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From Their Words: An Analysis of CRS 615 Papers to Find Common Philosophy, Beliefs, and Values.

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Philosophy, Beliefs, and Values

Part II

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Buffalo State College

The International Center for Studies in Creativity

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An Analysis of CRS 615 Papers to Find Common

Philosophy, Beliefs, and Values

Part II

An Abstract of a Project in Creative Studies

by

Karen Loffler

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Science

December, 2007

Karen Loffler

ABSTRACT

From Their Words: An Analysis of CRS 615 Papers to Find Common
Philosophies, Values, and Beliefs
Part II

This project used qualitative techniques to find common philosophies, values and beliefs among the graduate students of the Masters of Science degree in Creative Studies at Buffalo State College. The project examined twenty exit papers from the CRS 615 course from the early 1970's to 1999. The purpose of this project was to develop a baseline of philosophy, value and belief of the graduate students so others could have a foundation from which to build.

Common themes from the Master's students' papers and definitions of philosophy, value, and belief were applied to the content of the papers.

The results identified which themes were important enough to the students to write about in their final paper. The results also showed what learning the students felt affected them in their daily lives, especially in the areas of defining creativity, teaching enhancing creative ability, and areas of personal growth and development. The final analysis also uncovered many questions for future researches.

This project also addressed which of the search terms of the Creativity Based Information Resources (CBIR) language the students were using while writing their papers. The purpose of this section was to see if the categories used for searching the CBIR are reflected in the students themes of PVBs.

Buffalo State College

The International Center for Studies in Creativity

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Dates of Approval:

_____ Karen Loffler, Candidate

_____ Dr. Mary C. Murdock, Advisor

The International Center for Studies in Creativity

“I really want to use my own creativity, and help others develop their creative potential and move toward higher levels of satisfaction and reward in their lives. I would like to make a contribution to the effort of maximizing the creative potential of all people to help make the world a better place. I realize that this sounds idealistic, but isn't that what philosophy, values and beliefs are all about?”

---Student from the Creative Studies Program 1994

Acknowledgements

This project sat in a box for many long years while life continued on after leaving the graduate program. I do have to say it's not the subject matter that made me procrastinate, just my lazy nature.

I still feel honored to be able to literally pick up fellow students' words and move them from one place to another. I treated each little slip of paper with kindness. Thank you to all who returned a paper those many long years ago.

My heart-felt thanks go to Dr. Mary Murdock who, after my seven-year absence, jumped right back into helping me complete my project. It is her enthusiasm and spirit I will try to emulate as I take my degree out into the world of creativity and begin to find my way.

I need express my gratitude my husband, Chuck Brumley, for being a constant source of faith in my abilities to finish my project. Thanks for spending a torturous year outside the *blueline* and away from your beloved Adirondacks. I am appreciative of your many and gentle nudgings to follow my heart back to my love of the creative process.

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SECTION I

Section I contains the justification and reasons why this study needed to be done. The background, the rational and questions that guided the study, and the significance of the study are covered.

The Background

The Faculty at the International Center for Studies in Creativity (CSC) has taught their graduate students the elemental components of creativity---history, nurturing, and developing. The students lived and breathed creativity for the 30 credit hours needed to complete a degree. They read theories, practiced tools and techniques, and received some hands-on practical experience in their time at the Center. At the end of the journey, the students were asked to write a paper outlining their personal philosophies, values and beliefs---these were papers that have been untapped for 30 years.

It was the content of these papers that became the content of this study. Working as a team, fellow student Sue Steege and I began our process by seeking approval of the Human Subject Committee so we could use the material from the students. We then developed a letter of consent and a summary of our hopes and needs to the graduate students. (Appendix 1) The tone of the letter rang humorous and imploring---hoping for good return numbers, we figured that a brightly natured letter would work better than an academic plea. We then contacted as many students as we could find addresses asking for a copy of their paper from 615. A very extensive list of alumni was obtained through the Center's records. Along with the letter went a postage-paid post card. The post card gave the graduate options to check and return---I'll send my paper; I'll look and try; I have no idea where my paper is; and call me to remind me to look (Appendix 2). This post card helped us determine how many students wanted to help but did not have a copy of the paper.

Rational and Questions that Guided the Study

The focus of this study was to examine the exit papers from 615, Master's seminar to develop an understanding of the philosophies, values and beliefs. (PVBs) This study began to organize, collect and report initial data concerning the PVBs that the students have assimilated.

The questions that guided the study were as follows:

1. What were the philosophies, values, and beliefs articulated by those the field through a formal educational program in creativity?
2. Were there elements of CBIR vocabulary shown in CSC Alumni's personal philosophy of creativity?

Significance

Why would one explore the philosophies, values, and beliefs of the Center for Studies in Creativity alumni?

“To any field of endeavor, it seems necessary first to learn something of one's craft... An 'Education for Creativity' will aim to instill, not slavish conformity to existing forms but the necessary technical and psychological tools.” (Abra, 1988. p.8)

If what Abra suggested is true, then by looking at the students from the program, we might be able to determine if they had assimilated the learnings, both the technical and the psychological. And further, we could examine how or if those learnings affected the students in their work and personal lives. It was in that understanding that we believed that some insightful conclusions might be found in the students' and that future study questions could emerge.

In the next fifty years creativity researchers need to develop clearer definitions and use more combinations of methodologies that will help move the ideas of creativity

from speculation toward specification. What is also needed is a methodology that combines scientific approaches with the biographical approaches. (Mayer, 1999. pg. 459)

Our study has done this by examining the slice of data that has been unexplored as to PVB: the exit papers of the graduate students from the Center for Studies in Creativity at Buffalo State College. Although some studies of our graduates and of the program's impact have been done (Lunken, 1990; Keller-Mathers, 1990; Neilson, 1993), at the time this study began, no recent work existed that examined the baseline philosophies, values, and beliefs of the participants. This study was the first to explore the fundamental thoughts of the graduate students and provide a base of data for future longitudinal studies using a qualitative research approach to understand biographical information of this group of students.

“...The phenomenon to which the term creativity applies is the phenomenon of synthesizing knowledge. Hope for the greater unification of knowledge lies in the continuance of studies of creativity.” (Rhodes, 1987. pg 12)

If what Rhodes suggested is valid then the student's papers held a twofold importance to the study of creativity. The first importance was that the personal philosophy papers showed the students' knowledge of what they retained from the program and how they applied that learning in daily life. Had the students synthesized the learnings from the course work? According to Rhodes, if this synthesis had taken place, the students would have performed acts of creativity. And to go one step further, if the student had indeed retained and applied the learnings it would help the faculty at the Center to understand the effectiveness of the program.

The second importance of studying the papers was that they might hold value as to which directions to explore next in the realm of creativity. Rhodes stated that unification and continued study was the key to understanding more about creativity. It was interesting that Rhodes set forth the juxtaposition that in order to understand creativity we had to use creativity along with study and knowledge.

Prior to this study, there was very little data about the PVB's of the students in the graduate program. The students' papers were brimming with raw data. It was important to look at these papers to see what questions and directions for futures studies might be found concerning the PVBs.

SECTION II

Review of the Literature

Section II is an overview of the pertinent literature. Although there is little literature concerning the actual PVBs of the actual graduate students of the Creative Studies Program, there was some literature concerning more general views of PVBs of creativity.

General Background of PVB Development

“...By becoming more creative we can lead brighter lives, and can live better with each other...By becoming more creative we may even find a way to bring permanent peace to all the world.”(Osborn, 1993. pg 397)

So ends Alex Osborn's pivotal book, *Applied Imagination*. He set forth a strong belief, an imposing standard for any order and big shoes for researchers of creativity to fill. Writings and research about the philosophies, values, and beliefs that surround creativity attempt to fill those shoes. Although little has been written about the actual PVBs of the graduate students, there was a fair amount of writings underlining the importance of exploring the philosophies, values, and beliefs that emerged as one looked at all the aspects of creativity. The past, the present, and the future all hold unique ideas as to what creativity is and why it was/is/will be valued.

By looking at this history of the development of the philosophies that surrounded creativity, one begins to see how the current philosophies may have developed. It was as if a slowly emerging rock was being uncovered. At first creativity was a mere stone just breaking the surface, still a mystery hidden below the surface. Then, the earth around the rock eased back and more understandings of creativity could be seen. And this happened again and again until the shift to today's concepts of creativity. The question remained, though, as to how much deeper the rock was buried.

One road to the development of creativity

Picture in the distant past, that the philosophy behind creativity has always been fodder for conversations after an evening meal or an afternoon walk. The voices bounced from the stone temples arguing that creativity was nothing more than a muse playing with the human mind. The argument jumps into the Middle Ages where conversations break creativity into pieces like imagination, skill, and background (Abra, 1988; Albert and Runco 1999; Davis, 1999). And today the challenges of understanding creativity reflects

off computer screens and rocket ships and attempts to categorize creativity into four neat little compartments: person, product, press, and process (Arietti, 1976; Rhodes, ; Tardif & Sternberg, 1988; Torrance, 1988; Taylor, 1988; Gardner, 1993). And future conversations about creativity will ring, as we understand more and more about the universe and humans' small time on earth.

The constructs of creativity reflect the current state of thinking. As each era passes, the scholars and scientist build on past thinking. According to Albert and Runco, "scholars agree that the earliest western conception of creativity was the Biblical story of the creation given in Genesis."

This view was held "until the second century A.D." Yet, the eastern world was voicing views about creativity, "for Hindus...Confucius...Taoists and Buddhists creation was at the most a kind of discovery or mimicry...Plato felt nothing new was possible and art in his time was an effort to match or mimic ideal forms."

People in the Middle Ages held the belief that a "special talent or unusual ability by an individual was a manifestation of and outside spirit for which the individual was a conduit." The thinking of the Renaissance shifted the philosophy of creativity back to the individual artists and their talents were "recognized and often emphasized as manifestly their own and not of divine origin." The Renaissance moved onward---the philosophers of the "enlightenment were able to move beyond a concern with imagination, individual freedom and Society's authority in human affairs." (Albert and Runco 1999. pg 18-19)

Albert and Runco traced the path and development of the varied philosophies that surrounded creativity. The cultural awareness of the time greatly influenced the development of the creative philosophy. Albert and Runco continued, "The most

significant distinction made in the mid-1700's were between the idea of creativity and genius, original, talent, and formal education." And more, "by the end of the eighteenth century, it was concluded that whereas many people may have talent of one sort or another and that this talent would be responsive to education, original genius was truly exceptional and by definition was to be exempt from rules, customs, and obligations that applied to the talented." (Albert and Runco, 1999. pg 20)

Another historical explanation that tried to unearth some of the philosophies that lie behind creativity was found in Floistad's: *Creativity, Past, Present, and Future: A Philosophical Perspective*. Floistad covered the development of the philosophy of creativity---much as Albert and Runco did---only he went on to add eight "lessons that could be learned from this rough historical sketch about creativity." (Floistad, 1993)

1. People are part of their cultural environment.
2. People's creative acts are expressions of their own powers, as well as expressions of the factors in their cultural environment.
3. People's creativity cannot properly be studied without taking into account their cultural environment.
4. The study of creativity [is] a complex matter: as every historical epoch is the product of earlier creative achievements, any full study of creativity involves studying the historical aspects of any given culture.
5. The overall purpose of any given study of creativity as I see it is a practical one: To understand creativity in order to nurture it.
6. If the over all objective is to turn an enterprise or a society at large into a creative institution, there are quite a few obstacles ahead...Two such difficulties [are] social class and discrimination against women.
7. A third difficulty which is closely related to the other two should be mentioned...the difficulty inherent in traditional ethics.

8. The overall purpose of creativity is to improve the quality of life in the society, local or global, in which it operates.
(pg 202-203)

The lessons seemed simple and easily grasped, yet they add to the complexity of understanding creativity. According to Floistad's lesson three, a researcher must not only study the creative person but also the person's culture, past and present. Along with that the researcher must also place the study into a historical perspective---a complex and challenging assignment. Yet one that might yield some clues in the understanding of someone's personal philosophy toward creativity.

After all is studied and understood, the researcher might very well have a good concept as to a person's personal philosophy of creativity. Yet a great amount of effort would have been required. And Floistad himself noted, "[the] problem is that we cannot implement old answers anymore, we can certainly learn from history. However, we have to find an answer that is related to the complex nature of the Modern World...the challenge is how creativity is to be nurtured in the future." (Floistad, 1993. pg 206)

Lessons learned from the past must not be discarded, but may not be what is needed to move forward into understanding creativity and the philosophies that attempt to explain its mysteries. Floistad suggested that as creativity researchers we have an obligation to be aware of the history but not cling to that history. Lessons five and eight spoke to the heart of Floistad's philosophy---understand how to nurture creativity and use that knowledge to "improve the quality of life." According to Floistad, researchers do not really need to understand exactly what creativity is but only ways in which it can be nurtured. Certainly a total understanding of creativity would provide stronger insight as to how to nurture and develop creative skills but perhaps they can be nurtured and developed with a partial

understanding as well. “To sum up, creativity is...creativity in terms of professional and personal self-development...this may in turn [contribute] to a cultural development in the society at large. That is what creativity and creativity research amount to. It’s primary objective is the good life in a community.” (Floistad, 1993. pg 245)

Floistad’s move toward simpler answers in a world that continues to grow more complex seemed all but a contradiction, yet it might be a contradiction in which researchers can find some answers. Once again creativity researchers appear to have some big shoes to fill.

The ideas of contradiction and ambiguity were also be found in the ideas of Rothenberg and Hausman.

“...The investigation of creativity must, at the least, alternate between the determined and undetermined aspects of the phenomenon: he bears in mind that explanations involving predictions do not account for the undetermined aspect of creation and that an exclusive emphasis on the undetermined aspect can retard fruitful inquiry” (Rothenberg & Hausman, 1976. pg 25)

They suggest that researchers look at creativity in two ways. In the determined aspects of creativity the researchers tried to find answers that would allow them to make limited predictions in a “conceptual framework.” Which means, one takes some of the known facts about creativity and places them in a framework and sees what conclusions can be drawn. An example would be to take a known fact, such as how improving flexibility can help increase the number of answers you can give to a question; use that fact in various situations, i.e. work, school, personal problems; and then objectively reach some conclusions based on the results learned.

In the undetermined aspects researchers look at creativity in “its autonomy, independent of antecedent causal sequences and teleological conditions,” (Rothenberger & Hausman, 1976, p. 26) meaning that creativity stands alone and acts alone outside any give framework. This reflects the idea of the muse or the greater power moving one to a creative act. These types of “undetermined” aspects must be examined in order to have a complete understanding of creativity. The geniuses and the prodigies of the world do seem to create differently than the rest of the population and their mysteries need to be researched, yet not at the exclusion of every day creativeness.

Exploring the determined with the undetermined ought to help develop a clearer picture of creativity because it allows room to examine creativity in pieces as well as in total. It also sets up a check and balance type system among the types of studies that would be needed. Researchers might look at quantitative data and analyze real and hard numbers; someone else could look at qualitative data and might be more subjective. Yet both could lead to equally important insights.

“...Tender-minded as this approach may appear, we believe it is required in the study of creativity; it allows is to understand much of the adaptive behavior of man without reduction of the essence of his humanity” (Rothenberg & Hausman, 1976, p. 26).

The idea of retaining people’s humanity when looking at creativity seems essential in overall understanding, especially in relationship to understanding the philosophy that enfolds one’s personal creativity. And to go one step further, to look at people’s humanity toward others might also yield clarity to the haziness of creativity.

These scholars have suggested the groundwork that other researchers can follow in order to continue to study creativity, especially in terms of Philosophies, Values and Beliefs. They suggest that in order to get the full picture, a researcher must look at many aspects and many angles of the challenge at hand. To research a human being, one must look at the past, the present, the environment, the relationships, and all but what that human had to eat that day in order to get an accurate picture of his/her creativity. The real challenge lies in the fact that as one takes into account all the extraneous factors---those factors are in a state of flux. They are continually changing. Yet even with that flux the researches yield insights that will continue to build the body of understanding about creativity.

Specific Readings on the Graduate Students and PVBs

A Community of Scholars: an Examination of Antecedents of the 1990 International Working Creativity Conference Participants, by Murdock, Isaksen, & Trincanti was a study “interested in identifying the patterns and relationships of influences on the participants as well as identify whom they felt they had influenced.” (Murdock, Isaksen, & Trincanti, 1993, p 87) The study examined who was influencing the creativity researchers at the 1990 International Working Research Conference. The antecedent findings were broken down into five categories:

1. Current Colleagues
2. Direct contact/ personal experience

3. Historical Antecedents
4. Aesthetic Antecedents
5. Precedents

(Murdock, Isaksen, & Trincanti, 1993, p. 89).

The study found that participants could easily name the people in each of the categories except the precedents, number five. Interestingly, there was reluctance for the participants to state who they felt they had influenced. The study clearly showed that the participants could draw lines backward and find out who helped them develop their views and philosophies of creativity. The study showed the complex nature of understanding creativity by demonstrating how the direct lines of influences by naming antecedents, current colleagues, and precedents brings us from the past into the present and into the future.

This study went further and took a broader look at the results where one very interesting core theme emerged: Mentoring. A study of scholars in the field of creativity writing about people who have helped him/her develop a philosophy of creativity seemed to pull the past into the future. “Exploring our collective history and making explicit the commonalities in our background can help us understand the paths we have taken and perhaps shed some light on how and why our understanding of creativity differ within our established community of creativity research.” (Murdock, Isaksen, & Trincanti, 1993, p. 101) The Trincanti study is important here because it begins to show that creativity was influenced by where and how the conference participants were raised, educated and their personal life lessons. And it is not much of a stretch to say that these same paths

influence the general public's ideas of creativity and helped explain the many differences of opinions found there.

The challenge of understanding how all the possible paths might influence one's creativity philosophy is a daunting task. The philosophies that enfold creativity are pulled from the past, shifted by the present, and then set forth into the future in ways unknown. The philosophies surrounding creativity are a maze under constant construction. Yet the Murdock, Isaksen, & Trincanati study suggested a strong and viable path to understand at least a zone of the maze.

Another sector of the creativity web was the Graduate Students at the Center for Studies in Creativity. Although there have not been studies directly covering the PVBs of the students, there have been studies that look at the impact of the Master's Degree on the students (Keller-Mather, 1990; Lunken, 1990; Neilson, 1990). The studies demonstrated how the students' new understanding of creativity and problem-solving techniques had influenced their lives, both professional and personal. And one might also suggest that if the students were influenced by the studies that their PVBs may also have been affected and influenced.

Keller-Mather's study investigated the degree to which various CPS (Creative Problem Solving) techniques taught in a graduate level course were applied in the personal and professional lives of the students. Surveys were given at three months, six months and one year intervals after the completion of the degree. Her results found that students could apply CPS techniques to their personal and professional lives and that the techniques remained useful for up to a year after the course (Keller-Mather, 1990)

Keller-Mather stated, “There is clear evidence to support that techniques taught ...were applied by students. The techniques were transferred to and used by students on challenges in the students’ personal and professional lives (Keller-Mathers, 1990 p. 218). This suggests that techniques of CPS may also have become part of the students’ thinking process and thus might have influenced their personal philosophies.

According to Keller-Mathers’s findings, the students were using the techniques learned from the course work at the center. Taken one step further you might say that since the students were using the techniques then they placed some value and had beliefs in the techniques. Keller-Mathers concluded, “...Creative learning proved to be worthwhile and meaningful to students” (Keller-Mathers, 1990, pg. 218). Her study suggested that the students had synthesized the techniques into their day-to-day lives. The larger question was whether or not the learnings have influenced the students PVBs.

Another study that covered the effects of the studies from the Center on the graduate students was Lunken’s 1990: *Assessment of Long-Term Effects of the Master of Science Degree in Creative Studies on its Graduates*. Lunken’s study was similar to that of Keller-Mathers, but she looked at the Master’s Degree as a whole rather than in terms of techniques. Lunken sent out a “questionnaire designed to assess how graduate study in creativity has impacted the graduates’ personal and professional lives.” Firestein & Lunken, 1993. pg 188) The questionnaire was divided into five sections: demographics, education, professional information, personal information, and uses of creativity techniques. Of the 62 graduates 53 were located and 38 responded.

The findings from the survey were rather dramatic. “Responses indicated that the information acquired in the Creative Studies Master’s degree program is not a set of facts to be called upon only at a specific time, but it has become a way of life and is a useful method for meeting challenges and situations in graduates’ day to day existence.” (Firestein & Lunken, 1993. pg 196) The study went on to state, “graduates believed that they had far greater resources to deal with situations that might ordinarily appear difficult.” And further suggested the graduates, “showed evidence of risk taking, change of habits, and dramatic changes in their personal lives.”(Firestein & Lunken, 1993. pg 197) The study appeared to have demonstrated some clearly stated changes in belief and values for some of the students. A belief being basic tenets or ideas articulated or acted on that people claim to hold real and true. A value being an individual’s set of beliefs that are internalized resulting in placing moral criteria or worth on any given action.

On last study that showed the effect of the learnings from the Center was Neilson’s 1990: *Impact of the Creative Problem Solving training: An in-depth evaluation of six-day course in creative problem solving*. Neilson took a close look at the CRS 559-workshop in Nurturing Creativity and found some interesting conclusions. Hers was the first attempt “evaluate what was happening in the course and to measure how students were applying Creative Problem Solving techniques in their personal and professional lives.” (Neilson, 1990. pg 8) The Neilson study found that while the students had increased their systematic use of CPS, after the course of a few months that systematic use declined. (Neilson, 1990. pg 200)

It seems that Neilson was beginning to uncover a possible challenge to the Program: how to have the students hold onto their learning? All the more reason to do

this study to see if any of the results of the Neilson study hold true for other courses in the graduate program.

These student studies showed that the graduate students were using the skills acquired from the Center in their everyday lives. They had assimilated the techniques and were drawing on them to better perform in challenging situations. They were using their skills to produce more options and therefore perhaps find more creative solutions, and in this deliberate process may have found that they had become more creative people.

These student studies also hinted at the challenge of student's bring there learning beyond the classroom setting.

According to Maslow's hierarchy, a more creative person may be close to self-actualization. Self-actualized creativeness is " a special kind of perceptiveness...such people can see the fresh, the raw, the concrete, the idiographic, as well as the generic, the abstract, the rubricized, the categorized, and the classified." (Rothenberg & Hausman, 1976, p. 88) According to this view then, the self-actualized person could see many options and opinions from varying vantage points.

It was certainly interesting to learn from these studies that the graduate students appear to be moving closer to self-actualization. Yet does this also mean that the program was influencing the PVBs of the students? That was one question that guided this study.

The future students and scholars will determine what will be studied. "The images of the future held by students will determine what they will be motivated to learn and achieve; their ability to live, cope and grow in a highly changing society." (Torrance &

Safer, 1999. pg 48) The PVBs of the graduate students will be part of that future. Beginning to understand the PVBs of the students may help influence the course of exploration of creativity and may lead us to new realms of understanding.

SECTION III

From their words

Process

Section III will cover the process of how this study was done: The nuts and bolts of gathering the data, tearing it apart, and then pulling it back together. How did we explore the philosophies, values, and beliefs of the graduate students of the Creative Studies Program? Qualitative Analysis was the major methodological emphasis in this study. We looked at the words from the students rather than the quantitative numbers or statistics. The study was descriptive and used content analyses techniques and constant comparison (Miles & Huberman 1994).

One word of explanation and clarification: The papers looked at were from the 615 Master's Seminar. This paper was assigned as the last written work for the graduates and in most cases was used for the graduates to focus on his/her personal Philosophies, Values, and Beliefs (PVBs) as they relate to creativity. In reviewing the syllabuses from the 615 Course and talking with alumni the approximate starting date for that written paper assignment started in 1975 or 76. (One of the alumni from the 1970's asked for a follow-up call and that was how the starting date was pin pointed.)

After sending out the letter and postcard to the alumni list, we received a total of 17 papers and 28 post cards. The papers were coded with a simple number system. The first paper that came in was number 1, with a letter for male or female and the last two digits of the year. For example, if the third paper to come in was from a female, and the date was 1983 the code would be 3/f/93. The code gave total anonymity to the students. The codes will be used if at some point a student chooses to withdraw his/her paper from any further studies. To our dismay, many of the postcards were checked with "I'd like to

help but have no idea where my paper is.” Along with the papers and post cards, we received a few personal notes of encouragement, which was an interesting and unexpected response.

The hardest part of sending out a letter and asking for papers was the waiting for the replies. It felt almost as lonely as sending out a letter in a bottle from a deserted island. We utilized the waiting time to develop the definitions of philosophy, value, and belief. The definitions developed from a mix of dictionary, both on line and in paper form, a sociology dictionary, and common sense. The definitions became tiered as they developed. Beliefs became the base for Values; Values became the base for Philosophy. Pictured it as an upside down tier cake, the small layer of Beliefs supports the middle layer of Values and the broad top layer of Philosophy.

THE DEFINITIONS

Philosophy

Defining philosophy is an age-old question, and probably has a many meanings as creativity does. Webster’s definition, aside from a course of study,

“2a: A pursuit of wisdom. b: a search for general understanding of values and reality by chiefly speculative rather than observational means. c: an analysis of the grounds and concepts expressing fundamental beliefs.”

For this study the definition needed to be something more concrete, something that you could identify from Belief and Value. The working definition became:

An individual's set of values synthesized or interpreted with his/her belief and learnings.

- Answers to life's questions of essence: who am I, where am I going?
- A systemic direction.
- The "aha" of understanding your place in life.

Values

The Values definition was the hardest to define and also hardest to pull from the papers. Value is not a term that is applied in the writing often. And Values can be interpreted easily as a philosophy and/or a belief. In coming up with a definition, the challenge was to make it so the Value would be self-evident.

Webster's definition (excluding the monetary and artistic meanings) of Value is:

"Relative worth, utility, or importance: degree of excellence."

The definition of Value then was then more steadfast than a belief and not quite as ingrained as a philosophy.

The working definition became:

An individual's set of beliefs that are internalized resulting in placing moral criteria or worth on any given action.

- Something that is the essence of self.
- Guides action of self.
- Judgments placed on self.

The definition was very action-oriented toward the self. In order to be pulled as a Value the passage had to have a sense of the student actually acting upon the words.

Beliefs

Belief was probably the easiest definition to define, mainly because a belief needs no proof, no back up---it simply exists. Belief covers preferences, emotions and ideals based on heart, home, and heredity. One believes what one believes.

Belief is defined, in Webster's dictionary as:

1: A state or habit of mind in which trust or confidence is placed in some person or thing. 2: something believed: a tenet or body of tenets held by a group. 3: conviction of the truth of some statement or the reality some being or phenomenon esp. when based on the examination of the evidence.

For the purposes of this study the working definition was:

Basic tenets or ideas articulated or acted on that people claim or hold to be real, true or valid for them.

- Preferences based on liking something.
- Knowledge based on emotion, not fact.
- Presupposed ideals based on heart, home, and heredity.

When reading the papers, if a piece of data answered the above criteria, then it was pulled as a Belief. All the beliefs were then separated into further themes such as: God/higher power, personal growth, personal definitions of creativity, and so on.

COLLECTING DATA

The process continued with a two separate close readings of the papers to collect the data for each of the categories---PVB. We color highlighted passages from the papers that met our pre-set definitions. We then compared our lists and came up with a master list for each philosophy, value, and belief. Our separate lists were very similar and only a few pieces of data needed to be moved after looking closely at what the student was saying. For example, I may have put one passage as a belief and Sue may have had it as a value. Some of the data could fit into two categories and when this was the case we again referred back to the whole paper to grasp a closer meaning of what the student was trying to say. Most of the data, though clearly aligned itself and we had surprisingly few differences.

At this point in the process my partner and I chose to move forward separately. Life pulled each of us in different directions and we found it difficult to find the time to work together. The benefits of doing this, though, may add some insight to the study when we have both completed our projects. The CSC will get two studies from the same batch of data. When we each have finished we plan to compare and contrast the conclusions and see what is there. This will hopefully strengthen each of our projects but it may also turn up interesting differences that could then be studied.

THE WRITE-UP

The data from the categories fell into common themes. For the most part the categories were self-evident. When reading through the data it was rather surprising that this happened. The papers reached over two decades yet the PVBs from the students fell into very similar places.

Trying to present the data in an honest light and a readable format was a challenge yet doable, because of the students' cohesiveness in ideas. A narrative format was chosen because the idea of using the students' words to tell the story was appealing. After studying the data, the themes emerged and were written up.

There were some pieces of data from each of the PVB that just wanted to be stubborn and not play well with the others. These ended up in separate categories because they were pulled as a PVB and also they made interesting and insightful remarks. It was not appropriate to force them into a category where they did not belong. All the data were important and needed to be included.

Section IV

CBIR Language

This section attempts to answer the disciplinary question: What elements of the CBIR vocabulary showed up in the CSC alumni's personal philosophy of creativity? Were the students using a coherent conceptual language (Kaufman 1993) and the language of the CBIR search engine? This piece was not meant to be an in-depth study, but merely an overview or summation of the language the students were using and to see if there was a reflection of the language in the search terms and categories that the CBIR uses.

The Reason

The premise was that in looking at the PBV of the students might also shed some light on how and if the CBIR language has been assimilated. There were three basic reasons that to explore the CBIR language connection to the graduate students.

- If the students were using the CBIR language then they have to some extent understood the learnings and have retained some of the material.
- The key words in the CBIR search engine were presumably key areas of study. Therefore, looking at the terms the student use might see where the students were drawing the information from to develop their personal philosophies.
- Looking at the terms used might suggest ideas for future studies and insights into the CBIR language and also the students and the program.

The Process

The process for this section was very simple. Simply highlighting the CBIR search terms used in the data obtained from the PVB's of the graduate student's papers was how the CBIR data was obtained. It seemed reasonable that a clearer picture would come from looking at the data as a whole rather than exploring the PVB's separately.

After highlighting the terms, they were arranged in clusters of hits. Then the clusters that had three or more hits were arranged in a graph.

A note: Some of the students used quotations to express their ideas and beliefs and, for the most part, it was not used here. There were a few occasions that a student paraphrased someone and it was clear that that was also what the student believed. In these cases it was highlighted. The material had to be clearly of the students' own thoughts to be included.

SECTION V

The Data

Section V reports the results of the data of the PVBs into a readable format. The data here is presented in the narrative format. All of the quotations were drawn directly from the students' papers, with every effort made to keep them in the context they were presented originally. The quotations are kept anonymous.

There was an image that summed up the whole of the data. Sidney Parnes wrote of brainstorming being like a kaleidoscope. Indeed, his whole philosophy about creativity seems to have this kaleidoscopic view. He said that the little pieces inside the kaleidoscope were like ideas and one could move and twist them and keep coming up with indefinite numbers of patterns and shapes. And when a person adds a new piece of crystal into the pattern it starts all over again. (Parnes, 1993. pg 35)

This was the way the data presented itself---many bright and colorful shapes from the past and the present all spinning in one direction yet producing a myriad of complex pattern and opinion. The past overlaps the present that overlaps the future. The data from the students' papers turned out to be wonderful shapes of all colors just waiting to be arranged into a new pattern.

Philosophies

Introduction to Philosophies

“One’s philosophy about creativity is fluid. It’s like water that shifts and settles depending on the changing surfaces.” (Student from CRS 615)

The depth of what the students choose to write about was intriguing. It seemed as if they had a need to reach into themselves and pull out ideas and concepts that were sparked and challenged by their studies at the Center. In this study the definition of philosophy was: An individual's set of values synthesized or interpreted with his/her belief and learnings.

- Answers to life's questions of essence, who am I, where am I going?
- A systemic direction.
- The "aha" of understanding your place in life.

It was this definition that we used to decide whether or not to pull a phrase or thought as a philosophy. The personal philosophies of the students fell into several common themes. Although there were one or two pieces of data that remained independent, most easily fell into one of the following areas:

- Teaching/Nurturing
- Personal Growth
- Multidimensional/Other theories
- Higher Power & Mystery
- Creativity is needed by and is part of humankind
- Other

The themes are arranged from the larger to smaller in the number of "hits".

The themes were of some surprise and showed an interesting cultivation of learnings in the student's philosophies. The theme of "creativity is needed" although small in actual hits was an appealing piece of data. There were students from the Center holding the philosophy that we as humans need to be creative and that creativity is what

makes us human. Another surprise appeared as the “personal growth” theme. (This also carried over to Values and Beliefs.) Many students had eye opening and “Aha” experience that changed their philosophies as they proceeded through the program; experiences that they said made them a more well-rounded person. Let’s take a closer look at exactly what the students have set forth as philosophies.

Teaching and Nurturing

The students wrote of the importance of teaching creativity to others. It appeared that after having absorbed the lessons themselves they saw the merit in teaching their new philosophy to others. “I...cast aside my prior assumption that I may have harbored about being a naturally skillful teacher with little left to learn.” This student had taken his/her learnings to heart, then went on to say, “I am committed to the belief that not only can these skills be taught, it is essential that we do so.” This student was taking his/her learnings forward into the classroom, taking action on new ideas. And although the word “belief” was used, this concept fit the definition of philosophy.

Another student shadowed the idea of taking action on teaching creativity: “I feel that it is crucial to work toward a better understanding of processes that can spur creativity...and presses that are more likely to foster and encourage creativity.” This student placed the emphasis on understanding more about how creativity works and what type of environment truly will help bring out the most creative potential in people. The student seemed to be saying that the more we learn about creativity the better we will be able to teach it.

The “teach-ability” of creativity was the most important aspect for this student: “Creativity belongs to everyone...the most important thing about creativity is that it is teachable, and thus, learnable. One can deliberately and knowingly develop his creativity.” The students appeared to have a strong sense that creativity was indeed teachable, and that it was important to do so. There was also an overwhelming sense of teaching creativity to children. “The importance of teaching children to use their creative potential cannot be emphasized enough.” The students touched on goal setting, climate, advocacy, and curriculum. Yet no matter which angle the students entered from, the sense of importance in teaching children came through.

“In my teaching, I do a great deal of goal setting with the students. I use examples of road maps for life leading to choices and goals.” And another student’s angle--- “Climate setting in the home, classroom, and in the work place is a very important component for me.” And this student blended the goal setting and climate together while working with other teachers. “In attempting to meet students’ needs at my school, I devise curriculum from a variety of sources. Working closely with classroom teachers, I check with them periodically to see if there is an area of subject matter on which to do enrichment activities. If a student is intensely interested in a certain topic, he/she is given the freedom and guidance in pursuing that interest.” Not only was this student building a wonderful climate in his/her classroom, he/she was also setting an example for the other teachers. By leading the way to a more creative atmosphere, this student was teaching by doing and both his/her students and co-workers were being affected.

A different slant on teaching children came from the philosophy of another student, a teacher, who was certainly attempting to give his/her students every ounce of

his/her learnings. "...At some point during the school year, all the students meet with me. They have the opportunity of intentionally developing their creativity by participating in lessons designed to increase their creative and critical thinking skills."

Another student's concerns lay not only in the classroom but also in the dispersing of "creative programs." "The separation between creativity and intelligence raises issues that I see myself becoming and advocate for. In education creativity is usually reserved for special groups and usually not taught as a life skill in which all could benefit...In my experience with at-risk students, I have discovered that many of the needs...correspond to characteristics used to describe creative people." This student felt that the programs to help children reach their creative potential needed to be broadened to include all children. Teaching the children about creativity appeared to be a philosophy that many of the students felt worthy of writing about.

The students also wrote about teaching in the work place. One of the students above was teaching by example for the other teachers but they wrote of a more direct teaching.

"I think it important for me to focus on the practice of non-supernatural creativity so that I may effectively teach it and thus fulfill my self-assigned obligation to assist others. I am less interested in Gardner's geniuses than in the common creativity, common man," For this student, then, teaching creativity to the "common" man was more important than understanding how the creativity of a genius works.

Another student teaches, "problem solving skills to individuals and couples so that they can make a positive difference in their relationships." He/she attempts "to make

other people more positive by helping them understand each other and teaching them some simple tools they can use to make a difference.”

This sense of importance placed on teaching showed not only an assimilation of the students’ learnings but also a continuation of these learnings through their teaching to others. To close, an insightful student realized that even though you may be the teacher, you still learn a thing or two. “ [In my job] working with dropouts of all ages in a night school...I found myself confronted with a fair number of bright, knowledgeable, and successful students who had failed to graduate from high school. Most of these individuals displayed talents and abilities that fell outside the accepted academic realm and they were willing to do academic work only as a way in which to pursue their real interests. Many of them taught me more than I could ever hope to teach them.”

Personal Growth

The personal growth in the philosophies expressed by the students was something of a surprise. Personal Growth was defined as a new way of approaching daily life, seeing something from a different perspective, having an insight about one’s self---and applying these into one’s being. Many students have left the Center as changed people; changed in their outlook on creativity; changed in their own internal individuality. These changes appeared to have had positive effect on the students.

“My philosophy and definition of creativity has grown...to a multifaceted organizationally-based explanation of creativity...yet my focus has expanded to recognize the importance of other variables...and how those variables guide my choices

in life.” The choices enfolded a ripple effect. They affected not only this student but also the people the student came into contact with and potentially each person who will be contacted in the future. “To discount the likelihood of future change [of my philosophy] is to do injustice to both the dynamic aspect of the creative process itself and to the manner in which I expect to live my life.”

The personal growth changes in the students were split in half between internal change, how the students viewed him/her self; and external change, how the student interacted within the world around him/her.

Internal Changes

The internal changes were quite moving and ardently worded and in some cases rather humorously stated. Many students were able to pinpoint that moment when their studies changed their view of self. “The understanding of the implications of my [KAI] score of 141 was one of the most liberating experiences I have ever had...It was enlightening and I was pregnant with creative studies.” For this student understanding that there were differences in styles of creativity changed his/her perception of self.

Another witty student wrote, “There comes a time in a man’s life when he may hear a creative call from within. A failure to heed this call will leave him in limbo, alive yet unfulfilled, unsatisfied, and yet perhaps not knowing why...disconnected from the earth, from nature, from his soul. There comes a time in the life of a man to shoot the skeptic and get on with living...to create, to be alive.” The student appeared to have learned how to listen to his more creative side and his creative side made him feel quite alive.

The depth of the internal growth of philosophies continued with this student, “cognizant of choices and goal setting and the power of these tools I have integrated them into the fabric of my life.” A student incorporated his/her learnings, which was of the program’s main goals, and using the learning to become a more effective person.

Another angle of personal growth was touched upon: “Truth, especially to one’s own thoughts and ideas, is part of the creative process...If the nourishment and development of creativity gives one the ability to face truth, even when it is difficult, life will be enhanced.” The student spoke not only for his/her own self but also for the general populace. Truth rested very close to non-judgment. Truth was neither good nor bad, it was simply a foundation to focus change. If understanding more about creativity might indeed help people understand more about truth and non-judgment, perhaps “life will be enhanced.” Another example of being truthful came from this student: “ I choose not to be glued to anyone’s label or niche. With awareness of the process aspect, I continue to pursue additional newly unfolding strands in my personal philosophy of creativity.”

One last internal change came from a student who was able to break from his/her formal training. “It was a wake-up call to me as an engineer trained in traditional thinking! I recognized that I had to question myself constantly---to look for different ways of looking at a situation, different methods, and different solutions. I had an ‘aha’ and I didn’t even know what to call it. I didn’t know who to credit.” Breaking from his/her learning from the past and applying new tools and techniques suggested a positive change for this student.

The breaking from the past summed up the trend in the internal changes of half of the personal changes in the students. The students demonstrated their ability to continue learning and growing as humans. They seemed to have blended their learning into new and seemingly more workable philosophies.

External Change

The students expressed many external changes in their philosophies. External changes were changes in the way the student perceives outside influences, other people, jobs and challenges. Thoughts of deferred judgment, enrichment of self, and inspiring others were some samples of the external changes that went on in the students. The students' concrete applications of the learnings were varied but had equal impact. A simple statement of, "I cannot judge those works I have read to be wrong," showed how one of the main guidelines of the creative process—defer judgment, has been applied to this student's outlook on his/her readings. The holding back of judgment and taking time to think and process was a powerful asset.

Students wrote about their abilities within their professions being enhanced with a new understanding of creativity.

"What I have learned about [creativity] from my antecedents and contemporaries...has broadened my practice and effectiveness." And the mirror statement, "My mission of teaching and inspiring people to love and serve is greatly enhanced by my practice of creativity." These students have taken and applied their learnings into the philosophy of their daily lives. A strong sense of enrichment seemed to have been garnered from their learning.

Another student's enrichment came from taking a different look at the people around him/her. "I became aware of the fact that there are highly creative individuals in our world who didn't always fit society's expectations...they invested all their time and energy on what others may have considered nonsense."

The sense of personal growth was hard to ignore in the philosophy of the students. The change that many students set forth in their words seemed to be life altering. They came to an awareness of themselves and the impact that one person can have on others. Simply by deferring judgment and understanding differences the students appeared better equipped to handle the challenges they choose to pursue.

One last thought came from one student to the other students in the program, "Soul search yourself to see if you truly desire this degree. This program demands a lot of effort, but remember you get out of life what you put into life. Have faith in your professors as guides and your inner voice as drive...and you will hopefully be amazed by an 'aha' at the end of this journey as I was."

Multidimensional & Other Theories

The students approached the issue of defining creativity in many different ways. Many students agreed that creativity was multidimensional, that each aspect of creativity plays with and against the others causing a myriad of possible directions to study and explore. "Creativity is a complex and multidimensional entity." And "[Creativity] is a multifaceted phenomenon, the potential for which is possessed by everyone." And one last statement, "Creativity cannot be labeled to any one specific trait, because it is not

unidimensional.” These sentiments echoed through several of the papers. Many students appeared to have left the program with the clear understanding that creativity at this point had no one definition and that creativity was more than just one simple trait. And to top that off each of those traits can be shifted and changed with the environment, experiences, nurturing, and heredity. The students themselves were proof of this shifting and change---as the examples above show the students bent their philosophy and faith to make room for the new ideas about creativity.

Some students attempted to pinpoint just how creativity worked in the individual. “Each person has an internal creativity, an internal process and an internal motivation that interact with internal knowledge.” This student had creativity taking place totally inside the human. Another student’s rather opposite take, “I believe in the concept Jung (1923-1976) calls the Collective Unconscious as being the root source for all creative ideas...which I interpret to be a common history which we can explore, combination and connections that would otherwise be unable to access on a conscious level.” Here were two differing views of where creativity originates. For one student it all happened inside and for the other it all happened in a realm far bigger than humans. And yet another student seemed to blend internal and external processes, “First, creativity is a transformational process that is both natural and imperative. Second, that as a natural process, creativity can be deliberately nurtured and developed through methods and programs. Third, is that within the diversity of cultural frameworks, there are differences and commonalities as well as some unique connections that can be identified in how people manifest their creativity.” And perhaps a simpler attempt at pinpointing a definition, “As I see it creativity is a function of a given person, in a specific environment, using cognitive

processes to develop new and useful products as a result of a developmental need to explore new possibilities.”

A student explained his/her slant, “My philosophy is of necessity built upon my definition and assumptions that creativity is all relative, which is to say that there can be no single definition of creative person, idea, press, or process. It is a question of what is effective for the individual.” Basing a definition on each individual certainly tossed a multidimensional coin into the mix. Individual preferences, talent, and heredity multiplied by experience, environment, and process leads to an infinite number of definitions.

There was one point that everyone did seemed to agree on: “Creativity can manifest itself in a multiplicity of ways and when experienced it can be immensely rewarding.” Theories may not agree and definitions may clash, but everyone seemed to implicitly understand that creativity was something special and well worth exploring.

Higher Power & Mystery

A philosophy of a Higher Power and Mystery was another theme the students wrote about in the papers. The general synopsis from the theme was that a higher power gave them the gift to create, but they could use certain tricks and tools to help improve what they were given. The higher power took many forms: God, The Creator, Universal Consciousness, Transcendental Meditation, and the ever-elusive Muse.

The strong philosophical belief that a Higher Power made us creative showed in the following statements: “For me, creativity is part of my understanding of how God

works in the world.” And the reflection statement: “My sense that being creative is just part of being human, part of how God created us.” And the final reverberation: “...my creativity theory is that a person’s creativity comes for his/her creator, from forces that are present in an individual at the time of birth.”

Some very compelling personal philosophies were being expressed here. The students were meshing their faith with their learnings and appeared to be coming up with a new way to understand and stand behind their already strong philosophy. These were deep core philosophies that science cannot argue with yet science can help one understand and re-interpret.

A student who was a follower of meditation, visualization, and hypnosis suggests, “Transcending the normal limits of cognition may allow for a far more complete expression of a person’s creative potential.” Another student referred to this same idea calling it the Universal Consciousness. “Creativity may become manifest in the realm of man but it may also have a manifestation from another realm, which may actually be a larger representation and directly in contact with the microcosm of man. This acknowledgement may indeed suggest a Universal Consciousness.” And one more, “ I will certainly not deny my beliefs on creativity and psychedelic psychology. These are who I am and to deny that would be to perhaps begin to close that connection with the universal consciousness which I have worked so hard to create.”

These students suggested that their faith and philosophy of a Universal Consciousness helped them understand where creativity may come from and how to tap into a deeper and richer meaning of creativity.

The students were also strong in the philosophy that even though there are Higher Powers at play, one could improve his/her creativity by using techniques and tools taught at the Center. "...There are many effective ways to tap into [creativity] without waiting for 'the Muse' to deliver the ideas of God." This statement summed up what was implied in several papers. (see Beliefs) The students meshed their core philosophies with their studies. It was interesting to note that the students held fast to their philosophies yet they acknowledge and accepted their studies.

Creativity is needed by, and is a part, of mankind

The students set forth the philosophy that mankind needed creativity: we are human because we possess creativity. Statements such as "creativity is purposeful and necessary to the existence of mankind" and "creativity is inherent potentiality a defining characteristic of human beings" caused one to stop and reflect. These students were questioning what it was that makes humans human. What makes us different from other animals? For these students creativity answered part of that question.

To delve one step deeper a student wrote, "The creative process is predominantly a mental activity that is interdependent with, and also, and integrator of, the cognitive process of the human organism." This student seemed to be trying to understand how creativity worked in the human. The philosophy appeared strong that creativity was what makes us human but how it worked was still something we do not know. We might have some hunches but no concrete facts.

The students' exploration of the relationship between humanness and creativity was a rather hefty subject. It spoke highly of the students' ambitions in trying to understand this thing we call creativity and how it may change one's philosophy, as one understands more. Another student expressed this as, "the need to know the nature of creativity, the nature of our highest order of being, pushes us beyond the 'admiration of mystery!' It isn't a question of knowing, but rather an issue of the need to know." The difficult part to grasp was that we might indeed never know the full embodiment of what creativity entails. Perhaps as Wordsworth says, we humans are "a sensitive being, a creative soul."

Another aspect of the humanness and creativity theme was found in the community realm. Students wrote of being better citizens and developing stronger community/society as a result of understanding more about creativity.

"My theory of creativity...is one of helping people achieve the most for themselves and ultimately society." This sounded all but idyllic, but yet what a strong outcome from a student's studies. And an echoed sentiment from another student, "As a practitioner, I have the opportunity and the obligation to further the use of creative science for the betterment of mankind."

One final statement seemed to pull all the students thoughts together as they related to creativity, humanness, and community.

"As a human being, one thing that makes us different from other animals is our thinking and creative abilities. Metaphorically speaking, I see this creativity as a seed, strong in its pursuits but very vulnerable...the seed of creativity seeks to reach its full growth and to manifest itself in some creative product. It becomes the shared

responsibility of those in a position to make some differences in the lives of others to take the job of horticulturists, enhancing the chances of each seed reaching its potential.” That about said it all. The students seemed to have fully grasped what a difference they could make simply by applying what they had learned and taking it in as a new and adjusted personal philosophy.

Other

While most of the data from philosophies fit rather nicely into self-defining groups a few did not. Several ideas emerged that were not enough to place them in their own heading. The students touched upon the ideas of motivation, creative climate, and future direction. These shards held interesting bits of information and needed to be addressed.

The students wrote about their approach to their work: “The work place is one where motivation and creativity can and do exist.” This student suggested that his/her work place held a balance of motivation and creativity. Another student addressed his/her motivation, “ When I’m working on an exciting news story, I’m caught up almost to the exclusion of my other commitments. My energy level is high; I’m willing to go the extra mile in terms of time and initiative. I’m motivated by the work itself.” Finding interest in his/her work seemed to drive this student to a more creative plane.

Another student spoke of freedom at the work place. “In order to be successful, I need the freedom to develop human relationships and not be tied to an organizational hierarchy that is focused solely on how or what results [are] achieved.” Realizing that

he/she did not perform well in a “solely” achievement based work place was a helpful insight for this student. This was not to say that this student will not achieve, but he/she understood the climate in which he/she was more likely to do well.

Another piece of data that had an interesting content was one about creative blocks: “Although the blocks to creativity are numerous, they fall into two categories. The first category includes habit, patterning and fixation...blocks in this category will respond to direct training measures such as those used in problem solving processes. The second category of blocks to creativity are psychological...shamed based blocks are the most significant blocks to creativity as shame is all pervasive, clandestine and nefarious. Shame is the antithesis of creativity.”

The well-written students spoke knowledgeably and eloquently of their philosophies. They brought out many concepts and possible directions for future studies. Two last pieces drawn from the papers seemed like good thoughts to close the chapter of personal philosophies. The first one shared words of advise to fellow students, “ ...Take a look back, make it part of your present, and go on with your journey. If perchance you are a Creative Studies student and you are working to hammer out a degree, take a moment to let it all incubate, finish your degree with enthusiasm, and then continue to learn, to incubate, and to create. And on that note, this is not the end. It’s another beginning.” This statement pulled together much of what the student’s philosophies said. Learn what needs to be learned and then take it with you toward a new beginning.

The final quotation came in the form of a quotation from *How to Develop Your Children’s Creativity*. This was insightful for the student and a wonderful thought on which to close this section. “A quotation I had written down from one of the books

jumped off the page when I re-read it recently, something clicked and it was an ‘aha’--- learning to love what you do is part a result of being loved while you do it” (Bean, 1992).

Some of the students had indeed taken their learnings to a lofty level. These students suggested that their understanding of creativity would help them do better in their jobs and in their life. And, that, in turn will help their community become a stronger place. If indeed, creativity could help students perform better in the class room and creativity could help people perform better at their jobs, then it is not that far of a stretch to think that creativity could help improve the community and our society. Certainly some of the students from the program were committed to working toward that end.

VALUES

“The beauty of creativity is that it makes a difference in all areas of life”
(Graduate student CRS 615)

The students’ values were the most challenging to pull from the papers. Very few students began their sentences with, “I value”. Value was not a term applied in the writing often. And Values could be interpreted easily as a Philosophy and/or a Belief. The definition of Value was more steadfast than a belief and not quite as ingrained as a philosophy: an individual’s set of beliefs that are internalized resulting in placing moral criteria or worth on any given action.

- Something that is the essence of self
- Guides action of self
- Judgments placed on self

The definition was very action oriented toward the self. In order to be pulled as a Value the passage had to have a sense of the student actually acting upon the words. The value had a personal action sense about them; they had to appear as if the students were acting.

The values arranged themselves into three main groups:

- Learned Growth
- Helping others
- Other thoughts

Learned Growth

The largest set of values came in the form of learned growth. A learned growth was something that the student gleaned from the lessons during the course work of the Creative Studies Program and applied it to his/her life as a change in a currently held value. Many students wrote of how the learnings from the program caused them to grow and shift. Some of these shifts occurred directly from peers, professors and antecedents. “I have been shaking hands with the past, present, and future simultaneously. My [professors and peers] have contributed to my growth on many levels.” And another student wrote, “I needed a pathway which...provided me with a foundation as to how I arrived at my theory. I found that the internal compass for my external pathway was my antecedent chart; those persons, places and events that nurture me toward my beliefs.” Another student said, “I have been actively engaged in the study of creativity for the past four years...I have become aware of my interest, my curiosity, my intrigue, and my passion for the subject...subjectively, intuitively, and affectivity...” For these students, going through the program gave them a new insight about themselves and the people with whom they interacted.

Another student spoke highly of his/her journey through the program, “I must note the fact that all the instructors in the Center for Studies in Creativity have encouraged me and my fellow students to be critical consumers and informed practitioners. That shared value is one of those that has attracted me to study...” This student truly seemed to have treasured his/her studies and the atmosphere of the Center.

A couple of students wrote of their new value in understanding creative style. “Would I have been a different (better) man today if I had understood the concept of style when in my 20’s...I know where I was and what I did and why. I do not lament the past but celebrate today’s opportunities.” This student seemed to have had a two-fold learning. One of which was he understood about his own creative style better. Additionally he noted that we could not change the past so why not accept it and move toward what the future holds.

A different student wrote about understanding styles: “Kirton’s theory has helped me come to terms with my own style of adaptive behaviors as well as aided me in the understanding of styles of my students.” This student then, by understanding and placing value on each person’s style, including his/her own, became more aware of difference and perhaps that awareness brought more acceptance.

Other students wrote of their learnings in more general terms. This student articulated the values that directed his/her life; “ The variables or key concepts that comprise my framework are support, human interaction, freedom, ambition/initiative and an enjoyment of my work and direction of my personal life.” Although not directly related to creativity, this student held some definite and strong values that echoed the themes of creativity. Another student also spoke of values that controlled his/her direction, “ The following values are explicit and implicit within my core. They flavor all I do...self understanding, self actualization, appreciation of life, assistance to others.” Here again a student was able to voice his/her values with words that reflected creativity themes. Both students had brought with them strong values to program.

Another example of a student who meshed his/her values with the ideas of the program, “If indeed the universal consciousness is pure love, and psychedelic techniques can increase my connection with this realm, then I must continue my dedication to those techniques. This may also increase my creativity as I become in touch with the creative force which may empower nature’s creativity and thus my own thought process.” This student understood that techniques may help increase one’s creativity and for him/her those techniques were of the psychedelic nature.

One last thought summarized the idea of blending one’s values with one’s learnings and also spoke to a revered personal growth: “My odyssey into the field of creativity has been a real adventure, causing me to reflect on my experiences and knowledge and to formulate new perspectives based on many new learnings.”

Helping Others

Another value that emerged from the students’ papers was the importance of helping others. “If creativity is inherent in each person and the expression of it leads to psychological health, not only should it be able to be developed, deliberate attempts should be made to develop it.” For this student, creativity ought to be developed to help the mental health of people in general.

Students also wrote about being actively engaged in helping children reach their creative potential. “Deliberate attempts should be made to develop creativity in our childhood.” And, “ Schools should be engaged in the development of creativity and critical thinking skills as well as in Creative Problem Solving.” And, “...it is in

understanding the creative students that I will achieve the greatest results as a teacher.” For these graduate students, then, there was a great value in understanding creativity and applying techniques to help children to develop their creativity.

The students did not stop at teaching the children; teaching creativity skills to everyone was also valued. “Perhaps I have always recognized untapped potential in individuals and wanted to help them use this potential productively.” And another student wrote of his/her insights into understanding his/her own job skills, “My priorities have shifted drastically to fulfillment through more direct action with people rather than through the indirect actions of being a good business manager.”

Helping others by using the new found knowledge of creativity was a value for some of the students. And as this student summed up, “ I can use my knowledge of creativity and what I have learned about nurturing it to help children, teens, and adults I work with to embrace their problems and challenges.”

Other Thoughts

The students wrote of many values that did not self-select into nice categories. Yet the passages addressed how the learnings from the Center had influenced the values of the student’s values. There were interesting thoughts and insightful ideas all tumbled together with the values of the students.

One student penned, “Acceptance of all people of all backgrounds, intellect, occupations, and vocations was integrated into the fabric of my life. These were the subtle lessons that I learned and that shaped my being.” Another student, “I recognized

that I had to question myself constantly to look for different methods and different solutions.” These students blended their lives and values with what they learned about creativity. The concepts of acceptance, openness to ideas, and motivation are the backbone of creativity and these students were using them to help explain their values about life and work.

There were several opinions on how the student viewed creativity. “The core of my theory is the imagination. Processes which surround the development of the use of mental play can spur creative structures.” “Acceptance and permission for new ideas and the tools for [CPS] are of the utmost importance.” And a simple one-liner from another student, “One label I am fully against for a person is ‘uncreative’.” And a more ethereal idea, “Creativity is...an act of social love (Arieti, 1976)...sums up both my pivotal and peripheral notion of creativity.” Each of these students set forth a different view and a different value of creativity yet all seemed to have grown out of the learnings from the program.

Some students acknowledged their parents as one of the influences on their creative being. “Both parents have shaped me...and I have extracted many quantities from both.” And, “I could not help but recall some of the precious gems of wisdom I received from my mother. She may not hold a degree in cognitive psychology but the foundations she laid for me, I had not in depth appreciation for until now...How fortunate I was to have the ‘street cognitive psychologist for a mother.’” And another student reflected, “in raising my children and in teaching, I have always tried to use affirmative judgment...I felt that an approving, happy place was a place for growth and success.” For these students the parents and parenting affected the children’s creative abilities.

A small group of students spoke to the heart of adding creativity to one's life. The students had affected by their studies and the values they carried with them to the program had grown and shifted to allow for the new ideas. "I value every person's creativity no matter how this is demonstrated." And although that may seem rather idyllic, it showed the strength in the valuation of creativity in the students.

One last passage spoke to the value of learning creativity. "As I become more sophisticated in my knowledge of creativity, I also am becoming aware of the ambiguity of the term."

Beliefs

“A new understanding rings loud as cathedral bells.” (Graduate Student CRS 615)

The beliefs drawn from the papers were the largest group and the most challenging to organize into a readable format. The students held many enriching beliefs that seemed to be influenced by their studies at the Center for Studies in Creativity. The definition of beliefs covers preferences, emotions and ideals based on heart, home, and heredity. One believes what one believes. This study defined a belief as: Basic tenets or ideas articulated or acted on that people claim or hold to be real, true or valid for them.

- Preferences based on liking something
- Knowledge based on emotion not fact
- Presupposed ideals based on heart, home, and heredity

The students seemed to have been able to blend their beliefs effectively with the new information they had learned. They wrote of these transformations and appeared genuinely enthused by the changes. The beliefs fell into eleven categories.

- Defining Creativity
- Theories
- Personal insights
- Environment/Press
- The Creative Person
- Teaching/schools
- Process
- Mysterious and Unknowable

- Motivation
- Higher Power
- Wisdom and Gems

Defining Creativity

The students struggled with trying to define creativity. The strongest belief seems to be that creativity was hard to define. “Creativity is a multi-faceted phenomenon.” And “Creativity is a hypothetical concept.” The students agreed that the definition of creativity was individual and multifaceted and yet it may be helpful to find one common definition. “It is important that there is one [definition] which everyone can share and which can be used as a starting point for future research.”

With the challenge clearly stated, the students pressed forward with their own ideas of what that definition might entail. Some students wrote of imagination as being a base for creativity. “The imagination provides the field in which creativity can occur.” And, “I define creativity as the process of applying structure to the imagination. When we organize what we imagine into patterns appropriate to a given situation, we are using creativity.” For these students the definition of creativity started with imagination.

Other students’ definitions started with an act, some sort of movement or action. “Creativity, however, seems to necessitate an act. Whether the act is communicated, presented in some physical form, or displayed, in some way is not necessary.” An internal action was what this student needed to consider something creative. Another

student accentuated this idea, “ It is my belief that in the case of at least some acts of creativity, such as involving one person with an internal process resulting in an idea, it is possible that there will be nothing to see, hear, smell, touch, or taste while this occurrence is happening or even once it is complete.” Another student agreed and built on that idea, “It is my belief that with or without an artifact, an idea is a necessary creative outcome, and is a necessary component for the occurrence of creativity.” So these students agreed that, at times, creativity could occur without a visible outcome or product.

Another student believed that there needed to be a tangible way to view the creativity. “A generative act of creativity must come from a person or a group, since by definition, without them there is no recognition of whether an idea may or may not exist and whether or not it is creative.”

One student shifted his/her understanding of creativity to ask how can we measure creativity, since it indeed exists, even if we cannot define it. “ Creativity, in and of itself, is not yet accessible for direct examination, study, and definitive conclusions. What has been available for study and investigation are the external manifestations, i.e. the creative person, the creative product, etc.” This student suggested then that perhaps the focus ought to be placed on the end results of creativity rather than trying to define the abstract concept of creativity. Another students gave some suggestions as to how to go about evaluating those outcomes. “I think that [novelty and value] are useful as criteria in judging a creative idea, with both being necessary but not sufficient on their own.” So as one student believed that the focus of creative study might be better placed on outcome, another student pointed out some of the challenges of understanding outcomes. The

definitions for the criteria that might be used to investigate creative outcomes could become a discussion at least as big as the students trying to define creativity.

Another student tried a simpler approach: “If only one writer thought the idea to be creative, then that is all it takes to be considered creative.” So for this student all it takes was an idea in one person’s mind and it was creative. And if, as another student suggested, “Creativity is a process of spontaneous combinations of personal experiences, or lack there of, within and environment, to produce novelty which is present in everyone.” Creativity must be placed in a certain context and one draws upon his/her surroundings to produce something creative. These two students showed the wide range of ideas as to what creativity is. Another student wisely wrote, “Perhaps due to the nature of the topic, creativity does not seem to have the same meaning for everyone.”

“When thinking about reality or creativity, there seems to have been an ancient trend that has diffused into modern thought, of describing them both in terms of duality and unknowableness.” This student’s belief touched upon another challenge of pinpointing a definition of creativity. History and the historical perspectives also come into play. And the ideas of duality and unknowable-ness may have started in an ancient world but they still continue today.

The students struggled eloquently to voice what they believed to be definitions of creativity. This student seemed to have arrived at an understanding of creativity, “ I believe that creativity is largely set in the cognitive domain, but is greatly influenced by the person, press, and product.” And another student voiced a more complex explanation; “It is the incredible intricacies and complexities of the human mind that are at the heart of the creative process and ultimately, the creative product.” The students seemed to

believe that creativity took place some place inside the mind and that the process was not yet known. The general beliefs about creativity and humanness were summed up with these two attempts at definitions. “Creativity is an inherent potentiality and defining characteristic of human beings.” And, “Creativity is purposeful and necessary to the existence of mankind.”

And finally one last attempt to define creativity; “Only man creates. This begs the definition of creativity, but a comprehensive definition of creativity has been elusive.” If the beliefs of definitions in the students’ papers reflected the research community on a whole, the word “elusive” appeared an understatement.

Theories

As with the definitions of creativity, the theories of what creativity was and how to research it varied also. The students drew on their readings from the program in developing their theories.

One student summarized the challenge: “I believe one of the more challenging aspects of studying creativity lies in the fact that after 30 years of thought and investigation, there is yet to be accepted a single unitary theory of creativity.” Another student proposed an idea for how to approach that unitary theory: “One cannot, in my opinion, study creativity without a frame work.” So for this student a framework would help bring about a single theory. But as this student pointed out, “Within the diversity of cultural frames, there are differences and commonalities, as well as unique connections in the ways people manifest their creativity.” So for this student even the frame work had

variances, and on top of that the individual made unique contributions to how the creativity will develop. Another student suggested that, “continued research, ecological approaches, synergistic psychology may enlighten me to another place, with a new philosophy in the future.” So here, the student needed more research in some more diverse areas of study. And to make some of the new theories useable, another student wrote, “The research must be applicable to situations outside the original study in order to produce a practical benefit.” So this student believed that not only do we need a “unitary theory,” we also needed a repeatable means of studying creativity.

Some students developed their own theories of creativity. Their beliefs spoke of a wide range of ideas from intuition, to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, to Profiling. Again, the range of theories reflected the challenge of finding one umbrella theory of creativity. A student penned, “Human cognition has proved inadequate to truly comprehend the nature of reality, which may have its roots in an infinitely creative potentiality...However, a glimpse of comprehension may come in times of intuition which has been included within the creative process.” This student pulled intuition into the theories of creativity and suggested that intuition may be where an answer could be found. Another student addressed intuition by saying, “If intuition [provides] a means of explaining the unknowable aspects of creativity, shouldn’t there be an effort to foster this along with the cognitive aspects of creativity training?” If one could teach techniques to enhance creativity perhaps there were techniques to enhance intuition, for this student that might have helped with understanding creativity. And another student added more depth to the interplay between creativity and intuition: “The Incubation Model captures the conscious and the unconscious, the rational and the irrational mind that, I believe, all

play a role in the process of creation. Intuition has always played a role in my life. The older I have become, the more I have relied upon intuition as a means of understanding and creating. Intuition plays its hidden game along with incubation.” This student believed strongly enough in his/her intuition that he/she relied on it to understand and create in the world. For these students intuition appeared as a major portion of their theories of creativity.

Other students had more theories, such as placing creativity in a framework in order to further study. “It’s my opinion that to move toward a better understanding of creativity and what works for whom, under what conditions, frameworks that incorporate a variety of disciplines and other factors needed to be considered and developed.” The students even suggested what some of those frameworks might be. “The trick then, is to examine creativity using the ecological/profiling model without getting so far into the micro level of inquiry so that the contexts of the study weighs down potential for future applications of the results.” So for this student the framework needed to look at the small but not too small. Another student added this skew, “What makes the ecological approach to creativity important is that it provides a framework to allow for research to move toward examining elements which may have a direct cause/effect relationship with observed creative behavior.” So for this student, examining what affected creative behavior may lead to some answers about creativity.

Maslow’s Hierarchy was a different framework suggested by a student. “It is my belief...that each of the levels of creative development...depends upon two equally important sets of hierarchical developments: those personality and characteristic qualities represented in Maslow’s ‘Hierarchy of needs’ and levels of task motivation present...A

person's position within any of the hierarchies is dynamic and changing, and situational in nature." This student believed that Maslow's needs and motivation both needed be present for his/her creative theory. And that even in that framework, creativity could be "dynamic and changing."

Another student voiced his/her views on a "gap" in the connecting of theories. "My disappointment comes from my perception of a remaining gap between the disciplines of the social sciences and creative studies." So, as this student suggested, the framework needed to expand to include an even broader area.

The students also understood the need to impose some sort of framework on creativity to further the research. And again they varied on which framework would best serve that purpose. As one student worded it, "There are a few people like myself who believe that all these people [researchers] are talking about the same thing just within their own context." So, each framework and researchers language was based in context and may not necessarily be incongruous.

In general from reading the students beliefs, it appeared that there were as many theories about frameworks that could be applied to creativity, as there were ideas for the definition of creativity.

Another student stated, "I believe creativity is not domain specific, although it is necessary to have an understanding of the domain in order to converge, or produce the novel and useful product." While creativity had no set domain for this student, he/she suggested that it helped to understand some of the field in which you are attempting to create.

Even with the ambiguity and challenges that came with the study of creativity this student thinks, “that the search for knowledge about creativity is a worthwhile pursuit and that there are some generalizations possible---as much as I feel that there cannot be only one right answer, I do believe that there is value in making generalizations, but not to the extent that they are exclusionary.” This student suggested that research was worth continuing, even if no one right answer will emerge.

A final passage from a student who had a “bigger picture” in mind for his/her scheme to find the theories behind creativity: “As we continue to investigate our curiosities about creativity from a variety of cultural perspectives, I believe we will come to a greater appreciation for diversity and perhaps see an elegant similarity among ourselves...we certainly will have more successful opportunity to collaborate in finding creative solutions to problems and challenges that face our ‘globe of villages’.”

Personal Insights

The students wrote of a vast number of new personal insights into their beliefs. It appeared that the lessons garnered from the program moved the students enough to alter their core beliefs. The statements pulled as beliefs and then as personal insights when strung together made a resounding positive reflection of the students’ learnings. They had grown from participating in the CSC major. One of the main insights the students had was an understanding that we, as humans, need creativity.

The insights came in many forms, from a simple, “creativity enhances living,” to “creativity is desirable and enriching,” to “creativity helps human beings express and

receive love.” And there were some more involved thoughts; “ Creativity is imperative--- both to the individual’s health and growth, and to the holistic health and growth of all natural life forms. Imperative suggested that it is necessary for survival, both psychological and biological.” Either simply stated or intricately stated the students believed that creativity was good for humans.

A couple of students wrote of their insights in creativity and how those insights helped the student relate to others. “ I believe creativity enhances Truth, Love, and Acceptance as aspects of healthy living.” So understanding creativity had helped this student strengthen his/her ideas of a healthy person. And the student went on to say, “Those who take risks are more likely to feel that they are innately accepted.” Risk taking for this student was an action that will help one feel accepted. Another student, a counselor, believed, “that the greatest contribution I can give a person who come to me whether ill or not, is to encourage them to become their own person.” So this student saw that helping patients to be themselves helped them feel healthier.

In another student’s passage, using one’s creativity lead to powerful changes. “People generally seek creativity when they are dissatisfied with their present course, and are rebelling against the accepted status quo. The inner personal struggle for something new and useful to fill the void is first a quest, then an undying need. Once the horizon is glimpsed your destination is clear. For many this point is simply referred to as ‘AHA!’ As if chains are broken, the air is cleared and you are reborn. Something that seemed so wrong has been defeated.” This student believed that a dissatisfied person would start looking for a creative change and that change would give a person a whole new sense of being.

More students wrote of insights that reflected on the understanding of self and self-actualization. “Creativity can be linked directly with our need to find deeper levels of meaning, a sense of greater purpose and fulfillment of potential, in a word, self-actualization.” Understanding creativity for this student seemed to be the door to greater understanding of self. This idea of creativity and self echoed in interesting ways in a couple other passages from the students. “The single most powerful tool to release creativity is the development of a positive self image.” So here, the student had the notion that self-image would increase one’s creative abilities. The idea shifted again with this student, “Creativity is a way of reaching our potential and expressing our individual uniqueness.” So for this student creativity gave us unique qualities that in turn helped our self-image. The students appeared to hold both opinions that creativity helps self-image and that a good self-image helped one’s creativity. Either way, the students had their belief strengthened by understanding more of creativity. “Creativity is an important part of being human, and, as such, deserves much reflection and thought.”

One last insight had set forth a different perspective on creativity: “I propose that creativity is not a first order or a second order construct of a larger issue. Creativity is the highest order construct of humanity. Variety may be the spice of life but creativity is the very stuff of it.”

Press

There was a pervasive belief from the students that Press or environment played a key role in a person reaching his/her creative potential. The belief was summarized by

these two students' passages: "The environment has a tremendous impact on our ability to be creative." And, "Since the environment plays such a critical role in the ability to be creative, it should be possible to provide an environment in which a person can learn to be more creative."

The students reiterated this idea in many ways, "I believe that external influences in the environment directly contribute to an individual's ability to be creative..." And, "I believe that creativity can be found in everyone, but also that the environment can serve to enhance or impede creativity." And again, "The behavioral baggage a person carries has an effect on his creativity. Providing a climate conducive to creativity bears heavily on the successful outcome of his process in terms of creative product."

The student's perennial beliefs about creativity and climate continued. "It is important that we provide the climate for making choices and that we provide the tools...imaging is one...positive affirmation is [another]." And a different twist, "The amount of interest generated towards the interaction of creativity and environment is sufficient evidence that environment had a direct effect on an individual's ability to be creative." One student held a broader view, "The climate we create will have a powerful effect on all the components of my theory, personality development, creative product development, and development of task motivation. [Climate] will have an effect on all kids and people we come in contact with." The student seemed to learn that climate affected creativity.

One student spoke of the importance of climate in a slightly reversed approach. "It appears that creativity can not be taught in an environment that is not conducive to learning and learning creative thinking skills takes nurturing and support. Blocks and

barriers appear to inhibit creativity...the point is, that each of these interact with an individual's abilities to be creative or think creative." A negative environment, according to this student, hampered a person's creativity. Another student elaborated on a different approach to environment: "It has become increasingly evident that the premise of the environment encompasses many facets and may be approached from various perspectives..." And another student stated, "I do not believe that there is one right answer to what an appropriate press for creativity is." The sense that environment directly affected creativity rang loud and clear in the passages from the students.

These last three passages summarized the sensibilities of the student's beliefs about the environment and creativity. "The good news is that because the environment significantly impacts creativity, we can help people maximize their creative potential through education." "I feel through proper climate setting and preparation we can help everyone reach for their potential...we can not know nor do we know who will be the next 'geniuses' of our society and we must give all a chance." And the final words, "We need to start with our environment, building a climate of freedom and growth. We need to be involved in co-nurturing of the delicate strength embodied in creative seeds, encouraging the pursuit of this very human of all quests---full realization of our own being, through the development of our personal and collective creativity."

The Creative Person

Students held the belief that person was the main component of creativity. "I see the person, in fact, all persons at the center of the whole concept of creativity." And, "The

most important aspect about the issue of creativity is that the person is a major factor.” Another student suggested, “The individual’s well being determines at any given moment, the potential of his creativity.”

The students beliefs about the creative person seemed to split into two areas which were taught at the Center: (1) everyone is creative; and (2) Each person has his/her own style.

Everyone is Creative

As with the philosophies, the students believed that everyone had some creative potential. “Every person has the capacity to be creative.” “Creativity belongs to everyone.” “Creativity is a basic human characteristic or trait, everyone is creative to some extent.” I believe that all people are creative, and have the capacity to generate creative ideas.”

Some students elaborated by adding a second level or layered the idea: “A belief that all people are creative greatly influences the way I deal with each person I come across in my work.” “We are all born with the capacity to create, however, something happens in the path to adult hood which interferes with the ability to be creative.” “People are naturally creative, yet the ways people are creative depends largely on what they focus on in life.” And one final thought, “Although I believe all people are creative, I further believe creativity can be enhanced.”

As reflected in the passages above, the belief that everyone is creative was presented strongly among the graduate students.

Everyone has a Creative style

The other area the students wrote of concerning the creative person was that of style. The students' beliefs reflected the understanding that each person had his/her own style and approach to creative efforts. "Each person has his/her own style of creativity." And another student wrote, "...There is no one right way for everybody [to be creative], but individually we may all have preferences."

Some students explored style further, "Creative style can affect the results of creative effort." And, "How well a person thinks creatively is linked to the other elements of a person i.e. process, critical thinking skills, knowledge, and motivation."

The students touched on some of the complexities of studying the creative person, the challenge of separating creativity with the environment and individual style.

Other students wrote of the creative person with the "break the rule" style. "Creative people often 'break the rules' in order to pursue their interests." And, "it began to occur to me that creative people very often had to, in a sense, 'break the rules.' Our formal, rigid environment can present many roadblocks for those who see things differently." Another view, " I have observed many different types of creative efforts in students...creative students create in different ways. Some students work within the guidelines while others stretch and often appear to 'break the rules' in order to do the tasks."

The overall belief of the students appeared to be that everyone was creative and everyone had his/her own style of creativity. "Being a truly creative and functional person takes constant vigilance and work. The balance between elements is in a constant

dynamic state of flux. The key is how well a person maintains a balance between elements.” The graduate students appeared to have found an understanding of those “elements”---that the creative person had both an innate creativity and a characteristic style. As one student wrote, “I came to this program with a hunch that all people are creative. I leave with the hunch a certainty.”

Teaching

The belief in teaching creativity flourished in the passages from the graduate students. Teaching to the general populace and teaching our children appeared to be important beliefs drawn from the students’ papers. As one student wrote, “The importance of teaching our children to use their creative potential cannot be emphasized enough.

Another student wrote, “It [creativity] is teachable, thus, learnable.” This thought was found in many of the remarks. If something was teachable then it could be learned. Another student drew directly from his/her readings: “Since documentation exist that creativity can be nurtured, it seems to me that the earlier this is started in the educational development of our children the better.” This student was backing up his/her beliefs with evidence. Another student continued the idea, “Skills need to be practiced, therefore, by practicing children can attain more creative states.” And another student wrote after using creative techniques with his/her students, “...Powerful learnings take place when a student is given the freedom to pursue a topic of his/her own choosing and interest.”

Another student took a slightly different bent by looking at assessments of children. “Methods of assessing school achievements and methods of instruction may be important

factors in creative growth.” So for this student the ways a student was taught and tested reflected on his/her creative performance.

A group of students voiced concerns over which children were being given the opportunity of creativity classes. “For many years, even after the acclaimed accomplishments of Helen Keller, proportionately few recognized creativity and giftedness in the handicapped.” And this student’s concern, “...the average child in most cases is being neglected for the opportunity to reach their highest creative potential.” According to these students creativity was set aside for gifted students and not attempted with the handicapped or the average student. And as another student believed, “Intelligence and academic success does not guarantee creative ability in a person. Often the creativity is lost or lessened because of the focus on content knowledge.” These students, then, held the belief that creativity lessons benefited any child gifted, handicapped or average.

Other graduate students tempered the teaching of creativity with qualifiers. “I have believed that individuals have a tremendous capacity for learning and growth, given the right opportunities and a supportive environment.” So here the environment was the qualifier. “Creativity can be taught. This does not mean we can teach people beyond their natural creative abilities.” The qualifier was that teaching creativity could only go so far. And one last thought, “Students themselves, as well as others, interested in realizing their creative potential have to be committed to that end.” Here learning was balanced with motivation and commitment. These students believed that even though creativity was teachable and learnable there were extraneous forces that came into play.

The students seemed to agree that teaching creativity was important and that it was almost a necessity that we do so: “I realize that all people did not have my background, [and] that we need theories of creativity and education to help others learn...” And as well as teaching others, the student believed in the need to teach the children. As one elementary teacher wrote, “working with the future’s children, on a day-to-day basis and nurturing each one to reach their greatest potential, I see a definite need for creativity.”

Process

The students held a variety of beliefs when it came to the process of how creativity works and the process of applying a structure to help improve upon creative outcomes. Understanding how the creative process works was a challenging goal, nonetheless the students explored some of the possibilities. “Since people are all different, the hidden process in one person is likely not the same as the hidden process in another.” And another student states, “We witness the natural process of creativity daily with members of our families, our students, our colleagues.” For these students the process of creativity was hidden within and was different for each person. Another student delved deeper into the internal process of creativity: “Anatomically, the creative process is classified as a mental activity involving the operation of the brain...it seems reasonable to assume that the creative process is not a mutually exclusive cognition function. Rather it is interdependent with the processes of perception, memory, thinking,

learning, etc.” For this student then the creative process was mixed with many other internal processes.

In order to explain the creative process other students attempted to place it in a framework. “When applying structure to what we imagine, when we fit these concepts and images to structure of context; then we are using our creativity.” And another student pointed out, “ Analogy, itself, is an example of applying structure to the imagination.” And another student gave an example of using an analogy, “[The] interactive process of creativity can be seen in our ability to be inventors. We have made useful products for what we naturally saw in our environment...and within the enactment of our inventing, we come to a new place.”

Overall it appeared that the students were trying to understand the creative process by applying some sort of framework of structure to the process of creativity.

Mysterious/Unknown

Again, as with philosophies, the students believed that there was a mysterious and unknowable quality about creativity. “I believe that creativity is spiritual in nature and contains an element of mystery.” And a reflective statement, “...thus creativity...may possess an inherently unknowable or mysterious quality.” And another student wrote, “Creativity is both undetermined and determined simultaneously.” For these students, creativity was mixed with mysterious and undetermined qualities.

Another view, “It is my belief that creativity is a component of human soul the manifests itself in the form of an outcome or result. It is a constant state of motion and is influenced by a person’s environment and the processes (he) uses (inherent or learned).”

One student voiced open-mindedness about the mysterious side of creativity saying, “While not in favor of the supernatural, I do not discount it out of hand.” Another student built on the idea, “ While creativity has an element of mystery to it, it is not so mysterious that it cannot be studied, taught, and learned. This belief reflects the area of most of my growth in [the Creative Studies] program.” These students appeared to have taken their studies and used them to find a balance between the unknowable and the understandable aspects of creativity and applied it to their belief system.

The students suggested that there may always be something unknowable about creativity but they also suggested that they believe it is worth continuing the research. This last passage touched on why they kept looking for the unknowable. “In search of the nature of creativity we come to a place that may remain unknowable...curiosity and the need to satisfy that curiosity is part of the nature of man as a creative being.”

Motivation

The students believed that motivation, both internal and external, influenced a person’s creative ability. “A person’s power to create is evident at different levels of one’s personal abilities and motivation.” The students suggested that internal motivation was a stronger force than an external one. “Internal motivation is more effective than external motivation in obtaining creative results.” And, “People will be most creative when they are intrinsically motivated.” Another student offered a way to help people find their internal motivation: “I believe that we can help to make this intrinsic motivation a viable part of peoples’ lives. They must be able to see that they are valued and capable

and that with this proper effort and tools that they can and will achieve.” And this student added, “Motivation can come from many places...it is important that we help others see that there are rewards in life---both internal and external and that this is the force behind getting ahead.”

Another student added a climate to the motivation, “ I would like to suggest that environment and climate will have a strong impact on those types of attitudes and abilities required for the development of high levels of motivation and thus necessary to creative, productive activity.”

It appeared that in general the students held the belief that motivation was an important factor in the development of creative outcomes.

Higher Power

A few beliefs surfaced in the relationship between creativity and a Higher Power. They ranged from this simple statement, “As people are made in God’s image, they all are born with the capacity to create,” to a more challenging thought, “A sense that energy is both received from a ‘higher power’, and flows from a ‘higher power’ through oneself to creative ends would only encourage creativity.” To an even more complex thought, “It truly does not matter if I call it collective unconscious, immortal mind, GOD, Great Spirit, or any other similar concept, it is where I believe that the source of all creativity lies. Thus I have entered a very high level of abstraction while seeking the root source of creativity, but that is where I must end up.”

And finally this expansive view, “ Each of us has internalized some conceptual notion of what the creator is...collectively we are the Creator. Diversity in our talents is not an accident...to make a successful whole, each must manifest his special talents.”

Although this was a small section the belief that there was a direct connection between creativity and a Higher Power was very engrained.

Wisdom and Gems

There were several beliefs drawn from the papers that did not quite fit into any of the sub-categories. The beliefs each held a distinctive angle when it came to creativity.

Wisdom

One lengthy passage attempted to blend a definition with an understanding of the process, “By our natural birth...we are both new to the world, bringing the potential of our individual personality and skills---and of the old world, carrying legacies of the genetics that may, as Carl Jung believed, also contain the collective unconscious. Living literally within the lap of creative process of evolution, we are the natural agents of change, imprinting back to our environment our unique connection to the world.” This student believed that we are connected to the past and the present and both mold our creative selves.

A group of students wrote specifically about Creative Problem Solving (CPS). As one student wrote, “In talking with [fellow students] there is evidence in what they have said, that CPS training has help them to realize their own creative potential.” This

student's beliefs were molded by what he/she has learned from the course work and from the examples he/she has seen in fellow students. Another view of CPS, "While I believe that Wallas'...notion of stages of the creative process (preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification) are appropriate descriptions of the internal process, I also believe that deliberate processes such as Creative Problem Solving...are also appropriate ways to make creativity happen." This student applied one of the main ideas behind the CPS process, that of openness to ideas. A final comment about CPS suggested, "Knowledge of process does not necessarily mean that it has become internal and applicable...the more one learns the more a person can accomplish both creatively and critically." So for this student, one can have knowledge but it must be applied to become effective knowledge.

Gems

From the students papers also came a series of one-line thought-provoking gems. The lines stood on their own with only the students' voices echoing.

"I feel that my participation in this field [creativity] requires an 'act of faith' on my part. I do not view this attitude as being skeptical, but rather prudent."

"The relationship between creativity and imagination is familial."

"Surely, Truth, especially to one's thought and ideas is part of the creative process."

“Giftedness is the interaction of ability, creativity and motivation.”

“Nurturing creativity in our lives helps is integrate our thoughts and feelings.”

“When creativity is nurtured and openness flourishes, love has a chance to flourish as well.”

And one last passage of advice, “I encourage you to both be true to what you already know about creativity and to be open to all there is to learn about it.”

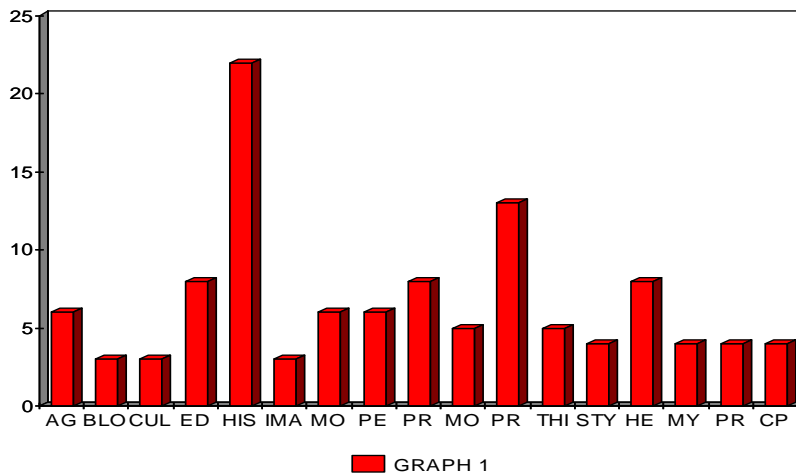
The wisdom and gems of the students’ voices in the exit papers was heartwarming to read. The insights and the thinking they presented seemed to show that they had taken their learning and were turning the learning into action. They seemed to develop a new way of thinking about themselves and others.

SECTION VI

CBIR Data

This section will present the CBIR data. This study attempted to answer the disciplinary question: What elements of the CBIR vocabulary showed up in the CSC alumni's personal philosophy papers. This section was meant only as a overview or summation of the language the students were using to see if there was a reflection of the language in the search terms and categories that the CBIR used.

The clusters that emerge from the highlighted material fell into these CBIR search terms: Age, Blocks, Culture, Education, History/Theory, Imagery, Models, Person, Press/Climate, Motivation, Process, Thinking, Style, Health/Growth, Mystery/Unknowable, Product, and CPS. Graph 1 shows the number of "hits" for each Cluster.



THE RESULTS

As the graph shows, there was a high number of students who wrote about the history and the theories of creativity. This could be in part from the type of paper that was assigned---a support your thoughts with readings type paper. The high number could probably be expected. It was hard to tell if the students had assimilated the history and theories or if they were simply parroting information. The words were important enough to the students to be used to make a point about their PVB's so it seemed to speak to an understanding of the material. Because the data were originally pulled as a PVB, students indeed had placed some amount of importance on the history and theories.

The other major areas that the students touched on were: education, press, process, and growth/health. Since a high number of the student in this sample were teachers it seemed reasonable to assume many of them were interested in how creativity and education might work together. So this result was not too surprising and seemed to suggest that many of the students came to the program with PVB already set and they now can articulate them in terms of creativity.

Press and Process were ideas that the students were exposed to during their course work. The terms were used in relationship to creativity, not just in a general way. Many of the students wrote of a strong sense of press and process. It appeared that the student were learning the concepts of press and process, and had shifted their set PVB's to accommodate these new ideas.

Section VII

Conclusions and Recommendations

This section contains the conclusions and recommendations based on the data from section VI. For ease of readability and clarity sake, a short discussion of concerns follows at the end of each theme.

It appeared that the students had differing Philosophies, Values and Beliefs about creativity. Everyone seemed to have a personal view about where creativity came from and what creativity was and often those views stood opposite. Yet, it may be in that opposition that new and stronger theories may emerge. It is as if these students were a microcosm for developing a definition for creativity.

Philosophy

Teaching and Nurturing

What did it mean when a number of students wrote about teaching and nurturing creativity in the last paper written for their course work? It meant that the students' philosophies reflected that they learned the lesson that teaching and nurturing creativity was important, at least in the school setting. The reasons and methods varied but the philosophy of teaching and nurturing creativity rang important to the students. The students suggested that teaching and nurturing creativity could lead to a more productive and well-adjusted society.

The students also understood that teaching creativity tools and techniques to children was very important. Because many of the students were teachers, they acted on this and had implemented creative behaviors in their classroom activities. They also encouraged others to do the same. These teachers also realized that the new techniques ought to be available to all the students, not just the gifted. The graduate students, teacher or not, realized that all students benefited from being taught in a creative manner, learning concepts such as CPS (Creative Problem Solving) and a creative environment. The newly found philosophy of teaching and nurturing creativity was being practiced in some of the students' day-to-day lives.

Concerns

Two concerns became apparent after the conclusions were drawn. One about the number of teachers in the program and their reasons for being in the program; the other about the creative atmosphere at the Center and how it may have carried over into the papers.

Many of the students were teachers working to keep their certificate by getting their Master's degrees. These students already understood the importance of education. And the tools and techniques learned during their course work might be just one more way of giving children a good education.

The students had just finished a positive learning experience in a very open and safe creative environment. This idealism may have carried through to the students' papers and

for a time to the students' classrooms and jobs. The challenge became determining how long the effects last.

Personal Growth

One of the more surprising conclusions came out of the personal growth theme in philosophies. Many of the students went through some sort of personal growth while attending the Graduate Program. This meant the lessons learned affected the students both in how they perceived themselves and how they perceived others.

The internal changes were focused on an understanding of style---understanding K.A.I. scores---and internal judgment. The students wrote of growing stronger as people from the understanding of these new concepts. They internalized the lessons and applied it to the world around them.

The external growth focused more on how the students perceived others. And how they would, from this point forward try to interact with others.

Concerns

Again there were two concerns that arose from the conclusions of personal growth. The first concern had to do with student's writing about the positive and the second again was the about atmosphere at the Center.

The students who believed the changes to be positive were perhaps more likely to write about the changes. The students appeared not to have any changes might not have

said anything. Not every paper addressed this concept of personal growth. A closer look would certainly be in order to determine if all students felt such changes or only those students who seemed to have some sort of positive growth experience.

Also, it seems that there was a bit of Halo Effect working in the papers. (Encyclopedia of Creativity) The students had just finished their course work that was based in an open and positive atmosphere. They were asked to immediately write about the PVBs. Did papers echoed the sentiments the students found in the classrooms or the students' opinions? Perhaps a clearer view of the changes could be garnered if the students were asked to write this paper a year later, or five years later.

Multidimensional and other Theories

It was unanimous with the students that creativity was multidimensional. It was also unanimous that there was no one common definition of creativity. This means at least everyone could agree on *something*. The study of creativity and the defining of creativity was and is complex and challenging; the students grasped this fully. The students seemed to understand that you could not take a slice of creativity and place it on a slide and tell the adaptors from the innovators by their hemoglobin. There were many influences involved in trying to study and define creativity.

Higher Power and Mystery

Many students suggested a higher power or mystery surrounded and influenced creativity. This meant that the students were looking for a way to explain the unexplainable by using their personal faith. The students who wrote of higher powers appeared to have a strong connection to their faith and were content to allow that to be part of the answer as to what creativity was---a gift from a higher power, something we could not explain. These same students seemed to understand that one could increase this gift by learning tools, techniques, and concepts to improve one's ability---like taking music lessons to improve your trombone skills.

Creativity is needed by, and is part, of humankind

This perhaps was the most intriguing section of all the themes. A small but well-spoken group of students wrote that humans for good health needed creativity. The concept that creativity was needed for the health of a human appeared as a sub-theme in many papers---though not directly pulled as data, the idea resurfaced again and again. The comments implied that to be a well-rounded healthy person one ought to have some sort of creative outlet.

The other side of the theme was that creativity was what set us apart from other animals---it is what makes us human. This meant that the students were thinking about what indeed made us human and what we needed in order to live.

Concerns

An interesting concern that could develop into an insightful study came forward from the conclusions and involves further study of animals, other than humans. If you teach an ape to paint is he/she then considered an artist? The question that could be explored in controlled settings in a laboratory with other animals. The results may lead to more of an understanding of what creativity is---is it an extension of instinct or survival? Is it a learned behavior and if you teach it to other animals will they then be creative? A study such as this could have merit in helping see the extent and the limits of being about to teach creativity.

Other

The basic focus of this theme was climate/environment and how it influenced creativity. Although there was a very small group writing of climate the lessons appeared to have been learned---your environment affected your creative outcomes. The outside world can help determine the quality of ones creative outcomes. The students became aware of what a creative climate was and they understood the influences.

VALUES

The conclusions and recommendations from the Values data in section VI are covered in this section. The values were the hardest to pull from the papers. They were the most challenging to highlight and tricky to truly choose as a piece of data. The students wrote of values sparingly and carefully. If a value was presented it usually was well thought out. Following our definition some values jumped out, but they were few and far between. Most took a good close reading to justify being selected.

Learned Growth

The students seemed to have placed value on the professors of the program and the assigned lessons from the readings. This meant that they developed new values from the time spent with the professors and with the readings.

Students also placed a great deal of value on understanding personal style. They have placed value in learning and understood that they were different from others and in some cases that difference could be measured and compared. (KAI scores seemed to hold much value for the students both as a personal issue and as a means of understanding others.)

Helping Others

Several students held values about helping others. The lessons they learned about creativity would help them in living that value. The value and importance of helping

children learn was recurrent in the writings. This meant that the students were using the lessons from the program to act on their values. Understanding others by applying creativity ideas and helping children reach their potential by using creativity tools and techniques were ways the students saw themselves helping others.

The value of accepting others as they are was made easier for some students by understanding different creative styles. Imagination and parental influences were values that helped form creative outcomes.

Concerns

Many concerns came up in the review of the values data. Something in the values section just did not mesh. After physically moving the data around and re-grouping many times, the same results were achieved---three themes that were not very strong and almost disjointed.

This disjointedness could have been from the challenge of defining Value. The working definition touched solidly on part of a definition but probably did not grasp the whole meaning. Perhaps something was missing. Something, one of those unknowable textures that ramble around in the human brain and gets mixed up with emotion to form a true definition. Could one omit emotion when trying to define Value?

Perhaps Value had a quality that sets it apart from Philosophy and Belief. Maybe the three were all so connected that Value, seemingly, in the middle could not be pulled out or separated from the other two. The challenge awaits future researchers.

The Values section was a weak link in this project. Although some interesting ideas did emerge---the students valued their professors and the emphasis on helping others. The students though, did indeed hold Value in their learnings. This was evident, if not pull-able as a value. And possibly a hidden plus was lurking here: The students were affected by the learnings; their beliefs and philosophies were affected. This means that the students were thinking about the learnings in relation to their daily lives. If, then, the students were thinking about the challenges of defining creativity and coming up with usable theories, there may be a sort of silent incubation going on. Many minds unconsciously thinking on a challenge could produce results further on in time.

Something with this section though, sits solid and unmoving. It was hard to obtain a clear picture of the students' values simply by drawing words from papers.

Beliefs

The Beliefs were certainly the easiest of data to work through. The students were very open and engaging when writing about what they believed. With eleven themes emerging, ten of which were very strong and had high numbers of hits, the students held well thought out ideas about what they believed about creativity.

Defining Creativity

Students wrote of the challenge of defining creativity. Two things everyone agreed on were that there ought to be one concrete definition of creativity and that creativity was multifaceted. That was where the agreeing stopped.

The definitions of creativity ranged from beliefs that creativity was individual based to environmentally affected. Topics such as imagination, structure, framework, action and outcome were used to help develop the students' definitions. This variation in definitions meant that the students were living as a microcosm of the greater creativity field in trying to define creativity. The Creativity research community had tried to set out definitions that reflect its beliefs just as the students had done. For example, researchers who work on studying intelligence might set out the definition that creativity is another form of intelligence. Someone who researches products of creativity may have a definition based on outcome of the creative process. So just as the students struggled to find one usable definition so do the researchers in the greater community.

All the students agreed that creativity was multifaceted. Multifaceted seemed to be a sort of catchword for all the parts of creativity that the students could not define. And also, due to the nature of creativity, the students understood that many things could influence a person's creative ability. These influences could be positive or they could be negative. This meant that the students grasped the lessons from their course work that much went into the development of a person's creative ability. Those factors could be hidden and subtle, hindering ability. Or they can be deliberate and concise, helping a person's ability.

Theories

Students developed some of their own theories based on their belief and their readings from the course work. Students wrote of applying frameworks to understand creativity; intuition as being part of creativity; Maslow's needs as a way of understanding creativity; profiling; incubation; and domain overlaps as means of understanding creativity.

The thoughts the students presented indicated that some of the theories taught in the course work struck different students as being the important ones. The students appeared drawn to the theory that made most sense to them. So the development of one's theory, like the definitions above, was based on preference to one's beliefs and disciplines, not for the most part in science and research. And while the students appeared to be rather well read in the theories of creativity, the theories they presented as their own were based on what they believed to be true.

Concerns

A good number of concerns appeared after pulling together the conclusions for the theories section. The main challenge seemed to be in evaluation of the data, which criteria to use and what to include and what to leave out. That evaluation too could be applied to the students understanding of the theories---what did they included and what criteria did they use?

Students were students and perhaps even at the graduate level the students may have reiterated the lessons learned for points. Not a nice thought perhaps but needs to be mentioned nonetheless. Some of the students might have stuck a theory in as a belief simply to get a good grade on the paper.

Another concern, which probably more accurately describes the challenge of understanding creative theory from the students, was to take a look at the lessons from the classroom. The students were taught many valid and diverse theories of creativity. If each student grasped the theory that was most in line with his/her beliefs and then presented it in the paper, then again we have theories based on preference and comfort rather than scientific principle. Researchers themselves tend to look at things that they are comfortable with in trying to explain creativity. This attitude seems to work against the goal of finding one strong theory or one strong definition. The challenge of creativity seemed to call for many disciplines working to overcome these differences in comfort and preference.

Personal Insights

The personal insights theme contained an overwhelming group of data. The range and elegance in the students' words signified that they understood how creativity related to them. This understanding appeared to have a great impact on the students.

Students wrote of health, happiness, heart, and hope as being qualities that one could improve by having an understanding of the creative process. These qualities could also be hampered by the lack of creative support.

The students also wrote of facing challenges in a positive manner and seeing possibilities in the new situation---a reflection of a major theme in CPS. Students also understood that creativity could help a person achieve a more positive self-image and individual uniqueness as well as help people on their way to self-actualization.

Concerns

Upon concluding the personal insights section one concern appeared. The students had, again, just finished course work in a very positive and open environment. They could be echoing the atmosphere of the Center. The concern lies in how long these students carry these positive feelings and beliefs. Studying the students with long-term research would dig up some interesting data as to the continuation of the positive effects.

Press

Press/climate/environment played an important role in creativity according to the beliefs of the students. Students believed that blocks and barriers hindered creativity while openness and acceptance helped creativity. This illustrated that the students understood the proper press one can help improve their creative outcomes. The students also believed they had an obligation to help children by using a positive creative environment.

Concerns

The main concern that came forth from the Press theme was: How will the students be able to incorporate the learning in the working world? The graduates understand the benefits of a creative atmosphere---yet does the rest of the real world understand? Did the students receive enough training to overcome the barriers that they will face when trying to build a creative climate in the classroom or work place?

Creative Person

The students firmly believed that creativity and traits of a creative person go hand-in-hand. Creativity helps a person's well being; everyone is creative; and everyone has his/her own creative style---were all sentiments the students agreed on. The first thought---creativity helps a person's well being, was a surprising result. Apparently many students believed that creativity could affect a person's health and well-being. It was a rather pervasive belief. This connection to health and well-being was not directly taught in their course work. Some articles were assigned in the reading here and there or there was the passing indication of a connection, but no direct lessons were built around creativity and health. The students seemed to garner this idea from the lesson on their own. Many of the students believed that there was a connection between creativity and well-being. Further studies on creativity and its relationship to well being seems to have a basis in the beliefs of the students.

Teaching

The belief that creativity was teachable and that it was important to do so was prevalent in the students' writings. This meant that the students had learned by lessons, perhaps by example, from the professors that teaching creativity could improve one's creative outcomes. They also supported that teaching creative ideas could help improve a creative person on an internal level.

Students suggested that all ages and abilities could improve their outcome by learning creative tools and techniques and by being placed in a creativity friendly environment.

Concerns

The concern that developed while concluding the teaching theme was about how to bring these lessons into the students' real world situations. The same challenges that faced the student when applying a creative press to the outside world would also face those wanting to teach creative skills. This issue would relate to how to develop the situation to first accept the change and understand the benefits, and then how to implement it need to be addressed more systematically while the student had the guidance of the professors of the Creative Studies Program.

Process

The theme of creative process was touched on by many of the students. Hidden processes, learned processes, and cognitive functions were ideas that the students presented in their beliefs on how the creative process works. Framework and structures, such as analogies, were also suggested to attempt to explain the process.

The students' beliefs on process were as varied as their beliefs on definitions of creativity. This indicates that the students understood that their process was different from other students; everyone had his/her own way of being creative. The students appeared to completely understand this concept and that there was no one process of creativity.

Mystery/Unknown

The students believed that part of creativity would always be mysterious and unknown. They suggested that supernatural or spiritual elements played a role in creativity and defining creativity. This indicated that some students believed that we would never understand fully what creativity is because of these mysterious and unknown factors.

Higher Power

The belief that creativity came from a Higher Power echoed the thoughts of faith in the philosophy section. This means that for some of the students' creativity was a gift from a higher power; one could build upon this gift but one could not make it happen

unless the Higher Power wished. This belief meshed the students' core beliefs and philosophies with their trying to understand creativity. They could apply the tools and techniques to improve what the Higher Power had given them. The belief of a Higher Power influencing creativity was strong for some of the students.

Motivation

Students believed that internal and external motivation shaped creative outcomes. This meant that the students understood that motivated people often have stronger outcomes when it came to creativity. They agreed that internal motivations were more effective than external ones. They also agreed that environmental causes had a significant impact on creative outcomes.

Wisdom and Gems

This small but eloquent group of data needed to be included. The students' insights were worth sharing and perhaps building on for topics of further studies.

Recommendation for future studies

This was a fun section to write because reading the students paper and pulling out the themes encouraged many questions---more questions than were answered. The recommendations were based on the research, taking some of the thoughts raised by the

students' one step further, or by trying to get at ways that the center might build from these conclusions to better help the students of the future. This section contains fifteen recommendations.

These recommendations are arranged three clumps:

- II. Research ideas that directly relate to this study from themes the students words presented.
- III. Research ideas that help understand the success of the graduate students and the Center for Creative Studies. Find ways of getting at better and more accurate pictures of the students and the curriculum.
- IV. Research ideas that came to me while reading and writing this project which relate to ways of understanding creativity in all its wonderful aspects.

Questions Directly Related to the Study

These question developed as the data and conclusions emerged.

1) It would be interesting to explore the pervasive concept from the students that creativity is somehow linked to health and well-being. Are artists and other commonly accepted creative people healthier and more well-in-being than folks who are not perceived as creative? Are they, say healthier than a garbage collector or a cashier, tasks that are usually seen as less creative?

2) It would be interesting to explore the relationship between religion and creativity. Are some religions more conducive to the concepts of creativity while others are not? Does the belief that creativity comes from a Higher Power become a barrier for creativity or is it a help---a freedom that allows you not to worry about the process?

3) Is there a better approach to understanding the students PVB rather than examining the papers? Would methods such as phone interviews, questionnaires, personal interviews are a stronger way of getting a clearer picture as to what the students truly meant to say in the papers. Follow-up studies could easily incorporate these techniques and ought to get more reliable results.

4) How long did the positive attitude garnered from the environment at the Center for Creative Studies last with the students when they returned to the “real world”? Which thoughts and attitudes prevailed and which dissipated?

5) And the companion study: How long did these new philosophies and beliefs last after the students left the program? Which tools and techniques helped the students retain their philosophies and beliefs and continue acting in a creative manner? And which tools and techniques were not useful in helping the students maintain their philosophies and beliefs?

6) A study to evaluate the value of this master’s degree on the students would be interesting. After holding the degree for a few years, do the students still place as much value in the creative process, environment, and CPS as they did freshly out of the program?

Research Ideas to Help the Center and the Students

7) It would be interesting to see the results of a study based on the blocks and barriers that the student encountered while attempting to apply the lessons learned while at the Center. Understanding these blocks and barriers may lead to additions to the curriculum so students in the future could take a class on how to break down blocks and barriers in the “real world”.

8) What successes have teachers had when implementing a creative environment in their classrooms? Which techniques were successful and which were not? What worked the best and what could have worked better?

9) How might the Center develop a way to utilize all the “trained brains” they have developed to help develop a definition of creativity. The students from the program understand the creative process as well as CPS (Creative Problem Solving). How might the Center make these brains available to the researchers out there struggling with the challenge of defining creativity? The students are a giant resource that is under-utilized.

10) How might the Center bring the ideas of teaching creativity to the general public to help create a more creative community? A packet of materials might be developed to present to teachers, parents, bosses, politicians, and councilors—people who have influence over others. The material could suggest ways to tap into motivation, creative environment, process and tools and techniques.

11) Does having some creative ability in one area carry over and make one more creative in other areas? If one is talented in painting does this predispose him/her to

be more creative when doing abstract math problems? Or if someone is a talented and creative researcher does this make one stronger when it comes to sculpting? Which of the creative traits carry over into other areas?

Research ideas that developed from reading the students' papers

12) A study about city vs. country would be interesting. Does the city stimulate one's creativity or does it over stimulate one's senses? Does the country turn off ones creativity or do images like a blade of grass unfolding encourage creative outcomes? This could easily be bent toward external stimulus and how they affect one's creative process.

13) Does diet affect one's creativity? Do certain foods help or hinder creative ability? Do blood sugar levels as associated with food need to be at a certain level to be more creative? And if so what of the cliché of the starving artist?

14) If it is commonly known that many creative people have had a traumatic experience in their childhood, why and how does this relate to creativity? Does the brain release some chemical to help cope with the trauma, and this chemical then does something to one's creativity? As a child you do not have the skills to understand the trauma, so does the brain shut down partly to cope with a trauma and thus allowing another part to open?

15) It seems obvious that some types of creative ability run in families. How might this be tracked in order to determine which creative traits are genetic or have a

genetic tendency? And if indeed certain traits are genetic could we then find them in DNA?

These research questions vary in their ease of development. It is certainly easier to call up a graduate student and ask him/her about his/her philosophies than it is to track creativity to one's DNA. But reaching beyond is a fundamental idea in the creative world and taking leaps to understand things we do not understand may be the only way to ever understand.

The students certainly tried to write clearly of their PVBs. Some of them went well beyond writing one last paper for a course---they charitably expressed their thoughts and theories, just waiting to be asked. The challenge is to keep this enthusiasm and bring the new ideas into the research field to help answer some of the unknowns

Updates

Curriculum

Approximately seven years pasted between the start and the finish of this project, and many changes have occurred at the Center. Many more graduate students have gone through the program and received their degrees. They have added their research to the growing body of work in the Creativity research world.

Perhaps the biggest change that has occurred was that the class that this research paper was based on no longer exists. There has been a curriculum change. CRS 615 has been replaced with CRS 635 Creativity and Change Leadership. (CRS635 was created on April 30, 2003. It became effective in the summer of 2003.) The new course is a culminating of:

“activities that cap the Foundations of Creativity strand of the curriculum; understanding and applying the characteristics of change leadership in the context of creativity and Creative Problem Solving (CPS); theoretical and practical launching point for students to examine their future contributions to the field, domain, and discipline by articulating their personal philosophy and definition of creativity; relation of the CPS process and other change methods to the challenge of making lasting change in other disciplines, such as business, education, psychology, sociology, history, philosophy, or the arts or sciences.” (Buffalo State College, Course Catalog, 2007.)

The new course seems to begin to answer the concern of how the students would apply the learning from the Center into their real lives.

Student Study Updates

Kristen Pinker has done a study that relate slightly to what is covered here. Her study focused on the impact of a Master of Science in Creative Studies on the current population of graduates from Buffalo State College. In depth interviews will be administered to five Creative Studies graduates with the purpose of answering the following questions:

- What changes are present in the personal lives of graduates as a result of the Creative Studies degree?
- Do they look at problems in a different way?
- Are they more/less receptive to ideas?
- Do they make decisions differently?
- How has the program affected their personal development?
- What changes have the Creative Studies graduates made to their professional lives?
- How can they be attributed to the Creative Studies Program?
- Are they positive or negative changes?
- What changes (if any) would they make to the program to make it more effective for them?
- How would their lives be different (personally or professionally) if they had not completed the program?

Mark Augustin is currently working on a study that will be a continuation of this work. He will continue to document the impact of the program on its students (Murdock, 1999). The purpose of this project will be to examine the philosophies, values, and beliefs expressed in the CRS Masters Seminar Theory/Philosophy papers developed by exiting students of the program. Additionally, the graduates' statements of intent will be explored for connections to philosophies. Investigating the entering and exiting papers of the graduates should provide valuable insight into the program's philosophical impact and disciplinary growth. The questions that will guide this study are:

- What philosophy, beliefs, and values were articulated by those entering the field through a formal education in creativity?
- What types of connections can be made between the graduate philosophy papers and their statement of intent upon entering the program?

On going research and adaptations, to the community's growing and changing needs, shows that the International Center for Creativity and Leadership is dedicated to putting into practice what they teach.

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Theme:
Validating the Effectiveness of CPS
Initiative:
Documenting the Successful Application of CPS at CSC (Impact)

*Project Title: From Their Words: An Analysis of CRS 615 Papers to Find Common
Philosophy, Beliefs and Values, Part II*

Rationale and Questions:

There is currently a need for documentation of the unique population that the CSC Graduate students represent. The focus of this study will be to examine the exit papers from CRS 615 to develop an understanding of the philosophies, beliefs and values that the students have assimilated, and to begin organizing, collecting and reporting initial data. The questions that will guide the study are as follows:

- What philosophies, beliefs and values were articulated by those entering the field through a formal educational program in creativity?
- Are there elements of CBIR vocabulary in shown in CSC Alumni's personal philosophy of creativity?

Statement of Significance:

According to Mayer the next fifty years of creativity research needs to develop a clearer definition of creativity and use more combinations of methodologies that will help move the ideas of creativity from speculation toward specification. What is also needed is a methodology that combines scientific approaches with the biographical approaches. (1999) There is a need for continuing studies of specific groups of people connected with Creativity. The 140+ graduates of the CSC Masters' program represent a truly unique group of professionals within that field. Although some studies of our graduates and the program's impact on their lives have been done (Lunken, Keller-Mathers), no recent work exists that examines baseline philosophies, beliefs and values. Our study will be the first to explore these fundamental thoughts of the graduate students and provide a base of data for future longitudinal studies.

Description of the Method or Process:

Qualitative Analysis will be a major methodological emphasis in this study. The papers will be sorted according to year and assignment. We will then identify key words, phrases or sections that illustrate philosophies, beliefs and values of creativity. We will cluster those key words, phrases or sections into categories. We will then develop an open coding system to describe those categories. Finally, we will analyze and synthesize the results.

Learning Goals:

1.) I want to learn about what the other graduate students have felt when completing the program. Where did they want to go? What was the best lesson that they are walking away with? 2.) I want to learn how to blend my abilities of close reading with the research process. 3.) To learn more about the research process from the gathering of the physical data to the writing up the results in a readable form. 4) To learn more about the research process from the gathering of the physical data to the writing up the results in a readable form. 5.) I want to learn that I can reach a personal goal—getting my masters—and that I can do it well and with honor.

Outcomes:

- Report of data analysis, including charts, graphs and stories
- Data file of CRS 615 papers
- An executive summary to be shared with study participants and published on the CSC web page
- A chart comparing CBIR controlled vocabulary to our results.

Timeline:

<u>December:</u>	Gather names and addresses of participants. Clarify address and contact information. Begin reading qualitative research literature.
<u>January:</u>	Develop letter of intent. Mail letter. Hope for good returns. Begin sorting by year and assignment focus. Begin identifying terms that are common in the papers. Continue reading literature.
<u>February/March:</u>	Continue reading papers. Continue sorting and finding common themes. Develop open coding system.
<u>April:</u>	Write report. Send out letter of results.

Principal Investigators:

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Literature

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