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Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity

Abstract

Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity examined perceptions of creativity among eight creatively gifted adults from diverse backgrounds who have a profession in an arts related field. This study examined what the phenomenon of creativity is and how it is experienced. The beliefs that inform perceptions of creativity were explored. The experiences that inform perceptions of creativity were described. The interactions among beliefs and experiences were considered. The data collected revealed that creativity is an instinct that each person possesses and can activate within themselves. Creativity can be nurtured based on environment and through personal, educational, professional, and cultural experiences. Creativity involves responding to the world around you and sharing your experiences with others. This study revealed that K-12 students need more access to the arts, opportunities to demonstrate learning through multiple representations, access to teachers of color, and identification and programming for creatively gifted students.

Document Type

Dissertation in Practice

Degree Name

Ed.D.

Department

Curriculum and Instruction

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Keywords

Art, Creatively gifted, Creativity, Gifted, Multicultural, The arts

Subject Categories

Art Education | Education | Elementary Education | Gifted Education | Secondary Education

Publication Statement

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Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity

A Dissertation in Practice

Presented to

the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education

University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

Abby Noel Winterbrook

August 2022

Advisor: Dr. Norma Hafenstein

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Title: Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity
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Degree Date: August 2022

Abstract

Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity examined perceptions of creativity among eight creatively gifted adults from diverse backgrounds who have a profession in an arts related field. This study examined what the phenomenon of creativity is and how it is experienced. The beliefs that inform perceptions of creativity were explored. The experiences that inform perceptions of creativity were described. The interactions among beliefs and experiences were considered. The data collected revealed that creativity is an instinct that each person possesses and can activate within themselves. Creativity can be nurtured based on environment and through personal, educational, professional, and cultural experiences. Creativity involves responding to the world around you and sharing your experiences with others. This study revealed that K-12 students need more access to the arts, opportunities to demonstrate learning through multiple representations, access to teachers of color, and identification and programming for creatively gifted students.

Acknowledgements

I want to dedicate this work to my late mother, Dr. Christine Ann Winterbrook *Mom you are my inspiration in life. I wish so very much you could have been here to see my completed work, but I am so very thankful that you got to walk part of this journey with me. I am so appreciative of the support and guidance you provided over the last twenty-six years. I love you forever and always. My dissertation is dedicated to you.*

I would like to thank Dr. Norma Hafenstein for her support and guidance throughout this study. Dr. Hafenstein has had a tremendous impact on my professional and educational pursuits. I am very thankful that I had Dr. Hafenstein as my mentor and advisor through this process.

To my Dissertation Committee: Dr. Norma Hafenstein, Dr. Mary Kay Delaney, Dr. Paul Michalec, and Dr. Susan Daniels, thank you for the time, effort, and thought you put into my work.

Thank you to my community partners, Dr. Susan Daniels and Molly Isaacs-McLeod, I appreciate your support and guidance throughout this process.

I would like to acknowledge the eight other incredible women I started the Ed.D. program with. I would not have made it through this program without your love and support. You all mean more to me than words can ever express.

I would like to acknowledge my grandparents Judy and Chet, my aunt Sherry, and my cousins Kim, Andrew, and Caitlin who have supported me and encouraged me to continue even during the most challenging of times.

A special thank you to my eight participants, without you this study would not have been possible. I appreciate your openness and willingness to share your stories.

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Chapter One: Introducing the Investigation

Creativity is a phenomenon that can be traced back to the beginning of human existence (Glăveanu, 2019; Weiner, 2000). Creativity is embedded into every aspect of life (Lubart, et al., 2019; Piirto, 2004). The term creativity was coined nearly two centuries ago and research surrounding creativity has since evolved (Glăveanu, 2019; Piirto, 2004; Weiner, 2000). The term creativity has been used in nearly every professional field and has a unique underpinning for every individual (Glăveanu, 2019; Lubart, et al., 2019; Piirto, 2004; Weiner, 2000).

Investigating the phenomenon of creativity provides insight into what creativity is and how it is experienced. This study examined perceptions of creativity among eight, creatively gifted adults from diverse cultural backgrounds who have a profession in the arts. Through this investigation, individual experiences were highlighted, while providing a collective perspective of creativity based upon themes that emerged.

Personal Interest as the Researcher

If I were asked to define myself, three words come to mind: artist, teacher, researcher. These three words or identities are not individual, but rather they are collective, each influences the other. From some of my earliest memories, I always knew I wanted to be a teacher. Even as a young child, I would create an imaginary classroom

filled with stuffed animals and baby dolls, I would stand up in the front of my imaginary classroom and I would teach my stuffed animals and baby dolls everything I knew.

As I grew older and my role changed from a toddler playing teacher into a student in elementary school, I consistently struggled with boredom in the traditional classroom environment. I distinctly remember the feeling of always knowing the right answer, never having to study, and finishing my work before everyone else. These feelings coupled with frequent moves made me dread going to school; however, unbeknownst to me at the time, these feelings would later shape my identity. Middle school is where my knowledge of giftedness began, it was during this time that the label of gifted was bestowed upon me, at the time I did not understand what being gifted meant. My family allowed me to explore non-traditional school environments like online schools and homeschooling that suited my needs more than the traditional, public-school classroom environment. It was during this time that I discovered that I not only had a passion for teaching, but I had a passion for learning, but not the type of learning one would typically think of, rather learning through investigation.

When I was around twelve years old, I was given my first camera, from that moment, I began to see the world in a new way. I found that I enjoyed teaching myself new techniques and I was able to find the challenge I craved learning how to take photographs. As I entered college, I knew I wanted to be a teacher, but my passion for learning and photography never faded. It was not until the end of my freshman year of college that I decided to take a visual arts course because it was part of my degree requirements. It was in that visual arts course that everything seemed to come together in

my mind; I knew I wanted to be a teacher, but at that moment I began to understand how I could also be an artist.

As my undergraduate coursework continued and led me to graduate coursework, I found my niche, I decided I wanted to be an art teacher. My passion for teaching and art had aligned; however, there was still something missing. When the opportunity presented itself for me to pursue an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction specializing in Gifted Education I knew it was the missing piece. My three identities came together: artist, teacher, and researcher.

My interest in the phenomenon of creativity stemmed from my identities as an artist, a teacher, and a researcher. Creativity permeates all aspects of my personal, professional, and educational life. Much like how I saw my identity as an artist, teacher, and researcher come together in a collective way, creativity is collective, it is not exclusive to a certain person or a certain culture. Everyone perceives and experiences creativity in their own unique way.

Background of the Problem

Creativity is a universal experience; however, varying perspectives about what creativity is and how people experience creativity exist (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Glăveanu, 2019; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019; Lubart, et al., 2019; Necka, 2011; Niu, 2019; Piirto, 2004; Runco, 2014; Shao, et al., 2019; Simonton, 2019; Weiner, 2000). Creativity theories have long sought to explain the phenomenon of creativity; however, many creativity theories evolved from the work of psychologists in the twentieth century and assumed a Western perspective lacking a diverse socio-cultural perspective (Piirto, 2004). Researchers in the twenty-first century have sought to expand these theories to

include a socio-cultural component that considers how creativity and culture are intrinsically bound to one another (Glăveanu, 2013; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019; Lubart, et al., 2019).

Socio-cultural research on creativity is often focused on defining creativity by comparing perspectives of creativity from a Western, individualist point of view, or an Eastern, collectivist point of view, while also making comparison on how these perspectives might be similar or different (Niu, 2019; Shao, et al., 2019). While there are many similarities and differences in how creativity is perceived across cultures; it is important to note that culture impacts creative endeavors and processes (Shao, et al, 2019). Socio-cultural research on creativity often focuses on perceptions of creativity from a culture as a whole, rather than from the perspective of individual members of a specific culture or from a specific group of individuals who have commonalities (Lubart, et al., 2019).

Persistent Problem of Practice

A persistent problem of practice is that limited research exists on perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults who are from diverse cultural backgrounds. While research exists on how creativity is a contextually embedded phenomenon that is intrinsically bound to culture; there is a gap in the literature when considering multicultural perceptions on what creativity is and how it is experienced from a diverse, arts-based perspective. Examining perceptions of creativity among individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds will fill a gap in the literature by providing new voices on what creativity is and how it is experienced from an arts-based, multicultural perspective rather than the primarily white, heterosexual male, psychology-based view of creativity

that currently exists. Examining the personal, familial, and cultural beliefs that inform perceptions of creativity among a group of creatively gifted adults from diverse cultural backgrounds who have a profession in the arts (e.g., painter, sculptor, dancer, musician, creative writer, performer) generates new knowledge on the phenomenon of creativity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to examine perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults from diverse cultural backgrounds. Examining these perceptions of creativity provides insight into what creativity is and how it is experienced. The phenomenon of creativity is observed from the theoretical lens of the Five A's Framework which considers five components of creativity: actor, action, artifact, audience, and affordances (Glăveanu, 2013). Examining perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults who are from diverse cultural backgrounds using the Five A's Framework will provide insight into the essence of creativity including its perceived components and structures.

Examining personal beliefs surrounding creativity provides the opportunity to better understand creativity from the perspectives of the individuals being studied. Uncovering familial beliefs surrounding creativity provides knowledge into how external perceptions such as parental beliefs surrounding creativity may influence an individual's perceptions of creativity. Discovering cultural beliefs surrounding what creativity is and how it is experienced allow better understanding into how creativity may present as a cultural construct. The unique experiences of creatively gifted adults provide insight into how experience may impact the way creativity is perceived.

Research Questions

The primary research question for this study is: (RQ1) What are perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults who are from culturally diverse backgrounds?

The sub-questions that support this research question are: (SQ1) How do beliefs inform perceptions of creativity? (SQ2) How do experiences inform perceptions of creativity?

The second research question for this study is: (RQ2) How do the interactions among beliefs and experiences inform perceptions of creativity?

Definition of Terms

It is essential to understand the terms that will be used throughout this study to better understand the findings regarding the phenomenon of creativity. The terms that are critical to define regarding this study are creativity, culture, multicultural, perception, the arts, giftedness, and creatively gifted.

Creativity

A generally agreed upon, basic definition of creativity is that creativity is something that is new and task appropriate (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Creativity is systematic, it is a social and cultural phenomenon; it is not an individual, psychological phenomenon that only happens inside of people's heads (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Simonton, 2019). Csikszentmihalyi (2013) described creativity as “any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one” (p. 28). For the purpose of this study, creativity will be defined as a social and cultural phenomenon that produces an act, idea, or product that is new and task appropriate (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019; Simonton, 2019).

Culture

Culture is a contextually embedded phenomenon (Lubart et al., 2019). Culture can be viewed in three different senses: high culture; patterns of human knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors; and shared attitudes, values, and goals (Simonton, 2019). House & Javidan (2004) defined culture as “shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretation of meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations” (p. 15). For the purpose of this study, culture will be defined as: shared motives, values, and beliefs among members of a collective racial, religious, or social group in a specific place at a specific time (Lubart et al., 2019; Murphy, 1986).

Multicultural

For the purpose of this study, the term multicultural will be defined as relating to multiple individuals from diverse cultures (Lubart et al., 2019). Multicultural perceptions are perspectives from multiple individuals from diverse cultures. Exposure to diverse cultures can foster understanding and break down mundane knowledge structures (Lubart et al., 2019).

Perception

Perception is the acquisition, interpretation, and organization of information people process through their sensory organs (Necka, 2011). “Perception is not just passive reception of incoming stimuli but involves active construction of mental representations” (Necka, 2011, p. 216). Perception itself is creative in nature because it requires composing complex and holistic representations (Necka, 2011). Perception is not

only rooted in external knowledge from others, but also internal knowledge which is gained through experiences (Necka, 2011).

The Arts

The arts are modes of expression that are shared with others through the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2018). The arts encompass a variety of categories that include the visual arts, performing arts, music, architecture, dance, and creative writing. Individuals who have careers or professions in the arts may be referred to as artists or creators in this study.

Giftedness

There is not a consensus on how to define giftedness; many individuals and organizations have attempted to define the term, but a definitive, agreed upon description of what giftedness is does not exist (Callahan, et al., 2018). “From the beginning of the 20th century until the 1960’s, there was one dominant paradigm of giftedness: giftedness equals high IQ” (Kerr & McKay, 2014, p. 1). Giftedness is often viewed from the lens of academic giftedness or intellectual giftedness (Johnsen, 2018; Piirto, 2008). Annemarie Roeper (1982) defined giftedness as, “a greater awareness, a greater sensitivity, and a greater ability to understand and to transform perceptions into intellectual and emotional experiences” (p. 1). For the purpose of this study, Annemarie Roeper’s definition of giftedness will be used because it focuses not only on the intellectual aspects of giftedness, but also the social-emotional aspects of giftedness that are evident throughout the lifespan.

Creatively Gifted

Creatively gifted individuals are those individuals who have a gift in one or more non-academic domains such as in the visual arts, performing arts, dance, music, or other creative endeavors (Piiro, 2008). Creative giftedness is different from academic giftedness because academic abilities are at least partly independent of creativity (Zenasni, et al., 2016). For the purpose of this study, creatively gifted will include individuals who are gifted in the visual arts, music, dance, performing arts, and creative writing.

Methodology

Transcendental phenomenology was chosen as the methodology for this study because it allowed the researcher to describe the phenomenon of creativity through the experiences of participants to create a composite description of what creativity is and how it is experienced. Phenomenology describes the experiences of participants who experience a common phenomenon, in this case, the phenomenon being studied was creativity (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Vagle, 2018). The goal of phenomenology is to study several individuals who have experienced the same phenomenon and develop a composite description of their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Vagle, 2018). The heuristic approach of transcendental phenomenology encourages descriptions of lived experiences to emerge rather than interpretation of experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The core process of transcendental phenomenology is: Epoché, Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction, and Imaginative Variation which will be explored in-depth in the methodology (Moustakas, 1994).

Chapter Summary

The phenomenon of creativity has an extensive history and permeates every aspect of life. This transcendental phenomenological study examined perceptions of creativity among a group of creatively gifted adults who are from diverse cultural backgrounds to gain insight into what creativity is and how it is experienced. There will be a specific focus on how personal, familial, and cultural beliefs impact perceptions of creativity. In addition, experiences' influence on creativity will be examined. Beliefs and experiences will be highlighted to share the perspectives of participants from an individual point of view. While commonalities that emerged from themes will provide insight into the collective essence of the phenomenon of creativity.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The literature reviewed for this phenomenological study provided a basis of understanding on how creativity and culture are interconnected and how individuals perceive creativity and culture. This literature review is an exhaustive collection on relevant information that pertains to the four primary components of this study: creativity, culture, perception, and giftedness. The history, definitions, and theories that exist on creativity are explored. The connections between culture and creativity are examined to uncover what literature exists about perceptions of creativity from Eastern and Western perspectives. An in-depth look at literature surrounding creatively gifted individuals is provided to gain a better context into the traits and characteristics of creatively gifted. Finally, deficits in the literature will be reviewed.

Creativity

Creativity has been evident since the beginning of human existence; however, the term creativity did not appear in literature until the late nineteenth century (Glăveanu, 2019). “The root of the words ‘create’ and ‘creativity’ comes from the Latin words *creātus* and *creāre*, meaning ‘to make or produce’ or literally ‘to grow’” (Piiro, 2004, p. 6). “There were undeniable acts of creativity that led to the invention of the alphabet, the first cave paintings, and the birth of ancient cities” (Glăveanu, 2019, p. 7). Creativity has roots in religion connecting back to the Greeks who considered creativity a part of

divinity (Piiro, 2004). Creativity was not internalized and humanized outside of deities until after the Renaissance (Glăveanu, 2019). Every aspect of human existence and everyday life is a product of culture and therefore intrinsically connected to creativity (Glăveanu, 2019). “It was because we started thinking of ourselves as creative that we could start examining what makes us so” (Glăveanu, 2019, p. 7).

Transitioning from viewing creativity in relation to deities to viewing creativity as a form of human existence began the inquiry into what makes humans creative (Glăveanu, 2019). Creativity then became linked with genius or eminence with the belief that very few people had been bestowed the gift of creativity (Glăveanu, 2019). This view of creativity became problematic because “the rarity of this kind of creativity...made us view these people as different, as standing apart from society and often having to fight against it” (Glăveanu, 2019, p. 7). Creativity has since been related to psychology (Piiro, 2004). Most often researchers link the foundation of creativity with the work of psychologist, J. P. Guilford in the mid-twentieth century (Glăveanu, 2019; Piiro, 2004). J. P. Guilford’s view of creativity was more inclusive, advocating that everyone had the potential to be creative, that creativity was not only bestowed upon a few select individuals (Glăveanu, 2019). With this new view of creativity, the term became more prominent in literature. The term creativity began to appear in most English language dictionaries post World War II (Weiner, 2000). The push towards creativity started in the United States when the United States began competing with the Soviet Union to control the economy around the time Sputnik was launched by the Soviet Union and the push towards gifted education also began (Glăveanu, 2019; Weiner, 2000).

Defining Creativity

Understandings of creativity have developed and changed for many years and continue to change even today (Weiner, 2000). A generally agreed upon, basic definition of creativity is that creativity is something that is new and task appropriate (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Beyond this consensus, definitions of creativity are broad and more complex (Glăveanu, 2019; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019; Piirto, 2004). “We seek to unmask the mystery of creativity precisely because it is so unexplainable” (Piirto, 2004, p. 32).

In the attempt to define creativity, there have also been attempts to define what creativity is not (Simonton, 2018). Simonton (2018) defined creativity as being characterized by three parameters: an idea’s initial probability, the final utility, and prior knowledge. Simonton (2018) goes on to characterize what creativity is not; creativity is not routine, bias, preservation, suppression, or ignorance. Essentially, Simonton (2018) is pointing towards creativity being related to process and product; it is not related to the mundane or ordinary.

When it comes to defining creativity there are field specific trends that point towards how creativity is addressed in specific contexts (Puryear & Lamb, 2020). There are implicit definitions of creativity that derive from personal beliefs as well as explicit definitions of creativity that derive from scientific data (Puryear & Lamb, 2020). For example, it was found that in the field of business that the usefulness or appropriateness of creativity is the most cited element in the definition of creativity, in psychology the psychometric elements of creativity were the most cited, and in education the artistic elements of creativity were most cited (Puryear & Lamb, 2020). The way in which a field

aims to define creativity is driven by the need of the field itself (Glăveanu & Kaufman, 2019). “Consider the arts – they are based on divergence and self-expression, are highly likely to produce novelty, and can be messy and unpredictable. The sciences are more likely to gravitate towards convergence and effective problem-solving” (Glăveanu & Kaufman, p. 18). The lack of congruency among fields brings an even greater divide in defining creativity in a way that is mutually accepted (Puryear & Lamb, 2020).

Definitions of creativity often refer to creativity as resulting in an idea or a product, but it has been debated whether creativity can exist outside of an idea or product (Piiro, 2004). Piiro (2004) emphasized that creativity can exist outside an idea or product because creative potential exists without evidence of a product. Specifically, in the field of education, students’ creative potential is often based upon process rather than product (Piiro, 2004).

Researchers have long sought to determine whether creativity is innate or whether creativity can be nurtured (Piiro, 2004). Creativity can be developed and nurtured and this development can begin at a very young age (Hui, et al, 2019). The factors that facilitate or hinder creative development are unique during each of life’s stages (Hui, et al, 2019). Oftentimes in childhood, creativity is developed through play (Hui, et al, 2019). In adolescence creativity is often developed in the classroom environment (Hui, et al, 2019). The development of creativity in adulthood is often influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors (Hui, et al, 2019). While creativity can be developed, it is undeniable that creativity is at least partially innate and that some individuals are more inclined to be creative (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Hui, et al, 2019).

Csikszentmihalyi, who is arguably one of the most famous researchers on creativity, described creativity as “any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one” (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013, p. 28). Csikszentmihalyi also defines creativity as not being an independent act, but rather an interaction between one or more people and their environment (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). Csikszentmihalyi (2013) described creativity as resulting from three elements: cultures containing symbolic rules, an individual who can demonstrate novelty, and an audience that validate that innovation. For the purpose of this study, creativity will be defined as a social and cultural phenomenon that produces an act, idea, or product that is new and task appropriate (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019; Simonton, 2019).

Creativity as a Phenomenon

Creativity is systematic, it is a social and cultural phenomenon; it is not an individual, cognitive phenomenon that only happens inside of people’s heads (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Simonton, 2019). Creativity goes beyond individual creators; it has a critical role in society (Simonton, 2019). Creativity is a contextually embedded phenomenon and the level of the context (e.g., family, school, work/organizational settings, etc.) contributes to culture (Lubart, et al., 2019). Creativity is conceptualized as a phenomenon by defining what creativity is and how it is experienced.

Theories of Creativity

A variety of creativity theories exists that try to examine the structure of creativity, what is needed to be creative, the drive behind creativity, how we create, and what preserves creativity (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Before diving into the most

relevant creativity theories in relation to this study, it is important to note that J. P. Guilford is considered one of the founding fathers of creativity research and much of the research that has been conducted in the past two centuries has been based off his work (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Guilford's creativity research stemmed from the United States' increased focus on innovation after the Soviet Union made historical advances in space with the launch of Sputnik (Glăveanu, 2019). Guilford's focus on creative potential was the foundation for many subsequent research studies and theories (Glăveanu, 2019). Guilford's conception of creativity opened the door for more empowering views of creativity and practical implications of creativity (Glăveanu, 2019).

Theories on the Structure of Creativity.

Theories on the structure of creativity aim to describe what creativity is and determine the components of creativity. The Four P framework of creativity is a well-known, foundational framework of creativity that was developed by Rhodes in 1961; the theory focuses on the four P's: person, product, process, and press (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). "The four P's represent four possible questions: What type of person is creative? What is considered to be creative? How do we create? How does the environment shape creativity?" (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019, p. 28). Rhodes' theory was one of the first theories to bring structure to the term of creativity by defining components and factors of creativity (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

Glăveanu (2013) re-examined Rhodes' theory and proposed a new framework which he title the Five A's framework which focuses on the Five A's: actors, audiences, actions, artifacts, and affordances (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The actor is personal attributes of creativity or the creative person in relation to society (Glăveanu, 2013).

Action encompasses the psychological and behavioral manifestations of creativity or the process of creating (Glăveanu, 2013). Artifact is the product of creativity or what is being created (Glăveanu, 2013). Audience is how creativity is judged or evaluated by external factors such as critics (Glăveanu, 2013). Finally, affordances are the interactions between the actor, the action, or the artifact and the environment (Glăveanu, 2013). Glăveanu's Five A's framework explores the sociocultural components of creativity which is how society and culture are connected with creativity. In addition, The Five A's Framework explores how the structure of creativity is operationalized (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The Five A's Framework reframed The Four P Framework in a way that considers external factors of creativity besides the just environmental factors (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). It also departs from The Four P Framework in that all the terms are interrelated and connected rather than being independent (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

The Four C theory developed by Kaufman & Beghetto (2009) is focused more on the individual in relation to creativity (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The Four C theory is concerned with everyday creativity (little-c) versus eminent creativity (Big-C) (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). This theory includes how the mini-C can evolve into the little-C and how then this little-c can evolve into the Pro-c (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The mini-C is when creativity is new and meaningful to the creator, it may not be a revolutionary creation, but there is some form of meaning to the creator (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Little-C is based upon the ideas that when a creator can advance their creations with some feedback, it becomes valuable to others, again it may not be revolutionary, but there is some value to others outside of oneself (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Pro-C is where creativity is achieved at a professional level; for example, one may have had much

practice and training and their work is viewed as accomplished (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The Big-C is eminent creativity, it is those creative individuals who become well known in their field and impact their field in innovative ways (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

Personal/artistic creativity can often be characterized by an artifact, audience, or affordances attributed to creativity (Ivcevic, 2007). “Most typical artistic creativity acts pertained to accomplishments in the arts (e.g., winning an award in an art contest)” (Ivcevic, 2007, p. 285). Artistic creativity is also often related to the development of educational skills, specifically in the arts which could develop from taking art courses or being involved in professional organizations related to the arts (Ivcevic, 2007).

Personal/Artistic creativity goes beyond the mundane and uses professional and educational experiences to inform creativity.

Everyday creativity is creativity that can be seen in mundane life (Ivcevic, 2007). “Most typical everyday creativity acts concerned self-expression (e.g., keeping a journal of ideas)” (Ivcevic, 2007, p. 285). Everyday creativity is less focused on achievement or knowledge and more focused on self-expression (Ivcevic, 2007).

“Relatively common, correlated with personality traits of extraversion and conscientiousness, as well as to experience of personal growth. Individuals higher in extraversion are more likely to take advantage of opportunities for self-expression in the social context that is found in everyday creativity (e.g., organizing parties or using humor)” (Ivcevic, 2007, p. 286).

Everyday creativity is more prevalent than personal/artistic creativity (Ivcevic, 2007).

Positive Creativity has focused on creativity as a force for good (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2022). “Sternberg has called for transformational creativity (also called positive creativity) [18,19]. This concept is creativity that is undertaken with the goal of

making a benevolent and creative impact on the world” (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2022, p. 1). In such a negative world filled with challenges (e.g., COVID-19, racism, climate change, political differences, safety concerns) most researchers and individuals perceive creativity from a positive lens (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2022). Positive creativity is nurtured through education, awareness, and community (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2022).

The Amusement Park Theoretical Model of Creativity (APT) was developed by Baer & Kaufman (2005). APT is narrower and more specific to creative domains; the model concludes with the selection of a medium (e.g., painting, drawing, sculpture, photography). The journey to the selection of the medium is metaphorically compared to an amusement park where one must have the initial requirements for creativity as they would need the means to arrive at an amusement park (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Then they would need to select a field to be creative in (e.g., art, science, math) as they would need to choose the genre of park they would want to visit (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Finally, they would select their medium which would be like choosing a specific park to visit (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

These four theories on the structure of creativity all aim to explain what creativity is and the different components of creativity. Glăveanu (2013) based his theory off of Rhodes’ (1961) theory to expand it to have more of a sociocultural emphasis and connect the components to one another. Kaufman & Beghetto (2009) departed from Rhodes’ (1961) and Glăveanu’s (2013) emphasis on the components of creativity and focused instead on how creativity connects to the individual. Baer & Kaufman (2005) based the APT on creative domains whereas the other theories are meant to be applicable across various domains or fields.

Theories on the Creative Individual.

Theories on the creative individual focus on what is needed to be creative (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The Componential Model of Creativity by Amabile (1983) that was later refined by Amabile & Pratt (2016) proposed three components to individual creativity: domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant skills, and task motivators (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). There is a fourth component that exists outside the individual which is the environment (Amabile & Pratt, 2016). Domain relevant skills is the technical expertise within a domain (Amabile & Pratt, 2016). Creativity-related processes are the characteristics of independence, risk-taking, disciplined work style, and the generation of new ideas (Amabile & Pratt, 2016). Task motivation is intrinsic motivation to solve problems (Amabile & Pratt, 2016). Finally, the environment is the social environment that includes extrinsic motivators (Amabile & Pratt, 2016). Creativity requires a confluence of all three components within the individual (Amabile & Pratt, 2016).

The Investment Theory of Creativity by Sternberg & Lubart argues that creativity is an individual decision (Sternberg & Lubart, 1991; Sternberg & Lubart, 1992). The Investment Theory of Creativity positions creative individuals in the role of a good investor, they need to be able to sell their work, and what holds back one's creativity is one's own thinking (Sternberg & Lubart, 1991; Sternberg & Lubart, 1992). The theory argues that people are not born creative or uncreative, but rather the attitude they develop encourages or discourages creativity (Sternberg & Lubart, 1991; Sternberg & Lubart, 1992).

Both Amabile & Pratt (2016) and Sternberg & Lubart's (1991) theories focus on the creative individual and how intrinsic motivation is a key factor in individual creativity. Amabile & Pratt (2016) also considers how environment plays a role on individual creativity whereas Sternberg & Lubart (1991) focus only on intrinsic factors. Both theories; however, imply that creativity can be developed.

Theories that Drive the Need to be Creative.

Theories that drive the need to be creative are focused upon intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influence creativity. Gruber's Evolving Systems Approach considered the activities of a creative person and the questions that trigger that person to be creative (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The theory suggests that the search for answers to these questions is what drives a person to be creative (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The Evolving Systems Approach emphasizes the development of creative work over a period of time and how a creator's passion which stems from questions drives their creativity (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

Csikszentmihalyi's theory surrounding Flow implies that people are creative simply to experience the sensation of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Flow is a state of being intensely engaged in an activity that results in a moment of complete absorption (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). These activities may not be easy or even relaxing, but rather it is when a person's mind is stretched to its limits to accomplish something worthwhile (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Csikszentmihalyi relates the state of happiness to Flow and

described how happiness and Flow are learned states of being (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

The Matrix Model which was developed by Unsworth emphasizes the reason and context for being creative (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The Matrix Model outline four types of creativity: responsive creativity, expected creativity, contributory creativity, and proactive creativity (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Responsive creativity is in response to an extrinsic factor (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Expected creativity is motivated by another person's desire for someone to be creative (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Contributory creativity is centered around a rather narrow problem (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Finally, proactive creativity is creating for yourself and your own reasons (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The Matrix Theory suggests that all creative acts fall into one of these four types of creativity (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

These three theories are all somewhat different because they focus on different elements of what influences creativity. Gruber implies that the drive to be creative is a response to questions that stem from wanting to solve a problem, Unsworth outlines multiple different contexts that drive a person to be creative that include both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, and Csikszentmihalyi focuses on how the complete absorption into an activity is what drives creativity.

Theories on Creative Processes.

Theories on the creative process are focused on how creativity occurs. Wallace developed a theory that has come to be known as *The Art of Thought* (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). This five-step model is widely used today (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The five stages described by the model are preparation which involves studying

the problem, incubation which involves the mind continuing to think about knowledge gathered on the problem, intimation which is the realization that a breakthrough is imminent, illumination which involves the aha! moment, and verification in which the idea is tested (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

The Geneplore Model is one of the most well-known theories on the creative process; it is a two-step process that combines the concepts of generating and exploring (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The first step is called preinventive structures and it involves developing mental representations of a possible solution to a problem (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The second step relies on how these solutions fit within the constraints of the desired goal (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The intent is for a creative solution to be found during the process (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

The Blind Variation and Selective Retention theory originated from Campbell and was revised by Simonton (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). The theory argued that ideas come blindly to an individual and over time those ideas are selectively retained (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Ideas that are selectively retained last longer and typically have more impact (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

These three theories on the creative process all have a similar focus on problem solving. Each of the theories describes how ideas come to an individual while trying to problem solve and the creative process is a response to the need to solve the problem. These theories also consider the impact of the process of creativity and whether the product created through the creative process was an effective solution.

Theories on Preserving Creativity.

Theories on preserving creativity are focused on the lasting effects of creative contributions. Csikszentmihalyi's Systems Model proposed that the preservation of creativity results from three elements which include "a system composed of three elements: a culture that contains symbolic rules, a person who bring novelty into the domain, and a field of experts who recognize and validate the innovation" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 6). All these elements are interconnected and work together (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019). Each component is necessary for creativity and cannot stand independently of the other elements (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

The Propulsion Model outlined eight types of creative contributions (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019; Sternberg, 1999). Four of the eight types of contributions aim to create within a paradigm while the other four aim to change the paradigm (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019; Sternberg, 1999). The first four types that aim to create within a paradigm are conceptual replications which reinforce present or past creative works, redefinitions which add a new perspective, forward incrementation which push the contribution forward on a small scale within the paradigm, and advanced forward incrementation which push the contribution to the boundaries of the paradigm (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019; Sternberg, 1999). The four types of creative contributions that aim to change the paradigm are redirections which alter the direction of a domain, integrations which merge two or more areas together, reconstructions which alter directions and ignore present innovations, and reinitiations which reinvent a domain (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019; Sternberg, 1999).

Both of these theories on the preservation of creativity are focused on the lasting impact of creativity and how creativity alters domains through innovation.

Csikszentmihalyi's Systems Model is more focused on the interconnectedness of the elements to preserve creativity whereas The Propulsion Model defines how types of contributions are categorized into eight different groups.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the orienting structure for a study (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). The theoretical framework guides the selection of the topic, the research questions being asked, the design approach, and the analysis of the data (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). "The theoretical framework provides a grounding base, or an anchor" (Grant & Osanloo, 2014, p. 12). The use of a theoretical framework provides a basis in the manner of a formal, well-defined theory that is already conceptualized (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). It works as a blueprint to guide the researcher through the process of crafting their study (Grant & Osanloo, 2014).

The Five A's Framework

The Five A's Framework developed by Vlad Petre Glăveanu will be used as the orienting lens for this study. The Five A's Framework is a shift from the more traditional Four P's of Creativity in that it emphasizes the socio-cultural systemic model where each term is interrelated (Glăveanu, 2013). The five terms that encompass the Five A's Framework are actor, action, artifact, audience, and affordances (Glăveanu, 2013). Glăveanu (2013) described the focus of the actor as personal attributions in relation to society; action encompasses the psychological and behavioral manifestations; artifact is the cultural context of production and evaluation; audience is the interdependence

between creator and society; and finally, affordances are the interdependence between creator and the material world. Glăveanu's Five A's framework explores the sociocultural components of creativity and how the structure of creativity is operationalized (Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2019).

Culture

Culture is a pervasive part of human living that relates to everyday living and behavioral patterns (Lubart et al., 2019). There is variation within and between cultural contexts and there are multiple levels of contexts in culture (Lubart, et al., 2019).

“In the last century, and even to some extent today, the word ‘culture’ referred mainly to the greatest achievements of human creativity in art, science, literature, music, and perhaps religion. Today, however, these phenomena are often viewed as instances of ‘high culture’” (Weiner, 2000, p. 99).

The word “culture” today is beyond the realm of achievement in the traditional arts and sciences and often associated with distinct groups within a society such as ethnic groups (Weiner, 2000).

Defining Culture

With the knowledge that culture is a multifaceted construct, it can be difficult to effectively define culture because of its complexity. Some of the complexities involved in trying to define culture exist in the regional and sub-groups of cultures that may exist within the context of a larger cultural group such as a national culture (Lubart et al., 2019). Cultural anthropologists give insight into the role of culture in understanding human behavior (Simonton, 2019). Alfred Kroeber a cultural anthropologist from Columbia University emphasized that civilizations across the globe are cultural systems (Simonton, 2019). Kroeber described how culture is commonly used in three basic

senses: high culture; patterns of human knowledge, beliefs, and behaviors; and shared attitudes, values, and goals (Simonton, 2019). Robert Murphy (1986), who was also an anthropologist at Columbia University, defined culture as “a set of mechanisms for survival, but it provides us also with a definition of reality. It is the matrix into which we are born, it is the anvil upon which our persons and destinies are forged” (p. 14).

Culture is contextually embedded; the context of culture has varying levels from familial setting to educational settings to local communities to national communities (Lubart, et al., 2019). Culture can be viewed as a social environment which is an inherited conception that is symbolic in the way in which it is communicated, perpetuated, and developed regarding attitudes and beliefs about life (Geertz, 1973). Culture is not only environmental, but it can also be experiential, it can develop from experiences, typically among a collective group of individuals (Lubart et al., 2019). House & Javidan (2004) defined culture as “shared motives, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretation of meanings of significant events that result from common experiences of members of collectives and are transmitted across age generations” (p. 15).

It is critical that when defining culture, one considers the multifaceted nature of the term so as not to diminish the extensive impact of culture on human existence (Lubart et al, 2019). For the purpose of this study, culture will be defined as: shared motives, values, and beliefs among members of a collective racial, religious, or social group in a specific place at a specific time (Lubart et al., 2019; Murphy, 1986).

Defining Multicultural

For the purpose of this study, the term multicultural will be defined as relating to multiple individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Lubart et al., 2019). “A line of

research has been developing in recent decades concerning the influence of exposure to several cultures” (Lubart, et al., 2019). Exposure to diverse cultures can foster understanding and break down mundane knowledge structures (Lubart et al., 2019). An enhanced understanding of creativity can emerge from knowledge gained by “examining in-depth, creative expression in a specific cultural setting as well as comparing and contrasting creativity in different cultures” (Lubart, et al., 2019, p. 422).

It is critical not only to consider a Western perspective of creativity when trying to understand what creativity is and how it is experienced (Lubart et al., 2019; Niu, 2019). Much research surrounding creativity has been limited to a Western, white, male psychological perspective (Lubart et al., 2019; Niu, 2019). Multicultural perspectives allow for consideration of what creativity is and how it is experienced from the viewpoint of various people of color from diverse backgrounds (Lubart et al., 2019; Niu, 2019).

Multicultural Experiences.

Multicultural experiences are interactions with people from diverse nationalities and ethnic groups (Lubart, et al., 2019). Multicultural experiences often involve immersive experiences such as spending time living abroad or spending time emerged within diverse cultures. Multicultural experiences can also emerge through research, experiences with products from other cultures such as art or even food, and other educational opportunities (Lubart et al., 2019). Multicultural experiences enhance knowledge and foster openness to new ideas (Lubart, et al., 2019). “When an individual is immersed in and exposed to only one culture, the learned routines and conventional knowledge of that culture may limit his or her creative conceptual expansion” (Leung, et al., 2008, p. 172). Exposure to multiple cultures’ ideas and perceptions provide exposure

to diverse ideas and breaks down routine knowledge structures (Lubart et al., 2019).

According to Leung, et al., (2008) psychologist have come to “agree on the importance of multicultural awareness and competence, especially given the rapid increase in global interconnectedness” (p. 169).

Multicultural experiences also foster creativity and creative performance (Leung, et al., 2008). Understanding thoughts, beliefs, and experiences of people from cultures other than one’s own culture allows for the expansion of ideas and provides new ways of thinking (Leung, et al., 2008). “Culture’s established conceptions and conventions provide its members with structured and routinized responses to the environment, these cognitive structures may be destabilized as people acquire alternative conceptions through their experiences” (Leung, et al., 2008, p. 72). People can then relay their newfound knowledge to their own culture to influence the expansion of understanding (Leung, et al., 2008). Multicultural experiences and gaining a greater understanding of multiple cultures can allow for juxtaposition and integration of various ideas from different cultures to encourage and integrate ideas in novel and new ways (Leung, et al., 2008).

Connecting Creativity and Culture.

Creativity and culture are multidimensional constructs that are intrinsically bound to one another (Lubart et al., 2019).

“Creativity as a process uses ‘culturally impregnated materials’ (ideas, signs, objects, values, etc.) to create new and meaningful artifacts that contribute to culture itself (both the macro-culture of entire groups or nations and the micro-culture of local actors and interactions)” (Lubart, et al., 2019, p. 421).

Creativity permeates the way we think about society and even ourselves (Glăveanu, 2019). Creativity exists across all cultures whether they are simple cultures or complex cultures; this creativity is channeled into diverse forms of expression, meaning that creativity can be seen in a variety of domains (Simonton, 2019). “Almost everyone tells stories, paints and carves, sings and dances. Creativity is communal” (Simonton, 2019, p. 465).

“Sociocultural research considers culture as an integral part of creativity (and, inversely, creativity as the ‘engine’ of cultural growth and development) and pays particular attention to how the meaning of creativity and its practice are co-constructed in local cultural settings” (Lubart, et al., 2019, p. 435).

The sociocultural approach to creativity focuses on the creative process as being collective and a part of culture rather than individualistic; it is made possible using signs and tools (Lubart, et al., 2019). Cultural changes affect our concept of creativity and contribute to this evolving perception of creativity (Weiner, 2000).

Culture’s Influence on Creativity

Creativity and culture are uniquely intertwined in that one cannot exist without the other (Runco, 2014). Conceptions of creativity in the cultural context aim to define the concept of creativity and to identify characteristics that interconnect creativity and culture (Lubart, et al., 2019). It is suggested that there are universal elements of creativity; however, it is also evident that there are distinctions in how creativity is viewed in various cultures (Lubart, et al., 2019). Originality, adaptive value, and societal utility of the act of creation are three of the most universal elements of creativity (Lubart, et al., 2019).

Creativity is inherent to culture, and it is deeply rooted in all cultures (Shao, et al., 2019). Different cultures express creativity in different ways, through different domains, and through different behaviors (Runco, 2014). One culture is not superior to another in terms of their creative abilities, but rather each culture offers unique perspectives on creativity (Runco, 2014). Aristotle believed what is honored in a culture will be cultivated by that culture and that is true in regard to creativity (Runco, 2014). Cultural values are communicated in various ways through various institutions such as through family members or an educational setting (Runco, 2014). Every individual is born into a culture, and they do not get to choose which culture they are born into; therefore, every individual is thrust into a preexisting system of value (Runco, 2014). Culture fosters creativity and the culture that a child is born into contributes to their perception of creativity (Runco, 2014).

Perceptions

Perception is the acquisition, interpretation, and organization of information people process through their sensory organs (Necka, 2011). Creation is influenced by perception because the way people think about creating something is determined by the way they perceive something (Necka, 2011). “Perception is not just passive reception of incoming stimuli but involves active construction of mental representations” (Necka, 2011, p. 216). Perception itself is creative in nature because it requires composing complex and holistic representations (Necka, 2011).

Perception can be both verbal and non-verbal and for creative individuals, visual thinking is vital for artistic creativity (Necka, 2011). Creative writers and poets are often visual thinkers as well because they are constantly visualizing (Necka, 2011). Oftentimes

culture is believed to rely on verbal systems of communication; however, nonverbal systems of communication are also the foundations of culture because communication is rooted in images as well as words (Necka, 2011). Perception is not only rooted in external knowledge from others, but also internal knowledge which is gained through experiences (Necka, 2011).

Cultural Perceptions of Creativity

From a global context, a generally accepted view of creativity is that it is the ability to create something new and appropriate (Niu, 2019). With this general definition comes the understanding that creativity is bonded by time, domain, and culture (Niu, 2019). Core characteristics of creativity that are shared by both Eastern and Western cultures are originality, imagination, intelligence, and independence (Niu, 2019). Outside of these core characteristics, the difference between individualist and collectivist cultures starts to shape perceptions of creativity. The impact of culture on creativity is seen in the way people engage in creative endeavors and processes (Shao, et al., 2019). People from individualist and collectivist cultures have different preferences of creative processing modes such as usefulness versus novelty which means that some people may value the usefulness or practicality of an object over the originality or novelty of the object (Shao, et al., 2019).

Culture provides the foundational materials and inputs necessary when underwriting creative processes and it can influence preferences in application of models of creative processes (Shao, et al., 2019). Culture also underwrites the assessment of creativity because many creativity assessments have been developed based on Western views of creativity and therefore are not culturally appropriate for all cultures (Shao, et

al., 2019). For example, many assessments of creativity, such as the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking, focus on process and product which may not be a key characteristic of creativity in Eastern cultures (Shao, et al., 2019).

It is important to note that Western culture typically refers to European and North American countries. Western culture in regard to creativity is viewed in this study as a predominately white, male, psychological view of creativity because the definitions of creativity that exist and were outlined earlier in this chapter are predominately from white, male psychologists in European and North American countries. Eastern culture typically refers to Asian and Middle Eastern countries. Not all countries and individuals who are grouped into Western and Eastern cultures will hold the same views and perceptions. For the purpose of this literature review, Western views of creativity and Eastern views of creativity will be considered while also acknowledging that each individual and country that is grouped within Eastern and Western cultures may hold a view that is divergent from these cultures as a whole.

Western Views of Creativity.

Research on creativity is often dominated by the views of Western culture (Lubart et al., 2019; Niu, 2019). Western cultures tend focus on creativity as process and product and how one can use creative thinking to solve difficult problems (Lubart, et al., 2019; Shao, et al., 2019). “Western researchers’ definitions of creativity tend to focus on a capacity to produce work that is both novel/original and adaptive or useful” (Lubart et al., 2019, p. 424). People from Western cultures often describe creativity using terms such as curious, imaginative, original, and individualistic (Shao. et al., 2019). In modern Western society, creativity is directed towards a global audience which has also furthered

movements towards greater individualism (Weiner, 2000). Western conceptions of creativity place emphasis on the present rather than the past and the personal characteristics of the creator (Niu, 2019).

Eastern Views of Creativity.

Eastern cultures focus on the collective aspects of creativity rather than looking at creativity from an individualistic perspective (Niu, 2019). In Eastern cultures, creativity is often described as contribution to society, appreciated by others, and inspiring (Shao, et al., 2019). These definitions focus less on the process of creativity and more on its value. “The Eastern understanding places a greater emphasis on the social contributions of a creative individual and more value on linkage between current and past” (Niu, 2019, p. 448). Eastern culture, “emphasizes the spirit of creativity and personal characteristics, either traits or abilities, at the explicit level and individuals’ moral and social contributions to society at the implicit level” (Shao, et al., 2019, p. 3).

Perceptions of Eminent Creators Across Cultures

While all people are creative, all creators are not equally productive, some creators are more inclined towards creative genius (Simonton, 2019). A range of creativity exists in every culture; however, some cultures, specifically Western cultures, tend to highlight eminence more than others (Lubart, et al., 2019). Cultures that value collectivism may view multiple creators as equal or as a whole (Lubart, et al, 2019). Cultures who are more individualistic; however, may value an eminently creative person over his or her peers who have the ability to complete the same task (Lubart, et al., 2019).

Giftedness

The terms giftedness and creativity began to emerge at relatively the same time in the United States during the mid-twentieth century with the Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik (Weiner, 2000). During this time, the United States began to push innovation, specifically in the sciences, in order to compete with the Soviet Union (Weiner, 2000). Since the mid-twentieth century, the term giftedness has evolved (Weiner, 2000). There is not a consensus on how to define giftedness; many individuals and organizations have attempted to define the term, but a definitive, agreed upon description of what giftedness is does not exist (Callahan, et al., 2018). "From the beginning of the 20th century until the 1960's, there was one dominant paradigm of giftedness: giftedness equals high IQ" (Kerr & McKay, 2014, p. 1). Towards the end of the twentieth century, a group of parents, educators, and psychologists met to redefine giftedness to include the innate differences and needs of giftedness; this group became known as the Columbus Group (Gifted Development Center, 2017). The Columbus Group defined giftedness as:

Asynchronous development in which advanced cognitive abilities and heightened intensity combine to create inner experiences and awareness that are qualitatively different from the norm. This asynchrony increases with higher intellectual capacity. The uniqueness of the gifted renders them particularly vulnerable and requires modifications in parenting, teaching and counseling in order for them to develop optimally.

Oftentimes giftedness is limited to the K-12 academic experience and the progression of giftedness into adulthood is not considered. The National Association of Gifted Children (NAGC) (2019) described giftedness as:

Students with gifts and talents perform - or have the capability to perform - at higher levels compared to others of the same age, experience, and environment in one or more domains. They require modification(s) to their educational experience(s) to learn and realize their potential. Student with gifts and talents:

- Come from all racial, ethnic, and cultural populations, as well as all economic strata.
- Require sufficient access to appropriate learning opportunities to realize their potential.
- Can have learning and processing disorders that require specialized intervention and accommodation.
- Need support and guidance to develop socially and emotionally as well as in their areas of talent.
- Require varied services based on their changing needs. (p. 1)

This definition excludes giftedness into adulthood and focuses on the modifications required in the educational experiences of gifted students (NAGC, 2019).

Other definitions of giftedness focus less on the academic aspects of giftedness and focus more on the social-emotional aspects of giftedness. Annemarie Roeper was a pioneer in the field of gifted education (Kane, 2014). Much of Annemarie Roeper's work and life revolved around recognizing the unique needs of gifted children, adults, and elders (Kane, 2014). For the purpose of this study, Annemarie Roeper's definition of giftedness will be used because it focuses not only on the intellectual aspects of giftedness, but also the social-emotional aspects of giftedness that are evident throughout

the lifespan. Annemarie Roeper (1982) defined giftedness as, “a greater awareness, a greater sensitivity, and a greater ability to understand and to transform perceptions into intellectual and emotional experiences" (p. 1).

Overexcitabilities

Kazimierz Dabrowski, a Polish psychologist and psychiatrist, identified five overexcitabilities, which are innate tendencies to respond to internal and external stimuli in an intensified manner (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009). The five overexcitabilities identified by Dabrowski are psychomotor, sensual, intellectual, imaginal, and emotional (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009). These five overexcitabilities typically overlap with gifted characteristics found in both children and adults (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009). Overexcitabilities are also commonly observed in creatively gifted individuals and these individuals often have multiple overexcitabilities. The five overexcitabilities impact the way life is experienced and the more overexcitabilities that a person increases this impact (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009). Daniels & Piechowski (2009) described the five overexcitabilities as:

- Psychomotor – movement, restlessness, drivenness, an augmented capacity for being active and energetic
- Sensual – enhanced refinement and aliveness of sensual experiences
- Intellectual – thirst for knowledge, discovery, questioning, love of ideas and theoretical analysis, search for truth
- Imaginal – vividness of imagery, richness of association, facility for dreams, fantasies, and inventions, endowing toys and other objects with personality (animism), preference for the unusual and unique

- Emotional – great depth and intensity of emotional life expressed in a wide range of feelings, great happiness to profound sadness or despair, compassion, responsibility, self-examination (p. 9)

Giftedness in Non-Academic Domains

Giftedness often connotes an intellectual or academic form of giftedness; however, multiple domains of giftedness exist outside of general intellectual ability or specific academic ability (Johnsen, 2018; Piirto, 2008). Individuals can be gifted in a variety of domains that include creative areas, productive thinking, leadership abilities, or in their psychomotor abilities (Johnsen, 2018). Those with gifts in non-academic domains are often bestowed the label “talented” while those who perform well academically are bestowed the label of “gifted”; however, this distinction is inaccurate in that those who have gifts in non-academic domains have exceptionalities and high abilities which can be distinguished as gifts rather than talents (Winner & Gail, 2000). Exposure to a domain is a critical component of being creative in that domain; you cannot have great creative contributions to a domain without knowing the rules of that domain (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). For the purpose of this study, creatively gifted adults who have a profession in a creative field which include those gifted in the visual arts, performing arts, music, dance, and creative endeavors will be focused upon.

Creatively Gifted.

Creatively gifted individuals are those individuals who have a gift in one or more non-academic domains such as in the visual arts, performing arts, dance, music, or other creative endeavors (Piirto, 2008). Creatively gifted is not confined to the arts; individuals can be creatively gifted in a variety of other domains as well. For the purpose of this

study, the focus of creatively gifted will be from an arts-based perspective; creatively gifted will include individuals who are gifted in the visual arts, music, dance, performing arts, and creative writing.

Creative giftedness is different from academic giftedness because academic abilities are at least partly independent of creativity (Zenasni, et al., 2016). Even though there is not a definitive link between being creatively gifted or intellectually gifted, there are three distinct similarities between these two populations of people: they are precocious, they are intensely motivated, and they “march to their own drum” (Winner & Gail, 2000). Characteristics of creatively gifted individuals include generating fast and original solutions, risk-taking, high level of novelty, high level of associative processes, favoring divergent and associative thinking, high levels of perfectionism, high potential for achievement, a high degree of independence, and a high level of passion (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013; Zenasni, et al., 2016). Creatively gifted individuals are also more likely to also be academically gifted in addition to being creatively gifted (Zenasni, et al., 2016).

Creative individuals operate at the extremes and oftentimes have great intensity (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). Creative individuals often have complex personalities that are multifaceted (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). For example, creative individuals tend to have a respect for tradition, yet they are not afraid to push boundaries (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). Creative people are passionate, they do not seek fame, but rather they do what they love (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013).

The question of nature versus nurture is debated when it comes to creatively gifted individuals (Winner & Gail, 2000). Children who have a “rage to master” or

“march to their own drummer” and hyper focus on a specific area of interest at an early age often have high achievement in that area of interest (Winner & Gail, 2000). Creative children often stand out from their peers and are exceptional in some way (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). It is impossible to rule out an innate component to giftedness; however, this does not deduct the importance of nurturing gifts (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013). Teachers and parents can be highly influential in nurturing children’s creative abilities (Csikszentmihalyi, 2013).

Children who are creatively gifted often face a crisis in adolescence when their self-esteem begins to drop and their response to this crisis is critical to their future achievement (Winner & Gail, 2000). “Adolescence is the time when prodigies must make the transition from technical perfection to innovation and big-C, domain creativity. Only those who can reinvent themselves will make the leap between childhood giftedness and adult creativity” (Winner & Gail, 2000, p. 118). Personality characteristics such as drive, tenacity, risk-taking, and the willingness to overcome obstacles are associated with success in any creative field (Winner & Gail, 2000).

Identification of Creatively Gifted.

The process of identifying creatively gifted children, adolescence, and adults has numerous challenges because creativity is difficult to measure and assess (Ambrose & Machek, 2014). Many schools use creativity assessments when identifying for gifted services and programs; however, the use of creativity assessments may not be accurate because creativity is a multidimensional construct (Ambrose & Machek, 2014). Creativity assessments that are typically used are also based on a Western view of creativity and do not take into consideration other cultural views of creativity (Shao, et

al., 2019). Best practices in identifying creatively gifted children in a school environment are using multiple measures that are both qualitative and quantitative such as the use of creativity assessments, portfolios, observations of creative processes and abilities, and interviews (Ambrose & Machek, 2014; Torrance, 1964). For the purpose of this study, creatively gifted adults are being identified based upon their profession in and contributions to an arts related field.

Creatively Gifted Adults.

Creatively gifted adults look at and see the world in unique ways (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009). Creatively gifted adults typically have a greater awareness of themselves and the world around them which reflects their overexcitabilities (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009; White, 2014). Intensity and a high level of sensitivity is especially common among creatively gifted adults (White, 2014).

Creatively gifted adults often exhibit characteristics of multiple overexcitabilities (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009; White, 2014) The following examples are meant to provide insight into how overexcitabilities may manifest in adults, but they are not an exhaustive list of how each overexcitability may manifest. In the creatively gifted adult, sensual overexcitabilities may manifest as an intense reaction to sounds or music; a drive towards bright, vibrant colors such as in clothing; a retreat from cluttered environments; a rich use of language to describe imagery; and even aversion to touch (White, 2014). Intellectual overexcitabilities may manifest as a “rage to master” in a specific area of interest, high levels of curiosity and concentration, constant self-critique, and perfectionism (White, 2014). Emotional overexcitabilities may manifest as feeling multiple emotions at one time, expressing vivid emotions in their work, and being highly

aware of others' feelings (White, 2014). Imaginational overexcitabilities may manifest in the form of strong visualizations, blending truth with fiction in conversations or stories, a vivid ability to recall events, and an intensity of dreams (White, 2014). Finally, psychomotor overexcitabilities may manifest in creatively gifted adults as rapid speech, nervous actions like biting fingernails, a need for movement if "cooped up", workaholism, and a love of movements such as dance (White, 2014). Oftentimes, when creatively gifted adults have multiple overexcitabilities they do not function in isolation, but rather the overexcitabilities are interconnected and play an integral part in the daily life of the creatively gifted adult (Daniels & Piechowski, 2009; White, 2014).

In order to best channel their creativity into productivity, creatively gifted adults need to understand themselves through self-discovery (White, 2014). Without this self-awareness, overexcitabilities can take a toll on creatively gifted adults' motivation and productivity (White, 2014).

"By assisting the creatively gifted to know and understand the complexities of their inner worlds, we empower them to develop into lifelong 'artists' in the broadest, most productive sense of the word); secure and accepting of their 'difference' and in control of the devil that drives them" (White, 2014, p. 114).

Creatively gifted adults who have a profession in the arts often find that they become interested in their area of expertise between the ages of four to twenty-three (Isaacs, 1961). Motivation to pursue a profession in the arts has been found to stem from public recognition or inherent drive (Isaacs, 1961). Obstacles often include lack of time or financial concerns (Isaacs, 1961).

Creatively Gifted in the Visual Arts.

Creatively gifted individuals in the visual arts are those “who originate, produce, perform, or respond at an extraordinarily high level in one or more of the visual arts” (Diket, 1994, p. 21). Giftedness in the visual arts often manifests early and is commonly seen through drawings (Piiro, 2008). The visual artists usually begin moving through the artistic developmental stages early and will begin comparing their work to others at an early age (Piiro, 2008). Concentrating for long period of time on artistic problems and working independently are commonly seen among those gifted in the visual arts (Piiro, 2008). Characteristics of creatively gifted individuals in the visual arts include originality, increased awareness of details, experimentation with materials or processes, using the medium (e.g., painting, sculpture) to express emotions, using art as a retreat for comfort, interest in various work of other creators, self-directed study of art, the accumulation of many works, and dexterity in creating work (Diket, 1994; Piiro, 2008). Predictive behaviors for visual art talent include interest, precocity, ability to concentrate, working on own time, creation for emotional reasons, fluency, and communication (Piiro, 2008).

Creatively Gifted in Music.

Creatively gifted in music are those who exhibit above average musical potential (Diket, 1994). Similar to artistic talent, musical talent often is seen in early childhood (Piiro, 2008). Spontaneous response to rhythm and music, relative or absolute pitch, ability to associate pitch with visual symbols, spending extensive time in musical activity, making up original tunes and melodies, advanced auditory discrimination, and memory for music heard are a few characteristics of individuals who are gifted in music (Diket,

1994, Piirto, 2008). Oftentimes, those gifted in music choose it as a mode of expressing what they are feeling (Piirto, 2008). Musically gifted individuals are often able to recognize, identify, and appreciate the structure of music as well (Piirto, 2008).

Creatively Gifted in Performing Arts.

Much like creatively gifted individuals in the visual arts and music, characteristics of creatively gifted individuals in performing arts begin to emerge in early childhood and continue into adulthood (Piirto, 2008). Characteristics that are common among these individuals include sifting into the role of various characters easily; interest in drama; using voice to reflect mood; the ability to externalize and dramatize feelings and experiences; imitating others; improvisations; enjoyment in evoking emotional responses; the need for attention; writing original stories or plays; and communicating feeling through facial expressions, body language, gestures, and movements (Diket, 1994; Piirto, 2008). Originality is another important factor in the behavior of those who are gifted in the performing arts (Piirto, 2008).

Creatively Gifted in Dance.

Individuals who are creatively gifted in dance are characterized by their high standards, creative expression, strength, advanced motor coordination, sense of rhythm, high energy level, ability to remember movements and patterns, and their high level of determination (Diket, 1994; Piirto, 2008). As with all creative domains, training for dance is difficult and demanding, but unlike other creative domains, a career path in dance is often short lived (Piirto, 2008). Gifted dancers have intense concentration and dedication, they are often in movement or influenced by movement, and have perfectionistic tendencies (Piirto, 2008). Piirto (2008) described how in interviews with gifted dancers,

they often credited the release of emotions and feelings that the movements invoke within themselves as why they chose dance.

Gifted in Creative Writing.

Individuals who are gifted in creative writing have a gift with words and a unique way of thinking (Piiro, 2004). Common characteristics seen among gifted creative writers include independence, resiliency, risk-taking, androgyny, introversion, and an intuitive way of viewing the world (Piiro, 2004). Oftentimes, gifted creative writers will also have a unique sense of humor and will use their writing to express emotions or to be a political or social activist (Piiro, 2004). Those who are gifted in creative writing are often high academic achievers and have demonstrated academic awards for their writing abilities (Piiro, 2004).

Eisner's Forms of Representation

Elliot Eisner's research and work was centered around the arts and education. In much of Eisner's research and work forms of representation are discussed. Forms of representations are the ways in which learning can be shown. Eisner (1997) described one method of representation, "I have selected film simply as one example of data representation. Film and video have much to recommend them. They contain dialogue and plot, they display image, and they can use sound, particularly music, to augment image and word" (p. 6). Eisner (1997) goes on to describe how film can teach. Film is only one example of a form of representation, many others exist (e.g., photographs, drawing, music, dance). "What we are dealing with is a conception of how meaning is made and what shall count as knowledge or, to use a more felicitous phrase, how understanding is enlarged" (Eisner, 1997, p. 7).

Relevant Research Studies

Few research studies exist that are related to multicultural perceptions of creativity from the perspective of creatively gifted adults. The studies that do exist that are relevant to perceptions of creativity typically limit the sample population to people from one culture or background and are typically from student or teachers' perspectives. The following studies are the most relevant to this study because they are either based on a non-Western perspective, related to the arts, or involve creative professionals.

Chinese Students' Perceptions of Creativity

Wang & Greenwood (2013) conducted a study using the Four C Model of Creativity as their framework to examine Chinese students' perception of creativity and their perceptions of Western students' creativity. The participants for the study were one-hundred Chinese students, ten of which were chosen for in-depth interviews (Wang & Greenwood, 2013). The study found that Chinese students typically perceived their creativity to be less than their Western peers (Wang & Greenwood, 2013). The study found that Chinese students typically viewed Western students being superior in their creative abilities compared to their own creative abilities (Wang & Greenwood, 2013). The interview participants responses indicated they were concerned about producing novel or different ideas to questions because in China's exam directed education there is typically only one right answer (Wang & Greenwood, 2013). Wang & Greenwood (2013) also found that students longed for a more autonomous learning environment where students were able to focus upon their interests.

United States Music Teachers' Perceptions of Creativity

Kladder & Lee (2019) conducted a study to examine music teacher's perceptions of creativity. The purpose of the study was not only to uncover music teacher's perceptions of creativity, but also how they viewed creativity in the context of the music classroom and how they believe creative students are perceived (Kladder & Lee, 2019). There were one-hundred-sixty-four participants in one southeastern state. The study found that "Participants from this sample defined creativity as the ability to: (1) provide original thought through the development of a new idea, (2) combine, synthesize, and change existing entities into something new, (3) problem solve" (p.). The participants believed that learner autonomy was the best way to promote creativity in the classroom (Kladder & Lee, 2019).

Chinese Creative Professionals' Perceptions of Creativity

Leung & Hui (2014) conducted a study on creative professional's perceptions of creativity in Hong Kong, China. The purpose of the study was to examine how creativity is perceived and communicated in Chinese culture. Fourteen advertising professionals were the participants for this study (Leung & Hui, 2014). Innovation is the way most of the participants defined creativity (Leung & Hui, 2014). "in contrast to Western culture creativity in Hong Kong is perceived as a modification, adaptation, or rearrangement in a form of intellectual, artistic, and societal revision...the power of creation is to surprise and shock people through reinterpretation" (Leung & Hui, 2014, p. 145). Originality and resonance were two components that participants noted being important to creativity (Leung & Hui, 2014).

Turkish Teachers' Perceptions of Creativity

Akyildiz & Cilek (2020) conducted a study on Turkish English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher's perceptions of creativity. Fifteen secondary EFL teachers were the participants for the study (Akyildiz & Cilek, 2020). The findings of the study indicated that participants viewed creativity as being related to life itself (Akyildiz & Cilek, 2020). In addition, three themes emerged from the interviews which included creative as being a new way of thinking, creativity is being open-minded, and creativity being tied to the materials being used or methods and techniques (Akyildiz & Cilek, 2020).

Chapter Summary

Creativity is a systemic phenomenon that permeates human existence (Lubart et al., 2019). Creativity and culture are multidimensional constructs that are intrinsically bound to one another (Lubart et al., 2019). The culture in which a person is born has some implicit or explicit impact on their perceptions of creativity (Necka, 2011). Core characteristics of creativity that are shared by both Eastern and Western cultures are originality, imagination, intelligence, and independence (Niu, 2019). Outside of these core characteristics, the difference between individualist and collectivist cultures starts to shape perceptions of creativity (Niu, 2019). Creatively gifted individuals are individuals who have a gift in one or more non-academic domains such as in the visual arts, performing arts, dance, music, or other creative endeavors (Piiro, 2008). A gap in the literature exists regarding perceptions of creativity from culturally diverse, creatively gifted adults.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to examine perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults from diverse cultural backgrounds. Examining these perceptions of creativity provides insight into what creativity is and how it is experienced. The phenomenon of creativity was observed from the theoretical lens of the Five A's Framework which considers five components of creativity: actor, action, artifact, audience, and affordances (Glăveanu, 2013). Examining perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults who are from diverse cultural backgrounds using the Five A's Framework provided insight into the essence of creativity including its perceived components and structures.

Research Questions

The primary research question for this study was: (RQ1) What are perceptions of creativity among adults from culturally diverse backgrounds who are creatively gifted? The sub-questions that support this research question are: (SQ1) How do beliefs inform perceptions of creativity? (SQ2) How do experiences inform perceptions of creativity? The second research question for this study was: (RQ2) How do the interactions among beliefs and experiences inform perceptions of creativity?

Transcendental Phenomenology

Phenomenology aims to describe the common experiences of a phenomenon among a group of participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Vagle, 2018). The goal of phenomenology is to study several individuals who have experienced the same phenomenon and develop a composite description of their experiences which explains the universal essence of the phenomenon (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Vagle, 2018). The composite description answers the “what” and “how” of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Vagle, 2018).

Transcendental phenomenology is a type of phenomenology that allows the researcher to closely examine experiences and perceptions of participants. Transcendental phenomenology is less focused on interpretations of the researcher and more focused on the experiences of the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Transcendental phenomenology is a heuristic approach rather than a hermeneutic process which means that transcendental phenomenology is more concerned with exploring the descriptions that emerge rather than interpreting the descriptions. "While understanding the phenomenon with increasing depth, the researcher also experiences growing self-awareness and self-knowledge....Heuristic processes incorporate creative self-processes and self-discoveries" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 17). The core processes of transcendental phenomenology are: Epoché, Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction, and Imaginative Variation (Moustakas, 1994).

“Epoché is a Greek word meaning to refrain from judgement, to abstain from or stay away from the everyday, ordinary way of perceiving things” (Moustakas, 1994, p.

33). Epoché is the process of bracketing out one's own experiences and biases (Moustakas, 1994). In the Epoché, the researcher sets aside their own understandings and knowledge to revisit the phenomenon from a new vantage point or perspective (Moustakas, 1994).

Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction experiences are considered individually which describe the phenomenon in an open way, from the perspective of the participants (Moustakas, 1994). Moustakas (1994) described this textural description as providing variations of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, sounds, colors, and shapes which give insight to the meanings and essence of the phenomenon.

The Imaginative Variation is the structural essence of experience (Moustakas, 1994). The structural description provides “a picture of the conditions that precipitate an experience and connect with it” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 35). The textural and structural are integrated to synthesize the meanings and essences of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994, p. 35).

Rationale

Creativity is a complex phenomenon that is ingrained in human experience (Lubart et al., 2019). The phenomenon of creativity is directly impacted by culture which is a contextually embedded phenomenon (Lubart et al., 2019). Transcendental phenomenology allowed a closer examination of the phenomenon of creativity and how adults from culturally diverse backgrounds who are creatively gifted perceived creativity to give greater insight into what creativity is and how it is experienced. Transcendental phenomenology was selected as the methodology for this study because it allowed for

new, fresh perspectives to emerge which brought a new understanding for both myself, as the researcher, and the audience (Moustakas, 1994). When selecting this methodology, a critical component was being able to collect data without preconceptions and theoretical notions because I wanted the perceptions and experiences of participants to be able to speak for themselves without any preconceived ideas effecting the experiences being shared (Moustakas, 1994). Transcendental phenomenology created an opportunity for reflective accounts of participants' experiences, as opposed to accounts that may be empirical or theoretical in nature (Moustakas, 1994). Transcendental phenomenology also lends itself to being open to various forms of data collection in the form of artifacts like photographs of artwork or videos of creative processes, in addition to interviews, which is a critical component to this study.

Role of Community Partner

The community partners had a key role in supporting research efforts through the recruitment process. The community partners for this study were two experts in the fields of gifted education and creativity. The community partners' role in the recruitment process included identifying participants that might be a good fit for the study and forwarding a recruitment letter (Appendix A) or flyer (Appendix B) to potential participants. In addition, the community partners had the opportunity to provide sound knowledge, wisdom, and judgement in research approaches. The Community Partner Agreements (Appendix C) outlined the community partners' role in the study.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred through interviews and artifact collection (Billups, 2021). Two semi-structured interviews were the primary data collection sources for the study (Billups, 2021). Interviews “capture an individual’s perspective, experiences, feelings, and stories with the guidance and facilitation of an interviewer” (Billups, 2021, p. 36). The interviews allowed the participants’ view of creativity to emerge rather than the researcher’s view of creativity. Artifact collection was a secondary data collection source (Billups, 2021). Artifacts provided a context for the study and created a tactile representation that aligns with understanding what creativity is and how it is experienced.

Setting

The setting for this study was confined to a virtual environment. The researcher interviewed participants via video conferencing due to the continued impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. In addition, artifacts were shared during the interview process and a photograph or video of the artifact was collected through email or via Zoom.

Participants

The participants for this study were eight, creatively gifted adults from diverse cultural backgrounds who had a profession in an arts-related field. The eight participants had a profession in an arts-related field which included being an artist, musician, singer, and/or performing artist. Purposeful sampling was used to allow the researcher to select participants based upon ethnic background, profession, age, and gender to ensure there was a balance among perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). All participants gave consent prior to the interviews being conducted (Appendix D).

Recruitment of Participants.

Due to the limited sample population, recruitment of participants proved to be a challenge. A second community partner was added during the recruitment process to expand the pool of potential participants. During the recruitment process, the community partners identified potential participants within their professional network and also shared recruitment materials (Appendix A & B) on their social media pages. From the recruitment materials, potential participants were directed to complete a short survey that collected demographic information (e.g., profession, age, gender, ethnicity). Forty-five potential participants filled out the survey. To ensure diversity in cultural and ethnic representation, each participant was chosen using purposeful sampling.

Once, the participants were selected, an email was sent to them to schedule the two interviews. Challenges arose in contacting participants, there were very few initial responses to the first email that was sent to schedule interviews. Of the six emails sent, only two responses were received. Interviews with those two participants took place while additional participants were recruited. Additional, follow-up emails were sent to potential participants and the recruitment materials were shared again by the community partners to gain more potential participants since there were limited responses.

New emails were sent to a different group of potential participants since limited responses were received with the first group of potential participants from these emails three more participants responded and scheduled interviews. With this set of participants, snowball recruitment was also used since the sample population was limited; this allowed people within the community partner's professional network and existing study

participants to recruit additional potential participants for the study by forwarding the recruitment email they received to potential participants (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The last three participants were the most challenging to recruit. Recruitment materials were sent out to specific individuals by the community partners to attempt to solicit responses. After multiple failed attempts to schedule interviews, new emails were sent to an additional group of potential participants and all three individuals responded and scheduled interviews.

Protection of Participants.

Minimizing risk to potential participants is a crucial part of qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The following precautions were taken to ensure protection of all participants:

- Participants were assured that participation in the study is voluntary, and they may withdraw at any time.
- All participants gave verbal consent to be interviewed via a video conferencing platform and acknowledged that the interview can be recorded for the sole purpose of interview transcription.
- Participants were assured that the interviews would not be archived, but only used for the purpose of this dissertation and then destroyed.
- All files, recording, and artifacts with participant information were kept on a password secured device that is only accessible to the researcher.
- Pseudonyms were used to protect participants' identities unless they requested that their real names and identities be used.

Interview Protocols

Participants took part in two semi-structured interviews using the interview protocol (Appendix E). Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes to one hour in length. The purpose of the interviews was to have an in-depth conversation with participants about what creativity is and how they experienced creativity. As part of the interview process an artifact was collected from each participant. Each participant was asked to bring an artifact that represented creativity to them, the type of artifact was left open ended to encourage diverse forms of representation. The artifacts were discussed and reflected upon during the interview process.

Interview Questions and Connection to Literature

The interview questions were organized in relation to the research questions and the literature. The tables below outline the interview questions, the alignment to the research questions, and the literature that justified the questions.

Table 1

Interview Protocol Questions and Justification for Interview 1

Primary Interview Question	Supplementary Questions (if needed)	Rationale	Alignment to Research Question	Connection to Literature
What does creativity mean to you?		Determine participant's perceptions of creativity.	(RQ1) (RQ2)	Glăveanu, 2019; Necka, 2011
What has informed your thinking about creativity?	a. How has family informed your thinking about creativity?	Determine how beliefs influence creativity.	(SQ1) (SQ2) (RQ2)	Glăveanu, 2019; Leung, et al., 2008; Lubart et al.,

	b. How has culture and/or community informed your thinking about creativity?			2019; Runco, 2014
What have you experienced in terms of creativity?		Determine participant's experiences with creativity.	(SQ2) (RQ2)	Piirto, 2008; Puryear & Lamb, 2020
What has influenced your experiences with creativity?	a. How have educational experiences informed your thinking about creativity? b. How has your professional endeavors informed your thinking about creativity?	Determine how experiences influenced the participant's perception of creativity.	(SQ2) (RQ2)	Piirto, 2008; Puryear & Lamb, 2020

Table 2

Interview Protocol Questions and Justification for Interview 2

Interview Question	Rationale	Alignment to Research Question	Connection to Literature
1. What artifact have you brought? Tell me about it.	Collection of basic information		
2. Why did you choose this artifact?	Determine how artifact represents creativity to participant.	(RQ1)	Piirto, 2008; Glăveanu, 2019; Puryear & Lamb, 2020
3. How does it represent creativity to you?	Determine how artifact	(RQ1)	Piirto, 2008; Glăveanu,

	represents creativity to participant.		2019; Puryear & Lamb, 2020
4. Who created this artifact?	Collection of basic information. Determine possible familial or cultural influences.	(SQ1) (SQ2)	Leung, et al., 2008; Lubart et al., 2019
5. Why was it created or what is its intended use?	Determine possible familial or cultural influences.	(SQ1) (SQ2)	Leung, et al., 2008; Lubart et al., 2019
6. If you had to describe the meaning behind this artifact in three words, what would they be?	Determine how artifact represents creativity to participant.	(RQ1)	Glăveanu, 2019

Data Analysis

The data analysis process followed the transcendental phenomenological approach: (1) Phenomenological Reduction (bracketing, horizontalization, describing textural descriptions), (2) Imaginative Variation (structural descriptions and final composite), (3) Synthesis of Meanings and Essences (composite structural description, structural synthesis) (Moustakas, 1994). I started by bracketing out my own experiences and views of creativity through the epoché in Chapter 4 (Moustakas, 1994). In the epoché I included all relevant information on my background and experiences with creativity, culture, the arts, and giftedness. After interviewing the eight participants to collect the data, the interviews were transcribed using Trint. The interviews were reviewed for accuracy. Once interviews were transcribed, common words and phrases were

highlighted using Trint to uncover themes that emerged in the data. The interview data was then sorted into tables in Chapter 5. Visual data such as artifacts were analyzed for content and reflections from participants on the creation of their artifacts (Miles, et al., 2014). I then provided a description of what was experienced and how it was experienced utilizing the Five A's Framework to align the themes with terms related to creativity (Miles, et al., 2020). I then synthesized the data into a composite description of what creativity is and how it is experienced (Moustakas, 1994).

Theoretical Framework

The Five A's Framework developed by Vlad Petre Glăveanu was used as the orienting lens for this study. The five terms that encompass the Five A's Framework were the structure in which the themes that emerged from the data analysis were aligned within the Imaginative Variation and the Synthesis of Meanings and Essences. Any themes that emerged from the data regarding personal attributes of creativity in relation to a societal context were aligned with the term actor because it is the person or personal attributes that can be shaped by a social context that influence the act of creating. Any themes that emerged from the data regarding the process of creating were aligned with the term action because it is the act of creating and how that act may be psychological or behavioral manifestation of creativity. Any terms that emerged from the data regarding the product of creativity were aligned with the term artifact because it is what is produced through creativity. Any terms that emerged from the data regarding how the artifact was used, valued, or judged were aligned with audience because it is a social or cultural view of creativity that an external factor in creativity. Any terms that emerged from the data

regarding relation to environment were aligned with the term affordances because it involves how environment contributes to creativity.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study is to examine perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults from diverse cultural backgrounds. Transcendental phenomenology was chosen as the methodology for this study because it is a heuristic approach that allowed the participants' experiences to come to the forefront allowing fresh, new perspectives to emerge (Moustakas, 1994).

Transcendental phenomenology allowed the collective voices of the eight participants from culturally diverse backgrounds who are creatively gifted and who have experienced the phenomenon of creativity to be heard while also honoring the uniqueness of their individual experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994; Vagle, 2018).

Chapter Four: Epoché

Researcher Bracketing

Transcendental phenomenology seeks to find meaning that transcends the obvious (Moustakas, 1994). In order to seek this meaning, the researcher must suspend all assumptions about the phenomenon being study in order to find the pure phenomenon within experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The Greek word “Epoché” means to refrain from judgement and the aim of the researcher in the epoché is to bracket out their own preconceptions, biases, thoughts, or opinions which often are constructed through their own experiences with the phenomenon being studied (Moustakas, 1994).

Moustakas (1994) stated “As I reflect on the nature and meaning of the Epoche, I see it as a preparation for deriving new knowledge but also as an experience in itself” (p. 85). In its most simple sense, the goal of epoché is to reduce the researcher’s voice to allow the descriptions from participants to come to the forefront of the writing. To achieve epoché, the researcher must be fully present when collecting and analyzing the data in order to capture the lived experience of each participant (Moustakas, 1994). This means that the researcher needs to find a way to set aside their own experiences.

In dedicating this chapter to describing my own experiences, it highlights any preconceptions or biases I may have, and allows the following chapters on data collection and data analysis to be solely based on what the participants described. In bracketing out my experiences, I am setting aside my views of culture, creativity, the arts, and giftedness

so that when it comes to collecting and analyzing the data, I can focus solely on statements made by participants. I begin this process by sharing about my own family and cultural background followed by recalling my experiences with the arts, giftedness, and education.

My Family and Culture

I feel that it is important to give some background information on the family and culture in which I was born and raised. My mom was born in the Appalachia region of the United States to lower middle-class, white parents. My mother had me when she was twenty-four years old, and I was born in the midwestern region of the United States. My family was somewhat complicated as I was growing up. I had no relationship with my biological father or his family. My mom re-married when I was five and my stepfather worked in sales. From the time I was about five until I was a teenager, my mom was a stay-at-home mom. Throughout my childhood and teenage years, we moved over twenty times, never staying in one place for more than a year. Most of my elementary years were spent in the southeastern part of the United States and most of my teenage years were spent in the mountain states. My family would have probably been considered lower to middle class depending on the time and place, but my mom always ensured that we lived in a nice area because she wanted to provide me with a better life than what she had growing up. My mom and stepfather divorced when I was a teenager, but my mom was always the stabilizing force in my life

Early Years and the Arts

I wish that I could say from my earliest memories I knew I was an artist or that I was drawn to art or even that my family cultivated an environment that encouraged the arts, but my experience with the arts was limited up until my teenage years. My early years were filled with predictable art projects that occasionally took place at home or at the small, private elementary school I attended for three years: coloring sheets filled with flowers and bunnies for the spring, drawing stick figures outside enjoying the sunshine in the summer, creating hand turkeys in the fall, and cutting out paper snowflakes in the winter. I was privileged enough to have weekly art classes and music classes at my small, private elementary school, but I do not remember these art classes having a lasting impact on me. I was always one of those kids who said, "I can't draw". During my later elementary years, I began homeschooling due to consistent moves, so I never had formal art classes after the third grade. My mom and I would regularly take field trips in which I would bring a sketchbook and draw what I saw like snow leopards at the zoo.

During middle school, my mom had bought me a camera for Christmas. I remember being so excited that I wanted to go outside immediately and start taking photographs. When I started taking photographs, I felt as though the world had been opened and I could finally see. I could see past the hard times, the noise, the chaos, and I could see the beauty surrounding me. From that moment on, I held onto my camera and captured everything beautiful that surrounded me: the mountains, the wildlife, the people. Little did I know that my world was starting to be influenced by art.

Adolescence and Giftedness

I was identified as academically gifted and talented by a public school district when I was around ten or eleven years old. When I attended school, I always finished my work early, I would get A's on tests without studying, I felt different than everyone else, and I just really hated being at school. In about fifth grade I asked my mom to homeschool me. She agreed and from then on she was my teacher.

When I was about thirteen years old, my mom made a life changing decision to start pursuing her undergraduate degree. Prior to her starting her undergrad, I do not think I even comprehended what college was or what it meant to have a degree. My mom was thirty-seven at the time and she had been out of school for over twenty years. I distinctly remember her saying that her brain felt like a rock when she started her first course. As my mom began her college journey, I became her proofreader. I read every paper she wrote to check for spelling and grammar errors. It was almost as if her coursework was my coursework, and I had the opportunity to absorb the new knowledge that she was also discovering. After graduating with her Bachelor of Science degree, my mom continued on to pursue her master's degree and teacher licensure. It was during this time that she was introduced to the world of giftedness. Although I had been identified as gifted in middle school, neither of us really understand what giftedness meant at the time. My mom continued on after her Master of Arts degree to pursue her Ed.D.. As she continued her coursework, she became more and more engrained into the gifted community and so did I. During my senior year of high school, my mom began working as a gifted specialist in local school districts. My mom's role as my homeschool teacher, her university

coursework, and her career in education greatly impacted my decision to become an educator and specifically my interest in gifted education.

College and a Return to the Arts

Walking into my bachelor's degree I thought I knew exactly what I wanted to do and who I wanted to be, but life had other plans. I started my bachelor's degree at a small, private university with the intention of becoming an elementary school teacher. Shortly after, I had to withdraw due to health issues and I ended up taking courses through an online university. It was during that time that I was required to take an art course. As I started the course, I had no idea what to expect, but as I got further into the coursework I began to be mesmerized by the arts. I fell in love with the act of creating. I had continued my photography throughout my high school years, but this new experience with various art forms opened my eyes to the vastness of art. I distinctly remember standing in the middle of a cold creek in the Rocky Mountains creating cairn sculptures from rocks for an assignment in that art course and realizing I wanted a career that included art. I changed colleges and degrees once again and started diving headfirst into the world of art. I began taking classes in drawing, ceramics, three-dimensional art, art history, art education; basically, anything and everything art related. My interest in the arts did not stem from natural talent; it stemmed from intrigue and challenge. I remember walking into my first drawing class and being so intimidated by all the other students because they had taken art classes in high school and I did not have any experience drawing; I was not the best in the class, I may have even been the worst, but the challenge of learning new techniques and methods to create something beautiful mesmerized me.

Art is where I began to grow, it is where I began to set aside my perfectionistic tendencies and embrace the unknown. It is where I could sit in class and have to practice because I was not perfect at it, I had to learn it. I had to be creative and embrace my creativity. I also remember walking into the ceramic's classroom for the first time and learning how to construct a pinch pot whistle, I had never used clay before, and I found that not only was I good at working with the material, but I loved the techniques and processes of hand building and wheel throwing. It was in this place of growth that I knew I wanted to show others how they could be creative and learn through art.

My undergraduate coursework led me to pursue a Master of Arts in Teaching, specifically in Art Education. During this time, I continued to grow, learn, and be creative. I had the opportunity to work with students of all ages in various capacities using various mediums of art. I learned about philosophies of art education, curriculum development, and instructional strategies.

I had the privilege of fine-tuning my own abilities in art through my master's degree as well. However, underneath all of learning and growth I was still brought back to giftedness. I began seeing connections among the arts, creativity, and giftedness. I saw overlaps in the philosophies, curriculum, and strategies that were being taught in my art education program that were also taught in my mom's gifted education program. It was ironic because as I was being pulled towards these two different areas, gifted and art, they were neglecting one another from an educational perspective. Gifted and talented students were neglected from what I was learning in my art education courses and creatively/artistically gifted students were being excluded from gifted programs.

Young Adult and Educator

After graduating with my Master of Arts, I began my career as an art educator. I accepted a position as a Ceramics Teacher at a high school in Washington state. Through my work as a Ceramics Teacher, I learned that many of my students had never taken an art course, much like me in my high school years. The classes I began teaching became my opportunity to introduce my students to the world of art and to challenge them in the same ways I had been challenged in the years prior. What I discovered through being an art educator is that through a simple material such as clay, most students were able to have an outlet where they were able to let stress melt away, even if it was just for fifty minutes a day. They were able to focus on creating. They were able to connect with one another through art despite their differences. Art and creativity were a necessary component of their education.

Connections and Where it Led

I entered the Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction Specializing in Gifted Education at the University of Denver around the same time I began teaching. It was in this program that my interest in the arts, giftedness, and creativity was affirmed and welcomed. I discovered that creativity was the bridge I was seeking to connect the arts and giftedness.

Chapter Summary

What I have found throughout my personal, educational, and professional experiences is that we, as humans, have unique experiences that need to be shared. Creativity permeates all aspects of my personal, professional, and educational life.

Creativity is collective, it is not exclusive to a certain person or a certain culture.

Everyone perceives and experiences creativity in their own unique way. Through this epoché and my reflections I have attempted to share my own experiences to illuminate any biases that I may hold when analyzing the unique experiences, the eight participants shared with me about the phenomenon of creativity.

Chapter Five: Phenomenological Reduction and Imaginative Variation

After the Epoché, Phenomenological Reduction occurs through horizontalizing, clustering horizons into themes, and creating a textural description of what the phenomenon is that is being studied (Moustakas, 1994). The focus shifts from the researcher to the participants. “The process involves a pre-reflective description of things just as they appear and a reduction to what is horizontal and thematic” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 91). The aim of the phenomenological reduction is to describe the general features of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). This process requires focusing on one angle or perspective until the angles or perspectives come together as a whole (Moustakas, 1994). “The process itself is like a visual ray that changes with every experience...shooting forth fresh perceptions” (Husserl, 1931, p. 172). The Phenomenological Reduction will occur through sharing the data that was collected from participants. Each participant’s angle or perspective will be given and then each of these individual parts will come together to describe and better understand the full essence of the phenomenon of creativity based upon themes that have emerged.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to examine perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults from diverse cultural backgrounds. Examining these perceptions of creativity provides insight into what the phenomenon of creativity is and how it is experienced. The phenomenon of creativity is

observed from the theoretical lens of the Five A's Framework which considers five components of creativity: actor, action, artifact, audience, and affordances (Glăveanu, 2013). Examining perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults who are from diverse cultural backgrounds using the Five A's Framework will provide insight into the essence of creativity including its perceived components and structures.

Research Questions

The primary research question for this study is: (RQ1) What are perceptions of creativity among adults from culturally diverse backgrounds who are creatively gifted?

The sub-questions that support this research question are: (SQ1) How do beliefs inform perceptions of creativity? (SQ2) How do experiences inform perceptions of creativity?

The second research question for this study is: (RQ2) How do the interactions among beliefs and experiences inform perceptions of creativity?

Summary of Participants

A profile of each of the eight participants is given below to better understand who they are and their background. A summary of this information can be found below in Table 1.

Ana Profile

Ana is a twenty-seven-year-old, Hispanic, performing artist who was raised in Orlando, Florida. She is the youngest of three and her parents were both educators. When Ana was about two or three years old, she started dancing; she took classes in ballet, jazz, and pointe. Her interest in dance later led to an interest in singing which led Ana to pursue acting in high school. After graduating from high school, Ana obtained her

Bachelor of Arts in Theater at the University of South Florida. From there, Ana went on to have professional opportunities at Unto these Hills, National Institute of Directing and Ensemble Creation, and Drama Kids International. She is currently pursuing opportunities in theater while also teaching performing arts to children.

Josh Profile

Joshua Granberg is a thirty-seven-year-old white Painter who was born and raised in Kenya, Africa until he was ten years old. Josh's family then moved to Lubbock, Texas. Throughout his life, he and his family, have moved around the United States. Josh obtained his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Painting and Bachelor of Arts in Bible and Ministry then decided to pursue his Master of Fine Arts at Florence Academy of Art in Florence, Italy. Josh has worked in a variety of fields from sound engineering to construction to being a full-time artist and now starting a career in commercial real estate.

Daniela Profile

Daniela Guzmán-Égüez is a thirty-nine-year-old opera singer who was born and raised in Ecuador. Daniela earned a full scholarship to complete her undergraduate degree in the United States, she then continued to obtain her master's degree in Texas. Daniela then returned to Ecuador and started her own chamber opera company to give students a place to perform. She later returned to the United States to complete an artist diploma. She is a professional opera singer and teacher.

Geya Profile

Geya is a forty-one-year-old, South Asian/Indian filmmaker who was raised near Denver, Colorado and now lives in California. Both of Geya's parents were scientists, but

they were also very supportive of the arts. Geya went to the University of California Irvine where she began a degree in electrical engineering, but about halfway through her undergraduate degree she changed to an English major. She later received her Master of Fine Arts in filmmaking at the University of California Los Angeles. She has worked for a variety of nonprofits and in the film industry. She is currently a screenwriter and director.

Fox Profile

Fox Spears is a forty-four-year-old Contemporary Native American Visual Artist who was born, raised, and currently lives in Seattle, Washington. Fox was adopted and raised in a white family, but his biological mother was from the Karuk tribe. Fox earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts with an emphasis in Design from Cornish College of the Arts. He worked in a variety of retail and corporate roles before pursuing being an artist full-time during the height of the pandemic in 2020. Fox has regularly pursued the arts by engaging with organizations such as Crow's Shadow Institute, Nia Tero Foundation, Pilchuck Glass School, Seattle Art Museum, and Tacoma Art Museum.

Esther Profile

Esther Ervin is a sixty-eight-year-old black, sculptor who lives in Seattle, Washington. Esther grew up in a household where her mother always kept her engaged artistically and her father taught her to do things that most girls wouldn't know how to do like operate power saws and table saws. Esther earned an undergraduate degree in Biology, she then did illustration through Peace Corp Health Handbook, and later got her MFA in medical illustration with an emphasis in sculpture. Esther has worked with a

variety of materials from drawing and painting to clay to metalwork and jewelry making to varied media collage. Esther is a lifelong learner, constantly challenging herself to use new materials, she recently took a workshop on powder coating metal. History, ancestry, and current events have a tremendous impact on what she creates.

Vera Profile

Vera Burns Fielder is a seventy-year-old black, Pianist, Organist, Choir Director, and Music Teacher who currently resides in Texas. Vera grew up in Louisiana and was surrounded by music growing up. She sang in her school choir and church choir and regularly attended concerts and other musical events. She obtained her Bachelor of Science in Vocal Piano and her master's degree in Music Education. She had a forty-year career as a public education General Music Teacher in the states of Louisiana, Illinois, and Texas.

Stephen Profile

Stephen Kilborn is a seventy-one-year-old, white ceramicist who was born and raised in the midwestern United States and moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico after college. Growing up, Stephen lived in a working-class home with his mother and grandparents and attended school in Detroit, Michigan and Bowling Green, Ohio. Since elementary school, Stephen knew he would become an artist of some kind. He attended college in Ohio and studied art. Stephen then moved to the northeast where he hoped to jumpstart his career as an artist, but he ended up back in Ohio. Around this time a friend of his was moving to New Mexico so Stephen jumped in the car with him, his wife, and their dogs and moved to Santa Fe. Stephen has lived and worked in Santa Fe as a potter ever since.

Table 1*Participant Demographic Information*

<i>Participant Name or Pseudonym</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Current Geographic Location</i>
<i>Ana</i>	Performing Artist	27	Hispanic	F	US/Southeast
<i>Josh</i>	Painter	37	White	M	US/Pacific Northwest
<i>Daniela</i>	Opera Singer	39	Latina	F	US/Mountain
<i>Geya</i>	Filmmaker	41	South Asian/Indian	F	US/Southwest
<i>Fox</i>	Contemporary Native American Visual Artist	44	Karuk Native American/White	M	US/Pacific Northwest
<i>Esther</i>	Sculptor	68	Black	F	US/Pacific Northwest
<i>Vera</i>	Pianist, Organist, Choir Director, and Music Teacher	70	Black	F	US/South Central
<i>Stephen</i>	Ceramic Artist	71	White	M	US/Southwest

Horizontalization

Horizontalizing is the process in which statements from each participant are shared individually to respect the experiences of each unique individual. “Individual perceptions, memories, judgments, reflections are core and figural in our developing understanding” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 94). Horizons or perspectives are unlimited, each horizon grounds the phenomenon and gives it a distinctive characteristic (Moustakas, 1994). Horizontalization assigns equal value to each statement which represents a segment of meaning (Moustakas, 1994). Horizontalizing is sharing all the perspective from each individual (Moustakas, 1994).

Individual Textural and Structural Descriptions

The individual textural descriptions of what participants experienced based upon the research questions are shared in the following sections. These individual descriptions

reflect the lived experiences of each individual in terms of creativity and are summarized in Table 2.

Interview 1.

The individual textural and structural descriptions were evident throughout the first interview as the interview guide and interview questions (Appendix E) were focused on gathering the participant's perceptions of creativity, beliefs surrounding creativity, and experiences with creativity.

(RQ1) What are perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults from culturally diverse backgrounds?

The interview question that guided these responses was: What does creativity mean to you?

Creativity to me is exploration. And it's kind of just learning the different parts of yourself and just how far you can go. It is growth because your mind, your creativity, the more you age, the way you view different things about life, that helps your creativity. (Ana)

Creativity is problem solving. And so part of that means you have to have a problem. And so I think sometimes people view it as what can you make up and pull from nothing into something. But I think it takes more creativity to work within constraints. And so that's one of the aspects I love about portrait painting, you can be more creative with more restraints than you can if you're given free rein. (Josh)

Creativity is like a superpower. And I think we all have that power, and depending on the circumstances, you engage with it or develop it more when you feel the least comfortable. If you are in a place in your life or a place like a physical place, you tend to develop more creativity if you don't want to conform to whatever is your situation. It's just the power that we all have to engage and respond to the world that's around us. I don't think you can survive without creativity. (Daniela)

Creativity to me just means freedom. I feel like it's freedom of expression. It's tapping into something very instinctual, and I really feel like it's something that definitely, at first, for me anyways, when I feel my most creative, I think I feel like there's a flow, a flow of ideas and thoughts and expressions coming out of me. And then later, I'll try to sort of logic through a structure if I need to, depending on what I'm being creative on or what kind of medium I'm working in. (Geya)

I think one of the things it means to me is really like how you're responding to the world around you or to what you're seeing. So think of it as like taking in information which can be as casual as just whatever you see or hear or are told. But I feel like there's some sort of this process that takes place internally, and it's how you how you choose to share what you experienced and then that door's wide open as far as how you do that, what it is, what you're trying to say.” (Fox)

“It means like digging into your innards, your guts, your soul to bring something out that maybe answers a question. If you're given a question to deal with. It's the

thing that expresses what you need it to express in the moment. So you're calling upon your history, your ancestry to bring about creativity. (Esther)

Creativity is your own interpretation. I think that it should not be anything that's been practiced. Creativity is thinking differently. And as far as the music, it is expressing yourself in music in any way, any form that you wish. If we were listening to a song and you can get all kind of different interpretations so being able to interpret differently from others. And it's not structured. I think it also helps us develop our personality. (Vera)

It's just the way I the way I live and what I do. (Stephen)

The above responses from the eight participants on what creativity means to them share their individual perceptions of creativity.

(SQ1) How do beliefs inform perceptions of creativity?

The interview questions that guided these responses were: What has informed your thinking about creativity? How has family informed your thinking about creativity? How has culture and/or community informed your thinking about creativity?

Well, I definitely think the fact that I'm Hispanic. And, you know, a person of color. I always feel like when it comes to creativity, I like to tell the stories that we may not hear so often. Whether it's, you know, my ancestors or someone else's ancestors, but a story that you haven't heard before. And so that's what I've tried to do. My family like catapulted my perception of creativity, so the first show I ever saw was West Side Story. And that was my dad, you know, playing it for me when I was seven years old, and that was the first time I ever saw someone who

looked like me on TV. And so that in itself was just exciting. And so they kind of made me realize, oh, I can do this if I really wanted to. But then the older I got, both my parents, they love hearing stories from other people, and so I think that made me want to hear different stories that have been told. And so in a way, yes, that helped create my creativity. For instance, my parents, you know, they would take us to see live orchestra if they were like free in downtown or even they would take us to see the Rockettes or The Nutcracker. My dad really wanted me to learn all different types of shows, so I grew up watching old shows like Good Times or What's Happening!! or Diff'rent Strokes or The Facts of Life. So I grew up learning that, but my mom was really into like opera and singing, so she would just play that around the house and just my dad played the bongos, so it was just all around us. And whenever my dad would play a song, he would try to tell us the history of the song. (Ana)

Definitely art. I think that's maybe, you know, what people would normally think, I don't always associate creativity with art. It's much more than that. You have creativity in like construction or some of my other occupations have required a lot of creativity. Sound engineering, you know, every single band that comes in, you have to be creative for how you are going to solve the problems of the acoustics, of the tunings, of the instruments, how everything integrates from our system to their system. There's just so much creativity and problem solving that has to take place there. And the more out of the box you can think, just the easier, more fun it is. I think my different occupations, have really informed creativity. I think my

parents are very intentional about creativity and they always encouraged abstract thinking, problem solving. It was really annoying at times. So both my parents really encouraged exploration and abstract thinking and coming up with ideas and encouraged my art as well. I was different than a lot of my other siblings in my art, and so it was nice that they did encourage that. Because all my other siblings went into ministry, but they were ok with my art and they encouraged it. And it was great. I would be very, very frustrated in like my junior high and high school art classes, because the teachers would just almost refuse to teach me, they'd say, we can't teach you anything. And so my parents would like enroll me into some summer classes at the universities and would go out of their way to find art stuff that I could engage with and would challenge me. Living in Africa, we didn't have stuff. And so my mom was very creative with things to entertain us. One of the things that was really disappointing to her was every time we'd come back to the states, she would collect two or three of those like, in Texas, they had three liter coke cans. So she would bring back two or three because that's all they could carry was two or three at a time. And so for years, she collected these until she got 10 and she made a bowling alley and none of us enjoyed it. It was fun, but we didn't enjoy it as much as she did. Like you know, that kind of thing, for her to think about it that long, and plan for it and figured out how to make that stuff up. In Kenya, because there was so much poverty and lack of stuff. Even if you had money, stuff wasn't there so there was lots of creativity like soccer balls were made out of dirt and paper sacks. And then one of the fun tools or toys that they

had is they would take old tires and cut like this ring out of them. So it's just this ring of tire. They take a stick and hit it, and it would roll right along. So just, you know, their toys were very creative. You could give any of us anything and we would make a fun toy out of it. We made forts constantly, always outside playing. Now in Florence, you know, I talk about freedom and constraints, and my upbringing was the exact opposite, upbringing was freedom and no restraints and free reign. Florence Academy was the exact opposite. It was absolute control, order. It was one thing, and one thing only, the development of skill. When you get to the third year of the schooling they'll say, you know, the first two years are just about learning the skill of art making. tactical skills in play, there is zero creativity. And they say, we do that so that it frees your creativity, you are no longer restricted by your ability, and so your creativity has no restrictions in that. So anything you can think of, you have the technical ability to create. I don't think they do a great job of making that shift and then letting people create. You start out with graphite then go into charcoal and oil painting. Highly classical. Completely classical. So it's exactly what you would have learned in France in the height of 19th century classical art. The same techniques, we ground the paint, the same. And you used control. I mean, to the point of you use these seven colors and these seven colors only from these manufacturers, you know how they interact with each other. And if you use a different, you know, if you use vermillion from this location where as from this location it'll act differently with this other pigment you're using. So it's extremely specific. And the point of it is so

that when the teacher comes around and says you have kind of an acidic red throughout the painting, you can't say, well, it's because my paints a little bit different. I know how your paint works because we're using the same stuff.

Therefore, we need to figure out why and adjust something. (Josh)

I think it's both being privileged and in need. Privileged to explore certain forms of creative thinking and creativity and need at the same on the same level to me. To find resources or be resourceful to take things to further level in many, many ways of life, like creating non-boring meals to what do I do with a nontraditional profession in a developing country? In my case, I'm always shocked how in the United States people have access to so many things like cars, you can change cars as often as you want. You know, they're not expensive. People gift furniture to you if they no longer want it or if they no longer need it, or if they just want new things in the house. Where I come from, like you'll never find a secondhand store or anything because people use their stuff until it's dead until it's been completely used and if you have something that's getting older, you just repair it and repair it. For example, I never had too many pairs of shoes when I was like, I don't know, high school or anything, and it's not because my parents didn't have like a lot of resources, it is just not a cultural thing. You just don't need them or don't have them, so for me, it was like a big shock and not in a negative way, but I can have this, and I have like so many possibilities when it's just very different. So you know, when you don't have so many things and then you start wanting all those things, you try to find your way to get to them. I wouldn't just get clothes every so

often because it's expensive or my parents didn't think it was time to get clothes, you know, so I just re-sew my own pants to give them bellbottoms or make them skinny or whatever was the trend like I would just change my own things. You need to repurpose something because you can't afford them or if they're just not available where you're at, you just repurpose things and try to make them work out for different things. Like with my little opera company. I mean, I have a decent salary teaching. And so I would invest all my money in props and costumes and sets for my productions. But then, of course, I couldn't afford a brand new everything for every show. So you'd have to repurpose the same clothing, the same curtains, the same stuff. And then once you start doing that, it's like it becomes a habit. Like, what do I have that I can really work on? And how can I make this work for multiple opportunities? And it was like any time in my family I would want something my grandma would turn something into what I needed. And well, my dad himself is very creative. And so there was always something going on, and I don't know just from the way he jokes or how he decorates things. My mom's a writer, but she's an introvert, so she doesn't share much, except her books, which I read now that I'm an adult. And I always was able to test things, test things that led me to create with my hands. I'm like a very kinetic learner, so textures and colors, and I had access to that from an early age. I was in a Montessori preschool. And I think that really got me engaged with those kinds of things with colors, textures, they were amazing and well just toys and experiences that really let you play with exploring. (Daniela)

Well, certainly my own experience in trying to express myself, that's you know, when I've written poems in my life it's just like a free flow of ideas. Like I was saying earlier, I think for sure, you know, pop culture and things, you know, movies that you see, this is what a creative person looks like. This is how a creative person works. This is how their life looks. I think that's certainly had a lot of influence on me. You know, the starving artists theme has come up in my life several times, so I think that's had an influence on me as well for what it means to try to make a career in being creative. And I also feel like, you know, I grew up with scientists, so I don't think creativity just pertains to the arts. It wasn't necessarily talked about all the time, but you know, we were surrounded by music and movies and science, and it was just always sort of in our house. So I think there was always that subtle encouragement to try to find a way to express ourselves. Culture, I think had a huge influence on creativity. I think being Indian, you know, I don't want to speak for every single Indian on the planet, but Indians in general, especially the ones I grew up with and my family, are very, very in tune to music and dance. My parents were involved in this Indian cultural association when we were growing up and they took us to dance performances and music performances. I think it was very influential culturally. We went to ballet dances and things like that as well. But Indian stuff was just it was just always around. That's what my parents were very comfortable with and that's what they loved and that's what we saw all the time. (Geya)

Well, my dad was an elementary school teacher, so I think he was really influential in that. He was also very creative. And I felt encouraged to be creative from a very young age, so I think that but there was no stigma around, you know, if I wanted to be an artist. They were kind of hands off in a way. I think also my daycare I have to give a lot of credit to. I went to an amazing daycare. And I think that also was really pivotal. I think it gave me a really good foundation of being able to feel joy. And I think they were also very, you know, very creative, very encouraging. That's really where I think I learned to read. So I learned to read at a really young age. I think I went into kindergarten reading at like a fifth grade level or something. The daycare was also like really close to a really big park in town, Discovery Park, and so we would go there a lot. So I think there was a lot of exposure to the natural world and forests and things like that. I think growing up I really thought of myself as a white person completely. And so, as I got older, there were little things that would happen, remind me that I wasn't entirely white. Like in high school, like there were a couple of girls, you know, they were like some white boy did that and ones like white like him and pointed at me. And the other one's like, he's not white and I'm like, I'm not white. What the hell, you know, like, so it's just like little things like that would happen sometimes where it's like, Oh, right, I'm mixed. I'm gay, I think it was around 22 or 23, something like that I came out and was like, I'm gay. But I think I really kind of went into this sort of like I was spending a lot of time partying and, you know like enjoying nightlife a lot and I know at the time, at least, I feel like there was such an

emphasis on I'm trying to be this like, perfect all-American boy. And I hit a point where it's like, oh, I'm never going to look exactly like that. Like, I can't, I can't actually be that. Why am I trying to? And so I think, you know, when I ended up going back to school, I think that's where I really started becoming more serious about my ethnic identity and I then visited my tribe when I was 19. And so of course, I'm going back to school and now trying to find funding like, and I did end up getting some grants from my tribe, and I think I was also like, well, if I'm going to accept this, there's a responsibility like, I can't be like just whatever. So I really at that point made a big effort to start learning more about my tribe and Native American issues in general. And it's so interesting thinking back onto what I was thinking at time. And, you know, I think I have many thoughts that are probably very common, like, oh, I can be a bridge between white people and the natives, you know, like all these things that now, I'm like, oh my god, it's so cringe. But you know, it's like I had to get to where I am. And it took a long time to feel like I belonged and to be able to accept for myself that my identity is valid and it doesn't need to be what someone else's experience is. And I am mixed, and that's OK. But I would say that really since then my culture is a huge influence on creativity and how I think about it. it's really like. (Fox)

Nobody creates in a vacuum whether they believe it or not, observation and meddling in your own work, but other people's work. I guess my perception of creativity or what art is has varied. The more that I become acquainted with other people's work, surprisingly enough, the pandemic has given me more opportunity

to delve into that because, you know, staying connected when we were sent home, and sharing work and processes, and then getting exposed and involved in new things. So there's a lot that influences my perceptions. I think my dreams, as well. My mother always kept me engaged artistically as a kid or at least creatively. And my father and I think, you know, I really got a lot from him about, you know, it kind of broadened my ideas of what girls can be because he was a broad spectrum tradesperson, and so when he was in his woodshop, he was like come over here girl and help me hold this board down while I cut it. And then I began to get interested in what he was doing and I would take the scraps and build things. You know, he taught me how to aim my hammer and use a power saw at a pretty early age. I don't think very many 11 year old girls were using power saws and table saws. So, you know, I got the idea, well, hey, guys can do it, I can do it. And that's been really helpful. I've been able to not only use those skills for myself, but occasionally, you know, maybe cut something for somebody else that didn't have the skill or equipment. And my spouse right now, you know, he's been really instrumental because living in the house that we now both live in I have lots of spaces and additional nooks and crannies to practice certain aspects of my art. And I have an office, you know, big things that I didn't have as a single person. Culture has influenced my creativity quite a lot because, you know, especially with the violent events that have happened in particular to black people recently, that's I guess, given me the ability to stop to think about and execute art that I would not have before. I think about race more than before because of current

events and activity. Here in Seattle, you may have heard about the occupation of the police precinct and all that stuff, but I wasn't out there because it was in times of COVID. But, you know, I was kept abreast of what was going on, and I'm working on a project now. Well, actually, two projects that are very culturally related, they are long term, long term in that they won't begin to materialize until next year. And in one case, I have been working on it since the summer of 2018. One of them will be permanent art so that'll be great. (Esther)

I guess that would start with my childhood. I was allowed to be expressive, as far as performing music and even the way I dressed, my mother did not complain when I put stripes on with polka dots. She did not say that they don't look right. So I did have that freedom to do that. And my mother was an educator, so I guess that helped. And as far as my background in music that helped because I had music teachers who were creative and who motivated their students to think outside of the box to be expressive. And I guess some of it had to do with DNA. So it was just the way we grew up and my parents did encourage it, I was allowed to go to concerts. I had someone laughing when I went to see Ike and Tina Turner and James Brown when I was nine years old. So I had a variety of music all the time. But I was singing in the church choir, singing in the school choir. Both my parents are African-American, my father sung, and I found out later in life that my father's sisters were a singing quartet group. Yeah, so then the community, as far as family and others that, you know, that was a big influence. (Vera)

I was born in Detroit and grew up with my grandparents and my mother, you know, in a small, kind of working-class house in Detroit. And then we moved to Ohio and I went to school in Ohio. But ever since I was in elementary school in Detroit, I thought that I would become an artist of some kind. At the time, my only reference was that I would become like a Disney cartoonist or something like that. I didn't realize, probably until maybe in high school, somebody told me that there were artists like on a regional level as opposed to a national level, if that makes sense. You know that there were probably artists who made money who made a living in Cleveland, whereas before that I was familiar with a lot of art history, which I read and also, you know, the big Abstract Expressionists and going to New York and all that. And until then I didn't realize that there were local artists, I kind of thought it was all or nothing. I've just always been driven to make things. And that's just always made sense even when I was in elementary school, at the end of the year I would think I'm going to flunk, but maybe since I'm kind of good in art, I'll pass. So I think it's just been part of my life. I never really thought about doing anything else. Somebody the other day that was in said, well, you know, she said, did you study this in college? And I said, yes, I did. And she said, well, you must have had a very understanding parents to let you do that. And I said, actually, nobody expected much out of me. And I think that's something that just being an older adult I realize is that there's an advantage to just being a working class where if you don't go to prison, it's a plus, right? And you know, I realized when I was in one of my first jobs, when I was 16, I cleaned

dorm rooms in Bowling Green, Ohio, and there were endless dorm rooms. And I remember thinking, I'm going to spend my entire summer cleaning these dorm rooms, and I would trade 12 weeks of my young life to clean these dorm rooms. And I think at that time I thought I'm never going to do a job that I like, so I just think that making things is just part of me. When I was in high school, I was in a program for kids that were from low income families, and they took us one time to a factory and they said, look, you can work in a factory, and they just made an assumption that since we were from a poor family, that we would never go very far. And I had a counselor who maybe every month would talk to me and say, now, don't drop out of high school. And I was like, I have no intention of dropping out of high school. (Stephen)

The above responses from the eight participants on what has informed their thinking about creativity highlight the personal, familial, and cultural beliefs that have informed their perceptions of creativity.

(SQ2) How do experiences inform perceptions of creativity?

The interview questions that guided these responses were: What have you experienced in terms of creativity? What has influenced your experiences with creativity? How have educational experiences informed your thinking about creativity? How has your professional endeavors informed your thinking about creativity?

Definitely when I worked at the National Institute for Directing and Ensemble Creation, I met so many people from different walks of life and I learned different techniques on how to build the story even just from writing random words down.

And then from there, how do these words relate or, you know, mapping out places that each of us have been and how those stories drove us to this story that we are in right now. Working with people from all different backgrounds. For instance, in college, I worked with a director from England and then he did Movement Theater, which is something I had never really done before. And he said, we're not going to have a black out on stage. We're just going to have movement and set pieces change within our actors. That was like, I've never done this before in my life, but it's something that now I incorporate when I'm creating theater because I thought it was so cool that there never has to be a dull moment. My instructors have influenced me tremendously. And especially just, in high school is when it really started to take off for me, when I really had my first Hispanic ballet teacher, the first Hispanic teacher really ever in the arts. And so that was just reassuring again for me that I have a place in this industry if I want to. And then again, going on to college and having teachers from diverse backgrounds who told me the fact that you're Hispanic and that your ethnic looking is the good thing that you have but it's also your downfall because of the fact that the world we live in is so black and white, so you might not get as many opportunities, unfortunately, so you need to create your opportunities. And then in doing so in college, I took a class called Solo and Duet Performance. For my senior project, I created my own one woman performance. I've done a lot of bilingual theater as well. And I didn't really get to do that until college. And it was because one of my professors, she was like, you're Hispanic, do you speak Spanish? And I was like yeah. And she was like

this opens up a whole new world for you. And as soon as I graduated, my first job in North Carolina I actually was speaking Spanish and English. And that's one of the reasons I got the role was because they knew I had experience acting in Spanish. Whenever there is an opportunity for me to act in Spanish, I try. And it's also interesting for me as an actor, I feel like I'm two different people when I'm acting in one language versus the other. I feel like when I speak Spanish, I'm more vulnerable and I don't know if that's because I'm more nervous speaking in Spanish to make sure I'm saying everything correctly. But that's something I've noticed within myself, and I've had directors tell me like, you're more vulnerable when you're acting in this language. And I was like, cool. Even when I teach at title one schools, I try to incorporate Spanish, especially since I know a lot of the kids are still learning English. (Ana)

I kind of view my educational experiences as different phases, so like childhood was just the freedom of creativity in play and imagination to just run wild. Then at Harding, so studying art in America is very different than studying art in Europe. In America, you know, it's much more about personal expression. The Fine Arts Department, I don't think really taught creativity very well. And so Harding was a little bit more like that to where the more scientific arts like graphic design had an incredible ideation process, creativity process where the fine arts didn't have that at all. But then I get my diplomas, three of them and I'm like, I still can't paint. I have a B.A. in Art and a BFA in Painting and I still can't paint. So that's why I chose that after my bachelors in America I chose to then go to Europe, And I

actually learned how to paint. And so creativity I felt like in some ways I had to develop on my own because the American system didn't teach creativity, they taught personal expression. And the Europeans didn't teach creativity, they taught skills. And so I still feel like some of the creativity, the educational side of creativity, is still in some ways perhaps lacking or missing.” (Josh)

“I think according to what your talents are like, you tend to develop creativity in one way or another. I guess more mathematical brains are less artistic in nature, things like sciences require more structured thinking, in my case I think I'm good with like seeing a big picture and finding something that will take me there.

Determination. And just wanting something really bad, people want something enough to make a way to get it or make it happen in a big or small scale, it doesn't matter. My educational experiences exposed me to a lot of creative activity since I was a little kid and then my experiences with El Sistema. El Sistema is a system of music learning that developed in Venezuela, where if you are a professional musician or if you have reached a certain level of musicianship, you have to teach someone with lesser level. And so it's a community oriented program that started to help children and teenagers that were living in poverty or like in dangerous neighborhoods or would be very likely to get involved with drugs and crime. So people in professional or advanced musical levels would go to these places and just ask people if they want to learn to play an instrument or sing. And so they started small children orchestras and then youth orchestras and then they reached to a professional level and that got the community involved. And so it's a very life

changing project that started in the 80s, late 80s, early 90s in Venezuela, and then it expanded to different countries in Latin America because their professional musicians would go like plant seeds in other countries. It would form like a nucleus that would grow in different cities. And so it didn't matter if you were like poor broke or if you were rich, if you had talent and you wanted to join, you could. And I remember I always liked to sing, but I had never heard classical music or anything. And I just remember when I stepped foot for my audition there, I felt the orchestra. The floor was trembling with the orchestra and I was like, oh my god, I was like, this feeling, it's just so great. I was like, how do you get this? How do you make this happen? What's going on? And so I think that was my first exposure to wow, so many things can happen at the same time. And then my teacher, this was the scholarship programs that you wouldn't pay anything, but she was very generous in sharing her experience and not only teaching you how to sing, but like bringing us videos, showing us, taking us to plays, you know? And this was even before Zoom was a thing and she would call colleagues and have them send us videos of performances or, you know, things that we have never had access to. I've seen my creative process grow in myself as a musician and as a performer. You know, that's like my one way of creativity. And as a teacher, you know, no student is the same, you almost have to catch onto their vibe. It won't happen the other way around. And then you can transform. People and personalities are so different. It's like almost being creative with your emotional intelligence, which has nothing to do with executive creativity. And

also as a creator, as like stage director, it's like, how do you get other people to do what you need them to do and let them be creative on their own in their own moment? Beyond schooling, this has been the greatest goal in professional life, and I don't I don't think if I have had to live in the circumstances that I have, I would have done it. (Daniela)

Well, I mean, I chose art for my profession, and so I think, you know, people do associate creativity with the arts more than the sciences or more than you know, engineering, even though they're very creative fields as well in different ways. I mean, in my own life, I still journal all the time. I still write poetry. I don't show a lot of it to people anymore. My day job is, is screenwriting so I write screenplays and I have to be creative about finding solutions and telling stories. And then, you know, when I direct movies and stuff as well, it's just what I do. It's become my job. I think it was nurtured honestly pretty much my whole life. You know, I'm looking at my own kids and what their assignments are in school and a lot of it is here is a picture of two snowmen. What are they talking about? Like, you know, they do encourage that even, you know, nowadays. And I feel like that was very much part of my education as well. I think where I found I wasn't as creative was when I was doing engineering in college. That was very structured, you know, and rightly so. And then again, when I switched to English, then I felt, OK, I can read my Canterbury Tales. I can, you know, it felt a lot more fluid and exciting creatively. But yeah, I feel like my education always incorporated that, even in high school, we had a teacher and I remember we had to do lab reports and I

remember she was encouraging me to be very creative, even in my lab reports. She was like you can write a story about what this is. So yeah, I think it's always been incorporated. The deeper I get into my profession, the more I realize it's an industry that tries to make you conform, so you can start with a very, very creative idea and then it's like, OK, but what's the budget? How is it going to make money? It becomes very scientific, like, here's the algorithm, here's how you make your money, you know? And so I think it's actually, I feel a little stifled in my creative endeavors right now. I think it's much easier to just sit at your desk and be creative and do whatever you want and now that I'm actually getting paid to do it, I have to listen to a lot of other people. So, yeah, it's been an interesting journey. (Geya)

Leaving my job and working for Amazon, a lot of my identity and who I was and how I work, even if it was like a day job versus an arts job like I had to like shed and let go of and think about how Like at the beginning of 2021, I was approached by Starbucks as well as Facebook to do projects for them, and I was like, oh my god, yeah, I'd love to, that sounds amazing, and I just kept getting in my own way. And so this is where I feel like there's been a shift in my work over the last year where I try, I tend to live in my head a lot, and I think that's why I like design because it can be very cerebral and tend to be very analytical and like, I'm always like doing risk assessments about everything around me and, you know, like just always thinking, thinking, thinking, thinking and on all three of the big projects I worked with last year, I kept stressing and freaking out like,

What am I doing? Is this right? And I think also there was, you know, since they were commissions, I had a client. It's not like I'm just off on my own making something. And so I was very in my head about like, are you going to like this? Is this going to be OK? And then like when it kind of came down to the wire, I'm like, I just need to trust my intuition, like I know what I'm doing. I think for all of them I kind of just went back to my process that I do with my monotype printmaking, like, OK, you know what you need to do. You need to get your idea. You need to gather your materials. You know, maybe have a sense of what you want to do. But when you are going to go do it, then you need to just go do it. And I think I was trying to really work from a place of wanting to be like, OK, well, here's my concept, and this is exactly what I'm going to do. And so this is what I'll provide. And that's not my process. (Fox)

I mean, other artists, current events, music, poetry, and I've done some work based on inspiration from lyrics from either music or poetry and the world is it's very full of sources of inspiration and you just have, I mean, like, I'm more inspired than I can do, you know, I have more inspiration than I can handle. I have a bachelor's in biology and I used to draw in my notes and I wish I had some of those notebooks now. And I was really meticulous about making notes. I could scribble them out in class and make raggedy sketches in class, and I'd go home to another notebook and I make everything all pretty. And you know, a couple of friends would be like can I borrow that? Can I make a copy of that? Going to travel was definitely an impact. I did illustrations for the Peace Corps Health

Handbook way back when I was in Peace Corps and from there the cardiologist had me do some illustrations for a presentation he was making. And then we started talking about medical illustration, which is when I went back to the states. I ended up getting an MFA in medical illustration with an emphasis in sculpture. I consistently try to learn stuff. I had a couple of residencies, one of which lasted a year and enabled me to take classes at Pratt Fine Arts so that was where I kind of emphasized jewelry making, but I also did some welding to kind of know how to do that. And I mean, I'm not a good welder unless I can use fire, those other methods are a little tough. (Esther)

I wanted to play the organ and I saw, you know, the organist at the church and of course, my parents didn't have an organ for me to practice, so my creativity, I put plastic cups down on the floor of the piano to practice using those cups to touch for the pedals on the organ. Later in college, I did take private organ lessons and my instructor thought that was funny, the way I learned how to use the pedal by using those plastic cups. So when you don't have you become very creative. But so as far as education, that was a little bit more structured. You couldn't go too far from what your applied teacher wanted you to do. You could be expressive in the way you performed the song on the piano. I do think when I became a teacher that that really developed my creativity because there were some things that I had not been exposed to, that I had to teach. And you heard me say the Orff ensemble well, I had not studied the Orff music technique, so I had to become very creative in teaching that and going to workshops and learning how to play the glockenspiel

and the xylophones and the contra bass and all of that. So in teaching, the children hadn't been exposed to it either, so they were allowed to experiment with the instruments, the sounds and how we could put them together and create music. So I think, I had more liberty of being creative when I started teaching and teaching younger children, sometimes you can receive music for them to perform and it's too complicated. So you would have to rewrite it, where it works for them. And as I said, sometimes I did commercial operettas, but most times I would write them. So it gave me the freedom of writing and creating, doing choreography and writing the music, even for some of the operettas. I wanted my students to have more freedom to be creative. I didn't want to say this is the way we are going to learn this. And with elementary school children, you need to present information to them as many ways as you possibly can. So one of the things I did with the younger children to teach them music dictation, I wanted them to learn how to hear rhythm and write it. That's a picture that I have where I use sticks and popsicle sticks. For the little ones to do the dictation, I clapped or played a rhythm. Instead of using pencil and paper, they would create the rhythm with the sticks. (Vera)

In high school I took a lot of art classes. I had a very good teacher and then I went to university in Bowling Green, Ohio which is where I was for junior high and high school. And then I went to college there and planned, originally on being a high school teacher or college teacher and right away, I realized that that wasn't something I wanted to do. And so I then majored in ceramics and painting and got

to take a lot of great classes, jewelry and painting and weaving. And I thought I would really love weaving and I hated it. And then after college, I worked in factories in Ohio, but I wanted to get out of Ohio. I never felt comfortable there. And so I went to Boston. Some friends of mine lived in Boston and had a rock band in Boston, and I went and stayed with them, lived above a head shop on Comm Ave. in Boston and tried to find work with a potter. I was pretty much focused on pottery at that time, but nothing happened in Boston. So I went back to Ohio, worked in a ketchup factory, saved up money. A friend was going to Santa Fe and I had thought about going to graduate school in Albuquerque. And so I got in his car with him and his wife and his dogs, and we went to Santa Fe in '72 in the fall. So I've been here for 50 years now. And when I came to Santa Fe, I needed a job and my friend and I got a job working in a furniture business, handcrafted furniture. And I worked there for three years, four years and made some pots on the side, maybe made a few prints, did a little drawing and decided that since I was 25, it was time to be able to have a go at ceramics, you know, or painting. I wasn't sure yet, but I decided that maybe I had more ceramics books than painting books and so I would go with ceramics. And I quit making furniture. And so at the age of 25, I decided it was all or nothing or something like that. And I started making pots, I didn't, you know, looking back on it, I didn't learn a whole lot in college. You know, I maybe learned a little bit, but I started educating myself and I then found out about the English Potters, the studio potters. I think the first year I made \$1500 and that was enough to live. I made pots and a group

of potters and I would sell pots down on the Santa Fe River. And I started, I did craft fairs and was really able to, you know, get started. And there were a group of us that were making functional pots and we were able to to get by. And then I started doing some wholesale business at that time. I accumulated some money and moved to a little village 50 miles north of Santa Fe on the Rio Grande. It's just a little village called Pilar. It's about 100 people, 17 miles south of Taos. And I'm there right now that's where my studio still is, even though I've lived in Taos for 30 years, something like that. I made enough to live doing craft fairs and having a bit of retail business and doing wholesale. And then I started getting people to help me because I thought that was the only way to progress. And I built up a wholesale business and stopped doing craft fairs. I always kept a little retail space going, and I built up a wholesale business that eventually had 120 accounts. And I was making 20,000 pieces a year or something like that and employing five full time people and seven part time. We got probably too big. We started to sell in Europe and I thought, this is not what I want to do. So I decided to not be national. So we had the gallery, we had all this wholesale business, and then we decided that we didn't need the wholesale business and we got rid of 100 accounts and kept 10 accounts. And then we got rid of those 10 accounts and we just sold at the gallery and at the studio. And four years ago, we closed the gallery and now I just sell here, which kind of mystifies people when they don't know me and they stop by because I'm not even out on the main highway So mostly I'm selling to

my customers, but occasionally people stop in, and sometimes they are kind of mystified, like, why do you think this should work? (Stephen)

The above responses from the eight participants on what they have experienced in terms of creativity reveal the personal, educational, and professional experiences of each participant.

(RQ2) How do the interactions among beliefs and experiences inform perceptions of creativity?

These responses were reflections from the participants during the interviews that demonstrated how their familial and cultural beliefs and educational and professional experiences ultimately transformed into their own thoughts on the phenomenon of creativity.

I just I love working with kids, and I feel like the more that we can get kids to express themselves at a younger age, it just allows them when they're older to not feel weird about expressing themselves. So my goal as a teacher is to always, you know, let kids be silly, let kids explore, but also build their confidence. And my hope is that, you know, realistically, not all of these kids are going to be actors, not all these kids are going to want to have a career in the arts, but I hope that they take what I've taught them and sprinkle it into whatever they do in life. With my creativity, I like to take my creativity to amplify the voices of kids to help them find their voice. (Ana)

I think sometimes we equate personal expression with creativity. And I don't think they're the same at all. And personal expression can often be the death of

creativity. If there's so much focus on just that personal expression, we don't push or cultivate, because you can't critique it, then because you can't critique what's inside of someone else there's no standard, there's no pushing, there's no progression forward other than what the individual psyche can do.” (Josh)

“There are no limits. I think the only limits to creativity is what you think is limiting you. And I think that's a general belief for everybody in any profession, in any in any field. When you think you can make it like you find a way. You can make anything happen, and it depends how far you want to take your creativity.

(Daniela)

I think there are creative scientific ways of thinking as well. And I think it's just a flow of ideas. And then you find a way to make it make sense in the real world.

It's about how you approach expression and finding your own voice.” (Geya)

“I think about my ancestors and I think about my tribe's culture and just that experience that they had, you know, over millennia developing a strong relationship with the land and like how to interact with it, what they make. And it's a completely different worldview from mine. But I like looking back to these things and finding these threads that I can pull through to now that I'm able to explore a little and that helps me connected to my culture and to the past and also, you know, find ways of bringing it into the future.” (Fox)

“I find it interesting how the viewer sees your work because it's sometimes very surprising just to listen to them and I don't tell them that wasn't my intention, but I tell them that's an interesting viewpoint. So, you know, that's one of the things

that you have to accept is when you put your piece out in the world. There is no obligation for the viewer to have your viewpoint. And it's quite refreshing if they don't. (Esther)

I do think when I became a teacher that that really developed my creativity because there were some things that I had not been exposed to, that I had to teach. I wanted my students to have more freedom to be creative. I didn't want to say this is the way we are going to learn this. (Vera)

The one thing I really enjoy about the making of the pottery in a like handmade operation is just the hands on part and the old school nature of it. And I think that translates to creativity as well. That's about as philosophical as I'll get. (Stephen)

The above responses from the eight participants on interactions among beliefs and experiences reveal how personal perceptions are formed.

Data Collection Summary for Interview 1

The data collected in the first interview with the eight participants is summarized below in Table 2.

Table 2

Interview 1 Data Collection

<i>Participant Name or Pseudonym</i>	<i>Words Used to Describe Creativity (RQ 1) (RQ 2)</i>	<i>Perceptions of Creativity (RQ 1) (RQ 2)</i>	<i>Influences on Perceptions of Creativity (SQ 1) (SQ 2) (RQ 2)</i>	<i>Experiences with Creativity (SQ 2) (RQ2)</i>
Ana	Exploration, Learning, Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity is telling a story that may not have been told • Creativity is learning about yourself • Creativity grows 	Family <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established creativity • Encouraged creativity • Attended live orchestras and performances with family 	Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.A. in Theater • Movement Theater • One Woman Show • Solo and Duet Performances

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playing music at home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Theater • Bilingual Theater • K-12 teaching in the performing arts
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural representation in tv, movies, and music • Amplifying voices that are not usually heard • Hispanic and being bilingual 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hispanic teachers and teachers of color • Learn from other artists and performers from all walks of life. 	
<i>Josh</i>	Problem Solving, Constraint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity starts with having a problem needing to be solved • It takes more creativity to work within restraints • Creativity is not limited to art • Personal expression can be the death of creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged and created opportunities for creativity • Advocated for art classes • Noticed talent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA in Art • BFA in Painting • MFA in Painting • Personal expression versus skill • Portrait Painter • Sound Engineer • Commercial Real Estate
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living in Africa • Studying Art in Florence 	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructors at Florence Academy of Art • Church 	
<i>Daniela</i>	Superpower, Engage, Respond, Survival	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We all have the superpower of creativity • Sometimes when we are least comfortable creativity develops the most • Creativity is engaging and responding to the world around us 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged creativity • Father was creative in decorating and jokes • Mother was a writer • Provided opportunities for hands-on exploration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montessori Preschool • El Sistema • Studied Voice • Artist Diploma • Signing with Professional Theater • Chamber Opera Company • Teaching at El Sistema
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Born and raised in Ecuador 	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need versus privilege 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Voice
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to resources • Community arts programs • Teachers and mentors 	
<i>Geya</i>	Freedom, Expression, Instinct, Flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity is freedom • Creativity is very instinctual • Creativity is a flow of ideas, thoughts, and expressions 	<p>Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraged the arts • Encouraged finding your own voice • Surrounded by music, movies, and science <p>Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian culture is in tune to music and dance • Cultural representation in pop culture such as movies, music, and tv <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers 	<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High School science class encouraging multiple representations of learning • College English classes • Poetry • College film classes <p>Profession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screenwriting • Non-profit work • Indian Public Access TV Show about Bollywood and the Indian Film Industry
<i>Fox</i>	Responding, Process, Internal, Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity is not singular • Creativity is responding to the world around you • Creativity is how you choose to share what you have experienced • Creativity is an internal process 	<p>Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopted • Only child • Encouraged to be creative from an early age • Attended a daycare that encouraged creativity <p>Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning about Karuk tribe • Accepting mixed identity • Immersing self in Native culture <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College professors • Native artists 	<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended a daycare that encouraged creativity • BFA in Design • Learning various artmaking practices <p>Profession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail • Design

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contemporary artists Organizations such as Crow's Shadow 	
<i>Esther</i>	Digging, Answering, Expressing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creativity is digging into your innards Creativity brings something about like answering a question Creativity is expressing what you need to express Creativity is calling upon your history, your ancestry 	<p>Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraged creativity Mother engaged artistically Father broadened ideas about art making practices <p>Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current events and issues Violence against Black people History and ancestry <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Artists Organizations that support the arts 	<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's in Biology MFA in Medical Illustration <p>Profession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illustrations in Peace Corp Health Handbook Practicing artist working with a variety of mediums and materials Residencies at Pratt Fine Arts
<i>Vera</i>	Interpretation, Thinking Differently, Expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creativity is stagnant in schools Creativity is your own interpretation of something Creativity is expressing yourself Creativity is being able to interpret differently than others 	<p>Family</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraged creativity Performed music from an early age Attended concerts Genetic link to creative careers <p>Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being African American and living in Louisiana Moving to Indiana and being the first African American teacher at the school <p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Music teachers who encouraged thinking outside the box 	<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BS in Vocal Piano Master's Degree Teacher certification in music <p>Profession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> K-12 Teaching in Music Playing the piano, organ, and violin
<i>Stephen</i>	Life, Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creativity is the way one lives 	Family	Education

and what one does	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did not encourage nor discourage creativity • Spouse and daughter influenced career decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelors in Ceramics and Painting • Workshops
	<p>Culture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working class mentality • Living in New York during Abstract Expressionism • Living in Santa Fe 	<p>Profession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working as a Potter • Going into wholesale • Transitioning more into craft
	<p>Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts organizations • Other artists 	

Interview 2.

The individual textural and structural descriptions were also evident throughout the second interview as the interview guide and interview questions (Appendix E) for the second interview were focused on gathering insight into the participant’s perceptions of creativity and how they would share their perception of creativity in a tactile, non-written way. The participants were asked to share an artifact using whatever form of representation they wished that represented creativity to them. The type of artifact that participants could choose was intentionally left open ended to encourage diverse forms of representation. Most of the participants already had an artifact in mind that either they had previously created or that has inspired them and their work. The data collected from Interview 2 is summarized in Table 3.

Ana

Ana chose to share an audio recording that she created in college for an assignment in a theater course. The three words Ana used to describe the meaning in the artifact she chose are honest, reflective and shocking. When asked about the reason she chose this artifact Ana responded by stating:

I chose a piece that I wrote in my devised theater class in college. It all stemmed from just an exercise that my teacher had us do, which was she just had us sit down in the corner of the room and she just told us, OK, you have three minutes to just write places you've lived in or that, you know, you've occupied space in. And so I just wrote a whole bunch of things. And one of them was my Yellow Room, because that was the color of my room growing up.

Ana described the artifact as:

Our next assignment was, OK, just write about that room however you want, and so that's how I created my poem. After she had us each record a piece, she then made us add movement to it and the way she said it was, I want you to find equivalency in your words and in your movement. With that, she meant I don't want to see you dancing. I don't want to see pantomiming what you said. I want you to find equivalency. Like, how do you make these words in your body? So, for instance, you know, one of the lines is four walls, literally, I just swung my arm four times in a different direction. And that symbolized my walls. It was so interesting how at the end, yes, I kind of formed a dance, but it wasn't, you know, like a technical dance. It was a storytelling in my movement, and it was fun to see

which parts I felt needed to be hard movements, which parts I felt needed to be fluid movements. And within that, it was also interesting to see my peers and what they wrote and also what their form of equivalency was and really how each of our bodies work differently. Because if I were to give this piece to someone else, their version of how they would see it in their body would be completely 100 percent different than mine, even though it's the same exact text.

Ana described how this artifact represents creativity as:

It represents creativity because it literally just came from me just answering a question of places I've lived in, places I occupied space, and I didn't think all of that, you know, would turn into a coming of age story. Basically how I felt growing up would have turned into, for me, just saying like, oh yeah, my yellow room. So it just shows you how you can really create something from something so simple and basic.

Ana's artifact representing creativity is below in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Artifact Collected from Ana



Note: <https://youtu.be/MfpnOuO9dNc>

Josh

Josh chose to share a painting he created in college for an assignment. The three words Josh used to describe the meaning in the artifact he chose were fluid, depth, and free. When asked about the reason he chose this artifact Josh responded by stating: "This was my creation piece for an assignment in college. It is an abstraction of creation." Josh described the artifact as:

So this one is an abstraction of creation. So the assignment was paint something from an unusual perspective. And so I thought of what if I combine the macro with the micro? And you can't get much more macro than the cosmos. And so I took a photograph of really close up of this fountain and water flowing over it and took that photograph and started painting, and it slowly then morphed into this abstract creation type scene.

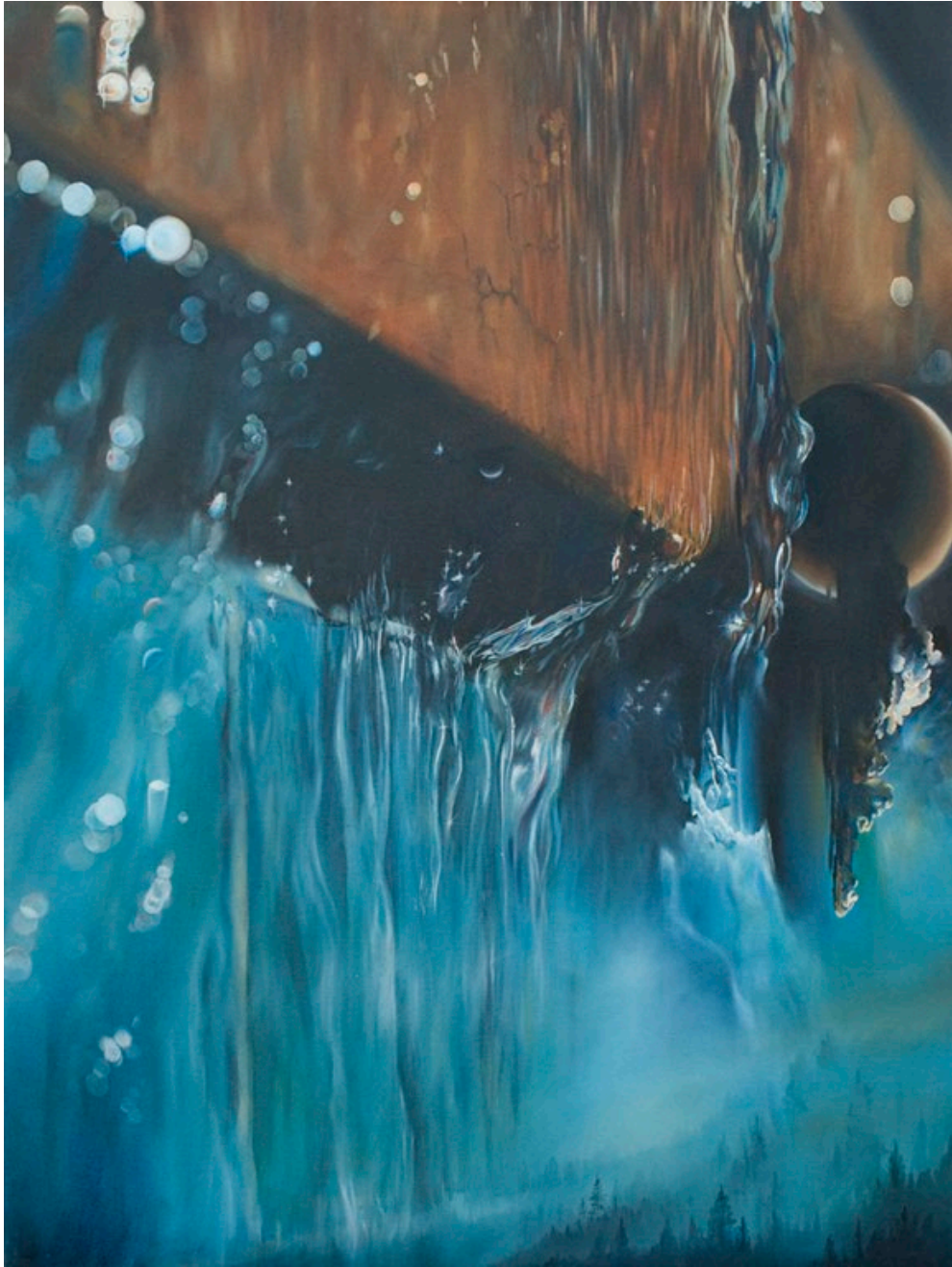
Josh described how this artifact represents creativity as:

The process that I went through, I just started out just thinking, I'll just paint this photograph, but then seeing, you know, this looks like a little galaxy out here, this looks like this and then its changing as a painting. And then when I displayed it, I took apart a stool that spun I took that mechanism and mounted the painting on that part and then add that to the wall so it could spin and you could go up and spin it because there was no up or down or right way to mount it. And there were different elements that could be viewed from any angle.

Josh's artifact representing creativity is below in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Artifact Collected from Josh



Daniela

Daniela chose to share a performance she created for a project. The three words Daniela used to describe the meaning in the artifact she chose are love, excitement, and achievement. When asked about the reason she chose this artifact Daniela responded by stating:

It's a big mix of all the things that I do. I'm a stage director, I'm an actress, I'm a singer. I deal with technology as I need to. I just I love this all like costumes make this one, it doesn't have a lot of pieces, but it kind of shows all the things that I like that I love.

Daniela described the artifact as:

This is a very short opera that the character that I sing the aria from she's in a clown troupe. They tour around and they perform and they make their living as a performing theater company. And she is married to like the big clown. And so his song is about how the show must go on and about how he has all these hard feelings towards her, all this rage because he's so jealous. He thinks she's having an affair, which she is, and she doesn't know how to leave him. But in the end, she gets murdered by him during one of their performances. But her song is very, very happy, and she does an analogy of how the birds fly and they move and being free. What I did with this video is I superpose her song, which is longer than his song, which is very famous and he's seen in the background and I slowed down the tempo of the piece like make it slow motion to match her aria. So from my perspective, it shows what both characters feel at the same time.

Daniela described how this artifact represents creativity as:

It's like a nontraditional way for presenting opera, so I think like it really represents that arts are not limiting and limited and that you can mix as many things as you want.

Daniela's artifact representing creativity is below in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Artifact Collected from Daniela



Note: <https://youtu.be/e29tkwB8FAE>

Geya

Geya chose to share a video of a Bollywood Dance that her family watched when she was growing up. The three words Geya used to describe the meaning in the artifact she chose were honest, reflective and shocking. When asked about the reason she chose this artifact Geya responded by stating:

I grew up on Bollywood and my family, this is a song that I remember from childhood, and I remember my mom, my mom, who's a scientist who's like a biologist and a chemist and loves science. This is like a song that we could watch over and over and over again.

Geya described the artifact as:

It's a Bollywood song. It's from the 60s, I want to say. I remember sitting around and watching the song and my mom just being captivated by the whole movie being black and white. And the song is in color, the Wizard of Oz kind of thing. And it's so beautiful. It's in this palace. The story is this woman is a dancer, and she's like part of the harem. She's very low in the court, and she and the prince fell in love. And it's genuine love. It's so romantic. It was based on a theoretically true story back in the day in India, and the song is all about her saying, I'm not going to hide my love anymore. And it's so subtly rebellious and so cool. And there's a moment where she like she grabs the king's dagger from his belt. She's just like, really in his face about it. It's amazing, and I feel like I get really inspired watching that.

Geya described how this artifact represents creativity as:

It represents creativity because it literally just came from me just answering a The set design and the colors and the costumes. It feels so rich and so layered, and I feel like it's a very creative moment from my childhood watching that and hearing my mom talk about it and understanding more and more as I got older.

Geya's artifact representing creativity is below in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Artifact Collected from Geya



Note: <https://youtu.be/LuYxcw0wCE8>

Fox

Fox chose to share an artwork by Rick Bartow as his artifact. The three words Fox used to describe the meaning in the artifact are spirit, movement, and intention. When asked about the reason he chose this artifact Fox responded by stating:

I've always been really struck by his work. I had some work in a show down in Northern California at Humboldt State University, and he also had work in that show and I traveled down and I did get to meet him in person before he passed. He printed at Crow Shadow multiple times. I think it was helpful to me in terms of just learning to let go and not being so restrictive about like I think of something, and feeling like it has to be exactly that, or it's not right, but instead to allow what happens in the process, what unfolds like maybe it's a mistake, maybe it feels bad in the moment, but that's OK, like, what else can we do with this? What gets changed now? So now what is it? And I really think I picked this one in particular, it's one that I think he did at Bend Art Center. But someone in the group of folks that I know had seen it and talked about it and shared a photo of it with me. And I thought about it for a couple of years and eventually ended up reaching out and they still had it. So I purchased it.

Fox described the artifact as:

So it's a print by one of my favorite artists, or probably my favorite artist, Rick Bartow. It's called *Little Shaman Dance I* by Rick Bartow, and it was made in 2009. I think this piece just has so much movement in it.

Fox described how this artifact represents creativity as:

It just has so much expression in the movement. I love how he's able to do so much with something seemingly simple. I mean, I feel like he's able to really get a lot of movement in there with the gestures. It's not how I work at all. But I don't know, I love it, it feels very free, it feels like there's a lot of emotion in it.

Fox's artifact representing creativity is below in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Artifact Collected from Fox



Note: Rick Bartow (2009) Little Shaman Dance I

Esther

Esther chose to share a three-dimensional artwork she created. The three words Esther used to describe the meaning in the artifact she chose are ancestral, sacrifice, acknowledgment. When asked about the reason she chose this artifact Esther responded by stating:

Well, that particular shape of vessel, I found it during the course of my research into the project and there were a lot of Africans who were stolen from the continent. So that their particular expertise could be used by the people they were eventually sold to. So there were people, metalworkers, and a number of the well-known metal balcony structures and other things in New Orleans were made by enslaved people. And they did blacksmithing and that sort of thing, you know, like horseshoes and all of that, they did pottery. They could weave and they could also herd. And I guess eventually, when some of the people who could herd escaped and became free, they became the black cowboys. Anyway, so I was inspired by this shape was a shape typical of an enslaved potter named David Drake, and he was also literate, and he would write and inscribe little poems, little, short poems on the inside of his pots.

Esther described the artifact as:

Well, that's one of a series of works that I recently had installed as a storefront exhibit in South Lake Union area of Seattle. There were seven of us who were provided with Storefront were on Amazon properties. And so the installation included five ceramic vases that reflected the question "Why do we have to keep telling people or reminding them that Black Lives Matter? And so the ceramic pieces showed institutional harm that has been committed since 1619. On the rear wall there were round, silhouettes about 17 inches in diameter, and the silhouettes depicted positive contributions to society by black people, and there were eleven of those that I selected.

Esther described how this artifact represents creativity as:

Creativity, you know, not only comes from within oneself, but we stand on the shoulders of the ancestors who came before us. You know for inspiration or what not, and that, you know, that's not exactly limited to black ancestors because I have been inspired to by other people's ancestors to. So, yeah, creativity does not exist in a vacuum at all. It's all out there circulating for us to tap into.

Esther's artifact representing creativity is below in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Artifact Collected from Esther



Vera

Vera chose to share photographs she took when she was a music teacher. She described these photographs as visual memories. The three words Vera used to describe the meaning in the artifact she chose are students being creative. When asked about the reason she chose the artifacts Vera responded by stating:

All the pictures show ways I encouraged my students to be creative and come up with their own ideas.

It shows rhythm dictation...It's more fun if its hands on and not pencil and paper so I chose that.

It is the improvisation there, so they're inventing and making their own. And my thing in my class, I always stressed is you know, you can make mistakes.

Sometimes I would play on the piano and I would play a wrong note and say, Oops, I made a mistake, but we'll keep going.

Vera described the artifacts as:

Picture 1: Sometimes they would create their own songs, and I would let them teach it to a group because that's what's happening with that small group that you see at the table. Someone has written a song and they're letting their classmates play it.

Picture 2: With that one, there's music playing in the background and they are keeping the beat. And then when it's their turn, they create a rhythm to go along with it. So I'm doing the Lummi stick activity with one little fellow. He had a tendency to want to hit people with the stick. So that's why he is with me.

Picture 3: I will play this song on the piano or play a recording. They will listen to it and play along. And again, they can create their own melodic lines and play with it.

Picture 4: It was an activity that I created for them with the little craft sticks, and I would give each student from six to seven sticks and I would do very short rhythm patterns. I would clap the pattern and they would listen to it and then clap it back, and then I would tell them to write it.

Vera described how the artifacts represents creativity as:

Its students being creative. And of course, you know, there's a process to get there. I always encourage them to come up with their own ideas. And I'll say, somebody's got a new idea, let's think about it. Let's produce something new, be different.

Vera's artifacts representing creativity are below in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Artifacts Collected from Vera



Stephen

Stephen chose to share a ceramic plate that he created as a decorative artwork. The three words Stephen used to describe the meaning in the artifact he chose are fun dinner plate. When asked about the reason he chose this artifact Stephen responded by stating:

I took a fabric printing class, which is something I've always been interested in with Patricia Michaels. She's from Taos Pueblo, New Mexico. And she's a Native American, and I took a fabric printing class with her and I had time like I wouldn't

usually have where I could actually think about making a new design. And so that design to me was quite good. You know, I consider it an accomplishment.

Stephen described the artifact as:

So the work I have chosen is a plate. And so that was a pattern that I came up with, almost 10 years ago, I can't believe it's been that long. It's Cholla, Cholla cactus, and it's an abstracted version of Cholla.

Stephen described how this artifact represents creativity as:

Cholla flowers are actually purple. These are red. There's a certain pattern on the cactus stem that this is an abstraction of. It's just, I think it's a pretty good pattern.

Stephens's artifact representing creativity is below in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Artifact Collected from Stephen



Data Collection Summary for Interview 2

The data collected in the second interview with the eight participants is summarized below in Table 3.

Table 3

Interview 2 Artifact Collection Overview

<i>Participant Name or Pseudonym</i>	<i>Figure</i>	<i>Artifact Type</i>	<i>Creator (SQ 1) (SQ 2)</i>	<i>Intended Use (SQ 1) (SQ 2)</i>	<i>How Artifact Represents Creativity (RQ 1)</i>	<i>Meaning in Three Words (RQ 1)</i>
<i>Ana</i>	Fig. 1	Audio Recording	Self	Created for College Assignment	“It represents creativity because it literally just came from me just answering a question of places I've lived in, places I occupied space, and I didn't think all of that, you know, would turn into a coming of age story. Basically how I felt growing up would have turned into, for me, just saying like, oh yeah, my yellow room. So it just shows you how you can really create something from something so simple and basic.”	Honest, Reflective, Shocking
<i>Josh</i>	Fig. 2	Oil Painting	Self	Created for College Assignment	“The process that I went through, I just started out just thinking, I'll just paint this photograph, but then seeing, you know, this looks like a little galaxy out here, this looks like this and then its changing as a painting. And then when I displayed it, I took apart a stool that spun I took that mechanism and mounted the painting on that part and then add that to the wall so it could spin and you could go up and spin it because there was no up or down or right way to mount it. And there were different elements that could be viewed from any angle.”	Fluid, Depth, Free
<i>Daniela</i>	Fig. 3	Video Recording of Performance	Self	Created for Project	“It's like a nontraditional way for presenting opera, so I think like it really represents that arts are not limiting and limited and that you can mix as many things as you want.”	Love, Excitement, Achievement
<i>Geya</i>	Fig. 4	Video Recording of Bollywood Dance	Movie: Mughal-E-Azam Music Director: Naushad	Film for Audience	“The set design and the colors and the costumes. It feels so rich and so layered, and I feel like it's a very creative moment from my childhood watching that and hearing my mom talk about it and understanding more and more as I got older.”	Inspiring, Rebellion, Beautiful

<i>Fox</i>	Fig. 5	Fine Art Print	Rick Bartow	Fine Art Exhibition	“It just has so much expression in the movement. I love how he's able to do so much with something seemingly simple. I mean, I feel like he's able to really get a lot of movement in there with the gestures. It's not how I work at all. But I don't know, I love it, it feels very free, it feels like there's a lot of emotion in it.”	Spirit, Movement, Intention
<i>Esther</i>	Fig. 6	Ceramic Work	Self	Fine Art Exhibition	“Creativity, you know, not only comes from within oneself, but we stand on the shoulders of the ancestors who came before us. You know for inspiration or what not, and that, you know, that's not exactly limited to black ancestors because I have been inspired to by other people's ancestors to. So, yeah, creativity does not exist in a vacuum at all. It's all out there circulating for us to tap into.”	Ancestral, Sacrifice, Acknowledgement
<i>Vera</i>	Fig. 7	Photographs	Self	Visual Memories	“Its students being creative. And of course, you know, there's a process to get there. I always encourage them to come up with their own ideas. And I'll say, somebody's got a new idea, let's think about it. Let's produce something new, be different”	Students being creative
<i>Stephen</i>	Fig. 8	Ceramic Plate	Self	Decorative art	“Cholla flowers are actually purple. These are red. There's a certain pattern on the cactus stem that this is an abstraction of. It's just, I think it's a pretty good pattern.”	Fun dinner plate

Clustering Horizons into Themes

After each participants’ angle or story is shared, connections are made to describe the phenomenon. The clustering of horizons into themes creates a composite description of what creativity is. This process uncovers the nature and meaning of experience (Moustakas, 1994). In order to organize the themes that emerged during horizontalizing, the Five A’s Framework of Creativity will be used.

Themes Regarding Creativity

Actor

Actor is the person or personal attributes of creativity in relation to a societal context. Creativity is internal, it is in your soul, it is something instinctual inside yourself.

As expressed in the participants' words, creativity is:

Learning the different parts of yourself and just how far you can go. (Ana)

Tapping into something very instinctual. (Geya)

How you're responding to the world around you. (Fox)

Digging into your innards, your guts, your soul to bring something out. (Esther)

Creativity is your own interpretation. (Vera)

Creativity is a response to the world around you and how you perceive what is around you.

Action

Action is the act of creating and how that act may be psychological or behavioral manifestation of creativity. The act of creativity is exploration whether that is within the confines of a boundary such as a commission or a problem needing solved or it may be through personal expression and having free reign. Creativity can be psychological in that it requires a flow of ideas. As expressed in the participants' words the act of creating is reflected in:

Creativity to me is exploration. (Ana)

That's one of the aspects I love about portrait painting, you can be more creative with more restraints. (Josh)

A flow, a flow of ideas and thoughts and expressions coming out of me. And then later, I'll try to sort of logic through a structure if I need to. (Geya)

As far as the music, it is expressing yourself in music in any way, any form that you wish. (Vera)

Is what I do. (Stephen)

Creativity begins as ideas, transforms into a structure, and results in an artifact.

Artifact

Artifact is what is produced through creativity. Artifacts can come in a variety of shapes and forms, what is produced through creativity is not necessarily tangible. An artifact can be recognizing different parts of yourself through creativity, it can be a solution to a problem whether that is an idea or a tangible product, it may be expressed through song or dance, or it may be tangible like a piece of pottery or a portrait painting.

As expressed in the participants' words, creativity is:

Learning the different parts of yourself. (Ana)

Dependent on what kind of medium I'm working in. (Geya)

It's how you how you choose to share what you experienced and then that door's wide open as far as how you do that. (Fox)

The products of creativity are endless and come in a variety of representations.

Audience

Audience is how an artifact may be used, valued, or judged by external factors. Creativity is not limited to oneself. Creativity and the product of creativity are subject to other's views and perceptions. There are factors that contribute to how an artifact may be used, valued, or judged such as cultural influences. As expressed in the participants' words, below are experiences with audience:

Nobody creates in a vacuum whether they believe it or not. (Esther)

I'm always shocked how in the United States people have access to so many things like cars, you can change cars as often as you want. You know, they're not expensive. People gift furniture to you if they no longer want it or if they no longer need it, or if they just want new things in the house. Where I come from, like you'll never find a secondhand store or anything because people use their stuff until it's dead until it's been completely used and if you have something that's getting older, you just repair it and repair it. (Daniela)

I find it interesting how the viewer sees your work because it's sometimes very surprising just to listen to them and I don't tell them that wasn't my intention, but I tell them that's an interesting viewpoint. So, you know, that's one of the things that you have to accept is when you put your piece out in the world. There is no obligation for the viewer to have your viewpoint. And it's quite refreshing if they don't. (Esther)

If we were listening to a song, you can get all kind of different interpretations
(Vera)

Audience is essential to creativity because it can help an actor determine what the meaning is they are attempting to convey, even if the audience perceives that intent in their own way.

Affordances

Affordances are the relation to environment. Creativity can be stifled or nurtured based upon a physical environment. At times creativity may be sparked by being immersed in an exciting physical experience such as attending an orchestra or creativity may be sparked as a response to a physical experience in which you do not want to conform such as witnessing violence. As expressed in the participants' words, below are experiences with participants' relation to their environment:

If you are in like a physical place, you tend to develop more creativity if you don't want to conform to whatever is your situation. (Daniela)

In Kenya, because there was so much poverty and lack of stuff. Even if you had money, stuff wasn't there so there was lots of creativity like soccer balls were made out of dirt and paper sacks. And then one of the fun tools or toys that they had is they would take old tires and cut like this ring out of them. (Josh)

My mom was really into like opera and singing, so she would just play that around the house and just my dad played the bongos, so it was just all around us.

Ana

And I remember I always liked to sing, but I had never heard classical music or anything. And I just remember when I stepped foot for my audition there, I felt the orchestra. The floor was trembling with the orchestra and I was like, oh my god, I was like, this feeling, it's just so great. (Daniela)

It is like taking in information which can be as casual as just whatever you see or hear or are told. (Fox)

Creativity can be stifled if it is not nurtured, for example, a school environment may stifle creativity if it is not engaging.

Composite Textural Description

The composite textural description is developed in a way that considers the experiences of the eight participants as a whole. The themes that emerged were taken into consideration to find commonalities among the participants' experiences. As the researcher, I listened, reviewed, reflected on, and re-read the data collected to construct a description of these eight participants' experiences with creativity.

Creativity is intrinsic. Seven of the eight participants described creativity as an intrinsic process or a process that requires you to look inward at yourself. Most of the participants described creativity as responding to the world around you which requires introspection. Participants also described how everyone is creative, but creativity must be nurtured.

Creativity to me is...learning the different parts of yourself. (Ana)

It's just the power that we all have to engage and respond to the world that's around us. (Daniela)

It's tapping into something very instinctual. (Geya)

I think one of the things it means to me is really like how you're responding to the world around you or to what you're seeing. (Fox)

It means like digging into your innards, your guts, your soul. (Esther)

Creativity is your own interpretation. (Vera)

It's just the way I the way I live. (Stephen)

Creativity is nurtured. All eight participants described environments that nurtured or stifled creativity. Seven out of the eight participants mentioned parents helped encourage or engage their creativity. All eight participants described at least one K-12 teacher or college professor who was influential in their lives and helped nurture creativity in the classroom.

My family like catapulted my perception of creativity, so the first show I ever saw was West Side Story. And that was my dad, you know, playing it for me when I was seven years old, and that was the first time I ever saw someone who looked like me on TV. (Ana)

I would be very, very frustrated in like my junior high and high school art classes, because the teachers would just almost refuse to teach me, they'd say, we can't

teach you anything. And so my parents would like enroll me into some summer classes at the universities and would go out of their way to find art stuff that I could engage with and would challenge me. (Josh)

My dad himself is very creative. And so there was always something going on, and I don't know just from the way he jokes or how he decorates things. (Daniela)

I grew up with and my family, are very, very in tune to music and dance. My parents were involved in this Indian cultural association when we were growing up and they took us to dance performances and music performances.” (Geya)

I felt encouraged to be creative from a very young age. (Fox)

My father and I think, you know, I really got a lot from him about, you know, it kind of broadened my ideas of what girls can be because he was a broad spectrum tradesperson, and so when he was in his woodshop, he was like come over here girl and help me hold this board down while I cut it. And then I began to get interested in what he was doing and I would take the scraps and build things. (Esther)

I was allowed to be expressive, as far as performing music and even the way I dressed, my mother did not complain when I put stripes on with polka dots. (Vera)

Creativity is growth. All eight of the participants described creativity as growth in some way. Most participants highlighted that creativity is not stagnant, but rather

creativity, in the right environment, is a process of learning and growth. All eight participants mentioned at least one educational and professional experience that had influenced their creativity.

It is growth because your mind, your creativity, the more you age, the way you view different things about life, that helps your creativity. (Ana)

If you are in a place in your life or a place like a physical place, you tend to develop more creativity if you don't want to conform to whatever is your situation. (Daniela)

I think I was trying to really work from a place of wanting to be like, OK, well, here's my concept, and this is exactly what I'm going to do. And so this is what I'll provide. And that's not my process. (Fox)

I did illustrations for the Peace Corps Health Handbook way back when I was in Peace Corps and from there the cardiologist had me do some illustrations for a presentation he was making. And then we started talking about medical illustration, which is when I went back to the states. I ended up getting an MFA in medical illustration with an emphasis in sculpture. (Esther)

I do think when I became a teacher that that really developed my creativity because there were some things that I had not been exposed to, that I had to teach. (Vera)

I then majored in ceramics and painting and got to take a lot of great classes, jewelry and painting and weaving. (Stephen)

The composite experiences that all the participants described are creativity is intrinsic, creativity is nurtured, and creativity is growth.

Imaginative Variation

Imaginative Variation describes the structure of the phenomenon being studied. It aims to uncover: “How did the experience of the phenomenon come to be what it is?” (Moustakas, 1994, p. 98). Basically, the Imaginative Variation seeks to discover the “How” of the phenomenon being studied. “The uncovering of the essences...is central in the Imaginative Variation process. In this phase of the process the structures of the experience are revealed; these are conditions that must exist” to experience the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

Composite Structural Description

Creativity is experienced educationally. All eight participants were able to detail how they experienced creativity in their educational endeavors. Two participants mentioned that daycare/pre-school influenced their perceptions of creativity because it allowed for exploration. None of the participants mentioned elementary school experiences or middle school experiences influencing their perceptions of creativity. Half of the participants mentioned that a teacher or class in high school influenced their perceptions of creativity. Finally, all of the participants described how college level courses or instructors influenced their perception of creativity in some way. All

participants have at least one post-secondary degree related to the arts. If educational experiences impact creativity or perceptions of creativity than creativity must to some extent involve knowledge.

Creativity is experienced professionally. Seven of the participants described how they decided to pursue a career in an arts related field in their teenage or early adult years. All participants described how arts-related experiences (e.g., attended an opera, working at a specific organization, traveling) persuaded them to pursue a career in the arts. All eight participants have been full time professional creators at some time in their life. Three of the participants later decided to pursue a full time teaching career in their field to share their experiences with others. If professional experiences impact creativity or perceptions of creativity than creativity must to some extent involve skill or talent.

Creativity is experienced intrinsically. All eight participants described how they experienced an internal drive to create. A state of flow or digging into your soul or internal processing were described by all eight participants. Five of the participants described creativity as learning about yourself. If intrinsic experiences impact creativity or perceptions of creativity than creativity must to some extent be based on motivation.

Creativity is experienced culturally. All eight participants described at least one experience with their culture or a culture that they were immersed in that affected their creativity or perception of creativity. Two participants specifically mentioned ancestral and historical experiences influencing their creativity or perception of creativity. If specific cultural experiences (e.g., Bollywood dances, Karuk basket weaving, violence

against Black people) impact creativity or perceptions of creativity than creativity must to some extent be based on values.

Chapter Summary

This transcendental phenomenological study explored the essence of creativity through the following research questions:

(RQ1) What are perceptions of creativity among adults from culturally diverse backgrounds who are creatively gifted?

(SQ1) How do beliefs inform perceptions of creativity?

(SQ2) How do experiences inform perceptions of creativity?

(RQ2) How do the interactions among beliefs and experiences inform perceptions of creativity?

Eight participants who were identified as creatively gifted adults who had diverse cultural backgrounds and a profession in an arts related field took part in two semi-structured interviews about what creativity is and how it is experienced. The transcribed interviews were analyzed for themes using the Five A's Framework. Composite textural and structural descriptions were created from those themes which lead the researcher to the essence of creativity based on the participant's stories.

Chapter Six: Synthesis of Meaning and Essences, Personal Reflections, Implications, and Future Research

Essence is the common condition without which a phenomenon would not be what it is (Husserl, 1931). “The final step in the phenomenological research process is the intuitive integration of the fundamental textural and structural descriptions into a unified statement of the essences of the experience of the phenomenon as a whole (Moustakas, 1994, p. 100). The essence of any phenomenon or experience cannot be fully exhaustive, but rather represents the essence at a specific time and place, based on the perceptions of a group of individuals.

Synthesis of Meanings and Essences

“Knowledge sought is arrived at through descriptions that make possible an understanding of the meanings and essences of experience” (Moustakas, 1984). For the purpose of this study, the essence of creativity based upon the experiences of eight creatively gifted adults from culturally diverse backgrounds is: Creativity is intrinsic, each person possesses creative abilities, and these abilities can be activated and nurtured through environment, personal, educational, professional, and cultural experiences. Creativity involves responding to the world around you and sharing your experiences with others. Understanding and knowledge of creativity can be opened based on forms of representation (e.g., written, audio, dancing, acting, drawing, painting, sculpting).

To provide an alternative form of representation on what was learned through this study regarding what the phenomenon of creativity is and how it is experienced, I created the video in Figure 9 to compile all the participants' chosen artifacts into an audio and visual representation. The data collected from participants was integrated into this video so that it became a piece of the data itself while also synthesizing the participants' perspectives as a whole.

Figure 9

Video Synthesis of Artifacts Collected from Participants



Note: <https://youtu.be/7Nlfvf-Q0PE>

Findings

Reflecting on the data collected and the themes that emerged, findings that became evident include the structure of creativity aligning to the Five A's Framework, distinct external influences on perceptions of creativity, distinct internal influences on perceptions of creativity, importance of forms of representation, personal creativity vs. everyday creativity, and positive creativity despite negative current events.

The Five A's

When considering the data collected and the themes that emerged it becomes evident that the structure of the phenomenon of creativity based upon the participants' experiences with creativity aligns with The Five A's Framework. Actor, action, artifact, audience, and affordances all contributed to what creativity is and how it was experienced by participants.

Actor

Actor is the person or personal attributes of creativity in relation to a societal context. Creativity is internal, it is in your soul, it is something instinctual inside yourself. Creativity is a response to the world around you and how you perceive what is around you.

Action

Action is the act of creating and how that act may be a psychological or a behavioral manifestation of creativity. The act of creativity is exploration whether that is within the confines of a boundary such as a commission or a problem needing solved or it may be through personal expression and having free reign. Creativity can be

psychological in that it requires a flow of ideas. Creativity begins as ideas, transforms into a structure, and results in an artifact.

Artifact

Artifact is what is produced through creativity. Artifacts can come in a variety of shapes and forms, what is produced through creativity is not necessarily tangible. An artifact can be recognizing different parts of yourself through creativity, it can be a solution to a problem whether that is an idea or a tangible product, it may be expressed through song or dance, or it may be tangible like a piece of pottery or a portrait painting. The products of creativity are endless and come in a variety of representations.

Audience

Audience is how an artifact may be used, valued, or judged by external factors. Creativity is not limited to oneself. Creativity and the product of creativity are subject to other's views and perceptions. There are factors that contribute to how an artifact may be used, valued, or judged such as cultural influences. Audience is essential to creativity because it can help an actor determine what the meaning is they are attempting to convey, even if the audience perceives that intent in their own way.

Affordances

Affordances are the relation to environment. Creativity can be stifled or nurtured based upon a physical environment. At times creativity may be sparked by being immersed in an exciting physical experience such as attending an orchestra or creativity may be sparked as a response to a physical experience in which you do not want to

conform such as witnessing violence. Creativity can be stifled if it is not nurtured, for example, a school environment may stifle creativity if it is not engaging.

External Influences on Creativity

External influences on the participants' perceptions of creativity included family, culture, community, education, and profession.

Family

Family is critical to creativity. Support for the arts within a family unit came to the forefront of the data. Nearly all the participants had families who supported and encouraged the arts, whether that was through going to free orchestras or performances, encouraging experimentation with materials, imaginative play, or watching films and shows. All the participants in this study were adults, but they all used examples from their families when they were growing up, specifically their parents, when they spoke of creativity. Parents have a critical role in influencing their child's creativity through community, culture, educational experiences, and their life at home.

Culture

Culture has an interconnectedness to creativity. The data showed that most participants were influenced by the culture they were born into or chose to immerse themselves in and that directly influenced their perception of creativity and the work they created. For some, the absence of cultural representation created opportunities for creativity such as the lack of Latina opera singers. For others, the culture they were surrounded by directly influenced their creativity such as being exposed to Bollywood

dances and videos and later becoming a filmmaker. It was evident in the data that culture and creativity are related and influence one another.

Community

Community is critical to creativity. In the data it became clear that community organized arts experiences were instrumental in the participants' choice of career paths. Symphonies downtown, community orchestras, arts organizations offering workshops, art gallery openings, and organized performances were all community-based events that impacted experiences on creativity. Community based events being offered at no cost to families was also a factor in individuals' and families' abilities to participate in these experiences.

Education

Education can nurture or stifle creativity. Educational opportunities that are open to a variety of forms of representation for learning, offer experimentation with materials, and provide access to mentors all positively influenced participants' perceptions of creativity and their experiences with creativity. Exposure to arts-based education also proved to be a critical component to the experiences participants had with creativity and it was noted that these experiences were limited in elementary and middle school; most participants or their parents had to seek out arts based education opportunities. It became clear that forms of representation in learning also impacted participants' creativity, they expressed having more creativity when given freedom in how they chose to represent their learning.

Profession

Professions in the arts influenced participants' perceptions of creativity. All the participants came into the study with a well-defined view of creativity based upon their experiences. Participants chose their profession to be in an arts related, creative field which directly influences their perception of creativity. The participants are surrounded by the arts daily because of their profession which directly influences their experiences with creativity.

Internal Influences on Creativity

Internal influences on the participants' perceptions of creativity included family, culture, community, education, and profession.

Self-Awareness

An internal influence that became apparent in the data is self-awareness. Many of the participants described creativity as something you activate within yourself or digging into your innards, this demonstrates strong self-awareness. Most of the participants described the experience of finding a piece of themselves through their experiences with creativity explaining it as telling a story or providing a voice. Participants described creativity as a form of self-expression and the process of understanding the world around them.

Forms of Representation

Through not only the narrative data provided by participants, but also the visual and auditory data, it became clear that the phenomenon of creativity is not limited to a written context but extends into various forms of representation. If one were to only

consider the written narrative of participants' experiences with creativity, they might not comprehend the extent to which creativity has been experienced by participants.

Including the artifacts provided by participants added a new dimension to understanding creativity one that includes sight and sound. The vibrancy and intensity of creativity can be felt through experiencing the participants' chosen artifacts. The sound, the movement, the color, and the detail all activate different forms of representation and learning.

Activating various forms of representation enlarges understanding and creates meaning as Eisner (1997) described in the literature. Hearing the audio recordings from the voices to the instruments to the music provided a glimpse into how creativity was experienced by participants. Similarly, seeing the artworks and photographs gives visual insight into how participants view creativity and how creativity can be shown in such various ways. The written words that participants use to describe the works gave insight into the meaning behind creativity. All these forms of representation work together to paint a whole picture of the phenomenon of creativity.

Understanding and knowledge of creativity can be constrained or unleashed based upon forms of representation. Even this research study as a whole is constrained by the format of academic writing as an academic researcher I had to abide by the standards of the discipline. An alternative understanding of creativity may be gained if the data was collected through another form such as observation or was shared in a different way such as through performance.

Personal Creativity vs. Everyday Creativity

Personal/Artistic creativity was evident throughout the narratives told by the participants in this study. Having a profession and background in the arts pointed to achievement in the arts which was evidenced by descriptions of creativity beyond the mundane. Being able to identify creativity as digging into your innards or responding to the world around you goes beyond self-expression that is evident in everyday creativity as Ivcevic (2007) described. The participants' narratives described their intentionality in being creative and searching for creative opportunities.

Positive Creativity Despite Negative Current Events

Current events have an impact on creativity. Participants described how events like the COVID-19 pandemic, systemic racism, and concerns for safety impacted their creativity. Despite these negative events, positive creativity is evident in taking these experiences and creating works that encourage positive change. During negative current events, participants also connected with an art or cultural community.

Personal Reflections

When I began this study, I had no idea what to expect concerning the data. What I learned through this process is that creativity is unique to each individual, everyone experiences creativity differently, and has distinct moments that influenced their understanding of creativity. While creativity is unique to each person, there are overlaps in experiences that relate to the phenomenon of creativity.

Three of the most surprising themes that emerged from the data for me were the lack of arts related experiences in elementary and middle school in participants'

educational experiences, the importance of family in participants' experiences with the phenomenon of creativity, and the impact of educators of color on participants. In my experience growing up, most schools I attended or knew of offered art at the elementary and middle school level, but through the data I learned that the majority of participants did not have educational opportunities in the arts in school during elementary and middle school years. In addition, I expected to see the data support families' influence of creativity, I did not expect it to be as extensive as it was. All of the participants described how their family, specifically their parents, either supported their creativity or impeded their creativity, with the vast majority describing positive influences on creativity from their family. Finally, as an educator I know the impact that educators of color have on their students but hearing the personal narratives of the participants and how educators of color truly impacted their career choices and self-awareness showed the importance of having role models who are like students. Having an educator of color say to them that there can be people who look like them in the arts directly impacted the career choices of participants.

My understanding of creativity was deeply influenced by hearing the personal narratives of participants' experiences with creativity. As I was conducting the interviews and scouring through the data I was surprised at the rawness and openness of each participant. Each of their stories and experiences were unique to them and it was enlightening seeing how experiences that may seem mundane influenced their perception of creativity in such an impactful way (e.g., parents allowing them to experiment with stuff, college assignments, conversations with friends).

Implications

The finding in this study has implications on art education, modes of learning in the classroom, access to teachers of color, and gifted education for creatively gifted students. All these areas influence the experiences students have with creativity which ultimately informs their perceptions of creativity.

Implications on Art Education

An implication to practice that was revealed in this study is the impacts of educational experiences on the perceptions of creativity among students. There was a lack of experiences among participants revealed in the research in the K-12 school setting. Most participants did not describe educational experiences influencing their perceptions of creativity until college. The research highlighted a deficit in the opportunities K-12 students have to connect with the arts through specialized classes. The research also shed light on the lack of advanced art classes offered to students at the K-12 level. More opportunities for students to have access to the arts in K-12 school settings is critical to developing creativity.

Implications on Modes of Learning in the Classroom

The research indicated that learning experiences that provided multiple forms of representation of learning or exploration were most memorable to the participants. Teachers of all subject matter should be incorporating opportunities to display learning through a variety of representations (e.g., writing, drawing, acting, performing, composing). Exploration of subject matter is key to activating creativity.

Implications on Access to Teachers of Color

Additionally, participants noted that teacher of color who looked like them were highly influential in their perceptions of creativity and drive to pursue professional endeavors in an arts-related field. We need more educators of color in the field of education, regardless of subject matter, students need to see people who look like them in their classrooms.

Implications on Gifted Education for Creatively Gifted Students

The research highlighted a deficit in identification and programming for creatively and/or artistically gifted students. Very few states identify creatively and/or artistically gifted students, let alone provide programming. In order to meet the needs of creatively gifted students' identification and programming should be mandated in each state.

Limitations

The findings from this study are not generalizable because of the small sample size and the inability to include participants from all cultural backgrounds. Individual perceptions of creativity shared by the participants may not reflect the perceptions of creativity held by a culture as a whole. While I did my best to bracket out my experience, this does not completely discount the possibility of researcher bias. For the purpose of this study, creatively gifted was based on profession rather than identification as a child or adult.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study could be replicated with participants outside of the United States, a larger sample population, art educators, or with participants from a different field such as scientists or mathematicians. Another area for future research could be conducting an in-depth study looking at the K-12 and/or post-secondary educational impacts on perceptions of creativity. One final area of study would be an in-depth analysis of Eastern vs. Western views of creativity.

Chapter Summary

This research study has explored multicultural perceptions of creativity to better understand what creativity is and how it is experienced. A gap in literature exists surrounding perceptions of creativity among creatively gifted adults from culturally diverse backgrounds and this study helped fill this gap. Eight creatively gifted adults from diverse cultural backgrounds who have careers in an arts related field shared their insight on and experiences with creativity. A transcendental phenomenological approach was used to bracket out the researcher's experience, consider the individual experiences of participants, provide a collective view of creativity, and synthesize the essence of creativity. Based on the research and results of this study, creativity is an instinct that each person possesses and has the ability to activate within themselves. Creativity can be nurtured based on environment and through personal, educational, professional, and cultural experiences. Creativity involves responding to the world around you and sharing your experiences with others.

Through this study it became evident that there are critical changes that need to be made in art education, gifted education, access to teachers of color, and modes of learning in the K-12 school environment in order to nurture creativity among students. There are numerous areas where future research could uncover even greater insight into the essence of creativity. Creativity lives within each of us and it is our responsibility to find paths to nurture creativity.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Letter

Recruitment Letter

Dear Potential Participant,

My name is Abby Winterbrook and I am a doctoral student from the Morgridge College of Education at the University of Denver. I am writing to invite you to participate in my doctoral research study, "Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity." The purpose of this study is to examine perceptions of creativity among adults from diverse cultural backgrounds who are creatively gifted to better understand what creativity is and how it is experienced. If you would like to participate, please complete the brief survey at https://udenver.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8jsnwx4ijGLRDvM.

If you are selected to participate in this study, I will email you to set up times for two interviews that will be conducted via Zoom. During the interviews, I will ask you questions about how you view creativity and what your experiences have been with creativity. I will also be collecting an artifact from you such as a sample of your work or an item that is a visual representation of creativity.

I expect to conduct two interviews which will each last approximately one hour. The Zoom meeting would be recorded for transcription purposes only. The recordings will be destroyed once transcription is complete. You will have the opportunity to check the transcribed interview to verify accuracy. All your information will be kept confidential by the researcher and an alternative name will be used in the study.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at 303-263-5968 or email me at Abby.Winterbrook@du.edu. You may also contact the faculty sponsor, Dr. Norma Hafenstein, with any questions. She can be reached by email at Norma.Hafenstein@du.edu.

Thank you very much!

Sincerely,

Abby Winterbrook, M.A.T
Abby.Winterbrook@du.edu
(303) 263-5968

Appendix B: Recruitment Flyer

Are you an artist, musician,
performer, writer, or do you
have a career in a creative field?

You are invited to participate in a doctoral research study
"Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity" being conducted by
Abby Winterbrook, a doctoral student at the University of
Denver. If you would like to participate in this study, please
complete the brief survey at
https://udenver.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8jsnwx4jjGLRDvM



If you have any questions or would like more information
please contact the researcher, Abby Winterbrook at
303-263-5968 or Abby.Winterbrook@du.edu or you may
contact the faculty sponsor Dr. Norma Hafenstein at 303-871-
2527 or Norma.Hafenstein@du.edu.



UNIVERSITY of
DENVER

Appendix C: Community Partner Agreements

Community Partner Agreement

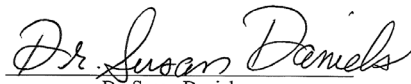
Dr. Susan Daniels and Abby Winterbrook

Beginning Summer of 2021, Dr. Susan Daniels agrees to be Abby Winterbrook's community partner for her dissertation project titled: Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity for the Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction specializing in Gifted Education at the University of Denver under the supervision of Dr. Norma Lu Hafenstein. The doctorate is part of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED). A key component of the requirements is to obtain a community partner. Researchers must disseminate their work to interested community members as defined by the nature of the research. Community partners can be in attendance during the defense of the dissertation, which will occur in Spring 2022 for approximately two hours in length, although attendance is not required.

Dr. Susan Daniels and Abby Winterbrook will collaborate either via email, telephone, or through video conferencing one to two times before Spring 2022, to discuss participant recruitment and the approach to research. The purpose of this phenomenological study is to examine perceptions of creativity amongst culturally diverse, creatively gifted adults. The persistent problem of practice that this research is focused upon is the lack of literature that exists on perceptions of creativity amongst culturally diverse individuals who are creatively gifted.

The primary research question is: What are perceptions of creativity among diverse individuals who are creatively gifted? The sub questions include:

- How do personal beliefs inform perceptions of creativity?
- How do cultural beliefs inform perceptions of creativity?
- How do familial beliefs inform perceptions of creativity?
- How does experience inform perceptions of creativity?


Dr. Susan Daniels


Abby Winterbrook


Community Partner Agreement

Molly Isaacs-McLeod and Abby Winterbrook

Beginning Fall of 2021, Molly Isaacs-McLeod agrees to be Abby Winterbrook's community partner for her dissertation project titled: Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity for the Doctor of Education in Curriculum and Instruction specializing in Gifted Education at the University of Denver under the supervision of Dr. Norma Lu Hafenstein. The doctorate is part of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED). A key component of the requirements is to obtain a community partner. Researchers must disseminate their work to interested community members as defined by the nature of the research. Community partners can be in attendance during the defense of the dissertation, which will occur in Spring 2022 for approximately two hours in length, although attendance is not required.

Molly Isaacs-McLeod and Abby Winterbrook will collaborate either via email, telephone, or through video conferencing one to two times before Spring 2022, to discuss participant recruitment and the approach to research. The purpose of this phenomenological study is to examine perceptions of creativity amongst culturally diverse, creatively gifted adults. The persistent problem of practice that this research is focused upon is the lack of literature that exists on perceptions of creativity amongst culturally diverse individuals who are creatively gifted.

The primary research question for this study is: (RQ1) What are perceptions of creativity among adults from culturally diverse backgrounds who are creatively gifted? The sub-questions that support this research question are: (SQ1) How do beliefs inform perceptions of creativity? (SQ2) How do experiences inform perceptions of creativity? The second research question for this study is: (RQ2) How do the interactions among beliefs and experiences inform perceptions of creativity?


Molly Isaacs-McLeod


Abby Winterbrook

Appendix D: Informed Consent Form

Exempt Research Information Sheet

Title of Research Study: Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity

Principal Investigator: Abby Winterbrook, M.A.T
Dr. Norma Hafenstein

IRBNet Protocol #: 1768598

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Your participation in this research study is voluntary and you do not have to participate. Even if you decide to participate now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. This document contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate. Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate.

Study Purpose:

If you participate in this research study, you will be invited to participate in two interviews that will be approximately one hour in length and will be audio and video recorded for transcription purposes only. Once the transcription process is complete, you will be given a copy of the transcription to verify its accuracy. All recordings will be destroyed once the transcription process is completed. The purpose of this research is to examine perceptions of creativity among adults from diverse cultural backgrounds who are creatively gifted.

You may choose not to answer any interview question or to stop the interview at any time for any reason without penalty.

There are no expected risks to you as a result of participating in this study. There is little to no risk associated with this study because the data collection will be secured on a password protected computer on the university's one drive account. Your identity will be protected with the use of pseudonyms unless you request that your real name and identity are shared.

If you request and provide consent that your real name and identity are shared in this study, the researcher and university are not responsible for any risks that may be associated with your identity being shared. Please initial next to a statement below:

_____ YES, I agree to have my real name and identity shared in this study.
_____ NO, I do not agree to have my real name and identity shared in this study.

You will be able to take a break at any time that you feel uncomfortable or overwhelmed or you may terminate the interview at any time. Likewise, if the researcher observes that the interview appears to be troublesome, they will suggest that the interview

be paused or terminated. You may, at any time, decline to answer any question without having to qualify a reason for doing so. You may, at any time, request a break, terminate the session, or remove yourself from this study, without any loss of benefit, and without having to qualify a reason for doing so. You may withdraw from the investigation with full confidence that any information that you have shared will not be included in the study.

Procedures: If you agree to be a part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in two interviews each lasting approximately one hour in length.

Before you begin, please note that the data you provide may be collected and used by Abby Winterbrook as per its privacy agreement. This research is only for U.S. residents over the age of 18. Please be mindful to respond in a private setting and through a secured Internet connection for your privacy. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. Specifically, no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties.

You will be audio/video recorded during each of the interviews so the researcher can transcribe the interviews for accuracy purposes. If you do not want to be audio/video recorded, please inform the researcher, and only hand-written notes will be taken during the interview.

Your name and identifying information will not be connected in any way to your responses in this study unless you request that your real name and identity be shared in the study.

Questions: If you have any questions about this project or your participation, please feel free to ask questions now or contact Abby Winterbrook at Abby.Winterbrook@du.edu at any time. You may also contact the faculty sponsor Dr. Norma Hafenstein by email at Norma.Hafenstein@du.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns about your research participation or rights as a participant, you may contact the University of Denver's Human Research Protections Program (HRPP) by emailing IRBAdmin@du.edu or calling (303) 871-2121 to speak to someone other than the researchers.

The University of Denver Institutional Review Board has determined that this study is minimal risk and is exempt from full IRB oversight.

Please take all the time you need to read through this document and decide whether you would like to participate in this research study.

If you decide to participate, your completion of the research procedures indicates your consent. Please keep this form for your records.

Appendix E: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol

Thank you for participating in this research study, “Multicultural Perceptions of Creativity”. During the interview process you will be asked questions about creativity and your experiences with creativity. You will participate in two interviews, the first will be to collect information about you and your perceptions of creativity, the second will be to discuss an artifact that you have selected that represents creativity. The purpose of these interviews is to gather your insight into what you believe creativity is and how you have experienced creativity, there are no right or wrong answers, but rather I want to learn about your beliefs and experiences with creativity. I will be audio and video recording our conversation but will only use these recordings to transcribe our interview then the recording will be destroyed. You will have the opportunity to check the information I have collected during the interview process to verify the accuracy. Before we begin, do you have any questions?

Interview One Questions:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What does creativity mean to you?
3. What has informed your thinking about creativity?
 - a. How has family informed your thinking about creativity?
 - b. How has culture and/or community informed your thinking about creativity?
4. What have you experienced in terms of creativity?
5. What has influenced your experiences with creativity?

- a. How have educational experiences informed your thinking about creativity?
- b. How has your professional endeavors informed your thinking about creativity?

During our second interview, I would like you to bring something that is a visual or audio representation of creativity with you. This could be something that you create for the purpose of this study, something you have previously created, or it could be something that is meaningful to you or your family. Please choose something that you are comfortable with me including as part of this study. The artifact you bring could be in the form of a photograph, a video, or an object. I will also be contacting you after our interview for a photograph or copy of the artifact you selected so that it can be included in the study.

Interview Two Questions:

1. What artifact have you brought? Tell me about it.
2. Why did you choose this artifact?
3. How does it represent creativity to you?
4. Who created this artifact?
5. If you had to describe the meaning behind this artifact in three words, what would they be?