Play Histories of Seniors Seen Through Their Life Stories: Seniors' Playful Art Education

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Abstract

Play Histories of Seniors Seen Through Their Life Stories: Seniors Playful Art Education

This research asks: (a) how does the playful art education of three senior citizens in Montreal, who are ages sixty-five and over, relate to their stories of play from different developmental stages of life, and (b) how do each of these seniors define their play today? This study addresses the absence of play theory's application to seniors' art education. I observed, recorded, and analyzed play at three, distinct, art education settings for Montreal seniors. Observational visits to each site, and audio recorded interviews capturing glimpses of each participant's "play history" provided insight into what play in art education means to each of the participants. This allowed details to emerge about each participant's definition of play as a senior. My analysis looked at the meaning of these definitions within the context of each senior's unique play history that she provided through stories. Stories allowed the participants' voices to be amplified in this study. It is important that seniors' voices are heard because Canada has a rising senior population that it must better support (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2013). Understanding how seniors define their play could help develop seniors' playful art centred education (SPACE) as a form of support for the elderly. This research concludes that most of the participants' past and present play experiences were: (a) highly individualized, (b) social, (c) culturally informed, (d) connected to nature, family, and income, and (e) intertwined with play histories. Yet, more research is needed to see how far these patterns extend across larger and more diverse senior populations. Play theory must work towards distinguishing non-seniors' adult play from seniors' play. Art education programs may be able to enhance seniors' play by using seniors' play histories as springboards for curriculum development, but caution is warranted here due to how much seniors' play could be based on personal play preferences and individual temperaments.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my late cousin, Clinton Thomas O'Grady Rimmer (1988-2016). Though we will never get to see you grow old, you packed more life into your brief time here than most of us ever do, precisely because of your immense love and delight for play!

Thank you for being my childhood playmate, and giving me more laughter and fond memories than I could have ever imagined having.

You will be missed dearly…

But I will now try to live and age more playfully, because of you.

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Prologue

Matilda's home was perched like a bird's nest above its neighbourhood, which was complete with the usually eclectic Montreal recipe of architectural formations. I was buzzed in to find a rickety staircase staring back at me. I wondered how Matilda did it every day at eighty-eight. She called to me from the summit of that daunting climb, "I know it's a very old building but I love it!" With earnest I replied, "It's the old buildings that have the most charm!" I couldn't help but hear the unintended metaphor lingering in the air once the words had escaped my lips.

Matilda's apartment was her personality externalized: streaming with sunlight, filled with vibrant colours, and coated with her life's artworks, which filled the walls with their own stories. The light floated in through the front window, creating a surreal and creamy backdrop for her plants basking in it. "You see I could never leave this place with light like that." I agreed.

Matilda and I were soon savoring warm apple turnovers with the brightest orange chai tea I'd ever seen. Her daughter had recently sent it from Arizona. As Matilda told me this, she gestured towards the comical display of absurd gadgets that her children had sent her. "I now have to watch what I tell them about over the phone. Anything I mention, it arrives in the mail a few weeks later", she said through laughter. Matilda then causally began telling me the secrets of a happy life - as if it she was discussing the weather, for it was all common sense to her at this point in life. She stressed the need of having a positive outlook, and pushing oneself to go out and play. She told me, almost clandestinely, that it's exhausting to watch her peers resign themselves to a life without play. Matilda puttered around her kitchen, embracing her hostess duties with zest, all the while telling me that her pain sometimes made it hard to get out of bed. In my guilty helplessness as her surrendered guest, my eyes scanned her cheerful apartment. It seemed to subtly shift meanings, becoming more about my floating thoughts than interior design.

Before I said goodbye, Matilda was sure to tuck some potent trinkets of wisdom into the remaining spaces of my heart and brain. “Always be kind to people, no matter how sad and grumpy they seem, for they are usually that way for a reason. Smile and welcome them. Don’t judge them, for you don’t know what made them this way.” Then, as she handed me my coat, she expressed hope that this research would help other seniors. “They must know how important it is to go out and play with others; to try to live life and enjoy it, no matter how hard it gets.”

As I left that sun-streamed apartment and shimmied down its steep decent back to reality, I realized that I must try to retain Matilda’s wisdom by *living* it - even if my replication of her ways is awkward and bizarre, like an apprentice trying to imitate a great artistic master. For, Matilda reminded me that the stories of our lives are our greatest works of art, which we are continually working on; and, more pertinently that, we are forever playing our way throughout.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background

"With mirth and laughter, let old wrinkles come" (Shakespeare, 1600/1984, *MV*, 1.1, 80).

My life story brought me to this research, but this research also helped me see what my life story is *really* about. Initially, I thought what had exclusively drawn me to the topic of play in seniors' art education was the fact that I had fallen severely ill in my early twenties. I thought this because of how my illness had acquainted me with a handful of the difficulties of old age such as chronic fatigue, aches and pains, bladder failure, accepting death, and social isolation. Moreover, my health improved when I began playfully educating myself in various art forms. It felt as if my playful art making contained an alchemical healing elixir - a "fountain of youth", if you will. From this point onward, it has seemed to me as if play and art share a "portal" for accessing a magical kind of "realm". I don't mean this literally, for it must be read with a sense of play – and yet, my curiosity about it all persists nonetheless. What is this mysterious "world" that play and art seem to co-create? After experiencing a comparable state to old age, I began to wonder if those internal places of imagination, creativity, and joy can offer relief to seniors experiencing the burdens as chronic fatigue, continual body deterioration, and social isolation. And yet, the process of conducting this research opened my eyes to the fact that, while my illness did have a heavy hand in inspiring this research, a far deeper force is what actually pulled me in the direction of this topic. This research brought me back to my own play history, and I was reminded of how child play preserved me.

One of my favourite childhood games was "The Closet Game". I was fascinated with different cultures, religions, and environments that could come together and formulate a "place" on earth and a "space" in history. Even at the age of three, I remember being mesmerized with

toys that were about the distinct environments of the world and their respective human and animal cultures. While I was very interested in world religions, cultural diversity, and global environments, my family was *not.* They have always been much more conservative in their political beliefs than I, and I felt very alienated by this even at the tender age of four years old. So I created "The Closet Game", where I would go into the broom closet and transform myself into a person from another part of the world. The closet was magical because when I left it, I could then speak in the language associated with the ethnicity that had just been given to me by the closet. While this is problematic in terms of global identity politics, there was innocence in my play here. At four years old, I saw this game as wonderful because whenever anyone in the family talked to me after the closet had transformed my identity, I could just speak back in the language that I now "knew"! I could go around the house and do things that weren't part of my culture of origin, and that would now be perfectly acceptable because the closet had transformed me to belong to another cultural group. I got great satisfaction out of frustrating my family members with this because I would respond to them in what probably sounded like Tongues.

The stories of my play that came back to me throughout this research showed me the crucial role my child play had in forming who I am today, *and* in determining how I play as an adult. The "inner world" that my child play created and preserved is what I now draw from when I make art as an adult. While this study showed me the value of recalling my own play history, my illness showed me how the perspectives and rich life histories of seniors are also worth treasuring. Perhaps the play histories of seniors can help me to better understand their unique and hidden play realities… and perhaps not? In any case, my experiences of creatively learning and healing through play and art are what ignited the curiosity in me to embark upon this research.

1.2 Thesis Overview

1.2.1 Problem statement

This study seeks to address the current lack of play theory being used to further develop seniors' art education. My review of the literature indicates that very little work has been done on the topic of seniors' play in particular, as opposed to studying adult play in general. Even less work has been completed on seniors' play in art education, when it appears that significant contributions to seniors' learning and creativity through play might exist. This study therefore seeks to contribute to discourses on seniors' play in art education so as to help fill this gap.

Furthermore, seniors' play in art education might also be able to assist in fulfilling societal healing niches by providing forms of public social care for the elderly that compliment and contribute to art therapy, but aren't "therapeutic" in the formal sense of the term. Further developing the role of play in seniors' art education could help elderly adults better manage the social and physical challenges that come with aging. For this to be possible though, seniors' playful art education must be better understood by knowing how seniors define their own play.

1.2.2 Research questions

This research therefore asks:

1. How does the playful art education of three senior citizens in Montreal, ages sixty-five and over[1], relate to their stories of play from different developmental stages of life?

2. How have each of these three seniors come to define seniors' play for themselves?

1.2.3 Methodology

This study's theoretical framework is *narrative theory* as informed by Bruner (1991) who is a critical contributor to the development of narrative psychology, but who also theorizes

[1] This age was selected because sixty-five is the Canadian government's definition of a senior (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2013).

narrative for the purposes of general critical inquiry that can be applied to many research domains. The specific methodological form of narrative analysis that I use for this study is *life story methodology* as informed by McAdams (2008). Using this methodology, I addressed the research questions by interviewing three senior citizens about their stories of play, or "play histories". As well, each of the seniors attends a playful art education site that I observed as an "in-motion story", or performance. Participant responses to life-story questions provided individual historical contexts, while observing their behaviours during playful art education sessions offered a framework for understanding how their play exists in present social networks.

1.2.4 Contribution to knowledge

Helping seniors overcome the challenges of old age could be an important part of art education's role in the future development of supporting Canada's aging population. Canada appears to have a big problem when it comes to supporting its rapidly growing senior population (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2013). Developing playful art education programs for seniors is a potential remedy to this problem that is worth investigating because it could push the societal function of art education into the realm of public social care. A greater frequency of better-funded sites for Canadian seniors' playful art education could offer greater opportunities for understanding how seniors' play differs from the play of non-senior adults. This could lead to seniors' playful art education being more effectively implemented to improve the learning, creativity, cognition, social skills, awareness, and senses of societal belonging for many seniors. As a result of this study's interest in improving the lives of seniors, this research also addresses ageism directed at the elderly. Since Butler coined the term "age-ism" in 1969, stigmatization and discrimination of seniors has become better known. Yet, its identification has far from elicited its elimination. Most of the seniors who I worked with in this study talked about the daily

marginalization and alienation that they experience because of their old age. Indeed, the phenomenon of ageism is well supported in the literature (Kuhn, 1998; Magnússon, 2014).

I therefore want to know more about how seniors define their play so that playful art education can better support elderly populations in Canada. If Sutton-Smith was correct in saying that playful learning is a lifelong process (1995), then why has so little research been done on seniors' play? This question seems especially pertinent since there are well-established links between child play, creativity, and learning (Feitelson & Ross, 1973; Montagu, 1989; Resnick, 2006; Sutton-Smith, 1975). Even further, Cohen discusses creativity changing with the aging process (1988). Of course, in some cases it does diminish. Yet, Cohen shows how the creative and innovative accomplishments of a significant number of historical figures reached astonishing new heights in their senior years: Mark Twain, Lucius Annaeus Seneca, William Carlos Williams, William Butler Yeats, Sean O'Casey, Grandma Moses, James Hutton, Copernicus, Galileo, and Sir Francis C. Chichester who completed his solitary circumnavigation of the world when he was sixty-six years old (1988). I wonder if the potential for great creativity exists for most seniors but has been curtailed by modern-day societal stigmatizations that assume the elderly years of life to be creatively degenerative. This may even be operating as a *master narrative* at the cultural scale, which inevitably impacts individual psyches (Breen, Cairney, McAdams, & McLean, 2016). I am curious as to whether or not playful art education offers another "world" within which seniors' creativity, learning, and positive self-perceptions can be reimagined. Through this study I hope to understand more of what playful art education means to seniors, so that it might eventually be better developed in Canadian public life. I therefore hope to live to one day see the play histories of seniors interwoven with the reality of future societies.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

I begin by explaining how I conducted this literature review. I then explain some of the barriers in this process given the lack of publications about seniors' play in art education. I go on to address the three main topics of this research: play, senior citizens, and art education. Through these thematic sections, I analyze what the literature says about the link between play and art education, as well as the less established relationship between seniors and art education. I then turn to looking at the sparsely emerging research pertaining to how seniors define play, finishing with an identification of a gap in the literature between seniors, art education, and play.

2.1 Research Process

This literature review was compiled by utilizing the following online databases: Education Source, Art Full Text, JSTOR, ERIC, and Google Scholar. I also searched the International Journal of Play, and explored book sources through the Google Books search engine, as well as Concordia University's library catalogue and interlibrary (Colombo) service. This review is limited to articles that have been peer-reviewed and to texts published in English. The key search terms used were: "seniors OR elderly", "play", and "art education". The results indicate disciplinary striations in the connections between these three concepts. For example, a relatively small number of articles on seniors and art education have been published in art education related journals, such as *Studies in Canadian Art Education*, while there is also a relatively small number of publications about seniors' play in publications such as the *International Journal of Play*. Yet, a significant number of studies about therapy, policies, legalities, and the psychology of seniors and old age are published in gerontology journals and books about the human aging process and lifespan. It was particularly interesting to find articles in the area of leisure studies that didn't necessarily use the word "play". This made apparent the

difficulties involved in distinguishing between play and leisure when applying play theory to seniors' art education. Lastly, only one study concerning the meaning of seniors' play was found, which indicates a gap in the literature for defining seniors' play in art education.

2.2 Play

I have been trying to understand the meaning of play, and particularly seniors' play, for about two years now. This process has only revealed further ambiguity, mystery, dynamism, and complexity about what play could mean. It has felt like trying to cement a liquid that doesn't have the chemical properties to remain in a solid state. The most I can therefore offer is a discussion of what other scholars have to say about running their hands through this elusive substance. Thinkers who have explored the meaning of play from their respective disciplinary standpoints will be briefly discussed. Three disciplinary approaches to defining play: sociological, anthropological, and psychological, will be discussed by turning to three respective theorists who each approach play according to their distinctive fields. I will then rely upon critical play theorists and studies to discuss the difficulties that the literature reveals about defining play for adults and in turn, seniors. I will finalize this section on play with a review of how play and seniors are connected through socio-cultural systems, education, and learning.

2.2.1 Defining play

I begin here with Henricks' *sociological* approach to defining play. Henricks opens his book by mapping out a number of key sociologists who have questioned play, and studied play's relationship to society (2006). Moving from Huizinga, to Marx, to Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, and then Goffman, Henricks asks the poignant question, "[i]s there a style of play that is characteristic of societies that are adopting a constellation of institutional changes that include capitalist economies, strong middle classes, parliamentary governments, relatively independent

judicial systems, and science-based belief systems and technologies?" (2006, p. 91). This is part of Henricks' larger task of offering a sociological understanding of play, as expressed by his more general research question, "[w]hat is the nature of play and what is its significance in society?" (2006, p. 182). What is relevant to Henricks' investigation is how Gutman indicates that physical play environments, such as summer camps and playgrounds, cropped up in Western societies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in response to industrialization and urbanization because, "men and women eager to prevent juvenile delinquency among the working-class youth, joined other reformers to insist that all boys and girls deserve to play" (2013, p. 258). Thus, it seems that meanings of play are strongly influenced by environmentally informed cultures of various societies, all of which develop through time and place.

Henricks answers his questions by taking "a more general view of play as a distinctive mode of human relationship" (2006, p. 182). He elaborates on this by constructing a model that links four key societal behaviours: play, work, ritual, and "communitas", to the ways that subjects engage with the object world (via transformative and conformative styles of subjective expression), and the ways that behaviour in society gets rationalized (through instrumental and consummatory behaviours) (Henricks, 2006, pp. 195-203). Henricks claims that play, work, ritual, and "communitas" are "attempts to build [human] relationships" (2006, p. 203). This leads Henricks to identify three ways play becomes "captured" or "stabilized" in social groups as: (a) an experience of form, or as a channel for human communication (i.e. games); (b) a contest for something (i.e. gym exercises, or "play-as-work" where pleasure lies in achieving the end result); and (c) a display of something (i.e. "play-as-ritual" involving publically displayed performances of everyday life that symbolically establish individual identity) (2006, pp. 208-209).

In his conclusion, Henricks returns to his question of whether or not modern-day societies have a unique style of play. He claims that, "play must be rescued from its own self-indulgent and antinomian tendencies by institutionalizing its more spectacular versions on the important cultural stages of society, [and that] in such ways play stays as important for adults as it is for children" (2006, p. 216). Henricks further states that institutionalization must not rob play of its unique qualities (2006). He elaborates on this point by discussing how "false play" can exist through play becoming perverted to the point of puerilism (2006, p. 218). Here, Henricks uses the example of Nazism to explain how puerilism as a "specter of play […] became the aesthetic underpinning of a broader process that caused the death of millions of people" (2006, p. 218). Henricks concludes this discussion by recognizing how vital it is for societies to protect the time and space of voluntary and free individual play, as well as "legitimate play opportunities" belonging to the routines of social groups (2006, p. 219). Henricks defends a version of play that can contribute to making society stronger when that play helps individuals discover appropriate limits "just beyond the gates of the playground" (2006, p. 216). While it makes sense for societies to encourage a version of play that helps individuals develop the capacity for expanding society's confines, Gutman's analysis of the sociological history of play spaces reminds us that environments and politics also influence how society determines the limits of play (2013).

With that, I will now turn to Dissanayake's *anthropological* approach to understanding play in such a way that it helps ground my study's assumption that art, play, culture, and development are connected. Dissanayake presents a theory of how art and play phylogenetically developed in tandem (1974). She does this by tracing the key behavioural characteristics of play and comparing them to the core qualities of artistic behaviour (1974). Through this process, she shows how art and play may have evolved together as "art-play" to serve social ends that would

have enhanced human survival (1974, p. 215). Dissanayake states that art and play would have developed in tandem as forms of universal human behaviour for enhancing "self-consciousness" (1974, p. 216). This is because, "[b]y giving artistic form to real or imagined events and objects, [humans gain] perspective on the objective as well as the subjective nature of experience" (1974, p. 216). Dissanayake claims that this process is part of how humans have learned, through art and play, to transform our inner (or cognitive) and external (or behavioural) realities. This notion helps substantiate the assumptions of my research that art and play not only share a link, but that they may enhance individual perceptions and awareness of our shared, social, human realities.

Based on Dissanayake's theory of how art and play evolved together, her definition of play entails eight general characteristics that she identifies as existing in most specific play situations. Those characteristics are: (a) "play is not serious", (b) "play is non-functional" (that is, it is "spontaneous and undirected"), (c) "play is self-rewarding", (d) play tends to "involve more than one participant", (e) play is "a repeated exchange of tensions and releases" (i.e. play contains "surprise" or "adventure", etc.), (f) "there seems to be a non-specific urge to play" (i.e. play is "diversive"), (g) "play is pleasure-orientated", and (h) there is a "strongly metaphorical aspect" to play (i.e. objects and people stand for things they are not) (Dissanayake, 1974, pp. 212-213). Art, as a cultural, social, psychological, and biological entity of human existence, may then be an important part of how adults internalize and construct play narratives. I define "play narratives" as stories involved in play that help formulate human understanding. Performance pieces that get viewed for fun and entertainment, such as those on television shows and films, are one example of a daily play narrative that impacts the knowledge and development of viewers. This is also an example of how play narratives get conveyed via art, which is why art education might be able to be a suitable platform for developing seniors' learning through play. The work

of Dissanayake shows that play likely enhances the cognitive and social consciousness of both children and adults. With respect to my research, it may therefore be the case that seniors' play in art education could improve their creativity, sociability, cognition, and conscious awareness.

Pellegrini is whom I will now rely upon for a *psychological* approach to defining play. In *The Role of Play in Human Development*, he writes a chapter on "Play: What Is It?". Here, he defines play structurally, functionally, and motivationally by often relying upon examples of play fighting and rough and tumble play to elaborate his assertions (2009). Structural descriptions are physical play indicators that rely on bodily and muscular movements (Pellegrini, 2009). Pellegrini includes three key structural elements of behavior in his definition of play: "repetition, sequential variation, and exaggeration" (2009, p 8). This is different from functional elements of play, which Pellegrini explains as taking on a counter-intuitive aspect due to the nature of play (2009). Pellegrini uses the example of play fighting because the part that makes it playful is that it is not intended to achieve the actual aim of real fighting (2009). So, this intention of not having a real goal, then oddly becomes a "function" of play behavior (Pellegrini, 2009). Finally, motivational elements are factors that motivate people to play (Pellegrini, 2009).

Additionally, Pellegrini points out a very impactful insight about defining play: that almost every scholar of play has struggled to define it, and yet as humans we know it very clearly when we see it (2009). Pellegrini learned from a study he conducted about playground behaviours of young primary school children in England, that participant and non-participant views of what was play versus non-play were completely opposite (2009). In defining play from a psychological perspective, it appears that Pellegrini considers the psychologies of the play enthusiastic researchers just as much as that of the players themselves. One of the problems of defining play that Pellegrini therefore identifies is the tendency for researchers to view

everything that children do as play (2009). Therefore, his approach is to develop tactics for categorizing play from non-play. One way to do this is by using "behavioural play markers", such as a "play face" that characterizes children's play because it sends a socially psychological message to other players that play time is being initiated (Pellegrini, 2009, p. 12). Additionally, the motivational state of play is considered by Pellegrini to be its antecedent conditions (2009). One example of this is how humans tend to not engage in play when there are dangers or threats (Pellegrini, 2009). Safe environments are correlational, and even precursory to play (Pellegrini, 2009). Pellegrini believes that structural, functional, and motivational aspects of play must all be considered together in light of how they "vary across the life span" (2009, p. 14).

Pellegrini also discusses his definition of play in relation to evolutionary developmental psychology, and the important role of "social cognitive processes" in play (2009, p. 36). Social cognitive processes are mental procedures used for socializing, such as theory of mind. Theory of mind (that is, understanding others' thoughts and motivations via complex social and verbal cues) likely develops through child pretend play because that appears to help children learn that not everyone has the same beliefs as them (Pellegrini, 2009). Pellegrini claims this takes place within a larger theory of evolutionary developmental psychology (2009). He therefore presents a view of play as "mechanisms as adaptations [that] are proximal links between evolution by natural selection and [modern] behavior." Put simply, evolutionary developmental psychology bridges evolution with current behaviors, and this allows observable play traits and qualities, such as social cognitive processes in play, to be theorized as part of evolutionary human history.

2.2.2 Defining adult play in general

Adult play appears to be highly involved and complex (Van Leeuwen & Westwood, 2008). This might be because there are many styles of playing as an adult (Glynn & Webster,

1993). This makes play among adults difficult for researchers to observe. Furthermore, adult play often takes on a different nature than child play (Cheang, 2002; Glenn & Knapp, 1987). The former can involve elaborate games, highly competitive sports, gym workouts, breakthroughs in the art studio (Thompson, 2015), or even passionately researching a fascinating topic (Sinner, 2015). Sinner (2015) discusses this by considering teacher-education and her own play history:

> For me, there is a causal link between the play of childhood and my researching today. If we as teacher-educators can begin to acquire insight to our pasts as sources of information, our own journeys in education may well prove to advance issues that the field of study has grappled with since long before my time. Perhaps, through our stories, we might begin to find a heart of wisdom. (p. 46)

Though play is seen as fundamentally social (Henricks, 2006), solitary (Sutton-Smith, 1997) and individual activities of focus (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014) can also be play, especially for adults. In particular, intense art making and creative processes are good examples of forms of adult play that involves high degrees of focus and concentration (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Thompson, 2015). That being said, there have not yet been any studies I am aware of that specifically ascertain if this applies mostly to non-senior adults or senior adults. All of this creates problems for the researcher because the subtleties of adult play, in comparison to child play, make observing the former very difficult. As the aforementioned examples illustrate, adult play does not present itself to be as readily "playful" in the same way that child play seems to. Another significant factor in determining adult play is individual preference (Van Leeuwen & Westwood, 2008). Cultural (Huizinga, 1949) and aesthetic (Lindqvist, 1996) assumptions also govern notions of play, while one's physical environment further impacts how both children and adults play

(Vickerius & Sandberg, 2006). It therefore becomes difficult to know the meaning of an adult's play because the literature indicates that adult play is coloured by a person's cultural background, physical environmental, accepted societal norms, and specific play preferences.

These ideas are supported in Sutton-Smith's 1995 text that documents the Johnson & Johnson Company Round Table Conferences, where key play theorists discussed the relationship between play and learning. One of these theorists is Csikszentmihalyi, who focuses on describing the *experience* of adult play, rather than on finding a definition for adult play (Sutton-Smith, 1995). Csikszentmihalyi claims that adult play is *flow*, which is the sensation of several phenomena that he observed, such as focused attention, feelings of control, and receiving immediate feedback (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). During a discussion of Csikszentmihalyi's work, Howard Gardner stated that perhaps, "[t]he phenomenal experience we call flow is in fact what the child feels during play, but cannot reflect upon because that's what being a young child is like" (Sutton-Smith, 1995, p. 285). This would then mean that play doesn't wither away with age, but instead gets experienced differently from an adult perspective versus that of a child.

In mapping out seven rhetorics that often get used to define play by scientific and scholarly cohorts, Sutton-Smith claimed: "[t]he adult progress rhetoric has actually disguised the understanding of what childhood is about" (1997, p. 111). Here he identified how the Western-based beliefs that many adults hold about play actually deny the animalistic drives (sexuality, aggression, etc.) that motivate play (Sutton-Smith, 1997). These adult assumptions make allowances for child play by claiming that it is needed for maturation (Sutton-Smith, 1997). While play seems to be largely viewed as required for children's healthy development (Alliance for Childhood, 2009), Sutton-Smith shows us how culturally informed beliefs reject adults' rights to play (1997). If play is only for child development, then Sutton-Smith asks, "[w]hat are

the mature doing when they play? Are they preparing for death?" (1997, p. 48). This provokes inquiry into adults' play because it suggests that adults hold beliefs about their own play that in fact *prevent* them from playing. I wonder if this way of thinking may be true for only non-senior adults - and if perhaps, seniors begin to grow out of such childish beliefs of adult life?

The literature on adult play theory seems to be beginning to pose similar questions, for it indicates a recent interest in discovering more about how seniors specifically perceive, and experience, play. Tse, Kwan, and Lee developed and evaluated a "Perceptions of Play Questionnaire for Older Adults" (2016). Relatively recent articles by Tse, Kwan, and Lee (2016), Magnússon (2014), and De Schutter and Vandenabeele (2010) indicate how seniors' play is beginning to be theorized. These articles come from an intersection of disciplines, such as education, geriatrics, psychology, health studies, and media and communication studies. Simultaneously, Cohen identifies a lack of play theory being applied to adult education, which entails seniors (2006). In Bergen's comprehensive literature review of psychological approaches to the study of play, she mentions that while there has been some work done on the nature of play throughout life, "[m]ore psychological research is needed, however, to investigate how play may serve adaptive functions in the human species throughout the life-span" (2015, p. 106).

At the Association for the Study of Play and International Play Association Conference in March of 2016, Dr. Henricks spoke on the body of play theory work left by Brian Sutton-Smith. Henricks mentioned that a manuscript of Sutton-Smith's final work might come forward (2016). Sutton-Smith had been trying to discover if play is a fundamental human emotion (Henricks, 2016). That would mean that play does not die with age. Play would instead *adapt* to the nature of each stage of the human life span. Henricks explicitly stated that he believes the future of play theory lies in expanding play into all its meanings, at all ages and developmental stages (2016). It

appears we know very little about how play works in older life. Hence why the study that I present here of seniors' play in art education is contextualized through their play histories belonging to various developmental life stages leading up to, and including, old age.

Freysinger has looked at the definition of play throughout the lifespan quite comprehensively (2015). She addresses the labeling game of "play" versus "leisure", asserting that many consider it arbitrary to draw a line between the two terms (Freysinger, 2015). I take adult leisure to be play because the individual and social effects of child play seem to be similarly experienced by adults at leisure, where the play is less obvious than in the child's case, but nonetheless present. The shared elements between play and leisure make drawing a line between the two seem pointless for many play theorists (Freysinger, 2015). "These [common] dimensions include: [(a)] voluntariness, lack of necessity, or freedom of choice; [(b)] personal expression or engagement; and [(c)] motivation that is more intrinsic than extrinsic" (Freysinger, 2015, p. 77). Freysinger adds that the experience of pleasure is another critical element uniting play with leisure (2015). Freysinger also explains that the experience of both play and leisure is not so much about *what* is being done, but is instead concerned with *how* it is being done (2015).

Yet Freysinger acknowledges how some theorists believe the play of children and the leisure of adults may be similar phenomena, but cannot be *compared* with one another (2015). Freysinger claims this is due to a view of the human life span where the self develops throughout time in ways that make the past and present "selves" ontologically incomparable (2015). Another way to understand this potential inability to compare child play with adult leisure is through the rules and regulations of society. Adults are much more bound by social and legal protocols than children are. Resultantly the former cannot experience the "selflessness" of play that children do (Freysinger, 2015). However, when Samdahl studied freedom and constraint in adult leisure, she

derived four categories for defining leisure (1988). One of those categories is *pure leisure*, which involves the most freedom and self-expression, and is the form of leisure furthest from the fourth *obligatory task* category (Samdahl, 1988). Thus, the "purest" form of adult leisure appears to reflect child play the most out of all four types of adult recreation. This suggests that leisure and play are synonymous because when adult leisure is truly experienced, it resembles child play.

As far as play, leisure, and the developmental stages of life go, Freysinger addresses the connections between these phenomena, but does not add a definition for play and leisure beyond "common dimensions" between the two (2015). She does outline studies of aging and leisure that indicate there has been a turn in the nature of the leisure activities of older adults since the late seventies (Freysinger, 2015). This turn suggests that older adults are now more open to higher intensity activities in their free time than in the past, as the work of Dionigi (2008), and Freysinger and Kelly (2004) suggests (Freysinger, 2015). Due to this, Freysinger believes that play and leisure must be historically contextualized, and that North American play theorists in psychology and sociology have rarely done that (2015). According to Freysinger (2015),

> A lifespan perspective on play suggests that play's meanings, motivations, and forms are grounded within the context of the interaction of internal (biological and psychological) and external (social and cultural) factors and forces that change across time with historical events - and that individuals are active in negotiating and directing their development. (p. 82)

This helps support why this study looks at how seniors meaningfully define play in relation to their past developmental stages that are simultaneously historical and individualized. In terms of how I define play for the purposes of this study, I am informed by all of the aforementioned research on defining adults' and seniors' play, while allowing this study to ask seniors to define

the concept on their own terms. As far as my definition of play goes, it seems that *play is a freely chosen expression of personalized concepts of fun and enjoyment, where this changes according to one's historically, socially, and psychologically developmental contexts.* In this definition there is allowance for individual interpretation and subjective reception of what play means.

2.2.3 Seniors' learning and play

Vygotsky claimed that child play is the basis of lifelong creativity (1971/2004), and his experiments and theorization indicated that child play could be vital to the development of adults' inner thoughts, words, and even consciousness (1962/2012). Put simply by Sutton-Smith, "[p]lay opens up thought" (1995, p. 315). If this is true, it means that every adult's creative and metacognitive basis originated through a process of play as a child. Play could then be used in all life stages for learning and development. If child play is indeed what formulates adults' original psychological modalities for creativity and awareness, playful art education for seniors might help enhance access to their cognition, especially when learning to be creative. Play might then be especially beneficial for seniors whose thought processes show signs of diminishing. Yet, not much is known about how *seniors' play as a unique type of adult play* impacts creative learning and consciousness. This raises the question of what play means for seniors. If art educators could have a better sense of the meaning of seniors' play, then curriculum and programming could be more knowledgably designed for seniors to effectively learn art using playful teaching strategies.

From an educational standpoint, communities that are inclusive to seniors seem to be able to help them continue learning (Boulton-Lewis, 2011) and civically engage (Henkin & Zapf, 2006). While this shows that seniors can learn and contribute to society with adequate community supports, Levy's work indicates that some seniors show a steady decline in learning ability as they age (1994). Socio-political and cultural issues of ageism likely exasperate this.

Those issues include: (a) dominate media portrayals of the elderly (Swinnen & Stotesbury, 2012), (b) the infrastructures available for senior citizens (Paez, Scott, Potoglou, Kanaroglou, & Newbold, 2007), and (c) doctor/patient relationships involved in elderly health care (Haug, 1994). Swedish-based researcher, Magnússon, published a recent article discussing how age discriminating discourses have even manifested in the University of Malmo's "elderpedagogy" programs that train students to teach seniors (2014). An important study by Levy and Langer supports the notion that socio-political and cultural issues could hinder seniors' cognitive aging processes, for such research revealed a correlation between negative stereotypes of the old and memory loss (1994). Another study run by Levy, Slade, Kunkel, & Kasl indicated that "[o]lder individuals with more positive self-perceptions of aging, measured up to 23 years earlier, lived 7.5 years longer than those with less positive self-perceptions of aging" (2002, p. 261).

2.2.4 Seniors' play and changing cultural systems

When we compact the issues and stigmas of ageism (Butler, 1969) with the steady rise of youth-obsessed material culture (Featherstone, 1982; Giroux, 2000), the problem of Canada supporting its expanding elderly population becomes laden with emotional, psychological, cultural, and social complications. Put by Hurd in her study of a group of Canadian senior women and their internalizations of growing old among the challenges presented by media-based beauty stereotypes, "[f]aced with the equation of beauty with thinness, youthfulness, and the fashion model figure, many older women experience a sense of profound loss as they age" (1999, p. 432). This is relevant to my research here - as well as to my preliminary exploratory study that was conducted in preparation for this current project, and that involved two different senior participants - because both studies unintentionally recruited only female participants.

This demonstrates a clear need for more research that hears directly from individual seniors in order to generate greater knowledge and awareness about how they can be better supported. Armstrong et al. explain how Canada is not providing long-term health care for its elderly population as effectively as it could be in comparison to more successful models identified by Scandinavian studies (2009). Given how much culture influences perceptions of aging (Pasupathi & Löckenhoff, 2002; Wheeler, 1997), more localized and context-driven Canadian studies on seniors' play could develop play theory as a means of fostering greater societal inclusivity of elderly populations through fields such as art education. Art education could therefore have an important role in the process of better developing seniors' play due to the well-documented relationship between learning and play (Pramling-Samuelsson & Pramling, 2014), and the strong establishment of play as a creative process (Russ & Wallace, 2013).

It appears too that play not only socializes people, but provides us with the creative innovation for "changing cultural systems*"* (Sutton-Smith, 1995, p. 315). Altering culture is historically an adult preoccupation, thus making play not just for children. Using play to adjust culture is relevant to seniors who regularly experience culturally normalized age stigma (Kuhn, 1998). This age stigma is likely heavily tied to the societal and cultural marginalization of seniors. This social isolation is the reason for most of the elder abuse in Canada (Podnieks, 1993). Thus, fusing play with seniors' art education as a potential form of public social care for seniors in Canada (and other comparable nations of the world) could help reduce the social marginalization of seniors, and in turn reduce the frequency and extent of elder abuse.

A historical analysis of elderly social care in five developed nations (Finland, Japan, Germany, U.K., U.S.) concluded, "[t]here is a certain inevitability to state-regulated, universal social care services based upon individual citizenship entitlements" (Anttonen, Baldock, & Sipil,

2003, p. 195). While each nation has taken distinct, historical paths towards developing elderly social care, "[t]he political economy of social care may be making 'care go public'" (Anttonen, Baldock, & Sipil, 2003, p. 195). Though Canada was not included in this study, the conclusions speak towards trends in elderly social care for developed nations such as Canada. Seniors' art education is fitting for as a form of public elder care because it challenges discourses that have typically disempowered seniors (Kuhn, 1998). Art education may therefore be able to be part of the development of universal social care for elderly citizens. With greater research, playful art education might prove to be an effective form of public social care for Canada's senior citizens.

2.3 Senior Citizens

The interviews that I conducted during my preliminary exploratory study support the claim that popular conceptions of seniors are in fact cultural *mis*conceptions. Modern Canadian society appears to over-generalize the intense debilitations that *some* elderly people experience, assuming that all seniors are decrepit. As one Canadian senior explains (Lefevre, 2016a),

> *P1: They're a burden to society.*
>
> *I: They're what, sorry?*
>
> *P1: A burden to society, 'cause [because] the newspapers are filled about what the seniors [are, and] how much the seniors are costing.* (p. 4)

2.3.1 Seniors and old age in Canada

In 2013 the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) produced a report describing the problem of Canada's rapidly aging population. The report states that "[t]he biggest demographic wave since the post-war baby boom is about to break over Canada, and municipal governments are on the front line" (FCM, 2013, p. 2). In the next twenty-two years, Canada's senior population will double, reaching 10.4 million by 2038 (FCM, 2013). By 2038, seniors will

make up *one quarter* of Canada's population (FCM, 2013). The report also relies upon the Age-Friendly Cities project of the World Health Organization (WHO) to explain how municipalities are key players in supporting elderly populations. WHO identifies the following priorities for how to best meet the needs of seniors: (a) housing, (b) transportation, (c) outdoor spaces and buildings, (d) community support and health services, (e) communication and information, (f) civic participation and employment, (g) respect and social inclusion, and (h) social participation. The latter five priorities are directly affiliated with seniors' playful art education. This makes me wonder if the societal role of art education can include providing public care for Canada's growing senior population – and whether or not this would be effective.

In 1993 Podnieks conducted the first national survey of abuse of elderly persons in Canada. Podnieks concluded that between 83 625 and 132 181 elderly persons are being abused and neglected out of 2 679 585 seniors - Canada's total elderly population at that time (1993, p. 15). Approximately two thousand seniors across Canada were interviewed for this study. "Abuse" was broken down into four categories: "physical abuse, neglect, psychological abuse, and financial exploitation" (Podnieks, 1993, p. 6). Material (or financial) abuse was the most prevalent form of maltreatment, followed by verbal aggression (or psychological abuse), then physical violence, and finally neglect (Podnieks, 1993). Social isolation, as well as a "relatively poor morale and […] feeling depressed" were common qualities among material abuse victims (Podnieks, 1993, p. 20). For victims of verbal aggression and physical abuse, this correlated with an individual senior's proximity to a close friend or family member, such as a spouse, who had serious mental and emotional problems. Seniors who were neglected were found to have physical health needs, but were not necessarily more socially isolated than non-abused seniors. For the three most common types of elder abuse across Canada, Podnieks' study discovered that a

victim's *social network* was a significant factor in how the abuse occurred (1993). Podnieks makes recommendations for national policies and legislation (1993). Two of her most critical advisements are for greater "education" and "new services" to help prevent elder abuse from happening (1993, pp. 51, 53). Education includes not only educating seniors about their rights, but also educating the broader population about elder abuse issues. What is meant by "new services" are "regional geriatric centres and one-stop access programs", which were recommended by the survey respondents (Podnieks, 1993, p. 53).

Considering Canada's growing senior population, it is vital that more education and new services be created with the aim of preventing elder abuse. These resources could simultaneously be used to meet the needs of most seniors, as the 2013 FCM report suggests. At the same time, the stigmatization of old age needs to be constantly considered, so as to be able to work towards removing "age barriers and stereotypes, which exclude older individuals from the ongoing work and play of the mainstream" (Kuhn, 1998, p. 6). This cultural stigma likely contributes to the social isolation of seniors that Podnieks has shown to correlate with three of the most pervasive forms of elder abuse in Canada. Thus, I add to Podnieks' recommendations that education and new services for seniors focus on helping them cultivate social connectivity and individual improvement. Playful art education may be able to provide this via progressive and empowering curriculum that enhances seniors' creativity, intelligence, sociability, and consciousness.

2.3.2 Studying the meaning of play for seniors

Furthermore, seniors should have a say in discussing the meaning of their own play. De Schutter and Vandenabeele's 2010 "Meaningful Play in Elderly" (MPE) model is the only study I was able to find that specifically addresses how seniors define meaningful play for themselves. This is opposed to studying adult play in general. I suspect there are more studies on defining

seniors' play, which are inaccessible to me because they are not written in English. This is due to how some European countries, such as Sweden and Denmark, are global leaders in 'eldercare', with having already developed "elder pedagogy" university programs (Magnússon, 2014).

When it comes to De Schutter and Vandenabeele's study, it is limited because they focus on "the meaning of digital games in the lives of older adults" (2010, p. 84). De Shutter and Vandenabeele define play by categorizing it based on observations of participants' digital game playing (2010). Their distinctions are: (a) playing with a partner involving competition, (b) "vicarious play", which is play via watching someone else play a game, and (c) playing multiplayer games involving either "cooperative console" or competition (De Schutter and Vandenabeele, 2010, p. 87). These types of play exist in contexts other than digital game playing. Thus, this study offers insight on seniors' meaningful play in general, but is limited in what it can say about the meaning of seniors' play beyond digital games. De Schutter and Vandenabeele conclude that meaningful play for seniors is not unlike child play, and go on to "provide an overview of the meanings digital games hold in the lives of older adults with regards to their psycho-social context" (De Schutter and Vandenabeele, 2010, p. 85). They do this by connecting their model to observations of seniors' digital game playing (De Schutter and Vandenabeele, 2010). This model defines elderly play in relation to: (a) connectedness to others, (b) cultivation of learning and growth, and (c) societal contributions (De Schutter and Vandenabeele, 2010). Though this "MPE model" provides a starting point for how seniors define play, De Schutter and Vandenabeele's study is limited in its research approach. Aside from how the study focused only on seniors' digital game playing, participants were asked about the meaningfulness of their play in problematic ways. While the lives of the participants were included in De Schutter and Vandenabeele's research to contextualize the study's observations

and results, a questionnaire was used to evaluate how seniors define play. This questionnaire required participants to check off one of the three MPE model criteria. This study's methods are therefore *circular* because De Schutter and Vandenabeele used their pre-established criteria of seniors' play to determine the meaning of seniors' play. I am instead interested in hearing what seniors think of their own play without relying upon the MPE model's descriptions. Though De Schutter and Vandenabeele did express the voices of seniors with excellent quotations in the write-up of their results, their study would have been more authentic and accurate if participants had been given more freedom to guide the study's results away from pre-established criteria of what seniors' play means. While De Schutter and Vandenabeele's MPE model did assist me in understanding what seniors' play *could* mean, I cannot be certain this model reflects how seniors feel about their play because the model seems to have been imposed on participants' responses.

Researchers must be aware of applying patterns in adult education "automatically to particular individuals" (Knowles, 1980, p. 93). Thus, while the MPE model does indeed provide a reference point for understanding the meaning of seniors' play, it is unlikely that the MPE criteria is fitting for the play of all seniors. I am therefore interested in how the unique play histories of each senior might inform their personal experiences and definitions of play in art education. This approach may reveal new insights about the meaning of seniors' play because it looks towards the play histories of seniors in order to inform and contextualize what their play means today. Furthermore, using life story methodology for this may allow seniors' voices and opinions to move inquiries concerning their play beyond mere researcher speculation.

2.4 Art Education

While play theory has been applied to art education settings for children and youth (Escobedo, 1999; Lindqvist 1996), little research has been done on adult play in general (Cohen,

2006), let alone in the specific context of art education. The term "adult" includes senior citizens, even though non-senior adult play and senior play could be very different if more research were done on this distinction. Art education may provide a valuable entry point for exploring the potential educational and creative benefits of play for seniors. A recent case study indicated that in a visual art group of seniors with an age average of 82.6 years, increased positive perceptions of their life situations occurred in comparison to a control group with no visual art to guide interpersonal dialogue among them (Wikström, 2000). Motivation and emotional engagement among seniors describing their life situations within the art group were significantly higher than with those seniors in the comparison group (Wikström, 2000). Wikström concludes that this reveals how art dialogues can help care for elderly persons because conversations about art build upon elderly adults' knowledge and personal experiences (2000). Aesthetic appreciation is also one of the three most common forms of learning during the elderly years of an average person's lifespan, with sports/games and reverse apprenticeship apparently being the other two primary means through which seniors learn (Chia and Special Needs Education [SNE], 2011).

2.4.1 Seniors' art education

As the limited amount of publications on seniors' art education suggest, this topic is still in its initial stages of inquiry. Due to the well-established relationship between art and play (Dissanayake, 1974), the field of art education could be contributing more conversations to seniors' playful learning, and their education through creativity and the arts. Greater research into seniors' art education is also needed to encourage seniors to overcome the cultural stigmatization of their learning capabilities. Seniors could then better reach their creative and intellectual potentials (Chia & SNE, 2011; Fleming, 2008). These goals could be achieved through enacting deeper understandings of play that might help reveal the rich insights that

seniors have to offer about life lessons, politics, histories, culture, and art. Art education is appropriate for investigating this because evidence supports the accessibility of creativity for high-functioning seniors (Cohen et al., 2006). Furthermore, creativity appears to be linked to furthering the learning and memory of elderly persons (Galbraith, Subrin, & Ross, 2008).

Kuhn's work supports this with her overview of art education for seniors in a National Art Education Association (NAEA) published text (1998). Kuhn not only speaks about the socio-cultural stigmas that senior citizens face in the United States (U.S.), but also points out how "[a]rt education as a profession is still giving very little attention to older adult learners" (1998, p. 15). Kuhn identifies five components of art education that are part of her theoretical structure (1998). She shows how these components relate to the learning and creativity of seniors partaking in art education programs (Kuhn, 1998). Kuhn claims "[o]ne of the best kept secrets of art education [is its] informal, diverse-site located learning", concluding that this type of learning is what millions of baby-boomers will want to devote part of their thirty-plus years of retirement to (1998, p. 15). Kuhn asserts that art education's greatest gift to seniors is how it "provide[s] growth of the self and creative opportunity of a type not available earlier in life" (1998, p. 12).

2.4.2 Seniors' art education and play: a missing link

With respect to play's use in learning, Kuhn doesn't connect this with seniors' art education. This connection between seniors' art education and playful learning has been established neither in art education, nor among play theorists. Links between senior citizens and play are just beginning to be developed, as evidenced by the recent research of De Schutter and Vandenabeele (2010), Magnússon (2014), and Tse, Kwan, and Lee (2016). Play in adulthood has been studied and theorized, as outlined by the above section on defining adult play in general. Yet, seniors' play remains largely underdeveloped. Ties between play and education are well

documented (Ailwood, 2003; Pramling-Samuelsson & Carlsson, 2008; Sutton-Smith, 1975, 1995, 1997), and this has helped bridge art with play since play enhances creativity through "the training of the liberal imagination" (Sutton-Smith, 1995, p. 195). Thus, applying play theory to seniors' art education may provide a platform for generating greater artistic engagement among senior populations, seeing as seniors' playful art education may be able to increase learning via activating the cognitive creativity, unique imaginations, and playful explorations of seniors.

2.5 Concluding Remarks

The literature shows a need for more research to be done on seniors' play. This is because my review of the literature reveals the following: (a) an extremely low number of studies having been conducted on seniors' play, especially in Canada and the United States, (b) a limited variety of research approaches having been taken for inquiring into what play means for seniors, and (c) a lack of having applied seniors' play to art education in particular. I am very curious as to why seniors have not yet been able to speak more for themselves about their own play. This likely has to do with socio-cultural stereotypes of seniors. Everyday discourses in Canadian and U.S. societies often depict seniors as senile, unreliable, infantile, and childlike. Put by Kuhn, "[j]ust imagine if we could get beyond the clichés of age as deterioration and see it as change with as much potential for growth as any other stage of living, yet with a recognition that the major characteristic of this stage is death just as earlier ones have their own major task" (1998, p. 5). Maybe greater investigation of seniors' play histories as a means for understanding how they define play could help seniors be treated as individuals whose opinions and knowledge are just as valuable and important as non-senior adults. At the very least, greater research into this area might be able to help art educators better understand the nature of seniors' playful art education.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Procedures

This qualitative research study uses *life story methodology*, as informed by McAdams (2008), as well as the theoretical framework of *narrative theory*, as apprised by Bruner (1991). Both McAdams and Bruner have psychologically-based backgrounds. Their respective concepts of life story and narrative theory are thus intimately interwoven with the notion of *narrative identity*, which is "an evolving and internalized narrative of the self that begins to take form in adolescence" (McAdams & Guo, 2014, p. 16). This study's use of McAdams and Bruner's theories has resulted in anecdotal accounts of the play stories of three seniors involved in art education. In this chapter, I explain why I selected narrative theory as a philosophical framework, and life story methodology as a research approach. I admit the limitations of life story research, as well as my biases. I go onto describe the process of recruiting participants, participant profiles, site similarities and differences, my chosen methods for collecting data, the interview questions, the observational visit procedures, and how all of the data was analyzed.

3.1 A Philosophical Framework of Narrative Theory

Bruner's narrative psychology-based perspective on narrative theory informs how he presents the latter, which is a framework for a narrative approach to critical inquiry (1991). Narrative psychology is defined as "a distinct field of inquiry […] characterized by the elaboration of models of personality and self based on narrative principles" (Vassilieva, 2016). While this study is anchored in the field of art education, narrative psychology naturally emerged through the use of life stories in answers to research questions that inevitably touch upon psychology. This is understandable given that there are strong ties between psychology and education (Bentham, 2002). Teachers, curriculum, and educational institutions have come to use psychological studies of student progress, development, and learning as sources of information

and critiques for education. The very act of learning is fundamentally psychological. When it comes to art education, creativity too is a cognitive, personal, developmental, and social phenomenon (Simonton, 2000). This study's research questions also ask about the stages of human development involved in the processes of coming to define one's concept of play as a senior. Life stage development, and the meta-cognition employed to think about how one defines something, are both fundamentally psychological. Play itself is a highly psychological entity (Bergen, 2015; Pellegrini, 2009). I would be hard-pressed to discuss play in seniors' art education without involving extant writing from the field of psychology. Bruner's explanation of narrative theory from a psychological perspective is an appropriate philosophical framework for this study because it applies well to the study of play. Bruner states, "[t]he central concern [of narrative theory] is not how narrative as text is constructed, but rather how it operates as an instrument of mind in the construction of reality" (1991, p. 5-6). This is relevant to play histories across developmental stages since this study has forced me consider play to be, at least partially, used by the mind to fulfill its role as a creator of reality. Simultaneously, this study is not intended for the field of psychology and is instead meant to contribute to art education.

In his description of narrative theory, Bruner lists ten features that define narrative, while also revealing its uses and limitations in critical inquiry (1991). These ten features are as follows. *Narrative diachronicity* means that narratives are durative and operate in human, rather than abstract, time (Bruner, 1991). *Particularity* refers to specific happenings occurring in stories that can then be put into broader types (Bruner, 1991). *Intentional state entailment* is when narratives involve people who have intentions, which allows for interpreting character motivation, but cannot provide causal explanations (Bruner, 1991). *Hermeneutic composability* means that there is a text that expresses something that may differ from interpretations of that text's meaning, and

that there is no clear answer for arriving at multiple meanings of the text (Bruner, 1991). *Canonicity and breach* refers to how not every narrative is a story, because a narrative worth telling involves breaching a "canonical script" (Bruner, 1991). *Referentiality* is the fact that verisimilitude assesses narrative 'truth' rather than verifiability (Bruner, 1991). *Genericness* is how narrative gets broken into genres, which are not just ways of representing human happenings, but also methods for storytelling that guide our minds when interpreting texts (Bruner, 1991). *Normativeness* is tied to "canonicity and breach", and refers to how any breach of a convention implies a presupposed norm (Bruner, 1991). *Context sensitivity and negotiability* involve the narrative intentions and background knowledge of "hermeneutic composability", but further admits of the role of the reader in the text, which is part of how narrative gets used in daily life to negotiate culture (Bruner, 1991). *Narrative accrual* is the way in which narratives accrue to develop a culture, history, or paradigm, such as science (Bruner, 1991).

Through these features, Bruner unpacks the mechanisms behind narrative theory that guide its use in research and knowledge creation (1991). He concludes that if we agree that "specific domains of human knowledge and skill […] are supported and organized by cultural tool kits", then "we must accept the view that the human mind cannot express its nascent powers without the enablement of the symbolic systems of culture" (Bruner, 1991, p. 20). Such a claim supports the notion that systems of symbols, such as complex cultural, interpersonal, and intrapersonal narratives, are utilized within fields of knowledge and skill, such as art education. Thus, Bruner's framework for narrative theory is relied upon in this study as a basis for how I adopt life story methodology as a precise method and modality for conducting narrative analysis.

3.2 Life Story Methodology

According to McAdams, "[t]he stories people fashion to make meaning out of their lives serve to situate them within the complex social ecology of modern adulthood" (2008, p. 242). McAdams explains that life stories are indicators of how people make sense of the world, and its social, historical, cultural, and political layers (2008). In terms of more recent research on life story methodology, there is "a growing understanding that personal stories develop through the narrative ecology of the self – the rich multilayered stories one encounters through interactions with family and others in one's social-cultural context" (Breen, Cairney, McAdams, & McLean, 2016, p. 1). This allows the *master narratives* making up cultural expectations to interact with and formulate individual memories and identities (Breen, Cairney, McAdams, & McLean, 2016).

When it comes to studying the meaning of seniors' play in art education, life story methodology is eminently suitable for this study not only because seniors tend to have many life stories (out of virtue of having a lot of life experience), but also due to what Blatner and Blatner (1997) say about the mind being an *artistic* source in relation to play:

> The mind is incredibly, constantly alive, a veritable fountain of fantasy, hopes, memories, associations, and all sorts of other ideas. This is the root of spontaneity, inspiration, and humor. It can be tapped as the source of imaginative activity, which is what people do in the professions based on creative expression. (pp. 57-8)

Hearing from three seniors about their life stories of past and present play granted me some access into their thought processes. When their stories of play would unfold, I felt as if I had been standing at the root of their play histories. This seemed to be the result of how the telling of their stories almost reinvigorated the participants with playfulness, curiosity, and enthusiasm for life. Paley studied the relationships between play and storytelling in children, finding that they

are deeply intertwined, while noting that, "[s]torytelling is, in fact, a more conscious invention than play" (1990, p. 36). Russ compellingly argues that the development of "affect expression" (or emotional communication) occurs in play, accessing memories, and telling stories (2014). She uses case studies of writers, poets, and artists to outline the creative advantages in adulthood of knowing how to communicate emotions with originality and prowess (Russ, 2014). Russ claims that this is one of the many ways that child play contributes to the development of adult creativity (2014). All of this is to say that there appears to be a psychological connection between storytelling, play, and the arts - not just for children, but also for creative adults. If play is the "foundation of adult creativity" (Russ 2014, p. 3), and if storytelling and memories do indeed help link child play with adult creativity, then life story methodology becomes highly suitable for researching the role of play histories in defining seniors' playful art education today.

Stories also carry universal themes, which might allow this study to point out ways in which similar research carried out on a larger scale could potentially help remedy the alienation of Canadian seniors. As Cole and Knowles explain, "[o]ur inquiry places us with a small number of individuals for intensive exploration, rather than with a large number for more superficial engagement" (2001, p. 70). While Cole and Knowles focus on life *history* research, they discuss life story or life narrative methodology as similar means for "describ[ing] research that involves studies of peoples' lives" through "personal experience methods for understanding elements of the human condition" (2001, pp. 14-15). Thus, much of what Cole and Knowles say about life history research can be extended to life story research. When discussing life history research, Cole and Knowles mention the importance of valuing *subjective truth* because it represents human experience that can be informative (2001). Similarly, life story research partially reveals the subjective realities of participants, which are "a representation of human experience that

draws in viewers and readers to the interpretive process and invites them to make meaning and form judgments based on their own reading of the 'text' as it is viewed through their own realities" (Cole & Knowles, 2001, pp. 10-11). I would add that readers' interpretations are also informed by the researcher's realities that inevitably colour the selection and representation of the data and findings. Subjective realities are relevant to seniors' playful art education because of how play seems to hinge upon interactions between internal and external realities (Winnicott, 1971). By focusing on subjective memories and internalization of one's play histories, this study tries to avoid researcher authority eclipsing participant wisdom about their play experiences. This study's methodology is therefore informed by the work of Cole and Knowles, who move away from historically predominant "subject-object" research approaches by instead embracing "an acknowledgement of an inter-subjective realm of being and meaning" (2001, p. 14).

Subjectivity is central to life story research due to the vital role that "narrative identity" plays in storytelling (McAdams, 2008, p. 242). That is, the self is constantly at the centre of the narrators' life stories, thus getting informed and defined through the stories themselves. In that sense, the participants' life stories allowed me to understand aspects of their identities, pieces of their worldviews, dimensions of their meaning making, and threads of their social-ecologies. My own life stories enter this study through the diary-novella style of field notes that I employed. When analyzing the data, this allowed me to begin to unpack how *I* have imprinted the data with my biases, interpretations, perspectives, and subjectivities, as all researchers inevitably do (Cole & Knowles, 2001). In this way there is an element of life writing at work in this study - not only through my play histories entering this text (in Chapter One), but also through my perspectives getting imprinted into the data (in the case of the diary novella field notes) and into the curatorial work involved in representing participants' stories (in Prologue, Chapter Four, and Epilogue).

This work is therefore an *arts-informed* qualitative research study. “Arts-informed research brings together the systematic and rigorous qualities of scientific inquiry with the artistic and imaginative qualities of the arts” (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 10). The storied elements of this research are artistically informed, due to how Metta explains the role of the imagination in narrative (2010). When specifically addressing the relationship between imagination and memory in life writing research, Metta states that, “[i]magination allows the storyteller to select events, stories and themes to tell to a particular audience. Imagination is, the creator of, created by and in co-creation with the self and hence, with memory itself” (2010, p. 17). Yet, a rigorous process of coding and data analysis, informed by Saldaña (2013) as well as Miles and Huberman (1994), was applied to the stories of the participants in addition to the life writing making up the field notes. Coding, re-coding, and iterations of categorizing codes allowed the artistically informed data of non-fiction stories, inevitably derived from the imaginations and memories of the participants and the researcher, to be analyzed using logic. Resultantly, there are limits to what these stories can say about an objectively shared reality.

3.2.1 The limitations of life stories

Life story methodology is limited due to the problems that arise during its analysis (Agar, 1980), and the extent to which its insights can be generalized. Since subjective experiences are at the heart of life story research, this makes it very difficult to draw forward general findings and conclusions from the data. Life stories can instead offer anecdotal descriptions of individuals’ personal lives that present a way for potentially universal elements in their stories to begin to be identified for further examination. Life story research can also generate awareness and empathetic understanding among researchers and readers in ways that facts and figures cannot.

One way to understand the value and limits of this life story research is to think about how a documentary film informs audience members' ways of understanding the particular topic being discussed in the film production. The audience will take in the documentary, usually aware that it is not the only authority on the issue, and that the film represents a particular take on the topic as informed by its video editing decisions, its director's biases and beliefs, the sample of interviewees selected, the musical scores, the visual decisions, and the narrative overlays. Yet the documentary still has something important to say about the topic, and is still a valuable piece of a much larger puzzle that makes up wider discussions of the issue at hand. This life story study operates in a similar way: the stories presented here have limits based on who was interviewed, the small number of participants involved in the study, and the decisions that I made when analyzing the data, and presenting the findings in somewhat of an artistically-informed way.

3.3 Biases and Predispositions

My primary biases that enter this research are: (a) my concern for the nature of art education amidst the "technological revolution" (Collins & Halverson, 2010, p. 24), (b) my concern for senior citizens, and (c) my criticisms of traditional research approaches that purport researcher superiority over participants, especially when those participants are senior citizens.

My first bias can be best explained through the work of jagodzinski (2015). He critiques globally economic "designer capitalism" for having launched an educational reform, in many developed nations, that is overly focused on assessment, and "lead[ing] to the slow demise of public education as we have known it" (2015, p. 284). Here, jagodzinski roots his work in an array of facts and figures that are evidence of global trends leading to a corporatization of education (2015). In terms of art education, jagodzinski (2015) states that,

> Art is decentering across the disciplines in schools and losing its territory to the technological design side of ICT [information and communications technology] and related fields of Internet design, industrial design and, of course, where all the effort is being placed: the so-called creative industries, where the jobs supposedly are located, according to the pundits of industry and the state. (p. 288)

Here, I believe jagodzinski is accurately detecting threats in public art education on a global scale. My bias is that I am concerned about the accessibility of quality art education in Canadian society, and what this could mean for the awareness and intelligence of voter populations in Canada. I am also concerned for what the rapid advancement of technology, and its apparent ties to corporate capitalism, could mean for the richest parts of art education: self-expressions, freedom to critique, and the benefits of a non-product-based artistic process. This bias of mine not only reveals that I have a vested interest in the development of government generated jobs for art educators, but that I also believe it is the obligation of art educators to teach in ways that are liberating, empowering, and therapeutic for both themselves and their students.

My second bias is my concern for the well being of seniors, which is informed by how difficult life was for me when I was so ill that I could hardly complete the basic tasks of living. This experience cultivated my empathetic understanding for how it might feel to get old without proper financial and/or social supports, as many Canadian seniors experience. Now healed, I am still continually shocked by how much my current independence relies upon having a healthy, strong, and fully functioning body. Whether it is carrying heavy groceries home over the thickly iced streets of Montreal, cleaning the ceilings and corners of my apartment, moving heavy suitcases to new provincial locations, or enjoying life by engaging in my playful experiences of

rigorous dance and strenuous yoga, I wonder how senior citizens enjoy life and play when many of them experience great pain from movements as simple as getting up from a chair.

My third bias is that I strongly question research claiming to be widely and superiorly objective. We need to accept certain truths as objective in order to function in pragmatic ways as, arguably, a semi-effective species. Yet even science is a consensus based on what scientists prove *not* to be true. At the same time, I think it is possible for humans to cultivate generalizable and truthful knowledge, but to do this effectively takes a lot of time and effort by numerous, diverse communities of inquirers holding diverse perspectives, and who are continually and collectively involved in debate. So it is *my bias* that I think many scholars' claims at objective knowledge are epistemologically limited and limiting. I also find the assumption that researchers know more than "their" participants to be anathema to good research. Thus, my researcher aims are informed by an interest to "challenge […] researcher 'objectivity' in the study of human lives" (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 10). This is pertinent for studying the lives of seniors because of how "conceptions of aging as deterioration and disease have dominated professional, especially medical and educational, concepts of the past" (Kuhn, 1998, p. 4). Due to this problematic professional history of stigmatizing the aging process, it is vital that contemporary research with seniors gives credence to their voices, opinions, thoughts, and subjective feelings.

3.4 Recruitment Process

Participants were recruited once the Concordia University Ethics Review Board approved this study (see Appendix F). Two of the community-based seniors' art education sites (Centre des Aines and the Concordia Seniors) were discovered through my work as a Teaching Assistant (TA) in the Community Art Education (CAE) program at Concordia University. I had been a TA at the Centre des Aines site since September 2015, and found out about the Concordia Seniors

site through the CAE Program Coordinator. In my capacity at Centre des Aines, I observed and evaluated pre-service teachers who led the senior citizens' art education classes. Therefore, I did not work directly as an art educator for the seniors at Centre des Aines. However, from my exposure to this site, I discovered there was playfulness in this community. I was able to gauge the playfulness of the Concordia Seniors' site through my preliminary exploratory study that I had conducted in 2016 for this current research project. Two of the three seniors involved in that preliminary study were from the Concordia Seniors site, and were able to tell me about how it was a very playful community. For this current research project, I worked with a new participant at the Concordia Seniors site. This new participant stepped forward for this study after I gave a participant recruitment presentation at the Concordia Seniors' site. For the Centre des Aines site, there were only two potential participants because this site is Francophone-based, and I needed to work with an English-speaker. So after explaining the study to both of the English-speaking seniors, one of these potential participants decided to partake in this study.

As a result, the two community sites were purposefully selected using *chain sampling* (Patton, 2015). Since I wanted to observe play in seniors' art education, I needed to be sure that each site was exclusively available for seniors, and that playfulness in art education existed to some extent at each site. For interviewing and observing one participant at each site, that process was open-ended other than having to meet necessary language requirements. As a result, participants were selected using *random sampling* (other than language selectors) (Patton, 2015), within each of their respective art education sites that were purposefully selected. So, this study contains a mix of purposeful (or "chain") and probability (or "random") sampling methods.

The site of the individual senior's home was discovered through *opportunity sampling* (Patton, 2015) that occurred during this study's preliminary research project. One of the

participants in the preliminary study said that her friend wanted to participate in this research. This unexpected participant ended up participating in both the preliminary study and this current research project. This was opportunity sampling because it was entirely unplanned to interview this participant. Once I discovered that her self-taught art education from home not only contributes to the development of art education in Quebec, but also is a form of play for her, I thought it would be very interesting to include her private art education site in this research.

3.5 Participant Profiles

All of the participants for this research ended up randomly being *female*. Their ages of 76, 80, and 88, randomly ended up covering a decent-sized spectrum of senior ages. The participants ended up each being from a distinct racial and ethnic background. At random, all of the participants had immigrated to Canada from different areas of the world (Australia/Holland, Portugal/Africa, and Sri Lanka). They all ended up having travelled to many places in the world, and having lived very international lives. Yet, not all of them are (or have been) from a high socio-economic bracket. They all ended up having excellent family support systems today as seniors. All of the participants are also *high-functioning* seniors. That is, they are all very motivated and engaged in social and family life despite the challenges of old age. All of the participants were also very mentally sharp and intelligent, no matter their age differences. Their physical challenges ranged in difficulty levels according to their ages, in the way that would be expected. That is, the youngest senior was quite physically capable with minimal aches and pains, while the eldest senior used a cane to walk and said that she struggled to get out of bed every morning due to her chronic physical pain.

All three participants ended up having *incredible* life stories. This could have been sheer good fortune on my part, or a testament to the benefits of life story methodology showcasing

how each life story is uniquely interesting. As well, all three participants were very outspoken, confident, self-assured, assertive, bold, and blunt. They all claimed to partake in playful art education, but their definitions of seniors' play differed somewhat significantly. Their stories were highly unique. Finally, one of the participants rarely experienced play as a child in quite a severe way, while the other two grew up with a lot of freedom to play as children. To view detailed relationships that arose in the data as: (a) shared (by all three participants), (b) paired (between two participants), and (c) individual participant factors, refer to Appendices B and C.

The participants' pseudonyms are: Celeste, Wendy, and Matilda. After confirming with each participant if this was okay, I based their pseudonyms on characters from my favourite childhood stories. Celeste is Queen Celeste from the book and television series *Babar*, Wendy is from *Peter Pan*, and Matilda is the prodigy protagonist from the Roald Dahl book, *Matilda*.

3.6 Data Collection

All of the data was collected from November 2016 until March 2017, with the exception of one interview from March 2016. To allow that interview to be used for this study, a separate consent form was approved by Concordia University's Ethics Review Board and signed by the relevant participant. That participant was part of both this study and the preliminary study for this project. The questions between the two studies were the same so it made good sense, and did not contaminate this research, to include the March 2016 interview.

3.6.1 Overview

This study used multiple methods of data collection in order to *triangulate* the data. I conducted interviews, completed observational visits, and wrote up field notes to look at each participant's play in art education from these three different angles. This allowed me to collect and analyze "evidence from the sources and [use] it to build a coherent justification for themes"

(Creswell, 2014, p. 201). My field notes reported my internal thoughts and reflections in the field, recollections of photographs and art that the participants showed me, and non-verbal forms of information about the participants' lives and stories that couldn't be captured through the interviews and observational visits. The interview data was almost entirely the stories and dialogues that the three participants provided. The observational visit notes were a collection of my interpretations of each senior at play in the given art education setting that she attends. All of these settings involved "supporting characters" who the "protagonist participant" would socially engage with while making art. The public settings involved many friends who each of the participants interacted with, while the private setting involved the participant's husband whom she regularly spoke with during her art education. These "supporting characters" had to be filtered out of the data to comply with ethical regulations. Thus, observational data was collected in a biographical sense, where I focused on the participants so as to capture the observed "story".

I bounced these three data collection methods off of one another to help monitor the validity of each source of data. In the Prologue, Epilogue, and Chapter Four, I use the validity strategy of "rich, thick description" that Creswell suggests for "transport[ing] readers to the setting and giv[ing] the discussion an element of shared experiences" (2014, pp. 201-202). As another validity strategy advised by Creswell (2014), I admitted my bias during continual self-reflection in my field notes. I also employed Creswell's validity strategy of "prolonged time" in the case of most of the research participants and their corresponding sites (2014, p. 202). I have known one research participant since March 2016. I've known another participant and her corresponding site of Centre des Aines since September 2015, in a non-researcher role that I had there. For the participant whom I became acquainted with at the start of this study, I conducted

the largest number of interviews and observational visits with her so as to have a prolonged period of data collection that could make up for my lack of background knowledge about her.

All of the participants decided not to be involved in member checks. Therefore, I was able to use the semi-structured interviews as a kind of validity strategy. This is because the interviews offered a platform for me to check in with the participants as to whether or not I was correctly understanding and interpreting what they were telling me. I would often have my assumptions about their play dispelled or confirmed by them during the interviews, especially since my coding process and some of my data analysis ran alongside the data collection period. While some researchers advise against such a non-linear approach, others encourage it (Agar, 1980). I adopted Agar's famous, yet simple, dialectic strategy (1980) where:

> You learn something ("collect some data"), then you try to make sense out of it ("analysis"), then you go back to see if the interpretation makes sense in light of new experience ("collect more data"), then you refine your interpretation ("more analysis"), and so on. The process is dialectic, not linear. (p. 9)

That being said, I did not engage in heavy analysis until all of the data collection was complete. I simply conducted coding during the time that I ran interviews and observational visits. The coding sessions often led to deep reflections, which I would write up in analytic memos as per Saldaña's advised coding strategy (2013). I also kept a journal for jotting down thoughts, insights, and ideas that would come to me unexpectedly throughout my entire research process. The analytic memos and the written journal provided platforms through which codes, sub-codes, categories, and themes could later arise through returning to those documents for deep analysis once all of the data was collected. Although Agar's dialectic approach was indeed adopted, there were also moments when linear mechanisms were at work throughout my data analysis process.

Agar's organic approach was mostly relied upon though, due to how life story methodology is almost inherently dialectical. Stories carry with them an inherent logic. Bruner discusses this with respect to how narratives must break convention, and how that dialectically presumes conventions to exist (1991). As well, following the lead of the participants was important to this research. That involved flexibility, which was not linear but instead dynamic. This was needed because investigating seniors' play relies upon the comfort and trust of all participants involved since play requires safety and security, as explained by Pellegrini's discussion of the antecedent conditions for play (2009). By not assuming a linear approach, I allowed the process to unfold in a logical and organic way. This gave the participants greater control over the direction of the data collection process, which put them at ease. The participants partially controlled the directions of the interviews, as well as our visiting schedules. That is why the frequency and length of interviews and observational visits varied with each participant.

3.6.2 Interviews

The interviews were semi-structured with open-ended questions that allowed for further exploration of particular topics by each participant and myself. The focus of the interviews was on the two primary questions that asked about stories of play from life stages prior to being a senior, and stories of play as a senior today (see Appendix E). Often, the interviews would begin by me asking the interviewees to describe each of their general backgrounds. I tried to allow the interviewees to guide the interviews as much as possible because I wanted to hear about how *they* meaningfully define their play. Sometimes though, I structured parts of the interviews by relying upon a list of open-ended, non-life story interview questions (see Appendix E) to ask about parts of their stories and their play that was confusing me as I coded the data and reflected upon it. I would often need to clarify the following: (a) if something was or was not play in their

terms, (b) what the differences between play and leisure were for them (if any), and (c) how and why exactly art education was play for them (after they had each already identified it as play).

Given how the participants were all very assertive and blunt, I am confident that all of them would have told me if art education was not playful for each of them. There is the chance that my presence as a researcher interested in playful art education could have swayed each of them to indicate art education as play during their interviews. However, I often felt that since I am much younger than all of the participants, they were not at all afraid to correct me when I was wrong. So I do believe that the large age gap between the participants and I actually helped minimize researcher influence. The data also speaks for itself, as there are many moments in the interview transcripts when each participant cut me off or corrected me with no inhibition. The participants were also all very clear about identifying the activities that were *not* playful for each of them. Furthermore, the field notes mention how the art educators at the public sites, as well as the participant's husband at the private site, described how bold each participant was. Indeed, outgoing personalities were likely drawn to participate in this study due to how it involved talking openly about one's life stories and having them published (albeit under a pseudonym), while also being observed by a researcher when each participant was learning and making art. While that presents an unintended sampling bias, it also helped reduce researcher influence on interviewee responses due to how each participant did not hesitate at all to speak her mind.

I conducted a total of six interviews. One interview took place with the participant whom I had known for almost two years, Matilda. Two interviews took place with the participant whom I had known for one year, Celeste. Three interviews took place with the participant whom I had met at the beginning of this research, Wendy. So the frequency of interviews inversely corresponds with how well I knew each participant at the start of the research, though that was

not intended. Matilda felt that she had told me everything she could about the topic in roughly two hours, so no further interviews had been needed. Celeste had wanted to meet twice for longer periods of time, with each interview being approximately four hours. Wendy assumed more of a life history approach to her interviews. Sometimes I asked specific questions about play and art to focus the interview, but relinquished my control over her interviews as much as possible because the methodology privileges participant control of the story telling. Wendy and I completed all three interviews as planned, and they each averaged out to be around an hour long.

It became apparent that more data ended up being collected from Celeste than from the other two participants. This was the result of Celeste's interviews being very long since she had a lot of stories and memories of play, as well as a lot of opinions about play. A limitation of my data collection methods is therefore that each participant is not equally represented in the data. This was why I chose to analyze the data through separating shared codes from individual ones.

At the private site of Celeste's home, we completed the observational visit *after* having done the interviews, while it was the opposite for the other two participants. It was not a concern to keep the ordering and frequency of the interviews and the observational visits exactly the same between all three participants and sites. That is because this study is not concerned with setting up a controlled experiment for participant comparisons across each of their playful art education sites. Instead, the focus is on individual relationships between past and present play stories, as well as how the participants' *stories* of play can be compared with one another.

As I was coding the interviews, I realized that the stories of play took on the form of playfulness in and of themselves. "Joking and laughter" became a common code that could not be ignored. Though this varied according to each participant's degree of playfulness and desire

to make jokes, it is interesting that the topic of this study and the formulation of the interviews as a data collection method usually ended up unintentionally converging in the interest of play.

3.6.3 Observational visits

For the two community-based sites, I began the observational visits prior to initiating the interviews. I made three observational visits to Wendy's site of the Concordia Seniors, and one observational visit to Matilda's site of Centre des Aines because she felt that only one visit was needed. I also continued to attend Centre des Aines for my job. Although I could not do research in that capacity, those work-based visits inevitably increased my innate familiarity with both Matilda and the site. For the private art education site, Celeste wanted me to observe her doing her playful art education only once because it made her nervous to have me watch her work on her art. Visits at the two sites that I observed only once were two hours long each, while each of the three observational visits at the Concordia Seniors site lasted for three and a half hours.

To explain what Celeste does, she is 80 years old and employed for her artwork, as well as her expertise in historical teaching methods. Her private art making is art education in the sense of being self-taught. Her artwork is also a form of art education in producing images that gets disseminated across public schools in Quebec. Celeste's "children's picture book style" illustrations get used in history curriculum to make the content more accessible to students in grades 3 to 6. Her images get put on smart-boards to be used for classroom play pedagogy activities that Celeste also designs and implements with the help of a smart-board technician. All of her illustrations are done by hand though. She does research on composition and anatomy in order to teach herself how to best represent historical ideas to children because she was never trained as an artist. Her artwork and texts also get used for classroom exercise books and teacher curriculum guidebooks in history and civics classes at the elementary school level. She recently

received an international grant with another retired teacher. The two of them will use this funding to implement Canadian children's literature curriculum into Quebec elementary schools.

The Concordia Seniors and Centre des Aines sites take on a very different nature from Celeste's private art education. Both of the public sites are set up in a community art classroom format, consisting of a projector for slide show presentations, large tables and chairs for students to make art, and a food and beverage table at the back of each classroom. The Concordia Seniors and Centre des Aines art education workshops are also both taught by student teachers. How the two sites differ is in noticeable socio-economic ways. Centre des Aines is situated in the Point Saint Charles area where gentrification has become a major issue. The Centre des Aines site Coordinator told me that many of the seniors who attend the art workshops there actually worked in the factories that historically developed this area, when those seniors were children. Centre des Aines also specifically strives to support seniors from lower socio-economic brackets. By contrast, the Concordia Seniors site seemed to attract highly educated seniors, who are therefore perhaps from higher socio-economic standings than the seniors making up the student population at Centre des Aines. Though higher education is not a prerequisite for attending the Concordia Seniors workshops, this site appeared to be a point of convergence for highly educated seniors.

In terms of Celeste's art education in her home, observing her solitary play was in and of itself a contradiction. She and I did not want to set up video cameras in her home because we felt that was impersonal and decontextualized. So, she thought of the idea where I would watch her do the colouring stage of the illustrations that she creates. This is because the drawing and design stages are so involved that she said that she would become self-conscious if I watched her do those tasks. Colouring was instead something she could do while being watched and not feel too nervous. So I observed her colour while I took notes on what she was doing and saying. As she

worked, she explained her artistic process and how it was a form of play for her. Though this setting was an artificial replication of her solitary play, I was still able to observe her art education without my presence being too disruptive because she almost always socializes on the phone or speaks with her husband while she makes art. However, data from this observational visit is limited due to the impossibility of ever truly observing an adult participant's solitary play.

3.6.4 Diary novella field notes

I first tried this field notation style during the preliminary exploratory study that I conducted to prepare for this research. This style is influenced by the examples of life story research reports provided by Goodley, Lawthom, Clough, and Moore (2004). A "diary-novella" field note style entails documenting research experiences as if the field notes are something between a personal diary and a novella for a public audience. Here, one must creatively organize the field notes into a narrative format. This is therefore an arts-informed method, which I ground in the work of Cole and Knowles (2001). This method was a suitable choice for this study for the following reasons: (a) this style fits well with the ethos and decree of life story research because the process of conducting research is itself framed as a story, (b) this makes the field notes much more interesting and accessible for both the researcher who writes them and the audience that reads them, (c) this allows the researcher to have a creative outlet, which is an important consideration for researchers in the field of art education who tend to be more creatively inclined, (d) my previous experience of using this style helped me better understand the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of the participants through the creative writing process. I found that this style of writing field notes forced me to see the study in an emotive and humane way. While some scholars may argue that this denies me researcher objectivity, I instead feel that it has allowed me to better understand the interplay of subjective experiences in the data, as well as

throughout the research process itself. Since subjectivity is central to play and life stories, this style of documenting field notes seemed to bring me closer to what I was seeking to know more about. For an example of this field notation style, see the Prologue and Epilogue of this report.

At the same time, it was vital that I retained a degree of researcher objectivity to avoid bias. I was able to achieve this objectivity by spacing out each visit with the participants. I would complete the diary-novella field notes immediately after an interview or observational visit. Then, I would have around two weeks until I saw another participant, which allowed me to step away from my emotional connection to each of them before re-entering into it. At the same time, as I became close with each of the participants, I realized that this was not threatening to the research, but instead complimentary to it. This is due to the nature or topic of this study. The topic of play does not create any kind of moral dilemma for me when I have befriended the participants. This is because there is nothing controversial about what they each told me about play. In fact, I noticed that the more I got to know each participant as a friend, the more I was able to witness, and share in, her play so as to be able to study it more closely and authentically.

Finally, the diary-novella field note style offers creative liberty in writing *form*, but not writing *content*. During the study, these arts-informed field notes elicited a series of small non-fiction stories that described my research process. This method therefore aligns well with life story methodology by capturing true stories about true stories. This field notation style also makes the data more playful to read. Implementing this notation method stems from my opinion that researchers have a social obligation to make their work as publically accessible as possible.

3.7 Data Analysis

Data analysis for life story methodology presents challenges. Put by Agar, “[e]veryone agrees that life histories are important, but no one agrees on how they should be analyzed,

beyond a simple presentation (edited in unknown ways) of the informant's narrative" (1980, p. 106). To help overcome this problem, I employed what Miles and Huberman call a *descriptive* analytical method (1994). "Researchers in *life history, grounded theory, ecological psychology, narrative studies,* and in a wide range of *applied* studies (education, health care, family studies, program evaluation) often take this general line" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 8). According to Miles and Huberman, descriptive analysis involves multiple data sources being condensed *not* on the basis of concepts or theory, but with a focus on everyday behavioural regularities (1994), which I observed in participants' play, or that existed through the participants' stories of play.

It is also important to note that I was unable to rely on counting codes to determine code significance. This is because, just as in fictional stories consumed for delight, it was often the case that many elements within participants' stories were *not* mentioned precisely because they *are* important. So, the death of a loved one and the challenges of old age were discussed in moderation precisely because of their significance. As a result, using code frequency was not an option for my analysis. However, when certain codes *were* frequently mentioned, especially across all three participants, they were noted for importance as a reoccurring theme in the data.

3.7.1 First cycle coding

My data analysis process began with Initial Coding using a variety of selected methods that were appropriate for data about stories, such as Descriptive Coding, Emotion Coding, Motif Coding, and Narrative Coding. I employed multiple coding methods so as to fulfill the goal of Initial Coding as articulated by Saldaña: "as a starting point to provide the researcher with analytic leads for further exploration" (2013, p. 101). I did this to remain open to what the data was telling me by employing multiple coding techniques, but I also encountered a problem with this. Many of the codes ended up being too general, especially (and ironically) with Descriptive

Coding. When it came time to try to organize the codes into categories and themes, a code such as “Family” actually meant “Family Issues” for one participant, and “Strong Bonds with Children” for another participant. This became apparent when I conducted a first iteration of categorically organizing the codes (see Appendix D). It was unclear how to make informed decisions about organizing the codes, because many codes were lacking their original contexts.

3.7.2 Second cycle coding

I returned to the data and re-coded all of it with more detailed codes so that the codes’ contexts were not stripped from them once the codes were categorized. Motif Coding is what seemed to work best for the data since it allowed me to deconstruct the stories according to detailed literary elements. “A *motif* is the smallest element in a tale having the power to persist in tradition. In order to have this power it must have something unusual or striking about it” (Thompson, 1946/1977, p. 415). This coding method was suitable because “a contemporary participant’s story, coded and analyzed with classic folk tale motifs, possesses deep psychological meaning” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 130). Motif Coding could thus not only provide me with the detail that I needed for making informed decisions when categorizing the codes. It also lifted literary and psychological elements from the data, which helped me analyze play histories. I did not use a Motif Index for this. I instead viewed the data as stories, and determined codes based on the smallest elements of those stories that could push the plotlines forward. Narrative Coding was also part of my Second Cycle Coding process. This fit well since “Narrative Coding is appropriate for exploring intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions to understand the human condition through story” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 132).

3.7.3 Coding biases and distortion

To help become aware of my coding biases and distortions, an experienced researcher coded a significant and representative sample of all three data collection methods across all three participants. He used Initial Coding, and many of his codes were similar to mine. Yet I realized from this process that I have a tendency to focus on cultural and social life since the other researcher's codes were more focused on socio-economic statuses that influenced participants' play. This was helpful in allowing me to develop more codes related to socio-economic status while not taking away already established socio-cultural codes, especially since the researcher who helped me also came up with a number of similar cultural and social codes. Instead, I admit here that I have an interest in socio-cultural dynamics that is a bias of mine, which has impacted the direction and outcomes of this research. Since culture fascinates me, especially in relation to play, art, stories, and psychology, I own this bias rather than trying to remove it from the study.

This researcher who helped reduce bias in my analysis also noticed that in my field notes I have a very "biographical style" of researching. This was something I too had noticed, and was concerned about because it could distort codes derived from participant behaviours. To account for this, any codes from the field notes that were the result of my opinions and ideas were left out of the coding inventory. A preference was therefore given to data that came from the participants, so as to not allow my stories about their play to eclipse their stories of their play.

3.7.4 Final data analysis iteration

A final iteration of the data analysis was then completed. This process began with compiling a coding inventory that organized codes according to the participant from whom those codes were derived (see Appendix C, *Figure C1*). These codes were then organized by colours according to being shared by all three participants, shared between each pairing of participants,

and unique to each participant (see Appendix B and Appendix C, *Figure C1*). This was very helpful in being able to see various relationships in the data between and among the participants.

The next stage required whittling down the codes to better understand the essence of the data. This process began with deriving four categories based on the individual codes: interests, temperaments, opinions, and experiences, which all influenced participants' definitions and experiences of play. Those categories were then assigned a colour so that the codes could be organized according to the four categories (see Appendix C, *Figure C2*). I then "boiled down" those categorized codes by analyzing them for "common denominators" that could become simplified codes and sub-codes (see Appendix C, *Figure C3*). The more detailed codes proved beneficial for deriving simplified codes, since I could now understand the original meaning of each code from their more detailed descriptions. This helped me ensure that I was categorizing the codes according to their original meanings from the raw data. I then used tables to organize these simplified codes, sub-codes, and categories (see Appendix C, *Figure C4*). Finally, I converted these tables into a final list of categories, codes, and sub-codes (see Appendix A).

This process allowed me to overcome some of the problems that Agar identified with the challenges of analyzing life stories (1980). Interpreting stories is an art, and thereby subjective. Nonetheless, we are able to read a work of literature and have a shared discussion about common themes and ideas in the piece. Here, I had to develop a logical way to question my interpretations of the stories in the data so that I wasn't making decisions at whim. This process allowed me to make more informed decisions about how the data should be interpreted since this data analysis strategy avoided stripping codes of their original intents by keeping intact the original meanings of the codes. When comparing the initial and final iterations of the codes, sub-codes, and categories (see Appendices A and D), the final version is much clearer and more refined.

Chapter 4: Stories and Findings

This study's key findings are discussed here with the support of the literature and the participants' play stories. I highlight the following critical findings: (a) the role of personal play preferences in formulating seniors' definitions of play, (b) the role of personal temperaments and play histories, as informed by culture, family, and war, in informing seniors' conceptions of play, (c) the role of natural and cultural landscapes in seniors' stories and definitions of play, (d) how individual play histories seem to inform seniors' definitions of play, and (e) how the senior years offer "golden opportunities" to discover new play forms, new play interests, and new playmates.

4.1 Personal Play Preferences as Informing Seniors' Definitions of Play

While I was aware from this study's onset that play involves individual conceptions, personal expressions, and subjective receptions of playing, I was unaware of how that manifests in relation to seniors' play. I still do not have an answer for this, but I may have found some openings to this inquiry. This is because the play histories of this study's participants helped reveal clues for how individual play preferences might operate in seniors' play. Personal interests arose in the data quite frequently in ways where they seemed to have informed each senior's definition of play. When the participants described their play as seniors, a common subjective factor was how some of their interests had lasted since childhood. Some interests though, including art for two of the participants, had been discovered in either their non-senior adult years or their senior years. The common thread was that all of the seniors' play histories revealed their play as largely defined by a lifelong interest that had become critical to determining their preferred play activities. For Celeste, this was her interest in culture, history, social justice, and politics, which all tied together as a single entity for her. For Wendy, this was human psychology. For Matilda, this was art in the forms of sewing, painting, design, and drawing.

A good example of Celeste's lifelong interest in culture, history, politics, and social justice lies in the following story from her childhood play. Though her interests in culture and history are not explicitly mentioned in the story below, they all operate in unison for her, since she had expressed how she views politics, social justice, and culture as "history in the making."

Celeste: Well, I, I think I have the photo of myself at that age, uh... dressed up as a cowboy. And I actually said, "I want to kill Hitler", and I'll tell you why. Because, uh, a-, at the time I was living in the Northern part of Mozambique. It's called Quirimbas, and you didn't have, umm... theatres, or the cin-, the movie house, or anything like that. It was just a normal bed sheet that had to be white so that you get a contrast. I mean it must've been a colossal one. And then, there was this very noisy, eh, camera just behind you. You know the, the one, that p-, the projector. And it actually made such a racket, and that's what I thought was really nice. And they would project the latest news from the, um... from the war. And small as I was, and the - there were no babysitters at the time. I mean, i-, it's something that wasn't common at all. The kids just went with their parents, and the parents didn't really care what you were watching. Uh, eh, you either closed your eyes, or y-, you just we-, you know, put your fingers inside your ears, and, eh… if you didn't like it. And that's how far it went. And I would watch these horrors, and I would ask, "What happened? Who, who is behind all this?"

Me: And how old were you? Six?

Celeste: Ehhh.... well let's see, eh. I was born in-, la-, uh, the last month of thirty-six. So it would be thirty-seven, thirty-eight, thirty-nine... I was about four or five. I was, I was very young. (Takes deep breath) and, eh, the, the word "Hitler", eh, always came up. You see? So, I, I, [/thought/], "This is the evil man." So when [/my parents/] dressed me

up as a cowboy [/for Carnival/], and they gave me a little pistol, which was... it wasn't plastic. I don't think plastic was in existence at the time, but, eh, just metal. It looked pretty real to me, and I said, "Well, I can do... humanity a..."

Me: (Laughter) a favour?

Celeste: -"A favour. Yeah, so here it goes, I'm going to kill him." And in that photo I look pretty fierce. I mean within the age of four or five. (Lefevre, 2017, P1, I2, pp. 3-4)

Today, Celeste continues to be "fierce" in her political critiques. She also went on to obtain a Ph.D. in history as a young adult. She now views play as political, and defines play as creating one's own world. Caring for her home is just one way that she does this now as senior:

When a child is really playing according to his rules, you know… eh I mean fair enough, every now and then there will be a flare up and you, you fight, and eh, you do your best to survive. And when you don't survive, you get somebody from the group that is going to protect you. At, at least you hope. Yeah, it's sheer politics! I wish Trump would invite me to teach him how to pu-lay! To play diplomacy, not make the mess he made (laughter)! He wants to build a wall and he wants his neighbour to pay (laughter)! (Laughter) I, I want to call a strike so, you know, I'm going to ask my neighbour, "Come and pay for this, I need it!" This, this is how I define play for myself. Uh, uh, and it, and this morning, it's, it's funny that you should be coming. I don't know if it's related to you, if it's the play, whatever it was! There is a spring, sort of within me that, you know, I have to [/do/] this and the next thing, [/and/] it's not a problem; it's not a burden. You just have to do it, and say, "Okay, I'll do this", but you do it in a playful manner. Sometimes when my husband says, "Oh God forbid, don't tidy the house all the time", I say, "But the house for me is an entity that I've created." It's my own, whether it's good or not, whether it's

> *stylish or not. It's beside the point. It's my world on this whole planet, this is the only thing where I - it's me. And for me it's play!* (Lefevre, 2017, P1, I2, pp. 53-54)

Here Celeste has defined play as "sheer politics", which connects to her lifelong interests. At the same time, she also goes on to talk about how play is rooted in one's creation of a personal inner play world. It is this inner reality that she believes can turn a task such as cleaning into something very playful for her. Root-Bernstein discusses this phenomenon as "worldplay", which she defines as "the invention of an imaginary world" that is self-generated through a child's use of her healthy imagination (2014, p. xi). As part of the findings of her study, Root-Bernstein states: "[i]f we cannot say that worldplay causes or guarantees creative achievement in maturity, we can surmise that it cultivates a number of factors that may work in *some combination* to promote adult creativity" (2014, p. 49). Here, Root-Bernstein does not differentiate between non-senior adults and seniors. Moreover, Root-Bernstein assessed adult creativity by looking at how it exists in adults' professions with respect to each of their worldplays from their respective childhoods (2014). In terms of seniors' play, it seems that seniors face the challenge of how to be creative when they are no longer tied to a profession. Celeste still has a creative profession at the age of 80, which is very rare. So, it is difficult to say whether or not Root-Bernstein's findings extend to seniors. However, her claims do seem to support Celeste's definition of play as an inner world. Simultaneously, Celeste's passion for politics, social justice, culture, and history seem to be connected to her view of play as not just an inner reality, but also as a reflection of how humans govern themselves. Celeste brings to our attention how politics and worldplay may be connected in formulating worldviews that shape our inner and outer realities. Her definition of play in the context of her life stories also shows us

how personal interests might inform how seniors define play. The degree to which this could be characteristic of seniors' play, adult play in general, or individual play at large needs to be tested.

Van Leeuwen and Westwood have somewhat looked at this by studying the lifespan paths of play for an individual, in conjunction with how individual preferences psychologically operate in adult play (2008). However, they too do not make the distinction between non-seniors' adult play and seniors' play. Instead, they pose the question of whether or not play can help maintain identity and self for seniors who get forced into nursing homes where their daily life activities cease to exist (Van Leeuwen & Westwood, 2008). More than offering a report of research findings answering their questions, Van Leeuwen and Westwood's study is a call to action for psychologists and play theorists to pay more attention to these questions (2008). What Van Leeuwen and Westwood do assert from their study is that individual preferences are highly involved in adult play, and that there is little known about how this psychologically operates, especially in relation to the lifespan (2008). My study indicates that three seniors each had at least one key interest that much of their play revolved around during their entire lives (when it could in terms of access), but this finding is limited due to this study having so little participants.

4.2 Personal Temperaments and Histories Informed by Family, Culture, and War

In hearing the seniors' stories of play alongside one another, it soon became apparent how much personal temperament seems to dictate the way in which each of them played, and continues to play today. Just as in any story, the protagonist's key attributes determine her motives, and therefore actions. This also became very apparent when I observed all three seniors participating in their respective settings of seniors' playful art education. Given that all of the participants each claimed that their art education is play, I witnessed how each of them plays with others. Each participant's temperament largely impacted the way she played, as well as how

she approached the very question of how to define seniors' play. Likewise, the participants' stories of play also indicated that each senior's temperament seemed to have been significantly informed by culture, family, and each of their unique experiences of war.

4.2.1 Shared temperaments as influencing seniors' play histories

Some of the participants' personal characteristics appeared to be shared: independent, self-confident, bold/outgoing, knows oneself well, lively/youthful/"with it", grateful/feels lucky, the ability to forgive and let go, authentic, resilient, resourceful, has hope, and wise. Many of these shared qualities fit the profile of someone who would be drawn to participate in a study such as this one, so it is little wonder that these qualities were shared among the participants. Qualities such as the ability to forgive or let go, resilience, and resourcefulness may have been shared because of how the life stories of each participant involved great hardship in the forms of either family oppression or cultural colonialism. Those qualities that may have developed out of hardship might actually be what has helped them all continue to play today as seniors. Within the code "challenges of old age", the sub-code "seeking out play as a senior" emerged. The participants' positive attitudes towards life, resourcefulness, and resilience all seem to have contributed to their tendency to seek out seniors' play. The work of Levy, Slade, Kunkel, and Kasl offers insight on this (2002). Their study found that self-perceptions of aging can impact one's longevity more than "other variables previously linked to survival, including gender, socioeconomic status, functional health, and loneliness" (2002, p. 266). The participants didn't seem to have particularly positive self-perceptions of aging, but all three participants did have very positive outlooks on life in general – despite having all gone through great personal or cultural hardships. With their shared quality of "gratitude/feeling lucky", they all seemed to really appreciate what they now have. A causal link between their war time childhoods is

tempting because Celeste and Wendy grew up in very difficult family situations, which were strongly impacted by the Second World War, while Matilda's family home was burned down during the Sri Lankan Civil War that she described as having been fuelled by colonial powers. Remarkable though their positivity is, the reason of it is intuitively comprehensible because they can now understand the true meaning of gratitude due to having struggled in the past. This likely helps motivate all of them to be positive and seek out play today as seniors. At the same time, this needs to be further tested against seniors who were jaded by severe hardship and setbacks.

Matilda perfectly expresses how positivity can influence seniors' play. She discussed the following in the context of talking about her own play, and her opinions about seniors' play:

Matilda: I have to [/go out/] because seeing others, seeing parts of my, my family and everything [/is important/]. Um, someone [/who is/] always complaining and always, uh, I mean - even though they are not as sick as me, you know? I think that I have to motivate myself to go outside. I think everybody should do [/this/]. I tell them that they should go, you know? But some of them are not open to it. What can you do? They don't go out of their… You have to seek out. You know you go to one place, the other one tells you about the other place, and you know, you go to all of them. And that's what you should tell everyone, that they should sort of… (Takes breath) I say nobody likes anybody who's complaining. And they will listen to you, and feel sorry for you, and everything. But at the end, [/they/] get fed up. One lady was saying she was getting sick of this person she was trying to help because she's always complaining. It's just - she's getting sick [referring to the woman trying to help the sick person].

Me: Right. Right, it passes to her, yeah.

Matilda: Yeah! So, that's the thing. But we have to tell people. I also try and tell

anybody that I know that you have to do it. That's what you should promote people to… Tell them, it is no use. We have to put up with whatever [/we/] have… And that's how you actually get old! And you can't complain (laughter)! (Lefevre, 2017, P3, I1, pp. 13-14)

4.2.2 Individual temperaments influencing seniors' definitions of play

Each participant also appeared to possess unique personal temperaments that influenced her play. For example, even though all three participants can be considered to be motivated due to how they actively seek out play today in order to counter the challenges of old age, a specific quality of Matilda's is "highly motivated" because her motivation is exceptional. She is 88 years old, and lives alone with chronic and excruciating pain to the point where she can barely walk, and yet she seems to go out to play more than the other two participants. In her own words:

Matilda: *You know it's not very easy to get up in the morning. Ye-, you know? Sometimes I find it hard just to walk, you know? But uh, I push myself. And I thank (laughter) Quebec that here, well just within a mile that you can - I go to four places. I go 'The Y', and they have exercises, and talks, and uh, um, uh… You know, uh, lunch for the day, and they pick me up [/and/] drop me back off. And then I go to the Day Centre. There, they have (laughter) exercises, and they have [/puzzles/] for the brain, questions, and all sorts of things. And then they have lunch, and then Tai Chi, and yoga.*

Me: *And is it with other seniors?*

Matilda: *All really, they're all mostly French. Oh they are very nice! So you need that, you know, in your life… to sort of be with people.*

Me: *Hmm-mmm. And is that your - do you consider that to be play for you?*

Matilda: *Of course! Of course!* (Lefevre, 2017, P3, I1, pp. 10-11)

Here we can see how Matilda has an exceptionally motivated temperament, in addition to being very loving, humble, and immaterial. She also had the most all-encompassing definition of play. She spoke of play in a very free and open manner, where it seemed quite obvious to her that enjoyable activities are play - no matter one's age, nor the reasons the activity is considered enjoyable. When I asked if something was play for her, she usually replied, "of course!"

4.2.3 Family, culture, and war

All of the participants' temperaments seemed to at least partially stem from their cultural and family upbringings. Matilda's individual traits appeared to be highly connected to her very loving family. Matilda has lived a life where she's always focused on what mattered to her most, which she said is art and family. Despite her father having told her, "[t]his art has no money, you know" her family has always been incredibly supportive of her playful artistic endeavors because she comes from a family of artists. She has fond childhood memories of watching her older cousin draw paisley designs on everything, and wanting eagerly to be able to do the same. Her Uncle also did detailed landscape drawings and played the Hawaiian guitar. A few centuries back, a family member of hers was a priest and a poet who translated religious works into seven different languages. He is now featured on a Sri Lankan stamp that Matilda showed me in an album. It became highly apparent that Matilda has had an extremely happy and richly artistic family life. Many of her children and grandchildren now pursue their artistic play interests in their free time, while having high-paying jobs in engineering and technological professions. Matilda instead found success by following a purely artistic path. "Money is nothing, you know", she had said to me. After looking through two dusty photo albums documenting all of Matilda's incredible artwork, as well as pictures of her family gatherings and trips to places all over the world, I began to understand her immaterial nature. Her upbringing seems to have

informed her loving nature that strongly values family over money. At the same time, she possesses qualities that are different from her family, such as being very immaterial. This has ended up impacting her play because being immaterial has likely helped her devote much of her life to art. Matilda's quality of being loving appears to have also dictated her play since culture and family seem to have contributed to formulating her loving and accepting temperament. This could hold the key to why she approaches the task of defining play in a very open-ended manner.

Put simply, Matilda is an easy-going person who is not one to split hairs over definitions. This approach to defining play contrasts sharply with Wendy's very rigid approach to what play can and cannot be defined as. Wendy's individual qualities are: hardworking, determined, sensible, intuitive, and being a leader. She spoke of how her Dutch cultural values made her very practical, grounded, and determined. In turn, Wendy seems to define play in a very analytical and cautious way. Wendy was deprived of play as a child because she was severely over-worked when she was young. Recollection is further complicated when considered alongside the other participants' stories and extant research (Gutman, 2013) indicating that child rearing was very different from what it is like today. According to today's norms in Canadian society, Wendy experienced severe neglect and what would be called "child abuse". However, it is vital to respect the historical differences so as to not judge her parents. Here, Wendy tells her story:

> *So I was born in Holland. And then my parents moved to Australia and I turned thirteen on the ship. And well, it was - my father had been in concentration camps. So I think he had Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, and I think he just wanted to get away. And, so he wanted to go to a sunnier place. And I was very disappointed because I had to leave my grandmother who I was very attached to. And I had a brother who was nine years old, and my mother was pregnant. Yeah (clears throat), so there's three and a half years*

between my brother [/and I/], and then my sister was born two months after we came to Australia. I'm the eldest. (Laughter, sigh) and, um, (pause) I don't know, but we were poor. So my mother, even though she was pregnant, she worked for a bit. And then (clears throat) she had my sister, whom I adored, and I kind of felt [/like a/] mother to her. And, uh, and then I had to work at Christmas time. Christmas time [/was/] a long, two-month holiday, and my father found me a job. […] [/So/], on the contrary, I don't have stories of play. I was – had to be responsible. Because oh, I was thirteen, my sister was born, I had to work all my school holidays. I had to work at fourteen. I started to work after school. I was doing accounting. Uh… Saturdays I had to work. So there was not much play […]. In Holland, I took care of my brother who was three and a half years old, because we had a two-hour lunchtime, from twelve to two. I was responsible for him from… I, from when I was seven years old, and he was three and half years younger. So I was responsible for two hours. So, you know, uh, so my mo-, my grandmother was my only salvation. And I got what I needed from her. So when I left my grandmother [pause]. So, that was... you know. Sh-, I was already missing that, because I got my love from my grandmother. And, my parents was, wha - you know, my mother had a hard time too because my father was in a concentration camp when I was born. During the war. So, she had this store. She had to manage it. She's very capable of doing things. But she was not capable of loving. She had to do, do, do, do, do, do. Which she did for her parents. She was the girl, and there were two boys. She was the one who was capable. Now you see, I understand all these things now, but I never understood that when I was younger. But I understand now how hard it was for her. (Lefevre, 2016b, P2, I1, pp. 1-5)

Wendy's childhood was clearly very hard, and as a result she does not have stories of child play. That being said, she went on to discover play as a teenager, young adult, middle-aged adult, and senior. When asked what had made her so determined to find play in life, she replied:

> *Where I got - I think where I got my strength from was that my mother, like in Holland, my father was in the Resistance. And so I, that was part of, so, and that - she was alone. And, you know, she ran a store, by herself. She gave birth by herse- or, she had an Aunt that came and helped her, and came. Yeah. And so, she didn't know if my father was alive or wherever he was. And so, she was very strong! And then, my father had, um, ah, you know, post-traumatic stress, you know. So she had to deal with that, and, and we never realized why my father was so restless.* (Lefevre, 2017, P2, I3, p. 25)

James Marten, a historian of war, contextualizes some of Wendy's experiences by discussing how children were impacted by the aftermath of the Second World War (2013):

> Like children in any country at the end of a major war, they also faced difficult reunions with deeply scarred fathers, many of whom had been away for years. For many children, the reappearance of fathers intruded on routines established without them, and the frustration, defeatism, and post-traumatic stress that shaped veterans' post-war lives often made them strict disciplinarians or hopelessly distracted. (p. 154)

In comparing the ways in which Matilda and Wendy even approach the question of defining play, their respective temperaments appear to have influenced how they each responded. Additionally, their play histories appear to not only have been influenced by their temperaments, but their temperaments seem to have been at least partially informed by their play histories. What is more, family, culture, and uncontrollable external events such as war largely shaped the different routes that each of their play histories have taken. As Wendy's story makes clear, her

temperament was influenced by her family, and in particular, her mother's behaviour. This appears to have influenced the way in which Wendy took to the task of defining play. When discussing a travelling experience that Wendy saved every penny for in early adulthood so that she could return to her grandmother, here is an example of how, in comparison to Matilda, Wendy approached the question of defining play with a heavy dose of scepticism and reserve:

Me: *Do you feel that experience was play or not? That travelling experience?*

Wendy: *It was an experience... I don't know if it was play. But we saw many things - is that play? Or, there were so many countries we had experienced. Like, uh... Like, [/on the/] seventh of July there is the bullfight in Pamplona. We stayed in - we were right there! And for the seventh of July! We didn't even know that. So, yeah, there were fun things. Like, it's a great experience.*

Me: *And, that um (pause). Like one of the things that my research is trying to look at is really how seniors define play today. So, like, er-, how you as a senior would define play now today in comparison to other developmental stages. So, as a young adult, um, w-, would that have been your definition of play, to...? Or, not really?*

Wendy: *-To have fun? Yeah. Is play to have fun? Or, or, to be... relax-, why, it was in a way, it was play.*

Me: *Hmm. When you, um, saw your grandmother for the first time, um, again, when you were twenty-one, did you and her play together again or was it more talking?*

Wendy: *Nooo. I, I just… It was just her security, like…*

Me: *Ahhhh...*

Wendy: *-She was loving. She was a big woman.* (Lefevre, 2016b, P3, I1, pp. 18-19)

Together, the stories from this section show us how each participant's approach to defining play is at least partially informed by their respective temperaments, and that their family and cultural upbringings seem to have influenced their unique characteristics and qualities. Returning to how Breen, Cairney, McAdams, and McLean claim that culturally-based *master narratives* formulate individual identities (2016), it makes sense that the participants' stories indicated that family, culture, war, and temperaments are all connected. Furthermore, McAdams, Josselson, and Lieblich say that "narrative forms provide a window onto cultural conventions and expectations about the "right way" to live one's life" (2006, p. 266). Here, these seniors' culturally informed stories instead reveal the "right way" to play. Family, culture, and income seem to have informed the nature and content of each participant's play history. Family is a kind of sub-culture, and income is often determined by that particular sub-culture. In this way, so much of play seems to boil down to culture. Put by Huizinga, "culture emerges from play" (1949, p. 46). Yet, it is unclear as to whether or not culture, play, and personal temperaments are connected for everyone, as well as *how exactly* they might be linked. It is also impossible to know from these stories whether or not seniors' definitions of play are more or less impacted by their culturally informed personal temperaments than non-seniors' definitions of play. That question is worthy of being researched because of how identity appears to shift with aging.

4.3 Natural and Cultural Landscapes Influencing Definitions of Play

I was shocked by how much the natural world was mentioned in relation to play or leisure throughout the entire lifespan. As well, nature seemed to become a metaphor for each senior's view of play, and literary landscapes therefore formed within all of the seniors' stories.

4.3.1 Play vs. leisure in seniors' descriptions of playing in nature

Wendy spoke about the importance of nature for relaxing as a senior. She was hesitant though to call this play, but it is what she does to relax, heal, reinvigorate, and reflect. If that can be considered play, then the following story explains play for her as a senior, which is intimately tied to natural play spaces. If not, then the following is an example of how she experiences leisure as a senior. Returning to Freysinger's work, the key elements of play and leisure appear to be the same (voluntariness, lack of necessity, freedom of choice, personal expression, intrinsic motivation, and pleasure) (2015). I therefore see this story of Wendy's as an example of play, but also feel uncomfortable claiming such when she was hesitant to call it play. As put by Wendy,

> *Wendy: So what other play is there? And then, wha - I go for walks with my husband on the weekend, on the mountain. We go there, and that's kind of nature… That we have to do, or you know, going for walks and appreciating nature... Is that play? […] Wha-, ah, uh, I, I, wha-, do-, what is play? (Laughter) that's it. I mean I'm not defining play! It's not really play. It's just… (Takes deep breath) breathing. And just… (Takes deep breath) relaxing. I guess, you know, I need to walk. Like, it's on the weekend I think, because that's you know, that's getting away from everything, and enjoying, like you know, you go to the Lachine, and th-, uh, it's just nature is very soothing. And… Peaceful! And… Reinvigorating, in a way, for you. Putting things in perspective.*
>
> *Me: Yeah, that's, that's interesting. Yeah. Um, because I'm, I'm sort of finding that, that might be a common thread. It's sort of like when we're children, play, it's almost like the opposite. It's more about getting high energy. And it seems that for a lot of people, a lot of adults and seniors, play is actually the opposite. It's bringing the energy down and calming down, and just….*

> *Wendy: Because you know why? When you do things when you're this age, you become tired very quickly. You have, you don't have the energy. You don't have the mental energy, and you don't have the physical energy. So, just to walk, along the Lachine Canal, with the rapids…. Or going to the mountain, and, as a matter of fact, we do not really go to Mount Royal. We go to Mount Royal Cemetery. My mother-in-law was buried there. And I f-, I got the, umm… The spot, the plot. Yeah. And… and, my husband didn't want to get the plot, and I said, "You have to come and see the plot!" Like, I had to do it for his mother, right? And I said, "It's so beautiful there because…" you know, it was, um, blossom time! I said that, "It's so gorgeous", and it just happened. So he said, "No, no, no, I don't want to go. I don't want to go." He's so scared of that (laughter). And I said, "You have to come", and, and so, at that time, it was a Sunday, and the Ukrainian Priests were singing. You know, they do, um, like, uh… Burial services, and they, they, the, the Ukrainians or Russians, they sing so beautifully! And, people who are with them, you know, the little, the family, they sing and you can hear it echoing! On Mount Royal! Mount Royal Cemetery. Unfortunately now lots of cyclists cycle there. They found out about it. Anyway. Yeah.* (Lefevre, 2017, P2, I3, pp. 17-20)

Even though one may see me as having prompted Wendy here for her response, I in fact did not. This is because Wendy was *very* comfortable saying "no" to anything that she disagreed with me on. She would not have agreed with what I had said if she had not sincerely been of that opinion.

This story of Wendy's helps reveal why nature is important to her play as a senior, while also bringing up the complicated cultural and social issues of labelling an adult activity as play. Sutton-Smith explains this when articulating the ambiguities of defining adult play (1997):

> There are the ambiguities that seem particularly problematic in Western society, such as why play is seen largely as what children do but not what adults do; why children play but adults only recreate; why play is said to be important for children's growth but is merely a diversion for adults. The most reviled form of play, gambling, is also the largest part of the national play budget. How can it be that such ecstatic adult play experiences, which preoccupy so much emotional time, are only diversions? And why do these adult play preoccupations, which seem like some vast cultural, even quasi-religious subconsciousness, require us to deny that this kind of play may have the same meaning for children? (p. 7)

It is interesting to note that for the two other participants who did not grow up in Western societies, it was no problem for them to see play as something that we all do at any stage of life. Again, here it seems that culture informs our very conceptions of how play can and cannot be defined. With respect to seniors' play, it is my opinion that this area becomes particularly sensitive within Western societies due to how seniors often get problematically viewed as infantile. Celeste told me a story of how she was leaving a McGill University auditorium with a group of seniors after they had finished their lecture that was part of a seniors' academic group to which they all belong. Celeste said that a young university student had exclaimed, "Oh they're so cute!" Celeste discussed how it was just ridiculous because the young adult had said this "as if we were all deaf and could not hear her." This is an example of how in youth-obsessed consumer cultures of most Western societies (Featherstone, 1982; Giroux, 2000), something odd happens where a regressive and insulting form of youthfulness gets problematically associated with old age as a form of ageism. As a result, seniors from Western cultures may be averse to talking about their play, while seniors from non-Western societies may be more open to the notion of

adults and seniors playing. This is what my study has shown, but only for three participants. More studies on this are needed to know whether or not this holds true at a larger scale.

4.3.2 Nature in defining literary landscapes, lifelong play, and creativity

With regards to how seniors play or partake in leisure, nature had a vital role, as Wendy's aforementioned story indicates. With Celeste and Matilda too, nature has always shared a critical relationship to each of their play. Both Celeste and Matilda go outside in nature for play as seniors. Unlike Wendy though, Celeste and Matilda also often played in nature as children. For Celeste in particular, the natural environment of Africa was *vital* to her play. For Matilda, she focused less on describing outdoor child play, and instead emphasized how much nature had inspired her artwork and paintings throughout her non-senior adult life. I saw many photos of Matilda all throughout adulthood when she would be painting or sketching outdoors in places all over the world. She made a point of spending all of her money on international travel so that she could capture different cultural and physical landscapes on her canvas. With the exception of some portraits and abstract work, almost all of Matilda's lifelong artistic play has been devoted to depicting nature. As a result, nature seems to inspire creativity in both art and play.

What is more, in hearing seniors' *stories* about nature's role in art and play, the play spaces became more like *literary landscapes* to me than actual physical spaces. Indeed, many of these play places are now gone. Mozambique has surely changed drastically through urban development in the last sixty-eight years since Celeste played in the wild jungles there. As previously mentioned, Matilda's childhood home and surrounding play environment were burned to the ground during the Sri Lankan Civil War. So, these natural play spaces don't actually exist anymore except in the minds of these individuals who are recalling them through their stories of play. In this way, they are literary landscapes. Literary landscapes are also

typically understood to stand as metaphors in novels. I could not help but see the play spaces as metaphors for each senior's unique play histories and definitions of play. Celeste often defined play not only as politics and an inner world, but also as *freedom*. The landscape that she described having played in was the epitome of freedom with hardly anything having yet been controlled by humans. I got to see one of Matilda's childhood play spaces in a photograph with her ten siblings and two parents. Even though the photo was black and white, the glowing and vibrant sunlight was highly evident. In the photo, there was an elephant and lots of flora. The setting of this photograph seemed to capture the peaceful and loving way that I had watched Matilda partake in her artistic play as a senior. The landscape in the photograph also shared a similar quality to Matilda's artistic works, and to the style of her bright, cheerful, and sunlit home. Matilda was less "literary" about her natural play settings because she preferred to show me photographs of them. Nonetheless, the literary metaphor is still apparent due to the similarities between Matilda's natural play spaces as a child, and the way in which she defined play with a carefree nature that suggested most enjoyable things to obviously be play.

Even Wendy's play history shares a metaphorical connection to her past play places. Wendy found play when she was a teenager. After moving to Australia, she met a lovely, and in her words, "playful" boyfriend who was a very good-looking lifeguard. She said that, in addition to her grandmother, he was her salvation. Wendy and her boyfriend played outdoors a lot when Wendy could find time away from work. They would go to surfing competitions and drive in cars with friends to socialize and swim at the beach. The literary landscapes of Wendy's teenage play can be read as a metaphor for how she was trying to heal and free herself from her difficult family situation. So, the seniors' play histories reveal not only a literal link between nature and

play, but also a metaphorical one depending on how the participants' stories of play are viewed. Admittedly, only three participants having been in this study limits the strength of these notions.

In this study, nature still turned out to be essential to all three seniors' play as children or adolescents. The affinity that Celeste's child play held with nature is particularly noteworthy:

Celeste: *I was born in Mozambique. I lived there for the first twelve years of my life. And then my father was transferred to the old Southern Rhodesia, which I am ashamed to say today is Zimbabwe. It's-, they turned that into total chaos. It was a beautiful country. And I lived there for another ten years. And then I went to live in South Africa. That's because I, I took my high school in Southern Rhodesia, which was under the University of Cambridge. And I went to the University in South Africa. I was there for, eh, probably plus or minus eight to nine years. And then I went back to Mozambique. Mozambique, I got married. Eh, my better half is up there. Or worst half. I don't know which one it is (laughter). And then, um... The Revolution came, nineteen seventy-four. So, we had to move out, otherwise my children would be programmed by the Communists that were coming in. And so we went to South Africa, and once again I lived there for another ten years. And there, and all of a sudden, [/Jace/] got, ah, the possibility of coming and get-, ah, getting a job in Canada and we came here. So I never really lived in Europe. But I did go to Europe, ah, since the age of, um, around about twenty-five until now that I'm seventy-nine. I think I've gone almost every year, to Europe. So, eh Europe is not strange to me, but I've never really truly lived there. That's, that's one thing I'm very fussy about. And I'm an African.*

Me: *Do many think that you lived there? Is that why you like to clarify?*

Celeste: Yes, most of them because I sound Portuguese. You don't associate Portuguese with Mozambique. You associate it with Portugal. So they, they think I'm from Portugal. I am not. And I am very proud of living in, eh, you know ah, ah-, having lived there or being born and having lived and married and everything in Africa because I find it's so misunderstood that whole concept of what Africa is. It gets my goat.

Me: Yeah, yeah, through the Western imagination?

Celeste: Yes, not only the Western, [/but/] you get the Asiatic too. They are very much, eh, on a par there [/with thinking that/] everything about Africa is second rate. Yeah. I learned a lot there. Particularly play.

Me: Yeah? Yeah, what types of play did you learn there?

Celeste: Um, you see during the Second World War, for some unknown reason, my father was transferred to what eh, people outside [/of/] Africa called 'Black Africa'. In other words, we were the only Whites. Thank goodness. Eh, who, with who would I play? Just with Black kids. Now Black kids don't - are not spoiled. I mean the, the worst play I've ever come across is European children playing. They need toys. They need Mommy to come and help them get out of whatever situation they're in. But in Africa, eh, at least in my time, it wasn't like that. You had a very big playground, and it's nature. And it's that alone. You invented your own toys, your own games, and your own dangers, because I got the hiding of my life. Because my friends would come and call me, they would whistle and I would go out, without my mother knowing. And they would take me to a sort of a rock, near the, it's a busy river, eh, it's a busy river.... [/To/] watch the crocodiles. And even, of course, we were just about the best breakfast they could ever have.

Me: Oh my goodness.

Celeste: I know. That's why I got the hiding of my life. My mother just hit me so hard because she was afraid I [/would/] be eaten by the crocodiles, and I wasn't aware of it. You see because we would just watch the, eh, I don't know, the big crocodiles warm up; they open their mouths. You see, so right about mid-day, they [/would/] open their mouths and stay like this (making action with hands and mouth). No, no, no danger. And they, they, I mean no danger… If you [/came/] near yes, sure (laughter). There are times when they [/could/] just k-, eh, cut you in half. No, but they would stay there very calmly. Eh, warming themselves up you see, by their tongue. And we really enjoyed that, and after that we'd just play with stones and sticks and, and leaves and flowers, eh, and run around, and to me that's why I quite often say, although there it was slightly different, it's the only time when a child is really free. They are not free. I mean free within the certain... Um, certain limitations I know. Because if you live in a society, eh, like eh, Jean-Jacques Rousseau said, "You are born free but you are everywhere in chains." I mean there are little chains all over. But within the, the limit of having those social cha-, eh, chains, play for me is, eh, an expression of freedom. Um, there are no rules, but if there are, you establish them, with your colleagues. Um, and no one is telling you if it's right or if it's wrong. Maybe, but even if there is somebody telling you that you're doing something wrong, it's a kid of your age. So you can just lash back and, and tell them just a bit of your, of your thoughts. Oh and quite often I would end up in a fight, because I was also very good at that, and I can show you a photo of myself thinking I was a Tarzan.

Me: Oh cool, I would love to see- [cross talk].

Celeste: Yeah you can. You can have look at it. Eh, that, that was a lot of fun. So I learned from them. And I owe it to, to the, to the, to the Africans... What it is really, to

play. Not with artificial toys, but you develop your own creativity. You, you want to enjoy yourself. You don't depend on others. It's up to you to look at nature because they didn't have… Any toys. They made their own toys. You see, eh, but this was in really 'Dark Africa', and I just love it to this day. […] Tha-, that's how much those little ones influenced me. Little ones, they were probably five or six, because I was four or five. I was very, very young, and then my father - and then I was, literally I was dying [/from Black Water Fever/]. Somebody came and said, "Oh my God, we have to take these people completely out of here," because, eh, they knew us very well. They transferred my father to another town, and there of course I lost touch [/with my childhood playmates/] with that, but, but, it left a mark on me, that ne-, was never erased. So, I became impossible. First thing, my toys: a monkey. A real monkey. This, this was a macaque. A macaque, it's a monkey. And, ah, that to me was my toy. You see? It's, it was my Marguerita. Marguerita was very important for me. And then we would climb everyth-, my mother would want me to go to, to school. I said, "To hell with school! I've got Marguerita. She gives me all the play I need." We would climb up. We'd climb up a mango tree. They are not very tall, but they have lots of branches, and I was tiny so they, they, they could support me - nothing like what I am today. I mean I was very thin, by the way. I will show you, you will see. Eh, and I would go up and sit on the branches with the, the monkey and this to me, to this day I will never forget. The monkey sat just you know, th-, le-, two legs dangling on each side of my shoulders. And they, eh, you know the monkeys they preen each another. He would preen me. I, I, I had no fleas. I had nothing. But he had to go through the motion, and which would send me almost to sleep because it was so nice. He was scratching my head, you see? I don't know how I never fell from the

trees, fast asleep. Anyhow and what I'm remembering is this. When he was, eh, preening, afterwards, because that's the procedure, y-, you pretend that you've caught a flea, and they do this, with their fingers (squishes thumb and finger together). And he'd come th-, th-, with each hand on each side of my face for me to see. You do this - there was nothing there, but he'd go through the motion.

Me: Just for, for this (makes hand action), for the recorder, what is this, this?

Celeste: Yup, this would be the killing, eh, eh, the flea. That they found… And, but you know that their hands are tiny. And that to me this was just a wonderful thing, I'd be falling asleep, and my mother would be screaming down below, "Go to school!" And, so I was "Oh…" (imitating her younger self looking sleepy).

Me: And you would just not go to school?

Celeste: No I did eventually. The, the cook told me, "You know Miss, if I were you, I'd avoid hidings." (Lefevre, 2016b, P1, I1, pp. 1-7, 14-16)

A great deal is expressed in this long introductory story of Celeste's early play history and upbringing. We see here the role of nature and culture in shaping her physical play spaces, but we also see how family tensions and child abuse influenced the rebellious nature of Celeste's play. Celeste also describes play here as freedom from society while one is still connected to civilization. She describes her identity as African, while it is also rooted in a history of the Portuguese colonizing Africa. Yet, Celeste still felt more connected to her Black friends and African culture than to her Portuguese kin. This story also reveals the role of problem solving and creativity in a form of highly independent child's play that Celeste hasn't seen the likes of in Western cultures. We also see here elements of how child play has changed through history, how it culturally differs, and how industrialization has changed it, as Henricks has also noted (2006).

Vickerius and Sandberg compared adult memories of environments in childhood with the environment around play today because they claim that, "[t]o understand play, it is important to make the environment in which play occurs visible" (2006, p. 207). It was discovered that the differences in the physical play environments between adults and children were: the media, toy industry, and McDonald's influence on children's play. Social relations such as parents' work schedules and preschool have also changed in ways that offer modern children more material entities for play (instead of imaginative or natural ones), but also the opportunity to meet more people, which is positive for children's social development (Vickerius & Sandberg, 2006). Here, Vickerius and Sandberg look at one generation of difference (2006), whereas the seniors' play stories from my study are from at least two generations ago. At the same time, part of what Vickerius and Sandberg say about adults' memories of play corresponds with my findings here. Child play was less materialistic, and as a result seems to have been more connected to the natural and imaginative world than today. When it comes to the social environment, Celeste's experiences only partially relate to what Vickerius and Sandberg conclude, for Celeste had lots of childhood playmates during the earliest part of her life. Once they moved, Celeste "became impossible" because she really missed her friends - so much so that she befriended a monkey and refused to go to school as an act of defiance. Matilda and Wendy's stories of play in childhood and adolescence seem to entirely correspond with Vickerius and Sandberg's findings that indicate play to have been simply less materialistic than it is today, which made it more connected to natural and physical play spaces (2006). As well, for Matilda and Wendy, social play environments were more limited than they are for most children today, just as Vickerius and Sandberg claim (2006). Since nature was so important to all of the seniors' play in youth, then that might be why it continues to be a very important part of all of their play today.

4.4 Individual Play Histories as Informants of Seniors' Play

Connections arose between all three seniors' unique play histories and their play today. These connections were rooted in personal interests that lasted a lifetime for each participant, yet were also influenced by their culturally and individually informed temperaments, as well as each of their natural, cultural, and social play environments as children. For the most part, opinions about play appeared to have their origins in play histories. For example, Celeste defined play as freedom from society, and her play as a child gave her this. Wendy did not really define seniors' play, but went so far as to say that it is good feelings and enjoyment, whereby that usually means relaxation, restoration and healing as a senior when one gets tired easily. Wendy's teenage play was largely about healing and "survival" due to being deprived of play as a young child. Finally, Matilda defined seniors' play as going out, being social, and doing things to stimulate one's mind and creativity. Her child play was largely connected to socializing with her very tight-knit family, as well as being absorbed in her passion for art. So here, we can see how all of the threads of each senior's play history come together to formulate a memory of early play, which seems highly related in content and form to how all of these seniors play today.

The threads that came together to weave these three seniors' stories of play were: (a) personal interests, (b) personal temperaments, (c) family, (d) culture, (e) war, and (f) natural play environments and/or literary landscapes of these seniors' play histories. It seems that these elements not only helped formulate these three seniors' conceptions of play, but also the manner with which they each approached defining seniors' play and play in general. At the same time, these definitions are specific to the individuals. There could be a general link between how seniors define their play and their early experiences of play, which would be interesting to test

with a larger study. It would also be interesting for further research to test if seniors' definitions of play are more connected to early play experiences than is the case for non-senior adults.

To provide an example of this, let us return to how Celeste considers it a form of seniors' play to care for her home. This relates to one of Celeste's childhood games, which was inspired by her mother's sewing, art making, and crafting. This story also reveals how Celeste's child play was influenced by war, but in a very different way than had been the case for Wendy.

Celeste: We had um - and please remember, we're talking about First World W-, ah, Second World War, and soon after that. Eh, we had ah, about two or three wooden crates. And, those wooden crates for me were, eh, were my houses. And, then I would wait for my mother, [/to leave at/] some time, to run off with her lamp, and then I'd take a string, tie it to the lamp, and put the lamp inside the crate. And I had my own flowers there, and my own chairs, you know? My chairs were [/what/] the bananas came [/in/], you know in, eh, in small, little boxes. And I would create, and I would make my own, eh, what do you call it um... Doilies! I don't know if you know what doilies are?

Me: Yeah, doilies, yeah.

Celeste: Yeah, and I would cut them because my mother was so very good at that. I watched and I said, "This is great!" I would take, ah, any coloured, or not coloured, just white piece of paper, or newspaper, and cut it into fancy things, quite often not exactly as it should be. But, those were my doilies inside my house. Of course, when the rain ca-, the, the rain came, I mean the whole thing would [/it/] just got soaked (laughter). But then I would say, "Well, it's time to, to create it again." I mean, there was society, there that's, [/but/] you could actually solve your own problems. You become a problem solver because you don't have people in your make-up-believe coming in to help you to [/with/]

your own world. Y-, you just-, it's just yours. Eh, that, it's something you own that nobody can touch, because they don't believe it exists. (Lefevre, 2016b, P1, I1, pp. 13-14)

4.5 Senior Years as a Golden Opportunity for New Play Interests and Friends

We can see that in some ways child play influences how individuals play as seniors. Yet, what about when seniors play in ways that they did not as children? Both Wendy and Celeste did not do art as children, but now do it as forms of seniors' play or leisure. For example, even though Celeste was creative in her childhood play as her stories indicate, she was not interested in doing art a child. She discovered art during her senior years, showing that while some of her interests have lasted her entire lifetime, other interests have developed through her elderly life.

Me: *So did you, did you do art as a child that felt like play?*

Celeste: *No. I saw my mother. You know when you went to the toilet, eh, ah, as you sit on the "throne" as I call it-*

Me: *(Laughter).*

Celeste: *The painting right in front is my mothers. The painting... Eh, the flowers. It was a Christmas card she sent me. And I said, "No way this is going to be kept as a Christmas card." I used the Christmas card, and I said to the man, "I want this framed."*

Me: *Wow, wow. So you feel that in, in adult life you got into art as a form of play because of your mothers' influence?*

Celeste: *Oh yes, yes, yes, yes! Because I always saw her, umm, you know if you were in a tearoom, she would use the serviettes, the paper serviettes, eh, just to draw, just whatever she wanted to draw. But usually, faces and flowers, and she liked flowers. Uh, she actually painted with a needle. If you see how she sewed [/like/] that, you wouldn't believe that is.* (Lefevre, 2016b, P1, I1, pp. 76-77)

4.5.1 Socio-economic status in seniors' new discoveries of play

Matilda, like Celeste, had artistic inspiration from family members. Wendy, however, did not have any artistic family support. Despite this, she demonstrated an early aptitude for art that was rewarded by her school when she won two art awards with little to no encouragement from her family for her academics and creative pursuits. She said that she had to leave art (other than sewing her own clothes), and was not able to return to it until much later in life as an adult when she had much more money to play. Due to this, Wendy has been able to explore many new play interests in adulthood. She said that, among rediscovering fine arts, she has also tried a number of sports including equestrian. She has also regularly done yoga for decades since she first discovered it in the seventies. So, while family inspirations seem to have a role in determining what seniors turn to for newfound play activities, socio-economic status also appears to be a factor in dictating what kinds of play activities are available to a given person.

While newfound play activities opened up to Wendy because of how she went from poor to wealthy, Matilda's experiences were the opposite. Even though Matilda is the poorest and oldest of all three of the participants, she plays the most, tries many new play forms, does the most art, and seems to be the happiest of all three seniors who partook in this study. While it is not the project of this study to define what determines her "happiness", even one exception to the rule means that a high socio-economic status is not necessarily required for playing as a senior, nor is it necessarily essential for aging well. Yet Matilda does have an exceptionally positive outlook on life. She also has the largest and most connected family of all three participants. As a result, her children would *never* tolerate her having needs that weren't met. So while she has no money, she is the matriarch of a family that believes in supporting its elders. As previously implied, Matilda has children and grandchildren who belong to high socio-economic statuses. So

it seems that socio-economic support is important to seniors' play, but that it can exist in many ways for seniors: through one's own means, through the support of one's children, and/or through government supports for seniors' play, which Matilda was already quoted in mentioning. If play entails a sense of freedom, it is also connected to money since money does offer liberties.

4.5.2 Changes in elderly life as related to new play interests and forms

Having interests that changed with aging was shared among all three participants, and seems to be connected to having more time to play as a senior due to retiring and one's children growing up and becoming independent. Indeed, Neugarten has articulated a spectrum of views on retirement, with positive approaches to it being described as "time to develop new interests and with opportunities to extend not only one's lifetime but also what can be called one's personal biography" (1996, p. 223). Moreover, physical limitations actually seemed to open up doors to newfound play. This is due to how all of the seniors in this study had adapted to new play forms to accommodate their health problems of old age – namely aches and pains, which in these cases seemed to be quite severe even for very high-functioning seniors. A few critical questions that remain are: (a) how far do these physical limitations extend across all seniors, (b) how many seniors cope with those challenges of old age by seeking out new forms of play, and (c) what are the motivations that result in certain seniors playing, while others do not?

I also noticed how physical limitations among all three participants appeared to inspire greater interest in mental expansion and abilities. All three participants emphasized the need to be *lifelong learners* in their senior years, which they expressed through their words, actions, or both. Indeed, Cohen states, that in a study with mentally healthy senior participants, ages 65 to 102, he found "examples of new intellectual growth and inquiry [were] abundant", leading him to conclude that "the capacity to learn knows no endpoint in the human life cycle" (1988, p. 26).

Even Levy's study on age-associated cognitive decline admitted that there was no lower age limit because the phenomenon can begin earlier in life, and "that a sudden onset of cognitive decline was very likely to be associated with an external cause" (1994, p. 65). This suggests that cognitive decline is not necessarily an inevitable part of old age, as Cohen's work also indicates.

What my study seems to point towards is that, with the inevitability of body deterioration and physical health problems, mental and creative stimulation as forms of play become more appealing for seniors than they may have previously seemed at other points in life. At the same time, it is important to note that all three participants in this study are highly educated and have been interested in learning throughout their entire lives. Still, they did all emphasize how much more important lifelong learning becomes when you are a senior due to physical declines of the body. I noticed how a great deal of their senior play activities revolved around learning, not just in the form of art education, but also in terms of book clubs, mental puzzles, academic societies, and intellectual conversations with friends. In this way, the seniors' years might actually open up greater mental and creative possibilities for playing due to newfound free time, and the fact that the physical body becomes increasingly unreliable and limited through the progression of human life, even for high functioning seniors. Indeed, all of this study's participants discovered their playful art education sites only once they were seniors.

Chapter 5: Discussion

I briefly discuss what the findings mean and what assertions they can support. In the interest of not repeating myself, I am letting it be known here that there are limitations to each of the points listed below. While this study offers in-depth anecdotal insights on seniors' play in art education, it does not elicit widely generalizable results. All of the points of discussion mentioned in this section need to be further researched by large-scale studies. Yet, this study can offer a contribution to directions that future research on seniors' playful art education can go in. This is useful given how underdeveloped seniors' playful art education currently is.

5.1 Individuality in Cognitive Developmentally Formed Definitions of Play

Based on the findings, personal play preferences and individual temperaments appeared to have an important role in determining how each participant defined play. Due to this, it seems that play is predominately individually determined during the senior years - but it is not clear as to whether or not this is characteristic of seniors' play. What appears to be shared by all of the participants is the role that unique play histories have had in shaping individual conceptions of play. It seems to me that definitions themselves are inherently a task of cognitive development, for I believe our conceptions of ideas are shaped by how we cognitively receive and make sense of new information and experiences. If our definitions of play are based on our individual processes of cognitive development, then it makes sense that one's definition of play is, at least partially, individually determined. This is because, according to Li and Baltes, differences in cognitive developmental operations across the lifespan consist of: (a) cultural and neuro-biological evolutionary processes that are species-typical, (b) age-based socialization where individuals acquire socio-culturally determined normative knowledge at certain stages of development, and (c) individual expertise and skills resulting from personal life experiences and

histories (2006, p. 349). Based on this, individuality impacts how we cognitively process information and experiences across all developmental stages. It therefore makes sense that information and experiences about play would be informed by individual play histories. At the same time, I was surprised by *how much* individuality appeared to inform each senior's definition of play. I wonder how characteristic this might be of seniors' play, or if individuality has a comparable impact in defining every individual's play at each developmental stage of life. From what this research showed me of the elderly stages of life, it seems that individuality could have a stronger role in seniors' play because of how each participant had *such* a strong sense of individuation, so much so that their highly solidified identities may be characteristic of their age.

5.2 Sociability in Educationally Created Experiences of Playful Art

At the same time, a highly apparent element to seniors' play in art education was the degree to which I observed it as being *social*. At all of the art education sites that I visited, social interaction was very apparent. Granted, all three of the participants who I exclusively observed are very sociable and outgoing. Yet, the social nature of all of the art education sites was not limited to each of the participants, but was more of an overarching element belonging to the community environment within which artistic learning and creation took place. Even in Celeste's case, her "private" art education was very social. The phone was constantly ringing, and she also continually chatted with her husband. She told me that her playful art education is always social for her unless she has a pressing deadline, in which case she isolates herself in order to focus.

While differences exist between all three of the participants' respective sites, they are united by how important social connection is to them all. I was very shocked to discover how social they all are because this contrasts starkly to my *own* experiences of playful art because it is highly solitary and internal. I usually get irritated when I am socially distracted from my art by

other people. Perhaps a great deal of my play, at this stage in my life, falls under the code of "play as ambition", for I do get immense satisfaction from accomplishing a desired creative goal. At the same time, Celeste told me that seniors must always strive towards a goal in order to still be truly living. She explained that all of the other life stages are given their respective goals, but not the senior years in Canadian culture and society.

While what Celeste says rings true, what I observed in seniors' playful art education was slightly different. Indeed, each participant seemed to have creative goals that they were highly focused on, but the social element of the art education experience seemed to be much more important. From analyzing each participant's play as a child or adolescent, it makes sense that social interaction would be very important to seniors' play. This is because of how each of the participants' play histories contains key supporting characters: playmates. Playmates and friendship came up many times in ways that were *critical* to all of the participants' play as children and/or adolescents. Returning to the finding that individual play histories seem to at least partially inform all three seniors' definitions of play, the social aspect of their play in early life seems to be shared by how they play today in art education. At the public community sites, even during moments of focus and tranquility, there was an overall feeling of community, connectivity, and "togetherness". At the same time, with this social interaction, fights and conflicts did break out at both of the public art education sites. Yet, it appeared that the seniors who I worked with in this study preferred the positive feelings of playfully making art with others, than protecting themselves from the potential risks of conflict that inevitably come from social interaction. At the same time, the three participants who I observed were all very emotionally and mentally high functioning. More research on seniors' playful art education sites needs to be done to better understand how important social connections are to this form of play.

Given what Podnieks says about the prevalence of elderly abuse in Canada and its significant connection to social isolation (1993), it makes sense that social connections were highly apparent across all three settings of seniors' playful art education. Furthermore, the social stigmas of ageism that Butler (1969) and Kuhn (1998) discuss further emphasize why social bonding was a key aspect of all three playful art education communities for the senior participants in this study. Moreover, in terms of play in general, Dissanayake defines play as having "a preponderantly social character [that] enhances what is called contact-furthering" (1974, pp. 212-13). Dissanayake connects this to art making by saying that, although creating art is private, it takes the artist outside of herself because she is put into relation with others, first through the artwork becoming an "other", and then with being concerned about how people will receive "the artwork" (1974). Indeed, I witnessed this across all of the seniors' playful art education sites that I observed. All of the participants were concerned about how her work would be perceived. Comparative comments were often made at the two public art education sites, and Celeste frequently asked her husband for his advice and opinions on how her work was looking.

Dissanayake states that "art play" is so tied to social behaviour that it was phylogenetically selected as a social signal (1974). She claims that, "the tendency for artistic behaviour is functional, because, at the beginning at least, it led to socially beneficial ends" (Dissanayake, 1974, p. 215). This is reminiscent of Pellegrini's psychological discussion of the functional elements of play, whereby he discusses play fighting as not intending to serve the actual function of fighting (2009). I wonder if seniors' playful art education operates in much the same way, where its real goal is socializing and not to create art. This might be the case because almost all humans *need* to socialize in order to live, but we don't need art to that extent. Pellegrini also identifies functional play behaviours as those that have "proximal beneficial

consequences" (2009, p. 13). So, a pretend play activity can actually prepare an individual for being able to do activities of real life that are close to those involved in the play. This is mostly viewed by developmental psychologists as part of how play prepares children for adulthood. This makes me wonder if perhaps play activities with proximal beneficial consequences could be present in seniors' playful art education by allowing them to continue to achieve the instrumental aims of their daily tasks when their bodies are becoming increasingly limited over time.

Overall, seniors' playful art education seems to be very social. Based on anthropological, psychological, and evolutionary theories, playful art making may be tied to ends that could particularly serve the well being of seniors in modern Canadian society, seeing as those ends are likely socializing and helping less functional seniors complete and practice daily tasks.

5.3. Play Histories as Developers of Seniors' Playful Art Education

From hearing the rich and captivating play histories of this study's participants, it became apparent that play histories carry with them the power to activate both play and creative expression. This was highly unexpected, as the study had simply set out to understand seniors' play histories in order to learn about their definitions of play. Here, I explain how seniors' play histories could be used by play-based art educators to know more about how their senior students play, while also contributing to curriculum development for seniors' playful art education.

5.3.1 Art educators learning the play histories of seniors

In looking not only at how seniors define play in relation to their play histories, but also at how this impacts their playful art education, it seems important for play theory-based art educators to learn the play histories of their senior students. This may be true for art educators wanting to use play theory for *any* type of student population. Yet, given how rich, complex, and dynamic the play histories of this study's participants are, it seems quite important to seniors'

playful art education that teachers be aware of all students' play histories in order for those educators to be able to truly understand how each student uniquely views and experiences play.

With the aforementioned Western cultural issues of infantilism that surround seniors' play, it is very important that art educators consider seniors' voices throughout the development and implementation of seniors' playful art education curriculum. Seeing as all of the participants were very keen on having their voices heard, this gives me the impression that seniors in general might be open to a very conversational, non-hierarchical way of playful art being taught. Though I witnessed a great deal of socializing happening at all three of the sites for seniors' playful art education, I did not see any effort from the teachers to learn about the play histories of their students. What is more, since play seems to be so personally defined during the senior years, art educators need to know how each of their senior students views play to be certain play is taking place. Of course, there are the "behavioural play markers" that Pellegrini discusses as indicators of mostly children's play (2009). While my observations of seniors' playful art education showed me that these behavioural play markers are far more evident in seniors' play than I had expected, a great deal of my insight into each participant's play *had* to be clarified through one-on-one conversations with the participants themselves. There were many times when each participant later corrected my assumptions of what I observed when I had asked her for clarification. Conversations about what is and is not play in one's art education, coupled with constant contextualization of this through being offered explanations of each senior's play histories, allowed me to understand each participant's play at a far deeper and richer level than if those conversations had not taken place. This study showed me how conversations such as this need to happen within senior's playful art education classrooms, especially considering how I also learned from this study that so many seniors do not get seen for who they truly are. No one

would guess that Celeste used to shimmy up trees with her pet monkey, or that Wendy travelled the world in the sixties as a young adult, or that Matilda worked as a United Nations secretary in Bangkok. Life story methodology can act as a tool to combat this problem. Understanding the play histories of each senior student could allow art educators to not only more accurately know how each student views, defines, and experiences play, but also who each student *truly* is.

5.3.2 Seniors' play histories and playful art education curriculum

Seniors' playful art education curriculum could therefore begin to be built as a constantly negotiated conversation between the students and the teacher, whereby the senior students' unique identities shape the curriculum content and teaching strategies. Art provides an ideal platform for investigating seniors' play histories as part of play-based curriculum itself. This is due to how the participants' play histories became so artistically inspiring, not only in literary ways but also visually. Had this study been larger, I would have explored this notion through my own visual representations of the participants' literary landscapes of their play histories, as well as by inviting the participants to also artistically recreate these play spaces of theirs. Yet, it can be known from the participants' stories themselves that play histories would make an excellent unit plan theme for seniors' playful art education curriculum. Put by Young and Saver, "coming to narrative is a necessary feature of human development. And, to the extent that culture is human development writ large, narrative becomes an inescapable constituent of culture" (2001, p. 73). Stories are bound to both human development and culture, while culture is bound to art. So, play histories as forms of narrative could help foster learning and development through art.

This is also the case because of how the stories themselves began to inspire play! All three seniors "lit up" and became quite excited when they each spoke about their play histories. Perhaps remembering past play experiences allowed the participants to access those same

feelings that occurred at the time when their play memories had originally been formed. Indeed, Schacter claims: "[t]he idea of remembering as "mental time travel" highlights something that is truly remarkable as rememberers, we can free ourselves from the immediate constraints of time and space, re-experiencing the past" (1996, p. 17). When it comes to remembering play, this could be hugely beneficial for seniors in allowing them to re-experience playful feelings. One of Celeste's stories even reveals how she felt a light and playful feeling come over her right before she expected my arrival for an interview. She admits in her story that she doesn't know what caused it, but that it could have been the fact that her and I were just about to talk about play. Perhaps the social connection, though, is what made Celeste feel a newfound sense of vigour and optimism. This cannot be known, but what is certain is that all three seniors in this study became enlivened with a playful energy during and after their discussions of play as a child, adolescent, and/or young adult. Perhaps the stories of play themselves can act as curricular instigators for cultivating seniors' playful art education in classrooms and communities. It therefore seems that the play histories of each student may be able to contribute to the development of curriculum for seniors' playful art education due to how seniors' play histories seem to generate playful feelings in some seniors. Further research might find that play histories may also inspire artistic content.

For students such as Wendy who did not have positive play experiences as a child, it is possible that the use of play histories for generating playful art education curriculum could be healing. This is due to what Young and Saver say about the neurology of autobiographical narratives (2001). In discussing how memory operates during autobiographical narration, they claim that the process is dynamic and fluid, getting continually renegotiated and re-synthesized through the act of remembering itself (Young & Saver, 2001). Put by Young and Saver,

> The narrative art form "autobiography" instructs us in our identities by virtue of its narrative form, which it imposes as a structure and vision on our lives, and exists in the form that it does as a consequence of how our brains function. Hence, autobiography stands as an embodiment of how art imitates life and life imitates art. (p. 80)

5.4 Seniors' Playful Art Centred Education (SPACE) as a Growing and Wilting Prospect

Perhaps the most evident finding from the data is that more research is needed in the areas of both seniors' play in general, and seniors' playful art education in particular. This is clear from contrasting the lack of research done on this topic with the abundance of sub-topics that have emerged from the participants' play histories. I therefore recommend the development of a program I am calling 'SPACE', or Seniors' Playful Art Centred Education. Yet, the findings suggest caution be taken with investments in art education as a *specific* play form for seniors. I have not worked out the details of SPACE, and simply suggest it be researched and developed.

5.4.1 Art education as uniquely suitable play for seniors

Based on the findings, it seems to be the case that art education offers a uniquely suitable form of play for seniors. This is due to art's special nature as a creative and potentially social learning process, as opposed to more solitary educational subjects. More importantly to seniors, however, art education appears to offer a form of play that is physically accessible, as opposed to activities such as vigorous dancing, high-impact sports, and/or physically demanding trips and excursions. Indeed, though Matilda struggles to walk, once she would sit at her seat with all of her required materials to make art, she could do so with what appeared to be ease and comfort.

Seniors' playful art education provides creative learning that is not only physically accessible, but *socially* as well. Celeste spoke of the socio-cultural isolation towards seniors at some modern restaurants. They are not friendly to seniors because they blast music far too

loudly, and are mostly filled with young people. Many adult play activities such as night clubbing, pub-crawling, and eating out can be socially alienating for seniors. At first I was going to add sex and dating to this list, but Celeste corrected me here. She said that it still very much so exists for seniors. She told me a few stories of how her single senior friends still date and have sex. She said that her husband's friend's father was kicked out of a nursing home for having had sex with one of the senior ladies there. He was ninety-nine at the time. I am uncertain about the biology of seniors' sex, but based on Celeste's stories of seniors' play, sex and dating continue to be a part of senior social life for some. So, seniors are not necessarily socially left out in that way. Yet, the social spaces that exist for adult dating are not friendly to seniors. Art education settings could provide spaces in society where seniors could meet one another and possibly develop romances as forms of play and pleasure. Art is able to do this in a way that many other educational subjects cannot due to its studio-orientated, community-based approach to learning.

5.4.2 Seniors' playful art education as maybe *not* a good public investment

At the same time, the fact that personal interests and individual temperaments appeared to have such a large role in determining each of the participants' play, gives reason to suggest that not *every* senior would be interested in playful art education. So, it would be poor judgment for the Canadian government to throw significant amounts of money at seniors' playful art education as a potential strategy for supporting our nation's entire growing senior population. Simultaneously, this study seems to indicate that it would make good sense for governments in Canada to invest in research that seeks to better understand how seniors play in general, with art education being one of several forms of seniors' play that could be investigated and tested. Additionally, seeing as culture appeared have a strong impact on how the participants define and experience play, art education as a form of seniors play could be quite culturally contingent.

5.4.3 The importance of seniors' playful art education to grow

In order for a program such as SPACE to begin to be implemented at any governmental level, more research on this subject must be conducted. The findings reveal a number of loose ends for subsequent researchers to pick up where I've left off. Since this study is limited to three participants, it remains highly uncertain how far the claims within this discussion can be extended across larger populations of seniors, both within Canada and cross-culturally. This discussion begs for an advanced researcher to come along and use the insights and anecdotes gleaned from this study as precursors for launching large-scale research projects that seek to understand how seniors define play for themselves, as opposed to assuming seniors' play to be the same as non-senior adults. This research here seems to indicate that there is great potential for further stratifying non-seniors' adult play from seniors' play, simply out of virtue of the physical, mental, and social changes that come with the final chapter of the human lifespan.

Additionally, it is vital to note that all of the seniors who partook in this study were extremely high functioning, female, and within an age bracket of mid-seventies to late-eighties. It would therefore be extremely fruitful for future researchers to look at how seniors' play in art education changes with respect to various degrees of capabilities among seniors, as well as in terms of gender and differing age ranges in the senior years. Through the stories of the three participants' play, I learned that there is a big difference between someone who is 65 years old and someone who is 105 years old. Yet, Canadian society seems to classify everyone who is older than 65 as a "senior". It would be interesting for play theorists to not only look more closely at how seniors' play might be definable, but to also look at how age, capability, and gender-based sub-stratifications of seniors' play may exist. In terms of SPACE, this study revealed that it would be beneficial for researchers to cultivate a set of best practices guidelines

for art educators to activate greater and richer seniors' play in their classrooms. Understanding more comprehensively how seniors' play can be best activated in art education could allow art educators to really enhance seniors' creative learning experiences. Researching this through the establishment of a unified network of playful art education spaces for seniors would offer seniors more social hubs, while also providing researchers with opportunities for cultivating greater knowledge and certainty about seniors' play in art centred education. At the same time, this would have to be done in a way that is mindful of how play forms other than art education could be more appealing to a significant number of seniors. Before SPACE could begin to be established, a large-scale study that maps out the various ways that Canadian seniors play according to percentages would be extremely useful in determining if art education is a wise investment for how the Canadian government can better support its rising senior's population.

5.4.4 Culture, nature, family, and income as factors in SPACE

Since these findings tell a story of the impacts that culture, nature, family, and income all seem to have on how seniors define play, future seniors' art education sites should be established with these factors in mind. Art educators may want to team up with environmental educators to look at how the physical environments of art studios could be merged with nature to inspire more playful art making. This is due to how participants' play histories necessitated literary landscapes as story settings that made natural and socio-cultural environments seem crucial to how seniors played as children, and how they continue to play and relax today. From an art educator's perspective, it would be interesting to see if this enhances seniors' playfulness and creativity.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The findings reveal that this study's participants define play in individualized ways. Celeste defines play as freedom, cultivated through an inner play world that takes on a political nature in group settings. Wendy defines play as positive feelings that can take on a relaxing nature when one ages, because of how one wants to restore energy as one ages. Matilda defines play as going out and socializing with others, especially in settings where she can create art. At the same time, their unique definitions of play contain shared elements, which informs the answer to my second research question of how the playful art education of three seniors relates to their stories of play from different developmental stages of life. These seniors' definitions of play all appear to be at least somewhat informed by their unique play histories, as well as by each of their specific challenges of old age. As well, the participants' experiences of playful art education were all social, but limited by physical symptoms of aging, such as aches and pains.

The role that culture and nature appeared to have in influencing and defining the three participants' conceptions of play was shocking for me to find. I wonder not only how much culture and natural physical environments influence seniors' understandings of play in general, but also how much culture and nature influence playful art education in particular due to how the observations made in this study showed that culture and nature inspire and impact an individual's process of learning and making art. Knowing *how* this takes place is not possible to derive from life story research, and must be studied in a manner that controls for cause and effect and/or correlative variables. This is the direction that my research may take in the future, should I be brave enough to embark on such a journey. What can be known for absolute certainty is that now I am going to leave researching for a while in order to have a chance to know more about play firsthand through cultivating a richer personal play history both in and outside of the classroom.

Epilogue

When it came time to pack up, Celeste put all of her drawings into a folder and took her iPad with her too. I don't know what she uses her iPad for, as she seems to use very little technology for achieving what she does, which is really quite remarkable in this day and age. A dying way of life, I thought idly to myself. She had her iPad out because she had been taking photographs of the particularly stunning snowfall that laced the barren winter branches in such a delicate and intricate way that a mesmerizing sense of stillness and peace was in the air.

I will miss Celeste, I thought. I don't yet know where this research will take me, but one thing is certain. Celeste has become a true friend of mine. Almost overnight, she has become an extremely valued and treasured playmate, companion, and mentor in my life. I plan to maintain an ongoing connection with her until the day she dies. I dread that day, and hope that I have another twenty years with her - at the very *least* so that I can see her make it to the triple digits! The only part I feel upset about is that *I'm only now meeting her*. It's really not fair, and I wish I had been able to know her for a much longer time. In some ways, I feel I have.

I've realized though that she lives on through her stories. This is why it is so important that the tales making up her playful life are at least partially captured here. It would be such a pity for people like Celeste, Wendy, and Matilda who have lived such beautifully rich and layered lives, full of play, art, and lifelong education, to not have their stories captured and told before they are gone. I therefore hope that this research about the play histories of three incredible senior women can bring perspective, value, and joy to the lives of this study's sadly small readership. If there's anything that this experience has shown me, it is that we only get so much time on this Earth. With that, we can only read and write so many texts. I therefore sincerely hope that this research will have been a fine expenditure of its readers' precious time.

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Appendix A

Final Iteration of Categories, Level One Codes, and Level Two Sub-codes

Table A1

Shared Codes, Sub-Codes, and Categories (Across All Participants)

Category 1: Play in General

i. PLAY AS SOCIAL
   a. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT
   b. FRIENDSHIPS/PLAYMATES
   c. BONDING/CLOSENESS
   d. GROUPINGS / PLAY GANGS
   e. JOKING AND LAUGHTER
   f. SMILING/SMILES
   g. TEASING AS PLAY AND NOT AS PLAY
   h. MISCOMMUNICATIONS/CONFLICT
   i. "GOING OUT" AS PLAY
   j. EVENTS AS PLAY
   k. DATING/ROMANCE
   l. MENTORING AS PLAY

ii. PLAY AS FEELINGS
   a. BELONGING TO A PLAY GROUP
   b. PLAY FEELS FULFILLING
   c. JOY/ENJOYMENT/HAPPINESS
   d. SATISFYING NEEDS
   e. AMUSEMENT
   f. PLAYING TO COPE/HEAL

iii. PLAY AS ACHIEVEMENT
   a. STRIVING FOR/ACHIEVING GOALS
   b. WORK/ JOB AS PLAY

iv. PLAY AS INTERESTS
   a. ART/DANCE/MUSIC AS PLAY
   b. GAMES AS PLAY
   c. GRANDPARENTING AS PLAY
   d. INTELLECTUAL INTERESTS

v. PLAY RELATES TO…
   a. AUTHORITY/RULES/REGULATIONS
   b. REBELLING
   c. FRIENDSHIP/BONDING
   d. PERSONAL INTERESTS
   e. PERSONAL TEMPERAMENTS
   f. NATURE
   g. REALITY
   h. CULTURE

i. JOBS/WORK
j. SHARING
k. NEWNESS/FRESHNESS
l. GENDER
m. HAVING FUN
n. CREATIVITY
o. LEARNING
p. BOREDOM

Category 2: Play Histories

i. EXTERNAL EVENTS
   a. WAR/WAR TIMES
   b. MOVING AND LEAVING LOVED ONES
   c. IMMIGRATION
   d. OPPRESSION AND/OR COLONIALISM
   e. POLITICS

ii. FAMILY OR SUPPORT SYSTEM
   a. PARENTS AND CHILD REARING
   b. HOME LIFE
   c. CULTURE
   d. EVENTS/PARTIES/GATHERINGS/TRADITIONS/TRIPS/HOLIDAYS/VACATIONS
   e. RELIGION

iii. PLACE OF ORIGIN
   a. LOCATION/SETTING
   b. PARENTING AS CULTURAL
   c. DIVERSITY/MULTICULTURALISM
   d. EDUCATION AND LEARNING
   e. CLASS/CLASSISM

iv. CHILDHOOD INFLUENCES
   a. OUTDOOR PLAY
   b. FRIENDSHIPS/ PLAYMATES
   c. CHILDHOOD PLAY PLACES
   d. SAFETY
   e. CHILDHOOD INTERESTS

Category 3: Seniors' Play Today

i. SOCIAL FACTORS
   a. STRONG SUPPORT SYSTEM
   b. SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS
   c. VISITING FRIENDS
   d. MARRIAGE
   e. TRUST/ KINDNESS IN FRIENDSHIP
   f. PLAYMATES IMPACT THE PLAY
   g. CARETAKING LOVED ONES
   h. PLAY ACTIVITIES/ GAMES WITH FAMILY
   i. "SERIOUS JOKES"/ USING HUMOR TO MAKE A POINT
   j. INTERVIEWS AS PLAY

ii. SUBJECTIVE FACTORS
   a. HIGH FUNCTIONING

b. CULTURAL INFLUENCES
c. INNER PLAY WORLD/REALITY
d. SOME INTERESTS LASTED SINCE CHILDHOOD
e. UNIQUE LIFE STORIES
f. HEROS/ ROLE MODELS/MOTHER INSPIRES HER
g. KIDS/STUDENTS AS FUN (OPINION)

iii. VALUES
a. ACCEPTANCE AND LOVE/CLOSENESS TO LOVED ONES
b. FAMILY VALUES
c. NATURE
d. ACTIVE LIFESTYLE/MOTIVATING SELF
e. LIFELONG LEARNING
f. INTER-NATIONALITY
g. PRO-MARRIAGE

iv. SHARED PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS
a. INDEPENDENT
b. SELF-CONFIDENT
c. BOLD/OUTGOING
d. KNOWS ONESELF
e. LIVELY/YOUTHFUL/"WITH-IT"
f. GRATEFUL/FEELS LUCKY
g. ABILITY TO FORGIVE/LET GO
h. AUTHENTIC
i. RESILIENT
j. RESOURCEFUL
k. HAVING HOPE
l. WISE

v. AGING PROCESS
a. HAVE TIME TO PLAY
b. CHANGING INTERESTS WITH AGE
c. VICARIOUSLY HAPPY IN YOUNGER GENERATIONS PROGRESS
d. HEALTH PROBLEMS
e. LOSING FRIENDS/ SPOUSES BY DEATH OR LOST TOUCH
f. PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE CHANGES WITH AGE

vi. CHALLENGES OF OLD AGE
a. DEPRESSION OVER AGING
b. IT WAS DIFFERENT FROM NOW
c. ADAPTING TO OR AVOIDING TECHNOLOGY
d. KNOWS SENIORS WHO STRUGGLE A LOT WITH OLD AGE
e. TALKING ABOUT OLD AGE OR AVOIDING IT
f. SEEKING OUT PLAY AS A SENIOR

vii. PLAY PLACES
a. NATURE
b. ART EDUCATION SITES
c. HOMES AND CAFES WHEN VISITING FRIENDS

Category 4: Seniors' Play in Art Education

i. GROUP FACTORS
a. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
b. SOCIALIZING/ BONDING

c. EXCITED AND PLAYFUL WITH FRIENDS
d. PLAYFUL BANTER
e. GROUPINGS/PLAY GANGS
f. MAKING PLANS FOR OUTSIDE OF CLASS
g. MIS-COMMUNICATIONS/CONFLICT
h. SHARING ART, STORIES, FOOD
i. SHARED INTEREST IN ART

ii. INDIVIDUAL FACTORS
a. BEING IN PRESENT MOMENT
b. EXCITEMENT FOR ART
c. LOOKING HAPPY WHEN MAKING ART
d. INTEREST/AMOUNT OF PLAY CHANGES WITH ACTIVITY
e. WORKING THROUGH BEING STUCK IN ART
f. SEEKING APPROVAL OF ART
g. RELAXATION

iii. LEARNING FACTORS
a. ASKING QUESTIONS
b. CHALLENGING ONESELF
c. LEARNING AND PLAYING HAPPENING TOGETHER
d. OPEN TO LEARNING NEW ART TECHNIQUES
e. FRUSTRATION
f. PERFECTIONIST IN ART
g. LOOKING FOR SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

iv. CREATIVE FACTORS
a. ARTISTIC INFLUENCES
b. NATURE AS INSPIRATION
c. FAMILY AS INSPIRATION
d. INTERESTS AS INSPIRATION
e. CHOOSING MATERIALS AND COLOURS
f. DISCUSSING ART

Table A2

Individual Codes, Sub-Codes, and Categories (For Each Participant)

Category 5: Personal Interests Influencing Her Play

i. CELESTE'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. CULTURE, HISTORY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
b. CRITIQUING EDUCATION (IN WORK-PLAY)
c. DEBATE AND POLITICS
d. CREATIVE FREEDOM
e. SELF-TAUGHT ART EDUCATION
f. PERFORMING
g. JOKING AND LAUGHTER
h. HUMOUROUS SITUATIONS
i. KIDS' PERSPECTIVES
j. REBELLION (IN HER PLAY)

k. "WILD NATURE PLAY"
l. PLAY THEORY
m. HER HOUSE

ii. WENDY'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. HEALING AND SELF-DISCOVERY (PSYCHOLOGY)
b. HER CHILDRENS' AND GRANDCHILDRENS' PROGRESS
c. CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS
d. LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING ART
e. DATING WHEN YOUNG

iii. MATILDA'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. CREATING ART
b. BEING SOCIAL/ LOVING
c. DOING ART WITH OTHERS
d. INTERNATIONAL ENDEAVOURS

Category 6: Personal Temperaments Influencing Her Play

i. CELESTE'S TEMPERAMENTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. CURIOUS/INQUISITIVE
b. PLAYFUL
c. CREATIVE AND THEATRICAL
d. REBELLIOUS
e. EMPOWERED
f. OPEN-MINDED
g. AMBITIOUS
h. CARING

ii. WENDY'S TEMPERAMENTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. HARD-WORKING
b. DETERMINED
c. SENSIBLE
d. INTUITIVE
e. LEADER

iii. MATILDA'S TEMPERAMENTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. LOVING
b. HUMBLE
c. IMMATERIAL
d. HIGHLY MOTIVATED

Category 7: Personal Opinions Influencing Her Play

i. CELESTE'S OPINIONS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. PLAY CREATES ANOTHER REALITY
b. PLAY IS FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION
c. PLAY AS A STATE OF BEING
d. PLAY FUNCTIONS ON THE BASIS OF FRIENDSHIP
e. PLAYFULNESS AS A PERSONAL QUALITY (SOME HAVE AND OTHERS DON'T)
f. PARENTS MUST LET THEIR CHILDREN BE FREE IN PLAY (AND WITHOUT TOYS)
g. CULTURE IMPACTS PLAY
h. PLAY MUST BE MORAL
i. CHILD'S PLAY AS POLITICAL

j. MOST ADULTS CAN'T REALLY PLAY
k. PLAY INVOLVES INTUITIVE COMMUNICATION
l. "REAL PLAY" FOSTERS CRITICAL THINKING/ PROBLEM-SOLVING
m. EDUCATION SHOULD BE CHEERFUL/POSITIVE
n. INDIVIDUATION HAPPENS IN CHILD PLAY
o. ART AND PLAY BOTH REQUIRE VISUAL LITERACY
p. SENIOR YEARS NOT WHAT THEY GET ASSUMED TO BE
q. SENIORS AS MORE INTERESTING THAN YOUNG PEOPLE
r. SENIORS QUESTION THEIR LIFE ACHIEVEMENTS AND GET BITTER IF FEEL FALL SHORT

ii. WENDY'S OPINIONS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. PLAY CAN BE HEALING/ HEALING CAN BE PLAY
b. BELIEVES IN LISTENING TO INTUITION
c. PLAY IS GOOD FEELINGS
d. STRESS IS NOT PLAY/KILLS PLAY
e. PLAY IS PERSONAL
f. BELIEVES IN HARD WORK
g. PLAY OVERCOMES BOREDOM

iii. MATILDA'S OPINIONS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. FAMILY IS EVERYTHING
b. BELIEVES SENIORS MUST MOTIVATE THEMSELVES TO PLAY/BE POSITIVE
c. BELIEVES IN CULTURAL OPENNESS/DIVERSITY

Category 8: Personal Experiences Influencing Her Play

i. CELESTE'S EXPERIENCES IMPACTING HER PLAY
a. VIVID CHILDHOOD PLAY MEMORIES
b. RACIAL AND ETHNIC ISSUES
c. HUSBAND IS VERY ILL
d. VERY HAPPY MARRIAGE
e. BEING MISUNDERSTOOD
f. STRONG BONDS WITH CHILDREN
g. FAMILY ISSUES
h. FEARS OF DEATH
i. PRIVILEGE/WEALTH
j. SUCCESSFUL CAREER
k. CHOSE OWN RELIGION
l. USES TRADITIONAL ART METHODS
m. AGEISM, RECEIVED AND COMMITTED
n. ENJOYING SOLITUDE MORE WITH AGE

ii. WENDY'S EXPERIENCES IMPACTING HER PLAY
a. VERY DIFFICULT CHILDHOOD/ NO PLAY AS CHILD
b. PARENTS HAD HARD LIVES
c. CREATED A POSITIVE ADULT LIFE
d. GRANDMOTHER AS VERY IMPORTANT TO HER
e. REALLY CONNECTED TO ART EDUCATION CLASSES
f. SLIGHTLY COMPETITIVE ART EDUCATION CLASSES

iii. MATILDA'S EXPERIENCES IMPACTING HER PLAY
a. POSITIVE INFLUENCES OF FAMILY
b. MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS IN LIFE
c. CONFLICTS ARISING AND HANDLING THEM WELL

Appendix B

List of Shared Codes and Sub-codes

Table B1

Shared Codes (and Individual Variations of Those Codes)

A

- ACCEPTANCE AND LOVE (AS IMPORTANT VALUE/ TO LIFE)
- ACHIEVING GOALS (AS FULFILLING)
- ACTING PARENTAL TO YOUNG RESEARCHER
- ACTIVE LIFESTYLE
- APPRECIATING NATURE (IN ART AND PLAY FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS)
- ART AS AN INTEREST
- ART EDUCATION SITES AS PLAY PLACES
- ART IS PLAY (FOR DIFFERENT REASONS THOUGH)
- ARTISTIC INFLUENCES (FAMILY OR SCHOOL AS A CHILD)
- ARTISTIC INSPIRATION OF FAMILY MEMBERS
- ASKING QUESTIONS DURING ART MAKING
- AUTHENTICITY (AS CHARACTERISTIC)
- AUTHORITY (MOSTLY IN SCHOOL OR FROM PARENTS)
- AVAILABLE TIME TO PLAY (AS A SENIOR,)
- AVERSION TO TECHNOLOGICAL/ DIGITAL GAMES

B

- BEING IN PRESENT MOMENT AS PART OF PLAY (PARTICIPANT CLAIMED OR I OBSERVED)
- BELONGING TO A PLAY GROUP (AS IMPORTANT/ FEELS GOOD)
- BOLD/ OUTGOING (AS CHARACTERISTIC)
- BOREDOM EVENTUALLY LEADING TO PLAY (ART INSPIRATION)
- BONDING/CLOSENESS (IN SOCIALIZING)

C

- CARETAKING (FOR OTHERS AS CHILDREN AND ADULTS, FOR ANIMALS AND/OR PEOPLE)
- CHALLENGES OF OLD AGE
- CHALLENGING ONESELF (IN ART)
- CHANGING INTERESTS WITH AGE
- CHEEKY & PLAYFUL BANTER DURING ART MAKING
- CHILD REARING (AS PLAY OR ONE'S OWN PARENTS INFLUENCING THEIR ADULT PLAY)
- CHILDHOOD BACKGROUND/ UPBRINGING
- CHILDHOOD INFLUENCES (ON WORK AND PLAY AS ADULT)
- CHILDHOOD PLAY PLACES
- CHOOSING MATERIALS/ COLOURS IN ART

- CLASSISM/ CLASS ISSUES
- COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (IN ART CLASS)
- CONNECTION TO OTHERS (AS IMPORTANT TO LIFE)
- CREATES IN ART EDCUATION (IMAGES, OBJECTS AND/OR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES)
- CULTURAL COMPARISONS MADE
- CULTURAL HISTORY
- CULTURAL IDENTITY/ PRIDE
- CULTURAL INFLUENCES (ON PLAY, ART, AND PERSONALITY)
- CULTURAL NORMS (VARIOUS, ALL IMMIGRATED FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES)
- CULTURAL POLITICS

D

- DANCE AS PLAY (AS CULTURAL / EDUCATIONAL FORM, ART, OR GOING OUT TO DANCE)
- DATING/ROMANCE AS PLAY (WHEN YOUNG AND FOR SENIORS)
- DEPRESSED ABOUT OLD AGE (KNOW SENIORS WHO GET AND/OR FELT IT ONESELF)
- DIFFERENT TEMPERAMENTS IN HER CHILDREN/ GRANDCHILDREN
- DIFFERENT/CHANGED TIMES FROM NOW
- DISCUSSING ART (AS INTEREST OR IN ART CLASS
- DIVERSITY/ MULTICULTURALISM IN SOCIAL NETWORK
- DRAWING AS PLAY

E

- EDUCATION AND LEARNING (BACKGROUND OF)
- ENJOYMENT DURING ART EDUCATION
- ETHNIC GROUPS (ESPECIALLY IN SOCIAL CIRCLES)
- EVENTS AS PLAY
- EXCITED AND PLAYFUL WITH FRIENDS DURING ART
- EXCITEMENT FOR ART (DURING ART CLASS AND/OR ART EDUCATION AT HOME)
- EXPERIENCING NEW THINGS (AS PLAY)

F

- FAMILY (BACKGROUND)
- FAMILY EVENTS/PARTIES/ GATHERINGS
- FAMILY INFLUENCES (ON ART, PLAY, AND INDIVIDUAL PERSONALITIES)
- FAMILY INVOLVEMENT (AS PLAY)
- FAMILY TRADITIONS AS PLAY (SOME HAVE/HAD MANY, ANOTHER HAD ONLY ONE)
- FAMILY VALUES (STRONG OR NOT AS STRONG IN INDIVIDUAL)
- FEELING GRATEFUL/ LUCKY (FOR POSITIVE PARTS OF THEIR LIVES)
- FEELING VERY CLOSE TO LOVED ONES
- FEELINGS OF BELONGING (IN RESPECTIVE ART COMMUNITIES)
- FORGIVENESS/ LETTING GO
- FREE TIME TO PLAY/ SOCIALIZE (AS A SENIOR, THOUGH ONE HAD HER WHOLE LIFE)
- FRIENDLINESS (AS PART OF SOCIALIZING)
- FRIENDSHIPS/ PLAYMATES (AS IMPORTANT OR VITAL TO ART, PLAY, AND AGING)
- FRIENDS/ PLAYMATES (AS A CHILD/ TEEN)
- FRUSTRATION (IN ART AS AN ADULT)
- FULFILLED WHEN CHILDREN/ GRANDCHILDREN ARE FULFILLED

G
• GAMES AS PLAY • GENDER (IN PLAY INTERESTS, ART, AND PLAY/INTERACTION WITH GRANDCHILDREN) • GOING OUT (AS PLAY) • GRANDCHILDREN PROGRESSING AS ENJOYABLE TO WATCH • GRANDPARENTING AS PLAY • GROUPINGS OF PEOPLE IN PLAY (AS A CHILD AND SENIOR, ESPECIALLY IN ART CLASSES)
H
• HAPPINESS/ LOOKING HAPPY WHEN MAKING ART (AT HOME OR IN ART CLASS) • HAVING FUN/MAKING EVERYTHING FUN • HAVING HOPE (IN HUMANITY) • HEALTH PROBLEMS (ACHES/PAINS) • HEROS/ROLE MODELS • HIGH FUNCTIONING SENIOR • HOLIDAYS/ RITUALS/ VACATIONS AS PLAY • HOME LIFE AS CHILD (INFORMS PLAY HISTORY)
I
• IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY USED IN PLAYFUL ART EDUCATION • IMMIGRATION • INDEPENDENCE (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • INNER PLAY WORLD (EITHER SELF-DECLARED PLAY/ CREATIVE REALITY THAT STILL EXISTS, OR "WORLD" GONE INTO WHEN HIGHLY IMMERSED IN MAKING ART) • INSPIRATIONS FOR ART (FAMILY, NATURE, TRAVEL, CHILDREN IN EDUCATION SYSTEM, KID'S LITERATURE, AND/OR HISTORY) • INTELLECTUAL AMUSEMENT (AS PLAY, INTEREST, AND/OR ENJOYMENT) • INTEREST/ AMOUNT OF PLAY CHANGES WITH ACTIVITY (ESPECIALLY IN ART CLASS) • INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCES IN LIFE • INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL (LOTS OF) • INTERVIEW AS PLAY
J
• JOBS/WORK • JOKING AND LAUGHTER • JOY/ENJOYMENT AS PART OF PLAY
K
• KIDS/STUDENTS AS FUN • KNOWING ONESELF (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • KNOWS SENIORS WHO STRUGGLE A LOT WITH OLD AGE

L

- LANGUAGE (KNOWS MANY)
- LAUGHTER (AS EXPRESSION OF PLAY)
- LEARNING AND PLAYING TOGETHER IN ART EDUCATION
- LEFT LOVED ONES WHEN MOVED
- LIFELONG LEARNING
- LIVELY AND ANIMATED (AS CHARACTERISTIC)
- LOCATION/SETTING OF CHILD PLAY/ PLACE OF ORIGIN
- LONELINESS OF SENIOR *FRIENDS*
- LOSS/SUFFERING
- LOUD WITH FRIENDS
- LOVE AND DATING AS PLAY (WHEN YOUNG, AND ONE CLAIMED EXISTS FOR SENIORS)

M

- MAKING FUTURE PLANS WITH FRIENDS (DURING ART EDUCATION)
- MARRIAGE
- MISCOMMUNICATIONS/CONFLICT (SOCIALLY IN GENERAL OR IN ART CLASSES)
- MOTHER INSPIRES HER (FOR SPECIFIC REASONS; ALL ARE SHARED QUALITIES)
- MOTIVATES SELF (IN UNIQUE WAYS NOW AND IN THE PAST)
- MOVING HOMES
- MULTICULTURAL BACKGROUND/ HOME
- MULTICULTURAL SOCIAL CIRCLES (THEN AND NOW)
- MUSIC AS PLAY (EDUCATIONALLY, WATCHING A PERFORMANCE, PLAYING MUSIC, BONDING WITH CHILD OVER SHARED MUSICAL INTERESTS OR INSTRUMENT)

N

- NATURAL PLAY PLACES
- NATURE AS ARTISTIC INSPIRATION (WORKING OUTDOORS, ARTISTIC SUBJECT MATTER, OR GEOGRAPHICAL CONTENT FOR KID'S ILLUSTRATIONS)
- NEEDS (PLAY AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS)
- NEW ART FORMS/ AESTHETICS/ ACTIVITIES AS FUN AND EXCITING (IF NOT IMPOSED)
- NEW EXPERIENCES AS SOMETHING GOOD TO CREATE FOR SELF
- NEW FRIENDSHIPS

O

- OLD FRIENDS (GETTING IN TOUCH OR LOSING TOUCH)
- OPEN TO LEARNING NEW ARTISTIC TECHNIQUES
- OPPRESSED IN PAST (HOMES/ RELATIONSHIPS AND/OR CULTURALLY/POLITICALLY)
- OUTDOOR PLAY (AS ESSENTIAL)
- OVERCOMING DIFFICULTIES IN LIFE

P

- PARENTING IS DIFFERENT IN DIFFERENT TIMES/ PLACES/ CULTURES

- PARENTS/ PARENTAL INFLUENCES
- PASSIONS/PERSONAL INTERESTS GUIDING HER PLAY HISTORY
- PERFECTIONIST IN ART
- PERSONAL PLAY PREFERENCES
- PERSONAL TEMPERAMENTS INFLUENCING PLAY
- PERSPECTIVE ON LIFE CHANGES WITH AGE
- PLAY ACTIVITIES/ GAMES WITH FAMILY
- PLAY AND MEANING/ FULFILLMENT
- PLAY AS COPING
- PLAY AS CULTURAL
- PLAY PEDAGOGY (EITHER IN ART EDUCATION CLASS AND/OR ART EDUCATION AT HOME)
- PLAY PLACES/ SPACES
- PLAYMATES IMPACT THE PLAY
- PLAYS WITH HER GRANDCHILDREN
- POLITICS (IN LIFE HISTORY)
- POVERTY
- PRO-MARRIAGE

Q

N/A

R

- REBELLING AS PLAY AND FOR PLAY
- RELAXATION IN PLAYFUL ART EDUCATION
- RELIGION (SPECIFIC WAYS RELIGION INFLUENCED EACH OF THEIR PLAY HSITORIES)
- RESILIENT (AS CHARACTERISTIC)
- RESOURCEFUL (AS CHARACTERISTIC)
- RULES AND REGULATIONS (INFLUENCE AND/OR INSPIRE PLAY)

S

- SAFETY (GROWING UP, IN MOST BASIC SENSE)
- SEEKING APPROVAL OF ART (FROM PEERS, TEACHERS OR AUDIENCE OF CHILDREN)
- SEEKING OUT PLAY AS A SENIOR (VITAL)
- SELF-CONFIDENT (AS CHARACTERISTIC)
- "SERIOUS JOKES"/ USING HUMOR TO SAY SOMETHING REAL
- SHARING ART WITH OTHERS AS PLAY
- SHARED INTERESTS AS POINTS FOR SOCIAL CONNECTIONS (IN ART CLASS/ INTERVIEWS)
- SHARING MEALS/ FOOD AS SOCIAL BONDING
- SHARING STORIES AS PLAY
- SINCE CHILDHOOD SOME INTERESTS/ TRAITS HAVE EXISTED
- SMILING/SMILES
- SOCIALIZING AND BONDING AS PLAY IN ART EDUCATION CLASS OR HOME (BY PHONE)
- SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS INFLUENCING PLAY
- STORIES BRING PERSEPCTIVE AND VALUE TO THE LIVES OF OTHERS
- SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES (IN ART, CAREER, AND/OR AS BEING FUN/ INCREASING PLAY)
- SUPPORT SYSTEM (AS ROBUST FOR ALL, AND VERY LARGE FOR MOST)

T
• TALKING ABOUT OLD AGE OR AVOIDING IT • TALKING ABOUT PLAY FROM YOUTH BECAME PLAYFUL FOR SENIORS • TEASING (AS PLAY AND NOT AS PLAY) • TRAVEL (A LOT OF) • TRIPS AS PLAY • TRUST/ KINDNESS IN FRIENDSHIP • TRYING NEW THINGS (IN ART AND PLAY)
U
• UNIQUE LIFE STORIES
V
• VISITING FRIENDS (IN ART CLASS, OVER THE PHONE WHEN DOING ART, AND/OR FOR COFFEE/ LUNCH)
W
• WAR/ WAR TIMES • WEALTH/ PRIVILEGE (AT CERTAIN POINTS IN LIFE, BUT GENERALLY ALL ARE WELL-EDUCATED AND RELATIVELY PRIVILEGED NOW) • WISE (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • WORK/ JOB AS PLAY (NOT ALWAYS FOR ONE PARTICIPANT) • WORKING THROUGH BEING STUCK IN ART
X
N/A
Y
• YOUTHFUL/ "WITH IT" (AS CHARACTERISTIC)
Z
N/A

Table B2

Shared Codes Between Celeste and Wendy (and Individual Variations of Those Codes)

A

- AGEISM (EITHER HAS COMITTED ONESELF AND/OR EXPEIRENCED)

B

- BELIEF IN MARRIAGE (FOR HAPPINESS)

C

- CHANGED OPINIONS (OVER TIME AND LIFE)
- CONNECTION TO A PERSON DETERMINES IF THERE'S PLAY

D

- DEVELOPING OWN IDEAS (AS FUN)
- DIFFICULT HOME LIFE (GROWING UP)
- "DISOBEYING" TEACHERS (AS A SENIOR AND/OR YOUTH)

E

- EDUCATED/ WORKED AS A TEACHER
- EMBARRASSED IN SCHOOL (FELT THIS BECAUSE BOTH DIDN'T KNOW ENOUGH KNOWLEDGE, BUT FOR VERY DIFFERENT REASONS: ONE DIDN'T PAY ATTENTION IN SCHOOL, AND THE OTHER HAD JUST MOVED COUNTRIES AND DIDN'T KNOW ENGLISH)

F

- FAMILY ISSUES (DIFFICULTIES AND SEVERE CHALLENGES WITH PARENTS)
- FREEDOM IN ART IS MORE PLAYFUL (THAN RULES FOR)
- FREEDOM (HAVING AGENCY/AUTONOMY/ FREE CHOICE/WILL)
- FRUSTRATED AS A CHILD

G

- GENERATIONAL FAMILY PROBLEMS
- GETS STUCK (IN AT-HOME ART EDUCATION, OR ART EDUCATION CLASSES)
- GOSSIP AS PLAY (EVEN IF AGAINST IT AS A FORM OF PLAY)

H
• HUMOUROUS SITUATIONS • HUMOROUS/PLAYFUL DELIVERY OF LINES (AS CHARACTERISTIC)
I
• IDENTIFIES AS A SURVIVOR (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • IMPORTANCE OF BEING PRACTICAL • INDIVIDUAL VS. SOCIALIZING OR SOCIETY (INNER CONFLICT OR BALANCING IN GROUP)
J
• JUDGING OTHERS (CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS OR SOCIETIES, OR ADULTS WHO MOPE)
K
N/A
L
N/A
M
• MAKING FUN OF AMERICANS • MENTORING YOUTH/ FAMILY/ FRIENDS AS PLAY/ ENJOYABLE
N
N/A
O
N/A
P
• PATIENCE IN ART (EITHER HAS A LOT OF, OR FEELS THE NEED TO EXECUTE MORE OF) • PLAY AND HAPPINESS FREE US FROM RULES/ REGULATIONS • PLAYING WITH WORDS (DIALOGUES, POETRY, BANTER)
Q
• QUESTIONING AUTHORITY

R
N/A
S
• SALVATIONS/ SAVIORS • SELECTIVE WITH FRIENDS (OR, SELECTING PLAYMATES AS BOTH A CHILD AND SENIOR) • SURVIVING CHILD ABUSE
T
• TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER IN MARRIAGE WHEN OLD • TEASING/ JOKING WITH CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN • TERRITORIAL OVER HER PLAY SPACE AS A SENIOR • TOO MUCH RIGIDITY KILLS PLAY
U
• UNLOVING/ HURTFUL MOTHER
V
N/A
W
N/A
X
N/A
Y
N/A
Z
N/A

Table B3

Shared Codes Between Wendy and Matilda (and Individual Variations of Those Codes)

A

- ADVANCED ARTISTS IN CLASS (ART EDUCATION SITES HAD STRONG ARTISTS IN THEM)
- ART CLASS HIGHS AND LOWS MOVE WITH GROUP ENERGY (OSCILLATES)
- ART HISTORY IN ART CLASS AS INTERESTING TO HER

B

- BONDING THROUGH SHARED ART EXPERIENCES

C

- CALM ART MAKING ENVIRONMENT (AT ART EDUCATION CLASS SITES)
- CHANGED SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS IN LIFE (STILL FULFILLED WITH LESS OR NOT)
- CHATTER AND CHUCKLING DURING ART LECTURE
- COMPARING ART TO PEERS' ART
- CONFLICT/ NOT CONNECTING/OUTBURST IN ART CLASSES

D

- DISCIPLINED (WITH MONEY/ SAVING OR HIGHLY FOCUSED, REGULAR ART-MAKING)
- DISCOURAGEMENT OF ARTS BY FAMILY
- DISSATISFIED WITH CLOTHES (SO LEARNED SEWING AT VERY YOUNG AGE)
- DISTRACTED DURING ART LECTURE (AS A FORM OF PLAY WITH FRIEND)

E

- ENGAGEMENT/ ENJOYMENT WITH TEACHER'S SUPPORT
- ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT ART CLASSES

F

- FOCUSED/IMMERSED IN ART MAKING

G

N/A

H
N/A
I
• IMPORTANCE OF TEACHER SUPPORT IN NEW TASKS
J
N/A
K
• KEEN PEERS ARE IN HER ART CLASS
L
• LIGHT TOUCHES (WHEN SOCIALIZING IN ART CLASS) • LIVELY ART CLASS/ COMMUNITY
M
• MENTORING OTHERS IN ART CLASS' • MOVEMENT IN ART CLASS (EITHER LOTS OR IN MODERATION DUE TO PHYSICAL LIMITS) • MUSIC IN ART EDUCATION ATMOPSHERE
N
N/A
O
• ONLINE FAMILY CONNECTIONS (VIA SOCIAL MEDIA AND EMAIL)
P
• PEER FEEDBACK AND SUPPORT IN ART EDUCATION • PLAYFUL MOMENTS IN ART CLASS • POSITIVITY IN ART CLASS COMMUNITY • PROUD OF ARTWORK
Q
N/A

R
• REALIZING HOW MUCH SHE DID IN HER LIFE (THROUGH INTERVIEW)
S
• SEWED CLOTHES AS ART (FOR NEED AND/OR FOR PLAY) • SLIGHTLY COMPETITIVE ART CLASS ATMOSPHERE • SOCIAL DYNAMICS IN ART CLASS (MANY/ LAYERED) • SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CONNECTING TO FAMILY (AS PLAY) • SOLITUDE/ ISOLATION (SOMETIMES DURING ART MAKING) • SUPPORT IN ART GROUP/CLASS • SUPPORT OF SITE COORDINATOR (AT ART CLASS)
T
• TAI CHI AND YOGA AS PLAY • TAKING FOOD BREAKS IN ART CLASS (A FORM OF SOCIALIZING AND RESTING) • TALKING AND LISTENTING TO THE ART TEACHERS IN ART EDUCATION CLASS • TEACHER SUPPORT IN ART CLASS • TEACHERS' INFLUENCE ON CLASS ATMOSPHERE • TEACHERS' NEEDS/ AIMS FOR ART CLASS • TEASING PEERS (IN ART CLASS)
U
• UNDERSTANDING IN ART CLASS/ "AH-HA" MOMENTS • USING TECHNOLOGY (GOOD AT/ QUITE SAVVY WITH)
V
• VALUES REFLECTING UPON ONE'S LIFE AS A SENIOR
W
N/A
X
N/A
Y
N/A
Z
N/A

Table B4

Shared Codes Between Celeste and Matilda (and Individual Variations of Those Codes)

A

- ACCOMPLISHED/ PROFESSIONAL ARTIST
- ADVANCED ARTIST SKILLS (SELF-TAUGHT OR WENT TO ART SCHOOL, IN REALIST PAINTING OR CHILDREN'S ILLUSTRATION)
- ALTERNATE REALITY OF PLAY IS EXPRESSED

B

- BELIEVES WE MUST ALWAYS STRIVE FOR SOMETHING TO BE LIVING/ ALIVE

C

- COLONIZATION (OF SOUTH AFRICAN PLACE OF ORIGIN OR SRI LANKAN HOME)
- CULTURAL INDEPENDENCE (RESISTANCE FROM OPRESSED GROUP IN HOME COUNTRY)

D

- DOODLING AS PLAY
- DRESSING UP IN COSTUMES AS PLAY

E

- ENGAGEMENT WITH WORLD AS NECESSARY TO AGING WELL

F

N/A

G

N/A

H

- HOME NOW (SHOWS ART, CULTURE, IDENTITY, OR SITE FOR PLAY IN ART EDUCATION)

I

- IMPORTANCE OF REMEMBERING OUR SUFFERING (FOR COMPASSION FOR OTHERS)

• IMPRESSIVE (PAINTER OR ILLUSTRATOR) • INCLUSIVE (RACIALLY IN ARTWORK, OR SOCIALLY ACCEPTING TO PEOPLE SHE MEETS) • INTENTIONALLY BUSY TO HELP COPE WITH AGING
J
• JOBS BASED ON HER CHILD PLAY (LIFELONG INTERESTS)
K
N/A
L
• LOST TOUCH (WITH SOME FRIENDS) • LOVES GETTING ATTENTION (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • LOVING/ PEACEFUL HOME
M
• MAGIC (IN EVERYDAY PERSPECTIVE/ SEEING LIFE AS MAGICAL) • MOTHERHOOD AS PLAY
N
N/A
O
N/A
P
• PLAY AS AMBITION/ STRIVING • PLAY AS AN INNER CREATIVE WORLD • PLAY AS FUNDAMENTALLY SOCIAL (ABOUT MENTAL/ EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS) • POSITIVE EXPERIENCES OF PLAY AS A CHILD • POSITIVITY (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • PROUD OF CULTURE/ IDENTITY (AND PROUD OF FAMILY OF ORIGIN FOR ONE SENIOR)
Q
N/A
R
• RACE

S
• SELF-TAUGHT (IN ART AND/OR MANY OTHER THINGS) • SNEAKING OBJECTS AWAY FOR PLAY AS A CHILD • SOCIAL BUTTERFLY (AS TEMPERAMENT) • SPOUSE/ FRIENDS DYING IN OLD AGE (PAINFUL/ DIFFICULT)
T
• TOMBOY AS CHILD
U
N/A
V
N/A
W
N/A
X
N/A
Y
N/A
Z
N/A

Appendix C

Samples of Figures Detailing Data Analysis Process

Legend
Shared across all three participants Shared between Celeste and Wendy Shared between Wendy and Matilda Shared between Celeste and Matilda Unique to Individual Participant

Celeste	Wendy	Matilda
Codes	Codes	Codes
A		
• ACCEPTANCE AND LOVE • ACCOMPLISHED/ PROFESSIONAL ARTIST • ACHIEVING GOALS (AS FULFILLING) • ACCUSATIONS (MADE AGAINST HER ABOUT APARTHEID) • ACTING AS PLAY • ACTING PARENTAL TO YOUNG RESEARCHER • ACTIVE LIFESTYLE • ACTS FEARLESS (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • ADULT PERCEPTION ON WORLD AS "DUSTY" • ADVANCED ARTIST SKILLS (SELF-TAUGHT IN CHILDREN'S ILLUSTRATION)	• ACCEPTANCE AND LOVE • ACHIEVING GOALS (AS FULFILLING) • ACTING PARENTAL TO YOUNG RESEARCHER • ACTIVE LIFESTYLE • ADVANCED ARTISTS IN CLASS • ADVISED TO PLAY IN ART CLASS (PEERS TOLD TO HER) • AGEISM (COMITTS) • ALWAYS FOUND SOMETHING TO LEAN ON/ RELY UPON • ANGLOPHONE COMMUNITY • ANTI "GOVERNMENT HANDOUTS"	• A GENUINELY CLOSE FRIENDSHIP (WITH ANOTHER STUDENT IN HER ART CLASS) • ACCEPTING (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • ACCEPTANCE AND LOVE • ACCOMPLISHED/ PROFESSIONAL ARTIST • ACHIEVING GOALS (AS FULFILLING) • ACTING PARENTAL TO YOUNG RESEARCHER • ACTIVE LIFESTYLE • ADVANCED ARTIST SKILLS (ART SCHOOL, REALIST PAINTING) • ADVANCED ARTISTS IN CLASS • AGAINST COMPLAINING (ABOUT OLD AGE)

Figure C1. This is a sample of alphabetical and colour-coded inventory of all of the codes across all three participants.

Legend
A Personal Interest Influencing Her Play A Personal Temperament Influencing Her Play An Opinion Potentially Influencing Her Definition of Play Experiences That Inform Her Play History and Perspective of Play

Individual Codes and Sub-Codes for Celeste
A
• ACCUSATIONS (MADE AGAINST HER ABOUT APARTHEID) • ACTING AS PLAY • ACTS FEARLESS (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • ADULT PERCEPTION ON WORLD AS "DUSTY" • ADVANTAGES OF IMMIGRATION (CLEAR PERSPECTIVE ON CANADIAN SOCIETY) • ADVENTUROUS (AS CHARACTERISTIC) • ADVOCATES FOR CRITICAL THINKING IN EDUCATION • AFRICAN HISTORY • AGAINST PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT (IN CHILDRENS' PLAY) • AGAINST POLITICAL CORRECTNESS • ALLIANCES ARE IMPORTANT IN CHILD PLAY GROUPS • ALWAYS THINKING OF KIDS IN ART MAKING (HER AUDIENCE) • AMBITIOUS FAMILY • ANIMAL PLAY THERAPY FOR SENIORS IS VERY EFFECTIVE • ANTI-MEMORIZATION/DONKEYWORK IN SCHOOLS • ANNOYING HER PARENTS AS PLAY • ANXIETY/ DEPRESSION OVER PARTNER GETTING VERY ILL • ARGUMENTS OF RULES HAPPEN IN CHILD PLAY (AND REACHING CONSENSUS) • ART TO DEVELOP CURRICULUM IS PLAY (LITTLE CONSTRAINTS) • ART EDUCATION AT HOME AS PLAY • ART TELLS STORIES • ARTISTIC AND PLAY INSPIRATION IS BETTERING KIDS' EDUCATIONS • ARTISTS CONTINUE TO PLAY AS ADULTS • ATTACHED AND NON-ATTACHED TO PLAY OUTCOMES

Figure C2. This is a sample of alphabetical and colour-categorized individual codes and sub-codes taken from the coding inventory according to each participant.

Individual Codes for Celeste

CODE: CELESTE'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY

- ~~ACTING AS PLAY~~ → ***PERFORMING***
- ~~ADVOCATES FOR CRITICAL THINKING IN EDUCATION~~ → ***CRITIQUING EDUCATION (IN WORK-PLAY)***
- ~~AFRICAN HISTORY (VERY INTERESTED IN)~~ → ***CULTURE, HISTORY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE***
- ~~ALWAYS THINKING OF KIDS IN ART MAKING (HER AUDIENCE)~~ →***KIDS' PERSPECTIVES***
- ~~ANNOYING HER PARENTS AS PLAY~~ → ***REBELLION (IN HER PLAY)***
- ~~ART TO DEVELOP CURRICULUM IS PLAY (LITTLE CONSTRAINTS)~~ → ***CREATIVE FREEDOM***
- ~~ART EDUCATION AT HOME AS PLAY~~ → ***SELF-TAUGHT ART EDUCATION***
- ~~ARTISTIC AND PLAY INSPIRATION IS BETTERING KIDS' EDUCATIONS~~ → ***CRITIQUING EDUCATION (IN WORK-PLAY)***
- ~~BONDING WITH STUDENTS (AS A TEACHER)~~ → ***KIDS' PERSPECTIVES***
- ~~BRINGS ARTWORK TO RESTAURANTS WITH FRIENDS~~ → ***SOCIALIZING/ BONDING, IN GROUP FACTORS OF ART AS PLAY (ALREADY IN SHARED CODES)***
- ~~CHEATING ON TESTS AS PLAY (CAMOUFLAGE, TECHNIQUES, INTELLIGENCE GAMES, OUT-SMARTING TEACHERS)~~ → ***REBELLION (IN HER PLAY)***
- ~~CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND PLAY (INTEREST)~~ → ***PLAY THEORY***
- ~~CLEANING THE HOUSE AS PLAY (PEACEFUL AND TERRITORIAL)~~ → ***HER HOUSE***
- ~~CLIMBING TREES AS A CHILD FOR PLAY (HAD PICNICS IN TREE WITH A WILD MONKEY)~~ → "***WILD NATURE PLAY"***
- ~~COLLABORATES WITH SMART BOARD TECHNICIAN IN HER PLAY TODAY~~ → ***CRITIQUING EDUCATION (IN WORK-PLAY)***
- ~~COMEDIC PERFORMANCES AS PLAY~~ → ***PERFORMING***
- ~~CONNECTS WITH SON-IN-LAW THROUGH PLAY (DESPITE BEING TOTAL OPPOSITES)~~
- ~~CREATING NEW EXPERIENCES AS PLAY AND FOR PLAY PEDAGOGY~~ → ***PLAY THEORY***
- ~~CREATIVITY OF FILM/TV (AS INTEREST)~~ → ***PERFORMING***
- ~~CULTURE AS A PERSONAL INTEREST~~ → ***CULTURE, HISTORY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE***
- ~~DEBATE (AS PLAY)~~ → ***DEBATE AND POLITICS***
- ~~DEVELOPING KID LIT IN QC CURRICULUM (WITH CO-WORKER AS PLAY)~~ → ***KIDS' PERSPECTIVES***
- ~~EDUCATION SYSTEMS (AS INTEREST)~~ → ***CRITIQUING EDUCATION (IN WORK-PLAY)***
- ~~EDUCATIONAL PLAYS (WROTE AS TEACHING STRATEGY FOR FUN)~~ → ***PERFORMING***

Figure C3. This is a sample of the table used to simplify and organize codes and sub-codes. This was completed for both shared and individual codes and sub-codes.

Category 1: Personal Interests Influencing Her Play		
CELESTE'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY	**WENDY'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY**	**MATILDA'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY**
PERFORMING	LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING ART	CREATING ART
CRITIQUING EDUCATION (IN WORK-PLAY)	CONVERSATIONS WITH FRIENDS	DOING ART WITH OTHERS
CULTURE, HISTORY, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE	HEALING AND SELF-DISCOVERY (PSYCHOLOGY)	BEING SOCIAL/ LOVING
DEBATE AND POLITICS	DATING WHEN YOUNG	INTERNATIONAL ENDEAVOURS
KIDS' PERSPECTIVES	HER CHILDRENS' AND GRANDCHILDRENS' PROGRESS	
REBELLION (IN HER PLAY)		
CREATIVE FREEDOM		
SELF-TAUGHT ART EDUCATION		
JOKING AND LAUGHTER		
PLAY THEORY		
HUMOUROUS SITUATIONS		
"WILD NATURE PLAY"		
HER HOUSE		

Figure C4. This is a sample of the tables used to derive code categories and determine thematic relationships among the data. This process was completed for both of the shared and individual codes, sub-codes, and categories.

Appendix D

First Iteration of Categories, Codes, and Sub-codes

Legend
*FOCUSED/MOST IMPORTANT SUB-CODES Note: all codes are listed in order of apparent importance.

Table D1

Shared Codes (Across All Participants)

Category 1: Forms of Play (Generally on Play)

vi. SOCIAIZING AS PLAY
- a. *LAUGHTER & JOKING AS PLAY
- b. *WORK AS PLAY (WHEN SELF-CHOSEN/ PLAYFUL MAINLY DUE TO SOCIAL PART)
- c. *SHARING STORIES AS PLAY (IN SOCIALIZING)
- d. HOLIDAYS/ VACATION RITUALS AS PLAY
- e. GRANDPARENTING AS PLAY (& SOMETIMES PARENTING TOO)
- f. HUMOUROUS SITUATIONS AS PLAY
- g. DANCING AS PLAY (IN A SOCIAL CONTEXT)
- h. PLAYING GAMES AS KIDS (BOARD, CARD, OR PHYSICALLY BASED)
- i. ROMANCE & DATING AS PLAY (WHEN YOUNG)

vii. PLAY AS SUBJECTIVE FEELINGS
- a. *PLAY AS FREEDOM (FROM RULES/REGULATIONS)
- b. *GOING OUT AS PLAY (FOR NATURE AND/OR TO CONNECT WITH OTHERS)
- c. *RELAXATION AS PLAY
- d. *NEWNESS AS PLAY (NEW EXPERIENCES OR FRIENDS, BUT NOT "TOO NEW")
- e. HAVING FUN AS PLAY
- f. PLAY AS FULFILLMENT/SATISFACTION (USUALLY WORK/JOB AS PLAY)
- g. PLAY AS COPING/ HEALING

Category 2: Factors Shaping Play Histories (Mostly Background)

v. UNCONTROLLABLE EVENTS
- a. *MOVING/IMMIGRATION (IN LIFE STORIES)
- b. *LIVING THROUGH WARS
- c. *OPPRESSION AND ABUSE (IN LIFE STORIES)
- d. LOSS (IN LIFE STORIES)

vi. FAMILY INFLUENCES
- a. *INTERNATIONAL/MULTICULTURAL UPBRINGINGS

b. ARTISTIC FAMILY INFLUENCES
c. MARRIAGE (AS PART OF LIFE STORIES)
d. ACCEPTANCE/LOVE (AS PART OF LIFE STORIES)

Category 3: Factors Influencing Play Today (Mostly Present)

viii. SOCIAL FACTORS
a. *FRIENDSHIPS/PLAYMATES/ BONDING IN PLAY
b. GROUPINGS/GANGS /BELONGING TO A GROUP IN PLAY
c. MISUNDERSTANDINGS/ CONFLICT ARISING IN PLAY (I.E. TEASING AS PLAY/NOT)

ix. INDIVIDUAL/SUBJECTIVE FACTORS
a. *ONE'S "INNER WORLD" IN PLAY
b. *A NEED TO PLAY/ HAVING PLAY "NEEDS"
c. *POSITIVITY/POSITIVE EXPERIENCES IN PLAY
d. IMAGINATION AND CREATIVITY IN PLAY
e. HEROS/ROLE MODELS IN PLAY HISTORIES & NOW BOREDOM (IN PLAY OR LEADING TO PLAY)

x. EXTERNAL/OBJECTIVE FACTORS
a. *RULES/ REGULATIONS/ AUTHORITY (LIMITING & INSPIRING PLAY)
b. *IMPACTS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS ON PLAY (ACCESS/RESTRICTS PLAY)
c. *IMPACT OF GENDER ON PLAY (INTERESTS, PLAY GROUPS, & IN SOCIALIZING)

xi. AGING PROCESS
a. *EXPERIENCING HEALTH PROBLEMS (IN OLD AGE)
b. *CHANGING INTERESTS WITH AGE (MAINLY DUE TO OPENNESS & FREE TIME)
c. *MORE AVAILABLE TIME TO PLAY (DUE TO SOCIAL ISOLATION/RETIREMENT)
d. CHALLENGES OF AGING (DEPRESSED ABOUT, GENDER, FRIENDS/SPOUSES DYING)
e. CHOOSING AN ACTIVE/BUSY LIFESTYLE (AS A SENIOR)
f. KNOWING ONESELF VERY WELL (WITH AGE/ AS A RESULT OF AGE)

xii. PLAY PLACES & SPACES
a. *CULTURE (INFLUENCING PLAY HISTORIES)
b. *NATURE IN PLAY (NATURAL ENVIRONMENT SHAPING/INSPIRING PLAY)
c. *PLAY PLACES (HOMES, COMMUNITIES, SETTINGS, PLACES OF ORIGIN…)
d. EDUCATION, TEACHING, & LEARNING (IN LIFE STORIES)

Category 4: Shared Individual Factors

v. SHARED INTERESTS ACROSS ALL PARTICIPANTS
a. *ART (AS PERSONAL INTEREST OR PASSION)
b. *OPEN TO EXPLORING NEW INTERESTS (ESP. IN OLD AGE)
c. *KEEPING SOME SAME INTERESTS THROUGHOUT ENTIRE LIFE
d. TRAVEL/TRIPS (AS PERSONAL INTEREST)

vi. SHARED TEMPERAMENTS ACROSS ALL PARTICIPANTS
a. *OUTSPOKEN/ BOLD/ CONFIDENT (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
b. *INDEPENDENT (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
c. *GRATEFUL/ FEELING "LUCKY"/ POSITIVE (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)

d. FORGIVENESS/ LETTING GO (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
e. YOUTHFUL/ "WITH IT"/ OPEN TO NEWNESS (PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)

vii. SHARED DEFINITIONS ON PLAY ACROSS ALL PARTICIPANTS
a. *PLAY FEELS GOOD
b. *WHAT "FEELS GOOD" ALTERS WITH INDIVIDUAL PLAY PREFERENCES/ INTERSETS & PERSONAL PSYCHOLOGY/SUBJECTIVITIES/PERSONALITIES

Category 5: Factors Influencing Art as Play (Focus of Study)

i. GROUP FACTORS
a. *COMMUNITY BELONINGING
b. *PEER & TEACHER FEEDBACK ON ART/ DISCUSSIONS OF ART/ SHARING ART
c. *COMPETITION/COMPARISONS IN PLAY
d. NATURE (INSPIRING ART & CREATING PLAY PLACES FOR ART)

ii. INDIVIDUAL FACTORS
a. *INTEREST/ PLAYFULNESS IN ART CHANGES WITH THE ACTIVITY
b. *INDIVIDUAL FOCUS/IMMERSION
c. *CHALLENGING ONESELF IN ART (NOT TOO MUCH OR ELSE IT'S NOT PLAY)
d. *SUCCESSFUL PERSONAL OUTCOMES (MAKES ART FUN/ INCREASES PLAY)
e. PREVIOUS EXPOSURE TO ART AT SCHOOL (INVITES OR DETERS PLAYFUL ART)
f. FAMILY/FRIENDS/LOVED ONES INSPIRING ARTWORK CONTENT

Table E2

Individual Codes (For Each Participant)

Category 6: Personal Interests Influencing Play

iv. CELESTE'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. *POLITICS/ INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (AS PERSONAL INTEREST)
b. *HISTORY, LAW, & CIVICS (AS PERSONAL INTEREST)
c. *CULTURAL & RACIAL ISSUES (AS PERSONAL INTEREST)
d. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES & TEACHING (AS PERSONAL INTEREST)
e. NEWS, FILM, TV & MEDIA AS PLAY
f. SCREENWRITING & ACTING AS PLAY

v. WENDY'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. *PSCYOLOGY & HEALING (AS PERSONAL INTEREST)
b. *MENTORING OTHERS (AS PLAY)
c. *YOGA AS PLAY/ NECESSARY FOR PEACE
d. DEEP ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS/ COFFEES WITH FRIENDS (AS PLAY)
e. DISCOVERING SELF IN ART AS PLAY

vi. MATILDA'S INTERESTS INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. *ACQUIRING ADVANCED ARTIST SKILLS (AS FUN/PLAY)
b. *ATTENDING REGULAR FAMILY EVENTS/PARTIES AS PLAY
c. *BEING CLOSE TO LOVED ONES & PEOPLE AS PLAY ("SOCIAL BUTTERFLY")
d. SOCIAL MEDIA WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS (FOR PLAY)

e. REGULARLY PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY ART GROUPS AS PLAY
f. (GROUP) TRAVEL AS PLAY

Category 7: Personal Temperaments Influencing Play

iv. CELESTE'S KEY QUALITIES INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. *REBELLING/QUESTIONING AUTHORITY (AGAINST IMPOSED RULES)
b. *JOKER/PLAYFUL/ PERFORMER (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
c. *RISK-TAKING/ADVENTUROUS (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)

v. WENDY'S KEY QUALITIES INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. *RESPONSIBLE (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
b. *TAKES CONTROL/LEADER (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
c. *GOOD JUDGMENT/ INTUITIVE (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
d. RESOURCEFUL (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
e. PERFECTIONIST (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
f. AUTHENTICITY/ INTEGRITY (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)

vi. MATILDA'S KEY QUALITIES INFLUENCING HER PLAY
a. *HUMBLE & MODEST (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
b. *KIND TOWARDS OTHERS (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
c. *STONG/RESILIANT (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
d. WISE (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)
e. IMMATERIAL/UNAFRAID OF FINANCIAL RUIN (AS PERSONAL TEMPERAMENT)

Category 8: Personal Perspectives and Ideas on Play

iv. CELESTE'S KEY DEFINITIONS/PERSPECTIVES ON PLAY
a. *"REAL" VS. "FAKE" PLAY
b. *PLAY AS A STATE OF MIND/ BEING
c. *FREEDOM & EMPLOWEMENT IN PLAY
d. *DEVELOPING VITAL SKILLS THROUGH "REAL" PLAY
e. TOMBOY (OUTDOOR PLAY, PLAYING W WILD ANIMALS, ROUGH & TUMBLE PLAY)
f. TRICKERY AND MISCHIEF AS PLAY/ "PLAYING" WITH THE RULES
g. MAGIC/FASCINATION/WONDER/ PRETEND IN PLAY
h. TOYS (AS TAKING AWAY FROM MODERN CHILDRENS' PLAY)
i. DEBATE AS PLAY

v. WENDY'S KEY DEFINITIONS/PERSPECTIVES ON PLAY
a. *NO PLAY AS A CHILD (OVER-WORKED AS CHILD/CHILD LABOUR)
b. *SENIORS PLAY AS RELAXATION (BECAUSE WE TIRE AS WE AGE)
c. *THE PLAYMATES IMPACT THE PLAY
d. *TESTED OUT PLAY FORMS AS AN ADULT/ LEARNED TO PLAY WITH AGING
e. STRESS IS NOT PLAY
f. LIGHTNESS, SPONTANEITY, FREEDOM ALL EXPRESS PLAY
g. FAMILY PLAY IN ADULTHOOD (GAMES, VACATIONS, ETC…)

vi. MATILDA'S KEY DEFINITIONS/PERSPECTIVES ON PLAY
a. *SENIORS MUST SEEK OUT PLAY/ BE MOTIVATED TO PLAY WITH OTHERS
b. *PLAY DISTRACTS HER FROM THE PAINS OF OLD AGE
c. *FAMILY OF ARTISTS LARGELY SHAPED HER PLAY
d. "HAD ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD" TO PLAY (BECAUSE FOLLOWED PASSIONS)

Appendix E

Interview Questions

Life Story Interview Questions:

1. Could you please share with me a story or two of a particularly vivid and meaningful instance of play that you can remember from previous times in your life? These stories could be from childhood, adolescence, early adulthood and/or middle age. Please try to be as detailed as possible, describing the environment, culture, country, other people in the story, and why this moment of playing is significant enough to you that you still remember it and have selected it to share it with me today.

   (Please note: if the interviewee struggles to think of a story, I will make suggestions here to inspire memories of lifelong play. Those suggestions could include: Christmas day or another significant holiday involving play; a birthday party; visits to playgrounds or museums; school lunches and/or activities; playing with siblings; regular hobbies that felt like play; art making; and playing with a parent, grandparent, or child for bonding.)

2. Would you be kind enough to please tell me a story or two of how you play today as a senior through your continued art education? Again, please try to be as detailed as possible, describing the setting and other people involved in this story. Please include in the story why you often choose this activity of play compared to other options, and why you might consider this form of play to be particularly meaningful to you.

   (Please note: if the interviewee struggles to think of a story, I will make suggestions here to inspire stories of senior play in art education. Those suggestions could include: describing their experiences at the art education workshops they partake in; teaching oneself art at home; and teaching art to friends, children, and/or grandchildren.)

Open-Ended Interview Questions:

1. Could you please provide some basic background information about yourself, such as your name, age, ethnicity, education, country of origin, etc.?
2. What do you think of when you hear the word ‘play’? How would you define ‘play’?
3. Do you currently experience playful activities on a regular basis? What are some?
4. What are your favourite forms of play that you regularly experience these days and why?
5. Do you feel you are playing when you learn to make art in this setting?
6. Do you believe play is necessary when you are learning to make art? Why or why not?
7. Is experiencing a connection with others necessary for you to see play as meaningful?
8. Must play contribute to your personal development and/or overall societal purpose for it to be considered meaningful play for you, especially regarding playful artistic undertakings?
9. Is playful art education important to your health, learning, creativity, and/or consciousness?
10. Have you played throughout your entire life? Were there times in life that you didn’t play?
11. What types of play have been most vital to your development and why?

Appendix F

University Human Research Ethics Committee Certificate

CERTIFICATION OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Name of Applicant: Kathleen Lefevre

Department: Faculty of Fine Arts \ Art Education

Agency: N/A

Title of Project: Play Histories of Seniors Seen Through Their Life Stories: Seniors' Playful Art Education

Certification Number: 30006965

Valid From: November 16, 2016 to November 15, 2017

The members of the University Human Research Ethics Committee have examined the application for a grant to support the above-named project, and consider the experimental procedures, as outlined by the applicant, to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Dr. James Pfaus, Chair, University Human Research Ethics Committee