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Can't Sing, Can't Dance, Can't Draw: How Leisure Constraints and Negotiations Impact Midlife Women's Participation in the Creative Arts

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CAN'T SING, CAN'T DANCE, CAN'T DRAW:
HOW LEISURE CONSTRAINTS AND NEGOTIATIONS
IMPACT MIDLIFE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CREATIVE ARTS

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Hospitality, Recreation and Tourism Management

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Debra A. Ullmann

May 2011

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The Designated Thesis Committee Approves the Thesis Titled

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By

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SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY

May 2011

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ABSTRACT

CAN'T SING, CAN'T DANCE, CAN'T DRAW: HOW LEISURE CONSTRAINTS AND NEGOTIATIONS IMPACT MIDLIFE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CREATIVE ARTS

by Debra A. Ullmann

This qualitative, exploratory study involving semi-structured interviews of 12 midlife women, ages 45 to 65, sought insight into how intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural leisure constraints, constraint negotiations, and motivations facilitate or impede midlife women's active participation in the creative arts. The data were analyzed within a socio- cultural context using grounded theory methods. Findings indicate that dynamic interactions involving social comparison result in judgment by others, of others, and of self. This spiraling effect is often initiated in childhood or adolescence. Once a woman internalizes the notion that she "can't sing, can't dance, can't draw," there is seldom any attempt to negotiate constraints and participate in a particular creative arts activity. In contrast, midlife women who actively participate in the creative arts have generally experienced some personal success and encouragement and are motivated in a variety of ways to negotiate leisure constraints. Life experience and midlife transitions were seen as facilitators that produced increased self-confidence, self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and decisive leisure choices. Social interaction was the overarching factor that constrained as well as facilitated leisure participation in the creative arts for these midlife women.

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I would also like to express sincere thanks to the amazing midlife women who participated in this study. Your grace, self-confidence, and wisdom were inspiring. Thanks to my husband of 31 years for always, always encouraging and supporting my own creative endeavors and crazy ideas, not to mention serving as long-suffering tech support! God, you are my mentor, muse, and the love of my life! You got me into this and I will be forever grateful. My future is in Your hands!

Dad, this is for you....for the love of music and dance and the exuberance for life you passed on. You said I could do anything I set my mind to and look where it got me! How I wish we could jam again....you at your drums and me at the piano. Someday....

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Chapter I

Introduction

It would probably still be true to say, however, neither leisure constraints research nor leisure studies as a whole generated much impact on or interest within other social sciences. This is to be regretted, although perhaps expected in view of the intellectual isolation of the field. (Jackson, 2005, p. 13)

Leisure activities form a spectrum that is both diverse and infinite, and leisure research frequently intersects with other academic disciplines in the social sciences, humanities, and applied sciences. However, as Jackson (2005) regrettably indicates in the above quote and despite the interdisciplinary nature of the leisure sciences, leisure research seldom impacts other disciplines to any large degree. In addition, although the leisure domain represents a wide range of endeavors and pursuits, a preponderance of leisure research studies have focused on a limited number of these activities.

Henderson and Hickerson's (2007) review of the field's journals spanning the last century reveals a primary focus on physical activity, recreation, leisure choices, and leisure satisfaction. Some leisure pursuits have received limited or no attention.

Participation in the creative arts is one such area and will be the focus of this research study. Integration of theories from the growing body of research on the effects of leisure constraints and constraint negotiations with research from the academic disciplines of fine arts and education will form the core of this study. While structural constraints have received more emphasis in the published research (Jackson, 2005), this exploratory study of interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints as applied to creative arts participation may offer new insights into both the creative arts as leisure activity

and interpersonal and intrapersonal leisure constraints in general.

Defining the creative arts has traditionally been a challenging endeavor and the source of much debate. For the purpose of this study, the definition of *fine arts* and *art* from the Oxford English Dictionary (1989) and the attributes used in the 2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (National Endowment for the Arts, 2008) will be combined to produce the following nominal definition: the creative arts are a creative *activity* traditionally considered within the domain of the fine arts, the *creation* of an aesthetic experience involving the mind and imagination. The emphasis on *creative activity* excludes passive involvement in the arts. Thus, actively composing music, conducting, or playing an instrument in an orchestra would fit this nominal definition, but listening to a concert would not. For the purposes of this study, creative arts participation will involve actively performing, designing, or creating in the fields of music, visual arts, theater, dance, literature, or arts technologies such as graphic design and animation. In contrast and to more specifically define the subject matter, this study will *not* involve activities that are under the domain of the applied arts, defined as those that have a functional purpose such as crafts, sewing, embroidery, needlepoint, scrapbooking, candle-making, cooking, jewelry-making unless there is an original design element involved.

Informal observations of and conversations with midlife women by this author have revealed a possible attitude towards the creative arts that might be described as the “can’t sing, can’t dance, can’t draw” mentality in which people iterate the belief that they do not possess the necessary talent or skills to participate in fine arts activities and

therefore do not choose those endeavors as leisure activities. Yet, this assumption that talent, or aptitude, is an essential prerequisite to arts participation is not conclusively supported in current research and is, in fact, the subject of vigorous debate. Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer (1993) posited that what we assume to be talent or artistic genius is often the result of concerted effort and deliberate practice aimed at developing the requisite skills that lead to exceptional performance. In other words, one can learn to draw, dance, or sing if sufficient effort is applied to skill development. In contrast, a study by Vinkhuyzen, van der Sluis, Posthuma, & Boomsma (2009) indicates that genetics may be a major contributory factor in talent and aptitude variability. Residing towards the middle of these two extremes are those who believe both genetic predisposition and deliberate practice act together to produce exceptional creative achievement (Runco, 2007; Simonton, 2007). It is important to note that this lively debate focuses on what Csikszentmihalyi (1997) refers to as creativity with a “Big C,” defined as exceptional creative accomplishment. In contrast, this qualitative research study addresses everyday creative endeavors or Csikszentmihalyi’s creativity with a “little c.” For those not privy to this academic debate, however, the belief that talent is a necessary prerequisite to creative endeavors, what S.R. Riley refers to as the “tyranny of talent” (personal communication, September 21, 2009), may be one potent contributory factor to the “can’t sing, can’t dance, can’t draw” mindset and hence constrain participation in the creative arts.

In fact, personal participation in arts performance and arts creation among adults in the United States has generally declined during the 16-year-period from 1992 to 2008

based upon the most recent Survey of Public Participation in the Arts (National Endowment for the Arts, 2008).

There are persistent patterns of decline in participation for most art forms. Fewer adults are creating and performing art. For example, the percentage of adults performing dance has lost six points since 1992. Weaving and sewing remain popular as crafts, but the percentage of adults who do those activities has declined by 12 points. Only the share of adults doing photography has increased – from 12 percent in 1992 to 15 percent in 2008, (“Persistent Patterns,” para. 3).

Unfortunately, the 2008 Survey only speculated on possible reasons for diminished personal arts participation. Certainly these declines are of concern for leisure service and arts agencies in both the public and non-profit sectors and can only be reversed once there is an understanding of the factors contributing to this declining participation.

Another body of research has established a large number of studies suggesting the value of arts participation. It is a component of most theories of successful aging (Rowe, 1998; Vaillant, 2002); is linked with personal satisfaction & use of resources (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996); fosters positive views of aging & aids in negotiating deficits of aging (Lindauer, 1997); provides validation, social connection, stress reduction, enhanced self-esteem (Adams-Price, 2007); increases positive attitude towards health, higher functioning, life satisfaction (Conboy, 1990); makes ageism less relevant, reduces loneliness, helps people manage change (Robertson, 2005); is a key factor in positively adapting to old age (Smith, 1989); and promotes boundary crossing beyond gendered, interracial, and generational segments of society (Wali, Marcheschi, Sseverson, & Longoni, 2001). Creativity is associated with divergent thinking (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996) and produces physical and mental health benefits (Cohen,

2001). Participation in music activities and classes has been connected to higher academic achievement in youth (Wood, 1990); associated with increased student self-esteem and self-image (Vander Ark, 1973); and positively increases creativity scores.

Statement of the Problem

If the creative arts offer so many benefits, then why is personal participation in the arts declining and what role might personal attitudes and assumptions play? The fairly new and greatly evolving body of research on leisure constraints and their negotiation may offer clues, particularly in regards to inter and intrapersonal constraints.

Existing as a subcategory within the leisure constraints research and evolving within the last thirty years is the study of women's leisure constraints (Henderson & Hickerson, 2007). According to Shaw & Henderson (2005), structural and intrapersonal constraints have formed the bulk of this research, but interpersonal constraints in the leisure of women have received comparatively little consideration. They call for an extension of the research beyond a psychosocial focus on the individual to one that explores interrelationships between broader sociocultural issues, since "leisure is holistic in women's lives and how leisure is perceived is framed solidly in social influences" (p. 605). An exploration of the constraint processes involved in creative arts participation by midlife women appears to be an advantageous vehicle for contributing to the research on inter and intrapersonal constraints in general and constraint negotiation processes used by midlife woman specifically.

In regards to future directions for the study of leisure constraints and constraint

negotiation theory, Shaw & Henderson (2005) have called for greater emphasis on how women confront and negotiate leisure constraints, while Jackson (2000) and Kleiber & Nimrod (2009) have called for more studies related to older adults. Godbey, Crawford, and Shen (2010) suggest that studies involving older adults are particularly useful when assessing interactions between constraints and antecedents. In addition, Jackson (2005) cites the need for greater research concerning individual motivational factors and leisure participation. Godbey, Crawford, & Shen (2010) call for “an activity-, population-, or domain-specific approach” (p. 115) to explore “sub-dimensions within each of the three categories” (p. 114) of leisure constraints.

Purpose of the Study

This exploratory study will address gaps in current leisure research pertaining to active participation in the creative arts as leisure activity. The study will contribute to the body of leisure constraints literature with particular focus on midlife women through an exploration of the interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints that influence their creative arts participation including any relevant constraint negotiation processes. Should constraints unique to arts participation be uncovered, this research could contribute to the development of a pool of constraint items as called for by Godbey, et al. (2010). Finally, motivation theory, including self-efficacy and goal effects (Bandura, 2003) will be explored in regards to midlife women’s ability to negotiate leisure constraints pertaining to arts participation.

Data will be analyzed utilizing theories employed by both constraint and gender researchers. Shaw and Henderson (2005) explain, “Constraint researchers tend to focus

on individual behaviors and explanations, while gender researchers focus more on the social and cultural context” (p. 29). Ultimately, it is hoped that the results of this study will inform practice in the creative arts and arts education, and extend the research in leisure constraints and negotiations as suggested by Godbey, et al. (2010).

Guiding Questions

This study will be driven by an exploration of the following three questions:

- How do leisure constraints impede midlife women’s participation in the creative arts as leisure activity?
- How does constraint negotiation facilitate midlife women’s participation in the creative arts as leisure activity?
- What role do motivation and, more specifically, self-efficacy play in the constraint negotiation process?

Definitions

The following nominal definitions will be applied:

Creative arts. A *creative activity* traditionally considered within the domain of the fine arts, which for the purposes of this study is defined as the creation of an aesthetic experience involving the mind and imagination. The creative arts may encompass the fields of music, visual arts, theater, dance, literature, and arts technologies such as graphic design and animation.

Leisure constraints. “Factors that are assumed by researchers and/or perceived or experienced by individuals to limit the formation of leisure preferences and/or to inhibit or prohibit participation and enjoyment in leisure” (Jackson, 2000, p. 62).

Leisure constraint negotiation. The steps people take and strategies they employ to address leisure constraints so they might participate in a chosen activity.

Midlife. The years approximately between age 45 and age 65 (Vander Zanden, Crandell, T. L, & Crandell, C. H., 2007).

Participation. Personally and *actively performing or creating* within the domain of the creative arts as defined above, ***not*** passively observing/listening as an audience member. Rather than an all or nothing premise, it is acknowledged that participation can incorporate a range from limited to frequent.

Structure of the Thesis

Five chapters will comprise this thesis beginning with the introductory Chapter I, followed by Chapter II, highlighting a review of the applicable literature. Chapter III will explain the methods of the study, while Chapter IV will describe the findings and Chapter V will synthesize those findings through discussion. Study limitations, researcher background and bias, recommendations, and suggestions for future research will conclude Chapter V.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Localized piece-meal research practices which do not refer to a common theoretical framework or make use of findings from existing studies (especially from a different sub-field) may add difficulties to cross-study comparisons, which in turn hinders the transfer and accumulation of knowledge in this field. (Godbey, Crawford, Shen, 2010, p. 115)

This chapter will present a brief overview of the concepts involved in leisure constraints and constraint negotiation. Special attention will be given to leisure constraints and constraint negotiation applicable to women and older populations. Finally, social cognitive theories involving motivation and self-efficacy will be addressed. Empirical research will be used, where available, to support the development of these concepts.

A Leisure Constraints Framework

Constraint research is a fairly new domain within the leisure studies field beginning with the first empirical research in the early 1980's. It has evolved from the concept of barriers, implying insurmountability, to recognition that many barriers can be negotiated or overcome. Thus, the term *constraints* better represents the possibility of negotiation. (Jackson, 2005) The idea that constraints could affect not only participation in a leisure activity, but also preferences for an activity was first posited by Crawford and Godbey (1987). At that time they developed the first models of leisure constraints delineated by three types of constraints, structural, intrapersonal and interpersonal, which in 1991 were arranged in a linear, hierarchical pattern constituting a “theory of hierarchical leisure constraints” (Godbey, Crawford, & Shen, 2010, p. 111). Structural

constraints, also referred to as intervening or contextual constraints, are external to the participant and most closely related to the earlier idea of barriers to leisure involvement. They typically involve time, finances, and availability of opportunities that interfere with leisure participation in a desired activity. Interpersonal constraints are social in nature, also external to the individual, and involve relationships of two or more. They include fear of social disapproval, including social control and social pressure. Intrapersonal constraints are individual and connected to the psyche and as such are internal, involving self-attitudes, assumptions, perceived lack of skill, embarrassment, fears, self-consciousness, low self-esteem, lack of confidence, and anxiety.

Among the three types of constraints, Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey (1987) believe that the most important influence on leisure choice and participation involves intrapersonal constraints due to their proximal nature. In other words, intrapersonal constraints carry the greatest impact as they interact with the psyche and hence, are most closely related to nonparticipation or limited participation in a given leisure activity. As a result, they pose greater challenges for negotiation than structural constraints. Structural constraints reside at the opposite end of the hierarchy and as such, have the least influence on leisure behavior. Equating interpersonal constraints with societal influences and intrapersonal constraints with psychological issues is perhaps another way of considering these constraints and evaluating their potential to be powerful influences on leisure choice.

According to Godbey, et al. (2010), the “ultimate goal of the model is the prediction of actual *behavior*“ (p. 124). It is theorized to function as a universal

framework of antecedents that predict leisure participation or lack thereof. The model as conceived is circular with entry at any level and, although the relationships among the three levels are the subject of debate and continuing research, one can say that they are dynamic and changing depending on the individual and situation.

Empirical research over the last twenty years has validated the three dimensions of the leisure constraint construct, however, the homogeneity of each dimension and hierarchical nature of the model as a whole has met with conflicting research results and much debate (Godbey, Crawford, & Shen, 2010). In addition, the interface between constraints and participation has not been substantiated through empirical studies. There is now, however, general consensus that differences in populations, the diverse range of leisure activities, and degrees of leisure specialization will result in heterogeneous leisure constraints subcategories within each of the three dimensions. As a result, it has proven difficult to develop any one leisure constraint scale that addresses all situations. In addition, what might constitute an interpersonal constraint for one person may be a structural constraint for another depending on the individual and their situation.

Leisure Constraints and Women

As leisure constraints models are applied to women as a special population, for example, differences have been found. Women deal with more constraints to their leisure, particularly intrapersonal constraints, which negatively influence the degree of leisure time women have in comparison to men. Shaw and Henderson (2005) explored women's intrapersonal leisure constraints including lack of a sense of entitlement to

leisure and the phenomenon in which women put the needs of others above their own, described by an ethic of care and thus, place a lower priority on their own leisure.

Jackson (2005) believes that “leisure changes most at transitional points in people’s lives” (p. 115), which lends credence to the observation that constraints to leisure may decline at menopause and during midlife when child-rearing duties have dissipated (Bialeschki and Michener, 1994). They conclude that at this time in their lives, many women return to activities and interests that occupied their younger days. Walker and Virden (2005) also cite research from the 1970’s indicating that as many as 50% of the leisure activities in which adults choose to participate are first learned during childhood. A study by Scott and Willits (1998) also found the best predictors of leisure activity during the 6th decade of life and again during the 7th decade were the leisure choices people made during adolescence. It would appear from these studies that leisure constraints are in flux over the lifespan, thus supporting the dynamic interrelationships within the leisure constraints hierarchy.

Leisure Constraints—Negotiations and Motivation

To explain why constraints don’t necessarily impede participation, Jackson (1993) expanded Godbey and Crawford’s leisure constraint model to address the process of constraint negotiation as it affects varying degrees of participation. Constraint negotiation identifies the processes individuals implement to overcome constraints and facilitate participation in a chosen leisure activity. At this time the importance of motivation entered the equation with Jackson, Crawford, & Godbey’s 1993 journal article on leisure constraint negotiation and their motivation-balance

model, which posited the importance of motivation in both constraint negotiation and participation. Presumably, with greater motivation an individual is better able to negotiate the negative effects of constraints and thus facilitate increased participation.

More recently, four hierarchical models of constraints involving different interplays between motivation, constraint, negotiation, and participation were tested by Hubbard and Mannell (2001). They identified and tested four constraint negotiation strategies: time management, skill acquisition, interpersonal coordination, financial. The results supported the constraint-effects-mitigation model, in which motivation has an indirect effect on participation. Jackson summarizes their results, “While there was no direct relationship between motivation and perceived constraint, motivation appeared to be strongly related to participation through its strong positive influence on efforts to negotiate constraints” (Jackson, 2005, p. 8). Son, Mowen, & Kerstetter (2008) tested Hubbard and Mannell’s proposed constraint negotiation model in regards to physical activity of adults aged 50-87 years and found support for Hubbard and Mannell’s (2001) results indicating that motivation had a positive influence on negotiation strategies, which were successful in reducing or eliminating the negative effects of constraints and facilitating increased participation. They concluded, “Motivation appears to play a vital role in the development and use of strategies to overcome constraints to participation” (Son, et al, 2008, p. 210).

Leisure Constraints—Negotiations and Self-efficacy Theory

Inherent in motivation, and correspondingly the ability to negotiate constraints, is the psychological concept of self-efficacy, a component of Bandura’s (1977) theory of

social learning. Self-efficacy is the personal belief that one has the capability to attain a goal or control the outcome of a particular situation. Self-efficacy develops through social observations and experiences and is a construct of personality. It seems intuitive that humans are willing to participate in activities that they perceive to be doable, a contention that is supported in Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (1957). Hence, if one has high self-efficacy and assumes success, one presupposes more activities will be attempted. Conversely, if self-efficacy is low, many activities will be avoided because the challenge is perceived to be greater than one's competency or abilities. Central to self-efficacy is *perceived* challenge versus *perceived* ability. The implications for leisure choice appear obvious. Those with high self-efficacy are willing to try a great many more activities than those with low self-efficacy. Tsai and Coleman (2009) studied the role perceived constraints and self-efficacies have on participation in active recreation for college students. Although there was a weak negative effect regarding perceived constraints, self-efficacies displayed stronger positive effects on students' participation.

Leisure Constraints—Negotiations and Goal Theory

Further contributing to this discussion of motivation in the negotiation of leisure constraints is achievement goal theory as proposed by Nicholls (1989) in relation to academic motivation but more recently applied to sports and active recreational pursuits. Underpinning Nicholls' theory is the display of competence, which is a function of the interactions between perceived effort and ability. Nicholls (1992) postulates two ways of viewing this relationship, undifferentiated and differentiated. A

differentiated individual is task-oriented and self-referenced, believing that through effort and hard work, ability can be improved. An undifferentiated individual is ego-oriented and outwardly directed, viewing the necessity for hard work as proof that ability is limited. The former individual evaluates progress personally, while the latter compares personal progress to that of a reference group. The relationship between ability and achievement is therefore positive for the undifferentiated individual, while there is an inverse relationship in the differentiated person. In terms of leisure choices, constraints, and constraint negotiation, one can postulate that the undifferentiated person would have greater difficulties negotiating leisure constraints and therefore participate in fewer, novel leisure activities.

Leisure Constraints—Negotiations and Psychological Theory

Psychological research by Kruglanski and Webster (1996) may also extend the constraint/negotiation dialog by describing a human predisposition to cling to learned rules, principles, and mindsets even when they have become counterproductive or been disproven. This inflexibility in thinking may perpetuate the “can’t sing, can’t dance, can’t draw” mindset, especially after one has been told and one’s experiences have confirmed that he/she is not artistic, musical, graceful, etc. Psychologist Ellen Langer (2005) suggests,

It is usually when we are young that we learn to think we are not talented; we are told so by teachers, parents, and other adults. We accept their evaluations because we are inexperienced: we don’t realize that the contexts in which we are being judged really say little about our talent (p. 46).

Hence, it is possible that intrapersonal constraints to arts participation may be instilled

within us at an early age via social interaction, resulting in interpersonal constraints, which are later transformed into intrapersonal constraints that become firmly anchored within an inflexible mindset.

Leisure Constraints—Negotiations: Questions for the Future

Leisure constraint-negotiation constructs are undergoing vigorous debate at this time. Hubbard and Mannell (2001) argue that what we consider to be constraint negotiators may merely be facilitators. Samdahl (2005) ponders the emphasis on leisure participation inherent in the constraint-negotiation-participation models and wonders how this can be aligned with the prevalent assumption that leisure is an attitude, a state of mind. She calls for an examination of how leisure constraints might affect leisure preferences and leisure enjoyment. Along those lines, Kleiber & McGuire (2008) argue that constraints are not always negative nor require negotiation. They may actually be beneficial if positive lifestyle choices are the outcome as evidenced in Baltes & Carstensen's (1996) model of successful aging, referred to as selective optimization with compensation. Godbey, Crawford, & Shen (2010) join Mannell and Loucks-Atkinson (2005) in cautioning against an expansion of the parameters of leisure constraints to the point where all non-participation is explained within this framework without consideration of other factors such as personal attitudes, cultural beliefs and values, and personality traits.

Godbey, Crawford, & Shen (2010) sum up this juncture in the trajectory of leisure constraint-negotiation research by stating that the underlying conceptualization upon which the model is based is empirically justified, yet they call for further research

that “a) reinforces the centrality of these components; b) suggests other ways in which they may be related; and c) uncovers different measurable variables that represent them” (p. 129).

Chapter III

Methods

*“.....women view all knowledge as contextual, experience themselves as creators of knowledge, and value both subjective and objective strategies for knowing.”
(Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986, p. 15)*

This exploratory, qualitative study using semi-structured, individual interviews compared and contrasted midlife women who either do not participate in the creative arts as leisure activity or have varying degrees of participation. Analysis sought to explore and describe, compare and contrast themes related not only to the constraints these women encounter, but also the antecedents that contribute to the formation of those constraints (Godbey, Crawford, & Shen, 2010; Walker & Virden, 2005). The enjoyment the women derive from any degree of participation in the creative arts was explored as well (Samdahl, 2005).

Research Design

Exploratory, qualitative, semi-structured interviews were selected to study the impact of leisure constraints, constraints negotiations, and motivation on creative arts participation for midlife women. According to Chase (2003), it is individuals who are most able to offer expert interpretations of specific meanings in their lives. Samdahl (1999) believes that structured questioning can omit undiscovered yet pertinent meanings since it reflects more closely the researcher's views rather than the subject's. With the intent of casting a wide net and exploring potentially undiscovered terrain at the sociological (interpersonal constraints) and psychological (intrapersonal constraints) levels, a semi-structured interview design was chosen for its flexibility, wide

parameters, potential for insight regarding attitudes, and ability to incorporate social perspective (Babbie, 2007).

Variable Operationalization

For the purposes of this study, active participation in the creative arts include the following broad categories and indicators based upon an amalgamation of definitions from the Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd Edition, and consultations with creative arts professors Dr. S. R. Riley (9/2/2009) and Dr. S. Verducci (3/9/2010). To highlight this study's emphasis on creative and active participation as opposed to passive observation, the verbs are italicized. The nominal definitions and these variables were discussed with each participant to ensure common understanding of the subject matter.

Music. *Singing* solo or in an ensemble, *playing* an instrument, *composing* music, and *arranging* music.

Visual Arts. *Painting*, *drawing*, *sketching*, *illustrating*, *making* ceramics, *making* sculpture, *taking* art photographs, *creating* visual collage.

Plays/Musical Theater. *Performing* in a play/musical, *performance* art, *designing* scenery, *designing* costumes, *designing* sound, *designing* lighting, *directing* a play or musical.

Dance. *Performing* dance, *choreographing*, *designing* scenery, *designing* costumes, *designing* sound, *designing* lighting for dance performances.

Literature. *Writing* plays, *writing* poetry, *writing* novels, *writing* short stories, *writing* screenplays, *writing* memoirs/journals.

Technologies. *Creating* graphic design, animation.

Interview Questions

As per Babbie (2007) the following interview questions were designed to be topic driven, probing, open-ended, and unstructured. Inadvertent bias in the wording of questions was also considered. These questions were designed to cover topics involving leisure activity patterns in general, the range and frequency of creative arts participation including non-participation, previous experiences and exposure to the arts, leisure constraints and constraint negotiations, attitudes and feelings regarding arts activity, personal success in the arts, motivations to participate to any degree or not participate in the arts, and changes in leisure activity over the years. It should be noted that these basic questions were asked of each interviewee, but as the individual interviews progressed, it became necessary to follow lines of discourse that led to questions not on this list.

For those known to participate in the creative arts.

- Tell me about your leisure activities.
- What creative activities do you currently participate in? How often to you participate? When and how did you begin?
- Why do you participate in these creative activities?
- What challenges have you encountered concerning arts participation?
- How have you dealt with these challenges so you could begin or continue to participate?

- What brings you satisfaction in your creative activities?
- What brings you dissatisfaction?
- How do you feel when you are doing these creative activities? Can you describe what is satisfying or meaningful about the activities?
- How would you feel if asked to draw a picture that others would view? Sing a song that others would hear? Perform a dance that others would watch?
- What exposure did you have to the creative arts and at what ages? School? Parents? Classes? How did you feel during those experiences?
- What is necessary for a person to actively participate in the creative arts?
- Would you consider yourself a creative person? How so?
- How have your leisure activities changed over the years?

For those not known to participate to any degree in the creative arts.

- Tell me about your leisure activities.
- If you do not participate in the creative arts, why not?
- What challenges have you encountered concerning arts participation?
- How have you dealt with these challenges?
- Would you like to participate in the future? Which activity?
- Under what circumstances would you decide to participate? How would you initiate participation?

- How would you feel if asked to draw a picture that others would view? Sing a song that others would hear? Perform a dance that others would watch?
- What exposure have you had to the creative arts and at what ages? School? Parents? Classes? How did you feel during those experiences?
- What is necessary for a person to actively participate in the creative arts?
- Would you consider yourself a creative person? Why or why not?
- How have your leisure interests/activities changed over the years?

Sampling Method

This study involved a purposive, non-probability, convenience sampling strategy that also incorporated snowballing to recruit 12 women from the sampling frame of midlife women, aged 45-65 (Vander Zanden, Crandell, T.L., & Crandell, 2007). This age group was chosen because these women are at life stages which usually afford opportunities for increased leisure, generally just at the end of or after the years of work and active parenting. Several studies (Anderton, Fitzgerald, & Laidler, 1995; Bialeschki & Michener, 1994; Parry & Shaw, 1999) found that women often reengaged in leisure during midlife after their children were grown. Women were recruited from a diverse set of channels in the San Jose, California area including but not limited to churches, formal creative arts organizations, and informal social networking groups.

The ages of the 12 women ranged from 46 to 63 with a mean sample age of 55. Initially, women were sought who represented the ethnic diversity of Santa Clara County, California, the site of this study. When this range of ethnic diversity proved

elusive, the sampling focus shifted to women who represented diversity in degree and type of creative arts participation. This facilitated comparison of different leisure constraints across various types of creative arts activities as well as varying levels of motivation to participate. Demographic details are presented at the beginning of Chapter IV.

Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews, ranging from 45 to 75 minutes, took place during October and November 2010. This author was the sole interviewer and assumed the role of student, encouraging dialog by asking each interviewee to expand on her responses and “teach” the researcher (Babbie, 2007). All interviews were conducted in English and audio recorded in two ways using a transcription tape recorder and Microsoft’s OneNote program. Memoing took place via computerized notes taken during and immediately after each interview and organized using OneNote. Each interviewee was given a consent form to sign and informed of their rights as study participants before the interviews commenced. They were told that names would be changed in all data reporting to ensure the participants’ anonymity. Socio-economic information was verbally gathered and consisted of age, responsibilities for children or aging parents, and financial constraints, all of which are pertinent to intrapersonal constraints according to the findings of Raymore, Godbey, Crawford, & Von Eye (1993), which indicated that lower socio-economic status increases intrapersonal constraints. Finances were not a major constraint, however, for any of the participants. To ensure mutual understanding of the category “creative arts” each woman was then

asked to review the categorized variable list of possible creative arts activities (Appendix A). It was emphasized, however, that this list was not all inclusive.

For the purpose of eliciting and documenting lived experiences and attitudes pertinent to the focus of this study, two sets of open-ended interview questions (Appendix B) were constructed and originally intended to differentiate between those who do and those who do not participate in the creative arts. It became immediately apparent, however, that with one exception (Mame), these women could not be so easily segregated into those who “do” and those who “do not.” Rather, degrees of participation were observed, hence the two sets of interview questions were merged and applied in a more individually appropriate manner.

Not only did the study participants resist distinct classifications in regards to their degree of creative arts participation, but the activities considered to be within the domain of the creative arts soon diverged into a gray area between creative and applied arts. This necessitated expanding the original parameters of what would be considered a creative arts activity and necessitated further flexibility in questioning the participants. For example, the applied arts (usually considered functional or home arts such as sewing and floral arranging) were deemed creative arts activities if the interviewee created an original design. Cindy’s fabric arts consisting of quilting, knitting, and spinning yarn encompassed original designs, thus fulfilling the new criteria. Likewise, Pam designed and executed original floral designs so this leisure activity was included within the realm of the creative arts. As the interviews progressed and a leisure activity was determined to be creative, additional questions were asked appropriate to those

who do participate in a creative art.

Each woman was thanked at the end of her interview with a token of appreciation consisting of a small wall magnet and an original Artist Trading Card created by the interviewer. The interviews were transcribed verbatim by this author using a transcription machine in conjunction with OneNote. Each transcription was completed and sent to the participant for a member check, corrections, and clarifications within one week of the interview (Babbie, 2007). As the interviews were transcribed and reviewed, some women were contacted via e-mail for additional questioning or clarification. Five participants were later given the opportunity to review and comment upon the rough draft of the findings.

Trustworthiness/Credibility

Qualitative research is generally considered to have greater validity than quantitative research. “Being there is a powerful technique for gaining insights into the nature of human affairs in all their rich complexity” (Babbie, 2007, p. 313), yet reliability poses greater challenges due to the subjective nature of the qualitative interview process. To increase reliability, the researcher used a reflective journal during data collection and analysis for the purpose of illuminating any researcher bias due to personal experiences and knowledge in the arts and to consider any potential impact on the research and analyses. The journal also served as a means of exploring emerging ideas and perceptions as research progressed.

Member checks also serve to increase trustworthiness of data by allowing Each interviewee to read her transcript and comment on its accuracy, make corrections,

expand points, and clarify statements. Selected interviewees reviewed the analysis portion of the manuscript draft to comment on accuracy of interpretation (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The method of data analysis contributed to the credibility of the results by using systematic grounded theory methods to organize and analyze the data. Finally, reporting techniques adhere strictly to accurate representation of data results, patterns, and concepts using language that is specific and meaningful (Babbie, 2007).

Data Analysis

Grounded theory (Babbie, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) was selected for the data analysis process because it provides for systematic and scientific data organization and analysis, while simultaneously allowing for creativity (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). It is uniquely well suited for this exploration of creative arts participation and leisure constraints—negotiations inasmuch as the concept for this research study began with informal conversations and observations involving other women (see Chapter I, p. 1) and was developed using inductive reasoning strategies (Babbie, 2007).

Glaser and Strauss' (1967) four-step constant comparative method was used. First, concepts were compared; then integration of concepts took place; next, categories were reduced leading to delimiting the theory; and finally, the theory was written (Babbie, 2007).

Memoing (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) using OneNote software program was first applied during the interview process and continued throughout the data collection and

analysis process. These memos consisted of code notes, theoretical notes, and operational notes and served as preliminary organization of the data. The analysis process was designed to be “flexible, iterative, and continuous” (H & R. Rubin, 1995, p. 43 as cited in Babbie, 2007).

The transcripts were initially color coded using open coding to organize main categories of interest such as leisure constraints (structural, interpersonal, intrapersonal), motivations, facilitators, negotiation, judging/comparisons, beliefs about the creative arts, satisfaction, and success. One hundred and one single spaced pages of transcripts were then reduced to 35 pages of material in 13 flexible categories. The initials that originally identified each respondent were changed to pseudonyms and individual portraits of each respondent were also created to facilitate analysis of dynamic relationships among leisure constraints, constraint negotiation, and motivation for each individual.

Next, axial coding was used to refine the initial categories and to create new ones as unique subcategories became apparent. For instance, upon analyzing the broad category of “motivation”, it became obvious that social motivation, was a factor for all 12 women, therefore social motivation became a distinction of “motivation”. Likewise, the broad category, “judging” was further honed to reflect “judgment by and of others” as distinct from judgment of self. Social comparison, the process by which individuals evaluate their own abilities and beliefs by referencing others (Festinger, 1954), also emerged as a new and distinct category.

Finally, selective coding revealed patterns, similarities, and differences across

the initial broad categories as well as from woman to woman. Dynamic relationships among structural, interpersonal, and intrapersonal leisure constraints were evident as each individual woman's portrait was analyzed, indicating complex inter-relationships that resist the desire for mutually exclusive categorization.

The initial and subsequent coding was considered throughout the process of analysis using Glaser & Strauss' (1967) constant comparison method. In addition, the reflective journal kept throughout data collection and analysis was used to capture thoughts, reactions, and insight and to generate further research questions as the results unfolded. The reflective journal also served the purpose of revealing author bias and personal attitudes regarding the subject matter.

Summary

Twelve midlife women were interviewed using semi-structured interview techniques for this exploratory qualitative study of how leisure constraints and constraint negotiations impact any degree of participation or lack of participation in the creative arts. Once the interviews were transcribed verbatim and member checks took place, the data was color coded and analyzed utilizing grounded theory methods as applied through Glaser and Strauss' (1967) four-step constant comparative method. Processes such as memoing and a reflective journal augmented reliability and member checks strengthened validity.

Chapter IV

Findings

“We know our skills and our fears” (Alma)

The findings will be presented using the original guiding research questions as a framework. Therefore, results pertaining to how leisure constraints impede women’s participation in the creative arts will be discussed first, followed by the data concerning how constraint negotiations facilitate participation. Information related to the role that motivation and self-efficacy may play will be presented followed by attitudes and beliefs about the creative arts.

The final ethnic make-up of the sample included 10 Caucasian women, one woman born and raised in Japan, and one born in Hungary, but raised in America after the age of three. All 12 women are married, one cares for her disabled husband, and six have young adult children residing in the home. In terms of college education, two women have Associate degrees or the equivalent, nine have Bachelor degrees, and one has a recently acquired Ph.D. in Theater Arts. With the exception of one woman who has a Bachelor degree in Creative Arts, the remaining 10 women have college degrees in subjects unrelated to the arts. All women are middle to upper class in terms of socio-economic status and none mentioned finances as a major constraint.

As Table 1 indicates, what the 12 participants lacked in ethnic diversity, they more than compensated for with a wide range of creative arts endeavors and varying degrees of participation. It should be noted that the real names of the participants were changed to pseudonyms as represented in the table below and throughout this thesis.

Table 1

Current Creative Arts Involvement and Frequency

Respondent	Age	Current Creative Arts Involvement	Frequency
Mame	63	None; Prefers physical activity	0
Cherry	55	None; Involved in church mission work	0
Livvie	56	Listening to music & singing alone	Daily (informally)
Tammy	50	Plays viola with family for church; Plays viola alone	5X/year 2X/month (informally)
Pam	57	Designs & crafts floral arrangements	4X/year
Mary Kay	54	1 st Flute with community band	Weekly
Alma	52	Musical theater performance; Choral singing; photography, piano	Daily to weekly depending on show & concerts
Lynn	59	Conceptualizes & directs high school musical theater	Daily to weekly for 6 months of the year
Dot	55	Journaling; visual arts & collage; print-making; Haiku poetry	Daily to weekly; Quit corporate job 10 years ago; re-engaged in art; started business as life coach and artist
Carrie	60	Technical theater: sound, lighting, costume design, directing; college professor	Daily to weekly; After raising children, returned to college 9 years ago for MA & Ph.D. in Theater
Cathy	46	Designs & crafts fabric arts (quilting, spinning yarn, knitting, sewing); Photography	Daily; Trying to sell online and start a business

Alina	55	Ceramics/Pottery; Graphics; Designing/building with wood	Daily; Corporate lay-off 1 year ago; turning hobby into pottery business
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Early Arts Exposure and Experience

The women were also asked background questions related to childhood and adolescent exposure to the creative arts and the degree of support and encouragement they received from their parents. As evidenced by Table 2, all 12 women were exposed to the creative arts during childhood and adolescence, most frequently through elementary school instrumental music programs, church choirs, high school bands & choirs, and high school arts and crafts classes, along with private music and dance lessons.

Table 2

Childhood and adolescent exposure to the arts and parental encouragement

Respondent	Age	Exposure	Encouragement
Mame	63	Church choir, art, dance, instruments (piano, drums), band, theater, crafts	No encouragement, but no discouragement; private lessons in dance, piano
Cherry	55	Instruments (organ, recorder, harmonica), folk singing, art	No encouragement, but father & grandfather became locally famous artists after retirement
Livvie	56	Crafts, poetry, art; loved to sing to herself	Mom discouraged music lessons; Dad took her to jazz clubs
Tammy	50	Instrument (viola), church choir, orchestra,	Parents sang in church choir; music large part of childhood; private viola lessons

Pam	57	Instruments (sax, piano), band, art	Parents played opera records; encouraging; private lessons in sax, piano
Mary Kay	54	Instrument (flute), band, orchestra	Dad played piano, Mom encouraging; private lessons in flute
Alma	52	Church & school choir, instrument (piano), photography, musical theater	Dad played banjo & guitar; grandfather was jazz musician; artists in family; felt supported, encouraged
Lynn	59	Dance, instrument (harp), art, crafts	Dad & 2 brothers were artists; Parents encouraging; private lessons in dance
Dot	55	Art, writing classes, ceramics	Parents very creative & encouraging; great aunt her “muse”; Girl Scout mentor in ceramics
Carrie	60	Instruments (flute, accordion, piano), choirs, marching band	Parents not “arty” & did not support art, although music was “o.k.”; private lessons in accordion
Cathy	46	Instruments (guitar), summer music camp, dance, art, painting class	Mom was musician & painter; provided art tools; very encouraging
Alina	55	Art, dance, instruments (violin, guitar, harmonica)	Mom & sister are artists

Their parents’ experiences with and affinity towards the arts impacted the encouragement or lack thereof that the parents provided for their daughters. For example, Livvie related how her mother was forced to take piano lessons as a child and hated it, leaving her determined not to put her own children through such agony. As a result, and despite Livvie’s desire to learn a musical instrument, “I just felt like that meant that wasn’t an option for me.” In contrast, these women have sought to extend every opportunity for their own children to have the musical and artistic opportunities they lacked: “So needless to say, with my children, we have done everything we could

to support their artistic bents” (Carrie).

Figure 1 presents the range of creative arts exposure during childhood and adolescence experienced by the 12 respondents, all of whom had multiple creative arts experiences. The most prevalent early creative arts activity, experienced by all but one of the women is art, while instrumental music exposure was cited by 10 of the respondents.

Figure 1

12 Respondents' early exposure to and experience in the creative arts

Art exposure was predominantly through elementary school art programs and high school art classes. Likewise, each of the women citing instrumental music involvement indicated their first exposure was through an introductory instrumental music program in elementary school. Choral music participation took place in elementary church choirs during childhood and high school choirs during adolescence.

The women who participated in dance all took private lessons. Mame was involved in theater at her elementary school and Alma participated in high school musical theater. These statistics clearly indicate the importance of elementary and high school arts programs in regards to early exposure to the creative arts.

Constraints: Structural

Structural constraints were cited by all respondents and found to have varying impacts on their ability to participate in the creative arts. Most frequently mentioned was (a) lack of time followed by (b) lack of skills, practice, knowledge, and education, (c) lack of opportunities and facilities, (d) physical constraints, and (e) financial constraints.

Lack of time. Lack of time was most frequently cited as a structural constraint and was generally discussed in conjunction with other leisure activities that the respondent placed at a higher priority. More specifically, lack of time was related to (a) self-employment or completion of BA degree, (b) commitment to and structure of the arts activity, (c) too many competing creative interests, and (d) time required for auxiliary arts tasks.

Several respondents indicated they had none to limited time for a creative arts activity because there were greater leisure priorities in their life such as exercise, caring for and riding their horses, and volunteer church mission work. (a) Self-employment in a business was mentioned by Pam and Mame, and Cathy discussed the time commitment involved in completing a BA degree in creative arts. Carrie indicated that multiple part-time jobs doing free-lance technical theater work and college teaching

restrict her ability to pursue painting. (b) The practice commitment along with structured rehearsal and performance schedules inherent in instrumental, choral, and theater activities pose challenges. Pam feels, “If you are going to participate in or play on any performing level, it just doesn’t allow a lot of time, given what I already do recreatively.” Regarding the regular time commitment that a church choir requires, Livvie observes, “It just ends up eating up all your free time and then it’s not fun anymore.” (c) Cathy finds she is passionately engaged in too many creative activities and says, “I need 48 hours and a clone.” (d) In the field of ceramics, Alina despairs at all the auxiliary tasks she must do before she can get to the creative aspect of pottery throwing.

Lack of skills, practice, knowledge, and education. This structural constraint was mentioned primarily in conjunction with musical endeavors. “I never learned to formally read music and I felt like I was the weakest kid in the choir....I felt like a dummy” (Livvie). One woman dropped out of what was supposed to be a beginning tap dance class, when her skills didn’t match those of the other more advanced participants. “I couldn’t keep up” (Cathy). Lack of current practice impeded some women’s desire to re-engage in an earlier creative activity such as painting or playing an instrument. “I don’t play my instrument like I used to so that would take quite a bit of training to get back to it” (Pam). Carrie finds it difficult to obtain technical theater jobs because she lacks a Master of Fine Arts degree and Alina thinks a college degree in art would have been helpful in advancing her technical skills.

Lack of opportunities and facilities. Despite the fact that the location of this

study is near San Jose, California, the 10th largest city in America, lack of convenient facilities and opportunities to participate in and gain advanced skills in a chosen creative art activity remains a structural constraint that was mentioned several times by the respondents. Tammy's church does not have a church choir for her to sing with so she "would have to go to a bigger church". Pam wonders what sense there is in learning ballroom dance when there are no venues in the area where one can show off the newly acquired dancing skills. Cathy was unable to find a spinning teacher and resorted to DVD's to advance her technique. College classes in the visual arts offer inconvenient and limited studio time. More than one visual artist (Alina & Cathy) longed for expanded and personal home studio space.

Physical constraints. Two women mentioned fatigue as a constraint. Cathy finds it difficult to do fine needle work at night when her eyes are tired. Alina cited the physical demands of throwing pottery such as hauling buckets of glaze and bags of wet clay. The physical dangers of manipulating hot molten glass while creating art glass is a deterrent for Cathy as is the physical stamina required to perform classical dance for Lynn.

Financial constraints. Money as a structural constraint was mentioned most frequently in conjunction with the visual arts due to the necessity of stocking art supplies and equipment. Only two women (Alina & Dot) in this study felt that finances were somewhat of a constraint, both of them visual artists who have small businesses connected to their leisure arts activities.

Constraints: Interpersonal

Social influence in regards to creative arts participation impacted every woman in this study and was connected to both motivation and constraint. This section will report the findings on interpersonal constraints related to (a) priorities based upon the needs of others, (b) challenges related to interpersonal relationships, (c) lack of support & appreciation.

Priorities based upon the needs of others. Although only three women indicated they still have older high school and college aged children in the home and one woman is caring for her disabled husband, the needs of others were mentioned as a priority that supersedes creative arts participation. Cherry places high priority on the needs of her church family and gives immediate assistance when she is called. Tammy is clear in prioritizing her blended family and five-year-new second marriage: “If I’m just going to go out and do my own thing in a community orchestra that’s a very selfish thing; it’s a very me thing”. Since her husband does not share her musical interests, she only plays her viola occasionally in church when her children can participate, and says she would only join a community choir if she weren’t married. Alma related how she dropped out of a voice-over class because her daughter was having anxiety issues: “You do have to be there for your kids and there’s a lot of energy in that.” She feels she will have more space in her life for her theater and musical activities when her daughter moves out. Cathy’s creative schedule is sometimes disrupted when her daughter needs something in the middle of the day and Dot is distracted by her household responsibilities and caring for her husband. “My creativity doesn’t always come

as number one,” she says.

Challenges related to interpersonal relationships. Numerous challenges related to collaborating, cooperating, and generally getting along with others were mentioned. While some were global in nature and could be applied to many social and work contexts, others such as artistic egos, talent, and competition were somewhat more specific to the creative arts. Several women mentioned difficulties dealing with inflated egos and people who have unrealistic estimates of their own individual skills especially when working in a collaborative setting such as a band, choir, or a theater production. “Some people think they have more talent or more influence than they actually do and they set people off; then gossiping and fighting starts” (Alma). Politics and competition within musical and theatrical organizations were also reported as constraints. Two visual artists, Dot & Alina, indicated the pull of and desire to resist competition with other artists and Dot mentioned being in the shadow of her husband’s artistic endeavors for many years. In the world of theater, Lynn feels that high school parents and students can be difficult to deal with when the student is not offered a desired role. Carrie cites frustration working with high school students in the technical theater aspects of a production when they do not follow through on tasks. For her, collaboration challenges include lack of communication, personalities that don’t mesh, and “when the people I’m working with don’t give full attention to the collaborative effort involved.” Similarly, Alma terminated her participation in one opera group because it “was so haphazard and amateurish.” Social influence was mentioned by Pam. “If you’re not actively involved with people who do [a creative activity], you

tend not to pursue it yourself if you don't have a particular talent.”

Lack of support and appreciation. Lack of support, appreciation, and understanding was mentioned by three women. Cathy told of giving her original creations to family members as gifts, only to feel unappreciated when people discarded her artwork: “I’ve heard little comments from others like you’re being cheap because you didn’t buy them a present, you made them something.” Her husband sometimes reaches his limit with the clutter connected to her many projects: “Why is there yarn all over the place? Don’t you think you have enough fabric?” Finally, Cathy’s mother doesn’t understand what she is going to do with her new BA degree in Creative Arts. Alina, recently laid off and trying to build her pottery hobby into a viable business, feels discouraged when “People say, well you can’t make a living.” Communication with their families is difficult when Alma’s and Carrie’s theater involvement requires them to work nights. “You need to be home with your husband” says Carrie’s mother and Carrie concludes, “Non-artists don’t quite understand how happy you are when you’re off doing this tech and they want you to come home and be really tired and be missing them and all that stuff and I never do.” In the realm of high school musical theater, Lynn feels it’s difficult to work in a situation where the school administration doesn’t understand and appreciate the value of the creative arts.

Social Comparison and Judgments

Social comparison resulting in self judgment, along with judging of others and by others permeated the participants’ responses. In fact, a word search indicated that the word “good” used as a value judgment was stated 153 times and “people” used in

the context of judgment by and of others was mentioned 147 times (Appendix B). In this study, social comparison and value judgments blurred the lines between interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints and more accurately served as a bridge between these two types of constraints. Livvie sums up this phenomenon by saying, “Maybe people would judge me the way I judge them.” Therefore, these findings regarding (a) social comparison and self-judgment, (b) judgment by others, and (c) judgment of others will be presented separately, appropriately set between interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints. Social motivation that facilitates participation will be discussed later in this thesis.

Social comparison and self-judgment. All 12 female respondents appeared to be well aware of social comparison in regards to their own and other’s abilities in the creative arts. As Alma commented, “A lot of it is self-judgment, which means that sometimes you can be harder on yourself than other people.” Examples of social comparison resulting in self-judgment include Cherry comparing her paintings to her sister’s and concluding that her sister had more of a “gift”. Regarding her drawing and painting ability, Lynn recalls, “I was always a little intimidated by my brothers because they were really very, very good. I mean really good.” She chose dance instead “because I just have it in my head that I would never be as good as they were.” Recalling how she unsuccessfully studied violin in elementary school, Alina mentioned, “I think maybe what they were looking for were people that are more talented.”

Social comparison. Social comparison can intimidate and constrain participation, leaving self-doubt in its wake as two of the visual artists in the group,

Alina & Dot, describe. Dot recalls entering a piece in an art show: “I really was kind of intimidated because technically the other artists participating were all very good.... My first impulse was, 'I'm not good enough to show the thing.'” She feels she is “shy around people that call themselves artists or are formally trained as artists versus people that I know that it is more process oriented, more organic, I guess.” Alina “struggled with whether you're a legitimate artist if you don't have a degree” as others have.

Pam discussed the difference in social position for high school band students in Ohio (“If you were not an athlete you *had* [emphasis added] to be in the music program and in the band.”) compared with California (“perceived as a geek kind of activity”). Mary Kay recalls how her own children's comments made her ponder the social status of band members:

Apparently being in the band was nerdy, but I didn't know that. I was not a nerd growing up, not that there's anything wrong with being a nerd. I thought of myself as fairly cool and I was in the band. I was not the typical band member, I would say. (Mary Kay)

Alma made a similar observation in regards to choral music: “Choral singing, it's getting a kind of renaissance now with everyone watching 'Glee', but for a long time choral singing was what nerds did.”

Social comparison often results in ranking one's own abilities and skills against those of others with both positive and negative results. Alma knew she could draw “because I can compare myself to other people.” Regarding musical theater, she also deduced, “I may not be as good as some of the people...there's a lot of really talented people in this area.” She also ranks the choirs in which she has participated: “They were not as good as some of the other choirs that I have sung in.” In referring to her

inability to read music, Livvie says, “I felt like I was the weakest kid in the choir when I joined”, yet in regards to her singing ability, “There were people worse than me and people better than me.” Livvie provides further evidence that social comparison does not always result in a lower ranking with her self-appraisal after a performance: “I knew the song and I think I would say that I was one of the best ones.” Likewise, Mary Kay comments, “Typically I’m like a B; I’m not the A.” When asked how she determined that, she responded, “because of other flutes that have been in the band.”

Self judgment. In terms of self-judgment, the female respondents made swift and confident statements about their creative abilities resulting in both positive and negative assessments. “We know our skills and our fears”, says Alma. Accordingly, the women’s statements demonstrated strong self-knowledge and self-acceptance. As Alina said, “I tried it [music and dance] and it was clear that wasn’t my medium....that’s not me and I haven’t had much trouble figuring it out. I’m lucky that way.”

Negative self-judgments abound beginning with Mame. “I’m not artsy-craftsy....“I can’t carry a tune.” Referring to art, “I was never great; probably because I wasn’t that good at it, I never had any urge to do anything with it.” When asked about dancing, “I wasn’t good at that either” (Mame). Cherry relates, “I have painted in the past, but it didn’t turn out like I should have any talent; it didn’t look that great.” “Everything I draw just looks bad” (Cherry). Regarding visual art, “I’m just not good at it and nobody had to tell me. And I don’t get pleasure from trying to do it” (Livvie). “I don’t feel like I have a solo voice” (Tammy). “I don’t have a great voice; I don’t sound

all that great” (Pam). Alma is sure of her weak areas: “I don’t have enough acting chops....I’m too old for leads.” Referring to singing, “I’m not a soloist, I don’t have the voice.” Referring to stage dancing, Alma feels, “I’m really a klutz; I’m not a dancer; I’m just so slow compared to everyone else” (Alma). Alina comments on her experiences with music: “I could not do guitar.....I tried harmonica, I couldn’t do that either....I’m pretty sure that I don’t sing well” (Alina). Carrie concurs, “I’m not great at piano”. Finally, Mary Kay adds, “I’m really not a performer, or at least I don’t view myself as a performer....I’m not a great musician by any means.”

Positive evaluations exuding self-confidence were also mentioned with equal conviction and sometimes in direct comparison to a perceived weakness. Says Livvie, “I can sing fairly well....If I know a song, man, I can sing it really good.” Mame feels, “One thing I did do I guess is kind of great, I always swam [*sic*]; I’m a swimmer so I taught synchronized swimming.” “I was a very good sax player”, says Pam. Alma relates, “I’ve confirmed what I already knew which is that my skill is being funny; funny I can do”. She goes on to say, “I don’t have natural talent as a dancer, but I can draw....I’m actually a pretty good writer” (Alma). “Sometimes I sound great [on the flute] if I put the extra effort into it”, says Mary Kay. “I think I probably have more passion than I have technical ability. I think I balance it well” (Mary Kay). Regarding her abilities, Lynn adds, “I’m not a soloist; I’d sing with a choir; I have a good choir voice” and “I just felt really comfortable with it [dance] and I knew; I felt like I was good” (Lynn). Carrie believes, “I’m actually really good at sound [design]” and adds, “When you get a Ph.D. [in Theater Arts] by then you’re absolutely positive you can

teach anything. And then the other thing you know is you can stand up in front of people and entertain them” (Carrie). Cathy sums up her self-confidence in her creative abilities by saying there are no creative arts she can’t do, although she may not do them all well, such as acting.

Judgment by others. All 12 women had memories dating back to childhood of incidents where their creative abilities were judged by others whether in an encouraging or discouraging manner. “I’ve been told I can’t sing”, says Mame who remembers her high school choir director telling her to just open her mouth and pretend to sing. Tammy recalls her 7th grade art teacher admonishing her because the sky she painted was the wrong color. “I wasn’t successful in what he wanted me to accomplish.” Indicating she has no desire to participate in the visual arts or take lessons, Tammy says, “The art teacher probably doesn’t even know he did that to me.” Alina’s elementary school violin teacher encouraged her to try another instrument and she remembers her mother leaving when she practiced. In addition she says, “I don’t sing very well, I’ve been told.” After overhearing her sing, her sister said, “Ew, I hope you don’t, like, pursue that as a career.” On a more encouraging note, Mary Kay says she is “Ok [in drawing]. I’m not bad. People have said so.” After singing a solo in church, Livvie recalls how “a lot of people came up to me and said, ‘I didn’t know you could sing like that.’”

Anticipated judgment by others also serves as a constraint to participation in the arts. Tammy would not want to sing a solo in church because “I would be letting people down; they would be expecting more and I’m not giving them what they

expect.” Accompanying the assumption that others will judge your endeavors is the feeling of vulnerability it produces. Alma has not yet pursued writing because “it’s the vulnerability that would be there to let other people read it.” She shies away from lead roles in musical theater for the same reason: “You have to be willing to fail; you can crash and burn out there.” Dot explains that her artwork was originally a private source of self-expression so it was difficult when she first decided to enter it in shows and place it for sale. “It felt weird to put myself up there, let alone to be critiqued, let alone wondering if anyone was going to buy any of my stuff. I still remember the terror of it” (Dot)

Judgment by others can be affirming when it takes the form of awards and accomplishments. For instance, Mary Kay was first chair flute in her high school band, “so I guess I was doing something right.” Pam also played first chair saxophone in high school and said her high school band director “was so appreciative for having me part of the program.” Alma has been cast in small musical theater roles after making the cut in auditions. Cathy won a photo contest through a national publication. Lynn’s productions have been honored with high school theater awards. Carrie achieved a Ph.D. in Theater Arts at the age of 60. Alina and Dot have sold their visual art and pottery.

Judgment of others. Those participating in instrumental and choral groups pondered the impact on quality when some in the group had lesser skills than others. Considering it a “down-side”, Tammy says, “you’d have to challenge those here [gesturing high] and other people are going to have to just be content to enjoy for what

is.” She related how much more she enjoyed singing in one choral group over another because “we all had very similar abilities.” Mary Kay says it affects everyone’s satisfaction with the performance when band members have varying talents, don’t have time to practice, and therefore “can’t be good enough”. Again in reference to choral groups, Alma wondered how to balance the social aspect with the professional, “Where some people, the process, and the rehearsal and the being with the people is more important than the actual performance.” The quandary is “Do we ask people to stop coming if they’re not rehearsing?” Alma judges the talents of others auditioning for a show and ranks her ability to land a role: “I watch all the other people and I look and I go, ok, that one, that one, not that one.”

Constraints: Intrapersonal

Nerves, stage fright, vulnerability, fear, shyness, embarrassment and other feelings were all mentioned in regards to creative endeavors particularly when other people may be observing their performance or viewing something they have created. Aside from this (a) performance anxiety, intrapersonal constraints also affect management of the creative process and include (b) creative blocking and self doubts along with distractibility and over-thinking.

Performance anxiety. Singing or performing in public or in a new situation makes many of our respondents nervous. “Playing [my harp] in front of people in recital situations makes me nervous. I’m not comfortable with that at all”, says Lynn who also feels, “I’m pretty shy about singing...I wouldn’t worry so much about what they were thinking of me, just mostly because it would be a new forum, a new

situation.” Livvie agrees: “I’m afraid. I just really do not like to be in the spotlight.” When asked if she would sing in public, Cathy responds, “Well maybe if there was someone else who would go with me. I’d just be nervous. I can carry a tune, but I’m not, you know.” Mary Kay always gets nervous every time she performs with her flute in a band concert. Even visual artists experience performance anxiety as Dot indicates: “I would be embarrassed to have to show my art or do a demonstration or something; I’d be embarrassed because it’s not good enough, but that’s not true.”

Creative blocks, self-doubt and distractibility. The respondents are not immune to creative blocks and self doubt, both of which are intrapersonal constraints that impact the ability to create. Alina refers to “clay freeze where nothing works, where you can’t make a mug if your life depended on it.” Self-doubt is “one of my biggest challenges; trying to not control it, to just let it flow.” Alina also feels the solitary potter’s life is emotionally challenging for someone such as herself: a people person who enjoys collaborating on a team. Alma has always wanted to write books, but vulnerability and the fear that she has nothing to say hold her back:

I think part of what my process has been, has been getting over that fear of vulnerability. And most likely the reason that I haven’t written for anyone except myself....it’s the vulnerability that would be there to let other people read it....I don’t know if I have something to say. But that could again be the fear that no one wants to listen. (Alma)

Livvie and Tammy have high personal standards for their own musical and artistic endeavors and are therefore hesitant to perform for others, believing they don’t quite measure up. Tammy says, “I just don’t like being center stage; I feel nervous singing a solo because I wouldn’t perform to the level that I feel I should be able to.” Livvie also

talks about her high personal standards in regards to singing solos: “It has to be pretty darn good, you know, like I’m probably a little bit too self-critical to be doing things like that.” Later in the interview while discussing her perceived lack of artistic ability, she says, “Maybe my problem is that I look at the very highest echelon and if I can’t, if that’s not me...I might be too much of a perfectionist or have too high of standards for myself. I don’t know.”

Dot feels it is a constant challenge for her to determine what and how she creates and where to focus her attention. “I don’t know how to start and I’m thinking too much....when I get too much in my head.” She explains “that’s really what our head does to us, you know, about oh, it’s not good enough, or you know, you should be doing this more often, or I used too many colors, it looks like mud.” Dot says, “The self-critic just got too, too big” when she focused on creating products for sale.

Alina and Cathy face challenges due to distractibility which affects their ability to keep a regular creative schedule. Cathy’s art time “still gets chopped up. I do it to myself”. Her distractibility is also related to boredom. “It gets boring doing the same thing over and over and day in and day out. I feel like I’m a fan and I’m spread all over....I feel like sometimes I’ve got to specialize in something.” Cathy also believes she is disorganized, which impacts her ability to complete projects and sell them online. “I’m inconsistent....I need to get my act together....I have more unfinished things than I should.”

Facilitators

Study results revealed five general categories of facilitators that ease participation. They either currently empower the respondents to participate in the creative arts or were cited as possibly facilitating future participation. Most frequently mentioned are (a) social facilitators including social networking and volunteer activities. The following situations were also cited as facilitating participation in the creative arts and will be discussed after social facilitators: (b) changing life situations resulting in more time, (c) activities that mesh with the participant's skills and comfort level, (d) structure, deadlines, and commitment, and finally, (e) the self-confidence that comes with age and experience.

Social facilitators. Primary among social factors is the concept of social networking which was mentioned in one aspect or another by all the participants in this study. This generally took the form of (a) encouragement, (b) community support and sharing, and (c) collaboration. Volunteer activities, a form of social networking, were sometimes the catalyst for creative arts participation. Carrie and Lynn were first introduced to their theatrical activities when they volunteered with arts programs in which their young children participated. Social networking then took over and they met people who provided them with opportunities and taught them new skills, introducing them to other people who eventually hired them for freelance jobs to do choreography, direct, and design shows in Lynn's case while Carrie did sound and lighting design, directed, and stage managed. In Carrie's own words,

I liked working with him [director of her children's plays] and asked him to teach me something else. So then, he had me stage-manage *42nd Street*, which

was my first stage-management task, which was pretty scary to do a musical as a first stage management thing. From that it just mushroomed. (Carrie)

Social networking. Carrie and Lynn's stories are prime examples of the integral nature of social networking to midlife women's participation in the creative arts. Even women who pursue solitary interests such as pottery and the visual arts find ways to create a supportive network of friends and colleagues. Alina enjoys receiving feedback from the public on her pottery at craft shows and she speaks of a community of friends who are "actually coming out of the woodwork to help me with stuffI guess I just never realized how many friends I have." Similarly, were it not for the encouragement and suggestions of her friends, ("You can do it; Go ahead and do it") Dot would have never entered a piece of artwork in an art show.

Encouragement. Encouragement of others through words, actions, or companionship is a powerful facilitator. For those whose participation is limited or non-existent at this point, social encouragement was mentioned as a means of increasing or beginning a creative activity. Mame would participate "if friends were involved and they got me involved." Livvie would consider re-joining a church choir if "I joined a church and I really got to know people there and I befriended someone in the choir or the choir director ...[who] knew exactly my handicaps and were [*sic*] willing to work around it." She also believes that verbal encouragement and appreciation would facilitate her involvement: "I just think people like me who are very unsure of themselves probably need more than people saying nothing. Maybe if a few people had said, 'Wow', you know....or 'I appreciate you coming every week.'"

Pam says having someone ask her to join them in a creative arts activity and

“being around individuals who are active in the performance side of things and getting to know them a little bit more” would encourage her participation. Both Pam and Tammy indicated they would be more likely to engage in an arts activity if their husbands were also interested. It was Cathy’s husband’s interest in flamenco guitar that prompted her to join him in taking lessons. Tammy adds that performing with her family at church and fellowship with other musicians who had similar skill levels would facilitate greater participation on her part. Alma, Mary Kay, Cathy, Alina, and Lynn all mentioned they had supportive and understanding husbands who encouraged their creative arts activities. Mary Kay says carpooling with other female band members helps them make the commitment to attend rehearsals regularly and provides camaraderie.

Community and sharing. Not only does social networking encourage women’s involvement in the creative arts, it also opens the door to new arts activities and friendships. Cathy met a friend in a class who then suggested they take a quilting class together: “It’s led to meeting interesting people, pretty nice people. Not deep friendships, but just interesting connections” (Cathy). Alma first re-engaged in choir through a flyer advertising a community choir, but then rapidly expanded her involvement through a wide-ranging network of musical theater and choral aficionados who share information about auditions, shows, and new musical groups that are forming. She speaks of “the sense of community and belonging that you get in doing one of these [shows].” They network through “Face Book and they all talk to each other and they all go and watch each others’ shows and send each other e-mails and say

‘Oh, I’m here; I’m doing this [show]’....It’s definitely community.” She sums it up by saying, “People are there as much for the social aspect as it is for anything else.” Alina also mentions community among those who do ceramics. She finds it helpful to take classes with other ceramics artists because “you get to see what others are working on and it gives you much more input and ideas....it’s kind of building that little community of people that you can share your work with, so I think that’s the satisfaction” (Alina).

Collaboration. For women who enjoy social networking, collaboration is certainly the next step. Carrie reports, “I really like collaborating”, explaining that “you need to have other thoughts coming in so you don’t get stuck in one direction and then find it overblown and you can’t make it work.” Dot also speaks of learning one artistic medium and then being drawn into another and another so she can teach her clients. “Clients want to know different techniques so I’m learning new things, experimenting, stencils and masks, reverse of stencils, so I can show other people.” Alina describes herself as a “people-y” person. “I like working in teams and so my [potters] guild helps with that, collaborating on art, learning that stuff.”

Additional time. It’s not surprising that additional time is a facilitator considering lack of time is a primary structural constraint among the 12 respondents. Additional time seems to be predicated upon fewer activities or changing life circumstances. Mame might engage in a creative activity when she becomes too old to exercise, which is currently her primary leisure activity. When Cherry is no longer involved in her church missions work, she anticipates spare time to take lessons and re-engage in past activities such as singing and painting. Tammy believes she may enjoy

participating in a community choir or orchestra once her children are out of the house and her 5-year-old 2nd marriage matures: “as our life circumstances change and we have more individual time and want more individual time.” When Alma has more time, she would like to paint. Dot finds that not having an eight to five job and children allows her the time she needs to create.

One respondent who does not view additional time as a facilitating mechanism is Livvie who has actually seen an increase in her spare time since her retirement from teaching. She is, however, very protective of that free time so she does not wish to commit to being in a church choir again especially given the weekend performance requirements and all the effort she applied. Looking back she explains,

I feel like I was working so hard at being a good mother and a good teacher. Those things were consuming and then I’m going to choir and I’m like the Band Booster president....I’ve done all that stuff. (Livvie)

Compatible skills and comfort level. The respondents cited numerous examples of situations in which they would engage in a creative activity if they felt they had the appropriate skills, were comfortable, and could be successful. This was evident even to the point of indicating how they would adapt an activity to make it more accessible, as will be discussed in the next section on leisure constraint negotiations. Tammy would enjoy singing with a choral group in which the members had similar or higher skill levels and where she could feel challenged. Alma would seek out theatrical roles where she can play to her strengths; where she can be funny or dance funny. If asked to dance, “I would find a way to make it something that I could do” (Alma). She would also try out for a part with which she was familiar or had already performed.

After experiencing her own mid-life crisis, Dot re-engaged in poetry and the visual arts: “It was only natural that I get back into what I love which was getting back into the arts.” If asked to draw a picture, Livvie says she “would want another medium like, could I do a collage?....[be]cause I’d have more control.”

Structure, deadlines, commitment. Making a commitment facilitates Pam’s floral designing: “If I commit that I will deliver 20 floral arrangements for an event, then they will be done.” Mary Kay appreciates the structure of weekly band rehearsals saying, “I would not play if it was just me.” Cathy comments, “but I do get back to things if there’s a deadline, like if I have to have it for Christmas or somebody hired me to do [something].” Dot’s commitment to her clients means “I have to keep participating in the creative process so I can teach someone else.”

Age. Based upon the results of this study, midlife affords greater self-knowledge, confidence, and purpose. Women are re-assessing their lives with children leaving the home and retirement on the horizon. Dot says “I believe this ache is what a lot of women experience too in midlife, when their life turns around to want more meaning in it.” Dot speaks of her rebirth after “a true midlife crisis...waking up and not going to my corporate job....I felt like a lot of unrealized potential.” She began writing poetry again and from there ventured into Haiku and Buddhism. “And I quit my job after 26 years in corporate life....and it was only natural that I get back into what I love which was getting back into the arts” (Dot). Cathy says she has a wide range of interests and experience because “that’s age, but also as the opportunities have arisen, I’ve grabbed it [*sic*]; grab it and try to make time for it”. For example, she talks about

the smocked dresses she made for her infant daughter, which she parlayed into an item to sell. Cathy speaks of an increase in confidence that comes with age; that “even though the theater thing really isn’t my bag....getting up and being an actor, I guess I could now because I’ve gotten a little older.” Alma believes that “what I’ve been going through in the last 30 years of life is getting to a point where I’ve felt confident enough in myself to be vulnerable, and that’s why I didn’t get back in the theater until now, because you have to be willing to fail.” Expressing a desire to paint when she has more time, Alma considers, “So I’m at an age in my life where I can say, ok, is this what I want to do for the last 10 years of my working career and then go and spend time retired doing stuff like that [creative activities] or do I want to start learning how to do some of that now.” Lynn talks about the way her creative goals have changed over the years: “At first because I liked to see what I could do and see a finished product.... Then I grew up and became less ego-centric, became more interested in how what I do affects those around me. That’s what’s satisfying; helping young people develop identity, self-esteem.” Carrie reflected upon getting her Ph.D. in her 50’s:

The Ph.D. didn’t give me more confidence, but it enhanced my confidence that I can attempt almost anything now. I am way less fearful of falling on my face. And if I do fall on my face, I don’t care anymore. That’s age. Turning 60 meant that I don’t care anymore. (Carrie)

And finally, Carrie proclaims her biggest facilitator is her own determination; “My own saying yes!”

Leisure Constraint Negotiation

Just as the women who were interviewed for this study found ways to facilitate their creative arts activities, they also became adept at negotiating the constraints that

were mentioned earlier in this paper. Three primary means of constraint negotiation were revealed: (a) scheduling, (b) adaptations that make the activity more comfortable and compatible with skill level, and (c) applying interpersonal skills and attitude changes.

Scheduling. Tammy arranges her schedule approximately four times a year so she can be available to provide music at her church. Pam fits in her floral arranging endeavors wherever she can, stating, “If I commit, I will get it done.” Cathy has multiple projects going so she can fit them into her schedule as needed explaining, “If it’s a two-hour drive, this would be the perfect thing to do for that.” Dot holds open studio hours for clients on Mondays for the purpose of “getting my ass in the studio.” She explores new artistic techniques and then teaches them to clients through scheduled workshops. Carrie dealt with family complaints that she was gone too much by eliminating stage managing from her schedule, which required a great deal of nighttime work.

Adapting the activity. The respondents have used creative problem-solving to adapt activities so they are compatible with their skill or comfort level. To compensate for her inability to read music, Livvie sat next to someone in choir who could read music, practiced a great deal on her own, and consistently attended all rehearsals. Alma contemplates overcoming her fear that she has nothing to write about by possibly focusing on nonfiction and research-oriented subject matter. She feels she lacks dance skills so asks to be in the back row on stage or to do a funny character dance: “I sort of dance as kind of a joke.” Mary Kay tackles difficult flute music by practicing as much

as she can manage and holding sectionals with the other flutes in the band. She calms pre-concert nerves by remembering to breathe. If Cathy had to sing in front of other people, she would ask that someone sing with her. Alina compensates for the lack of an art degree by reading, doing her own research, and teaching herself how to do things. She has hired a college student to take over some of the prep work so she can concentrate on the creative aspects of throwing pottery and build up her sale inventory. Like most of the other women interviewed, if she were asked to perform a dance, she would try to control the type of dance to make it more doable. "Would I get to control what the dance is?" Dot tries to get a handle on her creative process by studying books. From this point on, Carrie will only agree to work with student choreographers if they are her assistants so she maintains ultimate control of the creative process. When asked to direct a show that she dislikes, "the goal is to put a sophistication behind it to bring up the level of the show itself. So that makes it exciting." Carrie deals with the inevitable technical lighting or sound glitches by challenging herself to solve the problem: "That's frustrating for the moment but then it becomes a problem to solve which can be very exciting." If asked to draw a picture she would try to adapt the task to match her skills: "It might be abstract." Likewise, if asked to dance, Carrie says, "I could do my little bit of ballet movements that I learned when I took ballet...in my 40's." Since playing in front of people in recital situations made Lynn nervous, she played background music at a restaurant instead: "I loved doing that because everybody's eating dinner and people aren't really honed in on you. I could just relax and get into my music, and it was fun." To curb frustration due to lack of support for

the theater program at the high school where she contracts, Lynn has scaled back her involvement and now works only with those teachers she enjoys.

Interpersonal skills and attitude changes. Using well developed interpersonal skills and changing one's attitude are other negotiation techniques used by many of the women interviewed. When conflicts with other performers in a show arise, Alma reflects upon her possible role and tends to "defer a little bit when I see a real strong [ego]." She adds, "The one thing I do know is where I fit in that social hierarchy of whatever group I'm in, and that's actually a skill because sometimes people don't." Similarly, Mary Kay addresses politics within the band by acknowledging, "We all know who the political ones are and know how to deal with them." As first chair flute, she uses tact to help her flute section work on difficult parts without embarrassing or singling out any one person. Although she would enjoy having her family come to concerts, she accepts that "it's not their thing." After two of her relatives discarded her creative gifts, Cathy is now careful in regards to whom she gives her uniquely designed creations "because it's me I'm giving away....so I had to learn to let it go and be more cautious." In dealing with interruptions to her creative work, she says, "Most of the time I just do it, try to keep a positive attitude. Well no sense getting grumpy about it." When Alina experiences stress related to her new pottery business, she tries to "step back and do a little meditation on it and try to just cut myself some slack." She confronts distractions that keep her from her creative work by saying, "I just have to remind myself I'm never going to clear the deck. I need to just get out there and start working." In addition, Alina says, "I've had to lower my own personal expectations. I

can't make every piece perfect." Lynn takes a problem-solving approach in dealing with irate parents and students who are disappointed when roles for a play are handed out. She tries to be tactful but truthful, asking "How can I resolve your concern?" She also perseveres when faced with unsupportive school administrators. "I'm still here." In ironing out conflicts with her husband that are related to her busy schedule, Carrie says,

We just deal with it as it comes up. If he gets mad at me, he gets mad at me and too bad. And so...I'm still very happy and doing these things and if he wants to be mad at me then he's losing out on my energy. (Carrie)

Motivations

Motivators for leisure participation in general and the creative arts in particular are many and diverse, yet our 12 respondents shared certain similarities in regards to what prompts them to engage in the arts or other chosen leisure activities. Prominent as a motivator is (a) social connection, followed by (b) success and satisfaction, (c) challenge, (d) novelty and variety (e) internal motivation, (f) self-expression, (g) relaxation and escape, (h) enjoyment and fun.

Social connection. Just as the social aspect of a creative activity is a powerful facilitator, it is also a primary motivator for our respondents and frequently revolves around family, making new friends, being in a community, camaraderie, and giving to others. This is true even for the four women who are not currently participating in the creative arts or have limited participation. In these cases, it appears that social motivation has prompted them to choose other leisure activities instead. Mame says she "loved the social aspects" of high school band and choir even though she "was better at

other things.” She now chooses exercise, volunteer work, and socializing as her primary leisure activities. Cherry is motivated to do her church missions work because she feels this is God’s calling on her life and “It’s not all about you, but about people around you and how you can help them.” Tammy’s primary motivation involves doing activities with her husband and children and so she limits her creative activities to those she can do with her family such as playing their instruments together in church a few times a year. Like Mame, Tammy indicated that one of the things she enjoyed when she sang in the church choirs was the fellowship component: “It is something I enjoy doing especially if I had a group of people who we did it together.” Pam recounts that she enjoyed the social aspect and feeling of belonging when she was in the high school band in Ohio and how she signed up for band when she moved to California because, “Wow! Social program taken care of, get to know everybody, I’m the kid from out of town.” Livvie cited the camaraderie, teamwork, and fun involved when she sang in her church choir: “...being able to sing in a group and really make this wonderful sound.” As a newly-retired teacher, however, her prime motivator is protection of her free time so she can help her family and still have personal leisure time: “I try to keep my things that I have to do at a minimum.” Creating something with others was also mentioned as a motivator by Alma as she talked about her musical theater activities: “One of the reasons that you do it is to just to be with other people and create something.” Getting to know talented performers and being part of an artistic community also motivate Alma. She explains, “Every show is a little family. Some of them are tighter than others and that’s one of the things that I really enjoy about it and I think that’s what

brings people back. It's definitely community." In addition to meeting people through the band, Mary Kay also cites the camaraderie involved in creating something that others would enjoy: "I just love watching people enjoy the music." Social motivation also prompts Mary Kay to practice as much as she can so she knows the music well enough and "can perform admirably" so as not to disappoint the director or her fellow band members. Dot, Carrie, and Lynn are all motivated by collaborating and sharing with others as well as helping others. Dot is motivated to learn and experiment with new artistic techniques so she can then teach her clients. Similarly, Lynn's motivation arises from her desire to help high school students through musical theater: "I feel like I can really make a difference....That's what's satisfying, helping young people develop identity and self-esteem." Carrie enjoys collaborating with others on theatrical productions: "It's so much more fun to collaborate." Finally, Alina finds it motivating to hear feedback about her pottery from people at the craft fairs where she exhibits, "remembering comments that I have gotten from strangers that don't know me. That's usually the best way to see how you're doing."

Success and satisfaction. As might be expected, success in a particular activity is very motivating and the creative arts are no exception. Success and satisfaction appear to be strongly correlated as well. Of course the corollary would be that a person is unmotivated to participate in an activity in which they perceive themselves to be unsuccessful. As Livvie says, "When I'm just not good at it I don't take a lot of pleasure in it, like I would never want to draw." But success is not only satisfying, it's something that our female respondents sought. Tammy enjoyed the performance aspect

of singing with the qualifier, “if we were good”, which she says only happened about half the time in her previous church choir experiences. She also speaks of enjoying high school orchestra because “I was always successful in those, in those experiences.” Tammy goes on to say success is “If I didn’t make any mistakes; how proficiently I played” and that is what brings her satisfaction. Alma talks about joining another choral group “because they are somewhat more professional.” She acknowledges that “part of it was social, part of it was the performance aspect.” As she explains,

The process is wonderful and it’s one of the reasons that you do it. One of the reasons that you do it is to just to be with other people and create something. Um, but the performance is what you’re aiming for and for me, if I don’t aim for something that I think it’s as good as I can do, then it’s disappointing. (Alma)

Mary Kay is motivated to practice so she can perform on her flute well enough to “not embarrass the band” and contribute to a successful performance. Along with her commitment to the band as a whole, she says, “It really is a personal satisfaction.”

Lynn recounts the satisfaction she feels when the curtain goes down on a successful show:

and the kids have totally forgotten that I was one of the people who got them there and they are just so excited and happy because they know that they started something and they finished it and they’re excited to have shared it with their family and their friends and that’s just such a fun time. (Lynn)

What gives Carrie satisfaction with her theater work “is just the energizing excitement of the process itself....and whether someone else gets excited about it or not has nothing to do with the satisfaction; it’s my own satisfaction, a feeling of accomplishment.”

Many of the women feel an affinity for their craft or creative activity which contributes to the feeling of success. For instance, in contemplating the school art

classes she took, Alina says “I enjoyed it and felt like something that, when I was done it was reasonably good for my own personal judgment, so I felt like that was working.” Dot says learning to work with the pottery wheel in high school and beyond “just felt very natural. It’s what I did.” In high school, Lynn “couldn’t wait to get to that [dance] class....I just felt really comfortable with it and I knew; I felt I was good....I guess that’s what made me feel good about it. I can do this!”

Challenge. The women spoke of being motivated by challenges inherent in a creative activity that result in either personal growth or an opportunity to confront and solve problems. Tammy would eventually enjoy playing her viola and improving her skills in a community orchestra because “It would probably challenge me more so I would enjoy it more.” Pam recalls how much she enjoyed playing saxophone in her high school band when “the marching band director just kept pushing you to higher and higher and higher limits....and he really took your musical ability to the next level. Fantastic!”

Cathy enjoys the challenge of making an idea come to fruition. “I get ideas. I’ll see something and then if I can’t let it go, I’ll have to do that.” She enjoys the problem-solving process, “creating it in my head, the early stages” so much that “the doing is more motivating than the finishing.” Carrie is also motivated by the opportunity to solve problems as she designs a show: “It’s like putting together a jigsaw puzzle. It is a problem solving point, and there’s something about problem solving that’s very satisfying, even when it’s not perfect.” Alina loves the elusive goal of mastery: “It’s sort of this continuum of wanting to master something; I know I’ll never master this.”

Lynn is motivated by the challenge to “make something beautiful” in her dance choreography.

Novelty and variety. Our respondents were motivated to seek out creative activities that were unique and variable. Tammy’s first experience playing in an orchestra in 4th grade was memorable: “Wow! It was just something, it was something that was different....and so I didn’t necessarily love it, it was just something that was exciting to me, something that was different to do.” Likewise, Pam chose to play the saxophone because it was an uncommon instrument: “I wanted something that was a little bit different, so I started there [with saxophone] and really loved it.” Similarly, Mary Kay enjoyed middle and high school band since it set her apart: “I thought it was fun because...it’s not something that everybody was doing.” Cathy also appreciates being unique: “I just don’t like to do what everyone else is doing.” She seeks variety in her creative endeavors (“I like to try new things”) and enjoys designing and creating something that she can’t readily find elsewhere. Alina loves her medium for the constant variety and adaptability of the clay: “You can form it into shapes that you’d never guessed it would turn into; carve it, play with it wet or dry....there’s so many things you can make.” Carrie is also drawn to the variety that theater provides: “The exciting thing about theater is every time a show is produced, it’s different, so to me it’s never really quite done.”

Internal motivation. The women spoke of being driven to participate in their chosen arts activity or being self-motivated to grow and develop their skills. Reminiscing about her early school experience playing the viola, Tammy says, “We

were motivated to improve our skills.” When Alma sings with a choral group, she says of her performance, “I guess I have an inner sense of quality I’m trying to aspire to, and I might not achieve it, but I’m trying....for me, if I don’t aim for something that I think it’s as good as I can do, then it’s disappointing.” She feels it would be impossible not to participate in the creative arts: “That is a basic part of me.” Cathy feels “I’m just driven. I have to do it. I am sort of self-motivated.” For Alina, “It’s flow....I have experienced the whole flow thing.” She contrasts her early experiences learning musical instruments with her later ceramics work: “I wasn’t motivated to learn my music, but I’ve been motivated to learn my clay” because “I think if you find the right medium that speaks to you, you’ll naturally further and learn.” Dot believes “something’s missing if I don’t participate”, and also describes the flow experience as she is in the process of creating visual art: “If I’m actively engaged in process, I’m just there, I feel time flies, I feel great, I feel pretty excited.” Carrie enjoys her theater involvement because “it seems like that’s what I’m supposed to do.....When I’m not doing those things, I feel bored. It vitalizes everything else. It’s energizing.”

Self-expression. Alma explains, “It is a way of expressing your personality, yourself, your ego, your feelings to other people....and I think I have the kind of ego that needs a little bit of feedback.” Dot feels her visual arts and journaling go beyond mere self-expression: “Before it would be about self-expression, but now, as my spiritual practice has deepened, it doesn’t feel so that it’s so much about myself, but that it’s more universal or spiritual.” In referencing her dance choreography and directing, Lynn concurs that her motivation has moved beyond self-expression and fulfillment to

encompass those around her: “At first... I like[ed] to see what I could do and see a finished product. It was fulfilling. Then I grew up and became less ego-centric and became more interested in how what I do affects those around me.”

Relaxation and escape. Participation in the creative arts provides escape, rest, and respite for women who balance the many demands of life. When Livvie was teaching and raising a family, she viewed her church choir participation as “a bit of an outlet for me. It was my own thing away from the stresses of everyday life.” Now that she is retired, however, she has “lots of unstructured time....I don’t have the need to escape from my life.” In explaining why she no longer sings with the church choir, she says, “[I] hesitate to let anybody or anything structure my time and schedule.” Mary Kay also looked forward to her weekly band rehearsals when her children were little and viewed it as her “little escape....It was a way to get out of the house and be an independent adult and something other than diapers and that sort of thing.”

Enjoyment and fun. The word “fun” was mentioned 59 times during these interviews and used in either a positive context, “Oh, my gosh, it was so much fun.” (Carrie) or a negative context “Then it’s not fun anymore.” (Livvie). Clearly, the purpose of a creative leisure activity is ultimately enjoyment or fun for our respondents. As Alma explains, “It takes you out of that part of yourself that might be unhappy, and I think that’s why a lot of people do it.” Livvie enjoys downloading music and singing and dancing by herself at home. As she explains,

I heard some song on background music on a movie and...it was just the coolest song...and I found it on YouTube and it had the words. I must have played it like 10 times singing along with it. And I'm like, I wonder if there's [*sic*] more

of these, [be]cause that would be a really fun thing for me. Because I love doing it all by myself when no one's listening, you know. (Livvie)

Tammy says that playing her viola in church with her family is “a joy, it’s something fun.” Mary Kay describes her participation in the band as “a very rewarding, satisfying, feel-good sort of activity.” She goes on to say it’s “fun to do; I do get joy from the music.” Elaborating further about the music, Mary Kay explains, “Some music just grabs you a certain way....it can give you goose bumps.” Alina contrasts her current pottery-making endeavor with her previous corporate job: “The thing that I have to keep reminding myself is that I’m doing something for myself that I enjoy instead of doing my 70 hours for, you know, doing the marketing.” Regarding her visual artwork and journaling, Dot speaks about the enjoyment that comes with the process of making art, “I want to do this. It brings me joy....I believe often that it’s only through the process that’s brought the most joy.”

Beliefs about the Creative Arts

For the purpose of exploring fundamental attitudes about creativity and the creative arts, the study participants were asked the question, “What is necessary to participate in the creative arts?” Six broad categories emerged and included (a) general attitudes about creativity, (b) gifts, talents, and genetics, (c) skill development, training, and practice, (d) pre-requisites for creative arts participation, (e) aesthetics: “beauty” and “good”, and (f) creative process versus creative product.

General attitudes about creativity. The respondents suggested broad definitions of what constitutes creativity often expanding beyond the creative arts per se. As Cherry said, “Art doesn’t have to be a certain form.” She was among four

women who cited cooking as an example of creativity. “I like cooking...because cooking is both ways; it’s very practical, it feeds my family, and I exercise my creativity.” Tammy concurs, “There are ways of being creative instead of creative arts.” For example, she explains that you can be “creative in how you cook: my husband and I feel our food always has to be so colorful.” Pam extends the analogy by describing how the creative process is related to cooking. She says it’s “exactly like cooking: You can...take the steps or the notes and then make it your own just like you would a recipe where you read the ingredients and say, ok, I get the gist, set it aside, don’t worry.” Alina’s definition of a creative activity includes not only cooking, which she considers an expressive endeavor, but also shopping, and Carrie’s list includes “creative housekeeping or creative cooking or creative driving.” After recently completing her Ph.D., Carrie also feels that “research had its own creative aspect to it.” Other descriptors of the creative arts and creativity include problem-solving, designing and making something out of nothing, and a form of self-expression. In pondering what creativity is, Lynn says since she gets her inspiration “from things around me, from people I know, from what I’ve already seen, I guess what creative is, then, is the application of things that maybe are already there.” Cathy indicated what she does *not* consider creative and that is doing the same thing over and over and over.

Given these broad definitions of creativity, it’s not surprising that most of the women feel as Tammy does that we “all have a creative part in us.” Pam agrees, “Talent is something that we all have.” Alina adds, “Every human being on the earth is a creative being.” The vast majority of these women describe themselves as creative,

although not necessarily in the types of creative arts that were the focus of this study. Cherry says, “I have that in me, but I feel the things you’re asking, painting and things like that, I haven’t expressed it in that way, except for singing.” Mame, who has no desire to engage in the creative arts, describes herself as creative in putting together a real estate business deal or organizing successful events. Alma says she is creative “[be]cause I do all this stuff and I do it pretty well...a performance, a photograph, something that other people can see.” Livvie sees herself as a creative person primarily because, “I’ve always been an idea person; a think-outside-of-the-box person.” Lynn is a creative person “because I have a vision for something or a passion for something, and I get all the elements that go into it and there is a product at the end of it.” Carrie looks “for the alternative methods of solutions to problems” and therefore is a creative person. Dot responds enthusiastically that she is a creative person “[be]cause sometimes I do it!” She also cites her ability to “reinvent myself to have the life that I have.” What makes Alina a creative person is the fact that she’s “always been interested in making things” and likes problem-solving, which she considers a large part of the creative process. Pam’s creativity extends beyond her floral creations to the interpersonal skills she uses in her business as she seeks to match clients with professional positions. Mary Kay believes her creativity includes her problem-solving skills, ability to think outside the box, and the way she uses interpersonal skills to get “people to think of new ways to do things or how to make changes to the [American Cancer Society fundraising] event...to be more interesting”. Only Tammy does not generally consider herself a creative person. She explains, “Creative people think outside of the box and I’m much

more an analytical person.” She continues,

When I think of someone who’s creative in music, I think of someone who can play by ear, who can just write their own tunes, you know, pick up different kinds of instruments...people who improvise. I’m the one who needs the music in front of me.... Maybe I have too narrow of a definition of creativity.
(Tammy)

Our respondents cited many benefits to participating in the creative arts.

Tammy believes it “can be a good family-building force... things that you can do together...and a very important aspect in family life.” She also cites how participation in the creative arts develops other parts of a child’s brain. Dot emphasizes the healing aspects of the creative arts specifying journaling as a transformative art because you can do it either for therapy or leisure. She expands her definition of a transformative art by explaining, “Anything that you do from your head and that comes out of your fingers transforms you; something happens.” She considers her art making to be “therapeutic in working with grief and coping.” Lynn boldly states, “I think it [the creative arts] saves lives, whether it’s an emotional life or a real life” and feels, “isn’t that the value of creative arts: It’s the path it takes you on.”

Gifts, talents, genetics. The idea of artistic talent as inherited through one’s family is deeply ingrained, although many respondents conceded that those with strong desires can develop skills through lessons and practice. Cherry considers creative talent to be a “gift from God” that is also inherited. “Their primary character is very artistic” she says. She recalls thinking, “because my father was a painter,...I thought I might be gifted.” In comparing her painting ability with her sister’s, however, Cherry continues, “first, I felt sister has more of a gift; her painting was good; mine didn’t look as good.”

Mame says some have a gift and “naturally want to go that way.” She differentiates between singing, which she considers a gift, and playing the piano, which one can learn, explaining further, “There are certain things, like artists, I think there’s a gift there, but you can fiddle around with taking a drawing class or something.” Livvie believes, “I don’t have the gene for being an artist”, but in relating how her grown children can draw so well, she says, “I think I do have a design sense....My kids could have got that from me.” Believing that some people have more of a gift than others, Tammy refers to her ability to play the viola as “a gift that I’ve been blessed with” and then says her drawing abilities are “not honed as much as my musical abilities are.” Pam describes talent as “the basics in having something inherent in you that says, I can be trained to be better than I am.” For example, she says, “Some people have natural voices and then they can become exceptional with training.” Alma extends the concept of “natural talent” via “the genetic roll of the dice” to the school setting suggesting that, “As a teacher you’re gonna have to look and say, ‘this one can do that, and this one can do that’ and you praise them for that....not everybody’s going to be a soloist.” She feels “a great gift is recognizable and most people recognize that.” Mary Kay describes her flute playing as “so natural to me” because “it was maybe some actual ability.” Alina also implies a genetic connection: “I think music has a lot to do with being mathematically gifted because my nieces are both math and music people.” According to Carrie, “Talent is an inclination and then training takes you farther.” Lynn adds, “You’re born with a body, a voice and you can’t change that” as she explains why some people will never be ballet dancers or high sopranos despite training. She continues,

“Talent plays a role. I think if you have an ability, an innate ability, it just makes the path more encouraging, not necessarily easy, but encouraging because that gives you some confidence.”

Two of our respondents, Cathy and Dot, both involved in aspects of visual art, believe talent is not important. Cathy places more emphasis on motivation and drive, while Dot first re-engaged in visual art using collage as a medium because “I don’t need to have any kind of talent.” Dot believes it’s not about talent because “if it’s about the process, there’s no such thing.” She clarifies by saying, “Some people naturally might be able to do colors; some people have the language; some people do the composition. OK, you can call that talent, but you don’t need any of that to do art.”

Skill development, training, and practice. While 10 of the respondents indicated a belief in talent as a precursor to successful creative arts participation, they balanced that opinion by saying learning and practicing skills also makes a difference. Some creative arts activities were differentiated in regards to talent verses skills. Mame considers singing and visual art a talent, but piano is something one can learn. In discussing painting, Cherry says, “I think it would take practice to come up with something that you feel that is beautiful.” Although she believes some people are born with talent, she also believes those without it can learn. Tammy concurs and referring to drawing, says, “I think you can learn these things if you have some training and practice.” She equates higher skill level in the creative arts with greater success and therefore increased enjoyment. Pam believes “it’s where you really focus yourself and really want to improve yourself and the training part of it comes a lot from there.”

Alma differentiates between “things you can learn, and there [are] things that you can be good at, and then there’s natural talent.” Carrie believes “training takes you farther” than talent. Alina feels talent helps a lot.

Mary Kay and Lynn present another view of skill development and training. They believe technical proficiency and skill are nothing without passion and heart. As Mary Kay says, “I think you can be a very good musician even if you don’t have the heart, but it’s not going to come out the same.” Lynn concurs:

Maybe it has something to do with your soul, something inside where a person can paint something that’s correct and accurate and the perspective is there, or the color is there, but it doesn’t move people; there is no heart to it. (Lynn)

Pre-requisites for creative arts participation. Aside from talent being helpful, the participants believe a valuable attribute of creative people is desire and motivation. “They like that really well, I mean, more than average and really want to do it” (Cherry). “I guess a desire to do it” (Mame). Pam cites willingness and “have a desire for it” and Tammy says practicing a musical instrument takes motivation. Alma adds that one needs a willingness to learn. Cathy says, “They have to have that drive and then want; you can’t tell yourself no, because then it’s just not going to happen.” Alina describes the value of having motivation for those who don’t have talent: “if they’re motivated, highly motivated to learn something, they will be able to learn it.” Lynn says, “work matters, hence someone with talent won’t work at it and if someone else wants it bad enough, they will train and get lessons and take risks and succeed.”

Additional attributes of creative individuals include the ability to think outside the box (Tammy) along with lack of inhibition and willingness to commit (Pam). Alina

agrees that one needs to make a time commitment and adds that creative individuals “have to feel a need to express themselves in some way; they find joy doing these creative things and they need an outlet.” Livvie also believes “they have to find an outlet where they can do it [a creative activity] and feel comfortable doing it.” In regards to musical theater, Alma finds a sense of fun, enthusiasm, and willingness to be vulnerable essential because “if you’re not vulnerable, you won’t be expressing yourself, and that’s what it’s all about.” She says you also “have to be willing to make mistakes...willing to be a fool...willing to go out there on that limb and assume the other people are going to support you.” Alma adds another important component: “being able to assess your skill level and look for something appropriate, although you can aspire to something.” Based upon her theater work, Lynn agrees that “a person has to be willing to take risks, to be turned down [for a role], to persevere, to not take it personally.” She echoes Alma in stating that “a person needs to be honest with themselves about what their ability is; what is my talent, what is my gift, what can I work on?” Self-confidence, self-discipline, and getting along with others are important to Mary Kay. “The more self-discipline you have, I think the better you would be.” Carrie says, “The other thing about creative people... is their ability to focus; People who are distracted all the time are not going to be creative, no matter what you’re doing.” Finally, Cathy, Dot and Carrie all say one just needs to do it! “The true definition of artist is someone who does it....[is] in the process” (Dot). “You just decide you’re going to do something and you commit yourself to the doing of it, to the process” (Carrie).

Aesthetics: “beauty” and “good”. The words “beauty” and “good” were used 38 and 153 times respectively indicating strong and automatic associations between judging, valuing, and the creative arts. Examples include, “When you sing you want to sing beautifully (Cherry); “...doing something that will make people happy, that will please them, that will be pleasing to the eye” (Pam); “I couldn’t draw anything that looked like anything good” (Livvie); “ I think what is meaningful is when you actually express something that feels true or real or beautiful...you hear the beauty of the music itself” (Alma); “You see beauty and you see creativity there” (Tammy); “Fun does happen too when you do make some beautiful things” (Dot); “whatever is beautiful, which is such a personal reaction of something being beautiful or not” (Carrie); and “How are we going to make something beautiful here? I think that taught me to make everything beautiful; you know, everything can be....which is really a lot about art, isn’t it? You can find...something beautiful in it” (Lynn).

Creative process versus creative product. Most of the women were more aware of the finished artistic product whether it be a painting, a choral or band performance, a quilt, a piece of pottery, or a theatrical show, to name a few, rather than the creative process that produces the product. More specifically, those engaged in a performance-oriented activity resulting in a concert or production were more focused on product, while the visual artists were more aware of process, often citing the difference between the two. Cherry believes, “Art doesn’t have to be a certain form, but it matters how it turns out.” Speaking of her stage productions, Lynn talks about first having a vision and then putting all the elements together with the final goal the product, or

performance. Alma feels “the process is wonderful and it’s one of the reasons that you do it...to be with other people and create something, but the performance is what you’re aiming for.” Alina, our ceramic artist differentiates between process and product: “The ‘finish lots of stuff’ is the product, but I think loving the process facilitates the product. I don’t know if you can separate them.” Regarding the process, Alina further explains, “I’m understanding that you can’t be creative for long....You have to almost let it die so you can rebirth something and then start the cycle over again....you have this burst of creativity....that kind of tends to start to fade.” Going back to product, Alina believes, “It’s about sharing something with other people and....selling your work to the people who relate to it.” Finally, Dot another visual artist, says, “I believe often that it’s only through the process that’s brought me the most joy” and she further explains that for her, it’s not possible to be in the process and in her head at the same time: “Being in my head for me is...it’s about expressing an outcome. You have a static or predetermined way that it’s going to look.”

Summary

All 12 study participants indicated a wide range of childhood and adolescent exposure to the creative arts with varying degrees of parental support and encouragement, yet exposure alone did not result in creative arts participation during midlife. Prominent mitigating factors involved social comparison resulting in judgment by others, of others, and of self, thereby blurring the line between interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints. Structural constraints related to lack of time, skills, opportunities, and to a lesser degree, physical and financial constraints were also cited.

Social factors and especially social networking was seen as a primary facilitator and age and experience appeared to increase self-confidence and concomitantly, creative arts participation in some cases. The interviewees adapted creative arts activities and used interpersonal skills along with changed personal attitudes to negotiate leisure constraints. Motivations for engaging in the creative arts were plentiful with social connection heading the list. Success, challenge, novelty, internal motivation, self-expression, relaxation, and enjoyment are also motivating factors. Personal beliefs about the creative arts were well-established and included the belief that some people are genetically talented, yet others can participate to some degree through skill development and practice. Aesthetic judgment in the form of what constitutes beauty or what is considered “good” in the creative arts crept into all 12 interviews.

Chapter V

Discussion and Conclusion

“Creative Leisure: This force is vital to our lives and in the defining of our humanity; certainly investigating this aspect of human behavior is critical.” (Hegarty, 2009, p. 13)

We now reflect back upon the original genesis for this research study: the observed phenomenon of midlife women stating, “I can’t sing, can’t dance, and can’t draw.” Leisure constraint and constraint negotiation models were chosen to frame this exploratory research study and the following guiding questions were developed:

- How do leisure constraints impede midlife women’s participation in the creative arts as leisure activity?
- How does constraint negotiation facilitate midlife women’s participation in the creative arts as leisure activity?
- What role do motivation and more specifically, self-efficacy play in the constraint negotiation process?

There were also several secondary purposes for which this qualitative study was designed. It seeks to close research gaps related to the study of leisure constraints and constraint negotiation processes as they apply to the activity domain of the creative arts. As Hegarty (2009) states, “Research and theoretical writing that considers both creativity and leisure literature, however, largely does not exist despite the sizable overlap.” It also answers the call of Shaw & Henderson (2005) to extend the research concerning women beyond a focus on individual constraints, particularly structural and

intrapersonal ones, towards dynamic interrelationships resulting from broader socio-cultural issues. Finally, it explores the relationships between antecedents and constraints by studying an older population, as suggested by Godbey, Crawford, and Shen (2010).

This chapter will synthesize the findings from semi-structured, qualitative interviews with 12 midlife women who represent various degrees of participation in and types of creative arts activities. Leisure constraint and constraint negotiation models that emphasize dynamic interrelationships among antecedents and constraints will provide the framework for analysis, and constraints that appear to be domain specific in regards to the creative arts as leisure activity will be explored. Various forms of motivation as well as personal beliefs about the creative arts will also be examined.

Question One: How Leisure Constraints Impede Participation

In assessing current developments in regards to their hierarchical leisure constraints model, Godbey, Crawford, and Shen (2010) explain, “The hierarchical model posits that leisure constraints exist at three levels: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural which must be navigated sequentially for participation to take place or continue/progress” (p.113). They do note, however, that the sequence of constraints does not necessarily have to begin at the intrapersonal level. The existence of the three types of constraints has been empirically supported (Hubbard & Mannell, 2001), however, the relationships among the constraints are not yet clear. In fact a complex, dynamic interrelationship rather than a separate, sequential progression among the three levels of constraints is becoming more apparent as the subject is explored in the current

research (Walker & Virden, 2005; Shaw & Henderson, 2005). The results from this exploratory study also support complex, intertwining relationships between the three levels of constraints with interpersonal constraints often provoking intrapersonal constraints via social comparison, a particularly interesting finding that may be more prevalent in a leisure activity such as the creative arts.

Social comparison. Social impacts, both positive and negative, were evident throughout this research study. These include social networking, social motivation, and social comparison, the latter of which appear to be an inseparable aspect of the creative arts. Langer, Pirson, and Delizonna (2010) explain:

In the area of creativity and the arts, where there are no accepted objective measures of what is good or bad, right or wrong, in or out, social comparison seem almost necessary to create some form of standard. In any area where external audiences decide about success or failure, social comparison become prevalent (p. 68).

Self-perception is developed through the process of comparing ones abilities and skills to those of others (Festinger, 1954). Social comparison can motivate one towards self-improvement and enhance self-esteem, but it can also demoralize and produce a fear of failure, “and it is this fear of failure that keeps many of us from pursuing desired activity such as engaging in creative endeavors” (Langer, et al, 2010, p. 68). The results of this study indicate that social comparison begins in childhood for many women, and include judgments by others, self-judgments, and judgments of others. In fact, it was astounding how much judging was revealed in these research findings. Indeed, Livvie is accurate when she wonders, “Maybe people would judge me the way I judge them.”

Social comparison and leisure constraints. Walker and Virden's revised leisure constraints model (2005) provides the chosen framework for explaining the complex relationships between interpersonal constraints, social comparison, intrapersonal constraints, and motivations.

Figure 2

Revised Leisure Constraints Model

Note. Reprinted from “Constraints on Outdoor Recreation” by G.J. Walker and R.J. Virden, 2005, *Constraints on Leisure*, p. 202. Copyright 2005 by Venture Publishing, Inc.

The left side of their model considers macrolevel and microlevel antecedents that act in a reciprocal manner. These antecedents affect leisure preferences through motivation and intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints. Macrolevel factors are sociological in origin and among others include gender and cultural/national forces, both pertinent to this study. Microlevel factors could be considered individualized or psychological involving attitudes and beliefs, experience use history, human needs, and self-construal, again, all applicable to this study. These two constructs affect the social, psychological, and physical conditions (referred to as setting affordances) that either facilitate or impede leisure preferences and leisure engagement.

In regards to macrolevel factors, let's consider the creative arts as a distinct "culture". The Oxford English Dictionary Online (2008) defines culture as "the distinctive ideas, customs, social behaviour, products, or way of life of a particular society, people, or period. Hence: a society or group characterized by such customs, etc." Based upon that definition, the creative arts community in western society could be considered a distinct culture. Cultural standards are conveyed by others who act as social agents, in this case school art, music, and dance teachers; parents and families; fellow musicians, dancers, and artists; and social circles. For instance, and according to our interviewees, creative work must be "beautiful" and "good" and must produce a final product that will be judged by others. Talent is inherited, although some can develop skills through hard work and practice. Hence, macrolevel factors in the case of the creative arts are reliant on interpersonal relationships that convey standards. The standards are often internalized (microlevel factors) before one reaches adulthood, as

suggested by the responses from the women in this study. The study participants were all firm in their convictions as to what they could or could not do in regards to the creative arts. When asked how they knew, they frequently responded that they had been told or just knew. It appears that macrolevel messages are internalized, thereafter impacting microlevel factors and future decisions about creative arts participation.

Social comparison may be unique in this scenario in that it appears to encompass both macrolevel and microlevel factors. In essence, it forms a bridge between the two levels, just as it constitutes an intertwining relationship between interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints. In the creative arts domain, social comparison involves an assessment of one's own skills and abilities (microlevel) while comparisons are simultaneously being made to the skills of others (macrolevel). Among our study participants, social comparison resulted in potent and often deleterious leisure constraints to creative arts participation which could not be classified as solely interpersonal or intrapersonal in nature. For example performance anxiety is reciprocally related to both lack of self-confidence (intrapersonal constraint) and fear of others' judgment (interpersonal).

Aside from constraints involving social comparison, constraints related to caring for others over self were also prominent among the women in this study, thus supporting the findings of Shaw and Henderson (2005) and serving as further illustration of the interrelated nature of leisure constraints. Women's propensity to care for the needs of others ahead of their own, described by an ethic of care, is seen as a leisure constraint because it impacts personal time available for leisure. When asked

about priorities, many of our respondents clearly placed the needs of others, whether family or church members, above their own desire to engage in the creative arts.

Tammy believes it's "a very selfish thing" to play in a community orchestra and Dot feels, "My creativity does not always come as number one." Carrie's mother says she should be home with her family rather than pursuing work in the theater. While lack of time to pursue leisure activities due to caring for the needs of others may appear to be a structural constraint, in fact it often begins as an interpersonal constraint via societal norms, is internalized as an intrapersonal constraint, and then becomes a structural constraint impeding participation. Once a leisure choice is made or an activity is engaged in, a feedback loop prompts further reflection, hence the complicated intertwining nature of all three leisure constraints.

In summary, the findings from this study lend further validation to Walker and Virden's revised leisure constraints model as they support the concept of dynamic, intertwining relationships between antecedents and the three constraints rather than a hierarchical, sequential model. Furthermore social comparison in regards to creative arts participation appears to form a unique bridge between antecedent macrolevel and microlevel factors, and connects interpersonal with intrapersonal constraints much as a double helix intertwines and codes DNA information. The final coding has a profound and often long-lasting impact on creative arts participation, whether positive or negative.

Question Two: How Constraint Negotiation Facilitates Participation

The right side of Walker and Virden's 2005 revised leisure constraints model

involves constraint negotiation that facilitates leisure participation. They view constraint negotiation as a two-stage process, which initially takes place as part of the decision-making process, thus mitigating intrapersonal and interpersonal constraints, and then takes place once again after structural constraints come into play, thus mitigating interpersonal and structural constraints. (p. 202) Just as in the left side of the model, intertwining effects between microlevel factors and setting affordances (physical factors) act upon both leisure preferences and the decision to engage in a leisure activity. Once a person participates in an activity or does not participate, self-evaluation takes place initiating a feedback loop that promotes a reassessment of the three levels of constraints, the effectiveness of constraint negotiations that were applied, and consideration of what might occur during any succeeding experiences.

In the domain of the creative arts, it appears that microlevel factors related to negative personal attitudes and beliefs are so ingrained and powerful as to negate any attempt at participation through constraint negotiation. This being the case, some of the women interviewed never progressed beyond the left side of Walker and Virden's model in regards to creative arts participation. Based upon the results of this study, once a woman believes she "can't sing, can't dance, can't draw", negotiation to facilitate participation in that particular activity seldom occurs. Instead, other activities are chosen, as exemplified by Lynn who pursued dance over art because she didn't want to compete with her talented brothers. Some women, such as Mame, discard the creative arts altogether, despite a great deal of exposure during childhood and adolescence. Primary negotiation strategies for those who are motivated to engage in a

creative arts activity generally involved scheduling time for the activity, adapting the activity to fit skill and comfort levels, using interpersonal skills in dealing with others, and changing one's attitude to accept situations.

Question Three: How Motivation and Self-efficacy Impact Participation

Motivation was shown to be a powerful intervening variable that encourages negotiation of constraints to facilitate future participation for the women in this study. This supports the studies done by Hubbard and Mannell (2001) and Son, Mowen, and Kerstetter (2008) which demonstrated the positive effects motivation has on constraint negotiation strategies. Walker and Virden's 2005 revised model of leisure constraints also recognizes the impact that motivation, interacting with inter and intrapersonal constraints, and influenced by macro- and microlevel factors, has on leisure preferences.

Motivators. Motivators to participate in the creative arts were abundant and included challenge, novelty, self-expression, escape, and fun. Our study participants, however, indicated that their prime motivator was social connections. This was true even for those who chose not to participate in the creative arts such as Mame, whose leisure preferences revolve around other social activities. Social facilitators involved social networking, encouragement, community, and collaboration.

Interestingly, increasing age could also be viewed as a motivator/facilitator. Not only did the midlife transition prompt re-engagement in previous creative arts activities as presented in the research of Bialeschki and Michener (1994), but it also provoked consideration of life choice issues that in two cases (Dot & Alina) centered on a desire to leave corporate employment and pursue artistic endeavors. Increased age and the

concomitant variety of previous life experiences also brought enhanced self-confidence and greater focus, as evidenced by Carrie who received her doctorate in theater arts at the age of 60.

Past success and positive feedback in creative arts activities was another powerful motivator that resulted in increased self-confidence and prompted continued engagement in the activity. The corollary that perceived lack of success inhibits participation is of course also true as Livvie points out: “When I’m just not good at it, I don’t take a lot of pleasure in it, like I would never want to draw.”

Self-efficacy. Increased age and personally successful experiences involving creative arts activities not only enhance motivation, as discussed above, but also as might be expected, appear to increase self-efficacy, at least in terms of creative arts participation. Central to self-efficacy is *perceived* challenge versus *perceived* ability (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy involves the perception that one has the ability to meet the challenge, the belief that one is capable of achieving a goal or controlling an outcome. For those study participants who are all highly engaged in a creative arts activity, the feeling of personal success and satisfaction coupled with the experience of age appeared to result in a can-do attitude of confidence, passion, and commitment to their chosen activity. The women who had the greatest degree of creative arts participation (Dot, Alina, Alma, Carrie, Cathy) identified themselves as creative, capable, and determined. While they still struggled with interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints, they employed obvious negotiation strategies and were confident in their problem-solving abilities. Where skills were perceived to be lacking, they found ways

to develop them. Ceasing participation in their chosen creative endeavors was not an option. They described their lives without the creative arts as boring, empty, depressing, and unfulfilled. They frequently considered themselves to be driven and internally motivated. As Cathy explains, “I have to do it!”

Hence, it appears that successful experiences and encouragement in the creative arts increase motivation and enhance a feeling of competency, thus facilitating a greater sense of self-efficacy or a “can do” attitude. In regards to the women in this study who appear to have a “can’t do” attitude and have chosen limited or no participation in the creative arts, conclusions should not be drawn that they do not possess strong self-efficacy skills. When given a scenario where they had to dance, sing, and draw, all respondents demonstrated a remarkable ability to adapt a creative arts activity so it would be compatible with their skill level, an obvious negotiation strategy. Self-efficacy in terms of this research study may be more domain/activity specific rather than a global and established aspect of personality.

Limitations

As in all research studies, whether quantitative or qualitative, there are limitations that may have impacted the validity of these findings. The primary limitation is the fact that midlife women were queried as to their recollections regarding childhood and adolescent exposure to the creative arts as well as familial support and encouragement. Thirty-five to fifty intervening years may have affected accurate recall, although situations that carried high emotional impact appeared to have been recalled with great clarity.

In addition, the 12 women selected for these interviews were mainly Caucasian with one woman born and raised in Japan and another born in Hungary, but raised in the United States. All women resided in Santa Clara County, California as well. This narrow range of diversity in terms of ethnicity and geography may have skewed the findings due to the homogenous nature of the sample group. Since this is a limited, exploratory study, the findings should not be generalized beyond this specific sample group of interviewees.

Although every effort was made to minimize researcher bias via journaling throughout the data collection and analysis process, full disclosure necessitates revealing that the primary researcher has a BA degree in Music Education and is a midlife woman with 50 years involvement in a multitude of creative arts activities. She can, as well, relate to 7th grade art teachers critiquing her original artwork with negativity. Due to this experience in the arts, the findings may have inadvertently been analyzed through the perspective of a member of the creative arts community. This wide-ranging experience, however, has also facilitated an “insider mindset” resulting in greater knowledge and understanding in regards to participation in these various creative arts activities.

Conclusions

This exploratory study sought insight into how leisure constraints, constraint negotiations, and motivations facilitate or impede midlife women’s active participation in the creative arts. The data were analyzed within a social and cultural context as suggested by Godbey, Crawford, and Shen (2010) as well as Shaw and Henderson

(2005). Ultimately, it is hoped that the results of this study will inform practice in the creative arts and arts education and extend the research in leisure constraints and negotiations, as suggested by Godbey, et al. (2010).

Findings indicate that complicated interactions involving social comparison and resulting in judgment by others, of others, and of self impact interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints and are powerful forces that either facilitate or impede participation in the creative arts for women during midlife. This spiraling effect is often initiated in childhood or adolescence. While early exposure to the creative arts is advantageous, more important to later participation are successful experiences and positive feedback. Once a woman internalizes the notion that she “can’t sing, can’t dance, can’t draw,” there is seldom any attempt to negotiate constraints and participate in a creative arts activity.

In contrast, midlife women who actively participate in the creative arts have generally experienced some personal success and encouragement, and although these women may still confront interpersonal and intrapersonal constraints, a wide range of motivations including social and internal motivation drive them to negotiate those constraints so as to facilitate their participation. Life experience and midlife transitions were also seen as facilitators that produced increased self-confidence, self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and decisive leisure choices, whether those choices result in participation in the creative arts or in another leisure activity. The overarching factors that constrained as well as facilitated leisure participation in the creative arts for midlife women were social interaction. For example, social interactions were observed as

constraining to creative arts participation where social comparison results in negative self-judgments with regards to ability and skills. In contrast, social networking, community, and support are motivators and facilitators that propel women towards engagement in creative activities.

Implications. Results from this exploratory study prompt several recommendations designed to facilitate life-long participation in the creative arts. Parents, educators, and leisure providers should realize the importance and long-lasting effects of providing positive creative experiences and encouragement for children and adolescents. The research findings hold implications for several groups of stakeholders: (a) parents and family, (b) those that provide educational or leisure services to children and adolescents, and (c) those that provide educational or leisure services to adults.

Parents and family.

- Provide positive, successful creative experiences and much encouragement
- Emphasize the creative process over the product
- Provide opportunities for skill development
- Discuss the importance of practice over talent
- Provide raw materials for creative expression in art, music, dance, etc.
- Express the belief that the creative arts are vital to a well-rounded life
- Advocate for creative arts programming in the local community

Educational and leisure service providers for children.

- Recognize that encouragement and acceptance is crucial, especially during intermediate and middle school when children are exploring their identities.

- Eliminate creative environments consisting of negative judgment and instead provide appropriate critique that encourages, provides insight, and builds skills.
- Develop skills to facilitate later participation, but provide opportunities for creativity and improvisation
- Balance an emphasis on the joy of the creative process with the accomplishment of performance/product
- Provide for frequent (weekly) opportunities for performance and art exhibits
BUT allow students to implement adaptations to suit their comfort level
- Educate regarding aesthetics and cultural influences
- Grades should reflect both skill development and creativity in regards to experimentation and taking chances.
- Provide exposure to a wide variety of creative arts and mediums within each creative activity.

Leisure service providers for adults.

- Creative arts organizations should have clearly stated goals so participants can choose an activity that matches their comfort level.
- Encourage mindfulness regarding social comparison and its impact.
- Recognize the importance of and encourage social networking.
- For some, it may be necessary to approach the creative arts from a play perspective that emphasizes process over product.

Areas for future research. While this exploratory study has opened a dialog between the academic disciplines of leisure studies and the creative arts, it is only a

beginning. Future research should include quantitative studies for breadth of subject matter and additional exploratory studies for depth. Other age groups should be included, as well as participants who come from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Research should be directed towards men's participation in the creative arts as well. Finally, results from this study indicate leisure constraints may vary depending on the creative activity in question. This is an issue that should be explored with in-depth and separate studies of each creative arts activity.

Questions such as the following should be explored: (a) which of these findings can be generalized to other age groups and other cultures, and which applies only to midlife western women? (b) What effects do different types of acculturation have on creative arts participation? (c) What factors impede or facilitate men's participation in the creative arts? (d) Does social comparison also facilitate or impede participation in other leisure activity domains? (e) Do relationships among the three levels of leisure constraints differ depending on the leisure activity and if so, how? Further research is also encouraged to extend and confirm the findings from this study that relate to specific leisure constraints, such as social comparison, which may be unique to the creative arts, so as to develop a pool of constraint items as called for by Godbey, et al. (2010).

In conclusion, the disciplines of the creative arts and leisure studies share one common goal: enhancing the quality of our lives. Further coordinated research is not only warranted, but advantageous to both disciplines. "Our creative leisure is a means by which we release our personal thoughts, feelings, and needs of our existence.

Leisure alone and creativity alone do not implicate this powerful nature” (Hegarty, 2009, p. 13).

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Appendix A
Possible Creative Arts Activities

Music.

*Singing solo or in an ensemble,
composing music,*

*playing an instrument,
arranging music.*

Visual Arts.

*Painting,
sketching,
making ceramics,
taking art photographs,*

*drawing,
illustrating,
making sculpture,
creating visual collage.*

Plays/Musical Theater.

*Performing in a play/musical,
designing scenery,
designing sound,
directing a play/musical.*

*performance art,
designing costumes,
designing lighting,*

Dance.

*Performing dance,
designing scenery,
designing sound,*

*choreographing,
designing costumes,
designing lighting.*

Literature.

*Writing plays,
writing novels,
writing screenplays,*

*writing poetry,
writing short stories,
writing memoirs/journals.*

Technologies.

Graphic design,

animation.

Appendix B
Interview Questions

For those who are known to participate in the creative arts.

- Tell me about your leisure activities.
- What creative activities do you currently participate in? How often to you participate? When and how did you begin?
- Why do you participate in these creative activities?
- What challenges have you encountered concerning arts participation?
- How have you dealt with these challenges so you could begin or continue to participate?
- What brings you satisfaction in your creative activities? What brings you dissatisfaction?
- How do you feel when you are doing these creative activities? Can you describe what is satisfying or meaningful about the activities?
- How would you feel if asked to draw a picture that others would view? Sing a song that others would hear? Perform a dance that others would view?
- What exposure did you have to the creative arts and at what ages? School? Parents? Classes? How did you feel during those experiences?
- What is necessary for a person to actively participate in the creative arts?

- Would you consider yourself a creative person? How so?
- How have your leisure activities changed over the years?

For those who are not known to participate to any degree in the creative arts.

- Tell me about your leisure activities.
- If you do not participate in the creative arts, why not?
- What challenges have you encountered concerning arts participation?
- How have you dealt with these challenges?
- Would you like to participate in the future? Which activity?
- Under what circumstances would you decide to participate? How would you initiate participation?
- How would you feel if asked to draw a picture that others would view? Sing a song that others would hear? Perform a dance for an audience?
- What exposure have you had to the creative arts and at what ages? School? Parents? Classes? How did you feel during those experiences?
- What is necessary for a person to actively participate in the creative arts?
- Would you consider yourself a creative person? Why or why not?
- How have your leisure interests/activities changed over the years?

Appendix C

Word and Phrase Frequencies

<i>Word or Phrase</i>	<i>Frequency Spoken</i>
good (re. value judgment)	153
people (re. judging)	147
people (re. social context)	81
joy/enjoy	75
Fun	59
Beautiful	38
Skills	33
I can't (re. skill or talent)	26
Talent	20
gift(ed)	18
Appreciate	9
Ability	7
Bad	6

Appendix D

Informed Consent Form

San José State
UNIVERSITY

College of Applied
Sciences and Arts

Department of Hospitality,
Recreation & Tourism
Management

One Washington Square
San Jose, CA 95192-0211
Voice: 408-924-3000
Fax: 408-924-3061

The California State University:
Chancellor's Office
Bakersfield, Channel Islands, Chico
Dominguez Hills, Fresno, Fullerton,
Hayward, Humboldt, Long Beach,
Los Angeles, Maritime Academy,
Monterey Bay, Northridge, Pomona
Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego,
San Francisco, San Jose, San Luis Obispo,
San Marcos, Sonoma, Stanislaus

Agreement to Participate in Research

Responsible Investigator: Debra Ullmann, Graduate Student

Title of Protocol: Can't Sing, Can't Draw: Leisure Constraints, Negotiation, and the Creative Arts

1. You have been asked to participate in a research study investigating women's leisure activities.
2. You will be asked to respond to a series of questions and talk about your leisure activities during an informal conversation with the lead researcher, Debra Ullmann. Your responses and comments will be audio recorded and notes will be taken.
3. No risks to you as a participant are anticipated.
4. Your participation in this research study may further the knowledge base in regards to women's leisure participation.
5. Although the results of this study may be published, no information that could identify you will be included. All names will be changed to pseudonyms for the final written results.
6. There is no compensation for participation in this research study.
7. Questions about this research may be addressed to Debra Ullmann, (408) 997-2590, edplan@sbcglobal.net. Complaints about the research may be presented to R.J. Virden, Ph.D., Department Chair, Hospitality, Recreation, and Tourism Management, College of Applied Sciences and Arts, San Jose State University, (408) 924-3000. Questions about a research subject's rights, or research-related injury may be presented to Pamela Stacks, Ph.D., Associate Vice President, Graduate Studies and Research, at (408) 924-2427.
8. No service of any kind, to which you are otherwise entitled, will be lost or jeopardized if you choose not to participate in the study.
9. Your consent is being given voluntarily. You may refuse to participate in the entire study or in any part of the study. You have the right to not answer questions you do not wish to answer. If you decide to participate in the study, you are free to withdraw at any time without any negative effect on your relations with San Jose State University.
10. At the time that you sign this consent form, you will receive a copy of it for your records, signed and dated by the investigator.

The signature of a subject on this document indicates agreement to participate in the study.

The signature of a researcher on this document indicates agreement to include the above named subject in the research and attestation that the subject has been fully informed of his or her rights.

Participant's Signature & Date

Investigator's Signature & Date

Appendix E

Human Subjects-Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

To: Debra Ullmann

From: Pamela Stacks, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President
Graduate Studies and Research

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Pamela Stacks".

Date: July 15, 2010

The Human Subjects-Institutional Review Board has approved your request to use human subjects in the study entitled:

"Can't sing, can't draw: leisure constraints, negotiation, and the creative arts"

This approval is contingent upon the subjects participating in your research project being appropriately protected from risk. This includes the protection of the confidentiality of the subjects' identity when they participate in your research project, and with regard to all data that may be collected from the subjects. The approval includes continued monitoring of your research by the Board to assure that the subjects are being adequately and properly protected from such risks. If at any time a subject becomes injured or complains of injury, you must notify Dr. Pamela Stacks, Ph.D. immediately. Injury includes but is not limited to bodily harm, psychological trauma, and release of potentially damaging personal information. This approval for the human subject's portion of your project is in effect for one year, and data collection beyond July 15, 2011 requires an extension request.

Please also be advised that all subjects need to be fully informed and aware that their participation in your research project is voluntary, and that he or she may withdraw from the project at any time. Further, a subject's participation, refusal to participate, or withdrawal will not affect any services that the subject is receiving or will receive at the institution in which the research is being conducted.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (408) 924-2427.

Protocol #S1002185

cc. Randy Virden 0211

Division of Academic Affairs

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