ANTHROPO-CREATIVITY

A CASE STUDY OF CREATIVITY AT THE INTERSECTION OF ENVIRONMENT, PERSONALITY, AND CULTURAL PRACTICES

by

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(Under the Direction of BONNIE CRAMOND)

ABSTRACT

A creative individual, like a ship in the ocean, is influenced by the crosscurrents of the environment, personal characteristics, and the cultural practices that surround the act of creation, particularly in a theatre setting. Accordingly, this interpretive, phenomenological case study, examines the creative experiences of an urban, 73 year old male, who has had prolonged residencies in three different cultures (British, West Indian, and American), in order to understand how cultural practices have created, defined, and influenced his creative functioning.

Data from the study indicates that creative individuals – particularly those engaged in anthropo-creativity – who select a relatively less saturated or restrictive environment, invest energy in learning the language and cultural practices, can be flexible and adaptable, and are fortunate to find oneself accepted by the natives in an opportune zeitgeist, will perhaps find a more comprehensive expression of their creativity than in other, more restrictive situations. Further, the existence of a nurturing environment – variety in social and intellectual stimulus, parental encouragement of a potentially creative pursuit, provisions (both material and disciplinary) to enable the pursuit, and a combination of creative traits – tends to increase the potential for engaging in creative endeavors and/or leading a creative lifestyle.

INDEX WORDS: Creativity, Anthropo-creativity, Cultural practices, Environmental influences, Personality characteristics, Case study, Culture.
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In purely conceptual terms, this work has not ended … it remains the delightful, often startling, and deeply transformative auto-kaleidoscope I began twirling long before sentence one of this dissertation was formulated. However, just as the frame limits the art, these pages delimit my thoughts, prominent among them being a sense of a catharsis extraordinaire, enabled by the efforts, commitment, and goodwill of so many. Foremost are my parents, Vishnu and Tara, who by word and deed, propelled me into this higher orbit; my immediate family, Sherilyn, Arjun, Luke, and Siddhartha, who collectively maintained a strategic closeness-in-distance that offered a comfortable balance between emotional security and academic freedom; my extraordinary committee headed by Dr. Super Bonnie, the amicable and insightful Major Professor I would recommend to everyone; Dr. Bettie, whose infectious passion for writing and insistence on exemplary output has made this a better work indeed; Dr. Frasier, whose kind and gentle spirit guided this work; as well as Dr. Grantham, whose critical eyes pruned and supplemented where necessary; all those co-workers, siblings, and friends whose consistent support and persistent nagging often drove me to despair, but fortunately, just as often drove me to the writing desk; and of course, my respondent, alter ego, and dear friend, Arthur, without whose involvement, insights, and unstinting sharing of a life experience, my preoccupations with creativity would still remain troubled conjecture, and these pages would undoubtedly still be part of an old growth forest, somewhere in the pristine northwest….
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I.

INTRODUCTION

My Life in Three Acts

Ignorance is bliss they say, and like the all too willing prisoner in Plato’s allegory of the cave, I not only remained shackled to the mechanisms of my native culture in India, but also freely absorbed the representations of my reality in the form of flickering shadows cast on the far wall by unknown puppeteers. And it probably would have continued along these lines if I had not unchained and distanced myself from the cave by migrating from India; I probably would never have been fully aware of the existence of either the puppeteers or the nature of the shadow play between the cultural practices of my upbringing, my own personality characteristics, and the cumulative effects of these factors on my work as a theatre director.

Act I

The first act of this shadow play began early in my life, a predictably tumultuous upbringing in a predominantly middle-class, urban part of Bombay, India. As far back as I can remember, I had the urge to create – tents out of discarded lumber, model airplanes out of scraps of paper, or on a grander scale, reams of dark and tortured poetry about my imagined futures. Although some family members were leery of, and actively sought to block, these creative urges – as in the instance when an uncle ripped one of my poems about household mice to shreds and then sternly suggested that I never write poetry again – my immediate family usually indulged my desire for self-expression. My father, an educator turned food service entrepreneur, bequeathed me his favorite camera, and my mother, an
actor and pharmaceutical salesperson, took me along on several of her theatre road trips. Their benign attitude toward my creative urges promoted my experimentation with photography, visual arts, film, and finally, theatre, which became the focus of my life after high school.

After my first performance, both my mother and father noticed my attraction to theatre and appeared to be proud of my accomplishment and my declared intent to pursue it as a career. However, aware of the precariousness of the arts as a sustainable career in India – what commercial theatre there is, subsists on the fringes of Indian society – they were convinced that this yearning was only a phase and that I would see the light of a “real career” someday. “Oh, he’s involved in the theatre right now, but we’re sure he’ll find his niche by and by,” they said to their concerned friends. But that was not to be.

Years later, I was still engaged in creative pursuits, earning my livelihood in theatre, film, and advertising. Also, not only was my chosen vocation markedly different from that of my schoolmates, and the population in general – most of whom aspired to the traditionally “respected” professions such as medicine, banking, or business – but as far as I know, I was the only one of my peers who lived by himself in an apartment. In the densely populated, family-centered milieu of Indian society in general, this was a rare condition, and a source of some concern for my extended family and their acquaintances. “Why do you let him live by himself?” they would complain to my mother, “He must be so unhappy!” To the contrary, and judging from the steady stream of work, my tight-knit circle of friends, and a healthy bank balance, I considered myself reasonably happy and successful. And when coupled with the logistic freedoms of a single life – go and do whatever/ whenever – I was content with my self-sustaining utopia, a construct that plainly transgressed the cultural practices of my
immediate neighborhood, as evidenced by the furtive glances, whispered conversations, and stilted politeness of the neighbors.

The social pressures that operated so relentlessly upon my private utopia were also at work in my profession. As a creative artist (actor, part-time choreographer, entrepreneur) I was engaged in creating characters, choreographing dance, and designing print campaigns. The eventual “shape” of each one of these creations was usually a combination of my choices/efforts, informed by the pressures and preferences expressed by the other parties involved in the process – the director, producers, logistics, and financial considerations. In a specific incident, when I presented a concept for the graphic and explicit choreography inherent in a song from *Pippin*, the producers blanched, and then politely suggested that I rework the piece with abstract and inoffensive choreography. I relented somewhat by transforming the obvious into the subliminal. In this instance, as in others, I learned to negotiate within the implicit parameters of society while effectively maintaining the integrity of my creative vision.

Act II

Act II of my shadow play took place years later, when I left India to enroll in a graduate theatre program at a university in the southeastern United States. I had to accept the fact that new rules – the social customs of the South – had replaced the social structures that I had learned to negotiate in my creative endeavors in India; that the vagaries of the faculty of the theatre arts program had supplanted my friends and family as the strongest influences on my life and work. These faculty members, a collective representing the ethos of the program, and in some ways, the culture of the region, had their own unique set of social structures, both explicit and implicit, that I had to interpret and assimilate. As a result, and for better or for worse, my sense of self had changed.
Curious about this change, I began to pay attention to the cultural negotiations of other foreign students. Soon after my arrival on campus, the foreign student’s association had willy-nilly inducted me into their social agenda, and under their aegis, I had the opportunity to observe other foreign students and their cultural practices within this new milieu. I noticed that those foreign students who had learned to navigate the interstices of their adopted culture, those who were – without apparent condescension – successful in adapting the practices, rituals, and mores of the new culture within their own practices, had actually created successful, vibrant, and relatively fulfilled lives for themselves. By a combination of creative negotiations or adaptations, these students had managed to effectively permeate within the bounds of, and establish a secure beachhead in their newfound society. I wondered about their practices, their daily rituals, and whether they had inherited certain characteristics or cultivated a special set of skills that enabled them to recreate their lives in this alien setting.

What I saw of these students, I realized, was an external manifestation of their creativity – a creative living – but I had no theory to understand it. Also, for me, the existence of a creative process was the post facto examination of a product because the product would necessarily implicate creativity. MacKinnon (1978) stressed this very point, suggesting that “the starting point, indeed the bedrock of all studies of creativity, is an analysis of the creative products, a determination of what it is that makes them different from more mundane products” (p. 187). This widely espoused practice of product evaluation as validation of creativity has unfortunately been largely misinterpreted, and often results in the formulaic notion that the creative product is either material artifact, theory, or technology, thus ignoring a significant creative product – the individual. Maslow (1999) reported on this issue, proposing that the individual is a creative product insofar as he seeks
self-actualization by willfully creating a fulfilling and creative existence through the
manipulation of intellectual, social, material, and ethical modes of living. Like the foreign
students I had observed, I too was attempting to merge, negotiate within, and acquire some
semblance of ownership of the broader American culture. Accordingly, I was rapidly, but
selectively, reorienting myself to the cultural practices of my new milieu – or in Maslowian
terms, attempting to self-actualize. In responding to the unfamiliar cultural practices,
discourses, stressors, ideologies, interactions, and materials of my new milieu, I found that I
was not only expanding my repertory of cultural practices, but also by the selective
expression and suppression of this mélange of old and new cultural practices, essentially re-
defining my personality and my self.

Act III

Act III commenced when I began directing theatre productions and the inextricable
bond between creativity, theatre, and cultural practices came to the forefront. I found that I
was engaging my cast in a way that I had not experienced before, and the resultant
production – the insubstantial pageant that represented my creative vision – was somehow
different from how I had envisioned it. Now, unlike a visual artist or poet or mathematician
squirreling away in the isolation of some waterfront garret, my creative act – the production
– took shape amidst, because of, and often times, in spite of people; people who brought
their personal beliefs, their rationales, their ideologies, skills, and chequered pasts to bear on
the production. In a phrase, flesh and blood people, each one of who wove, as Geertz (1973)
has insightfully noted, their own webs of significance. The directorial act was, I concluded, a
multi-layered proposition in that the materials of my creative construction were not the
inanimate materials of visual art, the lexicon of prose, or even the abstractions of theory, but
a necessarily human pot-au-feu; that my private bolts of inspiration could only be actualized
through a series of negotiations and compromises with a group of people, each of whom brought individual cultural practices to bear on the stage; and that essentially, I was transforming a private web of significance (my creativity) into a theatrical web of significance (the production) using human webs of significance (the actors and audience). The then unarticulated notion that my creativity was governed by both my ideational strategies and the materials of my work (the people involved in my shows), laid the foundation for the subsequent identification of a type of creative functioning that I will call anthropo-creativity. This particular strain of creative functioning uses human beings as materials and depends on human agency for the articulation of the creative product. I will return to the concept of anthropo-creativity in later sections of this work.

Post-production dramaturgy

Intrigued by these personal and professional transformations, I resolved to examine the three acts of my life – shaped by (a) the environment, (b) personality characteristics, and (c) the relationship between cultural practices and theatre production – in greater detail, but very soon thereafter, the obstacles – prominent among them, the conundrum of lifting oneself-by-the-bootstraps – became painfully obvious. Accordingly, I shelved the idea, finding consolation in the fact that not only was this self-study impractical but somewhat embarrassing to pursue, until years later, when I heard my friend Arthur speak of his experiences directing a play in a rural school in Jamaica. Then, like the hobbyist who finally discovers a source for the one missing part of his incomplete model airplane, I realized that Arthur’s experience could serve as the wings with which I could test the airworthiness of my long-abandoned constructs.

When I first met Arthur, then 61, and all of 5’ 4”, the frosty-haired Briton’s boundless energy and inability to sit still created in me the indelible impression of the mythic
shark that never rests. Meeting Arthur was a bit like nodding to oneself in a mirror, culturally once removed, of course. His experiences were remarkably congruent with my own and as our acquaintance grew, those restless questions about how cultural practices create a life and influence one’s creative functioning, questions that had lain dormant for a while, began to reawaken. Like Moustakas (1990), I somehow knew that “the initial data [were] within me; the challenge [was] to explicate its nature” (p. 13).

I discovered that Arthur was born and raised in the Black Country area of England, where he completed his graduate degree in music and education, and at the age of 26, moved to the West Indies in pursuit of a career in music, stage production, and broadcasting. Several highlights, including a highly successful nationally broadcast weekly program created and hosted by Arthur, marked his 23 years in Jamaica. Although political strife forced him to flee Jamaica for the United States, he continued to maintain ties with the Jamaican community, playing music for their gatherings, and often preaching on special occasions. After arriving in the United States in 1980, Arthur earned his doctoral degree in theology and pursued his love for staging productions, theological counseling, and ham radio.

During his lifetime, Arthur, a classically trained musician, engaged in a variety of professional endeavors, the most persistent of which was stage production. From his very early days as a teacher in Britain, he developed and staged theatre and opera productions for the community. As a musician, he was in a position not only to reinterpret the musical score of the show, but also to interact with a cast and direct the production based on this reinterpretation. Naturally, his work with the various casts he encountered – the specific subcultures within the countries in which he lived – offered him an intimate glimpse of how cultural practices influenced his productions and by extension, his creativity.
Now happily settled in his third marriage with his wife of 26 years – Gwen – he works as an associate pastor in charge of the music ministry at a local church and continues to produce and direct theatre productions. His comfortable townhouse reveals an eclectic aesthetic, from Jamaican folk figurines, Welsh pewter, Romanian music scrolls, to Chinese woodcuts fashioned out of tender bamboo. Most of these gifts are from friends and former students. Although mutual interests and our multi-cultural experiences brought us together, Arthur and Gwen’s warm and consistent glow of universal esprit de corps – a glow that has endeared them to people around the world – has cemented the bond between us and naturally, we have become good friends.

Our conversations over the years indicated that Arthur and I shared some remarkably similar experiences and transitions in life; that like me, he had not only recreated his life in other foreign cultures, but that he had staged a significant number of productions in various cultures. Further, having personally witnessed his marvelous facility with the piano, as well as several of the performances that he had created and staged, in my mind he had earned the indisputable label of “creative individual.” This led to several interconnected thoughts and questions: What part did Arthur’s upbringing in rural England play in his development as a creative individual? How was Arthur able to create an apparently self-actualized life in an alien setting? Was his involvement in an artistic profession – music – sufficient grounds for labeling him as “creative,” and if not, how does one distinguish a creative individual? And urgently, as a stage producer, how had a change in cultural milieu influenced his creativity? These, and other similarly intriguing questions about the relationship between cultural practices and an individual’s creative life within a society, form the core of this study.
Statement of the problem

In this interpretive, phenomenological case study, I interviewed Arthur, an urban, 73 year old male from Atlanta, who has had prolonged residencies in three different cultures (British, West Indian, and American), in order to better understand how cultural practices have created, defined, and influenced his creative functioning.

Research Questions

a. How might specific cultural practices affect Arthur’s development as a creative individual?

b. What specific materials, relations, and practices define and maintain Arthur as a creative individual within a culture?

c. How might cultural practices and societal pressures (taboos, sanctions, institutional support, and individuality measures) influence Arthur’s creativity within a culture?

At the behest of this triumvirate, and using Arthur as the archetype, three significant pathways of inquiry emerged – the environment, the creative individual, and cultural practices that influence creativity – and sections of Arthur’s experiences naturally sedimented into the three sections of data story. But before delving into Arthur’s data story, a slight detour is necessary. Gee, Michaels, and O’Connor’s (1992) contend that “the meaning of a text flows from a combination of words and structural organization of the text, together with the inferences hearers draw based on their knowledge of the speaker and the context” (p. 248) implying the need for mutually agreed upon terms and definitions to enable the shared meanings of articulate discourse. Accordingly, in view of the recurrence of the terms “creativity” and “culture” throughout this paper, the following chapter employs the contexts and operational definitions of creativity and culture in order to tessellate each of these terms.
II.

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review is guided by several pertinent considerations - the creative process, cultural practices, and individual characteristics - that scaffold the thesis of this research, namely the impact of cultural practices on Arthur's creativity and creative functioning. Teasing out the various connotations, denotations, and semantics of the problem statement suggests a four-pronged approach to information gathering. The first of these four prongs is an overview of literature dealing with creativity - its process, products, person, and press. The second prong deals with the creative individual, sources of creativity, characteristics, and behaviors. The third prong touches upon the notion of culture - an entire discipline in itself - its basic definitions and relevant codification methodologies, appropriately delimited by the scope of this study. Finally, the fourth prong examines literature relevant to the creativity and culture nexus.

Into the sun: Definitions of creativity

Creativity manifests itself around us in the form of everyday concepts, ideas, and products, touching our lives in obvious and subtle ways alike. Although it has been the subject of speculation for centuries, and humans have engaged in the creative act since recorded history, strangely enough, the semantic metamorphosis of the term “creativity” from its Latin root “fruitfulness” to the contemporary “originator of artifacts” did not appear in the literature until almost the end of the nineteenth century (Weiner, 2000). Often viewed as unfathomable and unyielding to serious empirical study, creativity research has only recently acquired the legitimacy of other “hard sciences,” particularly due to the cross-
disciplinary involvement of such diverse fields as psychology, genetic engineering, and anthropology (Dacey & Lennon, 1998). Their involvement has added interesting insight, and yet, as a phenomenon, creativity lacks a unified theory. Sternberg and Lubart (1999) have pointed out that some of the roadblocks to the development of a unified theory of creativity include: (a) A preoccupation with the mystical – and a resultant reluctance to inquire into, verify, or validate the act of creativity; (b) the untested one-size-fits-all pragmatic approach – which focuses on the development of creativity, rather than on identification or verification; (c) the lack of theoretical and empirical underpinnings, resulting in creativity being viewed as a peripheral appendage to the central concerns of psychology; and (d) parochial research techniques that reify, generalize, or otherwise misrepresent the concept of creativity.

Yet, despite these obstacles, and understandably influenced by the prevalent ontological discourse of the era, creativity research has covered the gamut from definitions of creativity to the social implications of creativity. Rhodes (1961) analyzed the body of research on creativity, noting that although each theory addresses different facets of creativity, that essentially “… they overlap and intertwine. When analyzed, as through a prism, the content of the definitions form four strands. Each strand has a unique identity academically, but only in unity do the four strands operate functionally” (p. 307). He labeled these four strands as: Person, process, product, and press, further suggesting that their presence may operate as identifiers of the larger concept of creativity. This classification scheme has garnered much interest and seen extensive use in creativity literature. Therefore, this section examines relevant literature on (1) person – personality, traits, and sources of inspiration, (2) process – stages, evaluation, flow, and blocked creativity, (3) product – artifacts, stereotypes, and variances, and (4) press – the environmental or systems

perspectives, attribution, and social sanctions. What follows is a brief overview of these four interlinked strands, each of which is relevant in its own way to Arthur’s life and work.

**Person**

The final years of the Middle Ages and the onset of the Renaissance started the gradual swing of the pendulum away from divine interventionism, toward individualism as the causal agent of creativity, with an almost universal acceptance of this view during the Enlightenment, a period of marked intellectual distancing from the restrictive theology of the church (Albert & Runco, 1999). The contemporary shift of creativity research from an external perspective to an individualistic, process oriented one, may be attributed to the work of Piaget, who “ironically opened the door for a dynamic, process oriented explanation of development that begins to capture the fluid, changing, transformational tendencies of the human mind” (Feldman, 1988, p. 293).

**Sources of Creativity**

Researchers often view creativity as the achievement of an individual metaphorically standing on the shoulders of others (Taylor, 1988; Weisberg, 1988). Accounts detailing the sources of Shakespeare’s plays, Watson and Crick’s development of the DNA double helix model, Darwin’s theory of evolution, or even George Harrison’s composition of “My Sweet Lord,” suggest that the creative individual, whether he re-combined or elaborated upon a pre-existing concept or cultural database, received the spark for that particular formulation from “somewhere.” Perhaps the creative individual had been primed and was now ready to assemble random scraps of knowledge from pre-existing conditions into a novel artifact, without conscious thought (Feldman, 1988). Conjecture about the sources of creativity generally fall into two categories: (a) The supraliminal, and (b) the cognitive, each of which has played a distinct part in Arthur’s work.
The Muse’s touch: Supraliminal sources of creativity.

Historically linked to the magical, mystical, demonic, or divine, the search for an answer to the sources of creativity has tantalized the best minds of each generation. While each culture has an array of myths to explain the creation of the universe, the earliest archetype of the creative individual is the Divine Being. Recorded accounts, circa 500 BC, of Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle, have suggested that agents of the Divine Being, such as a muse or apparition, inhabit a person’s body, thus producing works of great value and aesthetic significance. By way of explaining the impressive creations of poets, the dialogue of Plato asserted that a poet was unable to compose until he had become inspired because he had lost all reason and did not create by art, but by power divine (Hamilton & Cairns, 1961). Further, Plato contended that as conduits or interpreters of the gods, each artist was possessed by, and bonded to a specific divinity. This belief in divine intervention was so pervasive that priests inaugurated artistic presentations such as the Greek drama festivals of City Dionysia, with an incantation to the gods, thanking them for their artistic gifts that appeared on stage through their human conduits (Brockett, 1987). Although marginalized by Western theorists, the concept of divine inspiration or mysticism as causal agent of creativity remains intact in some sub-cultures of the United States (Frank, 2000) as well as in other parts of the world, as recorded in Turner’s (1993) description of the Moroccan Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohai, who is considered the originator of The Zohar, a Kabalistic text of Jewish mysticism.

Closer to home, Jung attributed the source of creativity to the collective unconscious – a metaphoric underground water table – that permeates all human consciousness, enabling each person unrestricted access to the accumulated knowledge, experience, and wisdom of the human race (Hopcke, 1989). According to him, the creative individual was creative
precisely due to his ability to tap into the collective wisdom of this unconscious. This predominantly Western psychological perspective, of human beings as either repositories or potential retrievers of stored knowledge, parallels the concept of the wisdom-keepers of the Native People of North America. Arden and Wall (1990), in their collection of interviews with spiritual elders of various nations, elucidated this idea of wisdom-keepers who devolve their cumulative knowledge in the form of oral renditions to a select group of disciples, thus ensuring a continuity of experience and wisdom. Although supraliminal intervention as a source of creativity has met with cynicism, and in some cases outright rejection, it is a firmly anchored in Arthur’s beliefs and often articulated in his discourses, his commitment to theology, and the nature of his anthro-po-creativity, which depends on human beings coming together in “one spirit,” to actualize the performance.

Sparks from within: Cognitive creativity.

Guilford’s research in this area suggested that creativity is exclusively a function of an individual’s cognitive processes and abilities. Reminiscent of Descartes rationalist views espoused by the dictum – cogito ergo sum, or “I think therefore I am” – Guilford afforded primacy to human cognition as the basis of all creativity. Guilford’s (1956) groundbreaking Structure of the Intellect model illustrated over one hundred distinct cognitive processes, many of which, in his opinion, constituted the creative process. According to him, a prerequisite for creativity was the ability to see gaps in the scenario (locate the problem), which he considered an evaluative operation. He described divergent thinking skills - including fluency, elaboration, flexibility, and originality, as critical components of the creative process. Guilford (1956) also stated that flexible thinking may be the same as nonperseverance in futile methods; that originality might be related to the desire and willingness to be different; and that tolerance for ambiguity and fluency may be associated with
impulsiveness, a desire for adventure, and self-confidence – all of which are personality and/or motivational traits.

Another landmark development in the cognitive-based realm of creativity research is Sternberg’s (1985a) work based on his triarchic theory of intelligence. Sternberg isolated and emphasized the need for those metacognitive processes that were critical in creative thinking, particularly (a) recognizing the nature of the problem, (b) developing internal representations of the problem, (c) evaluating possible solutions, (d) organizing cognitive resources, (e) combining thinking strategies, (f) self-evaluating progress, and (g) adapting strategies in the face of imminent failure.

Cumulatively, Guilford and Sternberg’s lists of cognitive traits – measured by psychometric means – provide one possible avenue with which to evaluate Arthur’s anthropo-creativity. However, Gardner (1998) has argued that although creativity tests have shown themselves as robust measures across repeated trials, they have been unable to serve as accurate or valid predictors of an individual’s creativity in later life. Millar (2002) has vehemently disagreed with this contention, based on his longitudinal case studies of 18 individuals – the Torrance Kids – identified by the TTCT, administered some 40 years ago. These case studies examine the lives and practices of these individuals, all of whom appear to have lived up to some promise of their creative potential – they had an average score of 5.5 out of 10 on creative achievement. Although debate rages about the tested outcome of creative functioning and the predictive validity of the degree of creativity, there appears to be a tacit consensus about the existence of cognitive traits, without any comprehensive accord as to the nature of creativity that these traits will manifest, if at all. Said another way, the field admits the existence of petals, and leaves, form and color, fragrance, pistils, and stamens, but when these traits are combined, is as yet unable to predict the nature of the bloom.
Characteristics of the Creative Individual

Perhaps due to the problems inherent in the measurement of internal processes, the field, particularly psychologists, returned to externally manifest characteristics and demonstrated behaviors as a key to the identification of the creative individual. In the late nineteenth century, while attempting to explain the creative process in poets, Freud (1938) categorically asserted that “we may lay it down that a happy person never phantasies, only an unsatisfied one” (p. 144), thus confirming the popular view of a creative person as being disturbed, unfulfilled, or anti-social. Current research indicates that laypersons and scholars concur that creative individuals are somehow different from the average citizen because “they often behave in ways lying outside the usual or expected in their society, and thus represent “failures” of the socialization process” (Cropley, 1999, p. 238). This view is borne out by Torrance (1963), who found that due to their uniqueness, highly creative individuals were not only shunned by teachers or peers, but that sanctions were often invoked against them.

Ironically, while society has responded to the creative individual's idiosyncrasies with tacit ambivalence, or in some cases, outright ostracism, the creative individual’s startling insights and prodigious output have served to further society’s interests and add to their creature comforts. This paradox has not escaped the attention of theorists and researchers, and as expected, the matrix of personality traits that characterize a creative individual has been the subject of intense scrutiny. After extensive observations and research in the field, Torrance (1962) offered an exhaustive list of traits that describes the creative individual (see Appendix D). According to him, an alphabetical listing of the traits of a creative individual begins with “acceptance of disorder,” includes “awareness of others,” “defiance of
At first glance, the inclusion of apparently contradictory characteristics in this list is puzzling – for example, “given to flights of fantasy” compared to “goal-oriented,” or “observant” versus “preoccupied” – however creative individuals, due to their flexibility and ambivalence, are capable of Janusian thinking – evoking two or more antithetical concepts simultaneously (Rothenberg, 1971). While many of these traits and behaviors may appear contradictory, they are merely two sides of the same coin that coexist quite willingly, particularly when viewed in the context of the creative person’s variety of experience. In addition, due to its inclusive and comprehensive nature, Torrance’s description continues to be the authoritative checklist for defining a creative person.

Further, an interesting parallel to Torrance’s list is Scott and Scott’s (1989) list of personality traits exhibited by immigrants who had voluntarily migrated to Australia and were reasonably well settled in their new homeland. Based on their study, Scott and Scott found that immigrants were generally effective communicators, able to quickly establish interpersonal relationships, had a strong sense of internal control, were flexible, able to deal with psychological stress, possessed high self-esteem, were optimistic, ambitious, and sensation-seekers. Since Arthur is a migrant and a potentially creative individual, the remarkable congruence between Scott and Scott’s list and Torrance’s list of creative behaviors, not only suggests a similarity between the migrant psyche and that of the creative individual, but also provides an additional means of comparing the migrant personality to that of a creative individual.

Finally, Arthur’s apparently restless migration from one country to the next resembles Kubie’s (1958) conception of the individual engaged in the creative process, giving
free rein to the imagination, following its ramblings, recognizing the significant detours and latching onto them as objects of significance. According to Kubie:

Creativity is the capacity to find new and unexpected connections, to voyage freely over the seas, to happen on America as we seek new routes to India, to find new relationships in time and space, and thus, new meanings (p. 141).

Process

One of the earliest theorists of the creative process, Wallas (1926) viewed creativity as a four-stage process: (a) Preparation - the awareness or recognition of a problem; (b) incubation, or the conscious relegation of the problem to the subconscious level – entrusting the psyche to develop a solution; (c) illumination - the ah ha! moment - a recognition of the workable solution; and (d) verification, or the testing of this solution to determine its applicability and efficacy. In an interesting corollary to Wallas, Cole (1969) found that regardless of the product, creative people engage in a remarkably similar creative process.

Another proponent of the creativity as process idea is Osborn (1992), who capitalized on the concept of superior cognitive faculties of the creative individual, suggesting that due to their freedom of thought process, creative individuals developed a large number of alternative solutions to a single problem. According to Osborn, this process of “brainstorming” was the basis of their creativity. He was convinced that this ability to brainstorm resided in everyone, and if early judgments on alternative solutions could be suspended, then creative potential could be unleashed.

After painstakingly analyzing the data collected from interviews with 91 creative individuals who recorded periods of being completely and utterly engrossed in their various pursuits, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) proposed the idea of a creative process he termed “flow,” a concept that has gained worldwide attention and a global following. He suggested that
individuals in flow exhibited a specific set of identifiable behaviors such as ignoring
distractions or physical desires (sleep, fatigue, hunger); a loss of temporal awareness; a
crystalline awareness of their goal; a firm belief that the challenge was attainable; and
demanding and receiving immediate feedback on progress. Csikszentmihalyi asserted that
creative individuals often find themselves in a state of flow, and any individual who exhibited
these behaviors must be in flow, ergo, he or she must be engaged in the creative process.
Further, he has maintained that the state of flow is the closest thing to true happiness.

The body of creativity research developed by Torrance (1966; 1988) suggested that
creativity was a process that involved the interaction of four main factors: fluency, or the
ability to generate a large quantity of ideas; flexibility, which is an openness to new ideas as
well as the ability to view problems from unusual perspectives; elaboration, the ability to
transform an initial idea into a detailed and sustainable concept; and originality, or the ability
to produce uncommon and novel ideas. Like Osborn, Torrance was convinced that
creativity was accessible to anyone and that identification and nurture could develop this
creative potential. Accordingly, he developed the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking
(TTCT), a set of instruments that empirically measure creative potential by evaluating the
individual’s responses to open-ended verbal or figural stimuli according to the four major
(fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration) and 15 ancillary factors, including richness of
imagery, humor, abstractness of titles, and resistance to closure.

Nekka's (1986) “triad” model of creativity offered explanations for incomplete or
blocked creative endeavors by suggesting that creativity was only possible when the
individual possessed (a) special content knowledge, (b) special facilitating abilities (to see new
avenues or create alternatives), and (c) motivation. According to him, blocked or partially
realized creativity was due to the lack of one of these three elements. Therefore, “juvenile
creativity” was the result of limited content knowledge; “frustrated creativity” resulted from a lack of special facilitating abilities, whereas lack of motivation resulted in “abandoned creativity.” On a similar note, Woody II (1999) suggested that outstanding musicianship requires a combination of technical skill, creativity, and practice (motivation). The similarity between these three essentials of musicianship and Necka’s “triad” suggests that the absence of one of the above-mentioned factors may result in insipid, perfunctory, or poor musicianship.

Product

The most enduring proposition of the product oriented view of creativity is attributed to Rogers (1959), who visualized the creative process as the emergence of a novel, relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual on the one hand, and the materials, events, people, or circumstances of his life on the other. Building upon this concept, Stein (1974) argued the intriguing notion of attributional creativity, suggesting that creativity, per se, is an attribute residing in the artifact which is only deemed creative if it is “accepted as tenable or useful or satisfying by a group at some point in time” (p. 218). Since then, other theorists have added their approval to this product-oriented definition, generally suggesting that creativity is the creation of a novel, appropriate, and socially acceptable product (Stein 1974; Rogers, 1959; Sternberg and Lubart, 1995; Levesque, 2000).

Maslow (1999) challenged this limiting and stereotypical notion of product, suggesting that an individual could also be considered a creative product. He viewed the creative individual as a healthy, highly evolved human engaged in the ongoing process of self-actualization. Echoing Rogers’ belief that the human being is compelled to pursue a course that leads to a fulfillment of innate tendencies (Rogers, 1954), Maslow found that rather than accomplish acts of earth-shaking magnitude, most of his subjects indulged in
activities that fulfill their inner proclivities, thus resulting in products that, while not
typically considered creative, were nonetheless an extension of a creative life (Maslow,
Nicholls, 1972; Richards, 1997; and Cropley, 1997). Accordingly, he employed the
term “creative” to describe people in “a characterological way, and to [their] activities,
processes, and attitudes” (Maslow, 1999, p. 153).

For Maslow, this extended application of the term “creative” to the individual itself,
resulted in the need to distinguish “special talent creativeness” from self-actualizing (SA)
creativity – the former being an outgrowth of a specific skill, whereas the latter was a
tendency to do anything creatively. Further, he felt that creative individuals “see the fresh,
the raw, the concrete, the ideographic, as well as the generic, the abstract, the rubricized, the
categorized, and the classified. Consequently they live far more in the real world of nature
than in the verbalized world of concepts, abstractions, expectations, beliefs, and stereotypes
that most people confuse with the real world” (p. 153). Thus, Maslow’s arguments sought to
introduce the anthropocentric perspective to the debate on what constitutes a creative
product.

Anthropocreativity

All creative products, whether material artifacts or intangible theories, are fashioned
out of some manner of raw material available to the creative individual. The potter works
with clay, the painter with paints, the musician with an instrument, and a theoretician, with
ideas. But what of those creative individuals whose products depend on the use of human
beings as raw materials? What of their predicament at having to work with far from
inanimate and rarely docile raw materials that seldom bend to the creator’s will? Surely we
cannot ignore the raw materials of Gandhi’s galvanic social movement, or the legendary
theatre director Stanislavski’s critically acclaimed performances, or the grace and ephemeral
quality of Balanchine’s choreography? Therefore, just as Maslow’s argument legitimized the inclusion of individuals as creative product, I argue here for the inclusion of human beings as viable raw materials for creative endeavors; an argument founded upon my formulation of an atypical strain of creative functioning – anthropo-creativity – which, as I have specified earlier, is an atypical creative process that depends upon human agency and/or human materials for the realization of a creative product.

Now, the stereotypical notion of creative products as material or theoretical artifacts, confines acts of creativity to the use of either inanimate materials or theoretical concepts, respectively. These products, whether tangible (like a Roto-rooter, for instance), or intangible (the theory of relativity), also have an inscribed or static quality to them – a kind of corporeal permanence. However, there is another kind of creative artifact created by human agency and/or interaction; one that exists only for the duration of its viewing. Further, when human interaction/involvement ceases, the created entity – the performance – apparently disappears without a trace. To quote Prospero:

These our actors, As I foretold you, were all spirits, and are melted into air, into thin air; And, like the baseless fabric of this vision, the cloud-capp’d towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples, the great globe itself; yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve. And, like this insubstantial pageant faded, leave not a rack behind…

(Shakespeare, The Tempest, 4, 1)

Not entirely true however, because although the spirits may disappear, the performance does leave a few racks behind – in the acknowledgement of a shared experience, and more pertinently, in the form of those deep-seated ideations that shape and transform the collective consciousness of the assemblage.
The reductionist tendency is to consolidate creative performance products under the broad heading of “intangibles,” a practice that unfortunately obfuscates the issue. Whereas the general theory of relativity is an intangible product, it is inscribed in textual form and as such, its form may be cognitively recreated and applied by reading or manipulating the text. In fact, legend has it that Einstein actually refined his theory of relativity through a series of purely theoretical mental manipulations which he called mind-experiments (Morris, 1993). On the other hand, a performance product, though inscribed in text – the play script, or the symphony score, or Labanotation – cannot be materially recreated in the individual mind. The text is definitely NOT the performance, and further, any capture of the performance (on film or video) is at best a pale simulacrum of the real thing. No surprise then that due to the change of dimension, forms, and format, a recorded version of a stage production serves little more than archival or emotional needs. Therefore, although the performance an audience witnesses on stage is an enterprise that co-opts facilities from the material world – performance space, scenery, and costumes – it exists as a purely temporal congregation of nuanced expression, communication, and interplay between human beings.

By extension, creative artists – such as theatre directors, choreographers, pastors, and conductors, to name a few – who primarily use humans as the medium with which to articulate their creative vision, depend entirely on human skills, qualities, form, and interaction, to create their work. Thus, the creative vision of the theatre director – traditionally regarded as the creator of the production because of her ability to breathe “life” into the static script – can only be realized through the agency of the actors who people this insubstantial pageant, which at closing curtain, leaves not a rack behind.

As mentioned earlier, anthropo-creativity is not the sole purview of the theatre; it is apparent in any performance genre that involves human beings as mediums creating a
transitional performance artifact. Thus intricately woven into the fabric of the creative process and almost indistinguishable from the product, are the actors who recreate a role, dancers who embody the movement, and musicians who create the melody. On the subject of musicians, Sawyer (1998) has argued that whereas other creative processes result in a post hoc product, the performer’s creative processes are often juxtaposed and intertwined within the performance (product), resulting in a simultaneity of process and product. Further, since the performer is also the product – the music is created by the intricate movements of the pianist’s fingers – and the creator and created are for the moment one and the same, the creative product lasts only as long as the performance. Therefore, Sawyer suggested, transitional artifacts or performance traditions of a culture are equally viable indicators of an individual’s – and by extension, the culture’s – creativity.

Press Harrington (1990) focused on the social creativity of the individual, which he thought of as acts that were novel and had a substantial impact on people far removed from those who initiated them. Further, Harrington, in articulating the “distributed” nature of social creativity, asserted that “creativity does not reside in any single cognitive or personality process, does not occur at any single point in time, does not happen at any particular place, and is not the product of a single individual” (p. 149). This reluctance to acknowledge the individual as responsible for the creative act is faintly reminiscent of the supraliminal school of creative production, signaling a shift from egocentric to socio-centric thinking, as articulated by Csayni’s (1999) view that “only systems can be creative; a new idea, artifact, structure, organism, or molecule can emerge only as a component of a higher system” (p. 289).
Further along this line of thinking, the “systems view” of creativity stressed the importance of societal structures as shaping influences of creativity. Csikszentmihalyi (1999) summed up the role of society as the promoter and acceptor of creativity, observing that “Creativity should be viewed as part of a complex dynamic system of feedback in which novel ideas and acts may result in creativity only in the context of an interaction with a symbolic system inherited from previous generations, and with a social system qualified to evaluate and accept novelty” (p. 180).

Mockros and Csikszentmihalyi (1999) adopted a similar stance, contending that the appellation “creative” was a social construct, and that any artifact created by the individual, as well as the reputation of the creative individual is as much, if not more, a function of society as it is of the individual. They felt that before any novelty is considered creative, appropriately qualified judges must assess the ideas and products as likely to produce a lasting impact on the domain. In this way, accomplishments became recognized, valuable, and innovative after they had received social recognition either from the individual’s specialized coterie, or from society.

Extrapolating this assertion, the “creative” individual is created by society’s recognition of an artifact as creative. Thus, it is not divine power or the individual’s effort, but rather societal consensus that originates the “creative” artifact and the “creative” persona. Further, factors such as chance, social acceptance, and environmental dynamics either extol creative individuals, or relegate them to obscurity (Simonton, 1988; Perkins, 1984).

In stark opposition to this belief is Runco’s (1999) intriguing notion that the very act of creating is itself validation of the existence of creativity. Citing the now legendary case of Einstein formulating his theory of relativity in the relative obscurity of his position as a
patent office clerk, Runco argued that whether or not the Academy of Sciences had recognized Einstein’s achievement, Einstein had already developed his theory and therefore creativity was ipso facto present. Therefore, Runco argued, social recognition was necessarily post hoc to the process of creation.

Bottling a Cloud: Definitions of culture

The largely semiotic view of culture espoused by anthropologists is contained in Goodenough’s (1973) observation, that culture is “… whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members” (p. 19). However, the sociological take on culture includes an aggregate of the culture’s activities, behaviors, customs, events, and structures that engage, influence, and inform an individual’s life (Matsumoto, 2000). The complexities of this task are evident, and for ease of handling, the more than 79 different aspects of culture defined by social theorist have been consolidated into a set of eight categories, which include (a) general characteristics, (b) food and clothing, (c) housing and technology, (d) economy and transportation, (e) individual and group activities, (f) community and government, (g) welfare and religion, and (h) sex and the life cycle (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, and Dasen, 1992).

Since these categories encompass every aspect of a person’s life, and since they are a creation of the individual or the dynamics between individuals, the concept of “culture” and “individual” are essentially interrelated. Geertz (1973) argued this point, stating, “culture is the source, rather than the result, of human thought and behavior. Culture is a set of control mechanisms - plans, recipes, rules, and instructions for the governing of behavior” (p. 44). Since social issues clearly affect, and are in turn influenced by, the psychology of the individual, some researchers take the position that a clear differentiation between the psychological, or intrapsychic sphere, and the social and cultural sphere is simply not
possible, given the social construction of self (Montouri & Purser, 1999). Therefore, the individual’s functioning in a particular culture serves not only to define the culture, but also to synonymously define his or her self.

Appropriately then, Goodenough (1973), by noting “culture is in the hearts and minds of men” (p. 21), effectively placed the locus of culture within the collective consciousness of a bounded group of individuals who inhabit a certain finite space. The mutually negotiated decisions of this group define a culture and consequently, for the individual, the primary point of contact with (or departure from) the culture is a cognitive resonance with, or alienation from, the will of the larger group. That resonance, that nebulous entity, implicitly acknowledged by almost all cognizant human beings as membership to a culture, is further manifest in its practices, customs, and articulated beliefs, each instance of which serves to codify the individual culture. To illustrate the point, if the Japanese tea ceremony is a constituent of Japanese culture, then a person who believes in the validity of this ceremony, is actively engaged in the ceremony, and promotes the ceremony as a representation of the culture, naturally embodies that culture and therefore by extension, is the culture. Similarly, the individual consuming peanuts and singing “Take me out to the ballgame!” at a baseball game is as much a representation of American culture as the event itself. However, just as no single individual constitutes a culture, no culture is constituted without the individual. Thus, by creating, engaging in, and responding to activities that constitute a culture, the individual is simultaneously the soldier, and the army; the bird, and the flock; one, and many.

Expanding this concept of synchronous identities to groups and larger collectives of groups, most regional and national cultural identities may be said to consist of the cultural practices of the constituent sub-cultures. Thus the Yuppies of Buckhead, with their penchant
for imported automobiles, wine bars, and ski vacations, are undeniably a part of American culture and conversely, some part of American culture is constituted by the Yuppies. However, while each sub-culture contributes in some way to the national identity, it also retains practices that are unique to that sub-culture. I will return to this thought in a later chapter dealing with Arthur’s experience with various sub-cultures.

On another tack, the use of the word “culture” in our syntax carries its own set of connotations depending on the context and references involved. Often used interchangeably with ethnicity, origin, and race, Berry, Poortinga, Segall, and Dasen (1992) identify the following six distinctive connotative forms for the word culture:

1. Descriptive (activities and behaviors): E.g., in northern India, farmers regularly cultivate and consume large quantities of mustard and kale.

2. Historical (heritage and traditions): E.g. in Tibet, when a person departs on an extended journey, the family leaves a partially filled cup of tea at the door, awaiting the traveler’s safe return.


4. Psychological (descriptions emphasizing learning, problem solving, and other behavioral approaches): E.g., The feared tsunami was used as a model for the waves of attack formations at Pearl Harbor.

5. Structural (societal or organizational elements) E.g., A patriarchal government has ruled Indonesia for several decades.

6. Genetic (biophysical origins of a culture) E.g., The genetic structure of the lipid suppressor genes in the Hopi is different from that of the Malays.

Since the focus of this research is to explore the relationship between Arthur’s anthropo-creativity and the cultural practices he has encountered, the connotations of the word
“culture,” throughout this paper, will primarily be descriptive, normative, structural, or psychological in nature.

Another elegant approach to cultural research is that of taking a bi-lateral view of culture: consisting of objective (explicit) and subjective (implicit) elements (Triandis, 1994; Kroeber and Kluckholn, 1952). Legitimate measures of an individual’s functioning within any culture are a combination of tangible (architecture, foods, clothing, art, and others) and intangible elements (ideas, processes, thoughts, and beliefs). Adapting this bi-lateral approach to evaluate the effects of cultural practices on an individual’s creativity within a particular culture suggests an examination of both, Arthur’s tangible output (products and artifacts) and his intangible ideations (creative processes and motivations) within any given culture.

Although Triandis’, Kroeber’s, Kluckholn’s, and Matsumoto’s dimensions offer a starting point for an interpretation of the practices within a given culture, the main drawback of any cultural study is the researcher’s implicit positionality – the inescapable cultural “position” or standard which serves as the referent against which another culture or sociological system is evaluated. For instance, Violet from Trinidad may view the granting of political favors by ruling members of the government to non-government family members as nepotism or corruption, whereas Anila, from India, sees it as another innocuous example of the familial “you-scratch-my-back-and-I’ll-scratch-yours” ethos. Ironically then, researchers who view a “foreign” cultural practice and seek to interpret it in the context of their epistemology, often fail to recognize that the lens through which they view the practice is itself warped and tinted by their native cultural practices. Bailin (1997) noted this positional valuing in Simonton’s (1997a) characterization of specific political circumstances
as being either helpful or harmful to creative endeavors. Commenting on Simonton's theory of creative output based on a specific political pathology, she observed that:

The problem is not in putting forth as desirable some particular political ideal. It is, rather, in making a value judgment regarding political ideals, which is hidden in the guise of a strictly empirical claim. A judgment regarding pathology, in this context at least, can never be purely empirical. (p. 382).

Representing any individual, political system, or culture as more or less repressive, more or less conformist, is a value judgment, a relativistic enterprise requiring a standard against which that particular culture is measured.

Raina (1999) cautioned against the inimical ethnocentrism of most cross-cultural creativity research, pointing out variations in the philosophical underpinnings of all creative research. He has contended that Western thought is based on a predominantly Judeo-Greek model of an abrupt creation of the universe by an uncreated entity who brings order out of chaos, whereas Indian thought is based on the attainment of Ananda (bliss) or Jivanmukti (release), and Oriental concepts are informed by a recurring theme of a constantly unfolding universe. Lubart (1990) and Ludwig (1992) built upon this idea, suggesting that as a result of this philosophical variation, creativity is conceptualized in various forms throughout the world and that what is considered creative in one culture might not be valued in the next; that the very concept of creativity may “look” different depending on the longitude one is straddling at the moment. By way of illustration, Brenneis (1990) offered specific examples of musical creations from different cultures to illustrate the diversity of conceptions of music-making, each composition considered noteworthy in its native culture, yet each one markedly different in scale, tone, rhythm, and notations.
Finally, if culture is indeed a human construct—a set of behaviors and interactions introduced, sanctioned and policed by humans—then evidently, any attempt to study culture in its manifest form is at best, a study of the practices of the individuals that constitute that culture; practices that by commission and omission, exemplify the values, expectation, and boundaries of the culture. For the purposes of this study then, Arthur’s experiences are viewed in light of, and informed by, the specific cultural practices of the individuals or groups that he has encountered.

Sunshine with Clouds: The creativity/culture nexus

Linguists and sociologists may disagree about the interchangeability of the terms “culture” and “environment,” but there is little dispute that both cultural practices and environment have an unequivocal effect on an individual’s creativity. Getzels (1975) has pointed out that:

Clearly, there are patterns of values that distinguish one people from another, or the same people from one era to another. What are the pervasive philosophies of life in different cultures at different periods that influence the magnitude and character of the creative work that will be undertaken? What kinds of values contribute to what kinds of creativity in what types of individuals in what places during what historic periods? If the fullest possible answer to questions of this order is to be found, the study of creativity will have to become more cross-cultural (less time-bound and less place-bound) than it has. (p. 7).

In Western societies, until recently, the term “culture” was synonymous with the creative output of its citizens, namely its arts, sciences, literature, and music. Karl Marx extended that to include the economy, reputedly observing that the creative expression of an era reflects the current economic conditions of the culture (Weiner, 2000). The aptness of
his observation is borne out by the apparent profusion of creative achievement during the
golden ages of great empires usually followed by a comparable lack of creative output during
bleak economic periods (Csikszentmihalyi, 1989).

From an intellectual and reflexive standpoint, the creative theories of icons such as
Copernicus, Darwin, and Freud, not only arose out of their prevalent cultures but also
shaped those cultures by dispelling inherently anthropocentric notions. In establishing
theories that have become cultural benchmarks, these three icons have in turn, shaped the
creative output of successive generations (Dervin, 1990), and Copernican, Darwinian, and
Freudian “memes” – ideas or units of cultural imitation – are now part of the average
person’s psyche (Richards, 1997). Accordingly, notions of creativity as a genetic legacy or as
an individual triumph are being supplanted by the view that family, mentors, associates,
encounters with cultural practices, institutions, and memes are the co-conspirators in the act.

In this context, Robertson (1937) claimed, “genius is conditioned economically,
morally, and socially” (p. 654), effectively transplanting the roots of creativity from their
hitherto individualistic domain to the broader context of environment and cultural practices.
Kroeber’s (1944) work supported this concept by showing that eminent creators cluster in a
pattern not easily explained by purely psychological principles, suggesting that a force larger
than the individual was in operation. Further, Gray (1966) proposed an “epicyclical model,”
in which the cyclical fortunes and woes of major sociological systems such as politics,
society, culture, and economy were mapped onto a single grid, followed by a
superimposition of the appearance of genius thought patterns. He showed that genius
tended to cluster in those times and places where the sociological systems peaked, suggesting
a significant relationship between cultural upswings and the appearance of genius (creativity).
Barron (1963) did not quibble about whether society affects the creative individual, focusing instead on how its effects might play out in the creative individual’s life. Using the blueprint of ecological studies as a template, he suggested that if one considers creativity as the product of one’s consciousness, then “the ecology of consciousness must deal with the complete environment that Man experiences, and with the interrelationship between structure and processes in it that condition consciousness” (p. 96).

How does society condition a creative individual’s consciousness? On an apparent level, the central core of acceptable behaviors, expectations, and taboos of a society not only affect, but also shape the creative individual’s life experiences. Fromm (1959) suggested that every society had in place a set of “filters” through which not only behaviors, but also ideas must pass. Expanding on this concept, Cropley (1999) postulated the presence of four levels of socially recognized behaviors – acceptable, disapproved, objectionable, and fatal – suggesting that a creative individual’s output or behavior usually falls somewhere within this continuum, thus predicating his or her acceptance or rejection by society. Regardless of the value of their products, creative individuals – the Galileos, Copernicuses and Mapplethorpes of this world – who transgress the boundaries of acceptable behaviors into what society construes as fatal behaviors, usually face rejection, ostracism, or even death. Those creatives who remain within the acceptable to disapproval range – the Beatles, Brandos, and Colombuses among us – not only survive, but also enjoy celebrity status, precisely due to their measured and self-calibrated rebelliousness.

Evidently, societies and cultures that recognize and nurture the efforts of creative individuals and channel them in constructive directions reap the benefits of their talent, whereas societies that suppress or ignore the creative individual not only stunt the individual’s growth, but also adversely affect the society’s own well being. Perhaps society
represses certain types of creative output because it offends public sentiment or sensibility, or perhaps part of the blame for this suppression must be borne by creative individuals themselves who apparently make few efforts to endear themselves to society.

Finally, the profusion of theories surrounding the creativity and culture nexus can, at best, only illuminate certain aspects of these all-pervading, yet evasive constructs, and research in this area primarily depends on self-report and observations - the tools of qualitative inquiry. Accordingly, the following chapter looks at the theoretical framework and the methodology used in examining and explicating Arthur’s experience.
III.

METHODOLOGY

A Theoretical Framework

The raison d'être of this study assumes a decidedly interpretivist stance, one that promotes the idea of human experience as a web of significance that can be best understood if one searches for meaning, rather than definitions or laws (Geertz, 1973). Thus, instead of Weber's original two-pronged approach to Interpretivism - a co-mingling of verstehen (understanding) and erklären (explanation), I prefer Silverman's (1990) modification, which essentially suggests that Interpretivism rests on the emphatic denial that we can understand cultural phenomena in causal terms. At present, creativity research appears to oscillate between the nomothetic-positivist stance inspired by Guilford's structure of the intellect model, and the ideographic explorations of Simonton, Gruber, and Gardener. By admitting, a priori, the impossibility of understanding a cultural phenomenon in causal terms (a la Silverman), and by supplanting the search for causality with undistorted verstehen, I hope to sidestep the positivist temptation and focus on the phenomenon of a creative process possibly transformed by cultural factors.

Second, this study is intimately informed by Maslow's (1999) concept of a self-actualized individual as a justifiable "product" of creativity. Maslow challenged the prevailing assumptions of creative products as inanimate entities, suggesting that an individual could, and should, be considered a creative product. He viewed the creative individual as a healthy, highly evolved human engaged in the ongoing process of self-actualization. Maslow's concept of creative human as creative product signaled the subtle
shift of emphasis from intentio operantis (interpreted action) type of results-oriented creativity to the intentio operis (action in and of itself) type of self-evident creativity, automatically admitting the legions of creative people who had no tangible product, except their own lives, to offer as evidence of creativity (Crotty, 1998). Thus, metaphorically speaking, Maslow argued that a camera, whether it produced exceptional photographs or not, was itself a work of art.

Third, and perhaps the most pertinent of all, is the theatre theoretician Stanislavski’s (1936) concept of “circles of influence” which suggests that an individual’s reality is considerably influenced, and often determined by, his interactions with the individuals in, and influences exerted by, his immediate environment. Stanislavski visualized a three-layered influence consisting of the immediate family, which forms the innermost, and most potent, circle of influence; the collective of mentors, teachers, and associates that delineate an intermediary circle of influence; and finally the institutions and cultural factors surrounding the individual that form the third, or outermost circle of influence. Bronfenbrenner (1979) metaphorically represented this concept of a three-layered environment as a “set of nested structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls” (p. 3). Contrary to the deterministic view of individuals responding in mechanistic ways to the influences of the environment, Bronfenbrenner posited that the individual’s functioning within, and interactions with, his environment are based more on the individual’s perceptions of the social structures, rather than on an objective reality.

And finally, academic forays into the relatively unknown, particularly studies such as this, often call for a grounded theory approach that adheres to the Geertzian tradition of hovering close to the data ground and extracting “meaning” from the data rather than the positivist approach of “setting up of a hypothesis followed by its subsequent testing”
(Polanyi, 1969, p. 118). In preparation for extractions of significance, Dey (1999) has suggested that the researcher set aside theoretical ideas in order that substantive theory may emerge. While this tabula rasa approach appears doomed from the start, especially in the face of the a priori assumptions and frameworks mentioned above, I do however entertain the possibility of some emergent meaning that could eventually result in a substantive theory.

Research Design

Plucker and Renzulli (1999) have suggested that in order to ascertain creative functioning, “self-reports are the methodology of choice when researchers wish to collect information about an individual’s activities and accomplishments that may reflect creative potential and achievement” (p.42). Although Arthur’s self-reported matrix of culturally influenced creative experiences could have been teased out and made sense of in several ways, the depth and insight demanded by this particular research study and this particular set of research questions suggested a comprehensive, introspective, and intimate qualitative methodology. Enter the N=1 case study (or biographical methodology) which has a distinct place in the study of creativity and has found its niche, though not without some reservations, in the list of viable research methodologies in creativity (Gedo & Gedo, 1992; Gruber & Davis, 1988).

The Case Study

Relatively few individuals can lay claim to significant creative experiences in their own culture, and fewer still, to creative experiences in multiple cultures. Consequently, Arthur, whose creative experiences span three cultures, was, in my opinion, a relatively unique case that promised significant insight into the relationship between cultural practices and the creative mind. Abramson (1992) underscored the value of such atypical cases,
suggesting, “Since such data are rare, they can help elucidate the upper and lower boundaries of experience. Also, atypical cases are essential for understanding the range or variety of human experience, which is essential for understanding and appreciating the human condition” (p. 190). Although the study of such atypical cases offered a choice of methodological options, Yin’s (1994) definition of a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within it’s real life context” (p.13), offered the first of four compelling arguments for the selection of case study as a viable methodology.

The anticipated depth of study spanning Arthur’s creative experiences in three cultures offered the second compelling argument, echoed in Merriam’s (1988) definition of a case study as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit” (p.21). Third, the finitude of this study – its focus on a single individual, his unique set of experiences, studied within a specified time frame – suggested that an examination of Arthur’s lived experience is the examination of “a phenomenon of some sort, occurring in a bounded context” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 25), another case study imperative.

Fourth, Merriam (1998) has suggested that a case study is employed “to gain in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved; that the interest is … in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation” (p. 19). Accordingly, since the objective of this study was to gain insight into the experiences of a bounded phenomenon – in this context, Arthur, whose experiences undergird this study – I adopted the case study methodology for this research.

In addition to the reasons mentioned above, case study methodology offered other special characteristics that were relevant to this study. One of these was the ability of a case study to grapple with the intricacies inherent in an individual’s life experience. Olson (cited
in Hoaglin, Light, McPeek, Mosteller, & Stoto, 1982) has suggested that not only do
descriptive case studies illustrate the complexities of a situation, but they also have the
advantage of hindsight, which can be relevant, even in the present. Arthur frequently availed
himself of this device, fervently evaluating and re-evaluating his own actions and practices,
thus shedding new light on old experiences. Some of his hindsight offered more substantial
clues to his creative practices within a culture than perhaps those offered by his first person
singular, Johnny-on-the-spot accounts.

Another special characteristic, pointed out by Stake (1995), is the resonative capacity
of the case study, where readers bring their own experience and understanding to the data,
thus leading to new generalizations. This characteristic proved to be a significant
contributory factor in two ways: First, my personal experience in crossing cultural
boundaries has revealed many of the facts and fallacies of the discourses of the creative
individual on foreign shores, and although I cannot go so far as to say that I truly empathize
with Arthur’s experience, I have been sensitized to these issues and that alone helped to
illuminate some of Arthur’ experiences. Second, in order to enable the reader to engage
intimately with the text – to bring the “resonative capacity” to bear – I chose to foreground
Arthur’s data story, thus freeing his voice from the de-essentializing nature of impersonal
language, and from my theoretical spin and influence.

Addressing the challenges of delineating the cultural factors that influence an
individual’s creativity, Yin (1994) has suggested that apart from the case study’s ability to
efficiently answer the “how” and “why” questions – inherent in the statement of my
research problem – case study methodology is particularly suited to research where the
“variables are so embedded in the situation as to be impossible to identify ahead of time” (p.
9). The last, and perhaps most pertinent of all special characteristics of case study
methodology is its focus on process, both formative, and causal, rather than on derivative data or end products (Reichard and Cook, 1979). Paradoxically, although Arthur’s life experience itself, and the artifacts he has produced, may be viewed as creative products, this research sought to understand a) the context of his creations, and b) the process by which culture influenced his creativity, thus placing this research squarely within the purview of interpretive case study methodology.

In sum, case study methodology, which entailed the articulation of a detailed research question/s about a single bounded unit or case, the intentional or purposive selection of participant/s (Patton, 1990), collection of contextual data from the participant/s and/or other sources, a detailed analysis of the mined data, and finally a comprehensive representation of the interpretations and/or findings, proved to be the ideal medium for this particular study. In conjunction with the heuristic technique (Moustakas, 1990; Groner, Groner & Bischof, 1983) – particularly in the data collection and analysis stages – the case study best addressed the needs of this study.

Data collection

At the very outset of this study, I had to make a frank but painful admission to myself – that I did not embody the modernist perspective of “a kind of god who consciously knows what he is doing, who can clearly communicate meanings to another person, and who can derive the hidden but recoverable meanings …” (Scheurich, 1995, p. 241). In the absence of this god-like perspective, I had to rely on my senses, intuition, and knowledge base to guide me in articulating the substance of this work, which for the most part, depended on a faithful and valid record of Arthur’s experiences. I was acutely conscious of Lather’s (1991) caution that “sole reliance on the participants’ perception of their situation is misguided because, as neo Marxists point out, false consciousness and ideological
mystification may be present" (p. 64). How, then, was I to ensure the collection of adequate and reliable data from an individual about events that had taken place years ago, in a different time and space? Van Maanen (1982) has suggested that qualitative research “involves a refined combination of data gathering ploys. If anything, it appears that qualitative research is marked more by reliance upon multiple sources of data rather than by its commitment to any one source alone” (p. 15). Further, LeCompte and Preissle (1993) have counseled researchers that they can “… increase the level of confidence with which they present their explanations by triangulation with independent sources of information in the data collection phase” (p. 253). Accordingly, in order to create a valid tapestry that wove Arthur’s cultural experiences into the creativity that shaped his life experiences, and vice versa, I used three separate data collection methods – interviews, archival data, and a researcher log – to ensure adequate depth, effective data triangulation, and validity.

Interviews

The primary, and by far the most informative method of gathering data for this research, was the semi-structured, long interview (hereafter known as the SSLI) located midway on the continuum between the highly structured interview at one end, and the unstructured interview at the other. Essentially a “purposeful conversation” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992), the structured portion of the SSLI, in this context, involved the collection of accurate socio-demographic information, as well as a description of the cultural dimensions (Matsumoto, 2000) within which Arthur functioned/ functions. Further, operating on the assumption that individuals define the world in various ways, questions and issues that “allow the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging worldview of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic” (Merriam, 1988, p. 74) guided the unstructured section of the SSLI. Finally, the relatively concise data story was made possible by the SSLI’s
ability to “depart from the unstructured ethnographic interview insofar as it adopts a deliberately more efficient and less obtrusive format; it is a sharply focused, rapid, highly intensive interview process that seeks to diminish indeterminacy and redundancy” (McCraken, 1988, p. 7).

Responding to Kant’s (1950) dictum – “knowing what questions may reasonably be asked is already a great proof of sagacity and insight” (p. 97) – the SSLI was based upon an assortment of questions (Appendix A), which contributed to the production of a rich and dense record of the respondent’s experience. Strauss, et al. (1981) have identified four broad categories of questions for the qualitative interview: hypothetical, devil’s advocate, ideal situation, and interpretive. These four categories ask the respondent to speculate, affectively respond to, visualize, or offer insights on a particular issue. In addition, Patton (1990) has suggested six further varieties of questions – background/demographic, experience/behavior, opinion/values, feelings, knowledge, and sensory questions – each of which featured in my interview guide. Needless to say, the order of questions was largely determined by the flow of conversation rather than the fixed format I had prepared in advance, as well as the general instructions I gave the participant (Appendix B).

Following the completion of the consent form required by IRB (Appendix C), Arthur and I met on five separate occasions over a period of four weeks during the summer, and each SSLI was scheduled and conducted approximately 5 days apart. He arranged for us to meet in the choir room of his church – the only space that was relatively private and had a functioning air conditioning unit – and each interview lasted approximately 50 minutes. In preliminary conversations, I acquainted Arthur with the purpose of the study, shared the interview guide with him, and informed him that he could address the issues and questions in an order of his choosing. Since he elected to share his experiences in sequential order, the
first SSLI addressed demographic data, with the following three SSLI’s serving as the stage to recount his creative experiences in Britain, Jamaica, and the United States, respectively. Interestingly enough, during each of these three SSLI’s, not only did Arthur speak at length about the culture under discussion, but also occasionally he would compare and contrast it with his experience in another cultural setting. Fortunately for me, Arthur’s predisposition toward cross-referencing served two important purposes: (a) In those instances where he introduced new information, the new data added further depth and dimension to his copious data story, and (b) in cases where he reiterated an experience, the retelling in a new context not only illuminated the point under discussion, but served as an elegant mechanism for data triangulation – one of the foundations of validity. Put another way, if his subsequent retelling matched the original account, there was a high degree of probability that the specific event actually took place as recorded. The fifth and final SSLI served as a follow-up interview to consolidate data gleaned from the first four interviews.

Although I had visualized our meetings as conversations or reciprocal exchanges that, according to Lather (1986), have been found to “… create conditions which generate rich data” (p. 263), I found myself consciously resisting the urge to engage in conversation or reciprocate freely, preferring to let Arthur hold forth on the topic at hand to whatever length he wished. This decision was based on the informal pilot interviews I conducted with my wife, Sherilyn, and a few friends – based on the same subject matter and conducted prior to the actual SSLI’s with Arthur. These pilot interviews revealed that in the context of these issues, a conversational/ reciprocal exchange often hindered, rather than helped the flow of data; that in response to my observations, the subjects would often respond to my comments and divert their thoughts to accommodate my observations, thus straying from their original point. Arguably, my presence was a factor in shaping the data; however, while
acknowledging my complicity in the data generation process, I consciously wanted to minimize my influence while affording primacy to the respondent’s data. Accordingly, my SSLI’s with Arthur were not only an exercise in self-restraint but also a forum for Arthur to express his thoughts and views, amidst my encouraging nods, grunts, and smiles.

I videotaped all five interviews to not only obtain a data-rich record of density and permanence (Glesne, 1999), but also as a “means of remembering and studying detail that might be overlooked if a photographic image were not available for reflection” (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992, p. 143). Also, in order to address the power relations of the interview interaction, I prepared Arthur for each SSLI by providing him in advance with copies of the questions and/or topics we were to discuss during our forthcoming meeting. During each SSLI, I used the questions on my interview guide as springboards for exploration, thus allowing Arthur the freedom to guide the direction of each interview, and reducing the risk of imposing my own organization and subjectivities onto the interview. In addition, after all five interviews were complete and I had transcribed the data, I sent him a copy of the transcripts, followed by a brief meeting during which he modified and elaborated upon some of his previous remarks.

Artifacts

Commenting on the veracity of interview data, particularly the biographical narrative of the variety Arthur told during our interaction, Wengraf (2001) has noted that “by attempting to reconstruct the memory of the past, the life history becomes a ‘retrospective illusion’ determined equally by the past, the present, and the future. Thus the representation becomes the presentation of self-image serving to protect the identity of the subject in question, an ontology of self, a mythology” (p. 117). To circumvent this possible mythologizing of self, as well as to enhance the validity of the data, I solicited artifacts from
Arthur’s collection – documents, creative works, photographs, writings, journal entries – in which he has manifested, displayed, or recorded instances of creativity, notes on the creative process, moments of “Flow,” or sources of inspiration.

Unfortunately, video records of Arthur’s main creative experiences – his productions of Benjamin Britten’s *Let’s Make an Opera*, or *Noye’s Fludde* – were unavailable because video technology had not caught up with the time. In their stead, Arthur offered me a sampling of three other pieces that he had created. In chronological order of occurrence, Arthur (a) played from memory, what was to my ears, a mellifluous and lilting medley of Jamaican folk songs that he had developed and presented to various community gatherings, (b) provided me with a copy of a sermon he had developed, that, in his own words, was “... based on the ancient Hebrew way of telling stories from the Bible, called midrash – the plural is midrashim – in that the Rabbi would read the scripture and then he would usually retell the story in his own words,” and (c) offered me an audio copy of one episode of a weekly radio program for children that Arthur had created and broadcast on Jamaican national radio.

The Researcher’s Log

Finally, I maintained a researcher’s log with notes and observations that situated Arthur, his rituals and persona, and the interview interactions within the context of the milieu. Since I have had some personal experience with moving between cultures, I used this log as a data source that functioned primarily as a venue for conducting an *epoche* – a recorded introspection about my prejudices and preconceptions vis-à-vis cultural practices (Husserl, 1980) – that eventually found itself being worked into, and against, the interview content. As expected, the log contained notes about my impressions, predispositions, and personal biases, for how could I remove myself from this process? And perhaps, more significantly, why should I? Peshkin (1988) noted that while “subjectivity is not a badge of
honor ... paraded around for all to see” (p. 17), that it is important, pointing out that in his own research, he “… wanted to be aware of it in process, mindful of its enabling and disabling potential while the data were still coming in, not after the fact” (p. 18).

Further, I also recorded significant miscellanea - physical settings, descriptions of Arthur, my interpretations of his demeanor and the tone of our interaction, nonverbal communication (posture, attenuation, energy level, and physical space), emergent ideas and themes, personal reflections of creative transformations, and instances of the “unsaid,” or what should have been said but is avoided (Glesne, 1999; Patton, 1990; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). These notes were instrumental in structuring and buttressing the contents of the data story.

Data Analysis

As previously indicated, Arthur’s recollections were the main prospecting fields for this study. Gruber and Wallace (1999) substantiated this stance, stating that the creative individual’s report, and any motives the investigator ascribes to it - within logical parameters, of course – are valid, and that “Any facet [of the data story] which we may become aware of, owes its origin to something the creator said or did, and was therefore something of which the creator was most probably aware of as well” (p. 100). Arthur, in recounting his experiences, may very well have been conscious of his life’s trajectory, but where, within that mass of words that presumably inscribed his reality, was I to start this unraveling, this analysis, and finally this report on his consciousness?

Scheurich (1995) viewed data analysis as “a creative interaction between the conscious/ unconscious researcher and the decontextualized data that are assumed to represent reality, or at least, reality as interpreted by the interviewee” (p. 240). That was a good starting place – to play with the data, especially after the data transcription phase when
the triptych – the environmental and cultural practices that “created” Arthur; the personality that was Arthur; and the cultural practices that influenced Arthur’s anthropo-creativity – became apparent. All three of these addressed the statement of the problem, however, in order for a valid and coherent ratiocination, and to restrain the effervescent nature of analysis, I delineated the boundaries of the data story thus:

1. Conduct an examination of Arthur’s data story to explore and understand the influences of his growth environment and the cultural practices of his time.

2. Survey two situations (incidents) in Arthur’s life that demonstrate characteristics of the creative individual, as well as note the obscure or thus far unidentified characteristics that might be revealed in the data, and

3. Develop a summary of the impact of cultural practices on Arthur’s anthropo-creativity based on the following facts (from data) and reasoned assumptions:
   a. During the interviews, when asked to select and describe a creative product of his choosing, Arthur chose to describe his experience of directing a production in each culture.
   b. The director’s creative product – the show – is an admixture of his interpretation of the play, his facility with the cast, as well as the skills and responsiveness of the cast.
   c. The cast usually consists of local people who embody the cultural practices of their society.
   d. The culture of the area is NOT the culture of the country, or as Geertz (1973) puts it “To assume that Jonesville is the USA is a fallacy” (p. 21). Accordingly, rather than focus on national cultures – Jamaica, England, or the United States – focus on the sub-cultures and their creative practices.
e. There is a distinct cross-cultural similarity vis-à-vis some of the cultural practices exhibited by the sub-cultures.

f. Some of these practices are beneficial to the director and others are a hindrance.

g. Therefore, rather than compare sub-cultures, compare cultural practices that enable anthropo-creativity to those that hinder anthropo-creativity.

This framework offered a sturdy scaffold, but the textual representation of Arthur’s data story was not without its challenges either, for as St. Pierre (1997) noted, as qualitative researchers, “… we believe that we must translate whatever we think are data into language, code that language … sort those coded data bits into categories … and produce knowledge based on those categories, which in the end, are simply words” (p. 179). How then was I to proceed with any degree of assurance that my representation of Arthur’s experiences meshed with his reality? That my words would adequately capture the essence of his experience? My assumed role as interpretive bricoleur (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) was fraught with further challenges – the recursive nature of qualitative data, nagging questions about applicability (one cannot really predict the flow of discourse in a semi-structured interview), my ongoing readings and growing familiarity with various methods of qualitative data analysis, and as always, a concern for the faithful representation of Arthur’s creative experience. However, since one rarely sets out on a journey without some destination in mind, the analytic strategy that showed the most promise up to this point, and the one I eventually used, was the heuristic analytic technique, a conspicuous offshoot of the phenomenological school.

As formulated by Husserl (1980), phenomenology is the study of the structures of consciousness that enable consciousness to refer to objects outside of itself. This study requires reflection on the content of the mind to the exclusion of everything else, which
Husserl termed “phenomenological reduction” or epoche (p.69). Katz (1983) codified the epoche as a process that “the researcher engages in to remove, or at least become aware of, the prejudices, viewpoints, or assumptions regarding the phenomenon” (p. 37). Further, phenomenological reduction is only possible by suspending or bracketing the assumption of an independent existence of what is perceived and thought about (Schwandt, 1997). Therefore, as a general rule, phenomenological investigations treat an individual’s perception of an event or encounter - in this case, Arthur’s account of his creative experience in the various cultures - as the raw data that may be analyzed for meaning.

Contrary to the empirical approach of reducing any and all human interactions to integers, coefficients, and formulae, a phenomenological analysis scrutinizes the individual’s thoughts, perceptions, and experiences for event horizons and clusters of invariant constituents, thus constructing a textural-structural description of meanings. In short, a phenomenological analysis seeks to “reach the Lebenswelt of the informant, capturing the “essence” of an account - what is constant in a person’s life across its manifold variations” (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This is effected by first uncovering the perceptive strands of an event, understanding the event as encountered by the informant and co-researcher, and then (and only then) searching for clusters and themes that afford generalizations across experiences and/or events.

A subset of the phenomenological school of inquiry, heuristic inquiry - from the Greek word heuriskin, meaning to discover or to find - is a process of internal search through which one discovers the nature and meaning of experience and develops methods and procedures for further investigation and analysis. According to Moustakas (1990), “the heuristic process is a way of being informed, a way of knowing. Whatever presents itself in the consciousness of the investigator as perception, sense, intuition, or knowledge,
represents an invitation for further elucidation. What appears, what shows itself as itself, casts a light that enables one to come to know more fully what something is and means. In such a process, not only is knowledge extended but the self of the researcher is illuminated” (p. 10). Thus, as articulated by Moustakas, the process of heuristic data analysis involved the following steps:

1. After gathering the assorted data (interviews and artifacts) from Arthur, I immersed myself in the material with the intent of comprehensively apprehending his creative experience in each culture.

2. Following this, I allowed the data to lie fallow for a week, thus facilitating the awakening of fresh energy and perspective. Immediately after this forced down time, I reentered the material, taking notes and making a chart of the preliminary themes and qualities manifested in the data. This chart of themes and qualities was then woven into separate written depictions of Arthur’s three experiences (England, Jamaica, United States), retaining the language and examples from Arthur’s experience.

3. After this initial depiction of each experience, I returned to the original data to verify convergence of depiction and original data. Specifically, I tested the depiction for inclusion of the qualities and themes essential to the experience, and modified the depiction, as necessary.

4. I repeated this step for each one of Arthur’s three experiences (England, Jamaica, United States) testing each depiction against the original data and modifying each depiction as necessary.

5. I again immersed myself in these depictions, interspersed with intervals of rest - usually a couple of days - until the universal qualities and themes of Arthur’s
experiences were identified, contextualized, and internalized. At this point, I developed a composite depiction that embraced the three creative experiences, including exemplary narratives, descriptive accounts, illustrations, and verbatim excerpts that accentuated the flow, spirit, and life of the experience.

6. I again returned to the raw data and using the composite depiction, constructed an individual portrait of each one of Arthur’s experiences – which I labeled “English Encounter,” “The Jamaican Jonkanoo,” and “The American Adventure” – taking care not to lose the individual to the experience.

7. Finally, I fragmented the data portraits into meaningful sections, and reminiscent of the fractured and sporadic nature of the cultural discourses that influenced Arthur’s (and my own) life and work, reassembled the sections into the impressionistic triptych that represents Arthur’s experience.

One final concern guided the eventual shape of the representation, and that was the danger of drowning out segments of Arthur’s story amidst the tattoo of my interpretive dance. Was I to subjugate his story to the purposes of this study or allow his voice free rein? I was not comfortable with the former alternative, and Borland (1991) cautioned against the latter, noting that “To refrain from interpretation by letting the subjects speak for themselves seems to me an unsatisfactory, if not illusory solution” (p. 64). Ironically, rejecting these extremes provided the alternative I was looking for – a theoretical and spatial interplay between his words and my own. Accordingly, in order to afford Arthur primacy of voice, I deliberately chose to foreground his words and experiences, positioning my observations within the interstices of his story. Accordingly, what follows is Arthur’s data story, told in three parts, with his words occupying the primary space, interspersed by my (indented) observations, analyses, and theoretical machinations.
IV.

THE DATA STORY

Arthur: I was always doing things as the opportunities came up, as the necessity came up. And if it presents a challenge... like learning a new piece of music, then I will do it to the best of my ability. You see, I did whatever was needed at the time, and I think that's been the story of my life. Not doing anything for posterity but doing it for the here and now... because there's a need for it here and now...

Plucker & Renzulli (1999) have suggested that “self-reported attainments and activities can be interpreted as creative products” (p. 42). Each successive reading of the creative product that was Arthur's data story added another layer of understanding to the immediacy of purpose in his life, what Fromm (1959) referred to as an attitude for living in the now.

The Environment

The Black Country

Arthur: I think it was named the Black Country by Charles Dickens because when he was on a train journey from London to the Midlands, the industrial Midlands, and he saw all the soot and dirt and grime and blackened buildings, so he named it the Black Country, and we sort of kept that designation. The major industries of the area were coal mines and steel mills and the background of the people of the area was that most of the fathers worked in a factory or down in the mines or on the canals – Britain has a wonderful series of canals which were used for transporting all sorts of goods – working the barges or loading barges.
Few people were involved in the service industries, and fewer still in the white-collar jobs such as teaching and the ministry.

To study the individual, without regard for social environment, is to aggrandize Mt. Everest without taking into consideration the tectonic upheavals of the Himalayan range that created this massif. Aware of the limitations of such narrow, individualistic explorations of creativity without regard for the environment that co-creates the creative individual, Csikszentmihalyi (1988) has urged that “it is time to abandon the Ptolemaic view of creativity, in which the person is at the center of everything, for a more Copernican model in which the person is part of the system of mutual influences and information” (p. 336). His petition underscores the subtext of this section: that creativity research ought to evolve into a more holistic enterprise; that we could dispense with the various operational definitions of creativity if we view creativity as a confluence of symbiotic forces such as the individual, family, culture, and environment. Further, in an effort to broaden the scope of the creative process, Rhodes (1961), MacKinnon (1975), Stein (1974), and Isaksen (1987) have variously suggested that creativity is a matrix of four components: person, process, product, and “press” or environment. They suggest that these components are inextricably interlinked and that the study of creativity is indeed a study of the interaction of these variables - that no single component could be understood in isolation from the other components. Thus the call for the study of creativity vis-à-vis an individual’s social environment and culture is rapidly gaining validity, particularly due to the work of Simonton (1987), Gardner, (1993), and Montuori & Purser (1999).
Arthur: While the men worked, women were expected to stay at home to do the cooking and cleaning and looking after the kids and wiping their noses and things like that. They were expected to have supper ready when the man came home and then to be good, obedient women. They didn't have much of a life of their own. Of course, there were some who were liberated and went to the pub and had a few pints, just as their husbands did… as a matter of fact, several pints. The men of course were expected to be breadwinners and the ones to discipline the children, because the usual way of discipline was for the mother to say to the kids, “just you wait till your father gets home,” and then the mothers would slap them around quite a bit, but when the father came home he would take off his belt and give them six of the best. So that was perceived as one of his roles - he was the head of the house and you didn't question his authority.

Two factors bear examination here: First, Arthur's acknowledgement of the presence of exceptions within the cultural norm - as he notes, there were some women who were liberated and went to pubs. To the young mind, the acknowledgement of exceptions in any bounded system suggests not only the option, but also the viability of transgressions, thus Arthur appears to have not only been exposed to the possibility of exceptions, but also, to demonstrate an awareness of them. Torrance (1962) notes the creative individual’s sensitivity to exceptions, stating that creativity is “sensing difficulties, problems, gaps in knowledge, missing elements, something askew” (p. 16). Secondly, although receiving six of the best from father falls under the purview of strict discipline - a recurring theme in the lives of most eminent creators (Gardner, 1993) - it also has the effect of causing some trauma and creating a less than warm climate in the home, both of which, according to Feldman (1999) are factors noted in the families of creative individuals.
Arthur: Some of the women worked in the factories and others perhaps in restaurants. English people at that time and at that level didn’t eat out. The only place you ate at, at that time, was the fish and chips shop that was a very important part of a culture and it still is. Anyway, the fish and chips were wrapped in newspaper and for many of the homes in the area, that same newspaper would serve as the tablecloth for the week. That way, you wouldn’t have any more cloth to wash, and there was no money spent on the newspaper. Even in my home, I remember my mother trying to take the newspaper away and my father would say something like “Don’t touch that… can’t you see I haven’t finished reading the tablecloth yet?”

After work each day, the people would generally head home to cook the tea and do the housework and of course, on many nights a week, the parents would go to the pub and booze. Of course, the kids were too young to go with their parents to the pub so naturally, they were involved in whatever after school activities they could get involved in. People were not rushing home to see television because television had not been perfected yet, so there wasn’t that distraction, but most people had a radio and they listened to it every night. And on Saturday, the town went to a good local football match and supported the local football team, which then, was the idea of bliss for all of them.

The connection between Arthur’s interest in broadcasting and involvement in group activities on the one hand and his upbringing in this tight-knit, working class milieu – with its scramble for school activities and its reliance on radio for news and entertainment – on the other, suggests a direct connection between cultural practices and the creative individual’s formative experiences. One of the earliest articulations vis-à-vis culture and the individual, is Barnett’s (1953) normative view, namely that creativity is a dialectical process between the world and the self, with the mental
content of the creator constituted, defined, and altered by the culture, and vice versa. Barnett’s work specifically focuses on the cultural aspects of creativity, suggesting a positive correlation between the effects of cultural practices on creativity:

“Innovation is at once a psychical and cultural phenomenon, because the content of a thought predisposes the part it will play with respect to others. Its custom-determined substance will determine just which one of the possible mental reaction patterns it will provoke. Understood in this way, there can be no legitimate distinction between the psychological and the cultural approaches to the problem of cultural change” (1953, p. 16).

Arthur: There were some crimes – murders, theft, and rape – but we seldom heard of them because there was literally nobody on the streets during the day; everybody was working and that was an important factor because they all had a job to do. It was mostly manual work and they didn't get very far along by it except to help pay their rent and to go to the pub once in a while... but not France or anything. It was a hardworking life with few diversions and so their treat, once a year, would be to go to a beach somewhere for two weeks – to seaside places such as Barmouth, or Conway, where they would spend all the time on the beach walking up and down the beachfront and then stop at some snack shop to buy cockles and mussels and nuts and things, and then go to the fish and chips shop, and finally go to a show at one of the seaside places. You always had these variety troops giving performances all during the year at the local theater – not Shakespeare or something like that – and then after a two-week stay the family would return to their usual drudgery at home. The other big occasion, once a year after Christmas, was when they went to the nearest theater to see the English pantomime. It wasn’t the silent, esoteric performance, but a raucous comedy show
with audience participation – and since they usually came to the show after stopping off at the local pub, they participated with some vigor!

Overall, it was a kind of humdrum existence but people didn’t live very long, compared to today’s standard, so you didn’t get burned out with a particular job or situation or get the opportunity to move on. Usually, you worked in the mines or at the local steel factory from the time you were fourteen, when you came out of school, and you’d still be there when you either retired with a pension from the works, or till you died, whichever came first. Longevity, or life expectancy as we know it now, was not a common thing, and if you got to sixty, you were doing pretty well. In most cases, fifty was a decent age to die. So, that would be more or less how we lived.

Granted, the backdrop that frames the action in a play is a part of the onstage action, however, unlike in a play, in the case of human beings, the backdrop – the environment – that frames the individual is far from being a passive appendage hung in the distance. It actively engages and challenges the growth, concepts formation, and worldview of the child. All children undergo a lengthy period of exploration of their environment, a period during which they have the opportunity to discover the principles that govern the physical, natural, social, and their own personal world. Not only does the discovery of such universals become the backdrop against which further learning and discoveries necessarily take place, but also, the very processes of discovering themselves become models for future exploratory behavior. Also, the cultural practices that children encounter during this period serve to enculturate and assimilate them, with few exceptions, almost seamlessly into the mainstream of society (Gardner, 1998). Further, as Gruber (1974) has pointed out, cultural practices are best seen as a broad network of interactions that give direction to the child’s daily
and yearly activities; favor the creation and exploitation of images of wide scope; and
define a code of affective ties that guide the child’s evolving cognitive systems.

Growing up in Dudley

Arthur: I was born in a small town – Dudley – in the middle of England, in the Black
Country, and was the older of two children. My father was a postman and he delivered
letters until the war came – World War II. Then, since all the younger men had gone off to
fight, he wanted to go too, but he was not allowed to join the Army because being a
postman was considered an essential duty and because he was not quite fit for active duty –
his health had problems. So, he then became a van driver and a teacher of van drivers to those
new generations of van drivers that came up. He taught all those people and finally went to
work inside the Post Office as one of the people in the back offices, and he stayed there for
the rest of his days.

My mother grew up in Dudley and she was about fourteen I think, when World War
I started and all the men had to go off to war, and the girls all had to leave school to work in
factories and do the jobs traditionally done by men. So, she never went to high school
because she went to work immediately after the war started in 1918. She worked in a factory,
which received shipments of discarded guns and live ammunition and shells, and her job,
along with the other girls who worked there, was to dismantle the shells and recover the
gunpowder from them. The way they did that was that the girls struck the shell on a kind of
anvil to loosen the head from the casing and after prying it off, dumped the powder into
barrels, which were then sent off to other factories to be recycled. Well, on the very first day
on the job, an open flame ignited one of the barrels, which resulted in an extremely terrible
explosion within the factory grounds. Many of the girls her age died in that explosion, but
by some miracle, she survived, but she was pretty badly burnt all over her face and her body.
After she recovered from those burns, she received a grant of money from the factory to help her go back to school, and so she went back to school and that’s when she became an expert stenographer. She had a determination and an inner strength which I think got her through this terrible time - imagine the burns and how people look at you with your face all disfigured and all … and in a way I have to admire my father because he must have been a very compassionate person to have married this young lady in spite of her disfigurement and all that. After she married my father, she stayed at home and became a homemaker and took care of my sister and me...

Since the development of an infant’s reality is the consequence of a series of interactions with human, animate, and inanimate objects, one can infer that Arthur’s early reality was directly contingent upon the caregiver - his mother’s - efforts. The caregiver implicitly assumes a dual responsibility: (a) Validating the child’s experiences, and (b) offering encouragement and support during times of stress. Children encouraged by their caregivers to explore, engage, enhance, modify, verify, and enjoy their experiences – in short, to create – are far more likely to repeat these behaviors, than those discouraged from these pursuits (MacKinnon, 1961)

Rank (1976) posited that the parents’ reactions to a child’s struggle to establish autonomy and personal identity were critical to the formation of the child’s outlook, and creative output. Based on the parents’ reaction to this dissociative tendency, three distinct typologies emerged: (a) Adapted, (b) neurotic, and (c) creative. Rank felt that if, in the process of separation, the parents accept the child as a more or less separate individual, granting him autonomy and the opportunity to assert his own will, the child moves “healthily toward the attainment of a secure sense of self and the expression of positive will in selecting, organizing, modifying,
and recreating his own experience” (p. 180). Further, he argued that while the authoritative parental stance results in the creative individual, the alternative approaches – guilt induction and suppression – result in the neurotic or adaptive individual. Further, Piirto (1992) found that parental roles in modeling creative behavior, avoiding over-evaluation, de-emphasizing sex-role stereotypes, and accepting the child’s peccadilloes were a major factor in the child’s creative development.

Arthur: People from the Black Country were generally simple, hard-working folk, and the town of Dudley was right in the middle of the Black Country. In my hometown in Dudley, there’s this wonderful Black Country museum with all the relics of last century and the century before – the old trams and the coalmines and the old chapel and stuff like that. I would spend hours roaming about the place and poking into things. Dudley was sort of on the edge… a culturally elite place compared to the other towns around. It had a theatre for instance, and I mean a theatre that put on stage shows such as the English Pantomime, which we’d go to a lot. I saw my first opera in Tipton by the way, at the Tipton Hippodrome, as they used to call it. But Dudley also had a wonderful Technical College for adults where you could learn all the arts. It also had a great zoo – the Dudley zoo was famous in the 60’s, and considered to be the most modern zoo in Britain. It was built on the grounds of a castle, a medieval castle, which is still there. It’s one of the ruins they say that Oliver Cromwell knocked about a bit. It was picturesque country and we’re very proud of that background.

The multiplicity of ways in which one can view (treat) a person vis-à-vis the society in which he was reared, usually fall within the broad heading of system (person) within a system (social structures). Feldman, Csikszentmihalyi, and Gardner (1994)
prefer the tripartite division of field, domain, and person, whereas Gruber and Wallace (1999) situate the individual within the set of institutional milieus that influence the person’s development. In the broadest sense of the term, these institutions, including family, neighborhood, school, workplace, and other transitory groupings (such as a peer group or intellectual cohort) form the contextual framework within which the individual develops. Further, Arthur’s creative evolution may as easily be ascribed to variety of stimuli – the zoo, museums, and operas at the hippodrome – as to his own proclivities. In this vein, researchers have consistently shown that creative individuals are motivated, curious individuals generally raised in a culturally stimulating environment, among parents, teachers, and mentors who instill in them a love of learning and exploration. Though only a fortunate few are unfettered by restrictive guidelines or codes of acceptable conduct, in general the creative individual has many opportunities for self-guided exploration and discovery within the environment (Walberg, 1988; Bloom, 1976; Gardner, 1993, Csikszentmihalyi, 1996).

Arthur: I went to the local elementary school, Dudley Elementary School, which was an all-boys school. One of the interesting things was that I had to walk to school every day – which means that I was a lot slimmer and in much better shape than today. But I had to walk to school everyday and even in those days, it was sometimes pretty awful. I remember snowdrifts that came up to the top of your head and we had to struggle through those to the school. It was bad but we did it ... we all had to do it, and no excuses. There was very strict discipline and we wore school uniforms, ties, and a school coat, and maybe a blazer, and a few other things, and if you didn’t have those things, you were reported to the headmaster because everybody knew that you were from Dudley grammar school. Then, he dealt with
you in the old-fashioned way – with a couple of juicy ones to the bottom, and I’ve tasted a few of those myself. Maybe that explains why I am this way...

The instilling of discipline and one of its predictable outcomes – a consciousness of structure, or order – is one of the defining features of the creative individual, and also one of the most contradictory. Whereas creative individuals can, and often do, tolerate chaos, they eventually yearn to bring order out of chaos. During Project Implode, Taylor and Ellison (1972) developed the Creative Process Checklist and administered it to grade level students in Utah. After collating the findings, Taylor and Ellison found that among other characteristics, creative individuals had a strong motivation and desire to bring order out of chaos. Further, Gardner (1993) has noted, post hoc, one might add, the presence of strict disciplinary structures in the lives of most eminent creators; a disciplinary structure that the creative individuals resented, but also one that eventually afforded them the skills or self-discipline necessary to engage and fulfill significant creative works.

Arthur: It seems as if our family was always hospitable to people and there were always people coming in to see us; people from up the street; people who came and spent a whole evening and things like that. But more than that, during the war there were many Polish refugees in England – some of them joined the Polish army in Britain – and we had one particular young man who spent all his vacation time with us. I still remember his name – Josef Ledohovic – a wonderful, wonderful young man ... lost touch with him now... I don't know what happened to him after the war but people like that, and some from training college would come and spend some time with us. They were interested in us through music, and that's what brought us together... it was the household in which we saw a lot of activity. We were always busy working up toward something. Anyhow, in the midst of all that, when
I had completed the 11 + examination system, I got a scholarship to go to this grammar school - grammar school of course is a high school in the English system.

Winning a scholarship to grammar school suggests that Arthur’s teachers and mentors recognized his intellectual promise and took positive steps to encourage this intellect. But was that intelligence a factor in his creative functioning? Most researchers agree that the creative individual, while highly motivated and intelligent, is not necessarily cognitively gifted (Guilford, 1950; Torrance, 1967; Renzulli, 1986; and Sternberg, 1995). Contrary to the popular belief of his era, Guilford (1950) postulated an insignificant correlation between intelligence and creativity, and courageously swimming against the current, stated that IQ tests were unable to measure the constituent skills of creativity, such as the production of evaluative implications and transformations, with any degree of accuracy. He felt that these skills were even more important than divergent thinking skills in the creative process. Barron (1971) agreed, stating that adult creativity was not a function of one’s IQ, but of the perceptual and attitudinal styles of mind.

The IQ threshold model indicates that an increase of IQ up to a score of approximately 130 shows a commensurate increase in creativity. However, after that threshold, a rise in the individual’s IQ shows no significant increase in creativity (Cropley, 1999). Apparently, while intelligence determines the upper limits of a person’s ability to obtain and store information, the creative act itself depends on the divergent combinations that the creative individual is capable of making. To paraphrase Renzulli (1986) in order to be creative, one need not be an IQ star!

Arthur: The day before I started high school, war had been declared between England and Germany. So, on the first day of school, I don't remember much detail, but I remember the
shock and concern on people's faces because war had just been declared. All the male teachers had been called away to service and we had an influx of women teachers into our all-boys school – and some of them were great teachers from various parts, including London, who were evacuated to our area because of the war. We also had a teacher's training college next door and from time to time we had students from the training college coming in to help us, and help out the teachers.

It was a very good experience, and I have a great number of memories of high school. But I also remember the nasty things like having to carry gas masks to school and often scurrying down into the dirty and nasty and damp and worm infested air raid shelter and huddling there until the all clear claxon sounded. The fear of being hit by bombs was very real… always in the back of my mind, and I had some terrible dreams of the entire town being wiped out in one huge explosion by menacing squadrons of German bombers. Food … or should I say the lack of food, was another issue in itself. People survived on bare minimums – the ration cards of those days and the processed school lunches, which were even worse. I mean the school cafeteria in those days usually served up dried bananas, dried eggs, dried potatoes, and dried everything. It was awful, but we survived it…

The outbreak of war, its resultant deprivation, and the socioeconomic malaise that pervaded England, and Europe in general, was bound to affect Arthur and his creative functioning. Just as the ration cards and the fear of bombs affected everyday practices – conversations centered around news of the battlefronts; citizens interrupted their activities to scurry into shelters; people brought their own bread and jam when they visited each other; families hoarded their rations for weeks to prepare for the vicar's monthly visit – the possibility of war in the immediate vicinity arguably influenced Arthur. Wallach & Kogan (1965) have suggested that the undue
levels of stress and tension present during periods of war directly affect an individual’s creative processes. Further, Simonton (1997b) has noted that “war probably diverts investment of time, money, labor from any scientific and artistic activities not directly relevant to national defense or aggression” (p. 8), suggesting a serious curtailment of artistic and other creative endeavors in and around Dudley. However, necessity, they say, is the mother of invention, and Arthur notes with some pride that despite the travails, his parents managed to maintain a decent lifestyle – probably due to some creative modifications of their own devising. Finally, for Arthur, the realization that he and his family had survived the war through collective effort and positive affect, reinforced his leanings toward humanism – the belief in the essential goodness of human beings – a factor that was to guide his career and become a recurring theme in his life.

Modeling Talent
Arthur: I have had the urge to create the whole of my life I think. It hasn't always been easy though, and I've had to be forced a lot of times. But I think the urge to create starts before the very beginning even, before you are born. I mean, you've gotta have the genes… certain genes, I think which are necessary, to be talented… It's something which becomes part of you while you are developing in the womb, I suppose. I think that being an artist isn't something which you can learn more about, or just decide to be later in life if you haven't got the urge, or you haven't got the background and, certainly not if you haven't got what it takes…

My father and mother were both involved in church music, and what bound us to the community was our love of music. Also, my grandfather played the organ and our family visited him regularly to hear him play. My grandfather, by the way, lived in the
neighboring town of Tipton, and he was a shoemaker. He had a deformed foot – a clubfoot you’d call it, I think – and he started making his own shoes because in those days, you didn’t have any factories and things like you do nowadays, and he couldn’t find the proper shoes to play the organ with. You see, to play the organ, you can’t wear shoes that have rubber or plastic soles; you have to have all leather soles so that your foot can slip on the pedals and you can move from one row to another quickly. Regular shoes would jam up into the notes, so I suppose he got into the business of shoemaking because he had to make his own shoes… and he was very good at it, too. I remember as kids, we always had to take our shoes to him to be repaired and he always charged us too - no free service for the family!

My grandfather was the church organist and I used to love to go and watch him play and watch his feet, in those handmade shoes, move over the organ pedals. And then he’d play at home too, and the thing I liked about visiting my grandfather was that he always he got on the piano after supper – and we had a typically English high tea, which consisted of pork pie and trifle - and then we sang hymns with him playing the music. I usually stood at the door, fascinated and entranced. And that was the beginning of my journey to music I suppose.

The notion that any child can be taught to play music, while laudable, is no guarantee that the child will learn to play music or become an accomplished musician. The acquisition of musical skills appears to be a genetic legacy as much as a factor of teaching and motivation. There is some evidence to suggest that certain types of skills, including music and mathematics, may be genetically inherited rather than acquired (Schienfeld, 1950; Lehman, 1999). On this note, Gruber and Wallace (1999) have pointed out the enormous influence of family members, not only on the formation of the child’s psyche, but also on the creative process itself. By way of
example, they offer exemplars such as Darwin and his grandfather Erasmus, Van Gogh and his brother Theo, Einstein and his uncle Jacob, among others, each of whom were either directly instrumental in the formulation of the creators work, or, as in the case of the poet Wordsworth’s sister Dorothy, enabled them in their work by assisting with chores and other household duties. Further confirmation of the influence of family members on a youngster’s musical precocity comes from Simonton’s (1987) investigation of 677 classical composers, suggesting a significant correlation between a child’s musical skills and the number of musically inclined role models in the household. Also, by classifying responses to stimuli as either primary (primitive, emanating from the sub-conscious, unedited) or secondary (conscious, processed, and refined), Rivard and Dudek (1977) have shown that in the early years of childhood, considerable progress is made toward secondary process thinking, thus indicating the influence that the parents and the grandparents had on Arthur’s thought process, socialization, and creativity.

Arthur: My paternal grandmother was a sweet, sweet creature really… she was kind and sweet and an angel. She died of cancer and in those days, there was no way of alleviating it… there wasn’t much I suppose, except for opium, but that’s sort of the distant past… She died a slow and painful death, but we loved her very much and she was especially sweet to me – a sweet, sweet lady. Now my grandmother from my mother’s side was a very fierce person. Like my mother, she was a very determined woman, and like my mother, she was headstrong too. Maybe I get a little bit of that from her, or from both of them. My grandmother for instance, she was in her middle eighties when she migrated to the United States. In her middle eighties! She had never been abroad but she had a daughter and granddaughter who
were here, so she decided to tag along. She formally migrated to New Jersey when I was still very young... in my teens I think ... and I remember that it had a strong impact on me.

If gender roles are inscribed on a child’s psyche by exposure to a codified range of tasks performed by members of a particular gender, then interactions with such passionate female figures as Arthur’s mother, who worked in a munitions plant, and his globetrotting grandmother, would arguably do much to dispel communally sanctioned gender roles and identities. In the presence of such “fierce” women, the implicit message was that skill and predilection, not gender, define one's choice of roles. In support of such a contention, Bem (1975) has shown that creative individuals nominally reject “functional fixity” in preference for a more fluid, androgynous state. Further support for this preference for an androgynous state is based on Csikszentmihalyi’s (1996) exhaustive data analysis of responses from ninety-one creative individuals, resulting in the identification of ten dimensions of the creative personality. In general, he found that creatives showed oppositional tendencies – they tended to swing between diametric extremes depending on their circumstance.

Mentors and Music

Arthur: You see, I don't play music by ear, I'm not terribly good at hearing a tune and playing it; I sight read. I like to sight read it. But being able to play anything remember, is a result of having had to work very hard for many years. I started playing when I was nine... Oh, I begged my mother and father for a piano and after much hesitation and discussion, they finally relented and bought me a cheap piano, and agreed to pay for piano lessons. Initially it was fun, but then, as with all novelty, the boredom and the hard work caught up with me, and then I was forced to go take piano lessons.
My very first music teacher was Freida Round, the sister of Dorothy Round who was a famous Wimbledon tennis star in the ’30s. Freida was a fascinating woman – she was exotic, she wore a lot of makeup, her hair was all tied up in a bun – she was like a Carmen. Later, when I saw the opera Carmen, I thought to myself “that is my teacher!” She was just like that; she was patient, but firm. I remember going in some weeks and I hadn’t practiced … and she would be kind of very sad and she would sigh ‘Oh, Arthur, oh dear, what am I going to do with you?’ She never whacked me on the knuckles or anything, although she had a big fat pencil and she could’ve done that. “You are letting you parents down…,” she would say with a great big sigh. It was one of those “you are letting your parents down – they worked hard to get you here – I know you can do better” speeches. So, she was that kind of person, but we (the students) were comfortable with her and every so often, she’d throw a tea party, and all her students would attend and play for each other. It was a good relationship and three years ago, during one of my trips to England, my sister took me to see her. She was still alive, and old, and very charming, and apparently very well. But soon after that, she died – I don’t know if it was my visit and she couldn’t take any more of me!

To begin with the ending – Arthur is a natural humorist and almost all his anecdotes include some humorous content. I have attended several of his impromptu performances where he regaled the audience with his music, and his sharp tongue in cheek remarks. Koestler (1964) has suggested that the creative individual’s ability to associate apparently incompatible contexts into a logical framework – a faculty he called “bisociation” – is the same ability that facilitates humor. Further, Arthur’s quips – for example: I always wanted to be a missionary in some underdeveloped country, and help underprivileged people, so I came to America – not only bring together seemingly incompatible contexts, but they also lead to the pay-off line, or
what O’Quin and Derks (1999) call an “incongruity resolution” (p. 847), thus demonstrating his creative tendency. Arthur’s fondness for humor, a skill he has perfected over the years, apparently aids and abets not only his instinctive gregariousness, but also adds a dimension of mild irreverence to his work as a minister and community elder.

On the subject of interpersonal relationships, researchers have stressed the importance of a skilled teacher or mentor who guides the child’s development and talents (Bloom, 1985; Gardner, 1993; Raina, 1999). Whether known as patron, sponsor, guru, sensei, or another culturally appropriate appellation, the teacher/mentor assumes the parental role outside the home by providing challenging instruction, guidance, and encouragement to develop skills and competence. They also found that as the child matured, the parents faded into the background as the teacher/mentors assumed almost total control of the child/adolescent’s developmental potential, with the creative individual and the mentor establishing a strong intellectual and personal bond. Further Simonton (1975) had noted that these influences can operate in complex ways by either encouraging creative development or inhibiting it (when the individual imitates the mentor’s work), suggesting that positive benefits accrue when the individual is exposed to a variety of mentors.

Arthur: When I was in high school, I was always involved with church things and church groups, and I spent a number of my summer holidays – when I was about 13 or 14 – with the pastor from the church and his family. He had left the church and gone to live in the country. Now, to me, it was great thrill to go to the country after living in this interior of the industrial Midlands. So everyday I would cycle to his house – I enjoyed cycling; I used to cycle lot in those days – to this place in the country and spend a couple of weeks every
summer and sometimes a few days at Christmas with him and his family. We would play the piano and sing songs and generally discuss music and other things. It was a joyful experience. He was a person I would describe as saintly. He was very quiet and his one problem was he had a wife who henpecked him badly all the time. And he had two children, a girl and a boy, and one of them was the devil’s incarnate – the girl, not the boy. The boy was quiet, like his father. It was an interesting experience.

Social-learning theory posits that children, far from being passive receptors of stimuli, are actively engaged in the advancement of their own learning by peopling the world around them with potential models and then imitating the cultural practices of these models (Bandura, 1997). The choice of persons they associate with is influenced not only by the characteristics of the role model, but also the child’s personality and the environment. Arthur’s choice to spend his vacations with the pastor and his family appears to be a calculated investment in his own future as a missionary and minister. Also, substantial research on creative individuals by Ghiselin (1952) offers numerous anecdotal accounts of famous men and women who reveal personal details of the effects of place, circumstance, and environment in their own creative experiences. Montuori and Purser (1999) noted how interpersonal dynamics affect the creative individual: “We have probably all had the experience of finding a colleague or group of people with whom we feel we somehow resonate, where dialogue seems enriching, and creativity blossoms: Ideas are thrown back and forth, conversations spark new lines of thought, with each person adding his or her own perspective and area of expertise” (p. 3).

Arthur: I was the first in the whole of my whole family to get a high-school education or even to go on to university. In fact, I am still the only one in the whole of that family, and I
had many cousins. It was not the thing in to do in those days; you did what your father did. As a matter fact, I didn't go to school for couple of months. When I was about 16, I got fed up with school, so I left and went to work in the post office delivering telegrams. My father didn’t mind and my mother seemed amenable to the idea since I was helping the war effort. I had a smart uniform and we used bicycles in those days and pedaled all over town making our deliveries. It was an interesting experience until the headmaster of the school persuaded my parents to persuade me to go back to school, and because the headmaster thought I should go on to college, I returned to school and to my music.

Mead (1949) theorized that Samoan adolescents led a relatively stress-free life because there was no disconnect between their cultural practices, and those of the adults around them. On the other hand, Arthur, who constantly received the “you-did-what-your-father-did” message was unable to experience adult practices, particularly his father’s job, till the socially sanctioned moment – graduation – or until he rebelled against the status quo. Strangely enough, although on the one hand, his family expected him to attend school and receive an education, they were also quite ambivalent about schooling, apparently content to allow Arthur to make the final decision. This dissonance between the mother’s almost maniacal insistence on music practice time and her amenability to Arthur’s decision to quit school can perhaps be reconciled by the turbulent war situation, and Arthur’s growing confidence and assertiveness. Creativity researchers (Amabile, 1996; Arieti, 1976; Roe, 1975; Torrance, 1979) have shown that independence of judgment is a significant trait associated with the creative individual, and they acknowledge that the creative individual is more apt to do what is best for him/her, regardless of gender
stereotypes and other peoples’ perceptions of such socially rebellious behavior, a la Arthur’s abrupt dismissal of schooling as a necessity.

Outside of the creative individual’s immediate family circle, the next circle of influence encompasses friends, teachers and mentors. Simonton (1978) has suggested that a creative individual’s interaction with others, particularly a warm indulgent relationship between the creative individual and the “recognizer” of the creative output, markedly enhances and improves creativity. For Arthur, this was the school principal, who, having recognized his potential, persuaded Arthur to return to school. Therefore, viewed from yet another perspective, Arthur demonstrated another form of independent thinking by quickly abandoning his rebellious and somewhat socially sanctioned gender role – “you did what your father did” – due to the decisive, and perhaps fortunate, intervention of a mentor.

**Motivation**

Arthur: My mother, as was typical in those days, did not plan to work until her kids were old enough to take care of themselves, but when the war came, it changed everybody’s life. All women were going out to work because the men were away at war so they had to do men’s jobs. But my going to school on a scholarship and taking organ lessons and piano lessons and all that meant additional expenses and so she decided to go back to work herself. She had been a very good stenographer and knew shorthand, so she worked in the town of Dudley and I would see her most days – I would stop by her office and chat. She had made a lot of friends and quite a success of going back to work, and the fact that both my parents were working hard was an example to my sister and myself...

Research confirms the effects of a parents’ ethos, work ethic, and personal interests on a child’s creativity. Bloom’s (1976) study of 120 eminent artists, athletes, and
scientists revealed the critical role of the parents in the development of their child's talents. These outstanding individuals reported that during their childhood, their parents often read to them, were good teachers, displayed patience, offered praise and encouragement, and were generally actively involved in the child's interests. Further, Jamison (1989) and Andreasen (1987) conducted separate studies on poets, playwrights, artists, writers, and their families, and found that creative individuals were more likely to have creative parents and/or siblings.

Arthur: As I said before, my parents had made quite a few sacrifices to buy me a piano and they had made more sacrifices to pay for piano lessons, so I took piano lessons... at first because I wanted to... but then because I had to... and I grew to hate them. I couldn't go outside with the kids and play football and those things during those few, clear spring days we had in England. But I am very glad that I was forced to do it... my mother was extremely fierce about it... extremely strong. I had one hour of practice every evening, and one hour-and-a-half on Saturdays and Sundays, and if I did one minute short of the hour, my punishment was to do the whole hour again. So, my mother was the inspiration, and inspiration comes in many forms... In her case it was a cane, or a whipping, and other punishments... so, that was my background.

Stevens and Bakeman (1985) showed that the single most important factor in predicting high intelligence is the mother's ability to create and structure an environment that fosters learning. Further, parental attitudes and pressures are potent factors that have a distinct influence on the child's personality. Stein (1974) agreed, stating, "Creativity is the resultant process of a social transaction. Individuals affect, and are affected by, the environment in which they live. They do not interact with the environment without changes occurring in both directions. The early
childhood family environment either predisposes the individual to creativity or sets up intrapsychic barriers to creativity” (p. 218). Also, Dacey and Packer (1992) found that somewhere between the authoritarian and permissive parent, the “nurturing parents” were most apt to produce creative offspring because they recognized a child’s talents early, provided materials, a strict structure, and encouragement for the child to perform. Gardner (1993) has corroborated these findings, noting, “many creative individuals point with distress to the restrictiveness of their early childhood” (p. 31). Although Arthur’s parents (particularly his mother) may have demonstrated an authoritarian streak, there are distinct elements of the “nurturing parent” embedded in their recognition and provisions for his musical talent.

Arthur: I don’t think I developed self-motivation until much later in life. Perhaps it’s even mixed in a way with motivation from outside and circumstances. You see, I was very fond of reading at that time – novels mostly – and on my way home from school I used to pass the library. So I’d go in there and I would get two kinds of books – I would get music books with songs, and I would get novels, like a thriller or something. When I got home, I would quickly go the piano, and the books would be in there with me and I would start playing from the music books, all the while watching my time and so on. My mother would think that I was practicing my pieces, but really what I was doing was I was sight reading everything in the library book that I had got, and when I had done that, I was still playing – making sounds on the piano, while I read my novel – until the whole hour was finished.

Not all creative acts have an altruistic or ethical motive. Some of them are driven purely by the need to circumvent a particular problem or obstacle. Necessity sometimes IS the mother of invention and often, a close inspection of the types of effective strategies employed by an individual to circumvent obstacles by exploiting
situational dynamics, reveal a creative persona better than any decontextualized test or exam. The creative individual then, by nature, is seen as courageous and a risk-taker (Sternberg and Lubart, 1996, Dacey and Lennon, 1999) and will often bend the rules in order to gain greater personal rewards. By way of support, MacKinnon (1961) found that creative people are dissatisfied with the status quo, unconventional, courageous, risk-takers, spontaneous, complicated, had a wide variety of interests, holistic in their thinking, and unusually enterprising.

Arthur: Well, I was fooling her, but I was being fooled myself, because it was a skill that I didn't realize I was developing... the skill to sight-read and improvise. So in trying to catch up on the latest thrillers, I had unwittingly learned not only to sight read, but also to improvise ... make up music, elaborate on a theme, expand a melody and so on... those were some of the skills I developed in those days.

Learning to segue from the required musical pieces into similarly phrased improvisations that were of a pitch and timbre designed to fool the watchdog mother figure, demonstrated Arthur's unwitting internalization and command of two crucial factors of creative thinking – fluency and elaboration (Torrance, 1988). Another immensely useful byproduct of this dabbling was the proliferation of his musical repertoire. On this subject, Vervalin (1962) has suggested that since all creative individuals exhibit great intellectual curiosity, they possess a wide range of information that they can combine, sort, and extrapolate, in order to solve the problem through a process of creative construction. Arguably then, Arthur's random selection of music books and the assortment of songs he played during that period built up a repertory of scales and passages that not only stuffed his musical larder, but also stood him in good stead in later years.
Further, the creative individual's command of domain specific knowledge, whether intentionally or unintentionally acquired, is almost self-evident, because, according to Martindale (1989) “one cannot think of a creative idea in physics if one does not know anything about physics. You cannot very well combine mental elements in a new way if the elements are not known to you in the first place” (p. 213). Thus, the knowledge base of the creative individual may be compared to a well-stocked pantry containing a rich plethora of ingredients, which when combined with a command of heuristics or “rules of thumb,” usually results in some delectable and appetizing offerings (Langley, Simon, Bradshaw, and Zytkow, 1987).

Arthur: So, I think that going back to the very beginning, you have to have something that is part of you. Something... you have to have a talent. Then you’ve got to have someone who will help you to understand if and how to develop it - you can’t leave them undeveloped because then those talents won’t come to very much - in my case it was a mother who was very, very fierce, and beatings and punishments and all kinds of things - “you’ve got to stick with this thing' we’ve paid good money for that piano and you have got to learn how to play the piano,” and such. Then you yourself have to have some stickability, as I like to call it.

Stickability is a synonym for motivation, since the desire (or motivation) to see a task to completion requires that one “stick” to the task. Motivation is a much-studied concept in creative studies and theorists have speculated about its effects on the creative individual (Amabile, 1990; Abra, 1997; Conti & Amabile, 1999). In general, the motivation to create is either an intrinsic (self-generated) or extrinsic (distilled from the exhortations of external voices and demands) desire. Further subdivisions are possible - negative motives, drives, or expressive tendencies - however, in Arthur’s case, the primary source of motivation appears to have been his love for
music. Later, when the specter of hard work and rigorous practice clouded the romance of ars gratia artis, the motivation transformed into an extrinsic demand by the mother, who insisted on regular practice. Although Arthur stickability (motivation) for music and the arts waxed and waned, his assiduous practice and innate talent ensured that, at the very least, he would not become, what Necka (1986) labeled as a blocked creative.

Cultural density, Facilities, and Opportunity

Arthur: I think if I had been living in a remote country area, things may have been different, you know, because there’d be few people there and everybody would be far away from each other. But because I lived in the densely populated area – over 50,000 people – which adjoined the next town of 50,000, and there was Birmingham – and the whole area was filled with people, and filled with musicians, I thrived. Also, there were facilities around, there were piano shops – so my parents could buy me a piano, though they were struggling very hard because we didn’t have much money – and music shops for the music that I needed. I can’t really imagine what it would have been like if I hadn’t been there, with the opportunities that presented themselves. I think that if the opportunities had not been there, I would have been disgusted with playing the piano and probably given it up... it was the opportunity to make the music and to use my skills that kept me going.

At 12, I was put in for an exam of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, and my teacher, this very talented woman, took me to the local exam center. The examiners were all there and they included some well-known musicians, some nationally known ones too. My teacher stayed outside and I went inside and I, remembering what she had taught me, nodded very politely to the chief examiner and said “Good morning, Sir Granville.” He acknowledged me stiffly and pointed to the piano. I meekly went to the
piano, sat down, and then started to play my pieces – that was the plan, to play my pieces and leave. But the examiners had other plans, and one of them came over, opened a music book I had never seen before and asked me to sight-read. I took a deep breath and played it – quite well, I think. Then they gave me an oral test and then, I was free to go. It was a thorough examination. When I went outside, my teacher was in a tizzy. She said, “I heard you play all your pieces and you did very well, but what was that other piece that the examiners played for you right after you finished playing?” I looked at her in surprise and said, “That was me!” Apparently, my sight-reading had come off so well that she had been fooled into thinking that it was the examiner playing the piano. That was another moment of joy, obviously.

Hirsh (cited in Arieti, 1976) remarked that “genius without talent is like a great intellect with poor linguistic abilities” (p. 341). Judging from his performance on the Associated Board exam, not only did Arthur possess the requisite “linguistic abilities” of his field, but he also had the personality and motivation to apply them for the challenge and enjoyment of others. Further, Guilford (1986) proposed that highly creative people are not only driven by curiosity and generally more sensitive to problems, but that they feel the challenge to solve the problems and are persistent in their efforts to solve them. They enjoy what they do, in spite of the hard work, and find intrinsic satisfaction in the work itself. Guilford noted that the creative person is likely to have a broad store of information, wide-ranging interests, and a pronounced curiosity. As a rule, they avoid sex-role stereotyping and other external pressures to be “normal or “adjusted” according to generally accepted ideas of mental health or social propriety which, they feel, may inhibit novel thinking.
Arthur: Just as soon as people found out that I could accompany them, and that I was not just a soloist prima donna, but that I was willing to be the supporting person, I was showered with offers. Just up the road from where we lived when I was a child, we had a music teacher who had a very good reputation, a wonderful woman and a fine singer too. She called me several times to be her accompanist and I felt very honored to be offered that. I think from the very beginning of my playing, at the age of 10 or 12, I had been a supporting person. As soon as people find out that you will accompany them, you will have all the opportunities you want.

Early creativity theorists (Galton, 1870) have suggested that genetic makeup or family status in society was a crucial factor in creative eminence. However, more recent studies indicate that the crucial factor in emergent creativity is environmental opportunities for stimulation (Simonton, 1997). Although Arthur's skills had been developed by lessons and painstaking practice, he did not sense any substantial growth until he had tangible opportunities to apply his skills and broaden his repertoire – opportunities that, ironically enough, became readily available by posing as an accompanist, rather than as a soloist. Thus by capitalizing on the social demands of the time – the acceptance of and need for accompanists – he created a career or musical life for himself.

Arthur: When I was in high school, the organist from the big Parish Church in Dudley came to visit the high school and said he was looking for boys to join the choir. I was one of the boys he persuaded and it was a wonderful experience but a lot of hard work. I was leader of one side of the choir – the choir was split up into the cantori and the decantori – and I was the leader of the cantori, which was quite a privilege in those days. I have very happy memories of that time, in spite of the rigorous choir rehearsals. I have happy memories of
the organist and the choir director and going out during Christmas in groups singing carols and receiving five shillings at the end of two nights of singing ... You could buy something nice with five shillings in those days. As a matter of fact, as choir members we were paid, I think, two shillings for every six months or something like that, which was very little money even then. It was very little money.

Creative individuals are far more likely to engage in a task for the sake of the challenge, or for sheer enjoyment, or simply because “they want to” rather than get involved in situations they are coerced into, or where there is promise of a reward. The internal locus of control is a strong governor of creative activity. Based upon their study of quality of feedback and the resultant creative output of subjects, Hennessey and Amabile (1988) found that intrinsic motivation showed a positive correlation to creative output, whereas extrinsic motivations displayed a negative correlation. Based on this, they articulated an intrinsic motivation principle, which suggests that individuals tend to be “most creative when they feel motivated primarily by interest, enjoyment, satisfaction, and challenge of the work itself – not by external pressures” (p. 11). This motivational principle applies not only to the creative endeavor itself – Arthur’s music making – but also to prolonged engagements, such as projects, avocations, and jobs.

Arthur: My first real job, well one of my first two real jobs, was to be a pianist in a church. I was about eleven, I think, and I had to be the pianist at a Congregational Church. As I remember, the job didn’t last for long because I soon discovered that I was at the beck and call of every member of the church – if there were a hundred members in the church, I had a hundred bosses, and each one wanted something different. “You’re playing too fast,” or
“you’re playing it too slow,” or “it’s too loud” or “too soft.” Of course, I didn’t stay very long with that.

Obviously, when the amount of revulsion one feels in a situation outweighs the benefits of that situation, the natural instinct is to either insulate oneself, diplomatically extricate oneself, or flee, from the situation. Arthur’s choice, perhaps consistent with his creative personality, was to flee. In addition, the creative individual is also apt to express his disillusionment in a vocal and sometimes hurtful manner, a trait observed by Piirto (1992), who asked 26 published poets and novelists to respond to her question “How did your experience as a child in school help, or hinder, your creativity?” Based on their responses, Piirto deduced that the respondents demonstrated independence of judgment, non-conformity, challenge of authority, the search for truth, and ironically enough, an uncompromising verbal intelligence that “saw fools for what they were and called them that.” (p. 278).

Arthur: The next job I had, which was during the war was one of my most enjoyable jobs and I did it for several months – it was being the accompanist for a troupe of variety show artists who entertained at the military camp. Sometimes we’d go quite a distance – a distance in England means fifty to one hundred miles – and I’d go to as far as Wales several times just to do so these camps. I met up with such an interesting variety of people and I think I developed the “human approach” during this time because of the conditions under which I was working.

During my days as a variety entertainer or club artist, I had to learn to improvise. If a comedian was going to sing a song, I had to play an introduction which wasn’t on the copy – wasn’t printed there – I had to do something… keep vamping until he was ready to sing. You know comedians often take their time to start the jokes, so I kept going… That filler
time, that kind of maintaining an audience’s attention helped me to develop skills, which I would not have had before. Skills, for instance, of accompanying a singer or dancer; skills of improvising – you’ve got to, especially with a comedian; I accompanied acrobats and every sort of variety artists that was part of the troupe. So, that was one of my favorite jobs.

Early in their careers, and usually following prolonged engagement in the field, creative individuals report a “crystallizing experience,” that has been instrumental in defining their career paths (Walters & Gardner, 1986). Somewhat akin to the concept of peak experience or flow (Maslow, 1999; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), this crystallizing experience is usually a multi-dimensional battle royale between the challenges of the task and the creative individual’s skills that engages the intellect, activates the senses, and illuminates a potential future. Arthur’s work with the traveling troupe appears to have been the perfect symbiosis between the task and his musical/social skills, as well as an indicator to a potential future as performer, accompanist, and director.

Arthur’s delight in this particular experience is another indicator of the development of and penchant for anthropo-creativity, particularly since as a young musician, he was called upon to both lead, as well as accompany, the performers. The unrehearsed nature of the performances, the ability to pick up on instantaneous cues, and the essential dialectic between Arthur and the performers almost certainly sensitized, if not prepared him, for the needs of the more complex demands of stage production.

Breaking A way

Arthur: Going to university was an important thing to me. There were a number of us from Dudley who were the first in our families to go off to university... you didn’t do that before
then. I’m sure that the children of a much higher class of person were sent up to Cambridge and Oxford because they came from the big fancy public schools like Harrow and Eton, but, for us humble, working-class folks... that wasn’t our lot; that didn’t happen to us. To this day, I’m the first person in the whole of my extended family, all my cousins included, who has a university education...

The roles had changed for me of course, but I don't think they changed for any of my peers back home in Dudley, unless of course they were doing what I had done and had left home. In Dudley, I had felt somewhat tied and restricted and when I started to mingle with the people at the university - people with a lot more education who not only didn’t speak the Black country dialect, but actually spoke proper English - I thought to myself, “I want to be part of that world so bad.” So I ambled out of Dudley into university and into a different sort of lifestyle. I wasn't under anybody's thumb; I didn't have to report on things to my mother or father; I chose what to do and what not to do - and I was pretty wild in some of things I did, mostly as a reaction to having been under the thumb all that time. But I told my parents that I was leaving home and surprisingly enough, they shrugged their shoulders. Now that I think of it, there wasn’t anything they could do...

What instigated Arthur to abandon his birth culture in Dudley in order to settle in another region and thereby risk alienation and mental anguish in the process? What prompted him to abandon those most inextricable of human bonds - one's family, close society, and familiar cultural practices and venture into the uncertainty that awaited him in Birmingham, and perhaps further abroad? Smitsman (2000) theorized that “when internal changes make it impossible to maintain present relations, new structures can (and must) emerge. So, growth, or change per se, does not cause development to take place, but rather the discontinuities in the relationship
that may emerge as a result of growth” (p. 24). An extension of Smitsman's concept of “discontinuities” suggests that the desire to change one’s location – migrate – may be ascribed to the creative individual’s awareness of an internal discontinuity (between proclivities and opportunities), as well as an external discontinuity (between self-image and cultural mores).

An internal discontinuity appears when the individual is engaged in a profession or cultural practices that are markedly alien to the individual’s natural talents, tendencies, or proclivities. Ghiselin (1952) recounted the tortured words of the young Van Gogh, itinerant preacher and not-yet painter:

Prisoner in an I-don’t-know-what-for horrible, horrible, utterly horrible cage... Such a man often doesn’t know himself what he might do, but he feels instinctively - yet I am good for something; yet I am aware of some reason for existing! I know that I might be a totally different man! How then can I be useful, how can I be of service? Something is alive in me; what can it be? (p. 13).

From the perspective of psychotherapy, Maslow (1999) concluded that rather than accomplishing acts of earth-shaking magnitude, most of his creative subjects indulged in activities that fulfilled their inner proclivities. Runco, Ebersole, & Mraz (1990) tested Maslow’s conclusion - that creativity and self-actualization were functionally interdependent - on a group of 84 students in psychology classes and based on the responses, found it to be a valid assumption. Conceivably then, creative individuals – like Van Gogh – who did not, or cannot engage in their proclivities, see
themselves as mired in a meaningless existence of quiet desperation, searching for self-fulfillment in reduced or secret expressions of creativity.

By contrast, a severely disjointed relationship between the practices of a culture and the creative individual, results in an external discontinuity. Jung visualized the individual as an animated extension of the human spirit, striving to achieve significant meaning during his lifetime, yet dependent on prevalent cultural conditions for succor and support. Jung stressed the importance of societal structures (such as cultural institutions and practices) that enable the individual’s creativity (Hopcke, 1989). In the absence of such structure, Jung felt that “The individual man, therefore, is never able to fully use his powers to their fullest range, unless there comes to his aid one of those collective presentations we call ideals, which liberates in his soul all the hidden forces of instinct, to which the ordinary conscious will can never gain access (Jung, cited in Hopcke, 1989, p. 125)

Further, Rogers (1954) observed that individuals instinctively use the creative process in seeking to become actualized, or fulfilled. This quest is helped along by two factors: (a) The presence of psychological safety - accepting the individual as one of unconditional worth, providing a climate in which external evaluation is absent, and offering empathic understanding, and (b) psychological freedom - the presence of a space in which the creative person may explore emerging ideas without fear of failure or censure. According to Rogers, both of these conditions are necessary for creative growth.

But what if prevalent cultural practices and institutions do not provide either of these conditions? What if the culture is indifferent, barren, or even hostile?
Research has conclusively shown that factors such as fear, distrust, distorted or restricted communication, private stratagems, imposition of external motivators, persuasion, manipulation, and strict behavioral controls are anathema to creativity (Adams, 1986; Amabile, 1983; D avis, 1986; G ibbs, 1972; T orrance, 1979;). Creative individuals, who choose to remain in these circumstances, may employ adaptive mechanisms that include art and music as acceptable and healing outlets (G edo, 1990; O stwald, 1997; C ropley, 1990).

Arthur: I decided to move to Jamaica for three reasons, really ... The first thing was a young lady that I had met when I was at the University, who took my fancy and became my wife and she was Jamaican and was over there on a scholarship with the understanding that when she finished the degree she would go back to Jamaica... The second reason was, from the age of 10 or 11 remember, I wanted to be a missionary and go abroad somewhere ... as a matter fact I wanted to go to India, but Jamaica seemed okay, too ... East Indies, West Indies, not much of a difference you know ... so, it was going abroad. And the third reason was, when we were kids, part of the summer holidays from school was spent in the mountains in Wales – I loved Wales and I fell in love with the coast and the mountains – so the idea of going to a place where I could see the mountains everyday was very appealing to me ...

Creative individuals who acknowledge external discontinuities and are determined to overcome their repressive, barren, or inhospitable environments usually migrate. Defined as a fundamentally rational process, migration across cultures has many stated reasons including war, famine, oppression, the search for a better life, or as in Arthur’s case, even a whimsical decision such as wanderlust or the search for adventure (Scott & Scott, 1989). Gardner (1988) has theorized that creative
individuals, in an active search for psychological freedom and safety, often move across cultures in order to find a comfortable environment. Hayes (1989) supported this notion, pointing out that many of the central figures in a civilization’s burst of creative endeavor have roots in an alien tradition or culture. To illustrate this point, he noted the disproportionate number of Jews among the notable creators of modern Western civilization. Helson (1990) also observed that more than half of the prominent female mathematicians she studied were of foreign birth or extraction. Further support for the idea of migration in search of “greener pastures” comes in the form of the lopsided number of non-Western entrepreneurs fueling the current technological juggernaut, suggesting that these creative individuals may have migrated to the West as much in search of actualization as they did for economic benefit. Although their reasons for migration range from adventure seeking, to wanderlust, or even economic betterment, conceivably the root cause is the same – the search for self-actualization in an environment that promotes, or at the very least, enables creativity.

Arthur: I sailed from South Hampton on the south coast of England and my mother came to see me off on my adventure. She was weeping because she was convinced that Jamaica was up there in the remote jungle somewhere and that she would never see me again, or that I’d be caught and eaten by cannibals... but that's ignorance, and you know how mothers are! There was a lot of ignorance about some countries in those days... I was glad I left.

Findings and Implications – The Environment

Cultural practices – the tangible behaviors that link and enable an individual within a social group – are the verbal and signified discourse within which a child’s identity is shaped. The maintenance, evolution, and propagation of these practices rests with
the natives of the culture, particularly the parents, whose primary charge is to disseminate acceptable practices, thus inducting the child into the mores of the culture. Further, while cultural practices are perceptible, they are neither inherited nor omniscient, in that the individual parents must affirm, or at the very least acquiesce to, the practices dictated by the larger group. Hardly surprising then, that parents who fashion an environment supportive of creativity (through specific discourses, materials, and practices) within their nuclear family offer their children a better chance to develop in creative ways. Therefore, the parents, by making active choices and availing themselves of opportune circumstance, are the locus of creative fashioning and it is through them that the creative behavior of the child can and may be shaped. Arthur’s parents undertook to raise him in a particular way, and that “way” played a significant role in the development of Arthur’s skills and identity.

Understanding the cultural practices that influenced and shaped Arthur were the key to his creative functioning. To adopt a Geertzian (1974) stance, “The essential vocation of interpretive anthropology is not to answer our deepest questions, but to make available to us answers that others, guarding other sheep in other valleys, have given…” (p. 30) the following flocks of sheep are from Arthur’s own pasture and as such, offer one possible pathway to circumstances and practices that influence the development of a creative individual:

1. Creative individuals benefit from residence in and active exposure to a varied, socially-stimulating, and artistically enriched environment – Although there is no clear indication the Arthur’s residence in Dudley was an active, as opposed to a default choice, his parents did have executive control in this
matter for it is they who would decide where the family resided and what activities the family would attend and partake in.

2. Contrary to the notion of the genius created in a turbulent home, creative individuals - particularly those engaged in anthropo-creativity - thrive in stable family structures, with both parents present and engaged in what might be considered productive and socially acceptable jobs.

3. Parents who demonstrate an active interest and engagement in artistic pursuits during their leisure hours increase the child’s creative potential. Arthur’s parents both sang and played piano, thus affirming the act of music making in their home.

4. Creativity may be enhanced by the active inculcation or encouragement of some form of artistic pursuit in the child, particularly when the child exhibits an interest in, and talent for, the same.

5. Interaction with a variety of people, personalities, and viewpoints may enhance creativity. Arthur’s parents actively entertained visitors from a variety of backgrounds, thus exposing their children to possible futures and possible selves.

6. Creativity, or at the very least, talent development, benefits from material provision and instruction for, as well as an insistence upon a disciplined approach to, the chosen artistic pursuit.

7. The peripheral, if not active, presence of a spiritual focus in the child’s life. This may be regarded by some as a tangential factor, however the inherent complexity of theology and its mysterious quality are magnets for the creative individual and therefore have become the focus of many a creative lives,
including the renowned Broadway composer Andrew Lloyd Webber, whose music is redolent with spiritual and mystic themes (LaChiusa, 2002).

8. At appropriate levels of maturity, allowing the child the freedom and mobility to explore and develop along lines of his own choosing is vital to the expansion of the child’s skills, self-concept, and world-view.

9. When parents treat externally imposed deprivation as an incentive for creativity – lack of resources are seen as challenges for invention rather than as a deterrent to activities – the child learns to surmount obstacles and enter into the problem-solving mode. Therefore the active modeling of the problem-solving approach may add yet another weapon to the fledgling arsenal of the creative individual.

10. Encouraging active inquiry and learning, with the consequent development of a wide knowledge base, usually results in the creative individual amassing a reservoir of potent materials for future creative endeavors.

11. Through a life style that demonstrates compassionate choices, a diverse peer group, active involvement in the community, Arthur’s parents modeled some distinctly humanistic values – that human beings have intrinsic value, need each other, and profit from each other’s company – that became a part of not only his personal life, but also his profession, which is integrally connected to human beings.

In general then, the more variety in social and intellectual stimulus, the more parental encouragement of a potentially creative pursuit, and the more provisions (both material and disciplinary) that are made to enable the pursuit, the greater the chance of the child eventually leading a creative lifestyle. Obviously, any attempts to replicate Arthur’s
environment (move to Dudley) in order to raise a creative child would not only be ill-advised, but an egregious misunderstanding of the dynamics of creative potential, even if the child’s creative potential has been tested and verified. Fortunately, most parents are conscious that their well-meaning efforts at shaping an environment are at best an educated guess, and that the eventual trajectory of the creative individual depends not only upon the environment, but also upon the personality factors of the individual, a factor that we will examine in some detail in the following section.

The Individual

Developing in parallel with the cognitive approach, research in the psychosocial field has focused on the personality, motivation, and the socio-cultural environment as sources of creativity. Researchers generally concede that certain personality traits generally characterize creative people (Amabile, 1983; Barron, 1969; Eysenck, 1994, MacKinnon, 1961; and others). Further, the general stereotype of the creative individual promotes the idea that creativity is the purview of certain professions, including those engaged in artistic fields, such as poets, writers, and composers. However, Maslow (1999) expressed his reservations about this belief, stating that he too had unconsciously “... assumed that creativeness was the prerogative solely of certain professionals. But these expectations were broken up by various of my subjects who were ordinary people, engaged in ordinary endeavors” (p. 151). Maslow’s reluctance to accord the designation of “creative” based solely on one’s profession suggests a closer examination of characteristics and practices, rather than choice of profession; on an individual’s action, rather than ideology; on being, rather than saying. If Arthur is to be adjudged a creative individual, but his lifetime engagement in the arts is rejected as a viable claim to creativity, then the focus turns to an alternate avenue - an
examination of his characteristics and practices in order to establish his credentials as a potential member of the creative individuals' club.

Accordingly, the second installment of Arthur’s data story is divided into two parts: Part 1 is a selective examination of Arthur’s experiences, informed by the shortlist of characteristics identified as constituents of the creative personality, whereas Part 2 ventures into the esoteric characteristics of Arthur’s personality that have few precedents in the creativity literature, and yet are a significant part of Arthur’s persona and practice.

Apples to Apples

Legions of creativity researchers, among them Rogers (1959), Torrance (1962), Piirto (1992), G oertzel and G oertzel (1962), Gardner (1998), and Taylor and Ellison (1972), have provided either descriptions or exhaustive biographical accounts of eminent creators, and a systematic analysis of these accounts yields a comprehensive list of character traits that are generally accepted as reliable descriptors of the creative individuals (Appendix D). Although the presence of these traits by no means guarantees the creative output of an individual – just as the presence of wheels on a car does not guarantee mobility – this list provides a primary means of identification of what Torrance (1963) has labeled as “the creative potential.” (p. 3). Accordingly, the following narratives serve as prospecting fields where I attempt to unearth a variety of pre-identified traits – shown in italicized text where apparent – in order to determine if Arthur’s words and actions demonstrate any resemblance to the personality characteristics of the creative individual as documented in creativity literature.

L ovin’ it in L ondon

Arthur: After I got my undergraduate degree in 1950 – my bachelor’s degree in music – I pursued a postgraduate certificate in education in London in 1952 (Ability to reinvent oneself). If you’re going to teach, as I was, you did the post graduate diploma in education which is the
equivalent of a master's in education here, so I did that, at London University (Goal-oriented; Focused). If you went to London, especially if you're from Birmingham or somewhere outside of London, going to London was a new life. I was kind of born-again. It was a sort of rebirth, it was wonderful (Self-awareness; Spiritual overtones). It was an exciting time, mind you, and it was the Festival of Britain that year. It was a wonderful year. The Royal Festival Hall had just been built and there were all sorts of shows and plays and I remember going to Covent Garden Opera as often as I could afford it, and to the Saddler Wells opera where I saw many operas and concerts (Aesthetic awareness). I also did the occasional bit of studying, but I can't remember much of that! (Playfulness; Humor) I do, however, remember having a lot of fun.

During my graduate years, I must have been seen as a character slightly different and I certainly was. I insisted on wearing maroon colored pants (Rebellion). Now I think I was the only person in the world wearing maroon color pants and I wore them day after day. I don't quite know why... I was a rebel, I suppose... or just that I was rebelling against something. During my undergraduate and graduate years, the other students in the class were all much older than I was because they had served in WWII and I was the only one who was left out of it, so I may have been trying to make an impact (Alienated; Loner). I don't know that I was consciously doing it for that but it seemed OK... and if I wasn't wearing maroon pants, it was bright green pants (Uninterested in policing self-image).

Now in those days you didn't do things like that at all (Awareness of social structures). Being an Englishman, you wore gray for everything. Dark blue or gray, but certainly not bright colors - that was a no-no (Observer; Rejection of suppression as a mechanism of control). I really didn't care what other people thought (Unconventional; Independence of Judgment; Ability to withstand conflict). In any case, English people are very polite you know. You're on an English
train and don't see anybody's face because they're hidden behind a newspaper (Observant). So, everybody was polite and nice. I don't know why I might have done that... because I was a rebel, I suppose... at least I was one then... and in some ways I suppose I still am (Challenge of established authority; Self-awareness).

Anyway, at that time, I was very interested in the avant-garde music from Germany (Attracted to the mysterious; Adventurous; Actively searches for variety) – Stockhausen, Weben, Bartok, and people like that – you know, composers who are now almost forgotten (Open to external stimuli; Curiosity). I was interested in that having been whetted by recordings of that kind of music, so I would then plan to go see these things, not knowing what to expect (Risk taker; Constantly expanding knowledge base). I went to a number of avant-garde operas where the performers would squeak and holler and shout and make no apparent sense. It's not what people were used to; these were concerts where people needed to just do something different. I suppose it was part of the underground theater – a breaking away from the traditional, the ordinary, the pedestrian way of life (Insightful; Verbal intelligence). My response was “Thank you very much. I have squandered an entire evening, wasted two pounds, and I won't come back to see this one again.” (Passionate; Cynical) “But, I will see something else next week in the hope that it is something good.” (Flexible; Optimistic).

Frankly, I found avant-garde music weird, but at the same time, wonderful (Janusian thinking; Preference for complex ideas). Well, weird because it was anything and everything... it was different from any kind of conventional music that I'd heard before. And the sounds that people were making, the movements that they were making were way out – strange, crazy, squeaking, and shrieking, and rolling, and growling... it's hard to explain; I think you have to see it or hear it, but it was just way out stuff. It was also wonderful because it was so different (Adventurous); it was uninhibited. I think I liked very much the uninhibited nature of...
the whole thing (Sensual; Passionate). Your English people are very prim and proper, and I was thrilled at seeing English people letting their hair down in a way which I had never seen before... and don't particularly want to see again (Humor). I think that was the wonderful part. I think it was wonderful because it was expanding my vocabulary and my repertory (Ability to relinquish outmoded ideas); expanding my knowledge of music; of the world of the arts (Insightful). So that was an important part and I'm glad I did it. I've no regrets about having gone to all these weird things, as a matter of fact, I did buy some records of some of these recordings, believe it or not, and I did play them a few times after that, but that part of my life is long since gone... (Ability to delay closure).

I lived at the student hostel and people from all over the world were there, so I organized a series of Saturday night concerts where people from each of those countries would present a play, or a speech, a song, or performance of some sort (Curious; Aesthetic awareness; Enterprising; Sociable). As it turned out, we had the most interesting variety of concerts (Openness to new ideas). I remember people came literally from all parts of London to watch. Some of it was very strange (Judgmental); the one I remember best was this Chinese lady I had invited to sing a traditional Chinese song. It was the first time I'd heard authentic native Chinese music and I could not understand her at all. The singer was so bad that the audience was quite put off, and because I had organized it, I turned as red as a tomato (Observant; Sensitive). Well these days I wouldn't do that of course... I mean I would still invite them to sing their song, but I would be prepared and say to the people, “Look, this is going to sound very strange. It might sound very amusing, but this is authentic music and I hope you enjoy it and I hope it will widen your horizons” (Pedagogic streak). In a way, it certainly widened my horizons and prepared me for anything that would come in my life (Insightful; Sense of Destiny).
Arthur: I’ll never forget the first winter that we were here in the States, they [Seminary classmates] had invited us to a Halloween party and we didn’t know what Halloween was – it was not part of the British tradition – so it was explained to us that you dressed up in fancy dress and went to a party and so on. So my wife and I, well it was I who decided that we should all dress up like ice cream cones for this party. You see, since I was white, we had playfully referred to me as being vanilla and my wife was chocolate, and our two daughters whose skin tone is somewhere in between, would be cafe au lait (Humor; Self-deprecation). I thought it was a brilliant statement on race (Differentiated value hierarchy). So we got a little cart and we made these costumes that made us look like ice cream cones and we each had a thing across the chest that said chocolate, vanilla, or cafe au lait. And then, on the cart, I painted a big sign saying “Ice cream – Various flavors. No K-K-credit cards,” with credit spelled with a letter K… No KKKredit cards (Intelligent; Observant; Opportunistic; Rejection of suppression as a mechanism of control). We were pleased as punch with our ensemble and we were sure we’d win the prize for best costume (Internal locus of control).

On the day of the party, we wheeled our cart to the door and then we made our grand entrance. There was a deathly hush that fell over the room, a sort of ripple of turned heads that started at the door where we stood and made its way all the way to far wall. It was obvious that we had done the wrong thing. You could have heard the Jell-O melt – that’s how quiet it got (Observer). They didn’t find it in any way funny, and we thought it was hilarious (Intrinsically satisfied; Independence of judgment; Ability to endure conflict). We were making fun of this sacred cow – racism (Rebellion). Of course, we did not get the prize, and as soon as it was decently possible, we walked out. It got rather chilly in there and there was no air conditioning on at the time, if you know what I mean...
Researchers who use personality correlates of creative behavior generally study highly creative individuals, and after determining personality characteristics they share in common, compare the test subjects – children or other adults – with these characteristics under the assumption that individuals who compare favorably are predisposed to creative achievement (Plucker & Renzulli, 1999). Compared to the master list of creative characteristics, and based on his recollections of his transformative experiences in London and the United States, Arthur demonstrates a significant number of the characteristics associated with the creative individual. But does this necessarily make him a creative individual? Are there other factors to consider before bestowing this label on him? Answers to these questions must necessarily be evasive because there is no absolute prototype of the creative individual, no single mold into which all creative individuals will fit. McKinnon (1978) has indicated, “The full and complete picturing of the creative person will require many images. But if, despite this caution, one still insists on asking what most generally characterizes the creative individual, it is his high level of effective intelligence, his openness to experience, his freedom from crippling restraints and impoverishing inhibitions, his aesthetic sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, his independence in thought and action, his unquestioning commitment to creative endeavor, and his unceasing striving for solutions to the ever more difficult problems that he constantly sets for himself” (p. 186). Based on MacKinnon’s shortlist alone, Arthur qualifies as a creative individual...

Rare Fruit

Based on the above set of characteristics, Arthur shares a resemblance to some creative individuals, however he also exhibits differences that typify him as a unique creative.
On this point, Wallace (1989a) has suggested that every person is like others in some respects (Alpha), like some others in some respects (Beta), and like no others in some respects (Gamma). Further, Gruber and Wallace (1999) have suggested that an additional factor – Omega – be added to account for the “distribution and configurations of Alpha, Beta, and Gamma – how they are represented and entangled so to speak – that makes up the whole person and the person’s individuality” (p. 100). Having identified the research based Alpha and Beta factors – a resemblance between Arthur’s characteristics and the prototypes identified by researchers as being part of the creative individual’s make-up – in the previous discussion, the following section lists the pseudo-Gamma factors (without exhaustive data, it would be unwise to label a characteristic as unique) that distinguish Arthur from other creative individuals.

Sociability and Gregariousness

Arthur: I lived at the student hostel and people from all over the world were there, so I organized a series of Saturday night concerts where people from each of those countries would present a play, or a speech, a song, or performance of some sort.

More often than not, the creative individual is viewed as the loner, the recluse, the hermit, or as the misunderstood genius that realizes the machinations of his mind in some secret hideaway. Vervalin (1962) noted this tendency toward introversion, further suggesting that the creative individual’s disinterest in policing one’s public image somehow enables this self-imposed exile from public affairs. There are, however, exceptions to this view.

Arthur surrounded himself with people and thrived within social situations. He has maintained that he has always wanted to be married – he has in fact, always been married – and that family, friends, and social networks are an important and necessary part of his life. He recalls having eschewed a solo career – the prima donna
status – from his early days in music, preferring to work as an accompanist, or co-creator, of music. Further, Arthur appears to have actively sought companionship and enjoyed spending time with the special people in his life, particularly his grandparents and teachers, whom he probably saw as sources of inspiration and support.

In college, Arthur’s social agenda appears to have taken center stage, particularly with his interest in expanding his cultural awareness by organizing the series of Saturday night concerts – another example of his anthropo-creativity. Later, when Arthur grappled with his faith, interestingly enough, he relinquished what some might consider a vital relationship – with a God of his choosing – while maintaining a relationship with human beings. Arthur’s faith in humans, and the desire to surround himself with humans, while contrary to theoretical findings, is a necessary component of his personality.

Arthur: I became an agnostic, a humanist agnostic; because I was still interested in people and knew that we needed each other … .

The Pedagogic Stræk

Arthur: I had learned in my year in London as an education student that the key word in education was “correlation.” Whatever you do must be correlated to what other people are doing within the school so I tried to do that. In fact, if I taught a song about the mountains, we talked about the mountains. “Have you been to the Welsh mountains?” I would ask …

By dint of sharing their creations with others, creative individuals are honorary pedagogues who, in keeping with the dictionary definition of the term, lead the way, and enlighten others in the process. However, in reality, and perhaps linked to their introversion and generally hostile reception by others (Torrance, 1968), there are few records of eminent creative individuals actively seeking to teach in the field of their endeavor. Contrary to expectations, Arthur, who could very well have
constructed a successful career within the confines of his field - music and theatre - actively sought to broaden his work by teaching within (educating while he directed a show) and without (teaching music to young and old alike) the field. In addition, he would often choose a particular script purely on the basis of it's educational content - one of his favorites, Benjamin Britten’s *Let’s Make an Opera*, is about a group of students learning how to produce an opera - thus expressing his distinct preference for "something to sink one’s teeth into“ rather than just a "fun show."

Arthur: Unless teaching is your point of view... in your blood, so to speak, you are not a teacher. You have to have what it takes to impart knowledge; to draw it out in all your students - you know education means drawing out of people. If you don't have what it takes to enable them, you're not going to be the best teacher; you might be a good teacher but not the best.

Longitudinal Inspiration - a long-term attentiveness to one's inner voices

Arthur: You see, one of my early childhood ambitions - when I was about ten or twelve - was to go to a church school to be a missionary in some poor country. It was stimulated even more at this time, this desire to become a missionary, as you can imagine - being around a campfire with every body warm and fuzzy and drinking hot chocolate, and all. That was the dream... to be a missionary.

Most of us are aware of the voices inside our heads that by turns dictate our actions, contradict our rationalizations, temper emotion, sing inane melodies, play out culturally encoded scripts, and generally create the incessant psychobabble that we must necessarily navigate on a daily basis. Once in a rare while, those voices join in divine chorus - read inspiration - that may change the way we think of the world around us, and if we are vocal and persuasive enough, change the way the people around us think of the world. Since creative output has historically been associated with flashes of inspiration (Weiner, 2000), catching a momentary snatch of this divine chorus may be all that’s necessary for the creation of an inanimate artifact or a theory, but when the creation is the self - as in the iterative process of reinventing
oneself day after day – a snatch or phrase will not suffice. Then, the creator must strain to hear not only the divine chorus in its entirety, but also replay the chorus consistently, sometimes for decades on end.

Cognizant of this tendency, Gruber and Wallace (1999) added a fourth criterion to their evaluation of a creative work, namely duration – the idea that creative people take on hard projects lasting a long time. In concert with this notion, Beethoven (Hamburger, 1952) is reputed to have carried musical ideas and phrases in his head for years before finally committing them to paper. Arthur’s idea of becoming a missionary was a similar long-term construct that he worked on for decades. By way of illustration, early in his life, Arthur was aware of the voices in his head that sang of his life as a missionary. Enraptured by this siren-like call, he worked his way out of the environs of Dudley to an urban college to study music. When theological disillusionment set in, rather than abandon the message of the voices totally, he managed to quell them temporarily, migrating to Jamaica to work there in theatre, radio, and broadcasting (note the similarity of these endeavors to missionary work, since they are essentially semiotic, and further, evident forms of communication). Years later, when the political and social situation in Jamaica deteriorated alarmingly, he moved to the Bahamas to continue with his teaching and public music making (missionary work, again). Finally, unable to delay the urgings of the original chorus any longer, he migrated to the United States to actualize his intents of becoming a missionary. In realizing his original vision, in creating a self, dictated by his chorus of voices, over a period of sixty odd years, Arthur nurtured his creative vision, taking lateral steps where necessary to prepare for the final formulation of the self as he had envisioned it many decades ago. Finally, rather
than join the ranks of the fatalists, what Thoreau labeled “... lives of quiet
desperation,” Arthur uprooted his comfortable life in the Bahamas, assumed
leadership of his life’s cantori, and eventually became a missionary to America.

Arthur: It was in the middle of my three year contract in the Bahamas, that my Christian
faith returned, and with it, the urge, the need from within – the motivation if you will – to
do something about it... to train to be a missionary... to go somewhere where I could help
the heathen in some poor, hapless country. So I came to America, of course!

Purposive or Generative Creativity

Arthur: I think, that’s how I understand my mission in life – to share, and to enable, which is
part of the sharing, and I hope that’s a good attitude, but it’s the only way that I can be.
Look at my work here at church: I prepare a sermon, but it’s not for me to hear; it’s for all
those folks out there to hear, or I prepare some music for service but it’s not for me, not for
my delight ... it’s to help in their worship.

Every creative product is, ipso facto and simultaneously, a mute testimonial
to creativity and a memorial to the creative individual who was responsible for it.
Some creative products profess no intent of broader publication (such as the not-
for-profit scribbling in my personal diary) and are impelled by the need to articulate
an inner urge, whereas yet other creative products (the gamut of commercial
enterprise falls within this category) are manifestations of a conscious desire to make
a universal statement, to mean something, or effect change in some way. There is a
third category that transcends these categories, and one that is displayed in Arthur’s
work: purposive or generative creativity – the intent to create a situation or process
whereby others can create.

Clearly, for Arthur, music and theatre were a means to explore the
individual’s relationship to the divine and in creating and presenting stage
productions, he sought to create a situation within which he could enable people to
create their own vivid interpretations and representations of faith. Thus, Arthur’s
stage productions in England, Jamaica, and the United States may ostensibly have been an expression of his creativity, however, there was also an undercurrent of missionary intent in these enterprises - the desire to transform the populace and leave a legacy.

Operating harmoniously with his pedagogic and gregarious instincts, the need for generativity - a promulgation or dissemination of one's ethos - within his milieu was a strong incentive for his creative work. Lindauer (1992) has noted a distinct and perceptible late-life style change in a creative individual, as well as the occurrence of the “swan-song” phenomenon - often a convulsive and self-sacrificing effort to create a work of some permanence. If Arthur's artistic engagement within each culture is viewed as a finite “lifetime” within the span of his life, the swan-song phenomenon is especially apparent, and the conscious realization of his imminent “death” - read migration - within that cultural group perhaps brought about an added surge of energy, introspection, and spiritual awakening that may not have been present in earlier works. More to the point, Arthur has had the opportunity to survey his theatre residencies and evaluate the effects of his swansongs in each instance - an exercise that usually leaves him despondent but unregretful.

Arthur: I think the story of my life is that I go into a new place and I do exciting things where there is nothing exciting and I move away and unfortunately, it doesn’t always take, or the same level of excitement isn’t maintained. There isn't immediately somebody coming in and saying “let's carry on with this work” which is always disappointing I suppose... but I have no regrets, except perhaps that maybe there wasn't enough inspiration started up in somebody else to carry on the work...
Findings and Implications - The Individual

Socrates’ injunction, “know thyself,” is perhaps the ideal point for the cognizant adult to begin the strenuous journey to self-discovery; a journey marked by a deep and intimate knowledge of one’s functioning, that may fall into place in one startling moment of clarity, or build gradually, as slices of self-realization upon the prong of one’s consciousness. Arthur’s experience demonstrates that individuals who are aware of their skills, their predilections, and their drawbacks are likely to lead more creative lives than those who stagger through the miasma of daily chores and tasks, or worse, doggedly deny that anything is amiss. Contrary to this ostrich-like head in the sand approach, Arthur’s choices reflect an awareness of self and his desire to fulfill that self; choices which, when compounded by the skills and motivation to effect this change, have eventually led him to his current station in life. Apart from the personality characteristics identified above, there are several noteworthy personality-based choices that have had a major impact on Arthur’s creation of self and on his anthropo-creativity.

Kirton (1987) has distinguished between the adaptive and the innovative creator, suggesting that compared to the rebellious innovator type, the adaptive creator is more likely to operate within the structures of the establishment, be functional, and elaborate on existing schemes. A review of Arthur’s personality and operational styles suggest a strong adaptive tendency that has stood him in good stead during his transitions through various cultures. Without being overly acquiescent or sycophantic, he appears to have found a stable balance between his creative urges and the needs of the institutions.

Guilford (1987) and Simonton (1987) both contended that formal education dampens the creative urge; that the adding of successive intellectual structures and processes reduces the fluency and flexibility of the individual by “stamping in a conformist
perspective” (p. 72). However, in Arthur’s case, there is no evidence to suggest that his music or stage creations have changed perceptibly since he earned an advanced degree. If anything, he now appears to have a deeper investment and insight into his music and the creation of stage pieces.

Finally, Arthur’s experience of producing a traditional British opera written in medieval English, with diverse cultural groups in Jamaica and the United States, was not only one of his more successful endeavors, but also a highpoint of his creative work. His creative output appears to have become more eclectic (more universal, more transcendent) because he has had the opportunity to stage productions in varying cultural practices. Also, due to the accrual effects of time and experience, each successive production gained in depth and facility. Confirming this notion, Simonton (1987) has proposed that composers who move across cultures usually dabble in unusual harmonies, notes, and scales – perhaps detritus from their native cultures – suggesting that migration, or at the very least a lengthy residence in a foreign culture, is beneficial to creativity.

Anthropo-creativity

Creative individuals vary in their interactions with the environment. Some disappear into their private domains to create their masterworks in solitude, apparently never again to be explicitly affected by the discourses or practices of their culture, while others, like Arthur, engage in visible, socially interactive professions that keep them connected to the cultural Gaia. In almost karmic fashion, the very factor – the environment – that once influenced Arthur’s early development as a creative individual, returned to the forefront and became a pronounced factor in his work in theatre. Successful theatre and opera are predominantly social enterprises that depend not only upon the skills and practices of the people involved
in the show, but also on the thoughts, beliefs, and responses of the broader population – the audience – who represent the culture within which these theatre productions are mounted.

As noted earlier, theatre is essentially a social transaction in two parts: The first is the human interaction that creates the event, followed the second, an audience’s viewing, reaction, and support of the event. Predictably then, the variations in composition of the cast, their skills, and the material availability would ensure that a production of Hamlet in the Dane’s native land, Denmark, would be differently constructed than a similar production in Djibouti. Further, acknowledging Mockros and Csikszentmihalyi’s (1999) concept of socially-sanctioned creativity, the continued patronization of a production – the standard benchmark for success in the theatrical world – is largely dependant on its positive reception by an audience, an outcome that relies heavily upon the degree of similarity between the production and the audience’s level of sophistication. Hardly surprising then, that opera does not thrive very much in mining towns, and truly avant-garde theatre has yet to appear on Broadway.

Accordingly, a significant factor in the choice and interpretation of a given production was the quality and sophistication of the intended audience. Without implying that Arthur capitulated to popular movements in the arts, or pandered to the lowest common denominator, the inescapable consequence of encountering the social and cultural tensions of the time was that not only were the performances and material manifestation of his production informed by these forces, but so were the choices that Arthur made for each one of his productions. Cumulatively then, while directors like Arthur, have creative freedom of interpretation in the initial stages of the production, the show’s eventual success also depends on its execution by the actors and on its reception by an audience. Thus, the
institutions and the people who interacted with Arthur during production played a decisive role in his creative functioning.

Further, just as any major organization’s annual report is a checksum of its constituent departments’ balance sheets, a national culture is a composite of various subcultures, each one contributing its unique flavor to the national identity. Since the thesis of this project was to explore the relationship between cultural practices and Arthur’s creative functioning, the issue then was not whether Arthur had interacted with the checksum of a culture, or even how it’s constituent sub-cultures varied in their practices, but rather, what specific practices in a culture enabled or impelled Arthur’s creative functioning and which practices disabled or blocked his functioning as a creative individual.

When asked to select and share a creative experience in the three cultures he has resided in, Arthur shared his experience of producing a play in the following four settings:

1. As a novice teacher of music at a middle-class, co-ed, suburban high school in Birmingham, England, producing and directing Benjamin Britten’s *Let’s Make an Opera* with an all student cast.

2. As an experienced teacher and choir director in a predominantly middle-class, all-boys parish school in Kingston, Jamaica, producing and directing Benjamin Britten’s *Noye’s Fludde*, with a predominantly student cast supplemented by adults from the community.

3. As a doctoral student and graduate assistant at the theological seminary attended by young adults, in Atlanta, Georgia, producing and directing the students in Benjamin Britten’s *Noye’s Fludde* and
4. As a full-time music teacher at a low SES, predominantly African American, urban high school in Atlanta, Georgia, producing and directing an in-class performance of variety songs and choir pieces.

While Arthur’s experiences in each of these four settings provided rich data about the nature and effects of cultural practices on his anthropo-creativity, none of the experiences stood out as being particularly conducive or antagonistic to his creativity. Therefore, rather than compare these experiences in their totality, or even in chronological order, I intentionally a) selected specific cultural practices from each the four experiences, and b) based on their content, juxtaposed them with another experience from another culture, thus setting up an oppositional binary in order to examine cultural practices that ostensibly encouraged or blocked Arthur’s anthropo-creativity within these milieus.

**Proximity**

Arthur: Jamaica turned out to be very much like a Britain, so I don’t think there were many times where there were any sort of cultural boundaries which were even pointed out to me. It all seemed very normal. I could not believe how normal it was. When I’d go to teach in the school, go to the staff room to drink my coffee with the staff, we’d hear the same kind of jokes, the same complaints about the kids, or work, or whatever it was. It wasn’t as if I’d gone to a foreign country.

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**Versus**

**Distance**

Arthur: I would never be happy living and working in a culture that was so different from my own, like say Russia or China - the places I have chosen to live, Jamaica and America, have been sub-cultures of the British and they’re still sort of anglophiles, you know...

Arthur found Jamaica to be very much like Britain, in that just about every institution or social practice was modeled along the lines of British society. His immediate ease in this different but very similar situation suggests that cultural proximity may be a significant factor in anthropo-creativity. Arguably then, a similarity between the cultural practices of the
immigrant and those of the natives offers distinct cultural advantages. For instance, a person from Bengal, who has some knowledge of the cultural practices of people from neighboring Bangladesh, would perhaps be far more at ease in the discourse than say a person from Ethiopia, or distant Argentina. Further, due to geographic proximity and a sense of shared cultural practices based on local traditions that defy international boundaries, the discourses of the Bengali would be relatively closer in nature to that of the Bangladeshi than the discourses of the person from Argentina, possibly privileging the Bengali over the Argentinean in interactions with the Bangladeshis. By extension, proximity of cultural practices may be a crucial factor for the theatre director, since successful theatre productions depend on significant interactions and productive negotiations between the director and the cast.

The obvious disadvantages of moving to a remote or alien culture, which would necessitate the time-consuming task of learning a new language and alien – some perhaps repulsive – cultural practices, were not lost on Arthur, who, it appears, made a conscious choice to move to a culture that would not only offer opportunities, but also one where he could start with his creative endeavors relatively quickly after settling in.

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Familiarity

Arthur: I was well prepared for what I was going to find in Jamaica because I had a Jamaican wife and relatives in Britain, and from having spent a considerable amount of my last year in London as a student with people from Jamaica at the hostel where I lived. So I knew a great deal about the culture, and I sort of knew what to expect, but it’s not quite the same as being there of course...
Alien-ness

Arthur: I was working in television – I did a daily program for children, and I had a morning program on radio – and there was a new program in development for which they were auditioning people. They wanted people from the staff, so I applied. The stage director called me in and said “No, we cannot use you because your face does not look right…” That was perhaps the only time in all my years in Jamaica, that I had been rejected due to the color of my skin.

The pursuit of more fulfilling fields and the resultant migration of the creative individual are accompanied by the inevitable acculturative stress – stress associated with having to adapt to a new set of social structures and data inputs – and there are consequent changes in the migrant individual’s cognitive, personality, and attitudinal variables (Berry, 1980). The degree of change is arguably commensurate with the amount of cultural “distance” between the migrant’s native cultural practices and the alien practices he encounters, as well as his willingness to bridge the distance, or assimilate. Common sense suggests that a person already familiar with a certain task or situation is more likely to perform the task or function within the situation in a more competent manner than one who is completely unfamiliar with the situation. Arthur’s enculturation and familiarization with Jamaican practices before he actually stepped foot on Jamaican soil, or his encounter with American cultural practices during his interviews were previews of a possible future in those countries. Rather than breed contempt, familiarity, in this case, not only bred ease of functioning, but also minimized the acculturative stress. Not surprisingly, the creative individual who prepares for extra-cultural experiences by familiarization with language and cultural practices stands to gain the advantage of uninterrupted creative functioning within the “new” cultural practices he encounters.
Receptivity

Arthur: I remember looking at the newspaper when I first went to Jamaica and noticing how amusing a lot of this was, because people were able to speak about their political leaders through cartoons and so on. That continues to this day – the ability of the people to be amused by what’s going on, to express their views, so there was an openness …

Versus

Rejection

Arthur: I remember when Black History month came around – and I was there for two years – the first year I thought “Well, Black history… what could be better than jazz? Or the history of jazz? We could look at this style and that player …” but my students wanted no part of it. They did not want to listen to the music from Chicago and they did not want to hear jazz because it wasn’t the music of their time...

Matsumoto (2000) has suggested that some cultures are “open” and others “closed” based on their relative receptivity to, or rejection of ideas and influences from without. Viewed as opposing bookends on the degree of cultural receptivity continuum, those groups that are receptive to ideas and willing to transform and evolve (ethos – freedom is healthy, change is good) are diametrically opposed to those that maintain a status quo (ethos – why fix it if it ain’t broke?), with other moderate groups located somewhere in between. More to the point however, is that all occupants of a cultural group are nominally subject to the consensual will of the culture and expected to conform to the cultural practices of the group. But what of the newly arrived immigrant? The new-kid-on-the-block who may or may not know the rules of the game?

The theatre director – Arthur, the creative individual – offers his thoughts and ideas to the cultural group, hoping perhaps to be auditioned and accepted. In an open society where receptiveness is a cultural practice, Arthur’s overtures would fall on fertile soil, as they did in the Jamaican school which invited him to direct and stage a production of Benjamin Britten’s Noye’s Fludde, thus not only enabling, but also reinforcing his creative talents.
Further, because of Arthur’s mode of entrée into the culture – he was married to one of the “natives” and therefore not a complete alien – and his facility with the local cultural practices, his interactions with the cast were very agreeable, a fact that measurably enhanced his anthropo-creativity.

On the other hand, Arthur encounter with what Matsumoto defines as a “closed culture” – one that was at best passive, and at worst utterly hostile to his creative and communicative attempts – resulted in his abandoning his original creative enterprise for a more derivative and less articulate production. Although various sub-cultural factors such as age, language barriers, and discrepant SES, could justify the hostility that Arthur evinced in this situation, Arthur’s lasting impression of the event was of being forced into a fatal tailspin from which he could not recover. Further, and arguably so, Arthur’s choice of Jazz as a suitable musical style for Black History month could be construed as elitism or anachronistic thinking – perhaps fueled by his fondness for classical and folk music and a commensurate revulsion for contemporary rap and reggae music. Whatever the stimulus for this hostility, Arthur’s disillusionment with this situation was so complete that were it not for the dictates of the school administration and the strong control he exerted over his emotions, Arthur would have forsaken the production altogether. Again, Arthur’s inability to communicate with, lack of entrée into, and perhaps little facility with the cultural practices of these particular students were serious impediments in that situation.

Unfettered Opportunity

Arthur: I was able to do all sorts of things in Jamaica which I could have never done in Britain because the kind of things that I would’ve liked to have done – like newspaper critic, or music critic for the newspaper – were already being done and written about by other people. Jamaica gave me the opportunity, the sort of opportunity, which I would never have had in England. In Jamaica, I was willing to experiment with anything... there was a demand, there was the opportunity to do it, so I found myself doing it... and enjoying it.
Arthur: It had to be rap or reggae; Jazz wasn’t the sort of stuff that they were accustomed to. Their thinking was very narrow, and try as I might, I couldn’t get through to them, but that’s my failure... failing to achieve, when all I had hoped to do was to make an impact...

We have perhaps all had the experience of being involved in a particular social group where our specific talents were marginalized due to a surfeit of similar skills, or because of having “been there and done that,” our social circle rejected our creations. The outcome of such marginalization or social rejection ranges from complete shut down (a regression from interaction) of the creative individual – what Berman (1999) described as inhibition or “totally effective repression” (p. 85) where creative activity emerges via hysteria and other forms of psychosomatic illness – or, if motivation is maintained and the creator compelled to act, a re-channeling of energies into an active search for problems. Some might argue that the identification and filling of a niche in an experientially drenched society is the true test of creativity, however, Arthur’s experience shows that creative individual’s may thrive more in a less saturated environment. For Arthur, the presence of all those opportunities in Jamaica, served not only as fertile soil for expressions of his creativity, but also aided in development of his talents thereby enriching his cultural experience.

Further, Arthur’s creativity was enhanced by the zeitgeist – literally, spirit of the age – that stimulated his abilities and his personal growth. In this context, Simonton (1999) has made a strong argument for the connection between the zeitgeist and the “inevitability factor” which he defined as “a time where the idea is in the air for anyone to pick, regardless of talent, or even training” (p. 274). Without minimizing the creative individual’s abilities, Simonton has suggested that unlike ad hoc creativity, or the creation-during-trauma scenario, sometimes the zeitgeist provides the impetus for any reasonably alert person to take full
advantage of the situation, resulting in highly creative or beneficial outcomes. As verification, consider the following hypothetical situation: If instead of the British, Nazi Germany had occupied India in the early part of the twentieth century, would Gandhi have been able to confront the Nazis with the same élan and degree of success as he did the cultural systems of the British? Perhaps not, especially considering the Third Reich’s extremist views based on their concept of Aryan supremacy. Hypothetically then, one could argue that the zeitgeist was as responsible for Gandhi’s success as were his own creativity and personal acumen.

Gardner (1988) has supported the zeitgeist concept, pointing out that the “genetic” Freud could have lived anywhere on the planet, but the “historical” Freud spent most of his life in Vienna. Around the turn of the century, Vienna was in many ways unique, and it is appropriate to assume that this cultural “field” exerted an important, if not decisive impact on Freud’s lines of development” (p. 313). Similarly, Arthur was fortunate to have been in Jamaica during those pre-independence years when the prevalent zeitgeist offered his particular skills and talents a wide variety of outlets, and exerted a decisive influence on his anthropo-creativity.

Creativogenic environment

Arthur: Here, I was in a more balanced situation and I’m grateful I think that I had the experience of being a student again, before I was allowed to direct. It allowed a nice balance to develop; one that suited me more at my stage of life... and one that helped in my developing and becoming more mature I hope.

Versus

Repressive environment

Arthur: I look for the opportunities, the facilities, the people who would be interested, and have the open-mindedness to try various experiments. I could never work for instance, in a conservative church, a fundamentalist conservative church, that would be my death. I couldn’t do that...
The commercial version of the quest for fulfillment goes thus: The long oppressed employee finally unchains herself from the dark and dingy desk, walks resolutely down the hall past other shackled peers who lustily cheer her on to freedom, and before one can say “Guadalajara!” she is reclining in a hammock on some island paradise, pursuing her labor of choice - sunbathing, eating conch fritters, and drinking pina coladas till the sun sets. This scenario, with the exception of the cheering multitudes, is perhaps an apt representation of the creative individual’s search for the ideal environment; a utopia where the individual has free access to the necessary tools of his craft, ongoing inspirational demonstrations by other creative individuals, and favorable cultural practices and conditions where the creative individual can indulge in the creative act, without fear of ridicule or reprisal. Although the existence of such a utopia is debatable, Arieti (1976), who employed the term “Creativogenic” to refer to an environment that fosters creativity, has listed its socio-cultural components: (a) The availability of cultural (and certain physical) means, (b) openness of cultural stimuli, (c) stress on becoming and not just being, (d) free access to cultural media for all citizens without discrimination, (e) retention of moderate amounts of discrimination - which after bouts of severe oppression or absolute exclusion, serves as an incentive to creativity, (f) exposure to different and even contrasting cultural stimuli, (g) tolerance for and interest in diverging views, (h) interactions between significant persons in the culture, and (i) promotion of incentives and rewards.

Further, in order to reconcile the mutual sharing between the creative individual and society, Arieti proposed an interactionist model in which “the individual offers or exposes his biological potentialities to the culture, and there follows an acquisition, on the part of the individual, of things already present in the culture” (p. 305). However, Simonton (1997) has
contended that a mere docile exchange of ideas is far from the ideal situation for the creative individual. He stressed the importance of contrasting and oppositional cultural stimuli to instigate the creative mind, because “when a society is characterized by multiple belief systems engaged in controversy and debate, each vying for the allegiance of a civilization’s denizens, creativity has more latitude for growth” (p. 270). The experience of always being the dominant and knowledgeable person is not necessarily in the best interest of the creative individual, and Arthur’s experience of producing at the theological seminary – which included some subjugation (as a student), some critical review (by teachers), and some degree of dissention (from peers) actually prompted his intellectual development, emotional maturity, and anthropo-creativity.

Skilled resources

Arthur: I was able to do Noye’s Fludde at the seminary because there were people on faculty who willing to take part or to play instruments, and more important, because many of the students at the seminary were married and had children. These were mature students who had some language skills and could more easily master the music and the language. Also, the cast had a focus in life – they were all there to become ministers and that meant a spiritual level, which I would not have found of course in the previous productions with kids.

Versus

Rudimentary resources

Arthur: Here in my first job [in Birmingham], I was faced with a whole uncomfortable mix of kids – some were of high school age, some of a lower mentality, and some were not “there” at all; others waiting to go to a technical school or to a place where they had to catch up on their education – and it was a very poor housing area so the backgrounds of these kids were very difficult. They were not from cultured homes and they not only had never gone to an opera or symphony, but they did not know what one was...

One of the more excruciating rites of passage for a stage director is the acknowledgement that that perfect production dancing around in one’s head will never materialize, mainly because it depends almost entirely on that most unpredictable and
inconsistent of all work materials – the human being. The corollary to this admission is the truism that a production is only as good as the people involved in it, and long before a production goes into rehearsal, the director is engaged in an informal search for the most workable and appropriate materials for the production. Given the finite amount of time in which to realize a production, the ideal situation for the director is the immediate availability of knowledgeable, skillful, and motivated people, and often, the director’s choice of shows, their staging, and their outcome are entirely dependant on the theatrical quality of personnel that get involved.

The availability of such outstanding casts and crews are a function of a culture’s valuing of, and their practices surrounding the arts. Obviously, those societies that invite and integrate the arts into their daily discourse and practices are far more likely to produce practitioners with the requisite skills (as well as an arts-conscious citizenry with artistic sensibilities) than those societies that focus on non-arts based endeavors. Further, and from an individualistic viewpoint, those practitioners who, due to their maturity or insight, can adequately delve into the intricacies of the text will be capable of producing a far more articulate and faceted performance than that produced by actors whose skills and insights are superficial or limited.

Specifically then, Arthur’s anthropo-creativity, and the successful outcome of his productions were entirely dependant on the cultural practices of the societies he found himself in; practices that directly influenced the availability, theatrical training, maturity and motivation of the personnel available for the production. Given that Arthur’s commitment to shaping the production would remain somewhat consistent from show to show, the change in working materials – the varying degree of human skills he had to contend with – had a significant effect on his anthropo-creativity.
Analogous SES

Arthur: I went to my advisor and said, “Please find me another school.” And she did. She found me a wonderful girl's high school – from boys to girls, and I’d never taught in a mixed school or been in a mixed school till that time – and I was able to do a whole lot of things there during my student days; the things that I had really wanted to teach, and some of the experiments, test out some of the theory of teaching music, and listen to some of the music, and explain it, and appreciate music... So, it was a good, good time.

Versus

Disjuncture

Arthur: I remember first of all being sent to a very English, very posh, public school - which in England means private school. Now that's where all the blue bloods and the aristocracy attended, and I hated every minute of it. It wasn't my speed. I'm not an aristocrat; I don't come from that kind of background and I felt uncomfortable being there. But the thing that made me most uncomfortable was that the kids treated their music master, me, in a disgraceful sort of way - they ran all over him, called him names, laughed at him, and such - and I said no, no... no! I cannot learn much in a situation like this because soon I would seize one of those nasty fellows with a lot of money and do god knows what...

Karl Marx may be passé now, but it wasn’t long ago that almost every discussion of creativity and society included some reference to social class, an arbitrary division that is usually connected to socio-economic status, and played out in almost all societies and cultures. Akin to the corporate hierarchy that, in a single skyscraper, ensconces its elite in penthouse apartments, houses middle management on lower floors, and relegates the peons to the basement, there exists within each cultural group an almost tangible social hierarchy often demarcated by socio-economic status. This hierarchy, subdivided along the seams of social status, is probably easiest to recognize due to the resultant cultural practices of that status. Thus, although everybody in the skyscraper is on the same “team,” (read cultural group) each group tacitly recognizes the schism that separates them from the other groups; a schism indicated by the variations in the intra-group cultural practices. Further, due to this intra-group variability in cultural practices, any meaningful, long-term interaction between individuals of varied status, though certainly possible, is rare, and instances of repression and
rebellion are evident, if not commonplace. Therefore, J. J. Baxter, the protagonist of The Apartment (Wilder, 1960) who resigns from his prestigious corporate job in protest over the atrocious demands of his superiors, is prototypical of Arthur’s rebellion against the atrocious treatment at the hands of his aristocratic students, a situation that, like Baxter, resulted in Arthur’s unceremonious exit.

Presumably, Arthur’s general dissatisfaction with the situation due to his mistreatment at the hands of those “nasty fellows” would have been a strong deterrent to producing a show at that school - an act of anthropo-creativity that would require intimate interaction with students of a superior social status. The hostility and ridicule he evinced at this school, presumably based on this disjointed social status (among other things) no doubt influenced his work, led to a barren tenure, and eventually forced his resignation. On the one hand, Arthur’s insights and inability (unwillingness?) to tolerate fools (Piirto, 1992), brought him to an awareness of his unsuitability within the level of hierarchy that he had been placed in, and rather than mutate into a pseudo representation of that social level, he chose to opt out entirely. On the other hand, Torrance (1962) has listed some unflattering traits of creative individuals, including their lack of sophistication and boorishness, which may be seen as alternative causes of Arthur’s decision to leave the aristocratic school.

Political safety

Arthur: Working in the arts in Jamaica was very different because I had a much freer rein. You see, before independence Jamaica was a placid, gentle sort of place, where people enjoyed their music, their folk songs, their folk dances and their theater.
Arthur: The climate of Jamaica changed perceptibly then. Political supporters were now armed and the political slogans were inflammatory challenges such as “Burn them,” “Fire,” and “Kill!” And there was much politically motivated murder, so by 1970, when elections took place, over a thousand people had been murdered in Kingston alone – political murders, you know. I remember all sorts of terrible things were going on, and the climate had changed, so it was time for us to leave...

Political unrest has proven itself a fertile ground for some kinds of social creativity to emerge, a la Gandhi, Martin Luther King, or Anna Devere Smith – the kind of creativity that unites fractious elements, points out injustice, or poignantly explicates various facets of the social disruption in order to express a point. Still other types of creativity, especially anthro-po-creativity that depends on intimate interactions, the kind practiced by Arthur, appears to thrive in a stable and cohesive political situation (Simonton, 1997b). Considering the fact that under the best of circumstances, a stage production is fraught with challenges, both personnel and logistic, these challenges multiply exponentially in the presence of political strife and uncertainty. No wonder then that the quantity and scope of peacetime productions far outnumber those productions mounted during periods of civil unrest, which for the most part are either defiant, marginalized, or underground happenings.

Further, the individual’s continued residence in a politically charged atmosphere depends on both, his perceptions of insularity, and his ability to resist external threats. Some creative individuals, like the bear market personalities (see discussion below), thrive in this melee, and elect to stay and create within an unsettled and fractious environment, whereas others, like Arthur, recognize the futility of any coherent production in such an era – not to mention the personal safety issues that override the value of the creative work – and opt to abandon the Creativogenic turned hostile environment and flee to a potentially supportive haven.
Much like the strike and sabotage at the sole paint factory in town that impacts the quality and quantity of paint available to an artist, political strife and unrest, in all probability, disrupt the basic working materials of a production – the people involved – and by disrupting their concentration, impede the staging, and therefore directly influence the individual’s anthropo-creativity. On the contrary, since periods of social harmony occasion relatively less personal and social turbulence, the creative individual is at leisure to pursue a full realization of his creative vision. Creativity theorists differ in their opinions about which of these two social environments are the most conducive to creative endeavors. Sternberg and Lubart (1995) have co-opted terminology from the financial markets, suggesting that the social environment might be either bearish – hostile to the creative individual – or bullish, where the system encourages and supports creative efforts. Supporters of the bearish school include Dabrowski (1972), Goertzel and Goertzel (1962), Simonton (1987), and Dervin (1990), who view the creative individual as hardy, adaptable, resilient, and driven to create in spite of adverse societal conditions.

Diametrically opposed to this notion of a “rose blooming in the desert,” are those theorists who believe that a bullish environment is the most conducive to creativity. Chief among the proponents of this view is Torrance (1965, 1995) who showed that competition, positive affirmations and encouragement can influence or even improve the quality of creative thinking abilities in children, whereas restrictions, ridicule, conditions that create fear, overemphasis on success, and lack of resources could negatively affect the development and expression of creative thinking. Arthur’s accounts of the general malaise and the resultant hasty departure from Jamaica appear to place him in the latter group of creative individuals – the ones who operate best in bullish environments.
Comprehension

Arthur: You see, in Jamaica, I was able to ease into everything and they seem to be able to take it into their stride – it wasn’t like there was any big upset, like say going from a tribe to tribe, or cast to cast – because we all spoke the Queen’s English.

Versus

Incoherence

Arthur: Another problem I think, was that these kids really all were into Ebonics, and I didn’t understand very much of it... actually, I didn’t understand them at all. It was like talking two different foreign languages – theirs and mine...

A cross-cultural, creativity-based study of bilingual and culturally diverse students, conducted by Lopez, Esquivel and Houtz (1993), indicates that on tests of creativity and flexible thinking, migrants perform as well, if not better, than their native counterparts in the United States, suggesting that language skills per se, are not a definitive determinant of creative ability. Admirable as these findings might be, the limitations of this study become obvious when the target population is hypothetically placed in certain situations demanding creative thinking. While these culturally diverse and bilingual students, many of whom were only marginally fluent in English, may perform admirably in the solitude of their testing situation or even in individual displays of creativity – playing the viola, fashioning a sculpture, or capturing a sunset on film – how would they fare in situations that require them to operate within the cultural practices and discourses of the native hoi polloi? Could these creative individuals function effectively in culturally alien situation where language and linguistic proficiency were prime necessities – such as directing a play, or rehearsing a symphony, or even leading a general rally? Would language barriers obtain a different – or even hostile – experience for these otherwise creative individuals?
Arthur’s attempt at teaching and producing a play at a low SES, urban high school in America was just such an experience that in his own words, was “…a total and utter failure.” Granted, there were other significant factors at work in this failed experiment, however, one of the main contributing factors was language. Arthur, fluent in English, with some French, and a smattering of Middle English, who had had little trouble communicating and interacting with casts from other areas and countries, was puzzled by this language barrier, or more specifically, a dialect barrier. He could not understand what his students said to him and to each other, but more than that, he was unable to comprehend their resistance to his linguistic practices. Thus Arthur’s inability (or reluctance?) to comprehend his students’ accent/ dialect – Ebonics – compounded by their inability (or reluctance?) to comprehend his accent/ dialect – distinctly British – led to an unfortunate impasse, the language barrier, which in its extreme form reduces human communication to symbolic gestures and verbalizations – unarticulated sounds that signify intention. With his anthro-creativity clearly in jeopardy and with few prospects of thriving in this linguistically disjointed environment, Arthur’s inability to communicate with his students led to a minimal degree, or in some cases a complete shut down, of creative endeavor.

Harmony

Arthur: When I got to the seminary here, I had a chance to work with a nice mixture of black and white – and this was something very different for me. I had worked with all white, or all black, and now, for the first time, I had a chance to work with a fifty-fifty cast. As a matter of fact, a fifty-fifty cast with an international flavor – the man who played the lead, Noah, was a Japanese student. You see, what brought us together and was binding us together was music, and drama, and concerts, because when they were with me in the choir practices and rehearsals, there was no time or place for racism. That wasn’t a part of who I am, and I wasn’t going to allow it to be a part of who they were. I didn’t favor anybody… we went strictly according to talent and interest and so on.

Versus
Arthur: In my first days at the seminary, the first two or three years in fact, there was a lot of racism... a great deal of overt racism. I remember one particular case there was a family of white girls and they went to the local middle school here, and one day, one of them invited a black boy to their home. That was completely unacceptable to their neighbors, another family with girls, and the parents sent a nasty message to the parents of these girls who had brought the black boy home, saying, “God does not intend for blacks and whites to have anything to do with each other, so from now on please keep your children away from ours.”

Then we had another incident where a black student at the seminary was tied up to his bed in his room and wasn't allowed to go out for the whole day to any of his classes. The students who did it were eventually discovered and they were fired immediately, of course.

Ironically enough, the presence of racial tensions brought about one of Arthur’s most creative works. No stranger to racial tensions, Arthur’s experiences and discourses on the race issue will appear familiar to American sensibilities, albeit from a slightly eclectic point of view since he is a Caucasian raised in Britain, married at different times to three black Jamaican women, and now resides in a city where the racial divide is as perceptible as ever. Once, a visitor from Korea, upon discovering that Arthur’s wife was black, stared at him for a moment and asked “Why?” Like Geertz’s (1973) marvelous take on a boy’s innocuous wink that may be variously interpreted as distress-signal-mockery-burlesque-rehearsal, for Arthur, this simple “Why?” was no disembodied question based on simple curiosity, but a scatter-bomb loaded with multiple warheads: Why did you do it? Why did you flaunt your culture’s practices? Why were you allowed to do it? Why do you persist? Why are you foisting this on me? These interpretations are perhaps an assumption of the Korean’s purpose, however, his views about the futility of interracial relationships are in stark contrast to Arthur’s decidedly integrationist views. Consequently, after his exposure to several overt racial encounters in Atlanta, particularly the KKKredit Card fiasco, the race factor was almost destined to enter Arthur’s work at some point. In this context, Campbell (cited in Simonton, 1988) noted that “persons who have been uprooted from traditional
cultures, or who have been thoroughly exposed to two or more cultures, seem to have the advantage in the range of hypotheses they are apt to consider...” (p. 414). Therefore, Arthur, schooled as he was in the relatively benign race relations of Jamaica, clearly saw the alternatives, and was fermenting his special brand of rebellion against racism. However, typical of the insight and opportunism of the creative individual, Arthur kept the issue in the background and tackled it at a time when it was most meaningful to him, to his cast, and to his audiences.

No racial subtext appears to have been present in Arthur’s work in the rural England of his youth, where, according to him, racial homogeneity was the norm and racial interaction was almost unknown. Again, no perceptible traces of racial subtext show themselves in his work in Jamaica, where miscegenation is fairly common and the residual color-consciousness is further diluted by the nationalistic slogan of “from many, one.” However, a broad and significant streak of racial consciousness appears in his work in the United States, a country he sees as being legally integrated but socially self-segregated.

Considering the racial tensions evident at the seminary during the turbulent 70’s, Arthur’s directorial choice to cast a black Mary against a white Joseph was not only a reflection of his own marriage to a black woman, but also a courageous and ground-breaking creative decision at the time. This pointed and socially-relevant “color-blind” casting - the practice of casting a role based on skill rather than the actor’s skin color or racial background, and now au courant at most theatres across the country - and the resultant stir it generated among both cast members and audience, was in effect a rebellious and socially-situated creative act aimed squarely at the heart of one of the most controversial cultural practices of the time.
In Arthur’s mind, whether the show was a success or not (based on the level of critical acclaim it received in the community) was secondary to its subtext—suggesting the possibility and viability of miscegenation by casting an interracial holy couple. Disrupting the audience’s traditional view of Mary and Joseph as the archetypal Caucasian couple no doubt furrowed many a brow, but it also attained creative significance in that the socially-constructed product was not only unique, but also avant garde, and therefore transformative. Needless to say, this product would probably never have been realized had the prevalent cultural practices, and its attendant laws, forbidden the co-existence of diversity on the same stage, as was the case a scant twenty years before Arthur’s arrival in America.

In sum then, it appears that the opportunity to work in a racially charged but legally supportive atmosphere stimulated Arthur’s creativity, especially since he could address the “race problem” by strategically casting from the representative races and without overt gesture, point out the fallacy of what was then, and to this day continues to be, the reprehensible practice of racial bigotry.

**Findings and Implications – Anthropo-creativity**

Whether by design or out of abstraction, Arthur did not subscribe to the post-war intellectual malaise caused by the “perceived failure of the European ethical subject” (Spivak, 1993, p. 274), maintaining instead his staunch belief in the dignity, worth, and essential goodness of human beings, the core ethos of Petrarchian humanism. Further, he actively sought the company of people, and chose a profession—music and stage production—that would deliberately put him in the path of people from many different cultures. Along with those people, however, came the inevitable clash between cultural practices and the labile social perplexities that although troubling and exhilarating, also influenced his anthropo-
creativity. Using self-reported expressions of positive affect and success as measures, a closer examination of Arthur’s experiences reveals the following specific cultural situations or practices that either enabled his anthropo-creativity or stalled it; observations that are specifically drawn from Arthur’s experience and may apply to creative individuals working with anthropo-creativity, in a culture other than their own:

1. Since successful productions depend on relatively effortless communication, significant interactions, and productive negotiations between the director and the cast, the degree of similarity between Arthur’s cultural practices and those of the natives, directly influenced his anthropo-creativity within that group.

2. Anthropo-creativity relies heavily on the creative individual’s ability to comprehend and communicate in the native language, or in a language common to both parties. Arthur’s ability to effectively communicate with his casts suggests that a command of the “native” tongue is almost a sine qua non for this type of creativity.

3. Before leaving Britain, Arthur steeped himself in the culture of Jamaica, and therefore was relatively unruffled when he arrived in Jamaica, suggesting that the creative individual who prepares for extra-cultural experiences by active familiarization with language and cultural practices gains the advantage of uninterrupted creative functioning within the new cultural practices he encounters.

4. As a corollary to the preceding points, the degree of receptivity of the creative individual’s mental figurations and ideas by the “natives” – due to cultural proximity and language facility – appears to have a positive influence on anthropo-creativity. Conversely, the denial or outright rejection of the creative individual’s ideas usually results in a diminution, or outright shutdown of anthropo-creativity.
Arthur found Jamaica to be a warm and receptive haven for his creative expression, and consequently found it to be the most fulfilling of his various cultural experiences. Therefore, moving to a less saturated or lesser-developed but receptive culture, offers the anthropo-creative individual greater opportunities to experiment and exercise his/her skills.

Although by no means a fait accompli, an opportune zeitgeist – a society’s contemporary psychological state that welcomes the particular kind of innovation the creative individual has to offer – enhances anthropo-creativity and creative production.

In an inter-cultural situation, the adaptive creator – one who operates within the broader strictures of the system, is pliant, and assists in the evolution of existing art forms – appears to have a distinct advantage over his more abrasive and brash cousin, the innovator. Put another way, flexibility and social-skills have a distinct advantage over the “I-know-it-all-so-do-as-I-say-because-I’m-creative-and-you’re-not” approach.

Other things being equal, the “native” group’s acceptance of, and positive interactions with, the creative individual are more likely when the socio-economic status of the creative individual is either commensurate with, or slightly higher than, that of the “native” group. Conversely, a socio-economic disjunction and its resultant difference in cultural practices may result in the alienation or rejection of the creative individual.

Creative individuals may find a bullish (politically stable) environment more conducive to anthropo-creativity.
10. The opportunity to work in a socially disjointed but legally supportive environment may stimulate anthropo-creativity, especially since the creative individual can freely address social issues using words, innuendo, and action.

Again, moving from the specific to the general, the creative individual who selects a relatively less saturated environment, invests energy in learning the language and cultural practices, can be flexible and adaptable, and is fortunate to find oneself accepted by the natives in an opportune zeitgeist, will perhaps find a more comprehensive expression of his anthropo-creativity than in other, more restrictive situations.
V.

RUMINATIONS

On Ethics

For me, the most troubling aspects of this study were the ethics and validity involved in bringing it to fruition. Although I had obtained permission from Arthur to conduct this study, I could not (and still cannot) help but question if subjecting Arthur to the merciless lens of scrutiny has compromised, and possibly changed, the tenor of our relationship. Conventional wisdom suggests that insofar as human relationships are concerned, active searching often reveals matters that in retrospect, one wishes had been best left undiscovered. I hoped that my questions and probes would not touch any raw nerves, and like a wary endodontist, I trusted my patient, Arthur, to signal his discomfort should any of my questions probe too deeply. Fortunately, we never got to that point.

In addition, other questions worried me: Was there a greater purpose being served here? How much would my long-standing acquaintance with Arthur influence my representation of his data story? To quote Van Maanen (1982), “the insider runs the risk of being carried away by intimacy such that a critical slant on the material will be lost and a wildly romantic version of the setting will emerge as a general description” (p. 19). Further, in the process of interviewing, working with, analyzing, and representing the collected data, how was I to handle sensitive and intimate data? Although at the outset, I had no clear answers, I resolved to follow two non-negotiable guidelines, namely that (a) I would faithfully record all that was said and expressed, with the added proviso that Arthur was given the opportunity to modify language or ideas he had expressed in the interview, and (b)
that while Arthur and I might disagree on certain interpretations and meanings elicited from the data, I would represent both viewpoints, firmly convinced that his interpretations had as much validity as my own. In retrospect, I feel that I have remained true to both resolves.

On Validity and Findings

On the question of validity, one of the major issues raised in the early stages of this study was the question of generalizability from the experiences of a single individual. What did Arthur’s unique experiences have to offer to the broader population? How could the practices and experiences of an individual be writ large to represent the populace? I contend that the difference between Arthur’s experience and that of the general public lies in scale rather than in specificity; in degree, rather than in kind; that we have indeed experienced in our own microcosm, some facets of Arthur’s particular and broader cultural experience. Thus, inferences drawn from Arthur’s experience, not only illuminate his specific condition, but also offer direct pathways that address the three research questions guiding this study:

1. How might specific cultural practices affect Arthur’s development as a creative individual?

Arthur’s experiences suggest that the more variety in social and intellectual stimulus, the more parental encouragement of a potentially creative pursuit, and the more provisions (both material and disciplinary) that are made to enable the pursuit, the greater the chance of the child eventually leading a creative lifestyle.

2. What specific materials, relations, and practices define and maintain Arthur as a creative individual within a culture?

Vis-à-vis personality traits, first, Arthur’s experience demonstrates that individuals who are aware of their skills, their predilections, and their drawbacks are likely to lead more creative lives than those who stagger through a miasma of uncertainty. Also, a review of
Arthur’s personality and operational styles suggest a strong adaptive tendency that has stood him in good stead during his transitions through various cultures. Without being overly acquiescent or sycophantic, he appears to have found a stable balance between his creative urges and the needs of the institutions. And finally, the increasing complexity and eclecticism of Arthur’s work over the years suggests that migration, or at the very least a lengthy residence in a foreign culture, is beneficial to creativity.

3. How might cultural practices and societal pressures (taboos, sanctions, institutional support, and individuality measures) influence Arthur’s creativity within a culture?

On the subject of anthropo-creativity, and moving from the specific to the general, creative individuals who select a relatively less saturated environment, invest energy in learning the language and cultural practices, can be flexible and adaptable, and are fortunate enough to find themselves accepted by the natives in an opportune zeitgeist, will perhaps find a more comprehensive expression of their anthropo-creativity than in other, more restrictive situations.

On Future Directions

The findings listed here and elsewhere in this study, based on Arthur’s work in various sub-cultures, have several implications and each one suggests new directions for further research. Prominent among them however, is the need for further study of anthropo-creativity, the concept I introduced earlier in this study. Anthropo-creativity – the type of creativity dependant on human participants – is, in my opinion, one of the most complex and challenging forms available to the creative individual, requiring not only an extensive knowledge of the core discipline, but also a deep and intuitive grasp of human nature, their abilities, and the cultural practices that prescribe their actions. Creative individuals engaged in fields that require human participants – theatre, symphonic bands, dance, human
resources, think tanks, and others - may benefit from initiating further research into, and pursuit of a deeper understanding of, this type of creativity.

Second, and with due acknowledgement of the fact that the air is not always purer on the outskirts of town, is the issue of distancing oneself from the hub of action in order to gain more creative room. Although the prospect of remoteness from the hub of action is anathema to some creative individuals, still others may experience a deeper satisfaction from practicing their craft in isolated, yet receptive pockets of civilization, as evidenced by Arthur's almost idyllic sojourn in Jamaica. Thus, a movement away from the saturated and often calcified center - even if the move is a mere intellectual distancing - promises new perspectives, and some tangible rewards. In more practical terms, examples of such distancing include educators relocating to underdeveloped areas, creative individuals actively seeking alternative means of expression, and established art forms (such as theatre) exploring relationships with other intellectual disciplines. A research agenda in this area might include the practices, affect, and output of creative individuals who distance themselves from the center.

Finally, the admixture of a rapidly changing demographic profile of most urban areas, the consequent interactions between a variety of cultural groups, and the educational mandates of the government, all contrive to place the educator at the center of knowledge, and often cultural, transmission. The law stipulates that each child must be educated and therefore it falls upon that child's teacher to understand, communicate, disseminate, and to some degree, enculturate the child. Arthur's experience suggests that not only creative individuals involved in anthropo fields, but also educators might benefit from acclimatizing themselves with their target population, acquiring basic (if not fluent) language skills, and rather than beckon from the far side of the cultural chasm, in the true spirit of the term,
educate by leading their students from the known to the unknown. Further research in this area might well focus on reciprocal enculturation – the practices and effectiveness of creative individuals (including educators) who acculturate themselves before enculturating others.

On Creating a Life

In the conception and execution of this study, I have consciously steered away from the broad brush of a nondescript, generalized form of creativity, toward the more individualistic – Arthur’s personality and his anthropo-creativity – because I believe that it is, after all, the individual who, using his facilities, methods, and the materials at his disposal, is responsible for creating artifacts, however transient, as evidence of creativity. Nevertheless, this focus on the individual in the creative process should not be taken to mean that social influences have no part in the drama, or that only those individuals who have made an enormous difference to society are to be deemed creative and worthwhile. Like the Torrance Kid, Wendy Henry, who felt that “My most creative achievement ... is myself” (Millar, 2000, p.47) creating one’s life with staunch and resolute purpose is worthy of recognition and making small contributions and even relatively minor innovations that counteract change may be the most important form of creative work. Further, by engaging in a socially conscious and generative use of one’s creative abilities, the creative individual diligently reveals, revels in, and mends the shortcomings of cultural practices. Therefore, if creative work is to be organismic, to express this feeling for the organism, then perhaps it must be for the most part incremental and modest, and its bona fides established not by the level of personal glory that the individual – Arthur – has achieved, but by the simple fact that he has touched and enabled other lives in the process.

Arthur: There’s this story about a landowner who was about to depart on a long journey, but before he did, he gave each one of his three servants a talent – talent
being the currency of the day - with the challenge that they bring the same back to him upon his return. Soon after the master departed, the first servant hid his talent in the ground; the next one traded it in the market and got five times the value; the last servant used his talent and got ten times as much. Upon his return, the master summoned the servants and seeing that none had lost any talents, praised all of them, except the first servant who had buried his talent in the ground. He then extolled the virtues of the last servant who had multiplied his talents ten-fold. I think in a way that is a parable of my life too. If you’ve got it, and you do nothing about it, then you’ve got to go down and stay. But if you’ve got it, and you use it in beneficial ways, then life will be very rich for you and because of you, for other people, too...
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APPENDIX A

The Interview Guide

Demographic Information
Birthplace; Age; Parents name, occupation; Siblings, age, occupation; Ethnic background; Occupation; Education; Birth country, length of stay; Year of migration, location, length of stay

The Central Question
What was it like to create a meaningful work within a culture? I am seeking vivid, accurate, and comprehensive portrayals of what this experience was like for you; your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as well as situations, events, places, people, and institutions connected with your experience. Your response to this may take any form – such as an outpouring, or the sharing of specific episodes, or describing one significant event that encapsulates this phenomenon.

How do England (then), Jamaica (then) and US (now) compare in:
  a> The degree to which they facilitate the desires of an individual over those of a group.
  b> The degree of inequality of power between the individual and the more powerful other.
  c> The degree to which cultures develop institutions and rituals to deal with uncertainty and ambiguity.
  d> The degree to which a culture fosters traditional gender roles
  e> The internal homogeneity of the culture, and
  f> The fostering of differential or similar behaviors based on the context.
  g> The availability of cultural (and certain physical) means
  h> Openness of cultural stimuli
  i> Stress on becoming and not just being
  j> Free access to cultural media for all citizens without discrimination
  k> Retention of moderate amounts of discrimination – which after bouts of severe oppression or absolute exclusion, serves as an incentive to creativity.
  l> Exposure to different and even contrasting cultural stimuli
  m> Tolerance for and interest in diverging views
  n> Interactions between significant persons in the culture, and
  o> Promotion of incentives and rewards

Possible probes
What provokes you to create?
Who were the people (if any) involved and how did they contribute?
What steps or stages did this project go through?
What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?
Any memories of the actual moments when the problem was resolved?
What were the predominant emotions associated with this project?
If this project were a photograph, what would we see in it?
Some say that creative people bring doom on themselves. What do you think?
How would you describe your home life during your early years?
Which teacher made the most favorable impression on you? Why?
What other artists influenced your work?
How old were you when you first encountered this culture?
What were the signs that made you feel like you “belonged” to the culture?
Did it change significantly during your time?
What kind of belief systems prevailed in this culture? Were people free to follow
their belief systems? Why/why not?
What were the power structures like in this culture and how did they affect you?
What were some of the specific and general expectations of this culture?
What implicit or explicit boundaries were there in this culture?
What was taboo in this culture? What might an artist be celebrated or disparaged for?
In terms of openness or resistance to change, how would you rate this culture?
What were the generally accepted gender roles in this culture?
Could you list the institutions that promoted creative endeavors? Was access to these
institutions available to all who desired it?
What do you see as barriers or blockages to creativity?
Have you ever hidden or refused to share a creation with others? Why?
How would you describe the process you go through as you create?
APPENDIX B

Instructions to Research Participant

Date:

Dear Arthur

Thank you for your interest in my dissertation research on the experience of creating within the parameters of diverse cultures. I value the unique contributions that you can make to my study and am excited about the possibility of your participation in it. The purpose of this letter is to reiterate some of the things that we have already discussed and to secure your signature on the attached participation-release form.

The research model I am using is a qualitative one through which I am seeking comprehensive depictions or descriptions of your experience. In this way, I hope to illuminate or answer the following research questions:

a. How does an individual visualize and define his creative process?
b. What does creating within a culture look like? What specific materials, relations, practices, etc. inform an individual’s creative functioning within a specific culture?
c. How might societal pressures (taboos, sanctions, institutional support, individuality measures, etc.) affect an individual’s creative functioning within a culture?
d. What is the relationship between an individual’s creative process and the three cultural settings he has experienced in his life and work?

Through your participation as a co-researcher, I hope to understand the essence of the phenomenon as it reveals itself in your experience. You will be asked to recall specific episodes or events in your life in which you experienced the phenomenon we are investigating. I am seeking vivid, accurate, and comprehensive portrayals of what these experiences were like for you; your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as well as situations, events, places, and people connected with your experience. You may also wish to share personal logs or journals with me or other ways in which you have recorded your experience - for example, in letters, photographs, poems, or artwork.

Again, I value your participation and thank you for your commitment of time, energy, and effort. If you have any further questions before signing this release form or if there is a problem with the date and time of our meeting/s, please call me at 404-xxx-xxxx.

Sincerely,

Kiran Narker

Note: Although this letter suggests that Arthur was a co-researcher in this study, in reality his role was limited to that of interview subject and respondent. He did not participate in any theory generation, analysis, or data representations given here.
APPENDIX C

Consent Form

I ________________________________, agree to take part in a study entitled Creativity on the move: Exploring the relationship between a changing cultural milieu and an individual's creative functioning, conducted by the researcher, Mr. Kiran Narker, of the Dept. of Educational Psychology (Gifted and Creative Ed.) at the University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602. I understand that he can be reached at 404-xxx-xxxx or by E-mail at: xxxxxxxx@xxxxxx.com, and that this study is being conducted under the direction of Dr. Bonnie Cramond of the Department of Educational Psychology Gifted and Creative), at 702-xxx-xxxx.

I further understand that I do not have to take part in this study and that I can stop taking part at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty. I can ask to have information related to me returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

I understand that the purpose of this research is to study the relationship between an individual’s creative functioning and the various cultural milieu he has experienced, as well as the possible influence of a culture on an individual’s creativity.

I understand that while there are no direct material benefits for participating in this study, the intangible benefits might include (a) a stimulus for deep introspection, (b) the opportunity to articulate one’s views, (c) the opportunity to add to the discourse and understanding of our time, and (d) having one’s views and life events recorded for posterity.

I will meet with the researcher on three separate mutually agreed upon occasions for interviews of 1½ to 2 hours, and later, for 2 more interviews if necessary. During these interviews, I will be asked to recall specific episodes or events in my life in which I experienced the phenomenon we are investigating. I may be asked to share artifacts, personal logs, or journals with the researcher, or other ways in which I have recorded my experience - for example, in letters, photographs, poems, or artwork.

I understand that the interviews will be videotaped for data transcription purposes, to assist the researcher in recalling specific details of the interview, and for analysis related to this study only. I have the right to view and edit the tapes and transcripts, if desired. The researcher will make every effort to maintain control of the videotapes and plans to erase them after the satisfactory conclusion of this research project, on or about November 30, 2002.

I understand that no significant discomforts or stresses are expected during the research process.

I understand that this research poses no risks to me.
I am aware that the researcher will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached by telephone at: 404-292-9899

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

______________________________________  ___________________
Signature of Researcher.      Date

______________________________________  ___________________
Signature of Participant      Date

For questions or problems about your rights please call or write:
Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D.  Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-6514; E-Mail Address: IRB@uga.edu.
Unlike the definitive identification of a species of plant or a planetary system, the question of what a creative individual “looks like” remains largely unresolved. Does the person have to create an earth-shattering technology, or write a moving play, or even lead an exemplary life, or is his personal innovation of using frayed computer cables to hold his glasses together qualification enough for the label “creative individual?” Sidestepping this essentially qualitative judgment of the individual, and turning to observable data, surely there were some indicators of a person’s creative potential; some behaviors or characteristics that would help in the identification of the creative person?

Fortunately, based on the large body of characterological information available on creative individuals – from observations and/or biographies of eminent creative individuals (Torrance, 1995; Simonton, 1975; Gardner, 1998; Feldman, 1999; Eysenck, 1993; et al) – I was able to create a list of traits (see below) observed in creative individuals. Further, this list of traits could be used in identifying other creative individuals by using a three-step syllogistic approach: a) Identify certain recurring characteristics of the creative individual; b) compare the person in question – in this case, Arthur – to those characteristics, and c) based on the accumulated evidence of traits, determined if the individual has more than a passing resemblance to other creative individuals. Simply stated, having closely studied a whole flock of ducks, if the newcomer – Arthur – looked like a duck, walked like a duck, and quacked like a duck, then it probably was a duck. Now whether the duck had created something of significance remained to be seen...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Theorist/Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adventurous</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Rogers (1959);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aesthetic awareness</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); MacKinnon (1961); Dacey (1992);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affection - strong</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alone - unafraid to be</td>
<td>Fromm (1959); Vervalin (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altruistic</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<td>Ambiguity – tolerance for</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Dacey (1989); MacKinnon (1978); Sternberg (1988);</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kirton (1999);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitude for living</td>
<td>Fromm (1959); Fromm (1959);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autonomous</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness of others</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baffled by something</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bashful – outwardly</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beauty - sensitive to beauty</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boredom - never bored</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Kirton (1987);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business ability - lacks</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenge of authority –</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Piirto’s (1992);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questioning the norm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Challenges self - attempts</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Torrance (1962); Guilford (1986);</td>
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<tr>
<td>difficult jobs (sometimes too</td>
<td>Bandura (1997) posits that an individual’s sense of confidence, which he calls</td>
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<td>difficult)</td>
<td>self-efficacy, derives from the ability to undertake and master challenges.</td>
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<td>This innate need for self-efficacy comes in large part from a history of</td>
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<td>accomplishments, and each successive challenge is an opportunity for further</td>
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<td>growth. Not surprisingly then, the creative individual not only craves new</td>
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<td>challenges in order to develop skills or solve a problem but will often</td>
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<td>attempt challenges that far are too difficult, in the hope that it will</td>
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<td>stretch existing boundaries (Also see Taylor and Ellison, 1972; Torrance,</td>
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<td>1962; Guilford, 1986)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chaos/ disorder – acceptance and</td>
<td>Barron (1988); Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>preference for</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Complex ideas – preference for</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Barron (1988); Torrance (1962); MacKinnon (1961);</td>
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<td></td>
<td>During his work with the IPAR group at Berkeley, Barron (1988) interviewed</td>
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<td>a series of eminent artists, architects, writers, mathematicians, scientists,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and team members of the first American ascent of Mt. Everest. Rigorous testing</td>
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<td>as well as personal observations led Barron to list several personality</td>
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<td>descriptors of creative individuals, including a preference for the complex</td>
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<td>and asymmetrical, independence in judgment, self-</td>
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<td>Trait</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constructive in criticism</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<td>Contrary - feels that the whole parade is out of step</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Barron (1988) noted that creative individuals were, psychologically speaking, both sicker and healthier than people are in general – they were more troubled psychologically, but had far greater resources with which to cope. Further, according to Barron, the stylistic variables characteristic of the highly creative individual were: a perceptually open and flexible attitude, a preference for the complex and chaotic - in contrast to the less creative tendency toward balance, simplicity, and predictability, and an intuitive (sometimes transliminal) awareness of deeper meanings.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Convictions - deep and conscientious convictions</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Courageous</td>
<td>Fromm (1959); Torrance (1962); MacKinnon (1961);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curious - full of curiosity</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Torrance (1962); MacKinnon (1961); Guilford (1986); Guilford (1986); Davis (1992);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cynical - Unwilling to accept anything on mere say-so</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dedicated</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972);</td>
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<td>Delays closure</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Torrance (1962);</td>
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<td>Destiny - sense of</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); MacKinnon (1961);</td>
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<td>Determined</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<td>Differentiated value hierarchy</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<td>Disciplined</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Csikszentmihalyi (1996);</td>
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<td>Discontented</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<td>Dominant (not in the power sense)</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Barron (1988); Torrance (1962);</td>
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<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Energetic</td>
<td>Barron (1988); Csikszentmihalyi (1996); Davis (1992);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enjoyment of work</td>
<td>Guilford (1986);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enterprising</td>
<td>MacKinnon (1961); Kirton (1987);</td>
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<td>Excels - has desire to excel</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexible</td>
<td>Barron (1988); Torrance (1962); Vervalin</td>
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<td>Trait</td>
<td>Theorist/Notes</td>
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<td>Flights of fantasy – given to</td>
<td>Csikszentmihalyi (1996);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focused</td>
<td>Fromm (1959); Kirton (1987);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender – defies sex role stereotyping</td>
<td>Guilford (1986);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal oriented</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Levesque (2001);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haughty and self-satisfied at times</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holistic</td>
<td>MacKinnon (1961);</td>
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<td>Humble</td>
<td>Csikszentmihalyi (1996);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Davis (1992);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Image – no interest in policing one’s image</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Vervalin (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independent in thinking and judgment</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Barron (1988); MacKinnon (1961); Piirto’s (1992); Davis (1992);</td>
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<td>Industrious</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<td>Insightful</td>
<td>Barron (1988); Torrance (1962); Davis (1992);</td>
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<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>MacKinnon (1961, 1978); Csikszentmihalyi (1996); Renzulli (1986); Sternberg (1995);</td>
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<td>Interchangeable – can blur distinction between self and others</td>
<td>Barron (1988);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal locus of control and evaluation</td>
<td>Rogers (1959); Barron (1988);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introverted</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Vervalin (1962) found that while testing for the bipolar orientations of introversion-extroversion, most creative subjects showed a tendency toward introversion, but surprisingly enough, those rated as extroverts still scored as high on creative potential as did the introverts. Further, he stated that in addition to their independence, flexibility, interest in meaning and implication, and verbal skills, creative people were not interested in policing either their own image or impulses, or those of others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intuitive</td>
<td>Barron (1988); Torrance (1962); MacKinnon (1961);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janusian thinking - Swing between diametric extremes</td>
<td>Rothenberg (1971); Csikszentmihalyi (1996);</td>
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<td>Knowledge base – has extensive knowledge</td>
<td>Torrance (1967); Osborn (1992); Sternberg (1990); Csikszentmihalyi (1988); Feldhusen (1995); Levesque (2001); Guilford (1986);</td>
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<td>Motivated - intrinsically</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Barron (1988);</td>
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<td>Trait</td>
<td>Theorist/ Notes</td>
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<td>Mysterious – attracted to</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not hostile or negativistic</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observant</td>
<td>Barron (1988);</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open to new ideas – receptive to external stimuli</td>
<td>Rogers (1959); Torrance (1962); MacKinnon (1961);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunistic – see and seize moment</td>
<td>Fromm (1959); Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppositional tendencies – introversion/extroversion</td>
<td>Csikszentmihalyi (1996);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order – seeks it</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Levesque (2001);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passionate</td>
<td>Csikszentmihalyi (1996); Kirton (1987);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patient</td>
<td>Levesque (2001);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persistent</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Guilford (1986); Levesque (2001);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playful</td>
<td>Csikszentmihalyi (1996);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power or political apathy</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preoccupied with a problem</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primitive</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem/ Fault-finder</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Kirton (1987); Csikszentmihalyi (1996) has pointed out that unlike computer programs which process data based on preprogrammed algorithms, the creative individual is adept at not only recognizing and selecting the problem, but also determining which of the infinite data sets and analyses are relevant to the solution, and when necessary, painstakingly creating new modes of analysis to address the problem. Further along this line of thinking, researchers (Sternberg, 1988; Torrance, 1988) have suggested that creative individuals are adept, not only at identifying the problem, but also potential solution “spaces” that appear promising. Arthur’s solution space included the production of a play, and by a process of evaluation and elimination – after he had ostensibly weeded out other alternatives – the remaining alternative proved itself workable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiescent</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radical - rebellious</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Csikszentmihalyi (1996); Kirton (1987);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regresses occasionally – Naïve</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reinventing the self – ability to</td>
<td>Fromm (1959);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rejection of suppression as a mechanism of impulse control</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Barron (1988); Torrance (1962); Guilford (1986);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait</td>
<td>Theorist/Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relinquish outmoded ideas - ability to</td>
<td>Fromm (1959);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserved</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk taker - willing to take risks.</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Torrance (1962); MacKinnon (1961); Kirton (1987); Davis (1992);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied - intrinsically</td>
<td>Guilford (1986);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Searches for truth</td>
<td>Piirto’s (1992);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assertive</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Barron (1988);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Levesque (2001); Fromm (1959); Davis (1992);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-confident</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-sufficient</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive</td>
<td>Barron (1988); Guilford (1986); Kirton (1987); Csikszentmihalyi (1996);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensual</td>
<td>Barron (1988);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sincere</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small detail - not interested in small details</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat uncultured</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speculative</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spirited in disagreement</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Kirton (1987);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>MacKinnon (1961);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status quo - rejection of</td>
<td>MacKinnon (1961);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stubborn</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Kirton (1987);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenacious - stickability</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tender emotions</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension - ability to withstand conflict</td>
<td>Fromm (1959);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thorough</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timid</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unconventional - doesn’t fear being thought of as “different”</td>
<td>Fromm (1959); Torrance (1962); MacKinnon (1961); Piirto’s (1992); Csikszentmihalyi (1996);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpopular</td>
<td>Torrance (1962); Kirton (1987);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsophisticated</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unusual hours - keeps</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety - preference for and interest in</td>
<td>Taylor and Ellison (1972); Torrance (1962); MacKinnon (1961); Guilford (1986);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal intelligence - sizeable</td>
<td>Piirto’s (1992); Vervalin (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versatile</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visionary</td>
<td>Torrance (1962);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonderment</td>
<td>Fromm (1959)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>