laborious memo system. Roisin McQuillan wrote up and faxed, posted or hand delivered memos and notes to each committee member after every meeting. The outcome of important phone calls, chance meetings and latest developments were either faxed, posted or hand delivered to all of the committee. No exceptions.

And we, but we, I know it sounds ridiculous but it was pre-all that technology [email, mobile phones]. We had Roisin McQuillin, as, doing all the admin stuff and there was just – everything was minute-ed and sent out to people straight away....(rolls eyes) (P.Friel.)

6.3.2.2 Coordination devices

Three key coordination devices were utilised or available to the CKF committee: Memos, Telephones and a common meeting space. Although mundane by modern standards the impact that these coordination devices and techniques had on the management practises within the committee was revolutionary.

All memos contained notice on up-coming meetings, notable to-do lists, assignments and responsibilities. The agency of the memo was central to committee coordination and the role played by the memo was that of a two-fold management actor: first and foremost it was a central communication device. The Memo updated committee members on the progress of fellow committee members, indicating who had delivered on what, when, and where. Secondly, it acted as a transparent record of accountability. The Memo was regarded as an organisational checklist against which progress could be measured and anything recorded on the memo was regarded as fact. Even Bickerstaffe's Richard Cook received memos on all of the committee dealings when he was involved (even though his involvement was centred solely on the production of Macbeth). Such information would later prove invaluable to Cook in the first year of the comedy festival.

We were on the phone a lot, a lot, a lot! (P. Friel).

As with all of the modern festivals, the number of exchanged phone calls increased in the lead up to the festival and during the run of the festival itself. No interviewee was able to estimate the amount of calls made and received during an average day but all reacted humorously when thinking back on how many there were. Four key phone numbers were given out in the organisational phases of the festival: Katleen Moran in the design centre, Paddy Friel in Kilkenny Castle, Roisin McQuillin and Tony Walsh. Other members with specific committee tasks were also on-call but due to their more focussed operating areas their numbers were less helpful to those with more general inquiries and offers of help. A key point of note here is the fact that these were land line numbers. Mobile telephones

were still uncommon. All phone activity took place at set times and set places. Calls were waited on, planned around and often happened late in the evening. If an important caller only had an office contact number then the committee member in question stayed in their office until the call was received. Similarly some contacts were only accessible by phone at set times per day. While the telephone was a vital communications tool for the CKF committee it did come with its own set of impositions and demands.

Central to the coordination of the festival was a physical meeting place where meetings and sales pitches were conducted in a relaxed, informal and appropriate surrounding: the Kilkenny Design Centre Coffee shop. With its cakes and coffee, and with an impressive view of Kilkenny Castle and the old Kilkenny Castle stable grounds, Kathleen Moran's stylish tourist-orientated coffee shop provided the committee with a headquarters to operate from, hold meetings in, brainstorm in and meet with potential partners/sponsors who they wished to impress. Herein was the embodiment of old world arts and crafts, mixed with stylish modern designs. The entire building proved how successful certain aspects of old Kilkenny could be when utilised properly; both visually and financially. The view of the Castle further compounded the potential marketability of the city's heritage and architecture. Although all of the committee members had offices and the space in which to conduct meetings and planning sessions those interviewed all joked that no one could beat the coffee, or the cakes. The key point was that while in the coffee shop committee members were free of interruption and able to focus on the CKF.

Where the KAW committee for 1974-'81 involved friends who kept each other updated and the KBF was tightly controlled by three central figures, the confederation committee remained informed and up-to-date through a highly organised and structured system of information flows. Between the memos, the phone calls and the centred meeting area the committee members admitted feeling a sense of professionalism in the committee. This sense of professionalism lent an agency to proceedings. Surrounded by a well organised support structure committee, members found themselves approaching the organisation of the festival with as much energy and commitment as they would channel into their own

business projects. This festival committee was not approached as a hobby, a play thing or some form of status measure but as a product with serious tourism potential.

6.3.2.3 Leadership

It was very clear from interviews and newspaper reports that Paddy Friel was the festival director in both name and actuality. Although Kathleen Moran and Tony Walsh were considered as being very important to the festival, Paddy Friel was in full control. All compartmentalized areas of the festival were run by their respective appointed leaders, some of which never became very prominent although they were very successful in what they did. Paddy Friel was the most associated CFK figure in the minds of the public and the performers; from setting up last minute seating to standing in countless promotional photographs, Paddy Friel's involvement was witnessed at every level of the festival operation. Just as McGuinness before her and Richard Cook after, Friel was a clear and defined committee presence that was visibly involved at all levels of festival chores. She was a figure of authority and able to mobilise extra bodies no matter what the hour. Her presence, backstage and on-site, was remarked on continuously by volunteers as being excellent for morale.

Other figures took care of their own arenas which due to their nature were less public than Friel's position. Although Moran was frequently mentioned as being central to the festival in other interviews, her leadership qualities appear to have been mostly focussed on the committee itself and sponsorship meetings. Next to Friel the second most public leader-figure among the festival committee was Tony Walsh. This was largely in part to his connection to the builders and the sheer amount of operatives he contacted and incorporated into the festival over the course of the three years:

Again back to my old thing, I know a little bit about a lot but I'm not an expert in any field but what I think I'm fairly good at is spotting people that will do the job, fill the gaps that are in need and I know what an organisation needs from the point of view of making it work and then I usually find the personalities and

usually I'm lucky enough to persuade them to come on board and then to weld them into a team.

Interviewer: The conscriptor!

Tony W: The conscriptor, exactly, that's my job you know. (Tony Walsh).

Responsible for incorporating many of the specialists, transports and suppliers for the festival, Tony Walsh proved to be the essential festival *Mr. Fixit* (Richard Cook) and the main resource manager of the festival operation. Through his experiences within the Local Authority and County Council, Walsh had a broad range of connections. Although his role was not a visible one or a prominent one, the sheer number of people and things enrolled by Walsh meant that his involvement was public knowledge. Walsh's connections were mobilised over the phone and through mutual connections. Face to face dealings were rare and those that did occur were accidental, informal and highly productive. To use John Laws' terminology, and with no disrespect, Tony Walsh was most definitely a cowboy-hero (Law 1994).

6.3.2.4 Planning

There was very little long term planning involved in the CKF. When the first large committee was assembled a loose agreement existed to hold the festival over three years. Some tourism council members envisaged the festival plan lasting from 1992 to 1999 mirroring the length of time for which Kilkenny was the capital of Ireland (1642-49). Some Tourism Council members remember hearing plans covering five years. The actual organisers at the centre of the festival were planning on completing the first year and then *seeing how it goes*. Three of that committee had no recollection of there being any agreement to continue until 1999 but remembered hearing that idea being *aired* in early meetings. That was the extent of the official planning in relation to the lifespan of the festival. However, all of the key actors agree that from beginning of the festival there was talk that it was specially structured so that *in theory* it could continue to run regardless of who was in charge. Changing one member was supposedly easy to do because the committee was compartmentalised: replacing one member did not involve replacing an

entire committee and so the theory proposed by outsiders was that the festival could continue for many years with just the parts needing replacement. This was the only indication of future planning that any of the interviewees agreed on.

Events in the second year would disprove this replace-one-part theory. For personal reasons Friel needed to step down after the first festival. Replacing her energy, personality, ability to manufacture contacts, and ability to mobilise multiple actors was not as easy as just appointing a new director. Friel was told by the tourism council that she had to continue for a second year before someone was willing to take over. Friel's energy and enthusiasm were significantly less in that second year. Her intention was to supply the city with a festival. Although new ideas weren't discouraged no radically new elements were added to the festival product until Macbeth in the third year.

Organising the second year was not easier, despite contacts having been made in the first year. Although committee members directed their full resources and contacts into staging the second festival, the spirit and adrenaline rush energising the committee was absent. Without Friel encouraging members to plan for future years no one made additional plans for any further festivals as they had a considerable work load already. Subsequently there was no discussion of planning a year-four or year-five festival during this year. There is a marked contrast between year one and year two that is evident in the interviews. The agency and drive of Friel was not the same and this is clearly communicated in the stories told by the other committee members. The difference in committee energy, enthusiasm and unwillingness to experiment with new ideas is almost palpable.

So, while they absolutely put their back into it the first year, there wasn't the same energy or commitment the second year, which meant that people started getting a bit narked with each other and there was quite a lot of people leaving committees and rows on committees and there was a difficulty in finding a new Chairman and some of the people who had put the effort in the first year said, that's it, they've done the effort now, good luck, goodbye and other people came in with different

agendas and different views and, and I think the third year was barely held together (Pat Nolan)

Organisationally the third year was not as successful as the previous two, but due to the success of Macbeth it is the year that most locals remember best. The key to planning in the first two years was allowing others to operate unmolested. While there were many elements to organise, many agents/actors/actants were enrolled or volunteered to do specific tasks. The bulk of the work undertaken by the committee in the first year was in conscription. The second year was different again as new people and previous years elements were contacted. Most were delighted to re-enlist but some had genuine and personal reasons for declining. The third year presented new difficulties as some of the committee stepped down (most notably Friel), and the relationships and understandings that had developed between them and the staff changed. This provided the festival planners with considerable obstacles with scheduling and resource access. The third year presents an example of where the public perception of the festival and the committee perception of the festival are very different. Where most of the public regarded the third festival as their favourite of the three years, those committee members who served on all the festival committees regard it as the worst.

Another challenge for some of the new festival committee members and key actors who followed in the final year was acclimatisation. As each element played their part there was less for the director, or new committee members to worry about. Many elements within the festival product itself were unplanned and developed spontaneously. Those working on these elements were good at their job and didn't require supervision (or as some put it: interference). They were experienced in their area, adept at thinking on their feet and didn't require monitoring. New member over-enthusiasm to assist in areas where their assistance wasn't necessary disrupted the flow that veteran members were accustomed to. Planning the festival proved awkward as new members wished to move faster or slower than older members were accustomed to. Additionally those newly enrolled members were also disappointed that the key senior committee members were

intending to wind the festival down as they felt that their opinions, ideas and plans did not get proper consideration they deserved.

6.3.2.5 Evaluation

There was no significant evaluation of the internal workings of the festival organisation, the festival as a product, its promotion or its delivery. When asked if any evaluation took place, interviewees confirmed that it had but struggled to give examples. Taking on board the lack of any significant long term planning and the lack of competition (both local and national) this doesn't come as a surprise. Over the course of the first two years there was no move made to alter the festival in any fundamental way. Some acts were changed to offer variety yet their replacements style of performance and musical genre were largely similar. The festival had attracted large numbers to its events, but financially it hadn't broken even. However it was very popular and therefore wasn't changed. Most of those involved in middle-management posts were delighted with the success of their individual parts. Those involved at ground level were content to offer their services again and those with key committee positions recall feelings of exhaustion, accomplishment and satisfaction. Friel stated that anything that had let them down in the first festival was reassessed but not discussed at great length by the committee.

6.3.2.6 Human resources

The amount of organisations, community groups, special interest groups and local authority staff that got involved was staggering. Over fifty organisations, agencies and committees were incorporated into the final festival product. Some were content with participating in the main parade, or content to assist behind the scenes. Other groups were incorporated to access resources, management knowledge, speciality tasks, and venue management. Although the festival product and the festival itself were amateur based, the organisation of volunteers and venue/site staffers was supervised to professional standards. Some of those who volunteered were compensated through some overtime or days/afternoons off (Castle staff, County council) but the vast majority did so for free.

Unlike previous (and later) festivals the mix of personalities in the confederation festival (volunteers, parade participants and venue crew) was broader and spanned multiple age groups and economic classes. Where the arts festival had not required large construction groups the CKF needed them to construct the city gates. These workmen were of a different ilk and personality type to what the KAW crews were used to. Where the KAW crews were considered to be *artsy people* the confederation enrolled from all manner of backgrounds and interests. Actors who never considered themselves the ‘type’ to get involved with festivals suddenly found themselves to be essential to the festivals’ continued success. Once again this re-enforced the perception that the KAW was an elitist operation and that the CFK was more *down to earth* and *home grown* with a strong sense of a city community^{xliv}.

The County Council and the Corporation, as a body, because Tony Walsh brought all that support with him, I mean for example the physical building of the gates, if you were there any evening that that was going on, you would have seen all the people who are employed by the Corporation, working away, all the very skilled tradesmen working away late at night, building away. And then there was an overtime paid for that as well too, you know, there was a lot of support in all of that, and then all the support from the engineers, and we had individual meetings for all these people, meetings with individual road engineers to get the one way system set up. (Paddy Friel)

New practises were also brought onboard for organising the entertainment programme and the people involved. Where the KAW and KBF committees had approached and contacted all of their entertainers individually and face-to-face, the confederation took a different route. The Agents for actors and performing artists and representational agencies for multiple acts were phoned and informed of what was required and asked to organise acts to perform in Kilkenny. After the first contact the managers of the performers and artists were given complete autonomy to select and hire appropriate acts. In effect the management agencies vetted, organised and transported the majority of the street entertainers all as part of their service. The same approach was taken to the musical

acts: an agent or agency was contacted and the acts were booked through them. Some events were selected on more informal levels through friendships and old connections, but when the committee realised the amount of acts required to create the desired atmosphere they opted to acquire the maximum amount of acts with the minimum of effort. This was a complete departure from the micro-management style of previous festival practise and it proved successful for the three year duration.

6.3.2.7 Non-human resources

Kilkenny's entire infrastructure, business community assets and all of the significant local gatekeepers were pledged to the committee to assist in the delivery of the festival. As mentioned in relation to previous festivals Kilkenny is rich in unique sites and venues which appeal to big audiences and festival performances. This wealth of architecture was also left to the committee's devices. Sites like the Castle and the Castle Park were guaranteed as Paddy Friel was not only festival director but Castle director as well. With Eamon Langton on the festival committee the support of his award-winning night club and restaurant was never in question and his position on the local vintners committee and his respect within the vintners' community helped to secure the support of many pubs and venues in Kilkenny. This remained the same for all of the modern festivals and is a huge factor in the atmosphere generated during Kilkenny events.

What was different with the CKF committee's approach was their management of these sites. Each venue manager, venue owner, or venue gatekeeper was left in charge. They were not over-supervised or micro-managed. Unlike past festivals, venue managers were not constantly visited and pestered or supplanted by the committee. Committee members did not tell venue staff how to do their jobs. Committee members did not publicly undermine any venue managers or disrupt their management systems. As was the nature of the festival, maintenance staff, grounds staff, or tour guides volunteering were appointed to assist at their place of work, if it was possible, where they could be most effective. There were no disagreements over site or venue management between the committee and venue boards or bodies. By allowing site managers to manage themselves

the committee effectively bypassed the potential for misunderstandings or reprimands from disgruntled venue bodies. Venue managers accepted any extra help that was sent their way and interviews with past volunteers reflected this difference in work atmosphere to their KAW days where venue boards or owners were sometimes at odds with the wishes of some of the arts sub-committees (1981-89). This approach was continued in year two and in the third year (although some interviewees hinted humorously that there may have been some misunderstandings in the third year between new committee members and venue and site managers). This was a simple professional step that showed a lot of trust between those involved. There was no ego-fuelling display, no need to be observed in a position of importance.

6.3.2.8 Business technologies

Paddy Friel's important meetings and dealings were mostly done on a face-to-face basis when the majority of other CKF committee members were operating by phone. Some interviews joked about being cornered by Friel and many mentioned feeling like bold schoolboys when trying to avoid her. Friel's style of management relied was one of continuous resource mobilization and continuous product creation. This contact based form of management was helped greatly by the use of the *Kilkenny Design Centre* as a meeting point and negotiation venue. As a neutral-seeming location (non-office, accessible, spacious, comfortable) the *Kilkenny Design Centre* coffee shop provided a friendly meeting point where potential festival partners or potential facilitators were encouraged to aid the festival in their specific field.

Once Friel had reached an agreement, those willing to come on board were given the freedom to deliver on their promises on their own terms. What happened between the agreement and the delivery of the product/service/resource/venue was not something that Friel interfered with unless made aware of a potential problem. What you have is a pattern of intense *hands on* involvement to secure resources and then a sharp *step back* and contentment not to interfere. As an increasing amount of organisations and agencies were enrolled an ever-expanding network of internal connections and relationships were

activated to secure the success of each part of the festival. The countless networks involved in each delivered resource and successful festival element forms an army of black boxes which remained behind the scenes of the festival. The Memo and telephone calls kept her abreast of developments and timeline objectives.

6.3.2.9 Managerial technologies

These *action at a distance* (Hansen and Mouritsen 1999) devices used by the committee were more extensive, professional, office based, and farther reaching than the one-to-one style employed by past festival actors. As these networks weave in and out of other networks some were dormant until needed and remained invisible until some crisis manifested. As mentioned previously the use of memo's, telephones and faxing was extensive. The memos mobilised actors, networks, and these in turn mobilised other networks, actors and actants. Memo's impacted on all levels of the organisational hierarchy. All committee developments were recorded by McQuillin in a memo.

Telephones were extensively used but it is important to note that this was before mobile telephones became popular and common place so many actors were forced to engage in telephone-tracking to reach their intended contact. Tony Walsh used the phrases *telephone tag*, *playing a game we like to call "you've just missed them"*, and other colourful expressions to describe the frustration and annoyance of depending on fixed lines when trying to contact mobile people. He also noted more than once that he never actually met some of the people he was dealing with – he had extensive conversations with them, but never met them face-to-face. The only proof that they were involved was that they delivered what was required in the morning, and took it away when all was done. Where Friel dealt mostly face-to-face with people, Walsh, Bergin and others dealt mostly by phone, and rarely witnessed the mobilisation of resources as a result of their orders or requests. Orders and phone calls were translated (somewhere else, by someone else) into results. Although there were moments where differences were experienced between expectations and results, these were caught in time within the organisations themselves when negative, and passed on when positive. Rather than experiencing a

continuous realisation of progress from the visible mobilization of resources these actors only glimpsed incomplete bursts of information as they checked up on the progress of others. The key technology that actually enabled the committee to measure progress was the memo system. When the memo system was accumulated it indicated a quantifiable amount of 'as-yet-invisible' tasks accomplished by the committee.

6.3.3 Power

As already discussed, the idea of hosting a permanent festival for the June bank holiday weekend was proposed by members of the Kilkenny tourism council in 1991. A committee was set up with representatives of every agency and sector operating within the Kilkenny business community, but proved to be laborious, plodding and unfocussed. Many key people recognised this as a signal that the then current pluralist system of festival organisation in Kilkenny didn't work.

Paddy Friel approached the council's key members and proposed doing things differently. This was a signal of change. Friel streamlined and compartmentalised the festival organisation and opened a new chapter in festival management in Kilkenny. There was more scope for expertise, for decentralising power, for delegating responsibility and for trust. Each member was allocated tasks and then released to complete those tasks without supervision or harassment. In exercising her power to assign responsibilities and create other positions of importance within the festival, Friel empowered other actors and agents without diminishing her own power base. This is not power-over or power-to but something different. Here power is past onto others, others are empowered, and power is exercised through power-past-on. In past festival committees there was evidence of dominant egos interfering in the festival's smooth running and interrupting the flow of power through the network. This unwillingness to trust other actors to deliver often spread by example. In these committees some committee members were more concerned with their own importance within the committee hierarchy than with what was best for the festival. Whether consciously or not

these actors often acted as breaks in the network that interfered with the running of the festival.

Friel's re-organisation was the first step in removing this way of thinking from festival organisation. By professionalizing the structure and compartmentalising it, Friel delineated roles within the committee. By putting everyone in a box and firmly assigning tasks and responsibilities Friel cut out any squabbling or jockeying for position or prestige. Some swapping and juggling of tasks did take place but mainly to spread the workload evenly among the committee, or where one committee member recently became most appropriate for those tasks. Although this festival involved members of multiple communities, back grounds and interests in a very pluralistic manner (as was the order of the day) at the core the festival was ordered, not governed, by an elite. This was definitely a case of mobilising others with 'power to' rather than an exercise of 'power over' by the committee. This festival ran on mobilised networks, and networks within networks. Those at the top were unable to reveal all of the back stage workings involved within the festival as these were black-boxes that they themselves never opened. From time constraints to lack of access the key members never actually witnessed all of the mobilisations at work within their festival, or heard all of the stories of last-minute successes and near disasters. Each network mobilised within the festival was given the autonomy to proceed by their own designs with a considerable amount of independence. Although these networks were kept within the information loop, no continuous pressure was exerted: they were informed through the memos without the onus of continuously informing the others. Each element was treated as a professional and reliable unit, unlike in previous festivals where some elements were hounded and continually double-checked to such an extent that progress was slowed. In delegating tasks to those that could best deliver on them, the committee extended themselves over many networks, actors, agents and actants.

Although Friel did operate over the telephone frequently, she opted to undertake the majority of face to face meetings as she knew she could communicate her energy and commitment to less enthusiastic potential partners better in person. Owing to this hands-

on approach Friel was frequently on-site when work needed to be done. This led to many of the ground staff working side-by-side with Friel moving chairs and other manual last-minute tasks. This placed her within public perception as the main face of the festival. This perception also added to her ability to negotiate and increased her ability to secure support which in turn increased the perception of her status on the committee.

6.4 An ANT analysis of The Confederation of Kilkenny Festival

Both optional interpretations of Callon's four steps of emergence were applied to narratives from the CKF to assess the suitability of ANT as an analysis approach (see table 6.1).

Table 6.1 Application of four steps of emergence to CKF

| | Callon (Fox 2000) | CKF | Porsander (2005) | CKF |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| 1 | <i>Problematization</i> | Present-Extreme | Entering the Obligatory Point of Passage | Present-Extreme |
| 2 | <i>Interessement</i> | Present-Strong | Forming a Pact | Present-Strong |
| 3 | <i>Enrolment</i> | Present-Strong | Performing various Negotiations | Present-Strong |
| 4 | <i>Mobilization of the Allies</i> | Present-Strong | Finding the Spokesman | Present-Strong in year 1 Weak in year 3 |

The global context of 1992 was different to that of 1964 and 1974. Technology had developed to such an extent that telephones, computers, faxes, and other technologies had become common-place in business. These changes facilitated easier flows of information and communication between agencies involved in tourism and festival events but there were patterns of festival management that firmly repeat patterns common in the past.

Friel actively questions, in person, the aims and organisation of the councils plans to host a large multi-focus festival. Friel actively offers an alternative option and an explanation as to why she believed the current approach to festival and tourism organisation was unsuitable. The concept of the festival does not originate with Friel, the choice of time period, the nature of the festival product and the loose historical theme do not originate with Friel. She is aware of moves to set such a festival in motion, and then offers to take over the operation. This is not a hijacking. This is a manager, the administrator of the most important cultural, historical, and tourism actor within Kilkenny city, identifying a slew of potential problems with the launch of a new tourism product. Friel freely admits that this was not her idea. Previous festival members are credited with being the initiators, the inventors, designers and devisers of the festivals they ran. Friel breaks this sequence. Friel identified what she saw as a disaster waiting to happen and intervened. Friel's approach to the management of the CKF is ground-breaking. Friel questioned the very make-up and lack-of-structure that existed before the festival committee is formed. Friel objects to the very wiring of the committee that is about to manifest. Friels' role here is not just the enrolling actor that assembles a network of actors and actants around her to order and deliver a festival. That is Friels' second role in this narrative.

Friels first role is that of a demolition ball. Friel knocked the old way of doing things. Friel triggered a gradual paradigm shift in tourism and festival management in Kilkenny. Friel did something which in current thought is normal and expected, but at the time was seen as excessive and out-of-place. She applied business management know-how to the organisation of a festival. Friel attempted to organise something that had been the sole domain of dreamers, artists, bohemians and talkers (as opposed to doers) and replaced it with order, business acumen and efficiency. Friel was no have-a-go cowboy, she wasn't a collection of giddy enthusiasts. She wasn't a rookie and she wasn't an amateur. Tourism was her business. Managing the biggest tourism asset in Kilkenny city and county was her job. And she had participated actively in the KAW at multiple levels. She already knew who the cowboy-heroes, manager-heroes, civil servant-heroes and zombies were. She knew the areas that should be black-boxed, she knew who her actor-intermediaries were and understood the underlying tensions within the Kilkenny tourism organisation

first hand. In taking charge of the festival she disrupts the complacency that had strangled Kilkenny's tourism agency and the KAW through the 1980s. Friel initiates a bloodless coup and redraws the definitions of festival management around her. Friel did not stop at questioning *who* but questioned *how* to its very core. She displayed local know-who but also business know-how.

In many ways this is her cowboy-hero story. Her David versus Goliath story is particularly humorous given that she is quite small and she was taking on the combined weight of Kilkenny's tourism organisation. She suits both steps yet there is a journey and a passing-through-a-test element to her story. The success of the first year and her forced acceptance of the role in the second year are testament of how right she was and the reliability of the measures and methods that she introduced to festival organisation. She takes on a quest, passes multiple tests and leaves the city changed when finished. Subjectively Porsanders' first step appeals more and captures more of the shake-up she caused.

In the second step there is a definite and unmistakeable formation of a power base and the prescribing of set roles and perimeters. Assigned roles with clear assigned barriers, territorialized understandings and clear deadlines are present from the start. Deadlines, goals, tasks, objectives, rotas, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are all analysed and assessed. As with the KBF, gatekeepers and those in control of necessary resources are vital to the delivery of the festival but unlike the KBF Friel selects an actor to act as intermediary between all of those gatekeepers rather than bringing them all on board and bloating the committee. In selecting Tony Walsh, Friel assigns him the task of Mr fixit, of negotiator, of assembler of gatekeepers. Other roles – PR representative, The Army representative, the Vintners representative – all come afterwards, enrolled in different ways and means. But even more importantly Friel enrolls business technologies, new business and management techniques and business disciplines to order and organise the human actors. These methods were not uncommon. Those in business were using them already. What was unusual was the utilisation of them for the organisation of a *mere*

festival. Friel professionalised the committees approach to festival management. This was not a hobby or a bit of a laugh anymore. This was business.

Once these steps are initiated, Friel sticks to her self-assigned tasks and does not interfere with the assigned tasks of others. By empowering others Friel frees them to do the jobs they have to do the way that they do best. Many become voices of organisation rather than presences. They organised events, deliveries, favours and fix-its over the phone or through faxes. They never actually set foot on site. Further actants and actors join the mix including internal communication devices such as the memo. In following the actants and non-human and human-non-human-hybrids through several festival narratives the impact of the non-human devices becomes apparent. The contrast between year one and year three articulate itself in the break down of communication, the propagation of misinformation and the isolation of some actors who were not kept informed of events outside of their spheres of influence. Once actors fail to become communication device-human hybrids the frequency increases of breaks in organisational flow. The failure to find an iconic spokesperson was not the failing of the committee but of the product. With too much on offer the image was blurred and far too 'catch-all' to strike an interest. On a local scale Friel quickly became the spokeswoman of the festival, freeing up other actors to work backstage. But outside of this local-hero dimension the festival fails to launch any iconic moment until the last year with Macbeth.

This festival had a strong narrative of mobilising allies. Not just humans but also communication technologies and practices. This is an ode to communication and the application of organisational business technologies merging with incredibly connected operators who know who to call on and how to call on them. Although these techniques and technologies were open to use by any committee, Friel was the first to demand their implementation and complete acceptance. It was a new way of *doing* festivals, a new way of ordering and organising festivals.

6.5 Festival Legacy

Revolving around an intense, highly select and structured network the CKF proved to be an extraordinary catalyst for restructuring committees and organizational bodies in Kilkenny. Its introduction of business quality efficiency and structures brought new life, prospects, potentials and investment to Kilkenny's festivals and place promotional agencies. It had signalled that it was time to introduce professional festivals to Kilkenny, and it provided many newcomers to the scene with invaluable organizational experience, countless contacts and new resources. It created a fresh generation of actors and networks that would become invaluable in the formation of many future festival and non-festival boards. Such operators included core reformers who would become the new blood, the new *players*. These players became so integral to later festivals and tourism groups that they defined them. The business management structures they implemented were specifically designed, self-sustainable and durable, and would have normally been deemed unsuitable for a *mere* festival. This departure from the 'usual ad-hoc' methods, this transition between amateur and professional structures is vital in understanding the formation of later festivals and their networks. There really is a true sense of *mobilising* allies here beyond just the boundary of the festival. Allies are mobilised through their networks, circles and arenas. These allies are empowered however no spokes-icon or spokesperson was developed.

The CKF also served to debunk some of the KBF myths, proving that not all festivals of its scale would attract negative attention. It provided the stage for a new generation of gifted and creative individuals to show what they could do. Most importantly it heralded the advent in Kilkenny of professionalised events and festivals, and a revolution in the techniques used in tourism organisations.

Although successful throughout its three year run and despite a selection of members who were model examples of resourcefulness and intuition, the festival committee became tired. The workload became too much for the amateur group. Although the

confederation festival was finished, a new seed had been sown and plans were under way elsewhere in the medieval city:

Discussions were happening at that stage as well about a proper Festival in June, the Confederation is a very local thing, it doesn't capture the imagination outside Kilkenny and Kilkenny needed a festival of some theme or other. In our views we would have limited capability in the whole artistic world, we were saying theatre has been done, film has been done, jazz had been done and so on all the normal themes and in discussion, which I wasn't part of at the time, Pat Crotty said "Richard Cook has an idea, no-one has done comedy" so comedy festival should be done. ...So we had meetings about that thing I remember being quite sceptical and Richard used to come and say "Will you support me" and all the rest and I said "look it I'll do whatever I can". (Tony Walsh)

By the end of its run the festival had had three significant impacts on Kilkenny: Firstly, the introduction of new managerial approaches to structuring a festival committee; Secondly, creating a larger base of festival experienced operators outside of Arts week involvement within Kilkenny; Thirdly, the introduction of Richard Cook to festival organisation.

Chapter 7. The Cat Laughs Comedy Festival

The Cat Laughs Festival was a brilliant concept which is absolutely attributable to Richard Cook. Richard had a very clear vision of what he wanted to do, who his market was, he knew his trade completely and he went after it and he succeeded. So that was very clearly devised and I suppose, would have to be described as the most professional of the events in the sense that it has a clear-cut objective. It was completely, clinically executed with superb timing and very good marketing. So I would give Richard Cooke very high marks on that. (Pat Nolan)

[Cat laughs '95] never will be repeated because it was romantic and it was the first ever festival and either you can't replace that romance and all the things that went wrong and there were huge things that went wrong I mean I could just fill you with things that went wrong but anyway they were kind of funny and I think that both the public punters and the comedians, I mean, they can look into our eyes and they knew that we were trying something very adventurous, and they gave us the benefit of the doubt. So when things weren't ready, when things went wrong, their attitude was very relaxed. (Richard Cook, Festival Director)

The following chapter details the key factors that were enrolled into the Cat Laughs Comedy Festival (CLCF) in its product, promotion, and organisation. This is the story of Kilkenny's first professionally branded festival and the first large scale festival to be held in the city that does not have the name Kilkenny in its title.

Loosely based on the *Edinburgh Comedy Festival*, this June bank holiday weekend festival was sponsored by Guinness breweries in its first year in 1995 and became The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy Festival on its second year^{xlv}. The festival was structured to be a highly professionalised, single art-form event. Within three years the festival had expanded from a three-day, thirty-seven comedian, six venue, sixty volunteer event, into a five-day, sixty-three comedian, fourteen venue, over one hundred volunteer event (see Table 7.1 for details).

Table 7.1 Four indicators of the growth of the Cat Laughs Festival '95 – '04

| | Attendance (approx.) | Estimated Economic generation | # of comedians ^{xlvi} | # of venues ^{xlvii} |
|-----|------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| '95 | 16,000 | £3 million ^{xlviii} | 37 | 6 |
| '96 | 15,000 ^{xlix} | N/A | 59 | 12 |
| '97 | 25,000 ^l | £ 6 million | 63 ^{li} | 14 |
| '98 | 30,000 | £5 million | 42 | 10 |
| '99 | 30,000 | £5 million ^{lii} | 35 | 9 |
| '00 | 25,000 | £4million ^{liii} | 38 | 10 |
| '01 | 25,000 ^{liv} | “a conservative £5 million” ^{lv} | 42 | 11 |
| '02 | 30,000 | “over £6 million” | 43 | 12 |
| '03 | 35,000 | Unstated | 47 | 13 |
| '04 | 33,000 | e9 million | 51 | 14 |

Note: Estimates and figures taken from *The Kilkenny People*

The festival began as a line up of semi-known Irish comedians with one or two international names and developed into a world class line up with numerous International stars, comedy short films (Kitty Flicks), Newspaper Cartoonists (Cat Laughs Cartoons) and a Pottery once off show (courtesy of Johnny Vegas). Comic stunts and gimmicks were not limited to the stage: on the first year a charity *Ireland versus the world* comedians' football match erupted and is now one of the festivals most eagerly awaited yearly events. The organisers and comedians alike also took advantage of the open top bus tours of Kilkenny^{lvi}, the local media (Radio Kilkenny, The Kilkenny People) local politics^{lvii} and Hurling matches.

Independent comedians struggling to break onto the comedy network staged unadvertised shows wherever they were able to. Comics could be bullied and bribed into giving impromptu performances in pubs, shops and filling stations and thus myth after myth was born. Stories of revellers asleep in hotel corridors, and tents in unusual places abounded. Although the first year failed to recoup its costs it did secure a second year.

Spatially the festival was once again centred on Kilkenny, but the organisation wasn't: the organisation of the festival stretched from Los Angeles to London. Its operating structures and network patterns were borrowed heavily from professional international

industries completely divorced from the old Kilkenny way of managing a festival. Even the festival's first point of contact with its customers evolved into something that could be accessed and explored at a distance – a one stop online shop presenting everything the potential customer needs to know. Over the course of three short years the comedy festival professionalised the promotion, organisation and delivery of festivals in Kilkenny, triggering changes in tourism agencies and place promotional organisations across the city and county. It changed the way local actors approached the re-organisation of their amateur festivals and their potential to promote the city nationally and internationally.

7.1 Product

The CLCF is a unique, single-form product with three intermittent fringe sideshows. Venue assembly is predominantly minimalist. Lighting requirements are rudimentary. Most of the comedians do not require any props or special stage materials – most popular comedians only require a high stool, a microphone and the classic bare stone wall made famous by the *Comedy Store*^{lviii}. The simplicity of the product's requirements on stage is further echoed in the lack of special city-wide requirements: the festival does not require a temporary one-way city-wide traffic system, there are no parades to organise, no street carnivals, and no one-thousand-seater open-air concerts or out-door theatre performances. The festival is hosted in multiple public houses and theatres across the city and it is launched and closed by heavily attended events in Langton's nightclub.

The comedy festival sells comedy and trades on the fame of its performers. This presents two parts to the festival product: comedy and comedian^{lix}. From its beginning in 1995, the festival consistently attracted established and internationally famous comedians as well as up-and-coming names (for a full listing from 1995-2002 see^{lx}). Once enrolled the comedian and their brand of comedy become the festival product to be experienced by attendees^{lxi}. This product experience is complex. Understanding the relationship between the paying customer^{lxii} and the product is crucial. The relationship on the night between each individual comic and the audience (which is simultaneously a single entity and a

collection of individuals grouped in one space) dominates the relationship between the customer and the festival more than any other factor. A weak show by a popular comic will negatively reflect on the festival. Irrational as it may appear, one poor performance is frequently seen as an indicator of the quality of the overall festival. Negative word of mouth generating from one poor performance will spread and is frequently taken as a criticism/reflection on the festival as a whole. The relationship between comic and audience becomes an indication of the relationship between the audience and the festival product as a whole. The first shows often sets the standard against which the following shows are judged, and therefore the festival as a whole.

The comic's actions, voices, pauses and silences will define the situation the audience finds themselves in. For the comic almost every move, intonation and epileptic fit of mock anxiety or rage is devised, calculated, experimented with, tweaked and rehearsed, and augmented with trademarked expressions, famous catchphrases or set-piece punch lines. The product boils down to the comic meeting the audience's expectations and making them laugh. But this must be completed by not repeating what he has done before, yet still being exactly what is expected of the hyper-real version of his personality. The comic must strike a balance between being 'vintage', being 'classic' and providing new material that meets with high expectations. It can often be hard to achieve this balance to satisfy a demanding crowd.

The comic's routine is an *information game*, he controls how the story is told, what speed, intonation, volume and expletives are used, when they are used, and how, if it's their style, to manipulate the audience's expectation of what is coming – then alter direction resulting in a potentially infinite game of hide and seek with the truth, the comedian and the audience. In this game some of the audience are passive, and others are active. Audience members can react very differently. Advantages possessed by the audience include anonymity, darkness and centre-point focused seating. The audience, as a body, are under no peer review to react appropriately, many are unknown to each other, and most venues use their seating patterns to focus interest onto the comedian and thus make it difficult for an individual audience member to fully survey the audience to assess

their responses as a means to gauging how to perform the proper reaction. An unresponsive or hostile audience are known as a *tough house*. A *tough house* can transform a good venue into a cold and hostile work environment for the comic. A *tough house* can have repercussions on the audience and on their impression of the festival as a whole. The comedian has no official warning system to alert him to sensitive issues in the audience, or where his assumptions are incorrect^{lxiii}. Most outsider comedians will do some research on what topics are taboo and any necessary non-translating slang, curses, products or cultural cues.

There are comedians who thrive on stirring the emotions of a crowd and relish getting a reaction from more conservative members of an audience. Thus controversy is never far from comedians or comedy festivals. The controversies stirred by the comedian's observations are courted by the comedian and are not the same as a *tough house*. A *tough house* indicates that the comedian is failing to connect with the audience. In such cases very little can be done by venue management or the festival committee. Follow up acts must work harder once a tone has been set, and if they fail to do so the night is lost and chalked up to experience by the comedians, yet cannot be so easily disregarded by the paying audience. "Dud" comedians lessen the sense of value-for-money experienced by the audience and reactions to bad shows can spread quickly in a festival arena the size of Kilkenny. Bad shows impact greatly on the festival as a product making the relationship between the audience and the comedian vital to the festival's success and reputation.

Where the CLCF is concerned, the addition of alcohol into this network lowers inhibitions, alters reactions and shifts reaction thresholds, decreasing self-restraint, increasing volume and making the audience more malleable for the comic. Similarly the comic may also be under varying degrees of alcoholic influence which may affect their performance. Not all of the audience react in the same way. Some do not accept the proposed version of reality or recognise socio-cultural reference points. Some audiences are not passive: they have within them anarchic or disenfranchised elements. Some disgusted and appalled audience members actively voice their disapproval of the material or the comedian (hecklers). Some will be motivated through deep beliefs and provoked

into active resistance by inflammatory statements made by the comic. Other hecklers are mindless reactionaries fuelled on alcohol, and peer acceptance. A comic with experience and can dispatch the latter hecklers with practised ease. However it is the silent voices, the laughter doldrums (large time periods of silence where there should be laughter), that are most noticeable and the most difficult to address^{lxiv}. It is this absence of laughter that makes its presence felt more than any other reaction a comic may receive. It is the absence of laughter that creates a *tough house*.

A curious discrepancy between the CLCF and KAW products is reproduction. Those who attend the arts concerts wish to experience a note-perfect rendition of a familiar classic, recreated tone for tone, tempo for tempo, and performed exactly as originally intended, ageless, without a single change. Those attending a comedy gig wish to experience new jokes, new stories, and new observations yet expect the comedian to be exactly the same. They expect, and often receive, new material every time they return to see the same comedian. Lee-way is often given if some crowd favourites are re-told, because these lines or sketches have developed a reputation and agency as a trademark.

When it comes to developing new material each comedian utilises different approaches, nearly all of which involve some form of public trial and error. Comics like Tommy Tiernan and Eddie Izzard make such facts known to the audience there and then, charming the audience further with a mix of self-deprecating observation and improvised additional comments. Other comedians don't like to expose themselves to the audience in case it breaks the spell when the audience realise that the comedian is not fully in control of the show. It is the convergence of these factors, opinions, routines, rehearsals, beliefs, instincts, intelligence, pressures on the comedian, interpretation of the audience, mood of the audience and more that create the product on which the festival is based.

Depending on the comic's style and set target points, he may flit in and out of the several hyper-real renditions of his character, shifting into and out of multiple personalities. The comic is not forced to maintain one character or keep the audience in one place mentally. Through mime, insightful observation, self-produced sound effects and inventive stage

use, the comic transforms the stage around them, thus transforming the space around him and at the same time transporting his audience in a Pyr Gynt fashion (Henrik Ibsen, 1892)^{lxv}. The stage also has its own transformative quality. When the comic steps onto the stage they are transformed into a hyper-real version of themselves.

It is very easy to be dismissive of a comedian's preparation routines and behind-the-scenes work but the majority of the successful comics invest a lot of time in preparation. The work and preparation that goes on behind the scenes at a music concert is very visible, with musicians being famous for conducting hours of selfless rehearsals and practise, every day. To an outsider the comic's preparations are invisible: the practising, rehearsing, trials, second takes, re-drafts, script designing sessions, and the hours of unfunny (and therefore failed) improvisational routines^{lxvi}.

7.2 Promotion

Some of the comedians are well known in their own right and receive high exposure in the media. Many feature in television shows, movies, plays or dramas. Both the external and internal promotion mechanics use the agency of fame to the best of their ability, yet none actually cover the actual jokes or one-liners. Examples of what to expect were very scarce in both internal and external promotions. One of the reasons for this was space – if every comedian included a one-liner the programmes would have to be bigger, and therefore more expensive to produce. Bar cat-related punning, none of the campaign had any jokes.

7.2.1 Internal promotion

In 1995 Kate Bowe^{lxvii} was the publicist behind the *enormous amount of national and international media coverage*^{lxviii} that the festival received in its formative years. Marketing was devised on a local scale by ODM (O'Dwyer Marketing), and on a national scale by O'Leary PR. These organisations were black boxed for this dissertation. These actors had a large part to play in the assembling and coordination of the festivals

promotion through a wide range of communication networks and mapping their individual contribution proved to be as extensive as mapping the promotion campaign itself. Although interviewees spoke highly of them and how they did extensive work all of them saw it as merely a channel, a conduit for the fame (agency) of the comedians and the soon-to-be-famous Laughing Cat image.

7.2.1.1 The Laughing Cat

In its first year the CLCF launched its very own icon: The Laughing Cat^{lxix} (See pictures 7a to 7h). This icon has since become highly recognisable and is, in many respects, the first actor potential festival customers encounter. The laughing Cat is an entity in its own right and accumulates agency of its own.

It is interesting that one of the exercises that Siobhan [O'Dwyer – ODM] did was, you know, they did a survey outside Kilkenny: "what did outside Kilkenny think of Kilkenny?", "what immediately comes to mind?" and they did this across the age group and all the rest, you know, the usual ones came up you know, the castle, the hurling you know, that kind of stuff, but t'was very interesting that for the under 25's the one that rated the highest was The Cat Laughs (Tony Walsh).

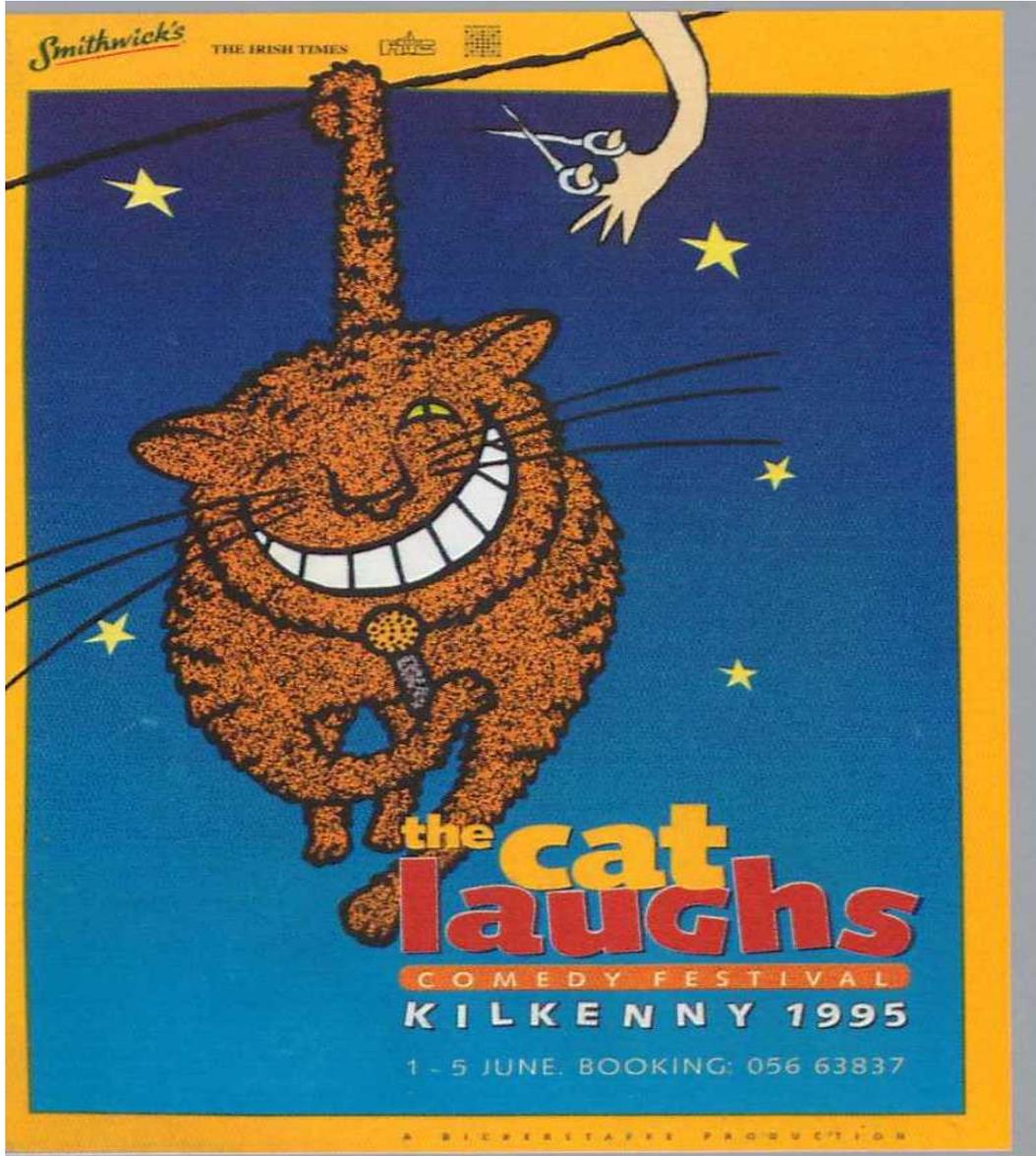
The original image was designed by Shane Johnson and developed by *Bite! Associates*. The versatile and highly adaptable trademark is a sophisticated brand. The images, agents, actors and myths tied into this brand make it thoroughly unique to Kilkenny and the comedy festival. The images and icons enrolled into the communicative collage are manifestations of local legends, modern myths, a modern advertising phenomena and sponsorship logo association. Such a visual and versatile icon was also well placed and conceived for the rise of the information highway. Its role within the success of the festival is extensive. From 1995 to 2004 the branding and use of the Laughing Cat went through two distinct phases, and one unsuccessful transition piece. Phase one involved the years from 1995 to 1998. Between phases one and two there was a miscalculated design for 1999. Phase two involved the years from 2000 to 2004.

The first phase represented the use of the full Cat and Rope/Scissors image on all 21cm x 29.5cm official programmes, and 14.4 cm x 21 cm booking/preview pamphlets (see pictures 7a and 7b). This Image dominated the programmes, brochures, posters and other paraphernalia from 1994 – 1998. The second phase marked the maturing of the brand logo with the adoption of the ‘smiley face’ approach to displaying only the head section of the Laughing Cat (see Picture 7d). The ‘full body’ and ‘tail-less’ logos were enrolled as multi-situational, iconic templates on which interchangeable, situation specific index images could be attached to advertise the addition of a cartoon fringe festival, the Kilkenny comedy bus tour, booking information, joke problem pages, and mock horoscopes.

Despite alterations to the brochure presentation design the Laughing Cat face has largely remained unchanged. This is a testament to the construction of the image and the agents and myths enrolled and built into it (especially the unique historical association Kilkenny has with cats). In the two phases presented here there was a strong sophisticated design management at work. As the festival progressed through these years the cat association was developed and increasingly used with ease to represent specific subsections of the festival. As the cat logo increased in recognition less and less of the actual logo itself was required to communicate: some advertisements required only two thirds of the face to achieve product-festival association.

The background colour was changed from year to year, from a yellow frame and blended dusk blues in 1995, to red in 1997, and later purple in 1998. This is essentially a re-workable template on to which the main ‘Laughing Cat’ logo can be hung. The background colour then formed the colour theme for the paraphernalia that distinguishes that year from others. (In the second phase the colour theme was changed and fixed at predominantly yellow for ’99, ’00, ’02, with a blue and yellow experiment in ’01 (picture 7g).)

Picture 7a

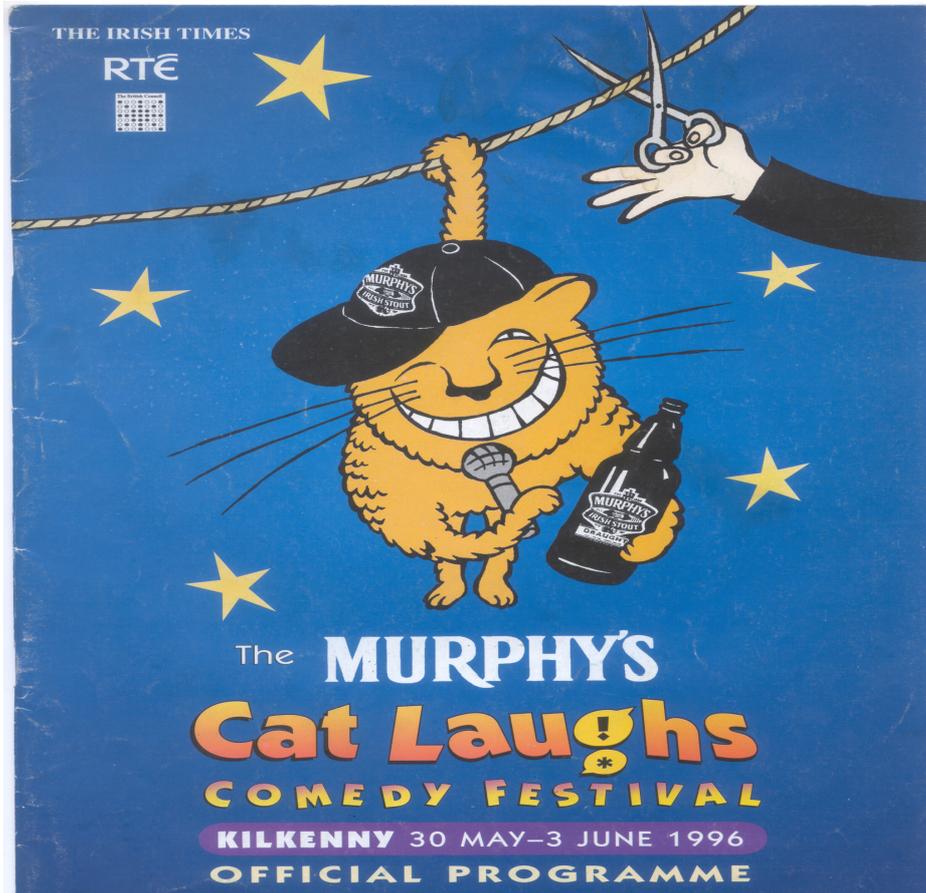


Picture 7a. Source: Official festival programme 1995

In 1995 the comedy festival wasn't sponsored by Murphy's and was instead funded by Guinness. There is no acknowledgement of this on the poster, or in the festival title which simply reads: *The Cat Laughs Comedy Festival* (see picture 7a). The logo created for that

first year was a rough sketch that would sharpen and emerge with changes under the partnership of Murphy's in the second year.

Picture 7b



Picture 7b: Official Programme cover 1996

Although colouration, scale, proportion and clarity leave a lot to be desired, the key components of that original attempt are striking, many of which would remain integral to the icon over the next thirteen years. The smile, round face, and the one-eye-closed/one-eye-open wink are all present thirteen years later, with the smile present on its own on the backing boards of all performance stages.

With the changeover from Guinness to Murphy's, new elements were introduced to the revitalised Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival (see picture 7b and Table 7.2):

- Murphy's Irish stout base ball cap (worn sideways)
- Smiling/laughing Cat face
- Microphone
- Bottle of Murphy's Irish stout
- Tail hanging from rope
- Black sleeved arm for hand with scissors

The Murphy's Irish stout baseball cap was positioned as being worn sideways: the agency of the representation of a baseball cap in itself is tripled as it is A) a modern Barthesian icon of casual American fashion, B) worn sideways it is a popularised indication of roguish, impish and mischievous behaviour in the wearer, and C) contains a secondary brand logo of the main sponsors: Murphy's Irish Stout, manifesting as a logo within a logo icon. Although the bottle of stout is interchangeable with other props to denote other situations, the Murphy's logo on the baseball cap remains.

The Laughing Cat face is modelled on the world famous smiley face, a template that has been 'furred-up', and whiskered, resulting in an unmistakably feline icon. It is this representation that proves to be most recognisable and transferable. Its agency becomes such that only partial representation is required to associate products directly with the festival.

The Microphone is an iconic signifier that has become as significant a symbol to those in the music and entertainment industry as the stethoscope is to doctors. A representation of the object itself the microphone has also been socially imbued with stand-up comedy connotations, and is thusly purposely enrolled as the proverbial tool-of-the-trade to communicate the role of the cat as a comedian. By creating such an association the designers have assembled a network that re-enforces the connection between the Laughing Cat icon and the comedian of the festival.

The bottle of Murphy's Irish stout is the primary product placement. The bottle reinforces the link between the sponsor's product and the festival. Though more susceptible to

change than the Murphy's baseball cap the bottle re-enforces other associations that the festival organisers wish to communicate, namely that of pub-centred socialising, sponsor-product association and sponsor-product consumption.

Table 7.2. Laughing Cat logo agents, classification and consistency of use.

| Agent | Semiotic Classification | Myth: Historic/Modern | Other | Consistency of use |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| Cat Face | Symbolic | ----- | Smiley theme | Phases 1 + 2 |
| Base Ball cap | Index/Iconic | Modern: roguish, informal, | Sponsors Logo placement | Phases 1 + 2 |
| Microphone | Index – stereotype tool of the trade | Modern: stereotype tool of the trade | | Interchangeable: Phase 1, Adaptable |
| Murphy's Bottle | Iconic | ----- | Sponsors product placement | Interchangeable: Phase 1, Adaptable |
| Cat body | Symbolic | ----- | | Interchangeable: Phase 1, Adaptable in phase 2 |
| Rope | Index | Historic: origin of Kilkenny's association with cats | | Phase 1, limited |
| Hand/arm/scissors | Symbolic | Historic/Modern | | Phase 1, limited |

The cat hanging from a rope by its tail is a most location-specific and historically distinct signifier. It is a direct reference to Kilkenny's history and the origin of associating all Kilkenny based sports teams and groups with cats. Though more subtle and less utilised, the rope and tail motif represent the mythic association Kilkenny has with the dark ages, medieval times, and Oliver Cromwell. The reference is to the blood sport practised in the town of stringing two cats together by their tails and suspending them over the street on a rope. The hand with scissors do not in themselves have any agency per se, however the

impending action hinted by their relationship to the rope is a nod to the humour involved in the festival.

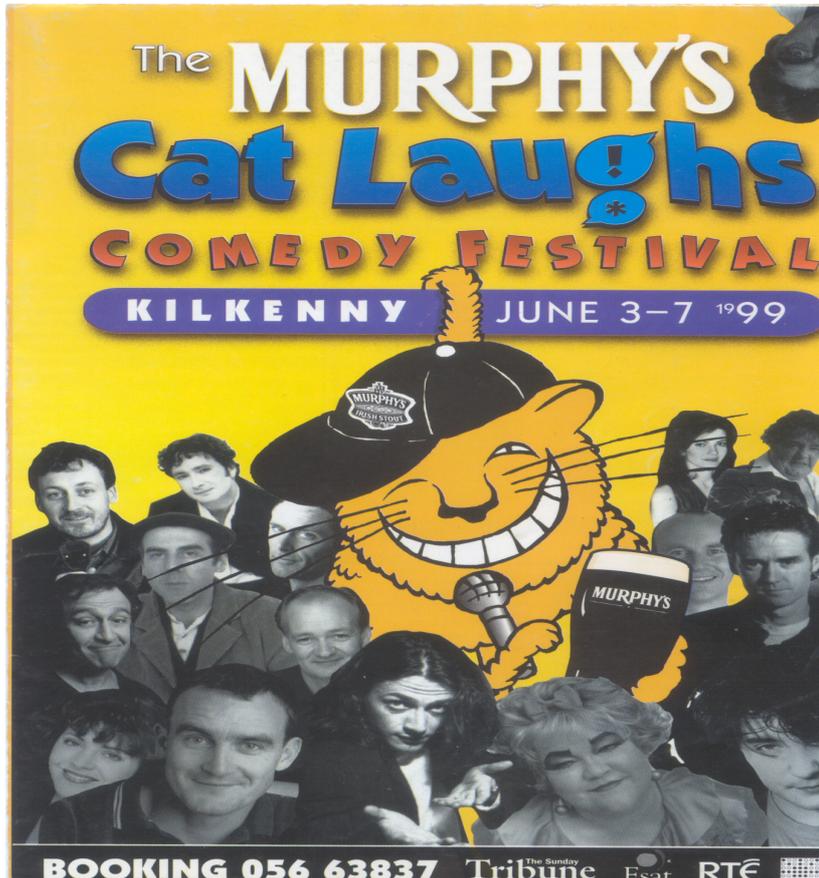
However in 1999 the Cat Laughs brochure took a slightly different approach to the front cover design. The minimalist Laughing Cat cover was altered by the introduction of the photos of 18 of the participating comedians (picture 7c). The enrolment of the comedian collage on the cover swamps the Laughing Cat and dilutes the brands effectiveness. The collage of these black and white studio-shot portfolio photos crowded the main page and was unsuccessful in attracting audiences. Though some of the faces were familiar to prospective audiences through television shows the majority were unknown or not easily recognisable.

Due to the lack of recognition the collage of faces becomes just that: a collage of faces rather than a collage of famous celebrity comedians. As many of the comedians were not popular enough that their faces were instantly recognisable it acted as a disincentive to doubtful potential customers. Where some of the past shows had sold out on the household fame of some of their American guests: Bill Murry '96, George Wentd '97, Dan Castellaneta '97, and the Cast members of *Father Ted*. Other shows relied on word of mouth and strong cult fan bases to Channel 4's "*Whose line is it anyway?*" and BBC 2 shows such as *Have I got News For You?*, *Never Mind the Buzzcocks*, and *The Stand Up Show*. Although these photos would be instantly recognisable to dedicated fans, to those unfamiliar with their programmes they are merely pictures of strangers.

The lack of impact, connotation or recognition was noticeable and they returned to using the cat icon the following year. The inability for the photo collage to mobilise and motivate displayed a serious misjudgement on behalf of the programme designers and a miscalculation on their behalf of what images to enrol, and what their impact would be in the broader network. In trying to portray actual events from the comedy experience the brochure designers chose real-world, rather than abstract, images. Rather than relying solely on the Laughing Cat they opted for something that may appeal more to a wider

audience by displaying the actual acts at the festival – therefore selling the comedians rather than the festival on its own.

Picture 7c



Picture 7c: CLCF Pamphlet cover 1999

Picture 7c: Front: L-R Kathleen Madigan, Jimeoin, Ed Byrne, Kathy Kinney, Dylan Moran.

Middle: Dom Irrera, Mark Doherty, Colin Mochrie, Fred MacAulay, Owen O'Neill, Jason Bryne.

Back: Barry Murphy, Jeff Green, Scott Capurro, Laura Knightlinger, Johnny Vegas, Peter Kay.

This development of new signifiers, new representations and new networks connecting faces from television into a relationship of association with the festival did not have the hoped for success. In fact it acted as a deterrent, flooding the brochure with too many faces diluted the presentation, and the image of the festival, fragmenting it into multiple components that were not able to present a unified experience. It is this same aim to communicate the component parts of a festival that is visible in the fragmented and largely ineffectual KAW imagery and marketing.

The second phase of the Murphy's Cat Laugh Comedy Festival advertising strategy (One 21cm x 29.5cm official programme and yearly 14.4 cm x 21 cm booking/preview pamphlets) simplified the Laughing Cat icon to its most basic component – that of the Laughing Cat face. From 2000 onwards the key branding incorporated nothing more than the face and one or two interchangeable props on secondary pages (see picture 7d). Four partial forms of the face are utilised on varying pages and covers:

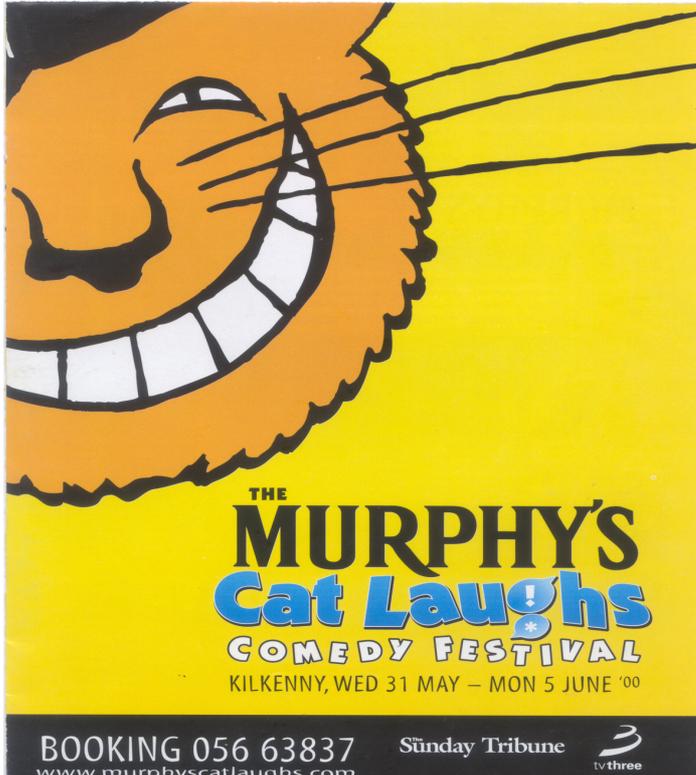
- 1) full face - full cap
- 2) 2/3 face – no cap
- 3) half – face, and
- 4) almost full face in circle.

The brand logo was popular enough to communicate its significance and received recognition. This is displayed in the ability to only use two thirds of the face and yet communicate clearly and effectively the product association and product sponsorship. This was an indication of the brands success when a partial representation delivers the same brand reaction as a full brand representation. The malleability of the partial face meant that the logo could be discreetly embedded in sponsor backgrounds, informational backgrounds and even incorporated into stage sets and stage backgrounds without overshadowing other images (picture 7d).

Interviews indicated that studies undertaken by ODM had revealed that between its debut in 1995 and 1999 the festivals brand had achieved almost complete recognition with the key disposable income demographic of 18 – 25 year olds. This not only reflects the success of the advertising campaign but also the agency of the brand itself and its development into an icon. Furthermore gender, sexuality and ethnic analysis of the icon revealed no negative readings of such an abstract, cartoon-like branding. Though initial Laughing Cat posters were criticised in the *Kilkenny People* for holding the Murphy's bottle these incidents did not stem solely from a concerned reading that the posters would infer that alcohol was necessary to enjoy comedy. Although this is a valid reading of the

festival posters, these concerns were voiced by those known to have vested interests in the Irish distilleries brewing group.

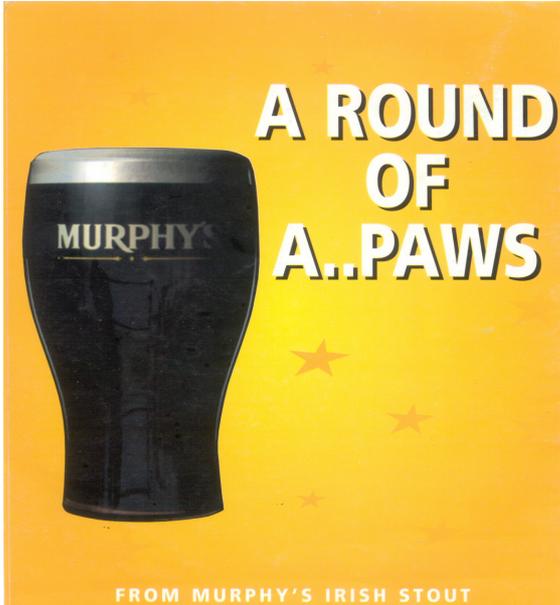
Picture 7d



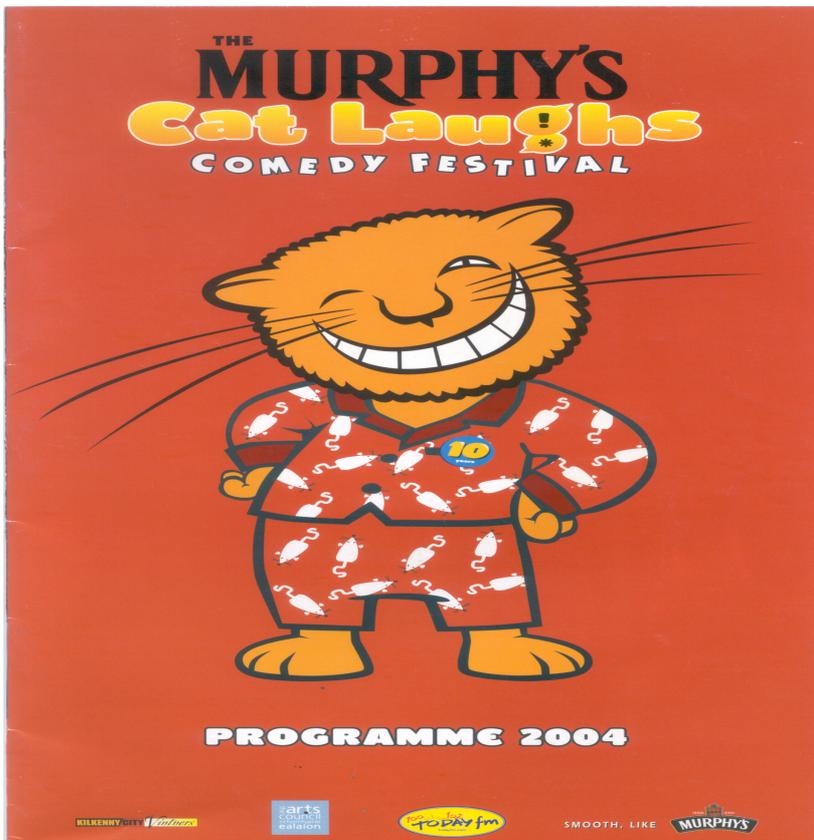
Picture 7d: Official poster 2000

In creating the Laughing Cat, the designers constructed a successful marketing vehicle. This is yet another 'cat' to further re-enforce that place-specific situated association Kilkenny has to cats, and develop this mythic relationship further with puns and slogans such as cat's got the cream (picture 7g), a round of A..PAWS (picture 7e), and the cats' pyjamas (picture 7h).

Picture 7e



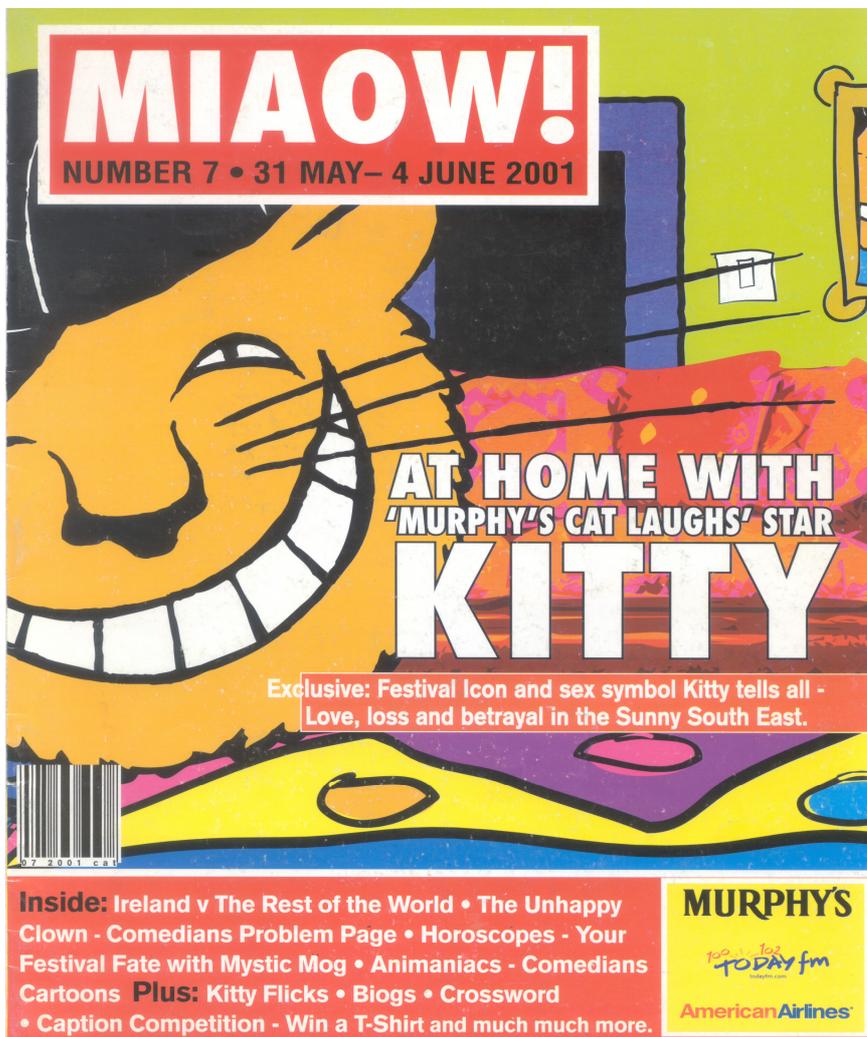
Picture 7e: CLCF Sponsor product promotion poster 2001-2



Picture 7h: CLCF official festival souvenir programme 2004

This cat-related imagining is taken further as throughout the brochure texts and assorted paraphernalia cat references are frequent and prevalent. In 2001 the festival programme took the form of a *HELLO*-type magazine called MIAOW, in which the festival brand was dubbed 'Kitty' (picture 7f). The professionalised marketing of the CLCF had created an icon.

Picture 7f



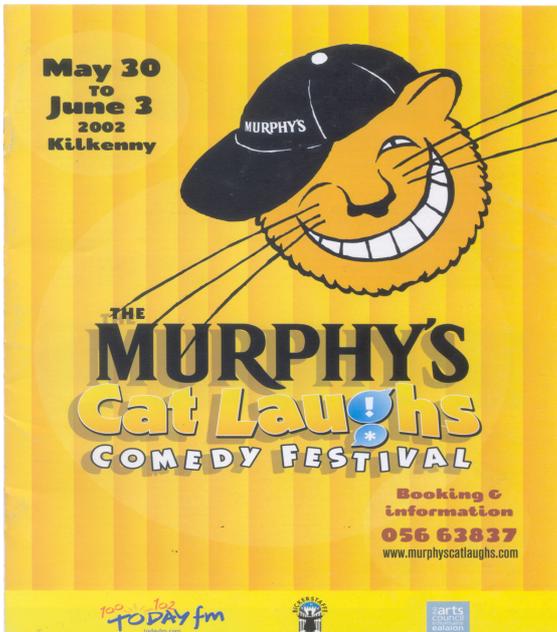
Picture 7f: Hello magazine style souvenir programme 2001

Picture 7g



Picture 7g: CLCF festival pamphlet back and front 2001

Picture 7i



Picture 7i: CLCF festival pamphlet 2002

7.2.1.2 The Website

The CLCF website was fully embraced in 2000 and received 130,000^{lxx} hits in the three weeks it operated before the festival that year. The introduction of the website had numerous repercussions on the marketing and experience of attending the festival. Laden with links, competitions, puns, maps, accommodation information and booking information the website was much more than a two-dimensional information site. The site acted as a coordinator for customers and a one-stop-shop for future CLCF attendees^{lxxi}. It included accommodation contacts, timetables, venue details, comedian histories and blurbs, credit card booking facilities, sponsors links, information on Kilkenny including maps and much more. The site provided a facility whereby the potential customer could organise every facet of their festival experience from their computer. The site provided an email address and phone numbers where any concerns that were not covered on the website could be addressed. It provided such services as downloadable and printable timetables (and therefore portable) and an uncomplicated subscription for acquiring free festival brochures. Where past audiences may have had to go to great lengths to book and plan their weekend away, with the comedy festival website they now had access to all of the necessary information in one site.

Staff utilised the website themselves to order their own organisation and planning strategies. Due to some of the staff's intense connection to the site any navigation errors or broken links were discovered immediately and dealt with it. This site predated Kilkenny council's own site and was ahead of any competition sites within the county including the Kilkenny tourism agencies and the hotel sites. Designed professionally by a Cork based web design company the award winning site became a flagship example of how the internet could be used to promote Kilkenny and its tourism projects.

7.2.2 External promotion

A decision made by the committee that had enormous impact on the external promotion of the festival was the exclusion of awards^{lxxii}, media pressure and other comic-industry trappings. By creating a no-media-hype zone around the performers, the organisers effectively ensured the continued participation of those comedians who wished to relax. The exclusion of media-industry pressure was welcomed with relief by most comedians and rapidly communicated within the comic fraternity. The exclusion of television cameras also ensured that control remained directly with the organisers:

Television companies tend to take over when they become involved and start setting the agenda so they won't be coming here (No T.V. for Cats, The Kilkenny People, page 1, July 1995.)

As a consequence, while the comedy festivals based in Montreal and Edinburgh became the hunting ground for new industry-talent, the CLCF remained free of said complications. While other festivals were transforming from a series of stand-up performances into one long series of job interviews (where the previously good natured atmosphere became dominated by large American networks interested in developing comics into the next big money spinner^{lxxiii}) the CLCF retained its appeal for performers. In announcing that there were to be no awards, no broadcasts, no scouts and no intrusive media, the organisers were advertising a busman's holiday to comedians who wished to let their hair down. By dedicating the first year to the memory of the American comedian Bill Hicks (1961-1994) they were making a statement that many comedians appreciated.

I mean, you know, I just knew that if we just got the quality right that the rest would follow the atmosphere, which is important to any festival. I knew that if you kept television away and you kept awards away, I knew that the comedians would have an extra special feeling coming and playing Kilkenny (Richard Cook).

One external advertisement node that disappointed Cook in its inability to promote the festival to his satisfaction was the Kilkenny network of tourism agencies and tourism council networks. The organisation of tourism agencies within Kilkenny was fragmented, lacked accountability, and was in a state of constant crisis-management. Their approach and structures weren't compatible with what Cook intended for the comedy festival. Miscommunications lead to various misunderstandings. An apparent lack of foresight, vision and ambition created obstacles in the formation of a working relationship between Cook and the disorganised and ad hoc tourism operators. The following passages are excerpts from an interview with Richard Cook, where he expresses the frustration he felt towards the lack of cohesive promotional bodies in Kilkenny:

No. I mean, to be honest with you, ...Cat Laughs does not have a relationship with any of the Tourist Councils. I mean, apart from the poor, beleaguered and besieged local Tourist Office, which just gets inundated all the time with calls and information requests and I mean, I've written letters. I, in the first year we got money from the Tourism Council and we really needed it, though we've needed it every year, really, genuinely needed it.

I think there's a sense, like, the Tourism Council are an odd bunch really, I mean there's so many, It seems to me that all the Tourism bodies are fuckers to some extent. I mean they're there to serve interests. The City and the County and who wants this and who wants that I mean I'm under no illusions in my own head as to what the Cat Laughs has done for Tourism in Kilkenny and also for the image of Kilkenny ... but the Tourism Council for whatever reason, you know, you approach it publicly and they say "Oh no we're fully supportive of this festival" i.e. Cat Laughs, but really, you know, they don't really understand it. They don't get it. They're not really, I mean they know it brings in a lot of people but you know, and I've made presentations to various tourism bodies but I've actually lost. You know? It seems to me that it's a fucker because its got people representing counties and you know even the county that Cat Laughs is good for the City but not very good for the County and you know it's just a lack of vision.

But it seems pretty obvious to me that you know these people should be sitting down with me and talking about an integrated strategy that incorporates, in a serious way, what myself and Lynn and Michael are doing with regard to this festival in Kilkenny because it attracts just thousands of people, not only nationally but Internationally. ... I really have very little time for any of these Tourist Bodies. I just I don't even think about them I just get on with what I do and if they want to piggy-back what I'm doing, I'm delighted. ... I mean they can do that, it doesn't bother me but I mean, I yea, we applied to one of the bodies this year for funding and we just said maybe they could contribute to the marketing budget that we have and I don't think we even got a reply (Richard Cook).

The last major impacting element in the external promotion network was the impact that two music magazines had; New Musical Express (NME) and Hot Press. As with all festivals word of mouth is a vital component. In every festival studied, word of mouth is the single biggest promotional network. Word of mouth can make or break a festival. But in its first year the CLCF attracted an extra indefinable, and often illusive, component to its word of mouth network: *cool*. The CLCF's reputation grew in the usual networks of attendee's, and target market fans, but the festival found itself receiving 'rave reviews' from key trend-setting magazines and papers like NME and Hot Press. NME had been represented by journalists known to Cook who extended their stay in Kilkenny to cover the entire last night. They were so impressed that they compared it 'in bragging rights' to being at the first Beatles gig in the Cavern, or one of U2's first performances. This unexpectedly brought an extra dimension to the usual word of mouth network. The 'were you there' reception of the first festival in these key magazines earned the festival a special level of social and cultural currency:

Already rated the world's number one comedy festival (Edinburgh Evening News)

The Cat Laughs Festival has been wild, wonderful and completely unforgettable (Irish Independent)

Cat laughs was a triumph ...and please, Mr. Organiser make Cat Laughs an annual event. We've had a blast (The Irish Times)

Although these phrases look ridiculous the strength of the endorsement from these sources increased the festivals' popularity and the peer value (badges of experience) to be gained with attending. These short reviews are the staple of a comedians PR machine. Such over-endorsements catapulted the festival to instant cult status. Word of mouth alone does not guarantee the acceptance of a festival as cool. People will be aware of it, yet not attend. By endorsing the CLCF in such fevered tones the NME and Hot Press articles wooed the potential audience members who wished to be perceived as being with the "in crowd". This added greatly to the festival's agency in the second year.

7.2.2.2 The Kilkenny People Newspaper

Over the course of the first seven years (1995 – 2001) the CLCF was continuously promoted throughout the month preceding the festival and for 2-3 weeks after. Almost every article was printed on page four – the weekly theatre and arts page – with exceptions occurring in issues immediately before and after the bank holiday weekend (front-page column and photo, and special interest pieces, see table 7.3).

Table 7.3 Cat Laughs coverage in The Kilkenny People '95 to '01

| Year | # Articles | #Page 1 articles | # Page 2 articles/columns | #Page 4 articles | #Other page articles | Negative articles | # studio photos | # non-studio photos | # other semi-related articles |
|------|------------|------------------|---------------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| '95 | 19 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 7 | - | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| '96 | 11 | 5 | 1 | 5 | - | Page 1 | 9 | - | - |
| '97 | 13 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 2** | Page 2 Page 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| '98 | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|---|---|---|-----|---|---|---|---|
| '99 | 6 | | | | 6 | | 3 | 4 | |
| '00* | 11 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 4** | - | - | 5 | - |
| '01 | 5 | | | | 5** | | 1 | 7 | |

*Festival coverage over shadowed by possibility of Kilkenny losing its city charter. Kilkenny People undergoes new layout and management changes.

** denotes presence of at least one full-page article.

The first year coverage focused on the newness of the festival, and the novelty value of the visiting celebrities. In 1995 a total of nine articles were dedicated to the festival: the earliest is in the April 14th issue and deals with the set up of the festival, and features a photo of George Wendt (Norm from *Cheers*) signing the Kilkenny visitors book while surrounded by festival committee members, the mayor and county enterprise board members^{lxxiv}. The majority of the articles are a stitching together of the agent-written blurbs^{lxxv}, which although informative do not actually communicate any jokes. They communicate how recognised, popular and successful the comedian is, yet do not actually show how witty the comedian's material is. Another approach revolves around the use of the agent-approved and selected resume photos (the majority of which involve the comedian 'gurning' and trying to appear whacky, intense or otherwise interesting). Studio-quality comedian headshots are scattered throughout the issues in the week immediately before the festival, without any articles, without any blurbs, and only accompanied by the name of the comedian (and perhaps nationality). The photo's are not accompanied by show times or booking details. As the years progress (until 2001) it becomes apparent that the writers have become accustomed and even bored by the festival resulting in the coverage of the festival becoming quite pedestrian and repetitive.

This was noticed by some comics who proceeded to highlight weak or ill conceived commentary within issues of the Kilkenny People as a means to connect with the audience. This approach was so successful that a two-hour show was formalised and '*Kilkenny Exposed*' became one of the cornerstone shows of the festival. In each show issues of the *Kilkenny People* were reviewed and lambasted, thus the paper becomes an

integral part of the festival it itself was promoting. Articles printed about the festival after the establishment of the *Kilkenny Exposed* shows were more careful in their reporting of the festival. An obvious effort was clearly being made to remove misunderstandings and prevent any comedian finding ammunition within the festival related articles. (Unfortunately certain place names within the county of Kilkenny will always provide easy targets -Muckrage, Kilmaganny, Kilmacow. For example, an article on a perceived drug problem in Piltown was well abused by Johnny Vegas.)

After 2001 a unique relationship dynamic develops as the position of *The Kilkenny People* as reviewer is subverted by the *Kilkenny Exposed* shows where issues of the paper are reviewed by those under review from the paper and their reviews of the papers reviews are then reported. This distorted the relevance of tracking the coverage post 2001.

7.3 Organisation

The organisation running the CLCF was embracing new technologies and managerial techniques years before any comment, mandate, or request from any official (or unofficial) funding agency was issued. Its operating systems were ahead of all its peers and contemporaries. Its management structures were groundbreaking for the region of Kilkenny. Its ability to resist pressure from the most influential of local and global actors, and survive, is testament to the character of the actors involved. With offices (and key actors) based in London and Los Angeles this festival wasn't just *international* in its marketing but in its organisation and structure. And all of this came from a man whom no one (whether a business, tourism or festival network operator) had heard of before the third year of the CKF.

7.3.1 Management

Although the management and volunteer networks put in place for the organisation and delivery of the CLCF were highly defined and compartmentalised there are overlaps and

interconnections everywhere. In both theory and reality the compartmentalisation of the festival organisation was well performed and maintained but overlaps still occurred. Mobile phone calls merged office space with backstage space, linked performers and stage managers to outsiders and insiders alike. Mobile communication linked those with queries to those with answers, breaking down the old communication barriers between those in the office and those 'on the ground' working in festival venues and contact points. Leadership was as reliant on coordination as it was on charisma. Coordination could now occur instantaneously on an international scale at levels unavailable to previous festival co-ordinators. Coordination and organisation of the festival became easier with the increased range of communication technologies available to organisers.

However, many threads depart and converge simultaneously making the creation of a linear timeline unreflective of how much was happening at once and how those involved were coping with the deluge. The role of various individuals, communication devices and time zones created new headaches and problems at the same time as they helped solve obstacles. In providing extra communication potentials new technology opened up the coordination range of the festival committee to an international market on a scale never dreamed of by the organisers of the KBF (1964) or KAW (1974).

7.3.1.1. Coordination

Internally the committee were very quick to adopt coordination systems and practises that they were familiar with from their own professions. Email was incorporated from the first experimental days of committee selection. Mobile phones were adopted even though the technology was cumbersome and more expensive in 1995. Memos and the confederation festival approach to distributing minutes and festival information was adopted and improved on through email as the technology became more common place. Many committee members worked together in the Bickerstaff theatre company and others socialised with each other on a regular basis. The closeness of the committee was reminiscent of the bond the original KAW committee shared but was supported by strong structures and a rigid compartmentalisation based on experience and ability and a

separation of festival director, festival administrator, and the financial organisation of the festival. The high level of professionalism displayed in the coordination and assembly of the first year committee reflected well on the committee selection.

External coordination with other Kilkenny festivals post 1999 was positive and facilitated greatly by the close proximity of agents, actants and actors to each other in the region (Brown, O'Connor et al. 2000). It was a web of overlapping and intertwined networks which flourished in the artistic institutional thickness in Kilkenny. When asked if the comedy committee interacted and co-ordinated with other Kilkenny festivals Cook responded enthusiastically:

Do the Cat Laughs and Arts Week [coordinate]? Oh all the time. We know each other for a start on a social level. For instance Arts week will be borrowing our phone system. The production manager we share - Michael Burke. He'll be using his office, which basically we pay for in terms of The Cat Laughs. We share loads, anything that we could physically share, we would share and it just makes sense. We will work out of the same office but in a way that's something that hasn't occurred by design, its just the way it happened and it's probably good to have because effectively we are doing two separate things. I mean Maureen Keneally worked for a short time with Kay, ...during the Arts festival worked for a short time with Alister ... it was all over the shop. I think in a city the size of Kilkenny that's bound to happen. (Richard Cook)

Coordination between the many tourism networks in Kilkenny was not successfully managed but this situation changed with new re-structuring systems within the promotional networks and agencies in Kilkenny. The re-ordering of internal communications within the Kilkenny county tourism network lead to improvements in their funding distribution, promotional coordination and communication with agencies such as the comedy festival. While tourism agencies within Kilkenny were having difficulties communicating and co-ordinating on a county scale, the CLCF was operating globally. Coordination within the festival became more international in 1998 than any of

the previous Kilkenny festivals, as it maintained *two full time offices in Kilkenny and Los Angeles, plus advisors in London* (William Cook, Official Festival programme, 1998, p.1). The comedy festival was designed to be more professional and more coordinated than previous Kilkenny events. It also began with an international contingent of comics and committee members. Where other committees were heavily manned and all concentrated on one geographical area, the cat laughs committee had American members from the beginning; this committee was spatially broader than any other Kilkenny festival committee had been before, and barring some first year mis-communications^{lxxvi} this first year committee was able to function over a distance of thousands of miles to coordinate the participation of over twenty acts. With the aid of conference phone calls, speaker phones, emails and faxes Cook and McCarthy communicated regularly without any face-to-face contact time. Missed calls were captured on answering machines and saved on tape, written on message pads and passed through office and home networks. New managerial technologies were utilised intensely to coordinate between the two men, each using their own brand of charisma and business technologies and people skills to secure participants on their respective side of the Atlantic. Both operated independently in the acquisition of prized signatures but full communication was maintained through out. This relationship is discussed further in the committee formation section.

Coordination among stage managers and ground staff was achieved through various means depending on the scale of the venue and the venues capacity and facilities: those working the Watergate Theatre had *cans*^{lxxvii} while those working smaller performances relied on hand signals and mouthing words. All of those ground staff interviewed stated that they were always fully informed of what was happening on the night provided they turned up on time. They were fully briefed on times, audience numbers, tasks to be done and the requirements of the comedians.

The traditional red light was used to communicate between stage manager and comedians, flashing briefly when five minutes are left and then constantly for the last minute of the set. This is the standard practise as shows are coordinated to allow audience members attend as many performances in on night as they wish. Acts must also be

coordinated within the show to ensure each comedian receives the full amount of time they are scheduled to perform^{lxxviii}. Discretion and improvisation are used by stage managers when enforcing time limits: stage managers running venues without a red light facility resort to maglites and red cards, and when these devices were unsuccessful or purposefully ignored, music and lights are turned on or the show's master of ceremonies (MC) is sent on to intervene.

Lastly, as already discussed, in 1999 the Cat Laughs Website was launched. Coordinating accommodation contacts, timetables, venue details, comedian histories and blurbs, credit card booking facilities, sponsors links, information on Kilkenny including maps and much more the site provided a facility whereby the potential customer could organise every facet of their festival experience from their computer. Additionally staff used the site to co-ordinate among themselves.

7.3.1.2 Leadership

As with the KBF and CKF, the CLCF had a very prominent figurehead in Richard Cook. Cook embraced this role as it freed-up other important actors to handle tasks while unwanted yet necessary media/public relations attentions focussed on Cook. Two of the actors that were freed-up were Lynn Cahill and Fergus Cronin. The former was the official festival producer who managed the ground troops and venues. The later organised the organisers and the organisation itself. There wasn't as many stories or images of these two compared to the amount of stories about Cook. Every staff member has a Cook story, but most volunteers never met Fergus Cronin. There are a number of Lynn Cahill stories but they are centred on her role as venue coordinator. Other leader figures have emerged at various junctures but none have had such an impact on the festival as these three, and none more so than Cook.

Cook's leadership role falls into three categories: pre-festival, festival and post-festival. His pre-festival role adheres somewhat to the ideas of Law's deconstruction fairy (1996) that are thought of when performing the role of Director: if you remove his phone, his

computer with its statistics, files, numbers, email etc. you lessen the director greatly. He does make phone calls, and he does connect people to other people, arrange meetings and make more phone calls. But he is not an administrator, and he is not a manager of local resources. He doesn't *do* statistics. He is an amazing communicator and utilises all communication devices at his disposal to do so. Cook is also a risk taker, and as such the idea of the *cowboy-hero* (Law 1994, p. 65) describes his management style: *they are effective because they have the knack, the luck or the capacity to make good decisions – decisions that will attract resources and keep the show on the road.* (Law 1994, p. 65) Cook's style is greatly complimented and enabled by the communication devices at his disposal.

During the festival Cook performs almost completely outside of the office. His mobile phone is his relay point to the office (and the information networks operating or reporting there) or his next contact. Cook performs the role of hands-on festival manager bereft of burdensome trappings: There is no restrictive space, or performance of restriction between him, staff, comedians, locals and audience. There is no ceremony or pretension to meetings with venue managers, pub owners, venue owners, comedians who are not on the programme, tourists, media interviewers, or other interviewers. Cook represents a visual statement of control. He is witnessed as he works, makes decisions, helps move seats, organises lifts and mechanics for stranded performers/guests, he is overheard explaining what the next step is to staff on the other end of the phone. His movements are observed and observable. He has even introduced some of the shows garbed in a flamboyantly loud shirt or t-shirt, jeans and runners. These factors indicate a manager operating in the field, marshalling the troops and co-ordinating from the street, without the trappings of what most would consider a director to have, both in tools and appearance.

By relaying with the office he is able to attend to whatever the latest crisis appears to be. *And the more carefully he does this, the more he depends on his information. And the more he depends on his information, the less autonomous his decision making becomes* (Law 1994, p. 66). As true as this dilution of autonomy appears to be, it does not dilute

the leadership qualities that Cook represents and displays. He performs the roles of efficient manager, able public speaker, honest and effective negotiator, and friendly welcoming face with ease, and more importantly, without restriction. Neither does he over-perform his importance. No anecdotal evidence or exaggerated narratives of excessive displays of self-importance, or arrogance were encountered over the course of the interviewing process. Here it appears that we have an actual example of Laws deconstructed manager (Law 1994, p. 142). Though he does have a mobile phone filtering all of the functions of his office to his attention, it is not an active unit. It only communicates to him when the office requires it, and almost completely on their initiation. He has complete autonomy from the office until the office require him to make a judgement call. They activate his phone to communicate with him. He remains independent and is there to assist them while dealing face to face with other glitches in the network. Although he does require their assessment to make his decision it is not done in a vacuum: those on the other end of the line are known to him, are trusted by him and he knows that they wouldn't bother him if it wasn't urgent. He has empowered them to be in the position they are in. This as not a dilution of his autonomy, it is instead a confirmation of his leadership that those he selects to support him can do so with minimal fuss or surveillance from him.

Post-festival Cook stands back and leaves those with administrative and accounting duties to complete their tasks without distraction. He may be called upon for some media end-of-festival reviews, or to deliver a final thank you to exceptional contributors or participants. He is still held as the director, and the top rung in the hierarchy, but he is under no illusion to his accounting and ordering skills and has full confidence in those assembled to handle them. This is a manager who knows when to manage and displays this knowledge, and also knows when to allow those enrolled to do something to do it.

Lynn Cahill (Cook's second-in-command both in the CLCF and in the Bickerstaff Theatre company^{lxxix}) is a founder of the Bickerstaff Theatre company and is a visible festival figure. Cahill's people skills, theatre training and organisational skills complement Cooks range of abilities and reinforce his constant efforts to improve and

expand the festival but her manner is calmer *with a touch of strictness* (Multiple interviewees). Cahill provides experience in live performance management, the logistics of volunteer mobilisation and an acute sense of what acts will be successful and where to stage them. Ironically Cahill may have a plethora of skills, information networks, and contacts at her disposal but this is not where her mark within the festival is made: Cahill has become the sterner force of the Cook/Cahill team. Although not as visible as Cook to the festival going public, Cahill makes her mark with the volunteers and staff managers.

Where Cooks' energy and flamboyant shirts have a striking visual impact, it is Cahill's stern, strict, no-nonsense manner (whether projected, affected, or actual) that delivers what is required of the team or venue staff she is attached to. Lynn Cahill is not an example of Law's (1994, p.61-6) cowboy-hero, that position well and truly belongs to Richard Cook. But Lynn Cahill is not one of Law's Civil Servant figures, nor does she fit the Hero-scientist mould (p. 69) or manager-cowboy (p.69) and neither is her role that of some Sheriff's deputy. Lynn Cahill's role is that of Stage Manager. She is stage manager of a five day long show set on a city-wide stage. Her role follows the stereotype of what a stage manager does: ordering the stage, ordering props, ordering backstage crew, ordering offstage cast, ordering lights, ordering extra elements the show may need, and acting as a buffer and translator between cast and director. Stage managers are often required to order and ground the more outlandish ideas and inspirations of the director (be they *Hero-cowboy*, *Hero-scientist* or *Unworldly visionary* Law 1994, p.69) and translate them into real-world achievable goals. Cahill is the practical influence that grounds the dreamer in Cook.

7.3.1.3. Evaluation and Planning

The committee's constant approach to evaluation processes is quite remarkable: venues, staff, comics, events, systems, software, images, web design, ticket distribution, timetable layout, support structures, mobile phone network coverage and customer feedback (including the actual methods of feedback) are scrutinised post-festival every year. The evaluation process ensures that standards remain high and that the festival remains fresh.

New festival events are evaluated, tweaked, and then re-interpreted. Ideas are evaluated for impact, economic sustainability and novelty/durability factors. If some elements do not work they are dropped or replaced. No matter how many elements are duplicated, every night presents new experiences for audience, comic and festival organisers. Festival years that coincide with significant sporting or social phenomena have a different additional factor that other years lack. These additional factors are often factored in by the festival organisers and the success of impromptu events assessed with designs to include it in the next festival (or next time the festival coincides with the bigger events). Local political elections and other incidents create opportunities that may not be repeated yet events designed to incorporate these current novelties are well received. The success of these once-offs and their reception are always carefully monitored for potential re-working. Key examples of the festival committees approach to evaluating, adjusting and retaining of previous successes include their FIFA World Cup commentary shows, the Kilkenny exposed shows, the Kilkenny tour bus and the Johnny Vegas pottery experience.

Shows and events are not the only elements of the festival that are under evaluation. The lack of impact from the 1999 brochure campaign triggered a re-working of the poster/brochure campaign. The committee approach towards evaluation also includes the changing of managerial software, timetabling software, office location, box office location and venue use. The festival committee also constantly evaluates the processes, systems, and managerial technologies of other festivals. Richard Cook and many of the first year committee had experience with the CKF and brought their assessment of what worked and what didn't (and what actors were required to make it work).

7.3.1.4. Human Resources

Now the detail of how they actually operated I'm not quite sure but you can see it's a very sharp, well run operation. Highly creative approach you know, so it's history really from there. (Tony Walsh)

All of those involved in the festival have their own narratives. Some claimed that they had nothing better to do, others claimed an addiction (Gomart and Hennion, 1999) to the 'buzz' resulting from the backstage chaos. Others said that they were conscripted because of what they bring to a committee. The number of humans recruited, enrolled, bullied, invited or bribed to join the festival, at different stages, is in the hundreds. Yet of this number not all of them played vital roles. As interviews were sifted through, four key human resource ordering devices became noticeable. These were: the Committee, Michael McCarthy, the Lisa Richards Agency and the Ground Staff. To understand how Richard Cook had access to so many notable and capable actors willing and able to organise and run a comedy festival, key components have to be understood: CKF, Richard Cook's role as director of Bickerstaff, his role as a director of the Lisa Richards Agency, and Richard Cook's networking with Michael McCarthy. These laid the foundations for the networks and links which Cook utilised to enrol and assemble the festival committee on a local and international level.

During the CKF Cook worked with some of the most influential actors within Kilkenny Tourism and business development arenas including Tony Walsh, Eamon Langton, Pat Crotty and Paddy Friel. Multiple chance encounters took place that would later become vital for the formation of the CLCF committee. These encounters opened many doors and avenues, providing connections and networks that Richard Cook would need, and use, to develop the festival. Through the CKF Cook would meet many of his first year committee including Fergus Cronin, solicitor Brian Kiely, Vincent O'Shea, and Siobhan O'Dwyer. With these factors set in place the CLCF became a remarkably professional and well-developed product from an early stage. The festival committee selection was highly informal and reminiscent of the original 1974 KAW, however it did not allow for hangers-on or sympathy selections. The committee were chosen on their skill and managerial abilities, their ability to operate within organisations and solve problems. This was a significant departure from the style of selection utilised by the KAW and KBF. No resource keepers or gatekeepers were selected or enrolled. The hierarchy of the festival was highly structured with artistic direction, venue management and fund raising well defined and compartmentalised. The committee was an example of business efficiency

and professional production techniques, and though the festival was not a financial and organisational success immediately, its new format proved realistic, workable and popular.

Well the committee was really a de facto committee, it wasn't, I met Vincent O'Shea, I knew a little bit, but I met him through Fergus Cronin who's a good friend of mine and Vinnie wasn't working on anything at the time and he suggested that Vinnie come and work on the finances or just help with me and myself and Vinnie were just kind of hand -in-glove on the first festival and then we had an administrator of Bickerstaff called Donna McCreevy, they're now married, Vinnie & Donna, and she was working on Bickerstaff and Clare Watson who's a friend of my sister's who I've known who's now head of Genetic Concern so, well she's was always an incredible go-getter and she's a remarkably organised woman and, 'cause I'm not particularly, I mean I have my own logic and my own way of organising myself but you needed someone like her and Vinnie to really batten things down. I mean the first festival really was just me selecting a load of British stand-up comedians and Michael McCarthy selecting a load of American stand-up comedians.....Annie.....Emo Philips who's a friend of his and also a star, not a huge star here but certainly a star, a small star, if there's such a thing, but he put, sent me improvisers and George [Wendt] and really, once they were selected it was just a question of organising from there on in and it was absolute mayhem I mean, it was looking back on it of course it was a wonderful time.
(Richard Cook)

Well, my first involvement in Cat Laughs was about ... the first year it was on, I lent a hand with some of the stuff that was going on that year. Second year I took on the role of managing the finances for the festival and did that for 3 years and left it in good hands ... I knew Richard Cook, basically I just worked with him on a friendly basis. (F. Cronin)

Most notable is the spatial distribution of the committee and the lack of resource gatekeepers: Michael McCarthy was operating from the USA, and none of the core committee were chosen for their ability to deliver on key resources but their managerial and professional skills and abilities. Michael McCarthy is singled out as he is the gateway to attracting and negotiating with American stars and is, in himself, an asset and resource. The American stand-up comic and graduate of Chicago's *The Second City*^{lxxx} provided the necessary overseas connections and networks to incorporate big American stars and comedians in to support and headline the festival. Through Michael McCarthy bigger stars such as George Wendt (Norm from *Cheers*), Bill Murray (*Ghostbusters* I 1984, *Scrooged* 1988, *Groundhog day* 1993, *Lost in Translation* 2003.), Dan Castellaneta (better known as the voice of *Homer Simpson*), Dom Irrera, (Oprah, Leno, Letterman, *Seinfeld*) and Rich Hall/Ottis Lee Chrenshaw. Through his connections with The Second City in Chicago, McCarthy was also able to approach new talents and encourage them to come to Kilkenny. Richard Cook frequently expresses his amazement at how McCarthy operates and how many people he is able to contact and communicate with.

McCarthy and the CLCF committee are also extremely diligent in all tax and VAT dealings with foreign artists. Software and committee members work together to ensure that all artists are appropriately documented, paid, compensated and accommodated. The process for applying and relaying tax information is professionally accounted and checked through both Michael McCarthy's office and the Kilkenny office. These forms and their subsequent copies are processed through emails, faxes, forms and copies. Although McCarthy is key as a gatekeeper and node for all of the festivals American imports and promotional exports he may be even more important in his role of ambassador as he was also responsible for introducing Richard Cook to improvisational comedy and stand up comedy:

I met Michael [McCarthy] in 199...., I'm so bad on dates, I think it was 1991 or 2, maybe 1991 and he was a graduate, a recent graduate of The Second City of Chicago.....I was working in the Gaiety School of Acting, [Michael McCarthy] was with his wife, on a honeymoon and he dropped in and said "Can I give a

class on comedy improvisation?" and I asked Joe Dowling who's the Director who knew The Second City well, said "absolutely, bring him in". He came in for about two hours - it was one of the funniest two hours I had ever spent there and I just suddenly thought I don't know anything about The Second City and I didn't know anything about comedy improvisation, how it worked, so at the end of that we kind of kept in touch and the following year I produced a show of his and a colleague called Greg Holloman and they did a show in the fringe of The Dublin Theatre Festival called The Rick Show which went O.K., not great, but afterwards, but our friendship kind of persisted, or continued through that and then I just kept talking about this idea of a comedy festival and he got enthusiastic about it, he's a friend of George Wendt, and after that he was a crucial link really because if we hadn't got George Wendt the first year we wouldn't have got as much coverage as we got and he also was a friend of Joe Murray who's Bill Murray's brother so Michael, I think the American input to the comedy festival has always given its kind of, its exotic nature and a certain degree of its magic and we would never have grown as quickly, in fact, it just wouldn't have been what it is were it not for Michael - a crucial element (Richard Cook).

Michael McCarthy and his improvisational comedy partner, Mark Beltzman, were invited by Richard Cook to perform in the CKF in 1994. Unfortunately through a series of events the show never materialised as Beltzman was offered a part in a movie (Billy Madison, 1995) and departed. McCarthy was left to walk around Kilkenny for a week, exploring its venues and sights, and running improvisation workshops. It was during this time that Richard Cook began to suggest the idea of an actual comedy festival to McCarthy. By the end of the week a loose strategy had been suggested and preliminary feelers were sent out seeking American comics interested in performing in Ireland. With McCarthy orchestrating and ordering the U.S. side of the operation Cook enrolled the Lisa Richards Agency to assist with ordering the Irish contingent of performers.

Comedians employ agents to plan their tours, select dates and venues, promotional appearances on shows and any other public relations work that the industry requires. In

hiring these agents the comedians effectively enrolls all of the managerial technologies at the agent's disposal. The agent structures the comedian's booking to be competitive, efficient and effective. Appearances are scheduled over mobile phones and faxes. Contracts, agreements, record deals, air times and venue timetable schedules converge and are compared until a common opportunity is agreed upon.

Hence the role of the Lisa Richards Agency is quite important. Formed by Richard Cook and his sister, Lisa, in 1989, the Lisa Richards agency represents many prominent Irish actors (Colin Farrell and Cillian Murphy to name but two), voice-over artists, authors, playwrights, directors and comedians. The agency employs a staff of nine people and includes Fergus Cronin among their directors. Based in Dublin the agency is a pivotal actor in its nodal capacity of connecting the CLCF director Richard Cook with some of the top comedians in Ireland. The list of comedians represented by the agency, and therefore connected to the Cat Laughs through Cook includes many festival regulars including Cooks' wife, Pauline McLynn (Mrs Doyle from *Father Ted*), Barry Murphy, Owen O'Neil, Ristead Cooper, and Deirdre O' Kane.

7.3.1.5. Non-Human Resources

The following outlines the truly cowboy-heroic outcomes from the discussions over financing and sponsorship and the ordering of the non-human actors enrolled through the crisis of arranging sponsorship deals and accessing local financial support structures. It illustrates the ordering of humans that was undertaken by non-human managerial structures and human-human power relationships within the key non-human resources: venues. It also explores the impact of silence in 'the room' on 'the festival'.

Business and managerial technologies

Other non-human resources of note (mobile phones, software programmes, brochures, emails, internet, websites and other nonhuman ordering technologies) have been mentioned before and will continue to receive attention in the following segment. The advantages that new communications technologies, new managerial technologies and

new managerial approaches and practices gave to the CLCF committee and staff, while not being available to the KBF or the early KAW group, were available to the KAW group operating in Kilkenny at the time. Although the CKF committee deserve credit for enrolling many new technologies and approaches the comedy festival group went further and incorporated software and processes from their professional operations and incorporated them into the festival's organisational structures. The committee members fully embraced both the communication technologies available to them and most importantly the intrusion that came with them. The comedy festival committee accepted the new demands that came with the new technologies. This acceptance further increased the benefits available to the committee by allowing the new devices and processes they were incorporating full function without hindrance^{lxxxii}. The CLCF committee initialised the incorporation of these new tools and devices because they could see the potential available to them. Due to the compartmentalised structure of the committee, certain processes remained with their installer and were never effected other members. Software programmes ordered pre-festival organisational tasks such as bookings^{lxxxiii}. Computers not only facilitated the correlation and coordination of large chunks of information but also facilitated the use of the internet through email (as a pre-festival ordering tool and communications hub among those with email in 1995) and later websites and online orderings.

Most importantly for the on-the-ground-orderings and organisational chaos of the actual festival days themselves, the rise of mobile phone networks (portability, availability, durability and reliability) play a key function that bicycle messengers of the KBF could not match. The function of the mobile phone extends to that of a mobile office, a mobile crisis control centre, a mobile headquarters, a global communication contact point and a mobile conference point. It allows for the coordination of multiple bodies, actors, actants, deliveries and collections and may effectively re-route and redistribute human and non-human resources where ever required (or more importantly away from where they are no longer required). The willingness to accept this mobilisation of office functions both geographically and socially, without any selective human interference, leads to the fullest performance of those functions^{lxxxiii}.

7.3.1.6 Financing

It is an imprecise economy, but, from top to bottom, the business of comedy needs a serious side or nobody would make any money from it. O'Doherty's story^{lxxxiv} is a reminder that comedians have to rely on ways of supplementing their incomes, just as the recent news that Murphy's will no longer sponsor the Cat Laughs comedy festival, in Kilkenny, is a reminder that big business is involved in what is often seen as a somewhat anti-establishment art. (Shane Hegarty, Comedy's a serious business, The Irish Times, 03/12/04)

The full narrative of how the festival was funded is not a quantifiable one. A lot of generous locals and international contacts did favours, lent vans, picked up stranded comedians and performed other tasks for free^{lxxxv}. In the first years many comedians and household names performed at a reduced fee for different reasons, in the later years they perform for the same fee because they enjoy their stay so much and have become personal friends of the organisers. Some elements of the financial narrative were not disclosed as they were considered sensitive by the interviewees and other interviewees did not believe it was possible to tell the complete financial narrative of the festival. One of those interviewed was Fergus Cronin who was in charge of finance from year two to year five and whose involvement has already been highlighted. The financial structure was computerised and constantly monitored. Relational databases and spreadsheets recorded, ordered and represented all transactions and details of the organisation. These were later interlinked into registration, ticket sales, and payment methods. Details were unforthcoming but several of these packages had been customised by some committee members in their professions and that these modifications had a positive impact on the use of the technology and its incorporation into the festival management structure. It was not used as a device to keep committee members on track. It was compartmentalised and structured based on professional models that the original committee were familiar with from the Bickerstaff theatre company and their professions. It was not lackadaisical or ad

hoc. And because these software technologies are only as helpful as the information held within them the spreadsheets and database were kept up-to-date.

Despite generating between £4 million and £5 million for the economy in Kilkenny each year^{lxxxvi} there was a lack of assistance from the tourism councils, and a shortfall of financial help from the local government. Though hotly defended by Senator Michael Lanigan (who also defended the KBF on many occasions) the festival received one significant financial grant in 1998 (£3,000) and has only received token grants on other years (£300-£400). Although the Bickerstaff theatre company is well funded by the Arts Council, they do not sponsor the CLCF^{lxxxvii}. Securing Arts Council funding met with poor responses:

I've been very frustrated with the Arts Council because I've been very ambitious with Bickerstaff and in a way they would view us largely as having an impact in a small place but not worthy of substantial money. (Richard Cook)

I think they were nervous of putting substantial money into a small place like Kilkenny and there's also Barnstorm which get quite a lot of money [the same] as we, the same as us and I find that very frustrating. And if you ally that to the lack of money coming from Kilkenny County Council and the Corporation, its become really clear to me now that the only way of funding my dreams and ambitions is commercially. So that the reason why I've been really keen to have this pub^{lxxxviii} and to develop this pub. I mean I really want to make it into a venture that will fund other non-commercial ventures in time and I think there's a market for that way of thinking actually. (Richard Cook)

Finding local funding from the local authority or county council proved to be inconsistent and fraught with negative and dismissive responses and frustrating behaviour:

Well no, I've never had an offer to bring it anywhere but I mean the reason why those rumours are about are because you know I've had ongoing struggle with the

Local Authorities and what I mean by ongoing, me asking them for money and them saying here's a small bit or no or here's a on-off bigger bit. And what I've said to them is being honest. It's not that I'll move the festival per se or I've had offers to move it but it's being that it may well become uneconomic for me to continue on because although the festival for the first year has broken even over its five-year period, we made money this year and we made money last year, that was on something like a 90% sell-out rate of shows, which is phenomenally pressurised. And the difficulty is, I said to the joint meeting of the county council and the corporation, if you were solely dependant on a sponsor or one major sponsor, it's a very difficult position to be in, it's a very unpleasant position to be in emotionally because if the sponsor goes the festival goes, I mean that's the bottom line. That's where you try to build of a balance between State money and Sponsorship so that you're not contingent on one major investor and that's the argument I was making. Apart from anything else it brings in a phenomenal amount of money into the city - and county in the longer term and so I just wanted to.... and also like I live here. This is my home and beyond anything else I wanted some kind of financial civic input to make it seem it to me anyway that they were happy to have the festival here beyond complaining that its costing a lot to clean up the rubbish. (Richard Cook)

Other networks, local tourism, infuriated him in their inability and unwillingness to come on board:

but the Tourism council for whatever reason, you know, you approach it publicly and they say "Oh no we're fully supportive of this festival" i.e. Cat Laughs, but really, you know, they don't really understand it. They don't get it. (Richard Cook)

The labour of constantly hunting, haggling, negotiating, networking, and re-building connections and contacts was worth the time invested. The spending of the finance received was prioritized and heavily managed. Although assembling the finance to support such a project was long and arduous the CLCF did get a lucky break. A large

proportion of the support received (30-40%, F. Cronin, 1999/2002) from 1996 to 2004 came from one source: Murphy's Irish Stout.

The story behind the change of sponsors between the first and second year is one of massive amounts of communication and miscommunication. It is a story about images and branding and the territorialisation of a product. It is a David and Goliath story, a tale of risk taking and cowboy heroism. It is the story of how the home town of Smithwicks, (then owned by Guinness) hosted the Murphy's Cat laughs Comedy festival, one of the most readily brand-able festivals Ireland has ever seen. The financing networks which were created and un-made during the first three years had a large impact on the festival. Pivotal future-altering decisions were made. The outcome and fallout from the battle for sponsorship not only changed the name of the festival and all subsequent branding but had social and political consequences locally. The issue of sponsorship crossed lines of loyalty, tradition, local business alliances and queried the role of sponsor as patron or enslaver. The power struggles that took place behind the scenes regarding the sponsoring (and therefore branding) of the festival effected relationships on multiple networks. It truly is a pivotal tale of a gamble that paid off. Had the deal not worked out it is very doubtful that the festival would still be operating.

The comedy festival is a single art form festival. It's unique; it's unique in almost British isles terms. Even the Edinburgh Comedy Festival is surrounded by a multi art form festival, so it is a very unique festival and it is owned y' know, readably brand-able, by a sponsor which gives it the money and the legs to carry on.
(F.Cronin)

Now I mean they don't give us [Arts Festival] a lot of money, it's very little money, so it would be less than 5% of the total budget, whereas the figures from the comedy festival, the main sponsor puts in 30-40% of the total budget and the other thing is there's more potential for box office in the comedy festival because of the single image nature of it, it's an easier thing to sell, y'know? (F.Cronin)

The product was perfect for a beer producer like Guinness to sponsor as it had great product exposure and the potential for increased consumption of that product was huge. As so many of the events were pub based Guinness had a captive audience. Festival merchandising was easily produced and highly recognisable, the majority being t-shirts, baseball caps and posters.

The festival was ready to enter its second year as *The Cat Laughs Comedy Festival* when the partnership with Guinness ended and *The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy Festival* came into existence. Under the Murphy's brand the festival grew bigger and bigger. Murphy's successfully sponsored the festival until 2005, in a city which was the home of Smithwicks Ale and Kilkenny Ale, and had a reputation within the Irish Vintners Association of being a Guinness Town. When Cook decided to go with Murphy's he was going against the wishes of the majority of publicans in the town – people he would need to remain on good terms with as their venues were vital to the survival of the festival.

On its second year the festival changed main sponsor from Guinness to Murphy's due to the reluctance of the former to confirm support after financial losses in the opening year. When this was announced enormous local pressure was placed on Cook to return to Guinness sponsorship. Herein lies what John Law (1994) would define as a truly heroic tale in which Cook proves himself to be quite suitable for the cowboy-heroic^{lxxxix} role in which he finds himself. Cook wrestles with local pressures, doubt, the biggest drinks sponsor on the island of Ireland, and possibly the most recognisable brand product associated globally with all things Irish. The result: A key decision resulting in years of success. The local aspects of the decision, its possible local/future implications, the probable outcomes as he saw them and his current socio-economic condition were all active within his mind as he came to choose between the gigantic yet impersonal Guinness group and the small, yet eager, Murphy's brewery (see endnote^{xc} for details).

Richard Cook displays *vision*, commitment to his chosen *vocation*, and an unarguable *cowboy* (Law 1994) streak. He understands how big business may decide to operate and illustrates his commitment to the festival and produces a solid and lasting product. On

their first year Murphy's committed £100,000^{xci} to the festival, this rose to £250,000 in 1999, 2000 and 2001^{xcii}. The contest between the two breweries was given very little overall coverage with only one article – admittedly a front page one – about the situation being printed^{xciii}. In said Article, The Battle of the Breweries, Sean Keane highlights the different modes of sponsorship taken by Murphy's and Guinness – the former paying its money directly to the festival organisers, the latter on the other hand supported the publicans by distributing free produce to be passed on to the public. The Murphy's approach provided Cook and his committee with greater control over the sponsorship and its use. The negotiations between Cook, Guinness and Murphy's were not always amicable or productive. Guinness used their influence with the local vintners society to bully an agreement from Cook^{xciv}.

Guinness could have the last laugh because they have a contract with Kilkenny Vintners tying them to Guinness products during any festivals in the city from 1995 to 1997. ... Mr. Holland [Chairman of Kilkenny Licensed Vintners] made the position of vintners quite clear. He said there was a clear policy within the vintners organisation to continue dealing with Guinness and to honour 'any ongoing relationships they had with them...However, while Guinness preferred to deal with the vintners, Murphy's opted to go directly to the festival promoters in an effort to boost sales and the image of the product.... ...Regarding the sponsorship of the 'Murphy's Cat Laughs' Mr. Holland said that the vintners had not been approached by Murphy's about sponsorship and that Mr. Cook went to Murphy's without the knowledge of the vintners.

(The Battle of the Breweries Sean Keane, *The Kilkenny People*, 2/9/1996)

Even when all the contracts were signed and agreed the larger beer brewery weren't happy to simply shake hands and walk away. Guinness mounted a music festival to compete with the comedy festival^{xcv}. But by applying business savvy to his product, by negotiating the best deal for his product's future and by "going it alone" Cook's reputation as a *man who can* increased dramatically (Sean Keane). Even publicans who had exchanged harsh words with Cook over the changing from Guinness to Murphy's

admired his determination^{xvii}. Cook, as cowboy hero, had stuck to his guns and made a tough decision which in business terms reaped years of benefits for his festival. By showing incredible nerve his reputation increased from an organiser, and a deliverer, to a hardnosed operator with backbone and determination. As unquantifiable as charisma, yet as equally impossible to ignore (Law 1994, p.67) these traits spoke volumes of how serious Cook was about his festival and how serious Murphy's valued it. In doing so Cook took how local business people regarded festivals to a new level.

There was also another ripple from Cook's agreement with the Cork brewery. In landing Murphy's as a sponsor Cook proved that financial support was available outside the goldfish bowl of Kilkenny. Cook destabilised the dominance of Guinness and some of the elite businessmen in the city. By looking outside the Kilkenny arena and attracting outside investors Cook had shown that there were possibilities outside the confines of the marble city. Cook was also able to attract and maintain his relationship with Murphys without having to insert a Murphys' board member or advisory on to his committee.

7.3.2 Power

There are several parallel and perpendicular hierarchies in operation within the festival. At any one site there are many *different ordering modes* that *butt up against one another* (Law 1994) especially when that site is a public house, as it will have two sets of staff trying to order one place: the festival staff and the venue staff. Within the setting of the CLCF four key areas of power were seen to be interacting: comic/audience networks; behind the scenes/venue networks; committee/resources networks; and festival/non-festival networks. Within the product venues several agencies clash and co-operate, and power moves from various actors over the course of preparation, performance, tidy-up and resumption of either 'normal' business, or preparation for another show. The parallel hierarchies are easily distinguished and are fairly straightforward (see table 7.4).

Table. 7.4 Comparing venue and festival organisational hierarchies in the CLCF.

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Venue Owner | Festival Committee |
| Venue manager (where applicable) | Festival appointed Stage manager |
| Venue Staff | Festival staff |
| Venue customers | Festival customers |

Relationships differ from venue to venue, management style to management style, the encouraged customer-staff policy to actual performed customer-staff policy. Similarly, relationships differ within the festival crew. Within each of the four groupings, internal dynamics affect relationships and networking between individuals and organisations.

The intersecting, overlapping and unifying point between the two hierarchies is the comedian. The comedian is what gives rise to the event, draws the crowd, situates the performance, which requires management and staffing, which leads to the imposition of the festival hierarchy onto the already-established venue hierarchy. It is when the comic brings the two hierarchies into competition or conflict that the hierarchies can no longer be termed parallel, and instead become intertwined. The performed product is a mix of the comedian, the agency of his/her comedy, their reputation and their comedy style's public perception (in other words how popular their brand of humour is). The comedian and their comedy style stand with one foot in each of the other hierarchies. Affecting both hierarchies equally, responsive to both, and yet with no direct responsibility to elements of either, the comedian, and all that comes with them, is a wild card in the deck. For the most part the relationships between festival staff, venue staff and their customers are predictable and unremarkable: elements come under stress once things begin to go wrong^{xcvii}.

All of the elements enrolled into the product performance revolve around the comic, and his agency (charm, humour, cultural currency, communication skills). The very make up and composition of the stage, props, lighting and atmosphere are generated on his/her

account: the demands made by the comedian and the style of the show will infer how much skill is required to operate the light and sound rigs and speakers thus selecting-by-demand the venue and the stage manager's technical agents^{xcviii}. The character and nature of the comedian are pivotal in adding to the work-atmosphere in this occasion. Troublesome or diva-like comedians with high self-opinions require extra pampering and staff attention. More humble or understanding comedians require less. A comedian's agency (fame, notoriety or charm) influences how they are regarded and treated by those allocated to tend to them. Debut acts who are less known on the comedy scene, or are not yet acquainted with other comedians are famous for way-laying local staff members or seeking them out for a few post-performance pints. Disagreements occur when the agency of difficult, or popular, comedians interferes with the smooth running of the venue. Tensions rise when bar staff are (impolitely) enrolled into festival routines by panicked festival venue managers, at the detriment to the smooth running of the venue itself. Venue managers often come to resent the poaching of their staff if it is mishandled or continuously assumed and taken for granted. Once again courtesy, information and respect can sway whether the relationship between festival ground staff and venue ground staff remains positive and functioning.

The style of comedy the comedian uses, or has a reputation for using, has an impact on how that power dynamic approaches hosting them, and influences the type of audience that attend the shows. Certain more notorious, lad-ish, or controversial/popularly abrasive performers like Mark Lamarr, Johnny Vegas and Des Bishop attract hecklers, negative responses, and strong vocal resistance. These comedian-audience relationships can be unnerving for staff, (both as bar staff, and as festival staff) and managers (owner/manager, or stage manager)^{xcix}.

The audience are also a significant actor in the success of the show, whether taken as a collective, or as individuals. The audience have, by their reactions and the volume of their responses, the power to alter the comedian's routine, mood and humour, thus either improving and personalising the experience, or stiling and leeching it. The feedback from the audience, in the form of laughter, groans, shock or realisation is integral to the

performance, energising or demoralising the comedian depending on the material, the comedians desired response and how that established in-joke, or punch line, is utilised later in the show^c. The audience are not passive receivers but active participants. All of these reactions create and re-create the atmosphere within the audience. This in turn affects those around them, and those around them, until the reaction reaches the comedian, indicating to him/her whether they are on the right wavelength or not. These shifts illustrate the various power relationships flowing within the venue: silences and laughter alike are impacting on the product, thus impacting on peoples reactions to the product and to their responses later as among themselves they relive and re-share the group experience of the show^{ci}.

7.4 An ANT analysis of The Cat Laughs Comedy Festival

Both optional interpretations of Callon's four steps of emergence (see table 7.4) were applied to the collected narratives of the CLCF to assess the suitability of ANT as an analysis approach. Cook succeeded in traversing the networks of the CKF and established himself as a key actor before any problems developed within the CKF. The problems which developed in the third year of the CKF were unconnected to his aspect of the festival and his responsibilities therein. Once the feeling was out that there was to be no fourth year Cook began to assess some of the elements that, by chance, had connected during the third year of the festival. He began to germinate ideas with trusted friends. He began to bounce ideas around. This was a trial and error approach to developing a new idea. Cook assessed the Edinburgh position and their stance on external factors like agents hunting for sign ups. Cook translated the operating structure Friel had championed in setting up the CFK and complemented them with theatre management structures and theatre business methods. Cook did not have to wage any battle or overly struggle to gain acceptance to his way of doing things. The majority of those that he way working with had worked on the CFK or in Bickerstaffe so were familiar with these structures and how they worked.

Table 7.5 Application of four steps of emergence to CLCF

| | Callon (Fox 2000) | CLCF | Porsander (2005) | CLCF |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Problematization</i> | Present | Entering the Obligatory Point of Passage | Present-Strong |
| 2 | <i>Interessement</i> | Present-strong | Forming a Pact | Present-strong |
| 3 | <i>Enrolment</i> | Present-very strong | Performing various Negotiations | Present- epic tales of heroism |
| 4 | <i>Mobilization of the Allies</i> | Present- extremely strong | Finding the Spokesman | Present- extremely strong |

Once the festival proposal had momentum Cook began to form pacts with allies across a broad range of backgrounds. However none were connected to tourism or benefited publicly from being connected. Tony Walsh was his only semi-official government link and acted as his *Mr. fix-it*. In this enrolment stage the Laughing Cat icon was developed. As already covered this was the first branding of a Kilkenny festival. This actor resonated with target and non-target crowds. It became an iconic anchor in the network, easily recognisable and instantly communicative. The mobilised and assembled images, agents, actors and myths tied into this brand make it thoroughly unique to Kilkenny and the comedy festival. The images and icons enrolled into the communicative collage are manifestations of local legends, modern myths, a modern advertising phenomena and sponsorship logo association.

In other networks Cook had access to countless comedians through the agency he runs with his sister, he also has committee members based in Los Angeles and London sourcing comedians with agency. Utilising communication webs that KBF festival members never even dreamed about, Cook can not only form pacts with actors in America but is able to mobilise their connections at a moments notice through the communications networks that they embrace and do not resist. Ironically by creating a no-media hype zone around the performers they create a bond, an understanding. The organisers effectively ensured

the continued participation of those comedians who wished to sit back and relax without the need to constantly perform. The exclusion of television cameras also ensured that control remained directly with the organisers and not comedy agents. Actors and actants adapt as necessary to the changes in the network, developing strategies and alliances to compensate for resistances encountered, constantly engaging in an uphill struggle for customers, performers, local goodwill and financial security. With this need for strong connections at one level comes the need for interconnection at a higher scale, networking and forging alliances regionally and provincially to avoid duplication or needless competition and aid with positive clustering.

This festival network was an up-hill battle of constant assessment and renegotiation where Cook shows an awareness of the difference between a) potential resources and the potential of actors to deliver, and b) the fact that a resource is not an input (and therefore not bankable) *until* the means are found to initiate and support the continued use of that resource. In acquiring resources a plethora of mechanisms apply, and are increasing as corporate, state and private fund opportunities increase. Cook knew these mechanisms from his theatre experience as did Lynn Cahill, and knew the networks of grant acquisition, sponsorship, fund raising, merchandising, and public relations strategies available, all with varying degrees of accountability, to them. They knew the system. They did not have access to human providers but they knew the mechanisms and were able to manipulate them successfully. There are also numerous informal strategies that they left to Tony Walsh.

Though a great many of these elements have become routine, they still require skill, coordination and vision. Once organised these services become the responsibility of somebody else and the volunteers. It is in both the 2nd and 3rd steps that Cook shines. Isolated from key local networks Cook communicates past them to secure his festival's needs and targets. In finding a *spokesperson* two key actors are revealed: Cook on a high-visibility local and 'known' regional level and the Laughing Cat that is dominant though cyberspace, the promotional circuits and all assorted merchandising.

Over time, the event and destination can become inseparable (D. Getz, 1997, p. 5)

Events are transient, and every event is a unique blending of its duration, setting, management, and people (Goldblatt 1990, p. 14)

7.5 Festival Legacy

In 1994 the Arts Council of Ireland were concerned over the lack of professionalisation in the operation of festivals in Ireland, but were unsure about how to remedy the situation. The Arts Council committed itself to supporting *the professionalisation of a number of arts festivals to assist continuity, improve standards and development (Arts Plan 1995-1997, Arts Council, 1994, p. 23, quoted by Quinn 1996, p.103)*. Unfortunately, the *how* part of this professionalisation wasn't elaborated on. The problem was identified, and prioritised as needing attention, but no solution was stated, or procedure recommended.

As the twenty-fifth anniversary of the *Kilkenny Arts Week* approached, many involved in the festival didn't believe it would survive to reach that milestone. By the early 1990s the festival was heavily burdened with its bloated committee. With increasing pressure to acquire more funding, some concerned committee members realized that new steps had to be taken to make the organisation of the event more streamlined. In seeking government grants the organizers had to restructure and adapt to new markets (Callon, 1999). Its internal structures were disorganized and counter productive. In a time of a rising economy with many festival goers having much more disposable income than before, KAW attendance was falling. Many committee members wondered if KAW had a future at all. Other festivals were becoming more successful, yet KAW wasn't. By 1996 several key actors involved in the festival knew that something had to be done. In March of 1996, the Chair of the KAW committee informally approached a veteran of the CKF and known Mr.-Fix-it of the CLCF, Tony Walsh, and asked for his assistance in reshaping KAW. Aware of the many problems associated with the bloated managerial

structure, the Chair was confident of Mr. Walsh's potential to restructure and save the festival.

Tony Walsh, who was fully aware that he was being conscripted solely for his organizational and management skills, was not impressed with the structure in place. It soon became apparent that if the festival was to continue it would require a fresh image, and a new streamlined organizational structure. Tony Walsh's selection methods were informal but precise; all of the previous committee members were removed. A number of proven *Confederation of Kilkenny Festival* and *Cat Laughs Comedy Festival* members were enrolled and a marketing consultant was hired to re-image the festival. New strategies were incorporated to sell the *potential* of the new board as well as the festival itself, which was re-christened as the *Kilkenny Arts Festival*^{cii}. Between 1997 and 1999 the *Kilkenny Arts Festival* (KAF) underwent radical changes in organisational structures and systems. Tried and tested structures that had been implemented in the CKF and CLCF were incorporated into the revitalisation of the festival and improved on. Trusted operatives from current and past festivals and their networks, abilities and experience were brought onto the committee by Walsh. Their way of doing things became the new procedure. This was a complete blood transfusion. All of the old blood was replaced by new blood. And this changeover did cause bad blood among those replaced. Step one of the emergence of the KAF begins with the KAW committee but none of the human actors that are aware of the need to change and seek to initiate that change survive the translation process. In translating the KAW into the KAF all of the human components are replaced and all of the operating procedures, sub-committee hierarchies and top-level managerial structures were re-ordered. The entire internal network of the festival is re-wired, restructured, to a tried and trusted format: an almost exact copy of the CLCF operating system (the key differences being the absence of London and American offices). Tony Walsh's refit of the festival is strictly at the top level of the managerial hierarchy: He does not interfere with volunteers or venue staff. These are not his concern. He enrolls and negotiates the mobilisation of the new committee and does not interfere in any of the changes that that new committee initiate. He trusts the board that he assembles. He is confident in their abilities and their proven track record.

The only outsider of note that comes onto the festival network is the professional festival director that the committee advertise for and appoint. This is the first truly professional festival operative in the history of Kilkenny's festivals and she quit after five months. She was replaced by Maureen Kennely who was known to all of the committee through collaborations between CLCF networks. Kennely becomes the face of the new KAF. She is put forward as the spokesperson. Her presence at major public relations events is documented in photos and in print. Her input to all levels of the festival is noted, observed and commented on. Through persistent exposure of Kennely's image, an association between her and the festival is built up in *The Kilkenny People* and through *Radio Kilkenny*. Unlike the KBF and CFK this spokesperson does not emerge organically but her work load and consistent commitment to the festival is unwavering and earns respect from those operating at different levels within the festival hierarchy. Although Kennely does not become popular with some of the older KAW actors that Walsh removed, she is highly regarded on a local level by participants, volunteers and business associates alike. Kennely's input is also brought onto the CLCF committee at varying levels after 2001. Although Kennely's emergence as KAF spokesperson is not as organic as Cook, Friel or McGuinness it is accepted and effective locally. Kennely is plugged into a network that is already in place. Kennely is inserted into a fully functioning network with contacts and connections already established and solidified. The pacts and enrolments are already secured and mobilised. Her emergence as festival director is a professional appointment and a signal to all of those mobilised and associated with the festival of new professional priorities and a new professional direction for the festival. The networks assembled by Walsh and others transfer over to Kennely's control professionally, without disruption. In her role as festival director Kennely instantly attains access to the networks, connections, resources and agency of the festival and its associates. Although Kennely does develop and maintain contacts and an agency of her own, the majority of her initial connections are in place before her arrival. The decisions of what contacts are necessary and who/what would best meet the needs of the KAF are taken and made by those local actors on the committee assembled by Walsh.

Internally this was a new festival: streamlined, professionalised and efficient. The changes they incorporated revolutionised the festival and all involved within it. From being seen as excessive and out of place, managerial and business technologies were now incorporated into every aspect of festival management in the city. With a professional administrator, a business-like efficiency and coordinated communicating actors, actants and nodes, the KAF grew stronger in product, promotion and professionalism. Changes that were mocked in 1991 were now, with grafts and translations by other heroic actors, the *norm*. This festival was everything the Arts Council wished festivals to be, and they began to take notice.

In the space of a decade these approaches translate across from an OPW administrators' desk to the operating space of every festival manager, actor and contributor. Procedures that were science fiction to the Brian Boru figure of McGuinness and alien to the Artmania of the original KAW committee becomes part and parcel of "the way it is" where, as Porsander points out, according to Callon (1986, 1986, 1991), *an actor-network is a result of a transformation that can be best characterised as a process of translation* (Porsander, 2005, p.19). This translation reached completion in 2001; ten years after the first rumblings came from the CKF. On the insistence of the festival director, a small specialised compartmentalised committee was formed. This ensured that it operated differently to its predecessors. The distinct and precise divisions put in place by the festival director are reflected in the ease in which the sections dealing with the confederation festival were ordered, compartmentalised, operated. Business minds brought a business approach to the domain of dreamers and artists.

Chapter 8. Conclusion

Perhaps there is no single and coherent pattern. Perhaps there is nothing except practises. Perhaps there is nothing other than stories performing themselves and seeking to make connections, practical and local connections, specific links (Law, 1994 p.19).

Festival management is an experiment that aims to get the perfect balance between product, place, customer and staff so that everyone enjoys the experience. No matter how many elements are reassembled into the same place at the same time an exact replication of an experience is not guaranteed. Kilkenny does not exist in a vacuum and none of the festivals operate in a vacuum. There are actors with extended and elaborate histories. There are narratives that require the telling of other orderings, other hierarchies and other narratives to fully illustrate the significance of the networks that are mobilised to produce a festival. ANT acquitted itself admirably in unearthing the inner workings of the four festivals. ANT is commendable in accessing the narratives and discourses of beginnings, endings, and the mundane middles of struggle and constant becoming. It is excellently positioned to understand the lengths required to retain the status quo and the continuous processes involved in staying strong in such fluctuating arenas. It is equipped to trace the topology of how these hybrids continue to operate and survive. It uncovers a detailed picture of the milieu operating in and around these organisations and committees. ANT has the ability to trace the networks and structures that the KBF central drivers initiate and develop over the ten year existence of the festival despite the low-technology environment. ANT was able to map the topology of the accidental, by-product, development of Kilkenny's tourism industry, the development of the B&B network and the change in national perception of the city. ANT successfully follows these actors, actants and networks as they become part of, or are enrolled into, other festivals. Along with following the networks developed for just the KBF, ANT is capable of following those networks beyond their intended use and into their new roles within the city of Kilkenny and other festivals.

ANT is able to follow the KAW committee through multiple transitions and translations and can account for changes in strategies and composition within the committee hierarchies and the festival product. It has the flexibility to continue tracing the KAW into the 1980s when it no longer resembles a tight unit or functions to its best ability. In granting ANT the freedom to follow the actors through the networks they devise (and are devised for them), ANT allows the researcher to follow where ever the actors and actants go. ANT is able to trace and adapt to the introduction of new managerial technologies into the festival arena from the CKF committee. It is able to follow the impact of new actors and actants in the festival networks within Kilkenny after the CKF is discontinued and the CLCF is initiated. CLCF's departure from so many of the conventional traditions introduces new forms of festival branding, promotion, and structure. ANT successfully supports the tracing of such diverse actors as passionate dreamers, professional tourism operatives and the branded smile of a laughing cat. Two interpretations of Callon's four steps of emergence were utilised (see table 8.1) to better understand the processes at work in the various festival networks:

Table 8.1 Fox and Porsander approaches to Callon's Steps of Emergence.

| | Callon (Fox, 2000) | Porsander (2005) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | <i>Problematization</i> – one set of actors realise they have a problem, then objectify and rationalise the problem, defining it so other parties can see and understand the situation, and in the process a solution is indicated. | Entering the Obligatory Point of Passage (actant must traverse to become part of net) |
| 2 | <i>Interessement</i> – people (allies) are locked into a course of action, roles are prescribed and goals set. | Forming a Pact: Locking other actants into roles and forming a power base |
| 3 | <i>Enrolment</i> – allies are defined, drafted/coerced if not already onboard, and co-ordinated; | Performing various Negotiations |
| 4 | <i>Mobilization of the Allies</i> – leaders, organizations, communications, an assembled network, the chain is in place with its various (and unique/distinguished/distinctive) links and nodes. Some are forced, others persuaded, at the centre the leaders have “translated the interests of others into their own” and gained full (if only temporary) support and cooperation. | Finding (becoming?) the Spokesman (strengthen the illusion of a single Actor)” |

The variations in step one reflected whether the network originated with the assembled actors or whether a strong actor entered into an already established network. The choice between categorising a festival's origin as fitting *Problematization* or Porsander's *Entering the Obligatory Point of Passage* is not an either/or scenario. It's merely a method of clarifying the different starting points reflected in the festival narratives. It increased the ability of ANT to trace variations in festival beginnings. This increased the suitability of ANT as an analytical approach to understanding the birth of the network and where actors may have originated and the strategies and energies they utilised. This facilitates the tracing of multiple starting points for all elements within the network thus strengthening the researcher's understanding of the efforts involved in such initiations.

The second step showed no massive deviation between interpretations. *Interessement* or *Forming a Pact* traced and explored all of the various strategies, energies, convergences, deals, double deals and luck involved in forming a *holy Alliance* (Callon, 1986a) in which it was (and still is) vital to *impose and stabilise the identity of other actants* (1986a, p. 207-8) This second step was explored even when no actors or actants had managed to create their own identity within the festival networks or were subsumed by the development of larger actors:

Even if the actants assert their own identities -formed and adjusted during action- it will be impossible for anyone involved to maintain a totally independent manner (Porsander, 2005, p.24)

A key example of this in the CLCF (1995-96) is evident where the director is the actor *who would not accept the narrowed interpretation of themselves and refused the translation defining their identities, goals or interests in a competing way* and refused the value ascribed to his festival by outside actants and actors (Porsander, p. 26). In the bidding war between the two beverage companies, the promise of commitment and agency isn't equal. One of the companies has a *quasi-monopolist position* (Porsander, 2005, p.27) regarding alcohol promotions and sponsorship within Kilkenny and *Its power*

seemed to have been secured by the agreement with the city (ibid). In the case of Cook's negotiations with Guinness he faced a company with what can only be described as a unquestioned hegemonic-monopolistic position which had a secured power position guaranteed by the Guinness monopoly through Smithwicks brewery and the Vintners Association within Kilkenny. In every conceivable manner the deal was secured, however *David* (Cook) had that significant factor that prevented *Goliath* (Guinness brewery) from winning. Cook did the inconceivable, and unprecedented, and opted to form a pact with Murphy's due to the monetary worth (and therefore respect) that they ascribed to the festival (and in essence, his abilities). ANT explored this interaction and measured the significance of this decision in pact formation and did not ignore it as some egotistical exercise.

The third step showed no noteworthy variation between the two interpretations of *Enrolment* and *Negotiations*. *In the emergent actor-network, negotiations were conducted using different strategies: seduction, transaction and silent consent* (Porsander, 2005, p.27). Revellers, locals and 'old guard' committee/network members are merely some of dozens, if not hundreds, of actants and actors that must be negotiated with. This is where qualitative methods have the edge over quantitative ones as they facilitate accessing the truth behind the coercions that were in this enrolment process. Some narratives are hilarious, others devious, some coincidental and others mundane but it is here where an understanding of the power flows at work within the network become evident. Connections, relationships, breakdowns, and, the obligatory burnt-bridges become traceable, measurable and understandable.

ANT traditionally faces criticism for not being empathic enough with its human actors. Misunderstandings about ANT would suggest that it may not have the framework or analytical tools to assess the passion, coercion and irrationality that manifests in the narratives of this step. However in addressing each enrolment on an individual basis and refusing to apply or pre-subscribe any issues of motive to the actors and actants under study ANT maps each enrolment with honesty and ethnographical integrity building up an understandable collage of links and relationships that are not merely human but non-

human-human hybrids of skill, ability, knowledge, agency and resources. ANT allows all of the voices (actor or actant) to contribute to an understanding of causes and consequences in the becoming of the festivals.

The differences in step four simply provided options to follow a unified flow towards an organising central point or to follow a loose and decentred operation. Outside of having a central 'known' figurehead there are other aspects of the role of spokesperson that can emerge from an actor-network. Sometimes a network is translated into an artefact which can become, if successful, a network spokes-thing. Transforming an entity into such an artefact (a brand, icon, or universal index sign) makes it transportable, reproducible and diffusible (Latour, 1993; Porsander, 2005). Of the four festivals only the CLCF achieved such a translation. Although there seemed to be a pattern between success and establishing a spokesperson or spokething not all of the festival operators were able to, or even thought of, developing one. These manifested as follows:

- KBF: One spokesperson – Mick McGuinness.
- KAW 74-80: No spokesperson
- KAW 81-90: No spokesperson
- CKF: One spokesperson - Paddy Friel.
- CLCF: Two spokes/person/artefact - Richard Cook, The Laughing Cat
- KAW: 91-92 – No spokesperson
- KAW: 92 – 97- No spokesperson
- KAW 97 -2005: Maureen Kennely

These individual steps are only part of ANT's analytical arsenal. Over the course of forty years of festivals in Kilkenny, ANT uncovers the emergence of the professionalisation of the local festival process. This is a narrative that becomes more apparent when all four festival networks are assembled together. The story of the insertion and normalisation of business communication and managerial technologies is a story of translation overcoming resistances to become, through varying degrees of transformation, the central organising actor behind the actor-networks of organisation within the festivals. This is an element that ANT tracks through its assessment of the power flows in the festival committees.

ANT traces how something is translated, from use elsewhere to somewhere else, and their progression afterwards. The KBF translated *Oktoberfest* into the Kilkenny of 1964; the KAW translated the *Edinburgh Arts Festival* into the Kilkenny of 1974; the CKF translated an abridged translation of the *Oktoberfest* that the KBF provided; and the CLCF translated the *Edinburgh Comedy Festival* into the Kilkenny of 1995. But there is another translation story here beyond model translation^{ciii}. It's the translation of festival management from a hobby and an excuse to have a few pints, to a professional place-promotional tourism-generating flagship project organised and structured as professionally as any other agency or organisation operating in the Kilkenny region. Friel was part cowboy-hero (Law, 1994), part manager-hero (Law, 1994) and a visionary (Law, 1994) in pushing through the changes she considered essential. These changes were then translated to Kilkenny's first professional festival by Cook and his committee. They merge with Cook's theatre management experience and were incorporated into the festival design, pre-festival organisation and day-to-day running of the event. Not only was the promotion and handling of the product revolutionary, but the professionalised approach they developed became the template on which following Kilkenny festivals are based. Through a series of co-incidents and unrelated projects, Cook found himself in the right place, at the right time, with the right idea, and with access to the right people. The people he approached to run and design various aspects of the festival mechanics were either ex-CKF, or were known to those Cook had worked closely with during that festival. In incorporating those actors, Cook also enrolled various management

technologies that had never been applied to festivals in Kilkenny and translated them into useable forms.

The pinnacle of this professionalisation is evident in 2008 when the CLCF advertised for a CEO. In the advertisement^{civ} the CEO's operating structure was clearly defined, and the language of the piece was professional, formal and precise. This post was open to anyone with experience and an *operational leadership track record*. Gone are the days of the ad-hoc thrown together committee with positions assigned as actors walked in the door. ANT reveals a traceable emergence of factors that lead to this development. The CLCF organisation built on the changes made in the CKF and made several key departures from the traditional way of operating a festival in Kilkenny. Its structures, strategies and technologies departed from the traditional way of doing things. The changes brought in by the committee members were not wild, aberrant or over-complex; they were systems that were working within organisations across the city but no one had considered applying them to organising festivals.

The eagerness with which the comedy festival organisers embraced new technologies improved the festival technically and boosted morale. These managerial technologies increased the festival's ability to attract audience members and provided them with event information prior to arrival. These technologies revolutionised how staff were marshalled pre-festival and during the festival. Their incorporation changed how the events were structured, how the performances were staged and how the audience encountered the performers. Equally the humans in the network were also vital: the comedians themselves as self-contained events, the committee members and the range of skills and ideas they incorporated into the festival, the actors with the connections, and the cowboy-heroes. It is not sufficient to simply map the networks between humans and solely concentrating on the impacts managerial technologies have ignores the key roles played by the entrepreneurs and the networked contacts, and the charismatic touches that make things happen. The flexibility of ANT facilitates the following of all of these components in equal measure where other theories may have disregarded them as irrelevant or invisible.

ANT follows the further transitions and translations of the festival as it continues to emerge as a regional entity and its impact spreads through sponsorship changeovers, fringe events and the reconstruction of key tourism units within the city and county. The CLCF committee's reconstruction of festival organisation was a success and their ability to organise had been noted by other key actors within the city. What they had learned on the single-genre venue-based festival was set to be tested and further translated as fears grew for the future of the KAW. The CLCF committee were judged by their peers and competitors to be the only ones that could save the KAW. Thus the actors of one festival become translated into another. This is not a regime hijacking. This is a re-wiring. This is an upgrade. This is a re-fitting of an old vehicle with new human-hybrid parts. Initially it is their expertise that is invited in to save the older festival: their network of technological-know-how and managerial know-how. It then becomes a full system re-build as the CLCF risk-takers and visionaries are also enrolled.

The narrative uncovered by ANT isn't just that of the festivals: Kilkenny's journey into tourism was accidental and mostly unplanned^{cv}. It's wealth of built heritage and historical landmarks provided it with an abundance of raw materials yet it wasn't until the beginning of the KBF that an actual tourism function could be found for some of the city's finest examples of built heritage. As one festival wound down and another took its place, the profile and incorporation of the built heritage of the city increased tenfold. For Kilkenny, the rich built heritage became a vehicle to showcase its first flagship festivals. This is unusual and contrary to the more common pattern where festivals are devised as means of showcasing fine examples of local heritage. For geographers, historians and social scientists interested in tourism or post-colonial landscapes ANT allows the researcher to follow the castle through its very own festival journey. From its re-birth as an active socialising site in the KBF, to its many high-culture inclusions in the KAW and CFK, to becoming part and parcel of everyday life in Kilkenny the story of the festivals is also the story of the castle and the networks formed to bring about its restoration, the networks which allowed tourism to grow and the networks which put Kilkenny on the map.

This introduces the aspect of *planning* festivals and implanting other successful festival models locally from detached perspectives. ANT questions how much is thought up in the laboratories of committee meetings, consultants' reports, and entrepreneurial risk-taking management schemes. To continue with the metaphor of laboratory and reality the people who construct these ideas outside of (so-called) grounded reality suit the role of the detached scientist, especially when the ideas and *requirements* could be seen in the same light as controlled environment experiments vs. experiments exposed to 'full reality environments'. With ANT the perception of Kilkenny is given an agency and becomes an additional actor with agency of its own. ANT has the tools to explore these extra dynamics. ANT allows for power to be traced in even its most flitting of fluctuations.

Events require physical settings, but their attractiveness is not necessarily dependent on that setting. Many other factors can be vital in creating the right ambience or atmosphere, including crowd dynamics, services and entertainment (D. Getz, 1997, p.6).

In short ANT has shown the adaptability, and integrity to uncover the workings and re-workings behind forty years of festival management in the city of Kilkenny and the emergence of a professional, structured and effective festival network and its impact on the development, organisation and presentation of Kilkenny city's tourism industry. ANT accounts for the differences between organic and designed festival structures.

8.1. Ontological interests

It needs to be added that in the actual action net, endless attempts at ordering took place. Had I followed all of them at once, it would have been easy to miss their tangible results. If, on the other hand, I had focussed only on things already created, for example formal organisations, it would have been easy to forget that they had not always been there (Porsander, 2005, p. 18)

This thesis was, and is, concerned with ANT's suitability to understand the topology and emergence of professionalism within Kilkenny's flagship festivals from 1964 to 2004. Its core concern was how best to read the texts which were assembled from participants, organisers and facilitators of these festivals. This study encountered a rich diverse grouping of actors, actants and agencies; of movers, shakers and negotiators; all providing *multiple perspectives, multiple spaces and multiple sets of spatial relations* (Murdoch, J. 2006, p. 14). Through these voices multiple experiences of Kilkenny and its festivals were recorded, multiple festival spaces (Massey, 1991, p. 28) opened up, so that new spaces of enquiry may be explored (Murdoch, J, 2006, P. 14).

What was hoped for here was a portrayal of at least some fraction of the orderings, voices, and experiences of the Kilkenny festivals. In this study the spaces created by the festivals in Kilkenny are *multi-sided and contradictory, oppressive and liberating, passionate and routine, knowable and unknowable. It is a space of radical openness, a site of resistance and struggle, a space of multiplicitous representations ...It is a meeting ground, a site of hybridity a margin or edge where ties can be severed and also new ties can be forged* (Soja, 1999, p. 276). These spaces, the topologies that are traced here, are a snapshot of successful networks, tense negotiations and irreparably ruined relationships that have been *becoming* in Kilkenny since 1964. Some festival years have received more coverage than others, some years more so than others, some things more so than others. In this thesis beginnings were given the benefit over endings because there was far more talk of beginnings^{vi}. Interviewees communicate fluidly about hero-moments which coincide with beginnings but are more reluctant to expound on endings. For most people endings will always be associated with failure, and failure is a difficult narrative to revel in. This will always be an ontological factor of research. If the subjects are unwilling to divulge their experiences and their struggles, the researcher can do little. This will always be a drawback to qualitative research but it is not a reason to avoid the hard stories, the tragedies, and the failures. In time these stories come to the surface.

Exploring the role as author-agent opened up further realisations on the nature of the people-agents (Law '94) involved within the festival-body, and how agents, actors,

people and organisations *were many different things at once* (Gareth Morgan quoted by John Law 1994, p.34). When ordering these experiences it becomes apparent that this process orders their accounts of ordering. Ordering, assembling, enrolling, organising musicians, comedians and jousters all into one place. Those *working the festival* ordered materials, notes, instruments, ideas, whole genres, and sent them out into the darkness where the audience sat. Those working in the festival were ordering those working the festival, and their peers, and the audiences, and their sub-committees. Realising that they could not complete this massive re-ordering alone they conscripted performance indicators, spread sheets, email addresses, mobile phones, ready-made rentable box-office systems, managerial technologies, board rooms and more. Orderings, layered upon orderings, voices within narratives, narratives within stories. In researching these orderings the qualitative researcher encounters obstacles (some personal, some professional) as regards how much information interviewees are willing to divulge yet the systems they use are observable and knowable. In analysing these patterns of orderings the researcher can glean an understanding of how the festival machine works and the character of each component – whether it is robust enough to with stand unforeseen stresses and pressures or whether further elements are required to protect weaker links, less capable actants or specialised actors. ANT is capable of reflexively unpacking the function of the network and the reasoning behind its assembly. ANT dispassionately analyses the construction, emergence, development, destruction or failure of these festival networks with a flowing attention to detail. However, ontologically it interrogates how the information is assembled, what is chosen to be assembled and the agenda behind choosing one element as being more significant than another. ANT does not play favourites. All elements are equal where analysis and the attempt to understand network development and translation are concerned. In pursuing each element equally ANT illustrates networks in their full complexity. As part of the analysis process ANT demands an interrogation of the information assembly process and an awareness of the role of author within this process. This highlights not only how information is gathered but what information is gathered and why certain information sources are utilised and others are not. Thus ANT allows for a greater ontological understanding of the research

process in addition to the findings it has the potential to uncover in the multiple networks and systems under its analysis.

8.2 Avenues for further study

There are multiple studies within the city of Kilkenny that are ripe and ready for harvest. The development of Kilkenny's tourism industry, its restoration projects and its other festivals all possess more tales of becoming, entrepreneurial heroes, consequences and the creation of new social spaces involving community, agencies, non-governmental and governmental bodies and the gradual adoption of more professional approaches to organisation, management and how power is distributed. Other topics vary from the heritage marketing success of Kilkenny Castle to the social impact of the arts in Kilkenny and the ability of community arts projects to mobilise communities and provide a vehicle for community inclusion and cooperation. In terms of the CLCF the changes the festival has undergone from 2005 to 2010 include changing sponsors twice (Smithwicks and Carlsberg are both Diageo brands) updating and then replacing the Laughing Cat, and embracing new social networking websites and software. In terms of the KAF there have been significant changes and upsets with the appointments and resignations of replacements for Maureen Kennely and failing attendance levels. In 2010 Carlsberg announced the complete withdrawal of all comedy related sponsorship in Ireland. This once more places the CLCF in a precarious position. Power struggles within the issue of sponsorship and branding will always fascinate Geographers and Sociologists alike. As place-related branding and multi-media representations of place become more prolific these struggles of identity and commodity should be examined and interrogated across terms of culture, tourism, place promotion and authenticity.

Multiple research opportunities exist in the tourism landscapes of other counties and large towns in Ireland. ANT research suits the spaces of struggle, resistance, negotiation and cooperation in the middle years of these organisations. Beginnings have their magic, their adrenaline and their buzz. Endings have a defined boundary and a cause-and-effect

structure of failed attempts to save the festival or traceable networks of resistance or even hostility that thwart the festival. But the middle of the story is far more intricate. Maintaining the routine and keeping the festival running is a difficult task and requires constant re-writing and re-reading of texts to generate new energies, new excitements and new spaces. The complexity of processes involved in preventing the festivals from failing far outnumber those involved in the formation stories or the failure tales. In the middle there is a constant becoming that needs energy, constant structuring and luck. The Arts council and Bernadette Quinn both spotted the need for such slippery and definition-evasive factors in the beginnings of festivals but they are equally precious in the middles. This is when the contexts accumulate, layered by action and reaction, like dirt in a fuel line or fine dust on electronics, these masses of little incidences, rumours and wobbles clog networks, weigh down lines of connection, and create more obstacles over time. There needs to be more attention on the struggle in the middle. Future studies should concentrate on how festivals continue. This is where geographers, festival analysts, tourism agencies, and special events students need to focus. Beginnings are easier to study because they are launch points and identifiable convergences and most beginnings start with a clean slate. The topology of the day-to-day continuance is more worn, more cluttered, more vital. The mundane and routine necessities that must be performed, negotiated, circumvented and black-boxed open understandings of the day-to-day. Beginnings are easy, endings are hard but middles are where everything is becoming. In understanding how successful festivals continue these findings may be translated to other festivals so that they may continue to emerge and develop, becoming part of the everyday experience of a city or county for tourists and locals alike.

In 2009 the people of Kilkenny city celebrated the four hundredth anniversary of the city charter.

This historic milestone year was officially marked by hosting eighteen festivals.

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10. Endnotes and Appendices

ⁱ The geographic and economic information provided here comes from a wide source of material, including *Investing in Kilkenny* (Business Insight, 2000). This economic analysis is a study commissioned by Kilkenny Industrial Development Company (K.I.D.Co.).

ii

Kilkenny city as presented by Kilkenny Tourism (map 1.4), the KAF (map 1.5) and the CKF (map 1.6).

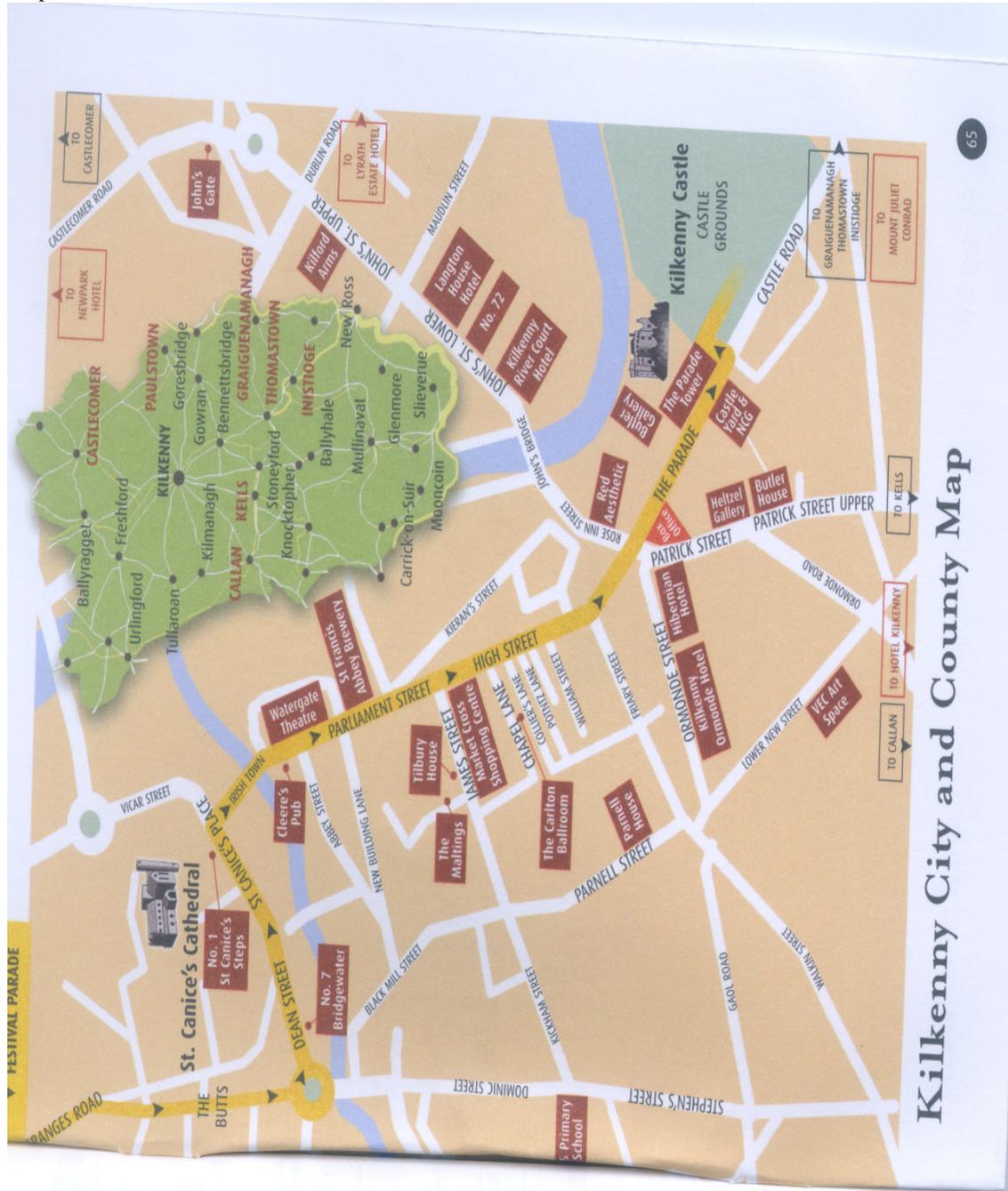
Map 1.4



Map 1.5



Map. 1.6



iv Iconic signs bear a resemblance to that which it represents and can be an image, images or graphical. It does not have to resemble *physically* what it refers to, nor the whole picture, and to read them the reader must first understand something of the contextual code. Index signs have a direct relationship to that which it represents. A shot of the Eiffel Tower indicates that the movie is in Paris, a picture of the Statue of

Liberty equals New York. These are images that have connotations beyond themselves. This understanding of these complex index sign-representation relationships is pivotal in place marketing. Symbolic signs: Any sign where the relationship with what it means is arbitrary, and can only function because there is a consensus over its meaning and meanings. e.g.: language

^v Crang, M. 'Folk heritage and regional identity', Presentation given to the Geography Dept. at NUI Maynooth, 3/11/2000.

^{vi} Original sources: RSGB Omnibus Arts Survey, 1991, Report on survey on Participation in and Attitudes towards the Arts in Scotland, System three Scotland, 1991. Tomlinson, R. 1993, Survey on Public attitudes towards the Arts in Northern Ireland, Marketing research Consultancy (Ireland) Ltd. 1991, Likkanen and Paakkonen, 1994, Les Pratiques Culturelles des Francais: enquete 1988-1989, 1989

^{vii} ANT: Key terms

Actors: An actor can be any human, non-human or human/non-human hybrid.

Actants: both humans and nonhumans can be actants. Actants may be "enrolled" into a situation or strategy in any manner of ways from mercenary to voluntarily. An Actant is anything that is doing something, acting (Akrich and Latour, 1992). Actants that acquire an identity then become actors. When connections between both actions and the actor's identities have been stabilised then you have a Network. *When a network operates so smoothly that the connections and separate identities are no longer discernable, we can then speak of an actor-network, a network that successfully pretends to be one actor* (Porsander, 2005 p. 19)

Agency: addresses the power of the non-human materials, devices and images. Agency is an *effect generated by a network of heterogeneous, interacting materials* (Law 1992 p.383). Agency, whether socially constructed, culturally given or historically evident has power to interact with and affect relationships. It, coupled with 'structure', becomes the foundations on which ANT approaches its case studies and the exploration of their multiple associations.

Black-boxing quarantines a sub-network. It acknowledges that a complex network of inputs and outputs interfaces between the sub-network and the remainder of the Actor-Network yet for simplicity sake it allows us to treat it as being 'just another actor'. Black-boxed actors may operate and be held as operating as actors, actants, intermediaries or having agency. No black-boxed quarantine is ever fully closed or permanent.

An *intermediary* is an actor (of any type) that stands at a place in the network between two other actors and serves to translate between the actors in such a way that their interaction can be more effectively coordinated, controlled, or otherwise articulated. (Kaghan and Bowker 2001, P.6)

^{viii} ANT was intended to be definition-resistant to avoid weakening its ability to analyse all aspects of the network under scrutiny. The process of selecting one definition of ANT involved ignoring others so instead I included multiple perspectives of ANT here:

ANT was developed to analyse situations in which it is difficult to separate humans and non-humans and in which the actors have variable forms and competencies (Callon, M. 1999, p.183)

Actor-network is, has been, a semiotic machine for waging war on essential differences. It has insisted on the performative character of relations and the objects constituted in those relations (Law, 1999, p.7)

Local interactions are tied into networks of relations which are constructed on a far wider scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street or region or even continent (Massey, 1991, p. 29).

In networks of humans, machines, animals, and matter in general, humans are not the only beings with agency, not the only ones to act; matter matters (Lars Risen)
(http://carbon.cudenver.edu/~mryder/itc_data/ant_dff.html)

My preferred ANT perspective is Anni Dugdale's Star Trek Deep Space 9 parable:
Odo is the security officer of the space station Deep Space 9, a Star Trek TV series. Odo is a shape shifter. His 'people' are the founders. Sent into space as an infant, a changeling, Odo is picked up as a shapeless blob of goo. Gradually, he learns to hold various shapes - a cube, a sphere, a cylinder, eventually that of a humanoid, and to shift between them. There are times when Odo appears as a solid (usually a humanoid). But for some hours each day we see him as fluid, as he regenerates in a special bucket. Sometimes Odo is clearly both solid and fluid, oscillating between liquid and solid, his centred identity as Deep Space 9's security officer trembling as his decentred state threatens. At these times Odo is both solid and liquid, simultaneously a singular object and a multiplicity of objects. And when Odo revisits his home planet he becomes part of the great link, poured into the ocean that is the continuum in which all founders on the planet are merged, having at one and the same time both different individual identities and the same collective identity. Anni Dugdale (1999, p. 113-4).

^{ix} In *On recalling ANT* Latour (1999) has issue with four things in ANT: the words Actor, Network and Theory, and the hyphen. In *Reassembling the Social* (2005) he advocates keeping the hyphen and returning the original other hyphen between Networking and Theory (p.9).

^x Law (1999) warned against the fixity and its threat to productive thinking: *Labelling doesn't help* (Law 1999 p.1). Law mourns the passing (and therefore acceptance/diffusion) of Actor-Network Theory into ANT; its naming and the conversion of that name into an acronym, and then its acceptance into the textbooks. He describes this as something monstrous yet natural, *the term "actor-network" grew, and it started, like a theoretical cuckoo to throw the other terms out of the nest* (Law 1999 p.5).

^{xi} At its core ANT seeks to heighten our awareness of science and every day life as an arena of performative devices, promoting the use of semiotics and semiotic thinking redressing this balance. The idea of incorporating semiotics with ANT isn't new: *Actor-network is, has been, a semiotic machine for waging war on essential differences. It has insisted on the performative character of relations and the objects constituted in those relations* (Law, J. 1999 p.7).

Semiotics teaches us how to think symmetrically about human and non-human agents. In texts, agents (actors, actants) are continually coming into being, fading away, moving around, changing places with one another, and so on. It is important that their status can easily make the transit between being real entities and social constructs, and back again (Pickering, 1993 p.563).

Semiotics imposes an exact symmetry between the human and material realms. Semiotically, as the actor-network approach insists, there is no difference between human and nonhuman agents: human and nonhuman agency can be continuously transformed into one another (Pickering, 1993, p.564)

^{xii} Objects bring other times and other spaces into the here and now. As Ashworth says *it is worth stating unambiguously that heritage is defined here as the contemporary uses of the past. It is defined therefore by use and thus by users and exists only in the present* (Ashworth paper given at GMIT NIRSA conference October 2002).

^{xiii} *The history of the museum is a history of the eye (...) and how it sees* (Hetherington 1999 p.54). New technologies and societal shifts in 'the norm' only heighten the importance of creating a place for blindness and other visual disabilities in relation to 'tactile encounters' when experiencing works of art. Sight has

dominated experience. It is through this sense and the structure of agencies surrounding us that our knowledge becomes situated (Haraway, 1991) and partially connected (Strathern, 1991).

^{xiv} Materials collected pertaining to:

The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy Festival

1. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival mini-brochure 30 May – 3 June 1996
2. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival Official Programme 30 May – 3 June 1996
3. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival Official Programme 29 May – 2 June 1997
4. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival mini-brochure 28 May – 1 June 1998
5. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival Official Programme 28 May – 1 June 1998
6. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival mini-brochure June 3 – 7 1999
7. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival Beer mat 1999
8. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival mini-brochure 31 May – 5 June 2000
9. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival mini-brochure 31 May – 4 June 2001
10. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival "MIAOW!" Official Programme 31 May – 4 June 2001
11. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival mini-brochure May 30 – June 3 2002
12. The Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy festival Kitty Flicks 2002 Flyer

The Kilkenny Arts Week/Festival

1. Kilkenny Arts Week catalogue cover (photocopied) 1974
2. Kilkenny Arts Week catalogue cover (photocopied) 1975
3. Kilkenny Arts Week Souvenir Programme cover (photocopied) 1991
4. Kilkenny Arts Week advance programme 1992
5. The Kilkenny People Kilkenny Arts Festival supplement 1992
6. Kilkenny Arts Week advance programme 1993
7. Kilkenny Arts Week advance programme 1994
8. Kilkenny Arts Festival programme booklet cover (photocopied) 1995
9. Kilkenny People Arts 95 programme/festival history booklet 1995
10. Kilkenny Arts Week: souvenir postcard "Untitled" 1995
11. Kilkenny Arts Week: souvenir postcard "Moonflower" 1995
12. Kilkenny Arts Week advance programme 1996
13. Kilkenny Arts Week advance programme 1997
14. Kilkenny Arts Week advance programme 1998
15. Kilkenny Arts Week Souvenir Programme 1998
16. Kilkenny Arts Week: a corporate opportunity flyer 1999
17. Kilkenny Arts Festival patron application flyer 1999
18. Kilkenny Arts Festival programme booklet 1999 x2
19. The Kilkenny People Kilkenny Arts Festival supplement 1999
20. Kilkenny Arts Festival programme booklet 2000
21. The Kilkenny People Kilkenny Arts Festival supplement 2000
22. The Kilkenny People Kilkenny Arts Festival supplement 2001
23. Kilkenny Arts Festival programme booklet 2002
24. The Kilkenny People Kilkenny Arts Festival supplement 2002

The Confederation of Kilkenny Festival

1. The Confederation of Kilkenny Festival programme pamphlet 1993
2. The Confederation of Kilkenny Festival programme pamphlet 1994

^{xv} An Action net (Czarniawska, 1997) has no set categories or 'pre-supposed dichotomies', it offers a handrail to assist in focussing on the dynamics of contemporary organising when ...it transcends organisational borders and even the networks organizations. "Actors", "organisations" and "networks" can be seen in this way as the as the products or stabilised effects of organising activities rather than something that exists a priori (Porsander 2005, p.18) When analysing an action net the process of the net is more important than its results. It is by means of studying the construction of the connections between

actions that the process of organising can be grasped. The notion of the action net allows us to see how connections between actions eventually create actors (Porsander, 2005, p.18)

^{xvi} Mick McGuinness (1921-2003) was Mayor of Kilkenny City on seven different occasions and last surviving Freeman of the City at the time of his death. He was first elected to Kilkenny County Council in 1959 and resigned in 1999. He was the longest serving public representative in Ireland at the time of his death.

^{xvii} **The committee (1964)**

Mr. W.A.L. Finnegan (Chairman), sales manager Kilkenny Brewery.

Miss Claire Allen (Secretary).

Mr. Stephen Deegan, Secretary Kilkenny Co.Council.

Mr. Peter Farrelly, Town Clerk (Vice-chairman).

Mr. Tommy Murphy (Publican)

Mr. James Coogan (Smithwicks cellar barman)

Mr T. Crotty, B.E., T.C.

Mr. Colm O Cochlain, B.Arch.

Miss Rita Harte (Artist)

Mr. Des Manning (Publican)

Mrs. Margaret O'Brien, I.C.A.

Mr. James Mullins, N.F.A.

CPT. Hugh Corrigan.

Mr. Richard Murtagh, Sanitary Inspector.

Mr. Nicholas Purcell, Chairman Kilkenny Co. Board, G.A.A.

Alderman M.J.McGuinness. (Mayor- '66, '67, '74)

(Festival secretary from second year until completion.)

^{xviii} On the second interview with McGuinness he made a throwaway comment that since attendance was so unexpectedly high in the first two years (200,000 in year one) no new promotion idea was thought to be necessary by him and Finnegan.

^{xix} Multiple narratives were recorded (festival barmen, festival revellers, show band guitarist) about the show bands and the show band era 'shenanigans'. Show bands had large followings of dedicated fans and were bankable signings and bookings for any festival. The show band phenomena is Black-Boxed in this thesis but is accepted as being a very significant force of attraction and external promotion source.

^{xx} ANT requires detailed information on the processes involved in committee enrolment, transition and turnover whether by coincidence, accident, requirement or design.

^{xxi} Picture App 1.1

From left to right: Mr. Bill Finnigan, Mr. Walter Smithwick, , Mr. Peter Farrelly Mayor M. J. McGuinness.

HERE'S TO THE NEXT ONE



Drinking a toast to next year's Kilkenny Beer Festival in the Beer Lambert, Group Promotions Manager, Guinness; Mr Bill Finnigan, Chair Festival; Mr Walter Smithwick, Mr M. J. McGuinness, Mayor of Kilkenny; Peter Farrelly, Vice-chairman.

^{xxiii} *Farrelly had a great gift and quality and clarity of where he wanted to go and he was known, quite rightly, as Stonewall Farrelly because he just knew, instinctively, what he was at, and it was interesting that while he was there running it, he was looking for authenticity...* (Pat Nolan).

^{xxiv} Unbeknownst to the interviewees, 12 interviewees from three different decades and three different festivals used the term Babysitting when referring to minding VIP's.

^{xxv} Irish light bulb company at the time. McGuinness was extremely proud of his role in this Cowboy-hero story. He was a very influential figure with many cowboy-hero stories but his retelling of this one was different in emphasis, speed and hand gestures.

^{xxvi} On the 5th of March 2003 Mick McGuinness passed away days before a third interview was scheduled to take place. No interview with the others was possible.

^{xxvii} I'm unsure if this is actually my idea or not. If not, apologies.

^{xxviii} Which is still functioning in as I write in 2009.

^{xxix} See Latour (1986) Models of power.

^{xxx} The first Arts Week committee (1974) were:

Chairman: Very Rev. Brian Harvey (Dean of St. Canice's Cathedral)

Programme committee: Chairman: George Vaughan (Artist and VEC Teacher), Barrie Cooke (Artist), Peter Donovan (Silversmith), David Lee (Organist and Choirmaster), Mary White (Teacher).

Finance committee: Chairman: Brendan Conway (CEO of the VEC), Virginia Begley (VEC secretary), Patricia Burke (VEC secretary), Susan Butler (Writer, sister of theatre producer Guthry, wife of Hubert Butler.), Jim Furlong, Ron Girdham (Smithwicks), Michael Gould, Jim King (Kilkenny design), Tom Phelan, Sr. Venard (Teacher), P.R.O.: Ramie Leahy (Artist and teacher).

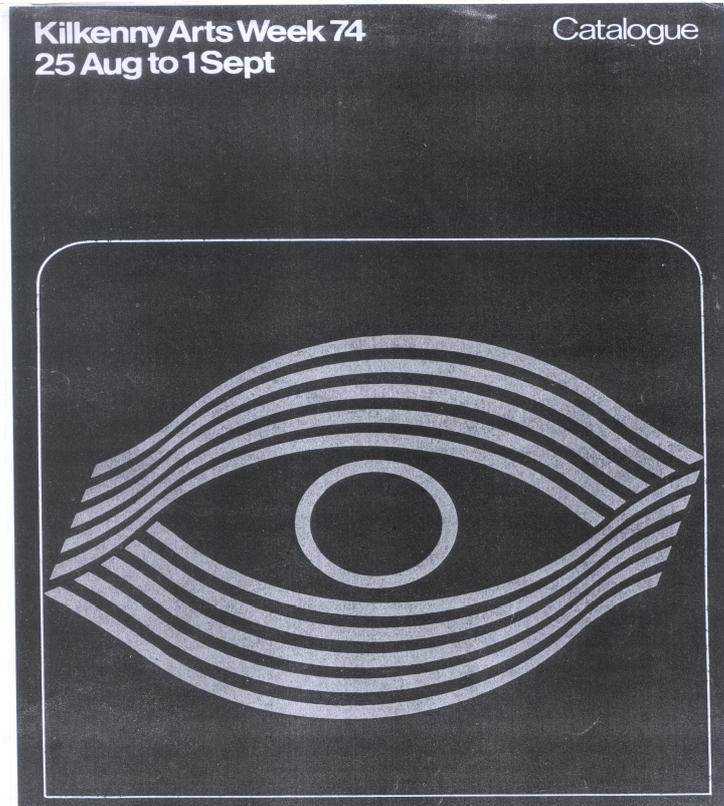
^{xxx}ⁱ The venue committee was a polite way to describe those who had to negotiate with Rev. Brian Harvey about the use of the Cathedral. It was later expanded to manage all of the venues

^{xxx}ⁱⁱ Here are other contributors of note:

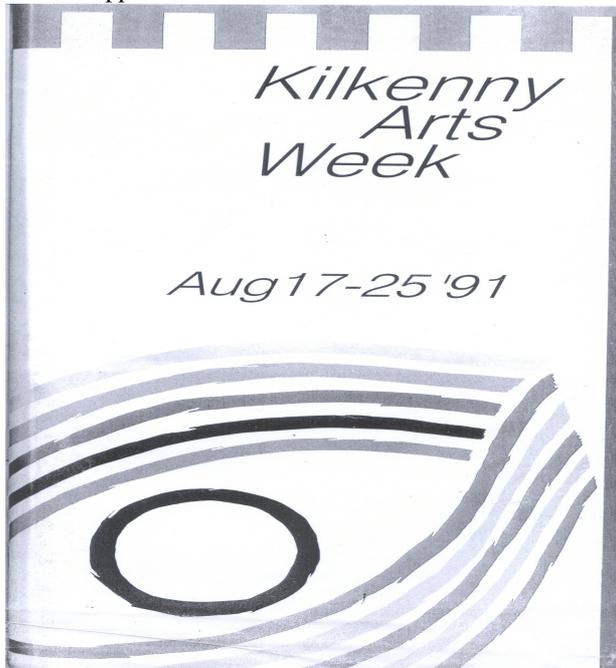
All the fellows that I have mentioned already were old soldiers of festivals in European mode, you know, of Salisburg festival and Edinburgh, they knew the climate of these places. And we had a fair shot at putting that climate in place in Kilkenny, and by means of the very notable artist or poet or musician walking through the city looking at the buildings or whatever. And I do recall seeing John Huet going round on his own looking at old buildings and he wrote afterwards on the destruction of Kilkenny, so-what's-new kind-of-thing, the destruction in the direction of modernisation.....

And Claus Aucher agreed to give a master class to musicians during the week, and he added immense image to the place because he got to know the guys in the pubs. He loved the pint. And we had many pints late at night down in Parliament Street and whatever, and he'd sing Bram's lullaby at the end of the night. It was creating an atmosphere such as the Wexford Opera Festival he is noted for, so it came almost ready made to us, you know. (Brendan Conway)

xxxiii Picture App 1.2



Picture App 1.3



PictureApp
1.5



^{xxxiv} The Arts Week Eye was not used for the following years programmes: '79, '81, '82, '83, '84, '85, '87, '88, '98, '99, '00, '01 and '02. The Eye Logo was present on years '74, '75, '77, and '91, '92, '93, '94, '95, '96, and '97. In '83 and '98 it was utilised on booking forms and other stationary though absent from programmes. No copy of the '76 and '80 programmes, or forms related to that year, were available for analysis.

^{xxxv} In late 1990 *Macnas* appointed Rod Goodall to the position of *Artistic Director* who alongside Manager, Padraic Breathnach, began to restructure the company (The Arts Council Annual Report 1991, P.44), the Galway Arts Festival appointed new a Programme Director, Trish Forde, to succeed founder, Ollie Jennings, (1991, p.44), and coincidentally KAW appointed a professional administrator, Sheila Deegan to work together with Chairman Ian Coulter, (The Arts Council Annual Report, 1992, p. 48). Although these changes proved positive in Galway, problems and misunderstandings over power relations meant that changes brought into KAW did not work out as some had envisioned. This is only one of multiple internal power-struggle stories within the festival's history.

^{xxxvi} Although members had set their minds to handing over their commitment did not wane. Members were described as being just as enthusiastic on year six as year seven. Even though they knew that they were handing over, their energy, intellectual input and dedication did not falter.

^{xxxvii} ... [W]e had on board from day one an accountant, Michael Gould, he was on the first committee, and he came from the accountancy firm, near the hotel there, it's a world wide accountancy firm. Michael Gould was there, and we asked him to achieve a situation that even if we made a profit that we wouldn't have to pay tax... (Brendan Conway).

^{xxxviii} *One of the best achievements was to get the full National Symphony Orchestra, RTE Symphony Orchestra – get it on board, and they came down here on the Friday morning, they rehearsed all day and they performed that night to a very full house. And that was on record and we did all the back-room dealing with them, and we got that on board for £1200. We charged them a facilities fee. Their normal cost would be £2500, which was a mint of money at that time, but we charged them a facilities fee of £1300, so we split the difference with them.* (Brendan Conway).

^{xxxix} Paddy Friel is the *daughter* of playwright and poet Brian Friel.

^{xi} The third festival was opened by actor Alan Stanford – *George* from popular RTE 1 agri-soap: *Glenroe*.

^{xli} Although all events were free, space was limited and bookings were taken for admission tokens. Shows like *Macbeth* were so popular that the tokens from the twelve shows were booked out within a matter of days.

^{xlii} Tony Walsh was C.E.O of the County Enterprise Board, and in 1999 promoted to Assistant County Manager level and appointed Director of Community and Enterprise for Kilkenny.

^{xliii} Member/Actor enrolment is a very important aspect of ANT and this is the first targeted, person specific-task specific, enrol-them-whatever-way-you-can, no passengers, no time-wasters, committee enrolment example. This is the first really professional assembling of a festival-orientated committee. This is the hiring of the *Magnificent Seven*, the assembling of the *Oceans 11* heist crew etc. This is exactly what ANT users write about when they track the plethora of enrolment strategies that can be used in network and regime assembly and mobilisation. This is also ‘going against the way things were done’ in Kilkenny.

The Committee

Chairperson; Paddy Friel, Administrator Kilkenny Castle,

Festival Administrator: Roisin McQuillin, Kilkenny Secretarial Services,

Kathleen Moran, Kilkenny Design Centre,

Tony Walsh, (then) Co.Development officer,

Cpt. Liam Condon,

Eamon Langton, proprietor of Langtons pub and night-club and (then)Vintners society president.

David O’Sullivan, Newpark Hotel and tourism council member,

Edmond O’Keefe, Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce.

PRO: Dennis Bergin

^{xliv} Walsh conscripted county council workers, carpenters, and builders who admitted that they wouldn’t normally be involved in “this sort of thing” (festivals) and were involved from beginning to end. These men also volunteered to help with stage construction, moving gig rig’s across the city and a lot of heavy lifting. Most of them were also conscripted by Walsh in the late nineties into the *Kilkenny Arts Festival*. The presence of the soldiers of James Stevens Barracks also added another social dimension to the festival ground staff and the mix of characters and personalities involved in the festival. This mix created a sense that the CKF was not elitist or catering to one type of Kilkenny resident. These fresh links and connections would prove to be crucial for the following Kilkenny festivals.

^{xlv} In 2005 it became the Smithwicks Cat Laughs Comedy festival and in 2009 it became the Carlsberg Cat Laughs Comedy festival.

^{xlvi} As listed in respective brochures

^{xlvii} As listed in respective brochures

^{xlviii} Beds needed for comedy, The Kilkenny People, May 10, 1996, page 1

^{xlix} Beds needed for comedy, The Kilkenny People, May 10, 1996, page 1

¹ Get ready to chortle, chuckle, rattle and roll, Sean Keane, The Kilkenny People, May 2nd, 1997, p.4
Stars “collared” for Cat Laughs, Sean Keane, The Kilkenny People, May 16th, 1997, p.5

^{li} Newspaper articles in ‘98 made note of the scaling down that occurred, by committee decision

^{lii} Ouch – Councillors get a tongue lashing, Sean Keane, The Kilkenny People, May 14, 1999, page 10
City rocked and rolled, The Kilkenny People, June 11, 1999
Doonesbury for Cat Laughs, The Kilkenny People, May 21, 1999

^{liii} How about Kilkenny tity?, Sean Keane, The Kilkenny People, June 9, 2000

^{liv} Stage set for weekend of laughs, Sean Keane, The Kilkenny People, May 25, 2001, page 22

^{lv} Can we afford to lose the Cat Laughs – No, The Kilkenny People, June 8th, 2001

^{lvi} Tourists found their tours being guided (hijacked) by Johnny Vegas, Jason Byrne, Dom Irrea and Rich Hall who invented histories and spun fables about a city they knew nothing about

^{lvii} Dara O Briain in 2001 latched onto the Kilkenny City debate regarding whether the city could retain its city status and the quarrel over whether it was a city or a town, a town or a city and then announced a solution: Kilkenny Tity!

^{lviii} The ‘Comedy Store’ franchise of comedy clubs is famous for reducing the comedy stage to its bare minimum consisting solely of a high-stool and bare stone wall with no decorations. This style quickly became iconic of the Comedy Store franchise and was replicated across the globe from Sydney to London.

^{lix} The vehicle for producing this comedy is the stand-up comedian’s interpretation of the world and their style of delivery, as opposed to other comedy vehicles (situation comedies, slapstick antics, farce). Once a comedian opts to perform at the festival they do not become a controllable resource or an immutable mobile – their fame or notoriety does – but they do not. They remain in flux: fluid and unforgiving if provoked. The comedians are contracted to perform, but are not obliged or expected to promote their shows, do spot interviews on radio shows, or become ambassadors for the festival. Some do, but completely of their own free will and for no extra payment. The comedians are not a resource that can be mined continuously for promotional and financial success. They are not constant – once off the stage they are technically no longer the festival product. But their fame, notoriety or brand is. Some attendees find the idea of mingling with famous comedians very appealing. To some customers the chance to rub shoulders with a favourite comedian is part of the product. In this sense even when the comedians are not on stage they play a pivotal role in the how the revellers experience the festival and Kilkenny. They are not doing anything but their fame and agency is working for them, creating stories for reveller-fans to relate as badges of experience (Boorstin, 1961 (1992)), Relph (1976), Urry (1990).

^{lx} Line ups

1995: Danny Breen, Geoff Boyz, Bernadette Birkett, Jo Brand, Anthony Clark, Dermott Carmody, Alan Davies, Will Durst, Kevin Gildea, Jeff Garlin, Jeff Green, Jeremy Hardy, Rich Hall, Dominic Holland, Sean Hughes, Phil Kay, Jimeoin, Fred Kaz, Tim Kazurinsky, Jon Kenny, Warren Hutchersno, Jeff Michalski, Donna McPhail, John Moloney, Dylan Moran, Jane Morris, Barry Murphy, Joel Murry, Ardal O’Hanlon, Owen O’Neil, Rick Overton, Parrot, Emo Philips, Michelle Read, John Shuttleworth, Mark Thomas, George Wendt

1996: Eddie Bannon, Geoff Boyz, Brendan Burke, Ed Byrne, Dermot Carmody, Happy Cole, Michael McCarthy, Dan O'Connor, Jeff Michalski, Megan Cavanagh, Ian Coppinger, Alan Davies, Martin Davis, Brendan Dempsey, Felix Dexter, Mark Doherty, Will Durst, Noel Faulkner, Diane Ford, Kevin Gildea, Boothby Graffoe, Rich Hall, Sean Hughes, Dom Irrera, Eddie Izzard, Milton Jones, Jon Kenny, Mark Lamarr, Eva Crowley, The Nualas, Sean Lock, Fred MacAuley, Katleen Madigan, Patrick McDonnell, Pauline McLynn, Donna McPhail, Barry Murphy, Bill Murray, Ardal O'Hanlon, Eddie Izzard, Stephen Frost, Neil Mullarkey, Suki Webster, Owen O'Neill, Rick Overton, Parrot, Greg Proops, Pat Short, John Shuttleworth, Mark Stauton, Mark Steel, Huw Thomas, Tommy Tiernan, Dom Irrera, The Second City

1997: Eddie Bannon, Rory Bremner, Brendan Burke, Ed Byrne, Jason Byrne, Scott Capurro, Dermot Carmody, Ian Coppinger, Alan Davies, Martin Davis, Brendan Dempsey, Mark Doherty, Shang Forbes, Kevin Gildea, Rich Hall vs Rich Hall, Jeremy Hardy, John Hegley, John Henderson, Dominic Holland, Dom Irrera, Milton Jones, Dave Johns, Andy Kindler, Laura Kightlinger, Mark Little, Sean Lock, Kevin McAleer, Michael McCarthy, Fred MacAulay, Patrick McDonnell, Reggie McFadden, Kathleen Madigan, Bob Mills, John Moloney, Dylan Moran, Barry Murphy, Ross Noble, Graham Norton, The Nualas, Dara O Briain, Deirdre O'Kane, Owen O'Neill, Alan Parker, Emo Philips, Joe Rooney, Margaret Smith, Mark Staunton, Mark Steel, Geogre Wendt, Dan Castellaneta, Colin Mocherie, Ian Stone, Tommy Tiernan, Mark Thomas, Huw Thomas, Harland Williams, The best of Irish Improv, The Second City

1998: Dave Attell, Bill Bailey, Eddie Bannon, Ed Byrne, Jason Byrne, Scott Capurro, Scott Carter, Brendan Dempsey, Mark Doherty, Will Durst, Diane Ford, Jeff Green, Rich Hall, Allan Havey, John Hegley, Warren Hutcherson, Armando Iannucci, Dom Irrera, Peter Kay, Mark Lamarr, Kevin McAleer, Fred MacAuley, Kathleen Madigan, Harriette Mantel, Donna McPhail, Sean Meo, Paul Merton, Dylan Moran, Barry Murphy, Colin Murphy, Ross Noble, Dara O Briain, Owen O'Neill, Jerry Sadowitz, John Shuttleworth, Tommy Tiernan, Johnny Vegas, The best of Irish Improv, The Second City

1999: Ed Byrne, Jason Byrne, Jimeoin, Dylan Moran, Deirdre O'Kane, Scott Capurro, Rich Hall/Otis Lee Crenshaw, Dom Irrera, Laura Knightlinger, Kathleen Madigan, Jeff Green, Peter Kay, Phil Kay, Fred MacAulay, Johnny Vegas, Lewis Black Adam Bloom, Mitch Hedburg, Rene Hicks, John Mendoza, Sean Cullen, Mark Doherty, Armando Iannucci, Milton Jones, Eddie Bannon, John Henderson, Barry Murphy, Dara O Briain, Owen O'Neill, Kilkenny or Bussed, Best of American Improv, Best of Irish Improv

2000: Apres Match, Brian Appleton, Eddie Bannon, Des Bishop, Adam Bloom, Geoff Boyz, Brendan Burke, Ed Byrne, Jason Byrne, Ian Cognito, Rich Hall/Otis Lee Crenshaw, Hattie Hayridge, Rene Hicks, Jeremy Hotz, Armando Iannucci, Dom Irrera, Jimeoin, Milton Jones, Phil Jupitus, Phil Kay, Sean Lock, Fred MacAuley, Mark Maron, Barry Murphy, Colin Murphy, Ross Noble, Dara O Briain, David O Doherty, Ardal O'Hanlon, Deirdre O'Kane, Owen O'Neill, Johnny Vegas, Harland Williams, The best of Irish Improv,

Cartoonists: Jim Cogan, Hunt Emerson, Private Eye, Tom Halliday, Graeme Keyes, Tim Leatherbarrows, Tom Mathews, John McCrea, Jussi Tuomola.

2001: Terry Alderton, Eddie Bannon, Todd Barry, Des Bishop, Adam Bloom, Marcus Brigstocke, Ed Byrne, Jason Byrne Rhoda Cameron, Louis CK, Ian Cognito, Ian Coppinger, Brendan Dempsey, Omid Djalili, Kevin Gildea, Rich Hall/Otis Lee Crenshaw (both shows!), Adan Hills, Dom Irrera, Jimeoin, Jake Johannsen, Phil Kay, Daniel Kitson, Fred MacAuley, Reggie McFadden, Gerry Mallon, Richard Morton, Barry Murphy Colin Murphey, Tommy Nicholson, Ross Noble, The Nualas, Dara O Biain, Ardal O'Hanlon, Deirdre O'Kane, Owen O'Neill, John shuttleworth, Mark Steel Daniel Tosh, Tommy Tiernan, Johnny Vegas, Mike Wilmot, The best of Irish Improv

2002: Bill Bailey, Eddie Bannon, Danny Bevins, Des Bishop, Lewis Black, Cris Bliss, Ed Byrne, Jason Byrne, Jimmy Carr, Omid Djalili, Kitty Flanagan, Kevin Gildeas, Ricky Glover, Rich Hall/Otis Lee Crenshaw, Adam Hills, Dom Irrera, Peter Kay, Phil Kay, Daniel Kitson, Sean Lock, Barry Murphey, Colin Murphy, Ross Noble David O'Doherty, Dara O Briain, Deirdre O'Kane, Owen O'Neill, Emo Philips, Jeffrey Ross, Pat Short, Mike Wilmot, Glen Wool.

^{lxi} All attendees have different aspirations, expectations and definitions of what's funny, what's not funny, what's original or what's out-dated. The festival attendees consists of three distinct groupings:

- 1) Devoted comedy enthusiasts
- 2) Random festival revellers
- 3) Bemused locals

The first group are hard-core dedicated fans, who try to attend as many shows as possible during their stay. These enthusiasts own CD and DVD copies of the performances, are familiar with the comedian's background, and can recite anecdotes and quotes from the comedians at will. In a sense they have sampled part of the comedy experience already, but not in the format or atmosphere delivered by the festival.

The second type, termed random festival revellers, attend the festival because it's a festival. Their main reason for attending is not the comedy and it is not to visit the city. They're simply using it as an excuse to party. Their presence at the festival is random and unplanned. The likelihood of them attending one of the shows is high, as several venues operate as pubs and nightclubs, but not essential.

Lastly, some locals choose to experience the festival events, (some alter their socialising routines to avoid it) with some volunteering as ground staff. Those that attend the festival experience the festival in a different way to outsider attendees.

^{lxii} Average cost per show- 1996 = £7; 2000 = £10; 2004 = €20

^{lxiii} American Bill Burr refers to David Beckham as "one of *your* soccer heroes" and immediately the mood within the mostly-Irish audience shifts. He is most quickly informed by many voices in no uncertain terms of his error. His reaction was to inform the audience that he was scrapping the rest of the joke and moved on. June 3rd, Venue Bar

^{lxiv} For a discussion on absence and presence see Law, J. (2003)

^{lxv} Where the comic's set 'goes', the stage follows; from the mundane streets and shops of everyday spaces and mundane interactions to more colourful, abstract places: The stands of two microphones become hen legs over the shoulders of Barry Murphy who has suddenly transported his audience to the surgery of a Hen gynaecologist (Rivercourt Hotel, June 7, 2004), spotlights transport Eddie Izzard to a scene from the film *The Great Escape* (Watergate Theatre, May 30th, 1996), Rich Hall's comic alter-ego consistently reminds us that we are guests at the Tennessee Department of Corrections comedy night (Cleere's Theatre, 7th June, 1999), John Kenny takes his audience into G.A.A. dressing rooms at half time during inter-parish under-twelves hurling finals between bitter parochial rivals (Newpark Hotel, June 2nd, 1996). Improvisation troupes frequently create situations where they insert the likes of a pizza delivery boy into situations involving the *Death Star*, Genghis Khan's tent, Roman Coliseums, the White House, and further and farther beyond. Space becomes malleable, alterable, idealised, horrified and dramatised. Naturally this 'transportation' of the audience is only successful when met by the correct corresponding suspension of disbelief on the audience's behalf, which once again brings us back to the relationship between comic, audience and individual. Some audience members do actively seek an agenda behind the tall tales of a comedian.

^{lxvi} To refer to this work as invisible is misleading; the fact of the matter is it is very visible in its quality, as it has sharpened and polished the comedian, thus making him/her as good as professional and quick witted as they want to appear to be. Lack of preparation, experience and skill become quite visible. Erving Goffman highlighted similar unrealised work occurring with radio broadcasters: "*with painstaking care, testing one phrase after another, in order to follow the content, language, rhythm, and pace of everyday talk*" (1959). Getting caricatures correct requires trial and error as well as observation and talent. Analysing the mannerisms and speech patterns of popular entertainment and political figures, requires time, practise, and an *eye* for spotting exaggerate-able traits. The finished product that the audience experience has often

undergone many incarnations, reaching this final point only after many man-hours of behind the scenes work.

Some comedians put their creative process to work for them by actively involving the audience in their polishing process and informing them straight out of the various different punch lines they were considering using and anecdotes of negative responses some lines have received (Eddie Izzard, Tommy Tiernan, Greg Proops, Owen O'Neill). One example of using back-stage work as on-stage material is when Rich Hall describes to the audience his process of deciding what material to use in his 'Otis Lee Crenshaw*' persona, and what to keep and use in his 'Rich Hall' shows (June 2001). These performers approach the production of their shows with complete professionalism, utilising dictaphones, camcorders, mirrors and laptops to record and observe rehearsals and improvised material so that ideas can be worked on.

* Although Rich Hall is also Otis lee Crenshaw, the delivery, style, and material is completely different. He never performs both in the one show, keeping both acts separate and distinct, he remains in character throughout while performing Otis, and the backing musicians that accompany Otis do not perform with Rich Hall.

^{lxvii} Kate Bowe refers both to the person Kate Bowe and the organisation Kate Bowe PR, headed by Bowe with a core staff of two others.

^{lxviii} No T.V. for Cats The Kilkenny People, June 9, 1995

^{lxix} Committee and volunteers often refer to it unofficially as *Miss Kitty*

^{lxx} Cat Laughs nets a big audience, Sean Keane, June 2nd, 2000

^{lxxi} The website attracted a particular type of customer in the year 2000 when net-usage and availability was not as mainstream as it currently is, thus excluding those without internet access.

^{lxxii} Joke awards were titled as a public relations stunt in the first year: The Top Cat award (best comic), the Kilkenny Kitten (up and coming), and the Cat-Astrophe (trophy) (worst performance) were spoof awards designed to be publicised, but not awarded. (Did you hear the one...? The Kilkenny People, June 2nd 1995, page 2.)

^{lxxiii} To fully grasp what was involved in the steps the CLCF organisers took to effectively outlaw 'media industry traders', one must first understand what was happening at the *Just for Laughs* festival in Montreal and the *Edinburgh Comedy Festival*. In the 1980s stand up comedy was heralded as the new rock and roll. Across Britain and America comedy joints sprang up at an alarming pace, mainly due to the ease at which the meagre setting could be erected. Acts flourished as Comedy 'stores' and comedy 'workshops' proliferated, and television companies were eager to capitalise. With the television success stories of comedians Robin Williams, Roseanne Barr, Jerry Seinfeld, Whoppi Goldberg, Eddie Murphy, Richard Prior, Bill Murry, Steve Martin and others, the late eighties and early 1990s saw a flurry of television industry scouts hunting for the next comedy-commodity. The same had also occurred in the early eighties in England with the arrival of many new fresh alternative comedians and sketch writers onto the London and Manchester scenes. Many saw it as the norm for these young comedians to *graduate* to television and movies. Some television networks were confident enough in the comedians themselves to sell as-is type specials – live recorded performances, the most prestigious being the HBO specials, and Channel 4 specials. Unfortunately some producers wished to replicate a performance yet without allowing the performer to perform as stand-up, and instead trying to marry them with a compatible vehicle in the shape of the television sit-com. This drive to commodify the stand-up comedians product rarely proved possible with many comedians being totally unsuited to their assigned roles (eg Billy Connolly as trendy school teacher, Billy MacGregor, in '*Head of the Class*' –1990-1991) or projects being dropped altogether. Projects where the comic retained complete creative control did succeed (Seinfeld, Ellen, Roseanne, Mork and Mindy) yet these were the exception to the rule.

^{lxxiv} *By every manner of means I tried to fill holes, financial holes for them in the first year and work with them. Done other things as well. I remember t'was very very important a lot of the comedians here you wouldn't get them for a normal fee but they like to be respected and I remembered organising things like Mayoral receptions because that would appeal to them. They could sign in the old visitor's book. I remember Richard came to me and he said "lookit, I'm getting such a fellow, oh yea, George Wendt, "that guy, Norm, in cheers" "but you have to have a mayoral reception for him". Richard thought that would be an impossible thing to get. I said "No problem. I'll talk to Mick Lanigan" so that was organised and we had George Wendt in the Town Hall (Tony Walsh).*

^{lxxv} Stars of Murphy's Cat Laughs The Kilkenny people, may 24 1996 p.4
Stunning Line-up for Murphy's Cat Laughs, The Kilkenny People, March 1 1996 p. 4
The Cat Laughs The Kilkenny People, may 5, 1995 p.4
Kilkenny will be split with Laughter The Kilkenny People, June 2nd, 1995 page 13
The second City The Kilkenny People, June 2nd, 1995 page 13
Get ready to chortle, chuckle, rattle and roll The Kilkenny People, May 2nd 1997 p.4

^{lxxvi} The failure to inform Dom Irrera that he was performing in Ireland, and mis-communicated accommodation numbers.

^{lxxvii} Headset and microphone devices for communication between directors and back stage crews

^{lxxviii} Through the various rituals of turning off the house lights, of closing/opening curtains, targeting spotlights, requests for phones to be turned off, and exit announcements, the audience are alerted and prepared for the commencement of the gig. Before the main comic arrives any number of sequences can be initiated to continue to buoy up the audience: an easily recognisable or associated theme song (to further emphasise the Cat imagery every show begins with *The Cure* anthem: *The Love Cats*), voice over, entrance style, etc. Some performances have Master of Ceremonies (MC's) who provide continuity and link the acts together.

^{lxxix} She was also Richard Cook's bestman at his wedding to the actress and comedian Pauline McLynn.

^{lxxx} The following exert communicates how many comedy-industry networks Michael McCarthy has access to through his *Second City* connections.

Taken from the website - The Second City: <http://www.secondcity.com/theatre/chicago/index.asp>
Accessed 3/8/04

Since 1959, The Second City has established itself as a Chicago landmark and a national treasure. The theatre that launched the careers of such comic greats as John Belushi, Mike Myers, Bill Murray, Gilda Radner, and more offers nightly comedy shows, as well as a variety of other programs and services. ...

The Second City also has touring troupes that take our shows on the road, a Training Center that teaches improvisation, acting, writing, and other skills, and a corporate communications division that services the business world.

Today, Second City has three different divisions that provide training and education to thousands of individuals each year.

Some alumni of note:

The compass players - 1955-1959 Alan Alda, Ed Asner, Ron Liebman

The Second City: 1960 Alan Arkin, Paul Sand, Joyce Sloane, 1961 Joan Rivers, 1969 Harold Ramis, 1971 John Belushi, 1972 David Rasche, 1973 John Candy, Bill Murray, 1974 Dan Aykroyd, 1975 George Wendt, 1976 Shelley Long, 1978 Jim Belushi, 1981 Rick Thomas,

1986 Dan Castellaneta, Rick Hall, 1988 Mike Myers, 1989 Chris Farley, 1991 Michael McCarthy

^{lxxxix} Allowing other components to do their job without interference is a lesson most committee power players are taught but don't learn.

^{lxxxii} Cook hired four computers from *Prompt Data* with booking software, they were delivered, explained and then left to the box office staff. No committee participation came from their supplier Vincent Lundy. The human resource provider in this instance is silent while what the computer software accomplished in 1996 was ground breaking.

^{lxxxiii} By 2001 the dominance of the text message as an ordering facilitator was almost complete. By 2005 the use of camera phones, phone camcorders, mp3s, and web phones were becoming more popular. By 2007 the use of camera phones, video messaging, picture sending and Bluetooth technologies were almost omnipresent and had mobilised video share sites and social networking sites, online discussion groups and bloggers on the promotion of the Kilkenny festivals. In 2009 CLCF utilised twitter and GPS and GIS technologies to allow patrons to download venue locations and 'comedian trackers'.

^{lxxxiv} This story describes a technology loop that is non-repeatable: *The comedian David O'Doherty tells a story about his brother Mark Doherty, buying a computer. Until a few years ago Doherty was a stand-up too, and like many others he supplemented his income by doing voice-overs. Knowing nothing about computers, he put the introductory CD into the machine. A helpful voice began to guide him through installation. It was his voice. He had recorded the voice-over a year before, and now a guy who knew nothing about computers was listening to himself telling him how to do it.* (Shane Hegarty, Comedy's a serious business The Irish Times, , O3/12/04)

^{lxxxv} Other forms of sponsorship-in-kind also exist in the form of donations, some of which include the box-office operating head quarters in 1996 and 1997, Flannery's Hotel, which was donated free-of-charge by Kilkenny Business man Roy Coogan. See Beds needed for comedy *The Kilkenny People*, May 10, 1996, for details.

^{lxxxvi} Ouch – Councillors get a tongue lashing, Sean Keane, *The Kilkenny People*, May 14, 1999, page 10
Doonesbury for Cat Laughs, *The Kilkenny People*, May 21, 1999
How about Kilkenny tity? Sean Keane, *The Kilkenny People* June 9th, page 40

^{lxxxvii} Combined figures – received from Arts council

| | Kilkenny Arts Week/ Festival | Galway Arts Festival | Bickerstaffe | Side notes on Watergate theatre | Significant once offs | Combined Source |
|------|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1991 | £20,000 | £45,800 | -- | | | ACAR* '91 p. 45 |
| 1992 | £24,000 | £48,500 | -- | £355,750 | | ACAR '92 p. 10, 45, 52 |
| 1993 | £26,000 | £60,000 | -- | £331,000 | | ACAR '93 p. 24, 54, 56 |
| 1994 | £45,200 | £96,500 | £34,500 | | | ACAR '94 p. 80-2, 84 |
| 1995 | £46,000 | £112,000 | £29,000 | | Cleeres: £4,000 | ACAR '95 p. 53-6, 79 |
| 1996 | £60,000 | £115,000 | £62,000 | | | ACAR '96 p. 46-7, 84, 94-5 |
| 1997 | £55,200 | £120,600 | £45,300 | | | ACAR '97 p. 50, 58 |

| | | | | | | |
|------|------------|----------|----------|--|--|------------------------|
| 1998 | £62,000 | £145,000 | £75,000 | | | ACAR '98 p. 31, 39, 42 |
| 1999 | £71,500 | £175,000 | £82,500 | | | ACAR '99 p. 20, 25-6 |
| 2000 | €209,092 | €355,297 | €3,200 | | | ACAR '00 p. 45, 47 |
| 2001 | € 229, 375 | €303,000 | €106,400 | | | ACAR '01 p. 77, 80, 81 |

*ACAR = The Arts Council Annual Report

^{lxxxviii} The Cat Laughs public house operated between the years 98 – 01 and was jointly owned by prominent members among the festival hierarchy. It was utilised as a stand-up comedy venue all year round and is within itself a black box of associations, connections, networks, cowboy heroics, fresh idealism and financial flows.

^{lxxxix} ... here, I think, is one of the keys to the stories of cowboy-heroism: they have to do with effective decision making and so with judgement. Cowboy-heroes have the power to match-make. And they are effective because they have the knack, the luck or the capacity to make good decisions – decisions that will attract resources and keep the show on the road. (Law, 1994, P.65)

^{xc} “Guinness basically owns Smithwicks. It’s run from Dublin and really, Dublin didn’t, Smithwicks didn’t see what happened so they were really mainly concerned with the fact that they had clearly lost a lot of money and that I owed a lot of money round the town. Which I did, I owed an awful lot of money round the town, but they were mainly to hotels, I owed money to the printers, not The Kilkenny People, printers in Dublin, local tax-man for VAT on foreign artists, but I knew they were the kind of bills that weren’t going to people out of business and that was really important to me that like I knew that if I was doing business with somebody that it would not be, if I couldn’t pay the debt, I knew one day I would pay the debt, I would always pay my debt, but that it wouldn’t put them out of business and of course, it wouldn’t and it didn’t and they were able to explain it. But there was a period of time, you found out who your friends were, there was a period of time where I was like a pariah and I really felt strongly about because I knew I had been involved in something that was quite special and there were some people at official level who really went out of their way to help and paid bills.

There were bills. There were certain key people who really helped me in that first year. Like sorting out things in kind and you know helping out paying the odd bill here and there but Smithwicks, locally, I think were dismayed when the festival went to Murphy’s because they couldn’t understand why. It was a big success, it was clearly going to get bigger, but I kept re-approaching Smithwicks saying I need to know, I need to know, I need to know and I’d get nothing - no replies and I think that that you know to an extent, an arrogance of the big company where they felt that they could take their time in assessing whether they wanted to get involved with me again and if they did, that they would grow the festival with me but with them in the driving seat and me as the conductor of some kind.

So I just couldn’t do this and Murphy’s expressed an interest the first year so I went down to a guy called David Ford in Murphy’s and within two weeks had a deal and it was worth double the first year, which it needed to be. I came back and I announced that to Eamonn [Langton], that Murphy’s were going to sponsor the Festival and then what happened is that the shit hit the fan because its a Guinness town and then they began to take me more seriously, obviously and they tried to make counter-offers to the vintners and the big meetings took place and I was you know, big efforts to persuade me to run again with Guinness. I think there were members within Guinness who didn’t believe actually [that] I had a deal with Murphy’s. I had some very unpleasant meetings. I remember one at the Newpark Hotel which I will never forget where I was paced round the room and the attitude was like, almost, “How dare you go off and we don’t think you can”, and then the letter following the facts of that three hours later saying “great to meet you here’s the offer”, the matching offer.

But as far as I was concerned it was a real learning lesson actually. It was very funny because I was doing a co-production with Lynn with the Abbey Theatre but from Bickerstaff point of view and I'd gone up and discussed a sum with the Abbey as to what they would co-fund the project and then I got a fax from them that day with a completely different number, a different figure from the one we'd agreed to and on the same day I got that fax from Guinness after a horrible meeting saying "Great to meet you and here's what we're going to offer as discussed " and I remember myself and Lynn, we hadn't a tenner between us. We were on the dole and we told the National Theatre Company and the national drink company to fuck off on the same day and I remember thinking this is a very special day in my memory and the thing was that as it became clear, the impact of what they'd done, I think Guinness people got special permission to increase their budget and then it was patently obvious to me if I jumped horses at this stage and went from Murphy's to Guinness, they would then own me because Murphy's would never come back, once there would be no trust. They would see themselves as a bargaining chip within the whole and they wouldn't be interested in that. Then Guinness would have been able to give me whatever they wanted. So I thought I had a moral obligation and also it seemed to me to make business sense to stick with Murphy's and then maybe Guinness would remain interested, which I'm sure they have done to a certain extent although I think they take a lot longer to make their decisions, particularly at levels of funding that we were talking about. Murphy's all told now, in terms of all their advertising and everything I mean they spend close on quarter of a million quid on that - a lot of money they spend on it.

There was a lot of, it created problems for a lot of the Vintners certainly, but that's just the nature of it, and it created problems I think you know locally you know. A lot of people had worked for the brewery in the past, a lot of people feel a kind of a commitment to Smithwicks and are very proud of the fact that Smithwicks historically were the biggest employer, not that it is any more, but it used to be. And Murphy's were always kind of laughed at and suddenly they were backing this festival which kind of, people were interested in and of course, initially in the early stages for a couple of years what it really meant was that, not that a huge amount of Murphy's was sold but the Heineken taps you suddenly saw increasing. Heineken and Murphy's.

So it was working for Murphy's and once Murphy's saw the 1996 festival - Bill Murray, although the show got criticised a lot, it generated a phenomenal amount of publicity - and then Murphy's would go "Oh yes, we'll stick with this" and they signed a further two-year contract with me, with major leaps in funding levels". (R. Cook)

^{xci} Interview with Fergus Cronin. Beds needed for comedy The Kilkenny People, May 10, 1996.

^{xcii} Interview with Richard Cook – may 2001.

^{xciii} The Battle of the Breweries Sean Keane, *The Kilkenny People*, February 9 1996.

^{xciv} Interview with Richard Cook - may 2001. The Battle of the Breweries Sean Keane, *The Kilkenny People*, February 9 1996

^{xcv} *In the first year [of Murphy's sponsorship] Guinness did really stupid stuff. They tried to have a World Music Festival the same weekend and they had bunting up all over the place and they were bringing in bands. They [Guinness] brought in one Samba band from Brazil of somewhere which they spent a huge amount of money on and of course you can't brand Samba bands and the whole point of the colour, some people were going around "how much are Murphy's sinking into this thing", there's a brilliant Samba band wandering up the street with people in Murphy's T-Shirts dancing behind them. (Richard Cook)*

Other stunts were pulled by Guinness that weekend:

It was really stupid. It got petty. There was a bunting war went on. One day Murphy's put up a load of Bunting and the following day Guinness would put up a load of bunting and take down Murphy's bunting, it was absolutely outrageous. It was stupid. ...But I just laughed at it all because to me it was the classic

case of a very big company not having their eye on the ball, which they didn't. They didn't understand the festival because they didn't focus on it. It slipped through their net and by the time it slipped through their net, Murphy's had it.

INT: That was a big fish there.

Richard C: Big fish there. Or it was growing. It started off as a little one and it was growing into a whale or a shark and in a way I was delighted in a sense I was felt it as a theatre company and I've always been battling against the odds and clearly ... stout market Murphy's are battling against the odds, a tiny % so I think I had a very personable relationship with three or four key people.

INT: The under-fish.

Richard C: The under-fish [laughs].

^{xcvi} Many publicans would not go on record but said the same thing: In the beginning they were furious with Cook and annoyed by his arrogance and stubbornness, but now freely admitted that they admired his guts and were extremely positive of the festival's impact on the city. In gambling on Murphy's Cook was placing the festival first.

^{xcvii} Hierarchies can be seen to disagree and "butt against one another" (Law, 1994) when information is not shared, or when attitudes of entitlement are displayed. The co-operative relationship between venue staff and festival volunteers largely depended on the atmosphere generated at the venue site. And this, once again relies heavily on the network generated by the comedian.

^{xcviii} A low-tech show requires less expertise and this also influences the organiser's decisions. High tech lighting and sound operatives do not take kindly to having people mess with their settings. Such venue technicians do not appreciate outsiders adjusting or manhandling their rigs. Professional touring technicians associated with a comedian do not appreciate the close scrutiny and interference they receive from what they perceive to be 'amateur dabblers'. These emotions ripple back into the venue hierarchy.

^{xcix} Interviews revealed that the attitude towards troublemakers is different between venue staff and festival staff. The average venue staff member is accustomed to removing, or witnessing the removal of, troublesome elements and feels very little remorse when doing so. Festival staff are not so hardened.

^c If a cultural reference is part of a joke it is important that it registers with the audience. But the audience is composed of many individual parts, so this may not prove possible. Bill Bailey is a comedian who operates in a nerd-culture sub-genre of humour. One of his story-arcs, delivered in the Watergate theatre 2001, revolves around the delivery of his impression of Yoda, a character from Star Wars. The sketch revolves around the character of Master Yoda, a Jedi master of over 800 years, as a tax consultant. Although the character was not mentioned the voice and distinct speech pattern was instantly recognisable to most. Those that hadn't seen Star Wars became the silent voices within the audience. This caught Bill Bailey by surprise so he decided to explore which audience members had seen Star Wars and which hadn't. He then re-enacted all of the movies in a mere handful of minutes. Then he swiftly turned the tables and asked who had never completed a tax return, and went on to highlight some of the similarities between Darth Vader and Tax accountants. Such a shift, when done successfully creates a unique product, as those exact improvisations are never to be repeated, especially if it is in direct reaction to specific events and interactions within that particular audience. This winning back of the audience returns control of the room to the comic, and the festival gains another epic myth. Cultural signifiers, icons, images, parables of the ridiculous and the sublime all partake in the power shifts between comedian and audience and back again, impacting on the reception of festival events, both individually, and as a shared experience event. These experiences feed into the larger festival loop – impacting on the festival through bookings and comedian selections, festival promotion through word of mouth and show reviews.

Of course there are the exceptions, which seem to occur in a minority of comedians. Established comedians, or those comedians who perceive themselves to be famous, fail to adapt set jokes to include the audience and continue on regardless as they believe it is the audience's lack of sophistication that is at fault, as opposed to any fault of their own. The audience reads such an attitude and they respond accordingly. Unpopular reviews of a comedian's performance are quickly communicated to the festival committee

through the festival grape vine of venue staff, festival staff, assorted concerned individuals and disappointed customers. E.g. Bill Murray.

^{ci} In-jokes and re-occurring punch lines are often rehashed between friends well after the show is over. Not all audience reactions revolve around knowing the difference between Margaret Thatcher and Marge Simpson. Some audience members confess to feeling pressured by the laughter around them to participate in the in-crowd laughter and thus avoid feelings of isolation. Two confessed to having embarrassing laughs that attract too much attention from the comedian who incorporates their distinctive laughs into becoming part of the show and thus these people do not laugh out loud if they can help it. One interviewee boasted that it was impossible to make him laugh and that he rarely did. Other audience members later speak of circumstances that make some jokes personally funny, some jokes personally significant, and others intensely hurtful, disgusting or embarrassing.

^{cii} The following descriptions originate from a report titled *Information package for principal sponsor* (Kilkenny People Publishing 3/4/98) sent to prospective sponsors.

Introducing The New Board: The new Board has been carefully chosen to reflect a combination of eclectic artistic tastes and business skills. There is a real energy and sense of purpose among the group.

Brian Kiely, Chairman

Brian is a dedicated supporter of the arts, and brings excellent diplomatic skills (essential to bring a sense of unity to the festival) to his position as Chairman. He has managed to manoeuvre us all into doing exactly what he wants us to do without offending anybody!

Fergus Cronin

Fergus, managing director of Bowen Water Technology - an international leader in environmental engineering - is a long term patron of the arts and well-known in film and theatrical circles. He brings long-time festival experience and financial management skills to the group. He is implementing management systems to ensure that all targets are met efficiently.

Kathleen Moran

Kathleen, Managing director of the Kilkenny Design Centre, internationally renowned for its showcase of crafts and decorative arts in a beautiful setting, brings a keen business mind, a clear focus and a strong sense of style to the Board.

Tony Walsh

Tony is chief executive of Kilkenny County Enterprise Board, and brings enormous committee experience and superb negotiation skills. He has worked hard with Kilkenny Arts festival in recent years to bring it to the beginning of this new era.

Lynn Cahill

Lynn is joint director of the renowned Bickerstaffe Theatre Company - responsible for many critically acclaimed productions. Not to mention the Murphy's Cat Laughs Comedy Festival - now one of the largest international comedy festival in the world! She is co-ordinating the first ever theatre programme for us this year.

Siobhan O'Dwyer

Siobhan is managing director of ODM - a young sharp and contemporary marketing communications agency in Kilkenny city. With a flair for capturing the heart of a brand, and a creative approach towards communication, she will help to create a dramatic and stylish new image for Kilkenny Arts Festival, and is preparing an innovative wide-reaching publicity programme.

Claire O' Donoghue

Claire is highly respected among the artistic world for her knowledge of the visual arts. We are delighted that she is responsible for co-ordinating an ambitious and challenging visual arts programme this year.

Susan Proud

Susan, who has worked with energy and passion to develop a hugely exciting music programme this year, is a professional musician and is also a prominent member of the Kilkenny Music Society. She is also chairperson of the Butler Gallery in Kilkenny.

Audrey Phelan

Audrey - a professional musician with a background in public relations in one of Irelands top PR agencies- was appointed administrator of the Kilkenny Arts Festival in 1997 and has worked ceaselessly to keep the festival moving forwards.

^{ciii} *...the choice of any particular model opens up an indefinite space of different goals (Pickering, 1993 p.579). ANT is particularly well equipped to target the idea of transportable solutions, of parachute-in fix-its, that have no destination-specific development or sensitivity to the unique characteristics of the area. Its as if they forget that Geography happens. ANT fortunately does not. (Latour, 1983, p.154; Murdoch, 1997, p736).*

^{civ} *The festival is a year-round operation and is governed by a Board of Directors and Executive Directors. Reporting to the Executive Directors, the Chief Executive Officer will be responsible for managing the five main elements that constitute the dynamic around which the festival operates; Administration, Programming, Marketing, Production and Finance. Based in Kilkenny, the CEO will work closely with the Artistic Director, Publicist, Financial Manager and Production Manager.*

^{cv} *And there may be grounds to fear that tourism in Kilkenny is still very much unplanned and governed irrationally:*

No. I mean, to be honest with you, I would be very... I mean Cat Laughs does not have a relationship with any of the Tourist Councils. I mean, apart from the poor, beleaguered and besieged local Tourist Office, which just gets inundated all the time with calls and information requests and I mean, I've written letters. I, in the first year we got money from the Tourism Council and we really needed it, though we've needed it every year, really, genuinely needed it.

I think there's a sense, like, the Tourism Council are an odd bunch really, I mean there's so many, It seems to me that all the Tourism bodies are fuckers to some extent. I mean they're there to serve interests. The City and the County and who wants this and who wants that I mean I'm under no illusions in my own head as to what the Cat Laughs has done for Tourism in Kilkenny and also for the image of Kilkenny....

... but the Tourism council for whatever reason, you know, you approach it publicly and they say "Oh no we're fully supportive of this festival" i.e. Cat Laughs, but really, you know, they don't really understand it. They don't get it. They're not really I mean they know it brings in a lot of people but you know, and I've made presentations to various tourism bodies but I've actually lost. You know?...,

It seems to me that it's a fucker because its got people representing counties and you know even the county that Cat Laughs is good for the City but not very good for the County and you know it's just a lack of vision....

But it seems pretty obvious to me that you know these people should be sitting down with me and talking about an integrated strategy that incorporates, in a serious way, what myself and Lynn and Michael are doing with regard to this festival in Kilkenny because it attracts just thousands of people, not only nationally but Internationally (Richard Cook)

^{cvi} *There are only two endings for the four festivals in this thesis as the arts and comedy festivals still continue on. And both of those endings were directly responsible for the beginnings of the festivals that followed.*