Creative City and Fields of Cultural Production: Ethnographic Perspectives of “The Arts” in Tampa

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Creative City and Fields of Cultural Production: Ethnographic Perspectives of “The Arts” in Tampa

by

James Kuzin

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
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Keywords: urban, community, development, identity, public-policy, economics, symbolic-capital, ideology, participatory, praxis

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES........................................................................................................ ii

LIST OF FIGURES........................................................................................................ iii

ABSTRACT .................................................................................................................... iv

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION.................................................................................. 1
  Positioning.................................................................................................................. 4
  Concepts.................................................................................................................... 6
  Guiding Questions................................................................................................... 10
  Anthropology & Development.............................................................................. 11

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW.................................................................... 14
  Creative Economy .................................................................................................... 14
  Development & Ideology ........................................................................................ 23
    Global Outcomes .................................................................................................. 24
    Local Impacts ........................................................................................................ 25
    Ideological Undercurrents ................................................................................... 26
  Praxis & Development ............................................................................................ 32
  Summary.................................................................................................................. 40

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY.................................. 43
  Methodology ............................................................................................................ 43
  Methods ................................................................................................................... 46
    Operationalizing .................................................................................................... 47
    Sampling ................................................................................................................ 47
    Interviewing ............................................................................................................ 49
    Participant Observation ....................................................................................... 51
    Knowledge Management ..................................................................................... 53
    Data Analysis ........................................................................................................ 53
  Research Background ............................................................................................. 54
  Ethics ....................................................................................................................... 54

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS....................................................................................... 56
  Creative City & the OCI .......................................................................................... 56
  Tampa Background .................................................................................................. 58
  Participants .............................................................................................................. 60
    Defining the Creative Class .................................................................................. 64
  Participant Interests & Practices ............................................................................ 67
  Participant Perspectives of Place .......................................................................... 75
  Participant Perspectives of Development ............................................................ 79
  Public Policy Barriers ............................................................................................ 79
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural Barriers</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of Art</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants’ Recommendation</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION &amp; CONCLUSION</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion of Findings</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Arts &amp; Development in Tampa</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connections to the Literature</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions &amp; Recommendations</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICIES</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: Satellite Image of Downtown Tampa</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: Interview Protocol</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Listing of Activities and Hours ......................................................... 47
Table 2: Listing ethnicity, gender, and professions of participants .............. 49
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Image of downtown Tampa skyline framed by construction........  59
Creative City and Fields of Cultural Production: Ethnographic Perspectives of “The Arts” in Tampa

James Kuzin

ABSTRACT

Stimulated by the economic theories of Richard Florida (2005), the City of Tampa established the Office of Creative Industries (OCI) to oversee efforts to strengthen the presence and visibility of “the arts.” This thesis presents ethnographic research focused on practices, and perspectives among members of the OCI’s service population. From July 2006 to July 2007, I conducted fieldwork among a diverse group of stakeholders possessing a unique connection to the aims of the OCI. The central problem addressed in this research looks at the degree to which cultural change occurs from participatory, grass-roots initiatives, rather than ones emanating from “the top” based on the economic concerns derived from largely quantitative approaches. The experiences and perspectives presented in this thesis provide a rich qualitative picture of cultural production in Tampa. While exploratory in nature, this research reveals some key considerations for city governments concerning cultural policy. This thesis concludes with discussion of theoretical and methodological implications of findings and calls for practice oriented approaches within urban development settings.
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I present findings from applied anthropological research conducted in partnership with the City of Tampa, Office of Creative Industries (OCI) on its objectives surrounding Creative City development policies. A central focus was an attempt to elicit the various perspectives of business/civic leaders and artists on this initiative, in order to determine whether there was a fit between official intentions and the lived experience of members of the arts community.

In 2003, the City of Tampa launched its Creative City development initiative, a city policy based on the socio-economic theories of American economist and urban development consultant Richard Florida, and focusing on his observation of key elements associated with innovation in economies (Florida 2002; Florida 2003a; Florida 2003b; Florida 2005). Florida (2005a) argues that high concentrations of professionals or members of the creative class in urban settings fuel regional and national economic growth through generating new ideas and ultimately new markets. Central to this theory, Florida observes technology, talent and tolerance as identifying characteristics of creative cities evidenced by the attraction and retention of the creative class members, and the generation of new economies (Florida 2003a:10). On Friday, April 11, 2003, Richard Florida spoke to more than 500 people in downtown Tampa to share his vision of Tampa Bay; an area where artists, musicians, gays, academics, and entrepreneurs would thrive within a burgeoning economy (Trigaux 2003a). Following an impassioned presentation by Florida, local administrators representing private and public sectors began planning to develop Tampa as a creative city or urban environment designed to reflect qualities found
attractive by members of the creative class. By the fall of 2003, a new City of Tampa administration established the Office of Creative Industries, and local business leaders and professionals established a virtual organization with the shared goal of launching and sustaining the development of Tampa Bay’s creative economy (Trigaux 2003b, Bennett 2003). Reflecting on the goals, Deanne Roberts, President, Roberts Communications stated, “The best job markets are those where bright, well-educated young professionals want to live and there is a vibrant, eclectic arts scene and other smart, creative people” (PricewaterhouseCoopers 2005:1).

After establishing the OCI in 2003, the City of Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio hired musician and reporter Paul Wilborn to oversee efforts aimed at establishing Tampa as a “regional cultural center.” In a 2003 newspaper article Mayor Iorio is quoted on her reasoning for this appointment stating, "It’s all part of what I hope will become the personality and image of Tampa as a city of art" (Karp 2003a:3B). While inexperienced in city administrative work, Mr. Wilborn had served as a board member of the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center, and had helped establish large-scale annual events in Ybor City, such as the Artists and Writers Ball and Guavaween (Karp 2003b; Persaud 2005). In an early interview Mr. Wilborn was quoted saying, "This is not a department head job or some big city administrator job...This is a people job...It is going to be a lot of fun" (Karp 2003a:3B). During another interview this same year, Mr. Wilborn reflected on his appointment stating, “In hiring me, the city is saying the arts are important. I want to help arts groups connect to the business community. I want to look for things and events that will put us on the national map” (Bennett 2003:8F). To accomplish this, the OCI was aiming to increase the presence of “arts” and “artists” in Downtown Tampa through networking among artists and business leaders, and advancing ideas of Tampa as a creative place among stakeholders and potential investors. By January 2005, Mr. Wilborn was
active among artists, arts-based groups, city legal staff, zoning officials, and out of state developers advancing ideas of downtown art festivals and live-in retail space for artists (Persaud 2005). Complementing these efforts, private and public organizations across Tampa Bay collaborated with the OCI to host industry tours (Thorner 2006), and funded independent economic research in Tampa Bay (Cortright 2004, 2006). In one such research project, *Things look different Here* Cortright (2006:2) found that comparative to other cities, Tampa Bay possesses (1) an aging population, (2) a “service oriented economy” strong in the areas of finance and “employee leasing,” (3) few manufacturing specializations, (4) relatively low numbers of entrepreneurs, (4) frugality in “education and charity,” and (5) “weak social capital”. Consequently, Cortright (2006) recommends focusing on the health care industry and existing industry clusters to “embrace and capitalize on baby boomer retirement.”

In spite of early enthusiasm, in June of 2007, the city of Tampa announced its plan to discontinue 121 full time positions and 133 seasonal positions observed as “unessential,” in an effort to cut $15 million from its annual operating budget; among these was manager of the OCI (Zink 2007). In this thesis, I trace the historical processes underscoring the OCI, and ask why in the end the OCI was not viewed as an essential priority of the city, and might be perceived as a failure. A key question asks whether there was an effective meshing between the vision/goals/policy of the city and those of the artists who are ultimately responsible for making the vision happen. My findings suggest numerous disconnects and forces at play, embedding the OCI, Creative Cities policy, and surrounding ideas within broader regional and global development processes, as well as underlying structural considerations.
Positioning

This thesis departs from research on the creative economy (discussed at length in Chapter II) and focal concerns with regional geographies, industries, and population demographics in several ways. First, the idea of the city as a hub of trade, communication, and innovation is long embedded in empirical understandings (Smart and Smart 2003; Redfield and Singer 1954). This thesis is not solely concerned with Creative Cities as an economic engine (Cortright 2002; Feldman and Audretsch 1999; Florida 2003a, 2003b; Hall 2000; Peck 2005); nor locating socio-geographic formations such as clustering among regional sectors (Cunningham 2002; Florida 2003a, 2005; Peck 2005; Porter 2003; Schoales 2006; Scott 2006) and industries (Cortright 2002; De Barranger and Meldrum 2000; Florida 2003a, 2005; Wolfe 2004), nor identification of specific demographic groupings (Egar 2003; Florida 1999, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2005). Further, my efforts were not aimed at producing knowledge to inform drivers of competitive advantage, nor enhancing management strategies (Ismail 2005; Gertler 2004; Florida 2005). Finally, this research does not entirely focus on the field of arts (Cunningham 2002; Egar 2003; Krätke 2004).

The central problem addressed in this research is the degree to which cultural change (specifically when associated with artistic production) occurs from participatory, grass-roots initiatives, rather than ones emanating from “the top” based on the economic concerns derived from largely quantitative approaches. Additionally, this thesis observes this problem as rooted in the limited capacity of development models concerned with incentives and property (and rooted in knowledge produced through largely statistical methods of economics) to navigate the power structures and socio-cultural processes that bound and institute economies at the local level (Greenbaum 2002; Yelvington 1995).
The economic analysis of Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Friedrich Engels (1820-1895) looked at relationships inherent to capitalist modes of production seeking to identify governing processes and internal logic. Through this approach, Marx and Engels (2001) observed consciousness as rising from material conditions arguing against the dominant preexisting paradigm. Since this time, political science has compiled research illuminating the complex and integrated processes inherent to capitalist production. For example, Harvey observes capitalist modes of production in relation to socialization and control:

The socialization of the worker to conditions of capitalist production entails the social control of physical and mental powers on a very broad basis. Education, training, persuasion, the mobilization of certain social sentiments (the work ethic, company loyalty, national or local pride) and psychological propensities (the search for identity through work, individual initiative, or social solidarity) all play a role and are plainly mixed in with the information of dominant ideologies cultivated by the mass media, religious and educational institutions, the various arms of the state apparatus, and asserted by simple articulation of their experience on the part of those who do the work [Harvey 1990:124]

In this excerpt, Harvey situates a range of material, social, psychological, and ideological factors presupposing the relationships of capitalist production—relationships embedded within systems of cultural control. In the US, the power of culture to modify behavior is made to appear natural through a formidable complex of media and economic marketing (Nader 1997). While culture is indeed central to imposing structure of social control responsible for maintaining conditions inherent to capitalism, culture is also central to the processes of social change responsible for economic innovation. For example, artistic production among marginalized groups often exists as a primary source of Cultural innovation such as observed in the formation of hip-hop (Krims 2002; Mahon 2000). The emergence of music trends and the popularity of place, as is observed in the history of hip-hop, illustrates how such authenticity engenders value:

Marx defines commodity fetish as the mistaking of an object for a social relation, or vice versa. Its involvement with the music industry is widely discussed, and
properly so, but one might well speculate that hip-hop and rap music intensify the dynamic. The process can be described as follows: “the commodified image of the ghetto forms a libidinal object. This, in turn, leads-and here is the tick-to a surplus value generated precisely from the commodification of a lack of value. In other words, the music industry has formed a way to refold some of the most abject results of world economic production, though a direct transformation, to the most fabulous multibillion dollar wealth… [Krims 2002:67]

In the example of hip-hop’s commodification, a once unique and unpopular artistic form ultimately established economic value from a “lack of value.” While indeed a spectacular process of transformation (Potter 1995), the economic wealth generated by hip-hop culture remained largely confined to the bank accounts of industry executives (and thus engendering little change in material conditions). However, the widespread appreciation of hip-hop’s core elements (i.e. Graffiti Writing, DJing, Dance, and MCing) continues to engender change and opportunity through offering a common ground for the formation of new relationships among otherwise socially distant actors.

**Concepts**

This thesis presents the working definition of an economy a system of exchange, in which property is produced, acquired, and transacted through the practices of individuals within specialized contexts. In the context of this thesis, property is a possession existing in both material (i.e. a product or holding), and representative (i.e. identities, practices, interests) forms. The shape and value inherent to these possessions are determined and constituted through processes and structures inherent to culture and policy formation.

In the above discussion of the capitalist economy, I address elements of production and commodification, I have not directly addressed the concept of property (due in part to the limited scope of this project) as I wish to present a working definition central to the findings of my research. In the supporting example
of hip-hop, I argue that commodification and commercialization ultimately produced value in a restricted fashion. While, initially (and largely still today) few progenitors profited from this transformation, resonant cultural productions offered value, however in non-economic ways. From this perspective, the productions of artists constitute what Weiner (1993) coined an inalienable possession. Weiner (1993) presents inalienable possessions as property imbued with identities of their owners and passed down through lines of inheritance, instating the property and their holder with great value. She states, "Ideally these inalienable possessions are kept by their owners from one generation to the next within the closed context of family, descent group, or dynasty. The loss of such an inalienable possession diminishes the self and by extension the group to which the person belongs" (Weiner 1993:6). Drawing from this position, this thesis observes cultural productions (in addition to select processes and formations) possessions imbued with “intrinsic and ineffable” value. In the following section, I introduce some key economic and socio-cultural concepts in light of anthropology’s cannon.

Central to all economic discussions is the concept of capital, observed here in both financial and non-financial forms. In consideration of capital forms, Florida (2005) states,

> From an economic point of view, creativity is a form of capital—call it "creative capital." Economists have long thought in terms of different types of capital: physical capital (raw materials), investment capital (finance), land (functional property), human capital (educated people), and social capital (the kind that comes from people acting in groups). [Florida 2005:32]

While these definitions are helpful in classifying some of the forms of capital, they provide little understanding of inherent processes. In the interest of a more comprehensive understanding, this thesis draws on the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002). Bourdieu (1986) observes,

> Depending on the field in which it functions, and at the cost of the more or less expensive transformations which are the precondition for its efficacy in the field
in question, capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the forms of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility. [Bourdieu 1986:243]

The presence of cultural, social, and economic forms of capital discussed by Bourdieu are inherent to the production of knowledge, power relationships (political, social, professional, etc.), and economies globally and locally. Further, building from this understanding, this thesis observes the conversion of all forms of capital as *development*—an ideologically driven, intended, and shared practice occurring through the intersection of forms of capital in an effort to influence change in existing conditions (social, political, material, physical/environmental, etc.). This thesis employs a working definition of *policy* as the structural mandates development—regulating practices formed through planning and implementation processes among governing bodies (social institutions, municipalities, NGO’s, etc.).

The definitions and concepts presented to this point reflect the treatment of key terms within anthropology’s canon. Central to these definitions, the subject matter of this thesis requires treatment of additional concepts frequently employed by anthropologists.

Understandings of *identity* and *culture* occupy various meanings among anthropologists specific to the topic of study. Often confusingly intertwined in academia (Sökefeld 1999), the concepts of culture and identity are dynamic and therefore necessitate specialized definitions. In this thesis, I present these terms as distinct, yet related. Below I begin with the culture concept as it relates to development. Wright reflects on the use of culture in development:

...‘culture’ is a dynamic concept, always negotiable and in process of endorsement, contestation and transformation. Differently positioned actors, with unpredictable inventiveness, draw on, re-work and stretch in new directions the
accumulated meanings of ‘culture’ – including old and new academic ones. In a process of claiming power and authority, all are trying to assert different definitions which will have different material outcomes. [Wright 1998:10]

Here, Wright reflects on the use of culture in development situating it as heuristic, dialectical, and continuously emergent. She distinguishes between two primary conceptions of culture in anthropology used in political, organizational and/or development contexts. Speaking to these differences, Wright observes two primary understandings described as, “…‘a culture’ with ‘a people’ which can be delineated with a boundary and a checklist of characteristics; and new meanings of ‘culture’, as not a ‘thing’ but a political process of contestation over the power to define key concepts, including that of ‘culture’…” (Wright 1998:14). In Wright’s latter definition, culture is a political struggle to identify defining characteristics of a group. In this thesis, culture is a fluid process determined through a politicized and constant state of negotiation and change (Wright 1998). More specifically, culture is an active process in which individuals participate and affect change. Like culture, identity is a dynamic concept central to the work of anthropologists. In research among Northern Pakistani Muslim communities, Sökefeld (1999) explores the relationship between identities of kinds, and observes a distinction between the “self” and the “shared self” (observed as interchangeable with the concept of identities of independent and collective forms). He states,

The close look at persons embracing a plurality of identities indicates that it is indispensable to distinguish between (shared) identity/identities and self. ...ability to manage different identities-to manage difference-is an important aspect of the self. Put the other way round, to conceive of a plurality of identities. [Sökefeld 1999:424]

Sökefeld presents identities as occurring in multiple forms for each person, negotiated in differing ways depending on the context. In discussion of these negotiated identities, Sökefeld evokes the concept of agency explaining, “Agency requires both reflexive monitoring of the self and monitoring of the self’s
relationships with others” (Sökefeld 1999:430). Also inherent to this research, agency constitutes yet another amorphous concept frequently employed in the social sciences. In review of the anthropological literature on language and agency, Ahearn (2001) raises some critical questions as to the use of the term. She argues, Where is agency located? Must agency be human, individual, collective, intentional, or conscious? ... Scholars using the term must define it clearly, both for themselves and for their readers. For anthropologists in particular, it is important to avoid treating agency as a synonym for free will or resistance. One fruitful direction for future research may be to begin to distinguish among types of agency—oppositional agency, complicit agency, agency of power, agency of intention, etc.—while also recognizing that multiple types are exercised in any given action. [Ahearn 2001:130]

From the position of Ahearn, agency could occupy many meanings. The negotiation of identities and theorized process of transformation through agency (of kinds of multiple forms) constitutes the working definition of power in this thesis and a central concern underlying my research efforts. Reflecting on this in consideration of the above anthropological treatment of the economic and socio-cultural phenomena, this thesis observes identity formation itself as a process of production and instating value. The above presentation of terms and concepts will lend explanatory capacity to the findings of this research.

Guiding Questions

This research focuses on the practice of development as informed by the kinds of socio-cultural and structural considerations presented in the above discussion. A central question asks how members of the OCI service community respond to the Creative City policy. Surrounding questions ask: (1) What is Creative City and who does it serve? (2) What are the perspectives of Creative City from among members of this service population? (3) What are the social and structural considerations reflected in Creative City? To answer these questions I designed an exploratory ethnographic study to produce knowledge beneficial to all participants
and interested parties. Moreover, this project was designed with the aim of informing future urban policy formation, and anthropological research.

**Anthropology and Development**

I locate the subject matter addressed by this thesis at a nexus of orientations among anthropologists working in development and rooted in the "monitorist" tradition (Paiment 2007:201); a concern with policies and administrations, and their impact among service populations and material conditions. The discipline of applied anthropology and the ethnographic enterprise are ideally suited to answering questions concerning the impacts of policy and development on populations and groups.

Anthropology is inherently an applied discipline, as evidenced in its historical relationship with development. Rubin (1961) argues that development has always been the primary focus for anthropologists studying culture change through the processes of socialization, technology, knowledge production, economics, ecology, public health, urbanization, politics, and power. Although historically this concern placed anthropologists at the center of global development efforts within sponsoring NGO’s, the reliance of these organizations on methods of industrialization and trickle down economics all but eliminated anthropology’s place (not to mention the research interests of the discipline) by the 1960s (Barfield 1997). Today many applied anthropologists are finding employment as program evaluators skilled in ethnographic methods. Yon (2003) illustrates how the use of ethnography in education by applied anthropologists engendered an increased focus on domestic institutions, the growth of interest on urban issues within the discipline, and ultimately the expanding interest in ethnography as a method of inquiry among individuals trained in sociology and cultural studies. Further, through the early work
of educational ethnographers, ethnography emerged as a primary means of linking programming goals with outcomes in addition to symbolic meanings and adaptive behaviors in the cultures of schools (Yon 2003:424). Consequently, evaluators of all institutions increasingly recognized ethnography for its potential to offer a ground level perspective of programming activities. Schwartzman (1983:179) states, “Ethnographic evaluation methods appear to be particularly well suited for use in describing the multiple, and often conflicting, interests and meanings the human service program participants may attach to program activities.” In discussion of the relationship between ethnography and evaluation, Camino (1997) stresses the importance of recognizing anthropology’s unique contribution. Indeed, anthropological methods offer abilities of value to prospective employers; especially those operating within the context of development. Anthropological methods are gaining increasing attention in development work among NGO’s and government agencies (Paiement 2007:197). In reflection on efforts among these organizations Paiement argues, “I believe that there are now considerable opportunities for anthropologists to influence the nature and course of development in ways that can have profound consequences for the quality of life of current and future generations” (Paiement 2007:214). Low (1996) presents some of these contributions in relation to urban development stating,

> Anthropological critiques of planning and design projects provide a methodology and framework for decoding the ideological intentions and material consequences of architectural plans and landscape designs, while radicalized fieldwork retains the power to demonstrate the how, why, and when of urban processes. [Low 1996:402]

The holistic focus of anthropology prepares practitioners to address any problem they encounter in any work setting. As observed in this overview, anthropology has a long-standing relationship with the field of development. In addition, the qualitative
research of applied anthropologists continue to yielded understandings of processes highly valued both inside and outside the field of development.

In the following chapter, I present literature from across disciplines to further locate the central problem, focus, questions, and methods of this research within academic work involving the creative economy (i.e. the creative field, creative industries, and workforce); broader discussions of the economy and development practices; and an overview of practice and process oriented research. I conclude this literature review through revisiting my initial focus and research questions with a methodological discussion transitioning into more specific discussions in the following chapter. In Chapter III, I provide a detailed explanation of the methods and approaches used to answer the central questions of this thesis; use of ethnographic methods of participant observation among the OCI and its partners, and interviews with its service community. In Chapter IV, I present findings central to the questions of this thesis as acquired in various settings throughout Tampa Bay. In Chapter V I revisit these findings in light of popular media, theory, and practice to produce knowledge central to the focus and questions of this research, and offer practical applications and recommendations.
CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

My review of relevant literature is organized into three primary sections focused on the scholarly work of creative economists, conditions and beliefs found within development contexts, in addition to literature reflecting constructive development orientations and key findings. In The Creative economy, I introduce the ideas associated with theories and research associated with the work of Richard Florida, given that this approach was central to Tampa’s OCI initiative. In The Glocal Development and Ideology, I present literature that illuminates applied anthropology’s contribution to issues of development globally and locally. In the final section, Praxis and Development, I present literature reflecting action oriented or practice based themes. In this chapter’s conclusion, I revisit each section in relation to the stated focus and questions of my research.

Creative Economy

Academic literature associated with the creative economy involves discussions of trends observed in local and global economies, industries, policies, culture, and social geography. Literature reviewed here addresses issues of the creative economy by way of reference to the work of Richard Florida, and reflects ideas developed within the disciplines of economics, geography, marketing, business management, public policy, and human resources.

In the last several years, economists have increasingly called attention to creativity as a primary driver of economic growth. Among such adherents, economist Richard Florida is recognized as a champion of the creative economy. In Flight of the
Florida presents the problem of a global competition for talent as a pivotal consideration in the economic growth of America. He states,

America’s growth miracle turns on one key factor: its openness to new ideas, which has allowed it to dominate the global competition for talent, and in doing so harness the creative energies of its own people—and, indeed, the world’s. The United States may have ushered in the era of high-tech industry and perpetual innovation, but it is by no means our nation’s manifest destiny to stay on top. To remain innovative, America must continue to attract the world’s sharpest and most creative minds. And to do that, it needs to invest in the further development, from both internal and external sources, of its talent base. Because wherever talent goes, innovation, creativity, and economic growth are sure to follow. [Florida 2005:4]

To remain innovative, Florida argues, the United States must invest in attracting and developing its talent resources, which are intrinsically linked to economic innovation. Florida argues that creativity is the “great leveler,” defying gender, race, ethnicity, sex and physical appearance. Moreover, Florida argues that we cannot predict who, “...the next David Ogilvy, Gwendolyn Brooks, Paul Allen, Oscar Wilde, or Barack Obama will be, or where they will come from. Yet our society continues to encourage the creative talents of a minority...” (Florida 2005:35). From Florida’s position, everyone possesses creative capacity or “creative capital,” and that economic health can be influenced through harnesing this potential:

Today’s leading growth theorists argue that economies develop not so much as a result of their physical and investment capital but based on stocks of human capital they possess. But human capital is typically measured by economists based on workers’ formal educational levels. Now it is the intrinsically human ability to create new ideas, new technologies, new business models, new cultural forms, and whole new industries that really matters. This is what I mean by creative capital. For an economy to grow and prosper, all types of organizations—individuals, firms, cities, states, and even nations—must nurture, harness, mobilize, and invest in creativity across the board. Similarly, for economists and academics to have any success whatsoever in measuring such capital, we must find ways to take into account the full range of human creative potential. This is the reason I’ve moved to an occupationally based model of measurement in my work; it still doesn’t go the full distance in getting at what drives creative economic growth, but I believe it’s more accurate than the standard education-level measurement. [Florida 1995:32]

In this passage, Florida identifies creative capital as intrinsically related to economic growth and calls for economists to discover new ways of locating and evaluating this
potential. Complimenting this position, Florida identifies a potential danger in the United States ability to attract and retain talented individuals. Evoking the past dominance of the U.S. in attracting and retaining talent, Florida argues,

> For decades, the U.S. has succeeded at attracting and growing talented people because of its creative ecosystem—a densely interwoven fabric of institutions, individuals, and economic and social rights. Attracting people does not just happen; it depends on the care and feeding of the organizations and people that make up this ecosystem. Perturb it or damage it in small ways and, like any ecosystem, it can die. The problem is: We don’t yet fully understand how this ecosystem works. We don’t know which fauna feed off which flora, and what kind of balances are in place. The ecosystem was easy enough to understand when we assumed it was premised on the one simple credo: economic self-interest. [Florida 2005: 238]

Here Florida discusses the U.S.’s post-World-War II economic growth, likening it to a little understood ecosystem. Florida observes the economy as determined by three primary factors: technology, talent, and tolerance. He states,

> To attract creative people, generate innovation, and stimulate economic development, a place must have all three. I define tolerance as openness, inclusiveness, and diversity to all ethnicities, races, and walks of life. Talent is defined as those with a bachelor’s degree and above. And technology is a function of both innovation and high-technology concentrations in a region. [Florida 2003:10]

Thus the “three T’s” of technology, talent, and tolerance are observed as interrelated components of economic development. Drawing from Florida, these themes are presented in various combinations in the literature if authors concerned with the creative economy.

Technology, geography and knowledge have long been recognized as critical to innovation (Feldman and Audretsch 1999:427). Such is evidenced by the prevalence of these themes in literature on the creative economy as found throughout the fields of economics, marketing, business management, and political science. The creative economy has been described as a complex of fields and processes specific to the functioning of the economy locally and globally. “Creative industries are less national, and more global and local/regional, than is typical among public
broadcasting systems, flagship arts companies and so on” (Cunningham 2002:6).

Similarly, Scott (2006) presents the creative field as a “commons” with numerous “free floating” parts. He states,

> The creative field that undergirds the new economy is constituted as a constellation of workers, firms, institutions, infrastructures, communication channels, and other active ingredients stretched out at varying densities across geographic space. This web of forces is replete with synergistic interactions variously expressed as increasing returns effects, externalities, spillovers, socialization processes, evolving traditions, and so on, and it is above all a locus of extraordinarily complex learning processes and knowledge accumulation. [Scott 2006:20]

Here, Scott identifies some of the primary domains and processes associated with creative economy. More specifically, these domains and processes are comprised of industries and located within urban settings. Schoales (2006) recognizes creative industries such as, “clothing, jewelry, publishing, motion pictures, sound recording, broadcasting, investment, design, advertising, and performing arts” (Schoales 2006:175). In his analysis of data from major metropolitan areas in the U.S. and Canada, Schoales (2006) locates distinctions among these industries:

> Some industries, those characterized by extremely rapid, ongoing new product introduction, exhibit a unique set of characteristics. These alpha cluster industries tend to be very spatially concentrated. The most innovative clusters in these industries support very high local wages over an extended period of time. Many of these industries have a highly creative, even artistic element. Industries like these are often valued for their ability to create an attractive environment for people to live and visit; however, they potentially have substantial value in their own right as sources of innovative production. [Schoales 2006:175]

From this perspective, Creative Industries present various values in the production of financial and aesthetic elements located in urban “clusters.” Clusters consist of industries in space-time relationship to one another and are viewed as central to the economic development of regional economies (Porter 2003). He explains,

> One of the most striking features of regional economies is the presence of clusters, or geographic concentrations of linked industries. We define a cluster as a geographically proximate group of interconnected companies, suppliers, service providers and associated institutions in a particular field, linked by externalities of various types. Examples of clusters are financial services in New York (Wall Street), medical devices in Boston, and IT in Austin, Texas and Silicon Valley.
Clusters are important because of the externalities that connect the constituent industries, such as common technologies, skills, knowledge and purchased inputs. [Porter 2003:562]

Like Scott (2006), Porter (2003) identifies “externalities” as central to the function of industry clusters in the economy linking industries to one another through capacities afforded in the leveraging of technology, skill, and knowledge. Cortright (2002) identifies the clustering of industries as central to business innovation through the competitiveness engendered. He argues, “Groups of firms compete fiercely against one another to achieve a technological edge, building their own knowledge...of customers, suppliers, workers, and others. Industry clusters tend to be vibrant sources of innovation, both in existing companies and through the creation of new businesses” (Cortright 2002:6). Looking at the process of an industry cluster located in Manchester’s creative sector, De Barranger and Meldrum (2000) found information and communications technologies (ICTs) enhance the local and global connectedness in creative sector clusters of small and medium sized business organizations (De Barranger and Meldrum 2000:1834). While the study found this within the scope of the project, the authors suspect technology alone was insufficient in sustaining project successes. They state,

> It is clear that the physical networking involved in the initial development of the site was important in further developing local cohesion but that the loss of the local project office and the two project officers has led to a loss of momentum from those companies who lacked the resources to continue developing their use of ICTs. [De Barranger and Meldrum 2000:1834]

These findings suggest the significance of human and organizational considerations in the producing capacities of industries associated with the creative economy. Moreover, research increasingly suggests competition does not act alone in economic innovation of firms, as evidenced in the existence of trust relations among a network of competitively successful regional firms, but rather, trust and rapport are presented as central to regional development (Wolfe 2002). He argues,
Building trust among economic actors in a local or regional economy is a difficult process that requires a constant dialogue between the relevant parties so that interests and perceptions can be better brought into alignment. Trust is one of those rare commodities that can neither be bought, nor imported; it can only be built up painstakingly through a prolonged process of interaction. [Wolfe 2002:39]

Here, trust is presented as a rare commodity irreducible to financial capital yet central to the development of communities. Ismail (2005) reflects on this specific to the internal processes of social organizations in discussion of his research findings on creative climate and learning. Although this research found innovation variable across different-sized organizations, “challenge” and “trust” emerged as key to successful organizational learning evidenced in the processes of embedding knowledge and information, developing internal and external research capacities, as well as with the sustained development of employee skills (Ismail 2005:649-650). Beyond the recognition of technology and organizational learning, creative economy literature also recognizes the role of culture in the production of creative industries in geographic locations. Gertler (2004) observes the importance of creative activity, pointing to specific trends among creative industries.

...it is important to recognize one of the more intangible but nevertheless significant impacts that creative activity can have on the urban (and national) economy. A fundamental paradox in the age of global culture is that, amidst strong pressures towards homogeneity and conformity, and notwithstanding the emergence of large and powerful global actors in the cultural industries to drive this process, there remains tremendous value in producing unique, distinctive and original cultural products. Such unique cultural products may ultimately provide the content and cultural capital that feeds the next wave of global cultural output. But they also create benefits both locally and nationally by shaping the identity of the creative places where such cultural products were originally produced. This is part and parcel of a global phenomenon in which the pantheon of stars has some notable new entrants: architects, musicians, artists, filmmakers, writers – even chefs. [Gertler 2004:6]

In this excerpt, the author calls for attention to authenticity in the manufacture of cultural products, situating culture as a driver in the production of creative industries. The author argues that cultural products function as a conduit to the development of cultural capital, seen as fueling the identity of place as a creative
center, thus drawing in talent. Broadly reflecting on this process, Florida (2005) observes culture as key:

The economic importance of culture, in my view, lies in its ability to absorb and harness human talent. Since every human being has creative potential, the key role for culture is to create a society where that talent can be attracted, mobilized and unleashed. All of this turns on an expansive, open, and proactively inclusive culture—one that does not discriminate, does not force people into boxes, and does allow them to be themselves and to validate their varied identities. In my theory, culture operates not by constraining the range of human creative possibilities but by facilitating and mobilizing them. Another word for this is “freedom.” Freedom, as we all know, means much more than being able to cast a vote; it means the ability to be yourself and to follow your dreams. Open culture is a spur to innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic development. Historically, it’s this exact kind of openness and freedom that the United States in general, and its great cities in particular, have been especially good at encouraging. [Florida 2005:72]

Here Florida reflects on culture as a mobilizing force through which individuals can be liberated to follow dreams and actualize economic potentials. A similar presentation of culture is employed by Egar (2003). He observes,

At the heart of this effort is recognition of the vital role that art and culture play in enhancing economic development, and ultimately, defining a “creative community”—one that exploits the vital linkages between art, culture and commerce, and in the process consciously invests in human and financial resources to prepare its citizens to meet the challenges of the rapidly evolving post-industrial, knowledge-based economy and society. [Egar 2003:4]

From Edgar’s perspective the acquisition of a cultural identity situates creative communities as a nexus of arts, culture, and socio-economic process. In theories of the creative economy, the creative community is reducible to a specific group of individuals. Defined as the “Creative Class” (Florida 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2005), individual members of this group possess at least a bachelors degree and work in a wide variety of professions requiring creativity – the creative industries (Florida 1999). In the opening discussions of his recent book, *Flight of the Creative Class*, Florida (2005) calls for attention to underlying motivations of the creative class in consideration of incentives inherent to economic development (Florida 2005: 77).
his early writings on the creative economy, Florida (1999) situates his reasoning for this recommendation:

Focus groups I have recently conducted with knowledge workers indicate that these talented people have many career options and that they can choose where they want to live and work. They want to work in progressive environments, frequent upscale shops and cafes, enjoy museums and fine arts and outdoor activities, send their children to superior schools, and run into people at all these places from other advanced research labs and cutting-edge companies in their neighborhoods. Researchers who do leave the university to start companies need quick access to venture capital, top management and marketing employees, fast and cheap Internet connections, and a pool of smart people from which to draw employees. They will not stick around the area if they can’t find all these things. What’s more, young graduates know they will probably change employers as many times in 10 years, and they will not move to an area where they do not feel there are enough quality employers to provide these opportunities. [Florida 1999:71-72]

Here Florida outlines a central concern with the environmental conditions desired by creative professionals, a problem he recognizes as increasingly significant today. These findings are consistent with those of other researchers. Observing lifestyle as a significant factor among creative professionals Egar (2003) notes the selection of “active, participatory recreation” in opposition to “passive forms” stating, “They will favor cities that have myriad possibilities for outdoor recreation rather than just professional spectator sports” (Egar 2003:30). Here, the author points to the active participation in recreational activities as a valued practice among members of the creative class.

However, some scholars question the central tenets of the “creative class” model. For Peck (2005), the creative field and its proponents constitute an ideologically driven productionism. He observes,

A new generation of entrepreneurializing subjects is formed, as the disciplines of creative productionism are extended to every aspect of self and soul, to the spheres of consumption and play, as well as to those of work, while the circumstances of those outside the favored class are rationalized according to a deficit model of creativity. And the strategic emphasis shifts from a narrow focus on the sphere of production to a deeper engagement with the marketizing and commodifying spheres of consumption and reproduction, positions within which become the primary markers of distinction in the creative city. [Peck 2005:766-767]
From Peck’s perspective, *creative* models of growth constitute little change to existing inequitable conditions, while constructing new barriers or a “deficit model of creativity.” Others question the capacity of this model, as reflected in research on international development efforts modeled after the creative economy. For example, Krätke (2004) looks at Berlin’s regional economy and restructuring attempts modeled after creative talent, incorporating variables such as socio-spatial polarization, the real estate boom of the 1990s and more recently a looming financial crisis (Krätke 2004:527-528). The observations in Berlin reflect some key concerns related to the political self-interest of the creative development model in Berlin.

Florida (2005) takes issue with the idea that the economy operates through greed. He argues, “There is no denying that many people got very rich in the 1990s doing creative work. But to conclude from this fact that greed was their primary motivation is to deeply misunderstand both the choices these people made and the way the economy operates” (Florida 2005:77). Indeed economic theories abound, and debates range as to the historical successes and underlying processes of the economy domestically and globally.

In the above discussion, I profile some key concepts and arguments around the “creative” economic theory. Literature on the *creative economy* focuses on the processes of innovation observed in the relationship of industries concerned with the development economic bases in the fields of technology, knowledge, and cultural production. Research in these areas reflects a common interest in the geographic clustering of representative businesses and industries, which are observed as central to innovation through competition and/or established networks and relationships. Further, businesses involved with the production of goods and services related to technology, human resources, and the arts are observed as key to the function of economies globally and locally. Literature on the creative economy presents industry
innovation as reducible to the skills and knowledge developed by talented members of the creative class. Research on these populations suggests a concern among individuals, with urban environments promoting of diverse employment opportunities, cultural arts, and tolerance. More specifically, research on the motivating interests valued among these members of the creative class reveal their concern with active recreational lifestyles, objectivity, and trust. Authors call attention to these drivers, cautioning the reader to the migratory flows of creative professionals actively searching for urban settings promoting of specific qualities, and the increasing competition among regions seeking to develop creative economies. From Florida’s position, the economy is largely determined through the attractiveness of an urban setting; choices seen as ultimately determining the success of a city seeking economic growth. At the same time, critics suggest that the model may be inadequate in accounting for the relationship between the “creative class” and economic growth, pointing out the difficulty of observing this relationship in practice.

**Development & Ideology**

The literature presented in the previous section focuses on a model of development through which cities can harness presumed “creative” potentials. This literature reflects themes related to industry, technology, business research, policy, business management, and development models. In cursory review of this literature, discussions afford few mentions of material conditions addressed through development, inherent power relationships or associated ideologies. In the following section, I present these themes as treated outside the discipline of “creative” economics.
Global Outcomes

The material conditions inherent to existing global development trends reflect significant discontinuities in the global economy. Such is a contentious area of study for anthropologists, given the problems observed in international work on social welfare. In review of the anthropology of social welfare policy, Okongwu and Mencher (2000) summarize,

- The World Bank defines its general principles as (a) achieving universal and equitable access to basic social services, including basic education, health care, reproductive health, sanitation, and safe drinking water; (b) enabling all men and women to obtain secure and sustainable livelihoods and decent working conditions; (c) monitoring systems of safety nets to protect people from adverse economic shocks; and (d) fostering social inclusion. Yet, by late 1998, even many at the World Bank had come to realize that their policies have mostly had the opposite effect of what they supposedly intended to accomplish. ... Internationally, the globalization process has been pushing for downsizing in government offices as well as in private industries—which means unemployment for many who had counted on governments as the employer of last resort. [Okongwu and Mencher 2000:111]

This excerpt reflects key considerations of inequitable development widely recognized in critiques of global development efforts. Escobar (2004) Observes these trends as a process of continuous displacement. He states,

- Displacement is an integral element of euro centered modernity and its post-World War II manifestation in Asia, Africa and Latin America, namely, development. Both modernity and development are spatial-cultural projects that require the continuous conquest of territories and peoples and their ecological and cultural transformation along the lines of an allegedly rational order. [Escobar 2004:16]

This “rational order” constitutes what Webber refers to as the “unchaining of economic interest” observed as inherent to capitalist enterprises (Webber 1950:444):

- The unchaining of the economic interest merely as such has produced only irrational results; such men as Cortez and Pizarro, who were perhaps its strongest embodiment, were far from having an idea of a rationalistic economic life. If the economic impulse in itself is universal, it is an interesting question as to the relations under which it becomes rationalized and rationally tempered in such fashion as to produce rational institutions of the character of capitalistic enterprises. [Weber 1950:444]
Taking a closer look at the process of production specific to post-World War II, Harvey (1990) observes the control of labor as a driving force. He states,

I broadly accept the view that the long postwar boom, from 1945 to 1973, was built upon a certain set of labor control practices, technological mixes, consumption habits, and configurations of political-economic power, and that this configuration can reasonably be called Fordist-Keynesian. The break up of this system since 1973 has inaugurated a period of rapid change, flux, and uncertainty. Whether or not the new systems of production and marketing, characterized by more flexible labour processes and markets, of geographical mobility and rapid shifts in consumption practices, warrant the title of a new regime of accumulation, and whether the revival of entrepreneurialism and of neo-conservatism, coupled with the cultural turn to postmodernism, warrant the title of a new mode of regulation, is by no means clear. There is always a danger of confusing the transitory and the ephemeral with more fundamental transformations in political—economic life. But the contrasts between the present political—economic practices and those of the post-war boom period are sufficiently strong to make the hypothesis of a shift from Fordism to what might be called a 'flexible' regime of accumulation a telling way to characterize recent history. [Harvey 1990:124]

In this passage, Harvey relates fluctuations in the U.S. economy to systems of production. Moreover, he presents these changes through “regimes” identified through specific practices, technologies, and structural configurations such as the Fordist-Keynesian regime representing the Post-World War II economy and more recently (and cautiously presented) as the regime of flexible accumulation. The effect of this shift was felt across the country, especially among America’s great urban centers.

Local Impacts

Until the mid 1960s, urban policy characteristic of “Great Society” programs, such as Model Cities, looked to support citizens and agencies located in the low-income urban-core with federal grants to fight the War on Poverty. However, beginning in 1969, as public attention turned to Vietnam, the Nixon Administration attempted to de-centralize these functions and shift power to local governments; the emphasis was to defund community organizations and groups with ties to the
democratic federal establishment. Further, revenue sharing inherent to these programs included block grants, which fueled redevelopment efforts. These initiatives funded new home subsidies to white American soldiers and Urban Renewal programs, which displaced inner-city families in preparation for highway construction. In addition to the social isolation and physical degradation resulting from these public policies, deindustrialization of the private sector resulted in a reduction of economic opportunities for residents living in low-income neighborhoods of inner-cities. In addition, policies favoring development permitted property owners, investors, and industries to work in concert with technocrats and politicians, resulting in widespread corruption (Savitch 1988). Although these government programs had aimed to correct the reproduction of poverty through increased funding to disadvantaged schools (ESEA), these efforts failed due to radical changes in the political climate during the 1960s and 1970s. Harvey situates the U.S. economy in the following decades within conditions found under the flexible regime of accumulation:

A rising tide of social inequality engulfed the United States in the Reagan Years, reaching a post-war high in 1986; by then the poorest fifth of the population, which had gradually improved its share of national income to a high point of nearly 7 per cent in the early 1970s, found itself with only 4.6 per cent. Between 1979 and 1986, the number of poor families with children increased by 35 per cent, and in some large metropolitan areas, such as New York, Chicago, Baltimore, and New Orleans, more than half the children were living in families with incomes below the poverty line. [Harvey 1990:330-31]

The above presentation of development and economic trends demonstrate the differential benefits of development.

**Ideological Undercurrents**

Within anthropology, ideology is seen as common to modern development efforts. Such is evident in the discussions of the neoliberal ideology in scholarly work on economic development. Speaking to this Farmer (2001) states,
It is an ideology that has little to say about the social and economic inequalities that distort real economies and instead, reveals yet another means by which these economies can be further exploited. Neoliberal thought is central to modern development efforts, the goal of which is less to repair poverty and social inequalities than to manage them. [Farmer 2001:313]

Farmer (2001) observes an ideological dimension to the practice of development, pointing to neoliberal pre-convictions underlying attempts to manage as opposed to repair social inequalities. Bourdieu (1998) outlines some of the processes inherent to the practices of neoliberalism:

And yet the world is there, with the immediately visible effects of the implementation of the great neoliberal utopia: not only the poverty of an increasingly large segment of the most economically advanced societies, the extraordinary growth in income differences, the progressive disappearance of autonomous universes of cultural production, such as film, publishing, etc. through the intrusive imposition of commercial values, but also and above all two major trends. First is the destruction of all the collective institutions capable of counteracting the effects of the infernal machine, primarily those of the state, repository of all of the universal values associated with the idea of the public realm. Second is the imposition everywhere, in the upper spheres of the economy and the state as at the heart of corporations, of that sort of moral Darwinism that, with the cult of the winner, schooled in higher mathematics and bungee jumping, institutes the struggle of all against all and cynicism as the norm of all action and behavior.... The transition to "liberalism" takes place in an imperceptible manner, like continental drift, thus hiding its effects from view. Its most terrible consequences are those of the long term. [Bourdieu 1998]

Thus Bourdieu cautions about the gradual dangers of this utopia actualized in the deterioration of economic conditions through obstructed social relations and learning.

His description of neoliberalism references a “social order” governing the inequitable distribution of power in a closed system. It is this “social order” that manufactures culture to such a degree of efficiency, that make it appear natural:

In the United States, culture may appear natural and inevitable because it is deliberately made to appear so by the manipulation of cultural images that articulate what people should be, should think, should buy (not that they always do). A strong belief in free will often impedes understanding of how lives are changed by cultural practices that are external to the individual and intended to modify individual behavior, for example, through political propaganda or economic marketing. [Nader 1997:721]

Nader’s observations are legitimating examples of how essentialist cultural images are employed in the engineering and maintenance of societal norms and
consumption practices. While imposing, popular media simply reinforces preexisting deeply embedded beliefs. For most people, socio-cultural conditioning begins with the introduction of the achievement ideology instituted at all levels of the US education system. MacLeod (1991) explains,

Several decades of quantitative research have demonstrated that the social class and ethnic group into which one is born have a massive influence on where one will end up in the class structure. American society is not as open as it purports to be. Although a degree of social mobility does exist in the United States, it exists only enough to sustain the "America-as-the-land-of-opportunity" myth. While a completely closed society cannot maintain a semblance of openness, a society that allows some mobility, however meager, can always hold up the so called self-made individual as "proof" that barriers to success are purely personal and that the poor are poor of their own accord. [MacLeod 1991:263]

In this excerpt, MacLeod presents a chief underlying assumption of the capitalist economy in discussion of the achievement ideology. This belief in the equity of opportunity strongly parallels Bourdieu’s (1998) reference to “moral Darwinism” and “cult of the winner.” From this perspective, the achievement ideology is reducible to ideas rooted in the work of 18th century Social Darwinists such as found in the writings of Herbert Spencer (1820-1903):

It is well that the lives of all of the parts of an animal should be merged in the life of the whole, because the whole has a corporate consciousness distinct of those of its components. And this is an everlasting reason why the welfare of the citizens cannot rightly be sacrificed to some supposed benefit of the State; but why, on the other hand, the State must be regarded as existing solely for the benefit of citizens. The corporate life must here be subservient to the life of the parts, instead of the life of the parts being subservient to the corporate life. [Spencer 1860:16]

In this passage drawn from The Social Organism published in 1860, Spenser presents the relationship between social organization and individuals suggesting an inverse relationship in obligations from what we frequently observe today in business. Reflecting on the influence of Spencer’s work, McGee and Warms (2002) observe,

Spencer’s organic analogy was so influential that his definition of primitive societies with simple technology, undifferentiated social structure, and lack of economic specializations achieved widespread acceptance. Spencer viewed
Darwin’s work as supporting his own and used the organic analogy as a mechanism for applying evolution to his theory of social change. It is Spencer, not Darwin, who coined the phrase “survival of the fittest”. [McGee and Warms 2000:8]

Indeed Spencer had been working on a theory of biological evolution prior to the publication of *Origins of the Species* in 1859 and viewed the theory outlined by Darwin and Wallace as complimentary to his own, however it was a quarter of a century until Spencer used the phrase *survival of the fittest* in publication. Spenser (1884) states,

Other things equal an army of insubordinate soldiers fails before an army of subordinate soldiers. Those whose obedience to their leader is perfect and prompt, are obviously more likely to succeed in battle than are those who disregard the commands issued to them. And as with the army so with the society as a whole; success in war must largely depend on that conformity to the ruler’s will which brings men and money when wanted, and adjusts all conduct to his needs.

Thus by survival of the fittest, the militant type of society becomes characterized by profound confidence in the governing power, joined with a loyalty causing submission to it in all matters whatever. And there must tend to be established among those who speculate about political affairs in a militant society, a theory giving form to the needful ideas and feelings; accompanied by assertions that the law-giver if not divine in nature is divinely directed, and that unlimited obedience to him is divinely ordered. [Spencer 1884:109]

Here Spencer presents the phrase *survival of the fittest* in the context of state military affairs. Since its publication, this phrase has made its way into discussions of economic competition. McGee and Warms (2000) discuss Spencer’s work in relation to the rise of Social Darwinism:

One consequence of Spencer’s work was the popularization of a point of view called social Darwinism. Social Darwinists interpreted natural selection to mean that if evolution was progress and only the fittest survived, then it was the right of Western powers to dominate those who were less technologically advanced. According to this line of reasoning, the domination of one society by another proves its superiority and its advanced level of fitness. Conquest of an inferior society by a superior one was the result of an action of natural law and hence not only moral but also imperative. This was a convenient philosophy for the rapidly expanding European powers and was used to justify their imperialism, colonialism, and racism. In the United States, social Darwinism was invoked as a justification for free enterprise capitalism. [McGee and Warms 2007:8-9]
Today survival of the fittest can be encountered in almost any professional setting such as political offices, corporate headquarters, college classroom, community centers, and coffee houses and is often cited as a key finding or “law of nature” inherent to evolutionary theory. Early on debate raged between “Social Darwinists” such as Herbert Spencer and Albert Huxley (1825-1895) and others in the scientific community regarding mentions of competition as originally intended by Darwin. A good example of this is found in the opening of Mutual Aid (Kropotkin 1914).

Kropotkin (1842-1921) argues,

The conception of struggle for existence as a factor of evolution, introduced into science by Darwin and Wallace, has permitted us to embrace an immensely wide range of phenomena in one single generalization, which soon became the very basis of our philosophical, biological, and sociological speculations. An immense variety of facts: -- adaptations of function and structure of organic beings to their surroundings; physiological and anatomical evolution; intellectual progress, and moral development itself, which we formerly used to explain by so many different causes, were embodied by Darwin in one general conception. We understood them as continued endeavours -- as a struggle against adverse circumstances -- for such a development of individuals, races, species and societies, as would result in the greatest possible fulness, variety, and intensity of life. [...] In The Descent of Man he gave some powerful pages to illustrate its proper, wide sense. He pointed out how, in numberless animal societies, the struggle between separate individuals for the means of existence disappears, how struggle is replaced by co-operation, and how that substitution results in the development of intellectual and moral faculties which secure to the species the best conditions for survival. He intimated that in such cases the fittest are not the physically strongest, nor the cunningest, but those who learn to combine so as mutually to support each other, strong and weak alike, for the welfare of the community. [Kropotkin 1914:1-2]

Through Kropotin, we observe a critical error, be it intentional or not, made by early anthropologists in the obfuscation of meaning and resultant abuse of power.

Beyond the issues observed in the history of Social Darwinism resides a structural problem in the paradigms presupposing Western logic in science. Gorski (2006) says this well:

Following Newton’s ultimately imperfect gospel, centuries of scientists assumed that the whole is equal to the sum of its parts rather than the relationship of its parts, and therefore believed that fixing a damaged structure while ignoring a dysfunctional relationship could repair the whole organism. Today, quantum physicists explode the tenets of classical science and no longer accept that atoms
are composed exclusively of physical matter, or that for every action there is but one equal and opposite reaction, or even that energy is finite. [Gorski 2006:1]

Here, Gorski positions the significance of relationships in contrast to the compartmentalized perceptions engendered by western logic and ideology. Moreover, this statement rests on a fundamental consideration for practitioners committed to social change; the health of the economy, individuals, families, organizations, industries, is determined not in it their component parts, but in the qualities of relationships maintained. This also points to a critical problem confronting social sciences overly concerned with statistical analysis resulting in reductive analysis.

Speaking to this problem, Wellman (1983) explains,

Statistical methods in sociology have grown increasingly sophisticated in multivariate capability. Yet the most widely used methods treat individuals as independent units of analysis. Their very assumption of statistical independence, which makes them so powerful in categorical analysis, detaches individuals from social structures and forces analysts to treat them as disconnected masses. Researchers can only measure social structure indirectly by organizing and summarizing numerous individual covariations. This limitation has led researchers, often unconsciously, to neglect social properties that are more than the sum of individual acts. [Wellman 1983:169]

Reflecting on the study of social structure Wellman (1983) argues, “The most direct way to study a social structure is to analyze the patterns of ties linking its members” (Wellman 1983:157). The effectiveness of this approach is evidenced in the findings of social science research orientated to process (Leacock 1972:61) and practice.

In the above section, I present literature concerning global and local development not located in the primary arguments of creative economists. Literature from the social sciences reveals an increasing socio-economic gap and the complications associated with population health and dangerous environmental conditions. I observe these conditions as largely determined by development practices rooted in ideologies neo-liberalism, the achievement ideology, and Social Darwinism inherent to the capitalist economy. Taken together, this thesis presents both development outcomes and associated ideologies as rooted in Western logic
central to research methods responsible for producing an incomplete and/or inaccurate representation of socio-cultural processes.

**Praxis & Development**

Literature from the social sciences illuminates some sustainable approaches through which practitioners have navigated the pitfalls of development presented above. Central to this are processes associated with organizations, individuals, and the power they produce. In his distinguished lecture at the 88th annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Wolf (1990) observes organizations as central to the exercise of power:

Organization is key, because it sets up relationships among people through allocation and control of resources and rewards. It draws on tactical power to monopolize or share out liens and claims, to channel action into certain pathways while interdicting the flow of action into others. Some things become possible and likely; others are rendered unlikely. [Wolf 1990:590]

From this perspective, organization locates power relationships in space and time among cultural producers. In the previous section, I presented the process through which power is instituted as a central consideration of this research; a process involving forms of capital (Bourdieu 1986), identities (Sökefeld 1999), and agency (Ahearn 2001). Further, the institution of these structures—themselves in the process of structuration—are central considerations to the function of economies. For example, Karl Polanyi (1968) describes the way in which a society situates its production as an instituted process. He explains,

The instating of the economic process vests that process with unity and stability; it produces a structure with a definite function in society; it shifts the place of the process in society, thus adding significance to its history; it centers interest on values, motives and policy. Unity and stability, structure and function, history and policy spell out operationally the content of our assertion that the human economy is an instituted process.

The human economy, then, is embedded and enmeshed in institutions, economic and non-economic. The inclusion of the non-economic is vital. For religion or government may be as important for the structure and functioning of
the economy as monetary institutions or the availability of tools and machines themselves that lighten the toil of labor. [Polanyi 1968:148]

Here the structure provided by institutions is central to production in social organizations as it functions to imbide values, motivation, and regulations affording a stable infrastructure. Moreover, this excerpt positions non-economic factors (themselves reducible to the processes and forms of capital presented by Bourdieu) as critical to the structure and functioning of an economy. Greenbaum (2002) observes this process in early Ybor City:

In economic terms, the Marti Maceo Society was an effective generator. In exchange for dues that were manageably low, individual workers obtained benefits that were unusually large. The extent of medical coverage and sick payments matched what was offered by the other immigrant mutual aid societies in Ybor City, and exceeded to benefits provided by mutual aid societies in most other cities in that era (Greenbaum 1991, 1993). As an Institution it also offered a means of developing human capital—its library and classes it provided, and in the activities that built leadership skills and useful knowledge. As a vehicle of group representation, the official Afro-Cuban presence, Marti Maceo was a source of social capital. It was the main organizer of relations among individual Afro-Cubans, and the main site of negotiation with other groups. Their ability to operate the club, to take care of themselves and participate in the cultural life of the immigrant community, earned Afro-Cubans the added currency of respectability. There were, however, nagging contradictions tied to the meanings of Afro-Cuban identity of a source of status and respect. [Greenbaum 2002:21]

Greenbaum observes identity formation in her presentation of “ethnogenisis” in an Afro-Cuban mutual aid society; a process involving power and the acquisition of cultural knowledge. Here race, ethnicity, class and gender are presented as inseparable from the cultural knowledge possessed by members of the social organization and the material benefits membership affords (Greenbaum 2002:19). Similarly, in his ethnography of female factory workers in Trinidad, Yelvington (1995:232) observes the construction of class, gender, and ethnicity in relation to power relationships. Here the concepts of hegemony and differential power relationships reveal how ethnicity, class, and gender inform the construction of social identities. In her research among the Tukanoans, Jackson (1989) finds the formation of cultural identities as an emergent process related to the constructive use of
information gathered across ethnic groups as well as from newly assembled institutions; an identity which in turn serves to validate the existence of the nation.

Similar to the constructive process observed by Jackson, Eisenhart (1995) finds “stories of self” as conceptual organizing tools in the navigation of experiences. She observes,

As individuals move from one sociocultural category to another, their interpretations of past experiences are influential. These interpretations include more than a listing of experiences one has had, or had knowledge of, and more than a review of how one has learned to talk about these experiences. They also include how the individual positions herself or himself in the situation (e.g., as victim or as in charge), how she or he feels about what is happening, and how past experiences are connected to possible selves within an institutional context. In expressing their interpretations, individuals contribute to the material conditions of their ongoing participation and to the cultural models available. [Eisenhart 1995:21]

In this same theoretical light, Bird (2002:522) draws meaning related to “cultural sense of place” from a variety of narratives offered by research participants. She finds, “…stories constitute one small thread in the complex way we construct our cultural identities, especially as those identities are tied to places” (Bird 2002:543). Similarly, Williams (2002) locates identity in relation to community, discussing the role of individual and collective in form’s of identity in the formation of socio-cultural bonds. Williams (2002) presents identity in relation to community:

Community expresses identity as we distance ourselves from our surroundings, root ourselves in a place, or make the familiar strange, using others as a touchstone. Communities engage structures of feeling, often in deep and moving ways. ...as people entwine their individual and collective identities with their understanding of the character of the community, they designate others as inside or outside, close or remote, building up or casting off the ties of community. [Williams 2002:346]

This description Williams appears to situate the complex and obligating relationships inherent to community. These identities offer a point of reflection for the cultural identities presented by Wright (1998):

...cultural identities are not inherent, bounded or static: they are dynamic, fluid and constructed situationally, in particular places and times. This is not just a Western urban phenomenon in the mid 1990s. In a tribe in Iran where I did
fieldwork in the 1970s, the population was made up of layers of refugees. Multiple identities were constantly negotiated; links with people in tribes from which they had fled were maintained or reinvented; there was no bounded, consensual, authentic, historical culture. Theoretical developments in cultural studies, and in post structural and feminist anthropology, have led us to understand he ‘cultures’ are not’ nor ever were, naturally bounded entities. [Wright 1998:9]

Here, Wright presents culture and identities as intertwined and dynamic in space and time, and "constantly negotiated.” Like Wright, Bird also locates her findings in relation to culture stating, “Through stories, people continue to make aesthetic and moral sense of places, at the same time endowing these places with a sense of their own cultural identities” (Bird 2002:544). Goodenough (2003) presents identity in relation to ideology and related practices. He states,

When we stop to look at what the concerns are that people are addressing through prayer, ritual, magic, etc., we find that they have to do with the state of their selves and the selves of others who matter to them, including the state of the groups with which people identify themselves. [Goodenough 2003:9]

In this excerpt, Goodenough (2003) observes the concerns central to belief and practice as a reflection of individual and collective forms of identity. In the above examples identity is observed as fluid, changing, informed, and constructed, in relation to culture and place. This distinction is central to the work of Sökefeld (1999). He argues,

The conceptualization of the relation between individual and society has since been reshaped, moving away from both social determination and methodological individualism toward a more dialectical understanding in which individual and society are related by mutual continuation ... Consequentially, what A and B feel, (do, say...) as individuals and as members of society cannot be separated, because as individuals they are always members of society, engaged in an ongoing process of mutual structuration and transformation. [Sökefeld 1999:428]

This excerpt presents individuals as actively engaged in the process structuring the world, both socially and materially. Literature concerning the political economy of urban environments often seek to illuminate the impact of structural forces on populations or individuals, and in turn the impact of populations and individuals on structures (Savitch 1988). Research finds individuals indirectly inform the
“maintenance of inequalities” within an urban area through their formation of identities (Susser 2001:238). Anthropologists have observed identity formation through the complex (yet observable) interaction of ethnicity, gender, age, knowledge, social relations, behavior, lifestyle practices, and so on in space and time (Greenbaum 2002; Yelvington 1995). It is also important to recognize the non-static nature of identities, they are both discrete and collective (variable), allowing actors to identify themselves as both individuals and as members of a group. In the South Bronx, identities of individual youth (Potter 1995), in collective forms (Padilla 1993), along with identities among instituting structures forces (capitalists, service providers, and government officials) shaped the existing socio-cultural conditions, which in turn informed the formation of identities across race, ethnicity, cultural groups, and class among resident youth (Austin 2002; Flores 2000; Rivera 2003; Rose 1994). Consequently, their cultural productions redefined the use of space (Rose 1994), conceptions of art (Austin 2002; Flores 2000), social action (Bennett 1999) and political economic realities (Krims 2002; Ogg and Upshal 1999; Potter 1995). This example of youth in hip hop culture is supported by the findings of Ray and Anderson (2000) who were highly interested in the lifestyles of Americans, like Florida (1999, 2005) and Egar (2003), when they began conducting research more than 20 years ago. After gathering data from over 100,000 Americans, they identify various groups, most notable among these were the “Cultural Creatives”:

Cultural Creatives are the ones who invented the current interest in personal authenticity in America. Authenticity means that your actions are consistent with what you believe and say. The people in this new subculture prefer to learn new information and to get involved in ways that feel most authentic to them. Almost always, this preference involves direct personal experience in addition to intellectual ways of knowing. It shows up in how they receive information, how they form their impressions, and how they decide what is real and important. They distrust presentations that rely on bullet points that march to the bottom line, in part because these kinds of presentations are so often manipulative and make it harder to come to conclusions that are personally relevant. They like first-person accounts, and they dislike journalistic styles that claim to be completely objective and that focus only on externals. And they are especially
sensitive to what they regard as slick, meaningless hype in advertising. [Ray and Anderson 2000:8]

Thus the term creative points to an orientation as opposed to a skill or quality, and ascribes value to experience and active practice. These findings reflect the capacities identified by MacLeod relative to individuals experienced to critical pedagogy. He states,

As students develop tools of social analysis and begin to understand how inequities in wealth, power, and privilege affect them, this critical awareness of selfhood in relation to society becomes a motivating force much more powerful than the achievement ideology. Reflection on their personal and social reality frees learners from the debilitating effects of the dominant "blame the victim" way of seeing the world. Consonant with the praxis of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire (1981), when learners perceive the structural roots of their own plight they develop a new sense of personal dignity and are energized by a new hope. Time and again I have seen students face up to long odds and vow to overcome them instead of resigning themselves to the marginalized fate of [disempowered individuals]. When their passions and intellects are stimulated by indignation, youths are often moved to challenge the heretofore hidden social, political, and economic forces that weigh upon their lives. For some, this means an intensely personal drive and ambition. Others begin struggling to create a better world. In still others, these impulses coexist; they work for social, political, and economic reconstruction as well as personal transformation. [MacLeod 1999:274]

Here, MacLeod presents the role of critical education in the process of changing undesirable social positions and conditions. This praxis is central to the goal of this research in developing a grounded understanding of how individuals insert themselves into the economy. Moreover, this pedagogy presents a constructive solution to the problems posed by inequitable or marginalizing models of development conditions.

Participatory models of development are gaining attention across disciplines among researchers concerned with sustainable development practices. Moreover, efforts are accomplishing broadly defined goals through the incorporation of youth in development practices. Anthropological literature on Youth Participatory Action Research (PAR) provides many examples of this in various settings (Birmingham and Christie 2004; London and Chabran 2004; London et al. 2003; Neiuwenhuys 1997;
Further, research increasingly locates the interests of youth and communities as intrinsically linked in processes of sustainable development (London et al. 2003:34). London et al. (2003) present sustainable development as involving youth, organizations and community. They state,

...when thought of and practiced together, youth, organizational, and community development can exponentially improve all community efforts. In fact, these processes can fruitfully be conceived of as three streams within a broader current of social change. Connecting youth, organizational, and community development can produce generative and self-sustaining processes that serve to address key social issues and revitalize communities and the organizations and individuals within them. In partnership, these modes of development can create ladders of responsibility and support that draw youth into progressively higher levels of organizational and community leadership, laying the foundation for indigenous community leadership. This model is similar to many other innovative models of education (for example, experiential education, popular education, service learning) and community organizing, which integrate youth into community building, problem solving, activism, and stewardship over time. This synthesis can also build common cause between groups typically divided (by race, class, gender, sexual orientation) between organizations, places, and disciplinary fields. (London et al. 2003:35)

Fine et al (2003) employed youth in researching public surveillance in New York City, revealing relationships between policing strategies and trust in public institutions and society. They state,

Our data suggest that police, security guard, and educator interactions with young men and women leave many of all races doubting these basic principles of a just society. Reduced crime rates benefit everyone but the costs of New York City’s experiment with aggressive policing and privatization of public space have increased incarceration rates significantly and alienates a significant portion of future citizens and voters. (Fine et al. 2003:156)

These findings echo those of Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) who locate youth participation as central to the development of social justice in society. In addition to the recent attentions afforded youth participation, the arts have long occupied a role in the policies of cultural development internationally.

The cultural policy research of Garcia (2004) looks at the relationship between arts programming and the success of large-scale events with strong arts and cultural components, comparing experiences in three major host cities: 1990
A committed dedication towards arts programming in major events can assist in keeping the balance and provide a complementary dimension to the economic discourse that is sustainable in the long term. This should imply an understanding that arts activity can succeed within events without needing to become a purely economic factor, but rather a facilitator for local participation and ownership that is, at the same time, attractive for visitors and media. To achieve this, arts programming should be seen as a factor within a broader cultural agenda and fully integrated within it rather than just treated as an attractive but dispensable component. [Garcia 2004:116]

These recommendations reflect the findings of Bennett (1999) who observed a German youth arts programming, rooted in rap music and hip hop, used to express various local issues. He states, “In particular, hip hop is being used as a medium for the expression of issues relating to racism and the problem of national identity often experienced by the younger members of ethnic minority groups in Germany” (Bennett 1999:77). Here, arts programming seems to provide potential solutions for otherwise complex socio-cultural issues. However, from the perspective of others, arts approaches present significant problems. For example, Phillips (2004) presents the arts as effective in select contexts as they remain dependant on preexisting economic conditions:

The arts environment is extremely competitive and arts organizations and artists have to be inventive in finding sources of funding and revenue. There are negative outcomes as well. As with any investment, there are opportunity costs – perhaps a community could have achieved a more desirable type of economic development outcome had they pursued different strategies. Another is that arts-based approaches generally rely on consumer services as the economic base, and typically, these industries pay less than producer services or manufacturing activities. Most are associated with increasing tourism – some citizens may not wish to have an influx of tourists and related problems that can arise such as traffic congestion and demands on infrastructure. There is the danger too of creating a manipulated townscape in which community ambience and sense of place are lost. [Phillips 2004:119]

In this excerpt, Phillips cautiously presents an arts based development policy drawing attention to the importance of public consensus.
In this section, I present the ideas of practice-oriented social scientists as an alternative to the dominance of statistical orientations reflected in economic development strategies. Through qualitative approaches, social science has learned a great deal about the process through which economies emerge. More specifically, how these efforts have produced the knowledge through which our society keeps pace with the processes of power inherent to production, culture, relationships, and identity.

Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed scholarly work central to the creative economy, development, and underlying social and cultural processes, which speaks directly to the focus of this thesis presented in the first chapter. This literature relates to central questions in highlighting economies of scale and domains of interest, ideological presuppositions of local and global development efforts, the related orientations among practitioners, and resultant outcomes demonstrated in existing conditions.

Literature concerning the creative field indicates concerns with geography, business management, human resources, and political science, arguing for policy development oriented to the growth of industry and social environments for employees of the creative sector—elements observed as central to economic innovation. Emphasis is placed on elements of the spatial arrangement of creative sector industries based in the fields of engineering, information networks, and communications technologies; subsector services of business management, design, and marketing; and varying perspectives of drivers (i.e. relationships reflecting completion and/or trust). Authors focus on the culture of workers in these fields, suggesting the arts and recreation as intrinsically valued among members of the
creative class. Further, creative economists caution municipal governments to observed migration patterns among this population and present strategies largely concerned with aesthetic values. Moreover, arguments throughout the literature on the creative economy reflect a prevalent concern with the creative potentials of individuals such as evidenced in Florida’s discussion of “creative capital,” and broad assumptions concerning the source of economic innovation. Reflecting on this concern in the context of economic philosophies reveals Florida’s position closely aligned with that of Hegel; that creativity (i.e. consciousness) determine material conditions.

In the opening pages of Chapter II, I present excerpts of Florida’s revealing an unquestioning support of the free market economy. Florida’s lack of critical perspective concerning ideas of free market capitalism suggests potential bias, compromising the validity of his theories. As observed in the positions of development experts and the ethnographic record presented in this chapter, exploitation and the loss of economic, social, and environmental rights and standards is frequently observed within the context of capitalist production and western models of development. In the previous chapter, I present this problem as rooted in underlying ideologies such as neoliberalism, the achievement ideology, and Social Darwinism.

Beyond assumptions concerning the free market economy, literature presented in this chapter highlights potential problems associated with the reductive statistical methods. Ultimately, statistical measures lend little explanatory power in relation to socio-cultural processes. This is evidenced in the ethnographic accounts of identity formation observed among individuals, groups, communities, and place. Ethnographies serve to elucidate core processes inherent to both the financial and non-financial economy, as well as the otherwise unobservable structures. From yet
another perspective, qualitative methods are increasingly valued in the context of participatory development practices and service learning. From this position, ethnography is a flexible model through which the production of knowledge and efforts to change existing conditions become an integrated and collaborative practice.
CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODS

Rather than fetishizing history, a practice approach offers, or at least promises, a model that implicitly unifies both historical and anthropological studies.

[Ortner 1984:159]

The design and methods of this research center on the production of a rich ethnographic understanding of the people, groups, processes, and issues related to Tampa’s Creative City development initiative. To accomplish this, I designed and employing traditional ethnographic methods. In this chapter, I present the methodological framework and reflect on my implementation of methods; discuss research design, interviewing, participant observation, knowledge management, and analysis; and close with presentation of my background and some ethical considerations.

Methodology

Wolcott observes ethnography as recognizing and interpreting what people do and “culture” as an “orienting concept” used to contextualize the locations, knowledge, and beliefs through which actions reproduce (Wolcott 1999:68-70). Achieving this in methodological terms required careful attention to paradigmatic frames of research in design and application (LeCompt and Schensul 1999a). This research aims to synthesize various paradigms for specific strengths such as commitment to social change, attention to global dynamics, and focus on power relations among individuals and groups as highlighted by “critical” approaches. I focus on the influence of place and local dynamics as reflected in “ecological”
approaches; and concentration on “emerging social networks” as observed and experienced (LeCompt and Schensul 1999a:56-57). Further, this approach reflects elements of a multi-site ethnography as presented by Marcus (1995). He states,

The most important form of local knowledge in which the multi-sited ethnographer is interested is that which parallels the ethnographer’s own interest in mapping itself. Sorting out the relationships of the local to the global is a salient and pervasive form of local knowledge that remains to be recognized and discovered in the embedded idioms and discourses of any contemporary site that can be defined by its relationship to the world system. [Marcus 1995:112]

While conducting research, I attempted to locate global themes in the knowledge acquired from settings and people throughout Tampa Bay. My use of methods in these settings reflects the “grounded” descriptions presented by Greenbaum (1998:119) as “an explanation designed to be free of preconceived ideas.” This approach offers a ground-level perspective in which the researcher becomes, “personally acquainted with the people whom they study,” allowing participants to, “speak for themselves rather than rendering their experiences through the dispassionate and often distorted lens of aggregate statistics” (Greenbaum 1998:121). Further, a grounded approach in which observations derived from active participation or practice among its “actors” provides the greatest understanding of culture (Ortner 1984:157). The design of this research reflects theories of practice found in the literature of social and applied anthropology (Bourdieu 1977; Ortner 1984; Yelvington 1995; Greenbaum 2002). In Outline of a Theory of Practice, Bourdieu (1977) provides a basic framework for the practice approach. He states,

It is necessary to abandon all theories which explicitly or implicitly treat practice as a mechanical reaction, directly determined by the antecedent conditions and entirely reducible to the mechanical functioning of the pre-establishes assemblies, “models” or “roles” – which one would, moreover, have to postulate in infinite number, like the chance configurations capable of triggering them from outside… [Bourdieu 1977:73]

Bourdieu cautions against theories presenting practice as static. Practice theory has been widely embraced by ethnographers due to its flexible framework and
effectiveness in locating processes of identity formation, power distribution, community, and development (Bird 2002; Eisenhart 1995; Gow 1993; Greenbaum 2002; Jackson 1989; Sökefeld 1999; Yelvington 1995; Williams 2002). Ortner (1984) describes this approach in anthropology: “A practice approach attempts to see this making, whether in the past or in the present, whether in the creation of novelty or in the reproduction of the same old thing” (Ortner 1984:159). Greenbaum argues this is best achieved through investigating the processes shaping, “…contours of action and the limits of success” (Greenbaum 2002:7). In this thesis, I locate such contours and limitations among cultural producers in practices of “material and ideological impact” among the OCI and its service community, and subsequently associate these phenomena within the broader process of international development (Mahon 2000:485).

This research draws on the work of praxis and action anthropology. Methodologists associated with these traditions call for establishing ethical, advocating, participatory, and collaborative goals (Tax 1975; Warry 1992). Further, the methods of this research reflect a critical pedagogy in which I often engaged participants in critical discussion of structural forces and existing conditions (Lyon-Callo and Hyatt 2003) in seeking to develop beneficial knowledge (Tax 1975) and share anthropological insights. Wright (1998) calls for analysis to consider the political use of culture. She states,

If we aim to influence local, national and international processes by which people are impoverished and disempowered, it behooves us to reflect on our own anthropological analyses of how politicians, policy advisors and decision-makers are deploying old and new ideas of ‘culture.’ We might learn from our analyses of the political strategies of others how to intervene more effectively ourselves in the politicization of ‘culture’. [Wright 1998:15]

Here, Wright (1998) calls for specific attention to the use of culture among power brokers. In keeping with this and the calls of all anthropologists presented above, I made considerable effort throughout this project to situate my department and
discipline in a uniquely contributing light with the goal of positioning the anthropological enterprise and practitioners as skilled in the constructive development of knowledge. Moreover, I sought to build meaningful partnerships with individuals I encountered; frequently discussing developmental experiences while studying anthropology at USF and sharing the knowledge acquired in a promoting fashion.

**Methods**

Traditionally, the ethnographic enterprise has focused on cultural description of the shared practices and beliefs found among a group of people (Cresswell 1998). This research emerged from careful consideration of specific phases involving design, research implementation, and analysis. In the five months leading up to the approval of this project, I completed a cross-disciplinary survey of literature related to Creative initiatives, gathered contact information from potential participants, identified geographic boundaries, located a research sponsor, collaboratively designed the general goals for research and drafted a USF IRB proposal, tested research instruments among extended family, and constructed a relational database through which to store and organize research-related knowledge. My conservative estimate is that I have completed over 550 hours of research for the City of Tampa, and met more than 200 new people working within the public, private, non-profit, and arts communities as shown in Table 1. Through these experiences, I gathered perspectives concerning the arts and development in Tampa, which provided me with a rich context from which to develop the more focused research goals that formed the basis for this thesis.
Table 1. Listing of Activities and Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Organization</th>
<th>Research Activity</th>
<th>Total Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children’s Board</td>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts Council</td>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art For Life Benefit Event</td>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Creative Industries</td>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Creative Industries</td>
<td>Interviewing</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Creative Industries</td>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Creative Industries</td>
<td>Transcription &amp; Coding</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Creative Industries</td>
<td>Analysis and Writing</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Profit Administration</td>
<td>Participant Observation</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grand Total 570

Operationalizing

Building theoretical models and operationalizing research designs is critical to anthropological and ethnographic research (Schensul et al. 1999:10-68). Across interviews and participant observations, I identified shared themes related to individual and group identities, perceptions of competition, and observed policy barriers. I have not drawn from Florida (2005, 2003, 2002, 1999) due to the methodological orientation of this work. To bring structure to observations and interviews, this research operationalized a set of nominal variables through which I could identify and organize key themes as they emerged throughout the project. Operationalized concepts reflect themes in everyday work and focus on relationships among individuals and social organizations, while accommodating history, distributions of power, and material conditions and contemporary issues.

Sampling

A total of 18 people connected to Tampa Bay by way of residence and/or work in the arts participated in interviews for this research. Participants were selected for
this research using non-probability sampling. The method used is described in a variety of ways, such as the convenience and criterion (Schensul et al. 1999:232-242) or opportunistic and criterion (Creswell 1998:119). Further, I attempted to locate individuals connected to the Tampa Bay Area via the “arts” (in production and/or facilitating capacity such as in event production, education, etc., advocacy) and economic involvement (entrepreneurial and/or labor). My research and personal experience, prior to beginning fieldwork, enabled me to make informed choices on how to locate participants.

Building rapport is indeed a crucial component to gaining interviews, as dangers exist in excessively leveraging relationships to ensure participation. I began in the hopes of locating contacts through the city of Tampa but later resorted to contacts I have made over the last 15 years. While over 50 individuals agreed to participate or solicited me for participation, only 18 interviews were completed. This was largely due to ethical guidelines I established requiring follow-up communications from individuals following project introduction— in subsequent communications, if solicited individuals did not introduce the topic of participation, they were not re-solicited. Further, on these occasions, I did not initiate discussion of research unless I was conducting participant observation; thus I feel confident in having completed interviews only with willing participants. Beyond the minimal threat posed to participants in unwarranted pressure to participate, I feared significant threats to research validity. I worried, increasingly as days and weeks advanced, that I would not gain a sufficient number of interviews representing insider perspectives (Agar 1996:134-138). Nevertheless, I believe the ethical guidelines regarding participant solicitation strengthened the validity of this project, since only willing and committed individuals completed interviews. Table 2 lists demographic, professional and domain of work information for all interview
participants (using pseudonyms). Demographic information, acquired at the time of interview, shows individuals self-identified with Pan-Latino (6), unspecified Anglo and/or “Caucasian” (8), South-Asian (1), Japanese-American (1), Jamaican-American (1), and Dutch (1).

Table 2. Listing ethnicity, gender, and professions of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Profession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Potter, Metal smith, &amp; Program Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>State Senator, Dancer, &amp; Entrepreneur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexia</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Small Business Owner &amp; Stylist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rukha</td>
<td>Hispanic-American</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Dancer, Painter, Teacher, &amp; Reporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maceo</td>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Band Musician &amp; Hospitality Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen</td>
<td>Cuban-American</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Public Defender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Cuban-American</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Social Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Dancer &amp; Actor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
<td>Hispanic-American</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Restaurant &amp; Club Entrepreneur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dread</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>DJ, Producer, &amp; Hospitality Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ted</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Marketing Consultant &amp; Playwright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palo</td>
<td>Cuban-American</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>DJ &amp; Producer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen</td>
<td>Jamaican-American</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Band Musician, &amp; Graphic Artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brent</td>
<td>Asian-American</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Marketing Analyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stacy</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Non-profit Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis</td>
<td>Anglo</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Traffic Engineer &amp; DJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>South Asian-American</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Musician &amp; International Admin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramona</td>
<td>Mexican-American</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Designer &amp; Restaurant Entrepreneur</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviewing

The structure of this thesis was highly influenced by methodologies of indigenous knowledge in the emphasis placed on valuing the knowledge of OCI’s service community in relation to development practices (Purcell and Onjoro 2002:171). The interviews reflect a range of styles such as semi-structured (Schensul et al. 1999a, 1999b), unstructured open-ended, in-depth (Schensul et al 1999:121-148), and life history (Angrosino 2002:34-43). By semi-structured I refer to my intended use of three questions employed across all interviews, and by open-
ended, in-depth and unstructured I refer to a multilinear structure in which no answer is considered off base and interviews followed organically as a participatory process of knowledge development.

During all interviews, I employed casual and engaged forms of speech representative of everyday dialogue reflecting the flexible and emergent interviewing protocol of conversational approaches (Agar 1996; Myers 1991). In preliminary interviews, this protocol proved effective and efficient in eliciting the desired information. For example, interpretive approaches such as those presented by LeCompte and Schensul (1999b) facilitated the flow of interviews as well as later triangulation of the meaning. I used expressions or artifacts of individuals (e.g. books, art, etc.) and/or organizations and agencies (e.g. flyers, brochures, reports, etc.) as reflection points in interviews. Interviews ranged in duration from 45 minutes to an hour and a half, in which time I sought to focus at least 15 minutes in each of the three key areas or phases. In the first phase, I applied the approach of life history to learn about how participants conceive of their relationship to larger society (Angrosino 2002:35). In the second phase, I attempted to locate participant perspectives of Tampa and/or place of residence. The third phase of interviews I sought to locate perspectives of development (e.g. change) related to place, profession, interest, or other topics emphasized earlier by participants. Following the initial questions presented in each phase I employed ad-hoc follow-up questions grounded in references to operationalized concepts and/or participant interests.

Throughout my fieldwork, I found myself drawing on personal relationships developed over the course of many years. To protect all participants I employed various strategies. Ethnography poses dangers to participants who frequently forget they are part of the research although my experiences did not confirm this. The fieldwork for this project spanned a total of one year (not including five months of
preliminary survey and needs assessment) which found me in regular contact with interviewees. Rather than forget about the research, participants frequently requested copies of their interviews to be shared with others within various social settings. In most instances, I quickly changed the subject to broader topics of discussion until I had an opportunity to discuss the potential dangers associated with sharing interviews. Before conducting interviews, I submitted all confidentiality clauses and interview questions to USF’s IRB. Further, I invested a great deal of time discussing the methods, timeframes, and potential use of knowledge produced with all participants prior to conducting interviews.

**Participant Observation**

In designing this research, I planned to work approximately 15-20 hrs a week, totaling between 180 to 240 total hours of participant observation, and scheduled for completion by November 1, 2006. These initial activities were to involve participation with the OCI, through which I would generate leads to participant observation opportunities with related organizations. My hope was that these efforts would provide a broad perspective and seamless entry into Tampa’s creative industries. However, in the initial weeks following my USF IRB approval I gained little exposure and no observational opportunities. By late August, I resolved to consult my committee for advice and only then began to move forward.

   My committee chair Elizabeth Bird, Ph.D. referred me to Ms. Judy Jetson, Director of USF’s Collaborative for Children, Families, and Communities, who in the following weeks proved vital to my orientation of creative industries and entry into the field. From August 1, 2006 to July 20 2007, I conducted participant observation with a total of nine social organizations in over 40 locations throughout Tampa Bay. These activities involved work with the Creative Industries Council, the Tampa
Downtown Partnership; The Arts Council of Hillsborough County, a county public art program, the Children’s Board of Hillsborough County Department of Program Impact and Innovation, a non-profit arts based benefit committee, as well as isolated activities with artists at venues throughout Tampa Bay. Through participation in these settings I gained intimate knowledge of practices among respective social organizations through systematic documentation of all meetings and interactions, and later located themes central to the focus and findings of this research (Table 1 lists durations for all activities).

I structured the collection and documentation of all observations drawing on the discussion of *In-Process Analytic Writing* presented by Emerson et al (1995:100-107). Moreover, these observations were informed by the presentation of social organization found in Greenbaum (2002). I recorded all observations via two drafts of notes, those taken in real time, and second drafts completed in my home office and stored in a PC Microsoft Access relational database. While I intended to complete all final electronic drafts within 24 hrs of observation, I completed most second drafts within 10 hours of observation.

In the interest of full disclosure, I would like to discuss a few areas of importance concerning my supplemental income throughout this project as well as my presentation of participant observation activities. From November of 2006 to September 2007, I completed a contract Graduate Level Internship with CBHC in the Department of Public Policy and Advocacy. My paid work for the CBHC has largely involved research and administrative tasks associated with internal operations. While I have received approval to use my work in these positions, I am precluding any discussions. While these notes are available for audit, I will only involve summary information to situate research settings, contextualize and triangulate findings, and
present recommendations. I choose not to include more detailed findings due to the potentially political nature of conducting community-based research.

Knowledge Management

The collection, storage, and analysis of ethnographic data drew on the discussions of electronic ethnography reflected in the work of involving a relational distributed database application (Boone and Wood 1992:274-275) designed and constructed for exclusive use in this project. This application involves capacities to track provenience of information specific to participant observations and interviews, while providing encryption capabilities (i.e. password security, and split structure) through which to maintain the anonymity of identities among participants. In addition to this technology, Nvivo was used in coding interviews. I maintained confidentiality of all participants and their information in keeping with, if not exceeding, security standards of USF’s IRB.

Data Analysis

This project follows past uses of narrative in the construction of meaning related to place (Bird 2002). The findings presented in this thesis center on collected interviews. The coding process involved multiple phases, beginning by coding transcripts and observations according to prevalent themes, identifying concepts reflected in my review of literature (i.e. participant responses concerning development), and lastly looking for comparative experiences in other places to gain triangulating perspectives.
Research Background

Born and raised in Tampa Bay, I have worked, studied, and lived as a resident of the City of Tampa for more than 10 years. Over the last seven years, I have conducted fieldwork in the areas of education, housing, community development, non-profit administration, and urban development. Applied components of these activities involved providing after-school programming for youth living in low income areas such as Sulphur Springs (Hathaway and Kuzin 2007), Central Park Village, and USF Area Neighborhoods; and negotiating boundaries between student researchers and non-profit administrators during production of an ethnographic video (Bird, Ambiee, and Kuzin 2007).

Ethics

All applied research is subject to the explicit and implicit interests of sponsors. Data indicating problems can pose a threat to sponsors and researchers alike. Because this research employed ethnographic methods, it posed the greatest danger to research participants whose background information and practices might be used against their interests. Consider individuals who enter into research settings with intentions of contributing to a humanitarian endeavor (e.g. producing knowledge for use in equitable development, fighting an injustice, etc.). What is in place to protect these individuals from unscrupulous use of their knowledge? More specifically, what is the value of intimate knowledge concerning individual or group practices among social marketers charged with changing public perception of a harmful product or a charged political issue? Culture has long been a tool of social control and is now increasingly employed to influence the practices of workers and/or consumers. For this reason, the treatment and presentation of all knowledge gained from social research rests not only with the researcher but also the research sponsor. In the
case of this thesis, it will be the obligation of all parties involved to consider how knowledge produced in this research will be interpreted and applied to protect the interests of direct and indirect stakeholders alike. Thus, in keeping with the tradition of praxis and action anthropology, I present findings with careful consideration of potential implications for participants and non-participants alike. I present all findings with explicit discussion of indented applications to avoid misinterpretation and misuse. Literature concerning “indigenous knowledge” or local knowledge is instructive to these ends within development settings (Purcell 1998; Schönhuth 2002; Sillatoe 2002). Drawing from this tradition, I present recommendations based in participant responses. First, this thesis locates and values the cultural practices of community members in relation to the research focus (Bucholtz 2002). In addition, I focus recommendations through the work of justice oriented applied anthropologists in the area of participatory research (Berg and Schensul 2004; and Bingham and Christie 2004; London and Chabran 2004; Purcell and Onjorno 2002; Schönhuth 2002; Sillitoe 2002). In addition to establishing guidelines for ethical use of knowledge, these methods contribute to the internal validity of this research to produce a representative picture of all processes and people (Ortner 1984). I expected these approaches to exceed the ethical expectations of all participants. While the ethical considerations presented thus far have long been central to my research efforts, until recently I was experienced to their significance only from a distance.
CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

The findings presented in this chapter center on interviews conducted among participants working in Tampa Bay’s private, public, and non-profit domains, connected with Tampa’s Creative City initiative. I begin with an overview of my introduction to the Creative City policy and the OCI, followed by a brief overview of Tampa and its recent history directly related to findings of this research.

Creative City & the OCI

I first learned of Tampa’s Creative Cities initiative in late 2005, while talking with Chloe, a self-employed artist living and working in Tampa. She explained that the City of Tampa was looking to collaborate with local artists to develop the arts and culture scene. Although Chloe was highly engaged by this idea, she had grown frustrated by a seemingly impermeable administration. A web search conducted later that evening yielded information on the initiative and the city’s intended role to coordinate development efforts through the OCI. In the following days, I set out to locate and speak with local artists and business owners associated with the arts in Tampa Bay. Seeking ground level perspectives, I asked initial contacts about the arts and culture in Tampa, as well as the OCI and Creative City policy. While many participants seemed engaged by this initiative, few possessed first hand knowledge of it. Over the next few weeks, I launched an email campaign and acquired various contacts among community members involved in the field of cultural production in addition to those provided by the OCI.
In April of 2006, I visited the OCI and met with Paul Wilborn at his downtown office to discuss office policies and practices, and evaluate research opportunities. Upon arrival, I observed more than 30 city employees busy at tasks within their respective cubes on a floor dedicated to The City of Tampa’s Department of Arts and Cultural Affairs. Located in two cubicles among many bordering the department floor, the OCI was not what I envisioned for a city administrator. Following the office secretary into the manager’s cube, I observed a modest setting featuring no windows and the usual office effects (L-shaped desk, PC, filing cabinet, personal pictures, etc.). Minutes later office manager Paul Wilborn entered and took a relaxed position behind his desk. A softly spoken man, he greeted me, paused a few moments, and wondered aloud, “well, what types of things might you work on… we don’t involve research in much of the work we do.”

During this initial meeting, I learned about the office, and guiding policies. The manager shared that although the city observed that Florida’s theories of technology, talent, and tolerance are significant considerations, the mayor had charged the OCI with developing the arts scene in Downtown Tampa. He positioned himself in this process stating, “My job is to connect artists with the business community and make things happen,” by locating “authenticity” or unique qualities of Tampa, sharing that this involved coordinating among artists and business leaders described as “two very different types of people.” Mr. Wilborn perceived these tasks as a significant undertaking given the lack of allotted funding, varying orientations among community partners and Tampa’s taxpayers. Speaking to the existing approach, he advised,

The best thing I can do is plug in with leaders of organizations that can help. These people can move things because they have an organization that has resources and goals. It’s kinda the old boring network but it’s a network because it exists. While there are all these new and exciting ways to do things, when it comes down to it, these organizations exist for a reason. There has only been
one or two partners that have not been exuberant and even there, we’ve had great gains.

When asked how the OCI demonstrated policy measures, the Mr. Wilborn described establishing partnerships with various local groups (committees and councils), launching promotional media campaigns, and hosting culture events. He observed these activities as a return on investment, and expressed interest in developing best practices stating, “I’d like to know more about what it is we do.” We soon refocused on my background, experience, and the discipline of applied anthropology\(^1\) and concluded with an informal agreement for the OCI’s non-fiscal sponsorship of this thesis\(^2\). In the weeks following this meeting, I designed and drafted my proposal, centering on locating potential partners for the office and gaining perspectives concerning Creative City policy and Tampa Bay. From July 2006 through July of 2007, I completed fieldwork with organizations and people I located in association to Creative City policy in Tampa Bay.

**Tampa Background**

Situated at the nexus of water and roadways, Downtown Tampa is accessible by water via the bank of the Hillsborough River to the west, the mouth of Tampa Bay to the south, and commercial/industrial port to the east, by expressways to the north and south, and a large rail station to the northeast of the central business district. Residential opportunities in Downtown Tampa are not distinct from cities comparable

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\(^1\) I provided some background on the discipline of applied anthropology and its relationship to development evidenced in local and international efforts, and presented some capacities afforded by ethnographic methods; sharing its effectiveness in elucidating grounded knowledge and process through a focus on practices and perspectives of a group.

\(^2\) The primary objective of this work would center on two charges, first conducting work in line with the OCI policies (identifying authentic qualities of Tampa, locating potential community partners, and facilitating existing partnerships). Second, Mr. Wilborn was interested in building working knowledge of the underlying practices and processes of the OCI and his position for internal use. Mr. Wilborn expressed little interest in hearing complaints about his office but remained open to my interests and agreed to facilitate in any way he could.
in size and population. In recent years, Downtown Tampa’s housing options include high-end estates, town homes, and condominiums located in western and southern areas, and a village public housing complex situated in the northeastern area. The City of Tampa’s cultural resources include The University of Tampa across the Hillsborough River from the central business district, Tampa Museum of Art on the opposite bank in Downtown, and beyond the train station and public housing, Tampa’s historic district of Ybor City (see Appendix A). As with most urban settings, Tampa’s downtown area has many faces reflected in its picturesque skyline and seemingly ever-present redevelopment projects (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Image of downtown Tampa skyline framed by construction

In the following sections, I present findings arranged according to three primary phases of interviews: the emergence of interests and professions among members of Tampa’s arts community, participant perspectives of place, and urban development as observed in relation to Tampa and/or individual practices. I begin with brief introduction of participants.
Participants

Participants of this research constitute both members of the creative class and the OCI’s focus service community (artists and independent small-business owners).

Ted: Ted is a marketing consultant, aspiring playwright, and self-described member of the creative class. A Florida native in his early 50s, Ted identifies himself through his belief in the “capitalist philosophy” and work in advertising communications, locating target markets and audiences for clients seeking to “increase their share of voice or share of brand” in their businesses. Moreover, Ted observes this work in relation to his passion for screen writing. I spoke with Ted on December 14, 2006 at an independent coffee house in south Tampa.

Brent: Brent identifies himself as a community-minded owner of a consulting firm and self-described member of the creative class. Now in his early 40s, Brent takes great joy in his “service to community” as the chair of a local non-profit. Speaking to this he states, “...seeing that we can have impact on the community has been just really cool. It’s easy to be community minded when the work is really-really interesting.” On the morning of October 17, 2006, I meet Brent and a colleague of his, Stacy, at a West Tampa Starbucks.

Stacy: Stacy is non-profit administrator and self-described member of the creative class. A female in her late 30s, Stacy identifies herself as coming from a strong background in arts and culture; knowledge she applies in her service on “most of the major arts boards in Tampa Bay.” Recently, Stacy has consulted the OCI on community initiatives, and launched a non-profit focused on sustainable living. She observes these activities as necessary for establishing broader

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3 This interview ran for approximately 50 minutes and afforded Stacy little opportunity to share her personal history. A follow-up interview was not conducted with Stacy, although offered, due to pre-existing ethical guidelines concerning repeat solicitation.
understandings of “vibrancy and quality of life within an ethnically diverse community”; a concern with the interplay between people, the environment, and the designing process building out from existing traditional and social norms of place.

**Madison:** Madison maintains a variety of professional roles, at times working as an advertising consultant, chairing a community development corporation, and serving as a Florida State Senator. In his late 40s, Madison identifies closely with community service stating, “What I do in the political arena and what I do in the professional arena tend to help feed what I’m doing in the social service area which is probably where I spend most of my time.” On December 15, 2006, Madison shared some background on the development of these roles in our interview at a new Tapas restaurant in Ybor City.

**Francis:** Francis is a traffic engineer, club DJ, and volunteer programmer on Tampa area community radio. Now in his early 40’s, his professions and interests reflect his longtime passion for science, math, and music. On October 30, 2006, Francis and I talked at his Seminole Heights residence.

**Chad:** In his early 30s, Chad identifies himself as a student of world music and works for an international non-profit committed to reducing violence and growing youth music education. Through this organization, Chad has worked in the Tampa Bay area developing youth music programming. On February 15, 2007, Chad recorded his responses to research questions.

**Jeff:** In his early 30s, Jeff describes himself first as a functional potter and second as a director of a municipal fine arts program featuring education in working with various media of visual arts. Jeff observes these identities as rooted in his high school experiences with art and shop (perceived as a primary destination for unpopular adolescents), and the liberal arts, through which he developed sustained
commitment to non-violence and social responsibility through teachers. On December 20, 2006 I spoke with Jeff at a City of Tampa park located in Ybor.

Alexia: Alexia has long aspired to become a stylist; however, in ninth grade she discovered art and color, passions she applies to her work today. Now in her mid 30s and a single mother of two, Alexia is a stylist, salon owner, and engaged supporter of the arts community, volunteering hundreds of hours over the last several years in production of Art for Life (an annual benefit art auction), work she finds highly rewarding. Reflecting on this work, she states, "I love what I do, I love making people feel good about themselves and making them feel beautiful. It’s a lot of fun and I’m very fortunate that many of my clients are just kind people too.” On November 7, 2006, I interviewed Alexia at her salon located several blocks west of Downtown Tampa.

Ramona: In her late 40s, Ramona S. identifies herself as an entrepreneur linking ethnic cuisine with local art through “creative use of space.” Since the 1980s, Ramona and her husband have owned and operated restaurants in outlying areas of downtown Tampa. Reflecting on her these businesses, Ramona states, "My mission statement has always been to utilize food, cuisine, to educate the community, not only about the cuisine but my culture including the arts. My objective has always been to give local artists a venue to sell art and have a voice through spoken word or whatever.” On November 5, 2006, I talked with Ramona at her Café y Galleria located several blocks North of Downtown Tampa.

Eric: In his mid 30s, Eric describes himself as a Tampa native and “proprietor of restaurant businesses.” Since the early 1990s, Eric has opened and managed some of Tampa’s most popular nightspots (credited with instituting Tampa’s underground electronic music scene). Moreover, Eric is highly respected among employees, visiting artists, and patrons as hardworking, charismatic, and humble. In
reflecting on his work, Eric shared, “I’ve always been service driven, I’ve always catered to guests or people, so it was a natural to get into the club scene. I was always the one to throw parties.” On September 16, 2006, I interviewed Eric beachside at hotel located on the shore of Tampa Bay.

**Maceo:** Maceo identified himself in his position as a server in a Tampa Bay area five star hotel, and in his core passion of creating music. Playing saxophone in an “all-original band,” Maceo advised of seeking to “make some kind of a difference” through combining different genres of music. A male in his late 20s, Maceo had just learned he and a girlfriend of several years were expecting a baby requiring him to take a leave from his band in order to work more hours. In our interview on September 7, 2006, Maceo and I spoke at my residence in West Tampa.

**Stephen:** Born into a family of musicians, Stephen and his three brothers started playing music at a young age while growing up in Jamaica, playing with his parents and brothers at church. Now in his late 20’s, Stephen divides his time between playing music and his work as a commercial artist for a design firm located in Tampa. On October 24, 2006, Stephen and I conducted our interview at New World Brewery in Ybor City.

**Rukah:** Now in her early 20s, Rukha professionally identifies herself through painting original art; the “privilege” of instructing urban dance (i.e. break-dancing) at an arts-based youth PID (prevention, intervention, and diversion) program; and her work as a columnist for national local weekly publication. Among these activities, Rukha is particularly passionate about working with youth, in addition to painting. On November 28, 2006, I spoke with Rukah in Tampa at one of her places of employment.

**Paulo:** Paulo grew up in New York City living with his mother, aunts, or grandmother at any given time. In his early 40s, Palo identifies himself in his art;
defined as DJ, producing music, and “video stuff.” Today, Paulo’s art involves multimedia productions featuring imagery thick with meaning, reflecting social, political, and cultural subject matter framed in a synthesis of sound and visual media yet featured in popular culture. On June 1 2007, I spoke with Paulo at his rental residence just south of downtown St. Petersburg.

The above participants represent individual members of the OCI’s service population employed at the time of interviews through state and local government, NGO’s, small proprietary businesses, and freelance art. While each of these individuals are positioned in a unique relationship to Creative City, I do not suggest they comprise a “representative sample” of this population.

Defining the Creative Class

In the process of designing and implementing this research, I found heterogeneous perceptions of the classification “Creative Class.” While Florida (1999) defines members of this population as possessing college degrees and professional occupations, my interviews with Ted, Brent, and Stacy revealed broader categories and considerations. In our interview, Ted offered some insider perspectives:

Certainly there are people who are architects, who are interior designers who are “creative.” They do things that bring in a sense of aesthetic to the community. However, in certain parts of Florida “creative” endeavors are frowned upon as not businesslike, not sensible [by many people] and their kids will grow up to be a lawyer or doctor. [A creative endeavor is] a writer, a sculptor or a painter or a fine art photographer. I would also say, in a business sense, people that do architecture or any number of professions. I’m just thinking of people who have made money, a way to define success but not the only one. I tend to pigeonhole creatives into writing, painting, photography, art, design, [however] there’s creative elements in medicine for god’s sake. Within science.

Here, Ted identifies the creative class as working in design or aesthetics-oriented fields. In addition, Ted reflects on these fields, suggesting many people lack understanding of the value presented by these fields. Additionally, Ted observes a
bias directed at this group in rural areas of Florida. Brent also notes de-valuing perceptions of the creative class explaining, He states,

I think our parents had a world that was more starkly defined...black and white. Our generation and the ones following realize it’s pretty much all grey because there is a blurring of disciplinary lines, multidisciplinary, multiculturalism. It goes back to Richard and tolerance. You have these sort of blended kinds of things that are happening. The folks that are gravitating toward the creative class are not the ones who are worried about the black and white, they’re like, ‘everything is grey, lets move on.’ And you see that in certain communities that want to hold on to certain black and white distinctions, and I don’t mean that in a racial way, I mean that in terms of holding on to some absolutes. You see that in some ethnic communities, you see that in some religious communities, in some professional mindsets, they want to hold on to the absolute or the dogma.

In this excerpt, Brent reflects on his parents’ generation (i.e. baby boomers) as operating from an old paradigm that he views as responsible for misunderstandings of creative work. Further, Brent distinguishes members of the creative class from this older generation as embracing of uncertainty. In recent years, Brent has worked closely with Richard Florida, traveling internationally to speak on behalf of the creative economy and development. In our interview he and Stacy offered some insider perspectives elaborating on the title and its meaning. Brent states,

I don’t care what the specific definition is because it’s really about innovation, it’s about design and design thinking. Richard defines them, us, as ‘imminently practical’ and willing to look at any solution as long as it works. I don’t care if it comes from a transportation engineer, or a physicist or a medical doctor or a spiritual guru. I’m willing to give credence to anyone who has something that will work. There are people even within arts and culture, or advertising or architecture not thinking like this and others in accounting, science, or government who are highly creative people.

While agreeing with this perception, Stacy noted a potential problem in the ambiguity of the term ‘creative’. She states,

I think that creative community is one of those things that can be a little ambiguous or confusing. Creativity means so many things to so many people. A lot of people really associate it specifically with arts and culture. You’re talking architecture and advertising, engineering; you can be creative in just about any discipline.

Like Ted, Brent and Stacy define the creative class as individuals concerned with innovation and problem solving across many industries. These presentations reveal
diverse perceptions associated with the title “creative class” as professionals concerned with aesthetics as suggested by Ted, or beliefs as presented by Brent, or methodologies applied across disciplines. While consistent with theoretical presentations observed in Florida’s definition of young professionals, and inclusive across a broad range of professions, the classification remains ambiguous and provides little understanding of individuals making up this group. This presents a potential problem for researchers and practitioners attempting to work within this demographic and may be a reason why the OCI had focused its efforts on artists and business owners. In Chapter III, I share problems faced in bounding this research. Consequently, I attempted to frame my efforts through establishing a working classification of my research population, initially defined as professionals identifying with the creative class, and people generating income through efforts in both the domains of art and business. Although the majority of participants located for this research fall within these definitions, not all possess degrees or own businesses, or consider themselves artists. Having anticipated this problem early on, I designed interview questions (see Appendix B) and protocol less around demographic considerations and more on the process through which individuals came to occupy their present position and social identity.

In the following section, I present information gathered in the first phase of interviewing reflecting my concern with the process through which participants arrived at social identities. I asked individuals to tell me about what they do and what they value. The histories collected reflect interests emerging through early childhood experiences and subsequent interactions with key people and groups encountered as adults. Because including all accounts is beyond the scale of this thesis, I present accounts of individuals I worked with in multiple contexts.
Participant Interests & Practices

During interviews, participants shared accounts of discovering interests and the process of determining present fields of work. For several participants, professions emerged through formal institutions. For example, Ted discovered his interest in film and current profession at university. Ted explains,

In 1979, I got a degree in journalism from [a private Florida university] in news education. I was going to write for a newspaper and in my last semester one of my professors, a Pulitzer Prize winner, said, 'you do the newspaper game pretty well, but you're much better at the creative stuff. I had done some silly impressions at his end of the quarter semester party and he said, 'you ought to do that, you're better at that'. So I started doing that, took it to my first job that I botched at the National Endowment for the Humanities. They had a grant to study southern history and literature for two years, I love to read, I got to make a documentary and it was a lot of fun. I got to travel around and had a lot of fun, it was great. Getting paid to read and learn is really cool. I was in Atlanta a lot on my journeys and so I met some people in advertising and the arts, still a fun great place full of dynamic people, so I moved into Atlanta. It was fantastic and then I went from there to Toronto Canada with [an international firm], got to travel a lot. From there got to Jacksonville, then to Tampa when we got a [a local grocery] account back in 1993.

Ted developed his passion and profession through the influence of a professor while studying mass communications. After graduation, Ted found employment as a marketing consultant with firms located in Atlanta and Toronto. Through his work in the advertising industry, Ted acquired an account with a Tampa based national grocery chain allowing him to relocate in the Tampa Bay area. Similarly, Brent discovered his interests in the arts while attending college. Brent explains,

I went to Ohio state university and studied law at Case Western in Cleveland. As an undergrad I had political science as a major, Japanese language as a minor and spent a huge amount of time in the dance department at Ohio state, which is completely accidental. I ended up taking a class in comparative arts and one day they brought in some members of the university modern dance program. They did this demonstration and said, ‘if you’re interested, you can take dance classes as an elective.’ I thought that it looked kind of interesting and thought there’s probably more women in those classes [laughter]. I ended up taking a couple of classes taught by grad students, they took me aside and said you’re actually really good at this (I had a martial arts background so I had sort of a kinesthetic awareness that I think translated well into dance) and advised the dance department was always interested in men, a rarity in dance. I thought, ‘what the heck’, and auditioned, got into the dance major program as a non-major, and a year after that was asked to join the university dance company; kind of like
walking on to a division A football team and never having played football. Scared the hell out of my father, an Asian American mid level manager who says get an education... he really wanted me to be a lawyer ... So I started dancing in college and I was in a rock band. I never played a musical instrument or danced or anything, but when I got to college the work sort of opened up; you see all this potential. So music and dance, hangin’ out with cool artistic people, that sort of stuck with me. I eventually fell with the dark side and became a lawyer, but that didn't take, I practiced for a couple of years and left to start a technology company with one of my best friends ... When I became an entrepreneur that scared dad too.

I think the folks that are operating in this sort of flexible space are the ones who are willing to take a little more comfort with risk and uncertainty or who have a significant safety net of some kind. Wonderful if you have it, but I think there’s something about being young and dumb enough. When I started that company with my best friend, I knew almost nothing about starting a business, but we knew it was something we wanted to try and we were willing to learn as we went along. I think success requires being smart enough to start something but not over analyzing it to the point of where you’re crippled by knowing too much. ...the more I know, the harder it is, ‘you better be buttoned up to do this stuff’.

Like Ted and Brent, Madison discovered his passions for the arts and civic action while attending college. He explains,

When I went off to USF as an undeclared, I had already started a couple of small businesses that I made money from and had resources. Thought I’d go enjoy life, get a college education, pursue a career, get married, start a family, and live the American dream. I shortly found that the conditions that students were living in Tampa were poor. I started a non-profit to organize students into an off campus student union to collectively bargain with landlords to force change, to improve quality of life for those of us who lived off campus. It began. Part of what came out of what we did was the Off Campus Housing Association, I was working with some creatives because I’ve always been interested in the Arts. It started at 4 with piano, my mother wanted me to be a concert pianist, so I played competitively for 15 years in the guild, met a young African American woman in junior high that wanted to be an actress and a dancer. I taught her how to read sheet music, she taught me how to dance. ... Typical Madison style. At this time, the athletics department was getting all the money from the candy sale, and we needed sheet music and costumes and backdrops. I decided to run as a student body treasurer for the junior high school. I won against all odds and diverted half the world’s finest chocolate-bar sale money to sheet music, costumes, and backdrops [laughter]. I developed an interest at that point in dance; it was the budding time in the early 70s and disco hadn’t come on the scene yet. Years latter as disco emerged, I was already skilled at dance and began working at a studio and teaching during happy hours at nightclubs throughout the [Tampa] Bay Area. I had free passes for every club for a hundred miles. The dating scene was hot for a guy that could dance, needless to say I was in college for seven years.
Contrasting these earlier accounts, Madison observes his passions as stemming from early childhood experiences and his parents. Jeff also discovered his present interests and profession while attending college and links these to earlier experiences in high school and travels post graduation. Jeff explains,

I was not a popular kid, always on the outside. The arts, the technical classes like wood and metal shop was where we were academically and socially forced to go. When I finished high school I didn’t go right to college, I actually traveled awhile, hiked the Appalachian trail. I always had a passion for philosophy and politics. When I was hiking the Appalachian Trail, kind of discovering Appalachia and Americana, I got the passion. It was in the spring or summer of '91 took a few weeks off of the Appalachian Trail, hitch hiked into DC and did all that, went back and finished the Trail. At that time the first gulf war in '91 was going on and I was really into the anti war movement at that time. When I went back to school, I thought I could make a difference by teaching American history or world Western Philosophy. A couple of high school teachers steered me in a path of non-destruction so I figured I could probably do society some good. When I got finished with my wanderlust, so to speak, I went back to the university. I was an American History Western Philosophy major with 20 credits left to graduate with a dual major and took clay as an art elective [changed track] and I switched and had to go back to the beginning. It was sort of through that and taking elective courses, I took a Ceramics 1 course and through that professor and material I kind of fell in love with the material; her lectures included not only the pragmatics of ceramics but also, ceramic history, art philosophy, and art history. I was like, wow, this is something that I can explore all avenues of history, philosophy and also create something; it gave me that urge to create. It took me seven years to complete my undergraduate degree.

In Jeff’s history, high school teachers inspired both a commitment to social responsibility and an interest in art. These exposures proved triangulating points while engaging a “wonder lust” after graduating high school and later while attending college. To this point, histories presented reflect the development of interests among participants possessing college degrees. Beyond these individuals, I also spoke with entrepreneurs and artists possessing less formal training. I begin with Alexia’s account. She states,

When I was in ninth grade, I got involved with visual arts at a magnet school, I think this was the first year for magnet school, I stayed interested through 12th grade. I actually came to Tampa to go to art school. I went to commercial art school and I didn’t like it. There was just too much advertising and marketing, but I really didn’t want to go down the fine artist road 'cause I didn’t really want to struggle. I don’t think I had enough passion to put into it or to wait out mastering my skill and everything. So when I dropped out of that school, I just
kind of wandered in to the hair school and signed up and I’ve been doing that ever since.

Alexia shared that art remains a large apart of what she does, hosting art receptions for local artists. She explains, “I like to get artists that are not really big to feature their art, either student or young emerging artists. It kind of gives them a chance to have an exhibit without having to pay for space.” Alexia’s work with artists began after her boss (referred to as both a friend and mentor) encouraged her to purchase the business and engage in non-profit work:

When I made the decision to buy, my friend said, ‘since you’re taking over my half of the salon, why don’t you take over my position with Art for Life. I think a lot of things happen without direction. You know getting married, having children, hair school, owning this business, my non-profit work. It’s like you’re not alone in doing what it is that you’re doing. You’re offered opportunities and the challenge is to rise to them. It’s like something is guiding my life for me.

For Alexia, the process of professional development has been an uncharted path involving various factors such as early exposure to the arts, influential peers, family, entrepreneurial opportunity, and embracing challenge. Eric, another Tampa Bay business owner, shared some of his early experiences and influences underlying present entrepreneurial efforts. He states,

I was raised in an environment of hard work, so work was never thought about. Work for me was like playing a sport, shootin’ hoops. It was my gift. Having that as a backbone, and finding something I liked to do made the difference for me. Some people come up against a wall and think to themselves, ‘how do I get through this?’ I just work through it, know what I mean?

My father passed away when I was 17. His passing, for me, was difficult because my father was struggling just trying to take care of his family. I believe that high stress was the cause of my father’s’ passing. I think it was a commitment that I made at that point that I was going to get on top somehow, someway, no matter what. I had some bad stepping stones to get to some good ones.

I was club kid at the time, going out, the owner of the place saw my ability to bring in people from around town and afforded me an opportunity. I worked at a place called Bally’s, it was the place to be. The owner saw my effort to work, and he saw a natural fit for me to be in the bar business and offered me an opportunity to help him grow the business. ...I just was out in the club scene, I knew a lot of people, I hung out with a lot of people. I liked to go out, I was going out 4-5 nights a week, I never worked in the industry prior to that opportunity.
Eric observes entrepreneurial opportunities having emerged through personal work-ethic gained from his parents, as well as social activities, peer relations, and the opportunities afforded by an early employer. Reflecting on the significance of his local efforts Eric stated,

I always envisioned the guys around me to grow with the opportunity I had. On the music side of it, there are DJ’s that have given their efforts and challenged themselves to an ability of international guys but didn’t have the exposure because the city doesn’t have enough exposure as a city that delivers that kind of music. You think of Miami, NY, LA, immediately your goanna give them props...

For Eric, being an entrepreneur involves extending opportunities to others much in the same way he had.

In addition to the entrepreneurs presented above, artists shared accounts of developing interests and opportunity. Below I present the accounts of some artists encountered in my fieldwork. Among the artists encountered, I interviewed several musicians. One musician, Maceo shared,

Actually I started with sport until I was 12; my dad always played bugle. He played when he was younger, but would pull it out at Christmas play a song like ‘BUUFFUUURREE’ [laughter], ‘haha, that’s great dad.’ It didn’t come out right, but it was like a tradition. When I was 12, all of a sudden I heard jazz on the radio and was like ‘wow, I want to play that.’ I wanted to play tenor to begin with and then my father knew of this marching band that would take on students, train them through their schools and introduce them into the orchestra. That’s how I got started. I wanted to start on tenor so I come to my first lesson and they had two instruments in front of me, one tenor which was like falling apart, it’s ugly, its case is all nasty and next to it was a beautiful alto sax, shiny with nice velvet inside, red. So as a 12–year-old, what do you choose? Actually, it turned out to be a good choice, starting on alto you got a much broader spectrum as far as your mouth position and the build up of muscles in your mouth. I played for probably two years before I was introduced into the orchestra, then started doing a workshop of New Orleans-style jazz. I got into the jazz and a lot of the music and slowly worked that for a couple of years and was approached and asked to play in a ska band. We played all over the Dutch province, playing around Florida would be comparable to what we did. It was fun, crazy time. Then I started traveling on my own, took my horn, didn’t play with the band for a long time, just whenever I got an opportunity. Eventually, I came to Tampa through a girlfriend I met while traveling in the Dominican Republic and I met my current band one night at an open mic on Davis Island.

For Maceo, playing music has been a lifelong passion and practice that began in the European Netherlands and continues today through producing live original music in
Tampa. Similar to Maceo, Stephen embraced the practice of playing music in a band as a youth outside the US. Stephen explains,

All of us grew up in the church. We grew up playin music in St. Catherine Parish in Jamaica, like a lot of groups before us. I didn’t have a bass guitar, all I had was a guitar bigger than me that my dad sent [home from the states]. My brother and I started playin classical guitar, and then we started playin’ percussion, a lot of percussion, and den it was Rasta. My dad taught us all the percussion stuff, ’cause he used to play wit Bob Marley back in the day. He played wit Trenchtown Rock in *She’s Gone*; he and Bob used to kick it, like homies, know what I’m sayin? A lot of those artists lived around us, like Black Uhuru, Wailing Souls...Toots and the Maytals. Actually, Toots he live right up the block from us and I didn’t even know dat! Yeah, his son tried to sell me bass one time, I almost got my first bass from the family and didn’t know it! It was crazy, we grew up with the Heptones, all dose cats was livin’ on the block but we didn’t know. We kinda grew up sheltered cause our mom make us like classical music and all dat stuff. The more we grew up, the more we knew who was around the neighborhood. So with the influences, I got a heritage, I gotta carry on, know what I’m sayin? I didn’t know this until I grew up and I asked my pop, I didn’t know none of dis stuff. Today pop play with us sometimes, he plays the Niyabinghi Drums. He doesn’t wear dreads no more, he cut his dreads off cause he said they’re not representin’... anyways it’s another story. But that’s how I grew up, learnin’ that classical music and Rasta stuff in the church in Jamaica, know I mean? Later I saw this guy playin the bass one time and was like, ‘man, I wanna learn how to play that’, so he taught me. Today, us three brothers have Tribal Style; I play the bass and my two older brothers play keyboard and drums.

Stephen’s passion for music is deeply rooted in family, cultural, and spiritual traditions. Soon the brothers formed a roots rock reggae band and began playing out, first while living with his father in California. Eventually, the brothers came to Tampa on the invitation of their sister and stayed; the band is growing to national recognition. Another artist, Rukha developed her love for dance and art at an early age. Rukha explains,

Since I was little I’ve been painting my whole life, I’ve been dancing my whole life, I grew up in a great dance, painting kind of family, mainly my mother. It just seemed to catch on to me more than my other siblings; I’m the only artist out of five kids. My mother has always been an artist. As I got older, I realized that’s what I wanted to do with my life. I grew up in hip-hop culture mainly, but I was surrounded by all types of music. I’ve always loved all types of music.

In addition to these influences of family and peers, Rukha gained early inspiration from the jungles of Panama:
I like vibrancy, I kind of don’t dig on dullness. If you dig on it, its cool, whatever. I think it’s a knack that’s built into me. I grew up in a very colorful atmosphere in Panama and remember these crazy Latin American festivals with the women in the huge and colorful dresses. It’s like my first memories: color, color, color, the jungles, the frogs with all their different colors, the iguanas green and brown, the butterflies, the mangos, all the colors I was surrounded in.

Following this, Rukha presented her orientation to art. She explains,

I see [my paintings] as an expression of myself and society and the way I see things through my eyes and what I would like to see more of, which is colorful people. Like more people who have an intellectual yet creative view on things that don’t live in a box. That don’t believe in straight lines. People who are just more open to different perspectives. ... I can draw you to a T but I’d rather paint you purple [laughter] or blue or yellow or give you crazy colored hair or I like to draw movement. That’s why I draw women and these movement things. I just like to be very bold sometimes I do a lot of risqué stuff but I do a lot of very cultural things as well that you can tell is a reflection from my past.

Like Rukha, Paulo developed a passion for the arts in early childhood. Growing up in Rochester, Paulo discovered music through playing soul and R&B 45’s for his mother’s basement parties:

I’d say it was myself hangin’ out with my moms record collection back in like 76-75 as, you know when I was like 10 or 11. After school I used to play DJ with her 45 records, a collection of funk, disco, latin music. I was always into something, I was into that, from a young age. My mom used to throw basement parties in upstate New York, sometimes I’d sit there playing some of the music while they were dancing.

In the neighborhoods of his youth, Palo witnessed many peers join sports teams and/or gangs outside of school; neither of which he found engaging. Rather, music remained his focus playing records at home as a latchkey kid. In addition to these activities, Paulo’s interest in music grew through the influence of his cousin and mass media. He explains,

Back in 78-79, my cousin was DJing in Miami doing disco stuff, I learned a lot from him. How to edit music, mix records together on beat, stuff like that. And then I saw couple videos on MTV, like Buffalo Gals where you see the guy scratching. That’s the first time I actually saw someone scratching a record, making that sound [laughter] then I started messing around with it, figured out how to do it. ...the hip-hop thing took like a year or two before Florida caught on.

While living in Miami Paulo continued DJing, and at the close of the 1980s played shows throughout Florida and eventually was offered a long-term residency:
I was doing parties around the state, a lot of raves and clubs going around that time. I was in Sarasota hanging out with some friends, doing one of their parties, and they took me to [this members-only club] in Gainesville. [The owner] was like this mysterious figure no one really knew... Yeah, my first experience was great underground. I kept hanging out there and started meeting some of the resident DJ’s. The very first party I did was with house music residents, David G and Yen – I don’t think there really DJing anymore but their still around – they had me guest DJ there after hearing me play at some of their after hours parties. They liked what I was playing so they had me guest DJ one night. That’s was like 92-93, that was Sexier Sound Party. I stayed in Sarasota for a bit cause I was getting a lot of gigs in Tampa and Orlando and Gainesville, driving back and forth. Eventually that led to a little residency in the side room [the owner] started up around 94. Down the road that led to more stuff and residency in the main floor 95-96. That went all the way to the end man, till 2000 when I was there.

For Paulo, knowledge gained from a cousin, and exposure to early “underground” with peers revealed opportunities, which through persistent effort afforded a paid residency. In this time, the club grew in international scope, began featuring DJ’s from around the world, and drew large crowds. For years, patrons from across the state and beyond embarked on weekend pilgrimages to hear Paulo’s unique sound. Since this time, Paulo’s performances have brought him international recognition played after parties at Sundance Film Festival, and helped host “underground” parties in Bahrain. Paulo reflected on his personal motivations for DJing,

Love of music, it really was a soundtrack for my environment. ... It’s kind of like you’re expressing through you’re music what you’re experiencing in your environment. What a lot of musicians or artists are trying to create. You’re showcasing their music and people can relate to that because a song you play has a kind of lyrics and they relate to that, deals with something in their life, or it can be something that helps them get away from that. Either makes them more aware or relax from the craziness of the world showing them there’s a better way going on somewhere or just fun – to have a good time. I mean, to me the music kind of brings people together from different cultures and backgrounds. The power of that sound that can connect everyone. I think that’s the rush of being a DJ really, when you can see that, feel it.

Paulo perceives DJing as fulfilling personal and social needs for himself and others.

When asked why these functions were important, Paulo responded, “Because it shows me that people can make things happen if they work together. It’s not all doom. At the end of the day everybody wants to work together, they don’t really
want to fight all the time.” In addition to these perspectives of music’s impact on
others, Paulo observes playing music as a spiritual practice:

Yeah, it’s a form of prayer really, just to be in touch with the whole. I mean my
sets can go from light to dark, I believe they should work together, they
compliment each other; they’re not contradictory. Some people say, ‘ah, you
should only play this way or that way’. I never see it that way, I think they work
together, its all part of the same universe. We just got to learn to accept [these
distinctions] and then were not bound by them anymore. Nothing is set in stone
[laughter], everything fluctuates; my music is a lot like that too. There’s so many
different vibrations, why not show it in what you do.

From Paulo’s perspective, music unites people across cultural divides and is a driving
force in the very real and spiritual connection he holds with the “underground
sound.”

The above accounts illustrate the emergence of professional and personal
identities as shaped by experiences in childhood, at college, and travels, as well as
the influence of family, peers, and educators. Taken together, these and other
participants of this research constitute members of Tampa’s arts community. In the
following section, I present responses of these (and other participants) concerning
place.

Participant Perspectives of Place

In the second phase of interviews, I sought to elicit participant narratives of
place. Below I present excerpts of these narratives specific to Tampa and other
locations as determined by participants.

Participants shared earliest memories of Tampa. Mary shared, “I grew up in
the west Tampa and Palma Cea area, but we would travel to Ybor City every
Saturday. That’s where we would purchase the majority of the goods that we would
consume at home; the Spanish community was easier to negotiate.” Rukha recalls
early childhood memories of growing up in an outlying suburb of Tampa:
My first memories were just being a crazy kid, trying to recreate Panamanian jungles in Brandon suburbia [laughter]. I remember it as an industrial city; railroad tracks everywhere and the trees were all cut down. It was flat and I was like, 'uh, I hate it here', there were no trees aside from orange groves. My sister and I would play in the orange groves and make believe we were back in Panama. This really kind of sucked. I really missed Panama really bad, cause there’s wildlife everywhere and there’s really cool things. ... I think when I got here to Tampa, I was yearning for that exoticness. There is still a lot of cool exotic things here, but its Tampa...

In this excerpt, Rukha recalls Tampa in relation to memories of Panama. Rukha also offered contemporary reflections of Tampa stating, "Today I go to, I think Viva La Frida’s is pretty cool, love La Teresita, and the Taco Bus is like walking into Mexico; they all provide a very cultural experience.” Stephen shared first impressions of Tampa after moving from California with his family. He explains,

We drove all the way here, hours man, the whole family. We drove out here and we had a house set up for us in Temple Terrace, got there unloaded. It was different man, just kinda different vibe. It was a lot slower and you just got to find your way around. We know some people there ‘cause my sister showed us some people took us around, friends from her school. Actually when I first came to Tampa, I never worked before. My first job was at Dairy Queen and then after that worked at Napa Auto Part, did some construction for a while, ‘cause you gotta find your calling, know what I’m saying.

Maceo recalls arriving in Tampa from the Dominican Republic, noting a large highway system and lack of activity on the street:

I flew into Tampa International and the girl I was visiting picked me up from the airport. ...I didn’t get in till two o’clock in the morning and then we drove straight to Davis Island and I just remember everything being so big, the interstate and everything. It was crazy, ‘cause you know in Europe it’s not like that at all, the roads are like half the size, even interstates there. I remember everything being so fucking big, especially two o’clock in the morning you have nobody on the road. You have this huge highway, with just one car and it [laughter]. I’m like [laughter] ‘where am I, what’s going on here!’ The next day I rode a bicycle around Davis Island and was just amazed, there was nobody on the street; it was like dead silence. I flew in from the Dominican Republic where life happened on the street; there’s no AC so why sit inside if you can sit outside. That’s the big thing here, people don’t go outside. The only place on Davis Island that you may see a few people here and there is the small business district. I was just like ‘wow this is kind of weird, there’s nothing going on’. You know what I mean? Overall I have met some really genuine people in Tampa. A lot of people are like, ‘oh, I hate this city, I hate this city’, but I really like Tampa. Tampa’s cool, but it lacks a lot as far as opportunities in art.
Here, Maceo recalls the scale of streets, inactivity in place, engaging people, and his perceptions of a lacking arts scene. This has not always been the case; in many interviews, participant reflections on Tampa involved mentions of early experiences in Ybor City. Ramona shared early memories of Ybor while discussing the start of her first business:

Before I came in, my business was a sandwich/soup/salad shop, and the owner also did tarot card readings. I think she was there for two years, and was selling her business and we took over her lease. I remember the landlord would only lease one year at a time. ... Jack Shiver owned my property and many others in Ybor. [Laughter] All the tenants had a name for him, Jack Sheister. He soon sold the building to a white family from south Africa. They were nice, honest, fair people.

I was very limited with the space, I couldn’t do much. The whole restaurant over there was smaller than 800 sq ft including the kitchen, storage room, bathroom [laughter]; I think the eating area was less than 500 sq ft. I did some events and sometimes would have 100 people, it was all cheek to cheek. I’ve always honored Frida Kahlo, so there was Frida’s annual homage in July that included spoken word, dance music. I hosted events where I used recipes from the book *Like Water for Chocolate*. At that time, Anne Rice was very popular so I did a dinner with a film projected on the wall. I had a little projector [laughter], it was such a small restaurant that everybody could see, it was very tiny [laughter]. We also had a lot of stuff happening outside as well. ... Aside from us, the plaza had Ybor Pizza and two other spaces that changed regularly. There was a shop for kids that sold skateboards and attire; there was a vintage store, and then a flower shop. Yeah, Blue Chair was there, Three Birds was there... retail was thriving. La France has been there since 75, she was originally across the street and then she bought the building. She’s been around a long time, yeah, Jill and I go way back. She and her husband were the ones that were stable, had a very successful business, had a nice big house. They would always host Thanksgiving and Easters. Most of the time that was where all the artists would go and hang out. They were the parents to all the starving artists. We used to call ourselves family, we were a community, helping each other, supporting each other, partying with each other, having thanks giving together because we all came from different areas and so we adopted each other and became a family and community.

The above account highlight’s a view of Ybor City as an arts district. By the mid 1990s, fires and escalating rents among properties in Ybor resulted in many businesses relocating or closing. Over the 1980s, Ybor increasingly attracted artists and musicians and by 1990 featured several alternative nightclubs. Francis reflects on this trend:
The alternative music culture, whether live or club, has had a fair number of locations. The Impulse I guess was one of the first night clubs I frequented upon moving to Tampa, it was very short lived. They made an honest effort, constantly changing themes. I think their first theme was from A Clockwork Orange, they did the whole club up like it was the Korova Milk Bar; and another was Apocalypse Now, they put a chain link fence up with scenes of Nuclear Destruction everywhere. These themes continued to generate interest and draw people in. It wasn’t the only place to go, but it was the place... There was also Act 4 lounge, that was the place for live music, people my age or older would remember places like the Electric Banana. Then you can move into Saturday nights at the original Masquerade (where the empire is now), Sunday nights at London Victory, Friday’s at 911, and DNA’s Old Wave Monday nights. All had their little niche in Tampa nightclub history and been successful in their time. Overall, The Castle has stood the test of time as an alternative music venue, well over 10 years. Culturally I guess the Castle helps to define the “Dark Wave” or gothic culture in Tampa. A lot of Gothic industrial artists come to Tampa because they know of the Castle, what it represents, and the people that go there; it’s a scene. When we started Scene and Heard at the Castle, Ybor was still kind of a dangerous place and I think people really appreciated what it was at the time. Sure, it’s become gentrified and trying to re-define itself; it had a little explosion of madness and now the city is trying to rein in the number of nightclub zonings there. God, how could I forget Tracks, Rick West would spin there on Thursday’s for breeder night. I mean people in the alternative scene would go there anytime, it didn’t really matter. That was nice thing about the scene here, how can I say this, a gay club was straight friendly. You know, it didn’t really matter, there were no attitudes. Lest I forget that Channel Zero in St. Pete had its heyday as well.

The above mentions provide an overview of Tampa’s flourishing alternative nightclub scene during the late 1980s and early 1990s in which Ybor is identified as a cultural hub. This identity was shared by many people I encountered in the field familiar with Tampa’s electronic and alternative music venues as I observed with Alexia, she states, “I would just go out to Tracks, Masquerade and run into people; many of them I still know.” For this participant, casual encounters made in Ybor’s clubs proved a point of social entry. Yet others presented Ybor as a place to find first gigs. Stephen recalls,

First time I came to Ybor I was like ‘man, what is this place? Let’s see what’s goin’ on’. These were my first steps to finding gigs in Tampa. I went to this Jamaican place, the Cauldron. Initially they told us ‘na, we don’t want no band here’, but I was like, ‘we’re a band from out of town and we need a start’, we did some of our first shows there. We also did a lot of shows at Orpheum, some at The Rub, and a few at Frankie’s Patio. Until recently, we didn’t play at New World, but would hang out there. We’ve played Jannus Landing, State Theatre, and countless little bars around town.
For this Stephen, Ybor provided the venues through which to market and play original music. Rukha identified art galleries and restaurants throughout Tampa: “I used to go to a lot of galleries like Mirta’s, Covivant, a couple other ones but they all closed this year. I also love going to New World in Ybor because I can eat and everyone kind of goes there at some point.”

Participant accounts of experiences in Tampa Bay collectively demonstrate a keen interest and involvement in arts activities, but also a sense that the quality of the arts scene has declined in recent years. Below I build out from these mentions to reflections on development (change in social and physical environments) shared during the third phase of interviewing. Participants observed Tampa from diverse vantages, however most agreed the downtown needed more activity. As Francis succinctly stated, “I think most cities are defined by their downtowns and we haven’t seen that yet. We have Ybor city, which is kind of a downtown.”

**Participant Perspectives of Development**

During the concluding phase of interviews, asked participants to share their thoughts on the aims of OCI in attempting to build a city of the arts evoking a range of issues experienced and observed relating to ordinances, art production, and climates of social activity, in addition to recommendations for future efforts. I begin by presenting mentions of perceived barriers to Tampa’s development efforts.

*Public Policy Barriers*

Many participants reflected on problems they have encountered while living in Tampa, the majority relating to city policies. Speaking to the overall vision of Tampa Francis states,
Generally I think the mayor is moving Tampa in a positive direction given her emphasis of culture and the arts, opposed to previous administrations more focused on property development. Not that there is anything wrong with development, but I think such was fostered at great expense. I think [former Mayor Dick] Greco gave away too much, ‘oh sure come and develop in Ybor City, you won’t have to pay impact fees’. The city has areas that are concurrency exception areas, places where your impact fees are waived or lowered to try to encourage development. Those have been in place for years now. I think you kind of have to do that, but you still need to gear and move the city toward a more kind of cohesive entity. I think there has been way too many entities and interests obstructing this.

Similarly, many of the business owners I spoke with shared this view. One business owner encountered problems while attempting to build in a underdeveloped area of Tampa. For Eric, building parking quickly became a significant problem, due to a city ordinance he perceived as inflexible and misdirected:

I remember when I first started my business the city said, ‘you have to get a parking lot’ ‘cause I had done all this expansion. The codes required that with expansion, more parking was required. I didn’t have the money, I was taking a piece of property that was a gay strip bar, had been closed for 10 months, and had numerous violations for illegal stripping. Moreover, the street was basically drugs, prostitution, and no-one wanted to go there, I saw the diamond in the rough … I didn’t have the money to go out and buy a parking lot, but I fought and found a way to buy a parking lot. So I returned to the city to advise that I acquired space and they replied, ‘that’s not good enough.’ I said, ‘what? I have 26,000 square feet of space.’ They said, ‘no, you need to stripe it, put trees on it…’ I said, ‘wait a minute, I just took everything I had to get the actual space, work with me on the time, to get it up to par.’ The rest of the buildings on the street were dilapidated, and they wanted me to bring my property up to standards nowhere close to surrounding buildings? I was fined $200.00 a day for four years, I think my fines were $169,000 by the time I actually went to settle with them. Finally, someone at the Mayor’s office said, ‘that’s ludicrous’ and waived the fines. For four years I had to sit there with the albatross across my neck. I had over $100,000 in debt in spite of owning four times the property they required for parking, but it wasn’t good enough cause someone at the lower levels was saying no, no, no, no.

In this excerpt, a business owner shares his frustration with a city ordinance observed as inflexible and misdirected. Ramona also experienced problems with the zoning process:

The wet zoning didn’t take long at all, what took long was fighting the traffic impact fees and the sewage fees. I’ve always been arguing and telling people, and I just cannot get anywhere, they don’t want to deal with it. In 1994 [then-mayor] Sandy Freedman passed an ordinance that anything south of Fletcher were gonna be given consideration for traffic impact fees an sewage fees to aid
businesses opening in areas sited for re-development. I wasn’t given any consideration when I applied for my occupational license. I didn’t have the money to fight the city so I give ’em $14,000 for traffic impact fees and sewage fees. I remember for almost six months I was doing Fridays, Saturdays only, limited menu and donation because I didn’t have money to purchase my wet zoning license. With wet zoning, you notify all your neighbors within a certain radius and if anybody wants to oppose, but nobody opposed. We hired somebody to do it, cost me $5,000. What took long was that the ARC dragged their feet for seven months while we were working day and night trying to develop an abandoned industrial lot into something profitable. It get very, it gets very weary. I’m just depleted and I feel like, ‘here, take all of me.’ Every step of the way we have tried to do good business in the city and it’s always been a battle, always fighting, fighting, fighting with the city just to survive.

In the above excerpt, Ramona expressed frustration with the lack of consideration offered developing small businesses. This frustration continues today as she attempts to address existing problems related to traffic dangers:

A woman was recently killed trying to cross the street right out front [pointing to the curb outside]. All these lots have fences that obstruct views. The city is so heavy handed with their aesthetics code violations, yet they don’t do anything about these fences? If we want to access this street, we’re taking our lives in our hands, you can’t see. The city says it’s not their problem because it’s highway so it’s state, the Department of Transportation says its not their problem because it’s in the city. However, when I wrote a check for traffic impact fees it went to the city.

Beyond impact fees, participants also encountered problems relating to business and residential property leasing. At the close of 2006, Alexia was confronted with the possibility of closing up shop:

Well we actually don’t have a lease here, which I hate. The light lease expired, I tried to get with [my partner] and speak to the owner of the building to see about getting a lease. He just doesn’t want to cause I think he wants us to go month to month cause he wants to sell it and he doesn’t want to have any ties with the leases. Which is smart for him, cause if we had a lease and he found someone to buy it, he’s obligated to buy us out. Which you know, we need to find out, I wasn’t on the ball to find out cause I’m sure there was some kind of laws that say the owner of a building has to have a lease with you if you own a business, I don’t know. So unfortunately, if we have to move, its going to be a big expense for us to re-open something else. Which we can make it work, you know, I mean I have money saved, its just not what I really wanted to use it for.

In addition to problems with this lease, the owner advised of a $1000 rent increase.

Alexia explains why she was unable to located assistance:
I know, [my partner] is always pushing me to go to business meetings but I need to make an effort to do that. That’s where I fall short in the business sense, like I’m really creative and I know how to make everything look good, and how everything can run smoothly, but as far as documents and really knowing organizations and laws, I fall short on that.

Differing from the problems of other business owners presented above, Alexia advised of a lack of legal business knowledge as a reason for not seeking assistance or attending meetings. Throughout my fieldwork, I learned of indiscretions among property managers related to exorbitant rent increases, ignored service requests, and general disregard for state and federal legislation. In September of 2006, one Tampa resident and his spouse endured such abuses following the passing of their rental property owner. Days from his burial, ownership of this multiple residence property in Tampa transferred to an out of state relative, and then back to a local Tampa family. Weeks later the new owners advised of rent increases totaling more than $200. In addition, the new owners respond to maintenance requests with unannounced visits entering the occupied property as if no one was home. On the second occasion, the tenant inquired about the legality of these actions, the owner ordered them to move out posting an “Eviction notice” seemingly drafted on a PC. Although these tenants and their neighbors had lived in their residence for more than seven years, no one was offered the option of purchasing the property as the tenants believed was their legal right. As in the case with Alexia, calls to both city and county administrations proved ineffective in locating assistance. Subsequently, these Tampa residents (local students and professionals) moved to an outlying area of unincorporated Hillsborough county returning infrequently to the City.

Informants also observed problems related to city and country policing strategies. In one interview, one informant shared observations of a predatory practice in Sulphur Springs:

To go into the Sulphur Springs area and make as many arrests as possible for stealing cars impacts an entire culture and population. These are decisions made
at high levels. Cars are stolen all over the city, but the central focus remains on perceived youth gang members in one area. Our focus isn’t all over the county. If you’re not aware of how someone might find themselves in a gang— that it’s the only way to survive in a particular neighborhood or school. How do you distinguish that child from the true gang member?

Here Mary advised of her frustration with a perceived cultural bias in Tampa’s juvenile justice system. Maceo observed the city’s concern with underage drinking in the development of policies adversely impacting his efforts as a musician:

First of all, for example, I think as far as the Tampa administration has some conflicting things going on there. New World Brewery recently received notice to discontinue live music or risk being shut down. This threatens one of the very few live music venues here in Tampa. Our mayor has this big idea about getting these underage kids out of Ybor City and on top of increasing the number of police the city has implemented stricter sound ordinances. As long as I can remember, and probably way before that, New World Brewery has promoted local and national original live music. A place like that is threatened with being shut down due to regulation attempting to stop 18-year-olds from hanging out in Ybor City and increase the older crowd? It’s like they’re cutting with a double bladed sword, you know? I don’t think this helps the arts scene at all. Another place like the Rare Olive, they used to have the doors open, you’d walk by and hear the live music going on the street. Now they can’t do that anymore because of the noise ordinance, they have to keep the doors closed. So you may hear a little bit, but you don’t really know what’s going on till you’re almost past it and then you’re like, ‘oh, shit, there’s a band playing right there.’ I don’t know, then you have night clubs have their blaring music right out on the streets, and they trying to get an older crowd into Ybor City? That’s not going to help. That’s just a small example like for me as far as what their not doing. What they should be doing is get more, promote more live music. I really don’t know how they should do that, but definitely closing down places that are doing an art scene seems counterproductive. They should help these businesses survive.

Paralleling Maceo’s critique, Stephen commented:

At Guan Massive shows, we keep it cool, subtle, but it’s still loud. [These DJ’s that] do a lot of rock shows got cited, it was right after summer jam this year. New World has canceled every show except for [mine]. So now I got to sign a form that says they’re not gonna get sued, we’re the one that gonna get sued. If I sign it by myself, I pay 500 bucks, and that’s just a warning. Yeah, usually me and another band member sign it, the band agreed if we make money it will go to the fine, but it kinda sucks man, I don’t know why they doin’ it. Who’s doin’ it? Pam Iorio? Who’s in charge of the stuff? Who makes the noise ordinance? I just want to know who’s doing that and ask them what’s the problem. There’s no body living around New World. Tampa also cited the Orpheum, the guy went inside the club and put his sound thing inside the club, isn’t that illegal? Doesn’t his have to be a certain number of feet outside to see the sound outside? They had to tell him, step out side. They had the doors closed, he put his stuff inside the door. What they doin it for? We just tryin’ to play the music and have a good time, they tryin’ to beat it down. I know Tampa’s a retirement city, but
that man? Whatever! Many of the guys know they’re not gonna get paid well and some of these cats just want to have gas money, to have beer and be cool with it. ... I don’t get money, probably like 10 bucks, and take money from my own pocket to bring guys from Miami, give ‘em a place to stay. It takes a lot of money to throw a show here, for a big show to go on like Dirty but Sophisticated. Lucas Por Wanna was nominated for the Latin Grammy awards, we got ‘em here the last two years. We brought in Span All Stars! All those cats. This year we hoped to bring in these cats from California called Visionary Crew. It’s too much money to fly and all and hope for the show to do good to pay them back. All of us are just regular cats, takin’ money out of our own pockets. Sometimes we get sponsors from Cool, they help us out and put up banners but it’s still not enough money to pay everybody, know I’m sayin? Most the time we pay to play shows. To me that’s love, ’cause sometimes the guys pitch in money for flyers and stuff. It takes a lot of money to throw a show and it’s gotta be well planned and all that sort of stuff.

The above accounts highlight how an Ybor City noise ordinance has been a source of frustration and stress among musicians interested in building Tampa’s original music scene. Participants also commented on the city’s direct efforts to promote studio art, as did Ramona:

When the city has gallery tours, even when I was in Ybor, I was always fighting to be recognized. I was like, ‘oh wait, they have a gallery tour, I have art in my space, why am I not recognized?’ The city said that I am not a traditional gallery. My business is progressive and is increasingly common in many areas such as San Francisco and New York.

Beyond Tampa, participants shared observations of policy related to Florida’s film industry:

To me the most powerful thing that Tampa needs to work on is not to always be so in awe of the bigger capital cities and their creative people. Tampa needs more industry. It’s always going to be tourist driven. Florida has an insecurity problem, and so does Tampa to a certain extent; they feel productions need to be produced from out of town. My firm has applied for contracts to produce commercials for the Lottery on a couple of different occasions, we didn’t get it both times and contracts went to out-of-state agencies. Any other state, California, Texas, New York that has a certain regional pride would have hung ‘em up. They would have run them out of town on a rail, tarred and feathered ‘em.

Paralleling the above reference, James, an aspiring actor commented, “Albertson’s is a Florida corporation, but it shoots commercials in Chicago!”
For many participants, Tampa’s development of an arts scene is obstructed by a lack of community among artists. Ramona states,

I don’t see people helping each other, apart of each other and they’re all contributing in some way to keep that alive, to keep themselves alive. And I don’t see that here. It’s really sad ... everybody has their own little cliques. I’ve always thought that if all the artists in the Tampa Bay community got together they would have a voice. Everybody, that’s the group from the 20s and 30s, and you have another group and another group, and they’re all very segregated.

Similar to Ramona, Francis observes,

From a musical perspective, it’s been an area that has talent, both live music and electronic music. I never felt the culture one way or another. It just doesn’t seem cohesive, it almost seems like a lot of people are out there and they’re kinda doing their own thing but they’re not necessarily a community or a bonding. There are moments when people and multiple elements come together like fashion and music like with Scene and Heard, or art and music like Galla Corina and Art for Life.

From this perspective, there is no mutuality among artists, with exception of a few multi-media events hosted semi annually. Although I found this sentiment common among both artists and entrepreneurs, few participants offered explanation as to why. I found an exception in the comments of one entrepreneur encountered in my early fieldwork activities. He shared,

Talking about the artists, when I entered this, previously I was a stockbroker, I dealt with clients, I had at one point a hundred employees, pretty much all stockbrokers, there was a certain mind-frame that they had. Ok yeah they were arrogant and all these things, but they had to be because that’s how you succeed in that business. You knew what you were dealing with on a daily basis, a lot of egos. I didn't expect that in the artist community. I always thought about the 60s and free love and all this inhibition and this free thinking, come to find out artists are probably the most narrow-minded people there are. Unless you believe in exactly what they believe in you’re a outsider. There's very little free space available in their thought process. And then you talk about the starving artist? Ok, I find that starving artists are starving for two reasons, typically work is not the reason. First, they’re too egotistical and they price themselves out of the market. The market is the market and the market is prevalent; what ever the market is going to pay is the market price, individuals don't put the price on the market, the street does. Artists might think their art is worth two grand, the street might think its worth $2.50. They’re not going to take what the street wants, there going to stick with their ego's and that's why there starving; they price themselves out of the market. Second, artists do not market themselves. They think they will be discovered and don’t do anything to help themselves. The
artists that are successful are the artists that compromise their ego’s to the market; they understand that they have to get out there and put themselves in the path of opportunity. There is a lot each of these artists. I love being involved, there's nothing better for me than to see somebody that’s struggling doing real well. Typically, I see this change occur in an 18 month timeframe. The transformation, not only in the maturity of their work but in the smile on their face, I mean its genuine and it good to see. This is a hub of artists, photographers, models, makeup artists, visual artists, video, everything comes in here. Being that we put out a publication, we get a lot of submissions and if the artist comes across cool, they get along with everybody, I’m more inclined to work with them. And then you see the transformation from point A to point Z or in-between and it’s usually about 18 weeks to see the maturity of their work. It’s gratifying.

In the above excerpt, a Tampa business owner contrasts previous observations as a stockbroker with his current work among artists. He suggests the lack of perceived financial success among artist’s is attributable to the presence of ego’s and pre-supposition’s; personalities out of accord with the structure of a free market economy. Further, this informant shared his pride in working with artists to overcome these perceived short falls, observing their transformation or “maturity” as occurring over an 18-month period.

In the above critiques, participants highlight numerous concerns relating to policy and community, many making direct reference to the production of art in Tampa. As I encountered references to Tampa’s arts scene, I inquired as to the significance of the arts for a city.

**Significance of Art**

In many interviews, participants reflected on the significance of the arts in relation to the identity of cities. My questions elicited numerous and diverse perspectives, both general and specific to Tampa. Madison shared,

Art has been our way of educating the world, art has been our way of communicating, and art has remained consistently, and art has little to no endings. It bleeds through cultures, through artists, so what better talent, what better venue can you work off of than art. Today we look at social ills, social problems, whether it be the break down of the family, or whether it be learning, or whether it be anger, or whether it be whatever.
Eric observed the music scene as a defining quality of cities and venues:

The music scene indicates the depth of a city for me. Anybody can listen to the radio and duplicate what they hear. Not everyone can dare to be different, forge for their like kind, and be committed to that. You can have all the money in the world. I’ve been to venues that are just sick in design but they lack the heart and soul of music, they’re skeletal at best. I think music really is the foundation for a city and a venue. Just the same way in a restaurant food would be, can you imagine walking in a restaurant and having the best service but the food was horrible? That’s it. I don’t know much about culture so I couldn’t walk into a museum and know. Music is something I would define it by.

Paulo perceived artists as offering a grounded perspective of a place reflecting on a recent trip to Germany:

Acceptance of the arts and music in a city is seen in people you meet from all over the world. You can hang out at some bar and meet an MC that does Cuban Hip Hop or meet some guy that plays the sitar, meet a guy that produces techno and see how all these minds are molding into this big artistic landscape. European cities are very accepting of it because the economy is kept in a certain way that doesn’t drive the artists out like other big cities in America. The rents are still very cheap in East Berlin, you can be an artist or a musician and still live on it. You don’t have to commercialize yourself to make money. You can live there. Also, you’re central to all of Europe so you can travel all over the place, all these different countries that accept a lot of different kinds of music and stuff. When I was there, it was like ahhhh. If you go to the record stores, they got every genre of music from every country, it’s crazy, they just suck up music like crazy. It’s crazy, the people there are into music whether or not they know the language, they/we listen to the sounds and all that. A lot of people been relocating there and they’re producing sounds breaking the mainstream. They can just be more creative in a city like that.

Maceo reflected on the role of original music for a city:

It’s an opportunity for musicians to make a living here in Tampa. As a musician, playing out, playin’ their own music as opposed to doin’ a cover song, it’s like a small pride of Tampa, they can say, ‘this band came from Tampa’, ‘we helped this band’. There’s so many cities that bands come from, New York, London, but I don’t know of any large band from Tampa because here you don’t have the opportunity. So A) you become an amateur band and you have a good time doing it making a little money here and there or B) you move to another city. When you move to another city with a band, there’s a good chance the band will break up. Say as far as the business goes, my band, we decide to go to New York to try really big time in the music industry, nobody’s going to go. For myself, I got a kid coming, I’m not going to move to New York to start in the music business. It’s hard ‘cause in Tampa you can’t make a living as a musician. So that’s, I think as far as original music goes, it becomes an identity. It becomes an identity of a band, of a venue, of an area in town, and of a city itself. It’s like, ‘this is our music, this is Tampa music.’ Then you can have cover bands, everybody can play
covers …but to actually have support for original music as supporting art, that’s the only true real art in music is original music, I think. Well as far as bands go.

Stephen added:

Man, what it does to Tampa, it blows Tampa up. I say it put Tampa on the map, it make people look up to Tampa. It’s like when I livin’ in Long Beach, people look up to Long Beach. Snoop came out and Warren G and Doctor Dre came out, people like, ‘what Long Beach is?’ know I’m sayin’? There wasn’t no Long Beach before [d]’em cats came out. But now everybody know about Tampa. I went to Sarasota and everybody like, ‘oh, you guys from Tampa?’ All those people like, ‘[d]em Guan cats’ its like they put high caps on us. They put a name on us and that’s good, know I’m sayin?’ To me it’s makin’ the city a lot better.

Ramona reflects on the significance of the arts as a motivation for business efforts:

For me it’s kind of like a selfish interest. I function best being around creative people, their energy inspires me, so I wanted to continue to - you know after seeing the artists being dispersed and going everywhere – I wanted to continue that [pause] that energy to go on.

Alexia shared appreciation for the function of art in relation to her business relationships stating,

One thing I like about featuring art in my business is that it brings a little more diversity to my clients, you know? Lets them see a different part of the world or society. Sometimes someone may say, ‘that piece of art is ugly’ and I say ‘well, what feeling does it evoke in you?’ Often that feeling was the intended purpose of the artist. Art doesn’t always have to be pretty, it’s a symbol, you know? Art can be political or based in how we view ourselves physically or emotionally. I like the idea of making people think, not being so restrictive or living in a box. We get stagnant, we go the same way to work everyday, we do the same thing and we don’t think about it. It just makes people think about the world.

Taken together, these participants again present a picture of a motivated, creative group of people, who nevertheless face significant barriers to making their art accessible. In addition to identifying problems and opportunities, some participants offered recommendations directed at Tampa’s future development efforts. I now present these comments.

Participants’ Recommendations

At the end of each interview, I asked participants to share their thoughts and/or recommendations concerning Tampa’s present and future development
efforts. The responses speak to specific orientations, strategies, and methods that could be employed in development and planning practices.

For some participants, relationships maintained by the city were of central concern. Eric states:

I think there has to be a better level of understanding and really, service. I think the city is challenged in its ability to break the rules for the right reasons. We live by a set of rules in our business, in our organization. Team members have to answer three questions to break a rule. We give the power to break a rule without having to come to a manager or owner. First, is the guest gonna win if they break a rule? Next will the team mate win if they break a rule? And finally, will the company win if they break a rule? And if the answer is yes to all three questions, they can break a rule. The city doesn’t have those principles to allow the front line guys to break the rules for the right reasons. So what happens, people are forced to not even go to the city because it’s easier to try and beat the city. You force people to look at ‘how can I skirt the line?’ ‘what loopholes can I exploit?’ as opposed to have a true conversation, sayin’ look this is my goal, here is my true beliefs. An individual might say, ‘I don’t have the money’, ‘I don’t have the support yet’, or ‘I don’t know how to go about it’, but it’s only yes, no. Look, service is more work, it’s not easy, it takes a lot of work, just think about it. Take a relationship for example, how hard is a good relationship? That’s where the city needs to go with us. They need to build a good relationship, that someone can come to them and share their true ideas and find a third way. Cause you might have one way, they might have another, but what’s the third way? Not just “no, that’s it.” That’s their biggest challenge.

From Eric’s vantage, a flexible model or approach to negotiating issues with constituents was a needed change with the city. Similarly, Maceo calls for the city to increase its role in facilitating local artists stating, “We need a maître d’, someone to organize and build relationships. …an artist needs to be able to go to a city and say ‘I have a vision’ and be supported.” For Mary, change occurs through community action:

If you go out into the community and do little things, it makes a huge impact. Like when the Mayor brought up homelessness as an issue early in her first term. Initially everybody wondered why she was getting involved in something like that, today people are beginning to see the significance of this issue [reference to prevalence of St. Petersburg’s homeless problem reflected in media]. What caught our attention was we went out one day and saw a little 15-year-old that was homeless! I can’t even imagine a 15-year-old without a home. Here you are still in your developmental stages, and here you are living on the streets.
This comment highlights the mayor’s early recognition and visibility on the issue of homelessness as a show of leadership. Further, encounters with a homeless adolescent proved an indicator of the problem and driver underlying the Mayor’s stance on the issue. For several participants, suggestions centered around strategies of working with youth. Rukha states,

I think we should have a better way for young kids and youth to be more engaged in it. We should have more programs not just have the big balers come out, you know and spend their money, and have these big art events. Mainly it’s attracting all these rich people and all these people who want to come out and have a good time. No that’s great, I love that because I document that kind of culture. We need to have more programs that encourage youth to get more identified with art, with the great things done with art, whether it be dance, painting, music, what have not. I think it would just create such a great society, a more developed or cultured person. A lot of these kids now aren’t that cultured. It would make a more aware child. Especially the way the world is turning now, the way we are progressing, we need more understanding people. The future leaders are going to be these kids we are teaching now. We need them to be a lot more aware/appreciative of the positive capabilities that a human has, instead of focusing on wars, what’s going on now! We need to look more past that, more globally.

From Rukha’s perspective youth and arts education should be a primary consideration for the City of Tampa, and more broadly for society citing global conflict as an indicator of the need for increased understanding. For Chad, Tampa possesses an opportunity to strengthen creativity in youth:

Tampa is really important for our organization and coming there is a great opportunity for us to showcase what’s happening in larger cities. I have been to Tampa now twice to work on educating [NGO representatives] on our work. I find Tampa unique and feel it has incredible potential to nurture artistic creativity. I think this is most important for young people.

Inferred here is a perceived lack of commitment to youth engagement, which has gained the attentions of an international organization committed to youth rights. Brent also identified youth as an important consideration in economic development:

I’ve talked with folks from the different work force boards and I’ve done workshops for high school kids, they say college is probably not an option for them. I say ‘ok’, are we gonna give up on these folks? No we’re not, because creativity and innovation do not necessarily come from college grads, they come from noticers of opportunity. If we get these kids thinking about themselves, as being a noticer of opportunity, and understand with some skills and some other
things, you can plug into this creative economy, you can be a player, you can have a career in this without necessarily going to college. So the point that I would make to people who say, ‘why would we focus on this stuff’, again it’s the value-add, it’s the next level of competitiveness and it’s also a fairly accessible entry point for even the most challenged members of your community in terms of education and attainment. ‘Cause there is a way, you can teach someone how to operate a camera, you can teach someone how to operate a commuter, you can teach somebody how to do some particular craft, you can teach someone how to be a stagehand at the performing arts center, you get them into that who knows where they can go from those kinds of things. So, low barriers to entry ... we don’t talk about that enough, frankly.

In addition to focusing on youth, this Brent cautions against looking solely to college graduates for innovation ad therefore calls for attention to creating low barriers to entry. For others, Tampa’s attempt to develop through the arts is viewed as redundant:

Tampa became kind of bohemian, kind of artsy on its own. If they want to create an arts district downtown, they need to focus in on the human element. They need to be creating inexpensive, cheap, non-fancy venues for the Joe Blow, not necessarily the highly talented, to come in and live their dream. Incubators. .... [Instead, Tampa’s approach is] like a planned residential community, its like living on a gulf course. That’s not what true art is about, true art is about free form thoughts and actions. Out of the non-conforming rather than the conforming. Do you follow what I’m saying? They’re building structure for an industry and environment that has no structure, and wants no structure. Art evolves out of controversy, it evolves out of non-structure, it evolves out of confrontation with society, it evolves out of differences. So they’re defeating their purpose. If I was developing the arts district, I would go to some of those old buildings, gut them out, and build two or three black box theaters -- Paint a room black, put a curtain up in front of it, throw some folding chairs in there -- invite some people to come in and form a theater company. Whether they got talent or not, let them do some stuff and then promote them. Try to get people-promote, promote, promote to the general public, come and watch this performance. So spend the resources and effort in bringing people in. Then you begin to get dimension out of non-dimension, you begin to get the conforming out of non-conforming.

In this passage, Madison calls on the city to observe the human element of their development effort in addition to a lack of structure perceived freedom among artists. Jeff also reflected on structural considerations:

I don’t know if a place can be engineered, at least the organic-ness that happens within community. I was drawn to and got my first apartment when I returned to Florida, literally four blocks from the Clay company, for that very reason. The gentleman standing behind me is here for that reason. He moved from Tennessee down to here and is presently a resident at the St. Pete Clay company. It’s an
organic sort of transition that brings in that sort of stuff. The Clay Company has spawned restaurants and art galleries without gentrification; without developers going in, tearing out the old and constructing something anew. I’m a St. Pete resident so I’m watching it happen to my little town too. As redevelopment comes in and they tore down some of these older buildings to put up some of these new condos with the mixed living, where they have urban spaces underneath, shops etcetera and living spaces above, I think that’s stamping a generalization. By doing this, this will in turn come. I think that it’s not so much a sustainable method of development. When you gentrify an area, when you come and clean it up, run everybody out, put up new, will the surrounding environment, surrounding social strata and even the economic strata sustain that over time? I don’t think it’s gonna happen. And I don’t think its going to happen in downtown St. Pete as I watch. I just don’t see these areas as being a financial Mecca that can sustain a $550,000 condo that one person can live in. As a home owner, I know I have a hard time making my $85,000 house, I can’t imagine a half a million dollar house.

For Jeff, art and community are mutually inclusive elements of an organic process and considered beyond the ability of planners and developers to engineer. Further, he cautions the city to follow sustainable development practices observing gentrification as undermining community at the core of economies. Francis notes potentials in Tampa’s downtown riverfront:

I think there has to be more ways to foster businesses downtown, try to keep them there, try to keep them open so that people want to make downtown a destination spot. Ybor city, with all its club madness, still tries to hold on to its Latin heritage in a way. Downtown never had a defining Latin culture but it’s still a downtown. If you create a place where people want to congregate, if you create a place where outdoor cafés can thrive then you know I think that kinda helps make Tampa a place that people will remember. We have a beautiful river down there. I just produced for a wedding last night at the Tampa museum. I never even thought the Tampa Museum rented out that space, I guess it’s just by word of mouth if they do it. They have the little atrium and artwork out there looking right out on the river. If you can help promote businesses or something focus on the river or focus on downtown as being a place you want to go, I think that goes a long way to define Tampa or define the culture of Tampa.

Paralleling this sentiment, Madison recommends rethinking existing plans for the Museum of Art:

Set aside some money, money to spend on building an expansion to that museum, and you say, I’ll subsidize you if come and set up shop in this area, and you don’t use the Arts Council to get the clearing house, because they are only going to work with people who have true talent in art, quote experts in the field. That isn’t what you want, you want an environment where everybody is welcome, you want an environment that just exudes art interests. Focus shouldn’t necessarily be on the quality of art, but should be on art itself. You want people
like this guy, and that guy [repeated] to come down there and live their dream. None of them are artists, but they want to come down there for a day or a night or an evening and feel as if they are. They want to read some poetry, look at some art, participate in some performance. If you want to build a hub and you want the masses to come, you got to appeal to the masses. The masses aren’t artists, they’re laissez-faire -- they’re quasi patrons. A perfect example is the French Quarter, that’s a little of everything. Do you think everybody that goes to the French Quarter is an artist? No but everybody goes down there and appreciates it. You got to create an environment that in itself attracts people who are or who desire to be creative.

Virtually echoing Madison’s call, Paulo offers a specific strategy observed while traveling in Europe:

A central arts culture center. Somewhere where even tourists can come see local artists, maybe studios. That’s something I saw in Berlin, this really huge squatter building that they were going to tear down but the squatters decided to take it over and keep it up. Instead of tearing it down, what they did, they used it to their advantage for tourism also. What they did, they opened up the art studios, so now tourists go up in a big building full of graffiti and they can watch artists painting during the day. So it’s become a tourist activity, they have a bar in their too and a cinema showing films. On the weekends, artists selling paintings, things they make. It’s all on the same strip where the cafés are, the lounges and restaurants, so it’s part of the whole tourism experience. At the same time it’s nourishing the artists of Berlin offering a venue for musicians because they have multiple bars for bands to play in. They have bands there every night and different kinds of artists. In addition, there’s another lounge next store with DJ’s, people doing metal sculptures outside (cool metal sculptures), they even sell artist’s stuff in the stores. So yeah, something like that, like a hub where all the local artists can set up their things and be sponsored by the city, where it’s cheap for them to have a space, to live in ‘cause they’re actually contributing something to the city.

In this account, Paulo cites precedent for an innovative approach to Tampa’s aims in an anarchist artist commune he visited in Berlin; a setting observed as a central hub of activity for “contributing” artists. Reflecting on these contributions, Paulo shared:

They’re contributing the art, what they’re doing. You know it brings something. It’s kind of like tourism. Tourists can come for a lot of reasons; they can come for gambling, strip joints, night clubs, a get away, a nice park, I don’t know. The strength of a city is the activity of its artists. Why not use that to help bring the tourism. It’s a little more different than going to the Dali museum, why does it got to be the Dali museum, you got loads of artists in your area. Why not take advantage of that, put them in a building showing their stuff. In return, artists would have a space to gather and produce, paint, play music, whatever. It’s art and history in the making. It puts the city on the map because it’s like, ‘woa, there’s stuff going on here’ people want to go see this. It becomes a primary attraction when they come visit. That’s what’s lacking in Tampa, there’s no primary attraction really. Something that really stands out there and can really
say, 'this is Tampa, this is our area, this is what we have, this is what we are.' I think the artists are the best thing that can represent that. It’s coming from the soul, it’s not coming from somebody’s numbers [laughter], what they think is going to make numbers. Otherwise it’s just a bunch of condos and that’s all we have to offer here, and they’re gonna be empty anyways in the long run. Or the hurricane will come and knock ‘em all down. And then it will be up to the artists to take all the garbage that’s here and make it into a piece of art. That’s what I saw in Germany, they would take old trailer homes that were abandoned and just deck ‘em out and make ‘em into bars or restaurants rather than destroying them. Yeah, they need to put something like that in an area where people would walk around it. Not like they’re doing now, stick a museum out in some area of the city where no one would go through unless driving. Another thing, the city doesn’t invest in any kind of promotion for things like that, they just don’t know about it I guess. There’s too much segregation, too many people fighting against each other, not working together. That’s what I notice in this area too, but I’ve noticed there’s a lot of people that got talent but they never come together. I think a building, something like that would bring -- it would attract all of those people and they would all want to be part of it somehow. If they want to be part of it they would all have to contribute something to give back to the city. In turn, that would force the artists to work together because they would all be building into something that was theirs and everyone’s.

In addition to these considerations of place, other participants focused their recommendations on human elements. For example, Tom cautioned that creative individuals tend to invite conflict, and calls for specific management strategies:

I would say by nature, groups of creative people working together gives rise to problems because your gonna have jealousy. Try putting Jackson Pollock, Andy Warhol, and Rembrandt in the same room and you’ll have incredibly bizarre people who are depressed and suicidal -- it’s not going to be a good fit. Advertising work involves similarly dysfunctional people together, often gathered in one space. That’s why we tell people ‘go to the beach, go to St. Pete, go write your ad, just leave the building’ and people that run the agency don’t like that. They want to run the agency; they don’t like that because they want to be able to control you. They want to be able to go by, they want to say, [increased pitch] ‘let me go see how James is working on his Mac or his computer, how can I get a hold of him?’ Also to they hire you, I call it a shaman or voodoo doctor, that’s really what you are, creative. And people that are left-brained, they want to be able to occasionally connect with that magic. I can’t tell you how many times the person who’s the account person or the accountant say, over a cocktail or something, ‘I really helped through that idea, I was really the one who was part of that’, to get some kind of rub off. They don’t want to say, I just pay them good money and they go away and come back, they have this great idea, this great commercial and they go, ‘no I don’t want to do that’. That’s why their in that deal so they can say, ‘I am the impresario that gathered it together and made that happen.’ You run into that a lot. You also run into people that gather people, whether it’s musicians or whatever, I know through my experiences in advertising, they can’t stand all the creative energy in the office. Laptops and all, you don’t have to be in a certain place, because you may go to a movie, you may go to a park and may have the idea. I never thought looking at a goddamn wall 9
to 5, sometimes you do. Now if you sit down and pound it out, that’s one thing, but until you get the inspiration, I don’t think you should be in a static place, I think you should be doin something else. I don’t think things come to you in a way like, ‘ok, when I sit down and have a cup of coffee, when the door closes I’m gonna get it.’ … I’m just saying, as far as generating ideas or new thoughts or whatever, sometimes a static environment is not the best place for it, cubicles are not the best place for it.

These participants’ recommendations reflect both general ideas and specific strategies for positive nurturing of an arts-based community. In the following summary, I revisit this information, contextualizing central themes with observations obtained in fieldwork.

**Summary**

In this chapter, I organized finding based largely in information shared among interview participants according to the three phases of interviews— the emergence of interests and professions among participants, reflections on place, and perspectives of development. The first phase of interviewing involved participant oral histories specific to the emergence of interests and professions. Histories suggest participant interests emerged through influential experiences and relationships during early childhood, while attending college, and domains of work. The eight participant histories provided reflect the experiences of two primary groups observed as representing individuals with and without college degrees. These histories, along with accounts shared in other interviews suggest a non-linear process through which identities and professions emerged. While diverse in both drivers and processes, common elements exist in the intersection of the arts and determination of professional work. In the second phase of interviews, I asked participants to reflect on their earliest memories of Tampa. Responses identified Tampa in both incorporated and un incorporated areas. Present were mentions of Ybor city during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s suggesting it as a hub of commercial and socio-cultural
activity. In the third phases of interviews, participants discussed change in both physical and social geographies, identifying barriers related to public policy and social relationships; the role of arts in relation to work and place; and highlighted key strategies and recommendations for urban development efforts.

For the City of Tampa and the OCI, the success of Creative City hinged on the presence of an arts community in downtown. In my discussions with Mr. Wilborn, I learned the OCI employed two key strategies: (1) Developing the “arts” in downtown focusing on arts-based festivals and retail activity, and (2) Networking perceived gaps among artists and business leaders. While Mr. Wilborn communicated Creative City aims in terms of the arts, I observed numerous activities of the OCI linked to strategies present in literature on the creative economy such as locating and promoting creative industries as well as marketing of place and events. The accomplishments of the OCI balanced on the efforts and non-financial capital’s possessed by Mr. Wilborn’s and a secretary. Because the OCI was provided a budget, Mr. Wilborn frequently called on personal contacts developed while living and working in Tampa. Described in jest as an “old boring network,” partners of the OCI constituted business leaders (many known since college or his long run as a staff reporter with the St. Petersburg Times) with who the OCI collaborated to plan events and media campaigns to promote downtown activities. Beyond these partnerships, Mr. Wilborn developed media and launched projects with Tampa’s Chamber of Commerce, the Tampa Downtown Partnership, Creative Industry Council, and the Arts Council of Hillsborough County. Outside these daytime activities, I spent time with Mr. Wilborn at annual events such as Tampa Bay Business Community for the Arts Annual Gala, and Art for Life non-profit benefit auction in which I served as accountant and he as auctioneer.
In order for Creative Cities to succeed, the OCI needed to have a broad buy-in among individuals connected to the arts in Tampa. While varied in social distance to the OCI, I found all participants and informants supportive of Creative City aims and eager to collaborate with the City of Tampa, while all expressed a need for increased downtown activities. Among participants located for this research, I observed Brent and Stacy at several events in addition to their positions as chairs of two of the above partnering organizations. Further, I attended a meeting with Mr. Wilborn and Jeff concerning community arts education. Beyond these observed interactions, Ramona, Ted, Kathleen, and Madison expressed long-standing personal or professional relationships with Mr. Wilborn and all possessed knowledge of creative theories. Beyond these participants all others held little knowledge of creative theories. For example, entrepreneurs Alexia and Eric, and artists Rukha and Francis had knowledge of the OCI but not met Mr. Wilborn, while James, Maceo, Stephen, Paulo, Dread, and Chad had not heard of the OCI.

Beyond these considerations, I observe numerous disconnects between the OCI and its service population. In the following chapter, I open with summary discussions of these disconnects according to primary themes encountered throughout conducting fieldwork such as differing perceptions of art, experienced conflict, and the individuals observed as driving development. While discussion of these themes contribute to understanding of the relationship between the OCI and the service population, my subsequent use of theory and the ethnographic record help to construct a more complete understanding revealing broader socio-cultural and structural issues at play.
CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Discussion of Findings

This project was not an attempt to measure, but to interpret and understand some of the perspectives of policy as it played out. Central to this effort, this research asked about the fit between Creative City policy and the lived experience of a service community of artists and arts business leaders. My findings suggest disconnects between the official perceptions and ideas underlying Creative City policy, and the lived experiences of the OCI’s service populations – that is, the efforts of individuals trying to manage cultural production are in conflict with efforts associated with innovative production. In the following section, I discuss prevalent themes of differing perceptions of art, conflicted experiences of power structures and social relations, in addition to perspectives of “who” drives economic development.

The findings of this research reveal different perceptions of art specific to meanings, motivations, and functions. Among artists and arts entrepreneurs, art is presented in terms of intangible value, such as in Brent’s reference to hanging out with “cool artistic people,” or the “inspiration” Ramona gained from being around “creative people.” Similarly, Ted valued documentary work because it allowed him to travel and “get paid to read and learn.” For some entrepreneurs, events provide forums in which arts flourish, such as shared by Ramona in discussion of her first café featuring cuisine tailored to cult films. Paulo cited appreciation for music’s ability to unite people across ethnicities; a motivation described as a “rush” both seen and felt. Beyond these motivations, participants also reflected on art’s personal meanings. Art is valued for more than aesthetics; as Alexia stated, “Art doesn’t
always have to be pretty, it’s a symbol...Art can be political or based in how we view ourselves physically or emotionally.” For Rukha, art is an intentionally bold expression, described as “crazy” and “risqué” reflections of a personal past. Similarly, Stephen described his music as “cool,” “subtle,” “but still loud.” Maceo had his start playing punk/reggae fusion throughout the Dutch province, describing this as a “crazy time.” DJ’s such as Paulo and Francis discussed non-commercial tastes in music (i.e. “goth,” “underground,” “electro,” and “scratching”) and venues such as “rave parties” and the avant-garde settings of “underground” clubs. Beyond meaning, participants offered their thoughts concerning the function of art such as Maceo, Eric, Paulo, and Stephen’s suggestions concerning music and the identity of place. Differing from these perspectives, Madison discussed “True art” as emergent from or evolving out of confrontation with societal norms. A concern with non-conformity appears the underlying motivation of artists associated with the formation of the Artists and Writers Ball in Ybor: “…a group of Ybor City artists and writers introduced the ball to Ybor City in the 1970s, a spoof of the area’s Gasparilla krewes. The ball became an outlet for creative types to let loose...” (Hayes 2006). These perceived meanings and functions of art constitute authentic forms of artistic production. Although “authenticity” is a stated interest of Creative City, the above forms and associated practices appear incompatible with elite definitions of what constitutes “art” (museums, major public arts projects, and so on). Further, grassroots arts, such as the music and non-conformist commitments of some informants may be misunderstood, and even viewed as contributing to social problems. Moreover, these forms of art are often prone to conflict with dominant spheres of power (i.e. government and development interests).

Building from the above discussion, the findings of this research are thick with discourses of power. This is evidenced in pervading attitudes and feelings of
helplessness shared by art-infused businesses owners like Ramona, Eric, and Alexia, and artists like Stephen and Maceo when confronted by city ordinances. Additionally, findings suggest conflict is prevalent in the relationships among artists. For example, Ramona and Paulo described a segregated community, while Francis described relationships as lacking cohesion and prone to self-interest (baring events featuring multiple elements of art). Representing a differing perspective from those above, Ted discussed professional jealousy among individuals observed as “bizarre,” “depressed,” and “suicidal.” These perceptions of relationships within social and production settings indicate the prevalence of conflict in the lived experiences of artists and art-infused business owners. Furthermore, the accounts shared illustrate how artists perceive and are perceived as maintaining conflicted relationships. These perspectives and experiences stand in contrast to the bohemian images of “a flourishing arts scene” presented by Richard Florida in 2003.

Beyond disconnects observed in relation to the perception and practice of artistic production, perspectives differ as to what and who drive economic innovation. First, drawing from literature on the creative economy, we find innovation in an economy rooted in entrepreneurial activity. Here, economic growth is attributed to the “Three T’s” of technology, talent, and tolerance; innovation is actualized through industries employing new developments in technology; and new technology is discovered and enabled through talented new individuals. Further, creatives argue talented individuals are drawn to tolerant urban environments characterized by “bohemian” qualities where they find employment in creative industries. From this perspective, culture is a tool through which talent can be “harnessed.” Beyond these ideas, qualities such as a “vibrant, eclectic arts scene...” as stated by Deanne Roberts are believed to stimulate the “success” of a local economy. Similar to the ideas of other creatives, Brent suggests “tolerance” and the
“blurring” of disciplinary and cultural lines are important. Brent also discussed personal success in terms of intellectual balance and stated the importance of knowing enough to launch a business without being debilitated by “knowing too much.”

For the artists and art-infused business owners education, shared space, material resources, and fair and flexible policies are of central concern. In addition, organizing and mutuality are called for—a needed sense of “community” and “voice” as suggested by Ramona, or exposure and a leg up as Eric suggests. For others such as Kathleen, community action involving “little things” are said to make a “huge impact.” For some participants, regulation of the real estate market was a significant factor, such as noted by Jeff, Alexia, and others. Participant responses appear to support the call for tolerance among supporters of the creative economy, while other stated needs such as business knowledge, mentoring, social action, and regulation of the housing market are distinct from aims of both the creatives and the OCI in bridging gaps among service providers. The findings of this research also indicate disconnects in perceptions of primary agents of change. The literature on the creative economy identifies every person as “creative,” however, “talented” individuals or “young professionals” are seen as prime movers. Following this position, Deanne Roberts offered additional qualities such as “bright,” “well educated,” and “smart.” Differing from these perspectives, Brent, Stacy, and Ted suggested more inclusive groupings not restricted to “college grads.” For artists such as Francis, Paulo, Steven, Maceo, and art-infused business owners such as Ramona, Eric, and Alexia, city officials were seen as the population with the ability to engender change. Further, Eric called for constructive action asking for officials to capable of finding a third way. Still others such a Ramona, Stephen and Mary indicate “family” and “community” as influential. Additionally, Paulo and Francis
observed populations in terms of “scene” and “underground.” In many of the above perspectives concerning the type of people central to development efforts, disconnects exist. For example, I observed professionals singled out only in creative economy literature, whereas diverse perceptions exist among participants.

The Arts and Development in Tampa

The following discussion draws on elements of participant responses and observations, along with archival material to situate Creative City’s downtown development aims and associated strategies within social and structural contexts. The development of place through the presence of artists and art festivals is not new to Tampa or Mr. Wilborn. This is evidenced by Ramona’s accounts of coming to Tampa and discovering “community” in Ybor City in the 1970s. For Ramona, this community, described as artists and friends with whom she shared intimate moments and holidays, inspired entrepreneurial efforts, supported her business, and produced art she featured and sold on their behalf. Beyond Ramona’s café, this community also supported a range of independently-owned, art-infused businesses throughout Ybor during the 1970s and 1980s. At this time, independent businesses seemed to thrive, such as La France vintage boutique, the Three Birds bookstore, the Blue Chair record store, and Silver Meteor Gallery. Beyond this retail activity, Ybor featured a few small annual events in the Artists and Writers Ball and Guavaween, co-founded by Mr. Wilborn and associates more than 20 years ago (Karp 2003; Hayes 2006). Complemented by a disco scene, Ybor and outlying areas featured the nightspots frequented by people like Madison (when attending college), in addition to a growing number of clubs and bars catering to alternative lifestyle and non-commercial music tastes. By 1990, Ybor grew in popularity among a diverse crowd drawn to uniquely themed nightspots such as Tracks, The Impulse, The Masquerade,
and The Castle, as recalled by Francis, Alexia, and Eric; these venues were attended and played by visiting DJ’s such as Paulo. Significant for Francis was the open and accepting attitudes he observed in contrast to the “dangers” he associated with Ybor at this time. Nevertheless, increasing numbers of college-aged adults frequented these nightspots and/or independent restaurants, shops, and galleries of this arts community.

By the mid 1990s, Ybor had changed and now featured a growing number of commercial nightclubs. Moreover, weekend nights began to take on qualities of annual events such as Guavaween as police barricaded main throughways and large masses of people caroused 7th Ave. In addition to these developments, clubs, artists and promoters began hosting “rave parties” in Ybor and downtown (Bagley 1994). These parties (many played and attended by Paulo) often started as late as 4 a.m. and lasted into mornings and afternoons. Following a raid at a downtown club, and related drug sting at a local high-school in September of 1995, Tampa’s City Council debated and announced plans for a citywide curfew for minors under the age of 17 between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. (Danielson 1995; Stebbins 1995). As late night events continued, and with Ybor’s party now spilled onto the streets, concerns over adolescent welfare escalated, the city to began enforcing established curfews resulting in increased arrests and violations for minors (Wexler 1997).

The Tampa City Council enacted a curfew for youths in January 1994, mainly aimed at Ybor City. But it wasn't until July 1996, after the council voted to strengthen the ordinance by outlining exemptions, that police began to cite teens for curfew violations. The ordinance says children under 16 can't stay out past 11 p.m. weekdays, and midnight on weekends. [Wexler 1997:3B]

Consequently, large sweeps netted numerous violators (such as the 52 local teens featured in this article) raising questions concerning the constitutionality of this ordinance seen as imposing excessive penalties on first offenders. While Ybor remained bearable most weekends, for many attending annual Guavaween festivities
had become unthinkable as parents with children were rarely seen hours before dusk and its founders stopped attending altogether (Karp 2003b). Beyond these retreats, independent businesses found maintaining shop increasingly difficult in light of skyrocketing rents as more and more large commercial music clubs opened and property speculation increased. For existing independent business owners (and many aspiring entrepreneurs), problems observed with rents, lease agreements, fires, and an increasingly unruly crowds had transformed Ybor’s identity from that associated with community and the arts to that of a commercial drinking hub. For many independent business owners like Ramona, opportunities outside Ybor proved increasingly attractive.

Throughout the 1990s, outlying areas of Ybor and downtown’s central business district became target locations for many entrepreneurs like Alexia and her boss, Eric and his partner, and Ramona’s family. Increasingly, previously undeveloped areas in South Tampa, downtown, and Seminole Heights enjoyed innovation. This is evidenced in the emergence of trendy salons such as established by Alexia’s boss; “alternative” music venues such Sunday’s at London Victory, Friday nights at 911, and DNA’s Old Wave Monday nights” discussed by Francis, Paulo, and other participants; and the galleries and restaurants such as Mirta’s, Covivant, and Viva La Frida’s familiar to all informants. While many people still visited Ybor for annual non-profit benefits such as Galla Corina, Art For Life, and WMNF’s Heatwave as volunteers and/or attendees, this was an exception as things seemed to have irreversibly changed.

Mayor Dick Greco and City officials resolved to correct Ybor’s problems. Attempting to increase a sense of security in Ybor, the city installed cameras along 7th avenue in 1997 and later face-scan software (Stacy 2002; Trigaux 2001), and sought to stimulate retail activity through property redevelopment efforts. In 1997,
Tampa City Council approved plans for the Centro Ybor, a new Ybor City entertainment complex estimated to cost nearly $40 million, diverting $9 million in U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development funding to assist Miami-based Steiner & Associates with construction efforts (Tampa Tribune 1997; Gruss 1998). In the following year, the initiative appeared to garner a good deal of support evidenced in promising news headlines, "Centro Ybor could become a regional destination, drawing millions of people when it opens" (Gruss 1998:1), and praising editorials such as "A great addition to Ybor City":

Ybor City already is popular as an entertainment district, particularly on weekend nights. But the streets are dominated by bars and restaurants, and the visitors are mostly young adults. This development will attract families and generate daytime traffic. Ybor City will have something for people of all ages virtually around the clock. ...

Mayor Dick Greco and his staff - particularly Fernando Noriega Jr., director of the Department of Business and Community Services - worked long, hard hours on the arrangements that would make Centro Ybor possible. They deserve our gratitude. Developers Mel Sembler of St. Petersburg and Yaromir Steiner of Miami also deserve credit for recognizing Ybor City’s value and potential. Their enterprise should create 900 new jobs. Thanks to the mayor’s charm, negotiating skills and extraordinary ability to make things happen, a lot of foundation is being poured in Tampa. Centro Ybor will add bustle and prosperity to Tampa. It is a much-welcomed addition to our city.” [Editorial 1998]

However, before long the project grew suspect in the eyes of many. By the time of completion in 2001, the new complex ushered in seemingly little change beyond the presence of new architecture and a short trolley-car route linking Ybor to another recently completed entertainment complex and cruise-line port at the Channel Side district of downtown. Further, in 2004, the City Council learned of undisclosed liabilities linked to the project, presenting the new administration of Mayor Pam Iorio with a significant problem:

City officials learned in January that a 1998 agreement to help build the $53 million Centro Ybor complex had left the city on the hook for $16 million when the developers couldn’t continue making loan payments. The city, under former Mayor Dick Greco's administration, agreed to guarantee a $9 million loan for developers. Under the agreement, the city would take over payments after five years if the complex struggled. Including the interest, the city now must make
payments twice a year of about $400,000, with a $5.6 million balloon payment due in 2018. [Behnken 2004:1]

Meanwhile Ybor’s party problems appeared to worsen when a female patron of an Ybor Bar fell to her death from a second story balcony. Enraged by reports that the party continued in spite of this tragedy, Mayor Iorio called for the city to "...get back to basics", vowing to clean up Ybor:

As soon as possible, Iorio said she will direct property tax money generated in the area to pressure-washing Seventh Avenue every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night. ... [City Council member Rose] Ferlita pointed out that Ybor's noise ordinance hasn't resulted in any citations. She asked staff members to look into the possibility of making bar owners put devices on their sound systems that would lower music when it reaches a certain decibel level. ... But [City Council Member Kevin White] expressed reservations about coming down too hard on the entertainment district. "It's an attempt to reshape the face of Ybor City," White said. "But you're also driving out the actual establishments that helped create Ybor City and made it a vibrant, bustling economic engine." [Zink 2005:1A]

Consequently, the city began to enforce the noise ordinance highlighted in my discussions with Maceo and Stephen. In spite of the bleak picture of Ybor painted for most Tampa residents, Iorio’s administration appeared optimistic as evidenced in city attorney David Smith announcing the potential future revenues estimating Centro Ybor’s property value upwards of $30 million by 2011 (Zink 2006). However, as the city attorney was promising this upside to Tampa’s default ownership of Centro Ybor, early signs of economic downturn could be seen.

Since September of 2001, Tampa (like municipal governments nationwide) enjoyed unprecedented rates of home sales, with the resulting property values and taxes growing to new levels. While this trend presented opportunity for property owners, it spelled trouble for many entrepreneurs and residents, as indicated in the comments of Alexia and Jeff. By June of 2006, this trend came to a halt and the market began backsliding. By March of 2006, national media observed signs of downturn in the housing market:

New home sales fell faster in February than at any time in nine years while home prices declined for a fourth straight month, raising concerns that the once high-
flying housing market could be in for a rougher-than-expected landing. ... But many Tampa Bay area real estate agents and builders say local new home sales began slowing this fall, and some think it's because the investors who helped launch the market into the stratosphere the past two years have gone away. [AP and St. Petersburg Times Staff March 25, 2006:1D]

In spite of these reports, Tampa pressed forward with upscale residential construction slated for downtown property and the privatization of a longstanding public trust:

More than 3,000 condominiums are finished or being built in and around downtown. Another 6,600 are scheduled to come on line in the next 10 years. But many of the projects are struggling in the face of a softening residential real estate market. Bank of America also plans to build 750 apartments on the property. Nearly 670 of those apartments will be for low-income renters. They'll replace the 483 public housing units now in Central Park Village. [Zink 2007:1A]

Today, reports of undisclosed liabilities associated with the construction of Centro Ybor and subsequent downturns in the nation’s housing market threaten financial hardships for the City of Tampa should Centro Ybor not prove the economic engine originally promised. For many Tampa residents and taxpayers the ordeal of Centro Ybor came as a shock, while for many others it simply confirmed suspicions. For Tampa’s arts community, Centro Ybor represented a blatant attempt to crush wills and restrict personal agency, and it was now located on a very hub of past activities, a plaza once shared by close friends and strangers alike.

In this section, I highlight some of the disconnects between the aims of Creative City and its service population of artists and entrepreneurs, through discussion of differing perspectives of art, relationships, and responsibilities, and subsequent presentation of media concerning the arts and development in Ybor. While the above discussions offer some preliminary insights concerning the tensions inherent to Creative City, research and literature situate the findings of this thesis within broader theoretical understandings.
Connections to the Literature

Economists may not necessarily share the economic and social interests of the true believers and may have a variety of individual psychic states regarding the economic and social effects of the utopia which they cloak with mathematical reason. Nevertheless, they have enough specific interests in the field of economic science to contribute decisively to the production and reproduction of belief in the neoliberal utopia. Separated from the realities of the economic and social world by their existence and above all by their intellectual formation, which is most frequently purely abstract, bookish, and theoretical, they are particularly inclined to confuse the things of logic with the logic of things.

[Bourdieu 1998]

The Creative Economy, as presented in Chapter II, is reducible to the field of cultural production; that is, the production of cultural goods and knowledge within superseding socio-cultural structures inherent to the artistic and scientific fields and associated governing power structures (Bourdieu 1986). From Bourdieu’s perspective, cultural production exists either subordinate to or autonomous from popular culture and associated industries. Described as functioning within an economy reversed, autonomous or “restricted” fields of cultural production are characterized by producers producing for producers (as opposed to an industry), and although not formally valued in terms of financial capital, is ultimately the source from which new cultural forms emerge (Bourdieu 1993:21-22). Operating outside the mainstream, the practices of artists producing for artists yield cultural forms not always fully understood or valued among popular consumers:

One need only compare the functional logic of the field of restricted production with the laws governing both the circulation of symbolic goods and the production of the consumers to perceive that such an autonomously developing field, making no reference to external demands, tends to nullify the conditions for its acceptance outside the field. To the extent that its products require extremely scarce instruments of appropriation, they are bound to precede their market or to have no clients at all, apart from producers themselves. Consequently they tend to fulfill socially distinctive functions, at first in conflicts between fractions of the dominant class and eventually, in relations among social classes. By an effect of circular causality, the structural gap between supply and demand contributes to the artists’ determination to steep themselves in the search for ‘originality’ (with its concomitant ideology of the unrecognized or misunderstood ‘genius’). ...placing them in difficult economic circumstances, and, above all, by effectively
ensuring the incommensurability of the specifically cultural value and economic value of a work. [Bourdieu 1993:119-120]

The actions of Ybor’s artists during the 1970s, the formation of the Artists and Writers Ball, as well as the emergence of “underground” music community and associated venues are legitimating examples of autonomous cultural production of restricted fields or communities. While often disregarded from positions of power, new cultural forms and their producers can yield unexpected economic outcomes such as observed in the growth of hip-hop. The emergence of hip-hop as an entertainment economic base reveals: “...a counter-formation that takes up capitalisms gaps and contradictions and creates a whole new mode, a whole new economics” (Potter 1995:111).

While the success of hip-hop suggests potential benefits of cultural production within autonomous and restricted fields, the example is an exception rather than a rule as production remains situated within broader spheres of power and yields few benefits among producers. The findings of this thesis illustrate how these cultural productions often clash with the perceptions and policies of representing dominant power structures. The accounts of participants presented in Chapter IV and revisited in the previous section provide examples of how dismissive attitudes and threats emanating from top-down attempts to manage and develop place have undermined the growth of grass roots developments throughout Tampa’s recent history. Here cultural producers such as local artists, entrepreneurs, and their supporting communities found themselves pitted against policy structures and socio-cultural forces often beyond their ability to navigate. In spite of the commitment and self-sacrifice required to gain entry and produce within the confines of imposing laws and obligating relationships, years of continued practice may yield few returns. These above examples are attributable to, “class-based dispositions of cultural capital,” linked with broader trends of centralization of cultural resources (Cunningham
2002:11), and constitute the “intrusive imposition” (Bourdieu 1998) of neoliberalism observed both globally and locally. Examples of this have been observed in development efforts modeled after creative and arts based approaches in Berlin reveals strong parallels with the outcomes of development linked with neo-liberal logic. For example, Krätke (2004) looks at variables involving Berlin’s regional economy and restructuring attempts modeled after creative talent, socio-spatial polarization, the real estate boom of the 1990s and more recently a looming financial crisis. He finds,

The Berlin case study demonstrates the ambiguity of the notion of creativity and talent: ‘Talented people’ may also function as developers of weapons of mass destruction, or as creators of economically and financially destructive policies, etc. ‘Creativity’ can be directed towards socially and economically productive activities as well as socially negative and economically destructive ones. Within a particular city or region, both extremes of creative action may be followed at the same time by different social actors. The outcome will depend on the balance of these forces. The Berlin case makes clear that the creative potential of its political class has been concentrated on financial self-service and the creation of instruments for an unfettered real estate business with the active participation of public financial corporations. This ‘worst practice’ urban governance not only led to the city’s financial breakdown, but turns out to have become a threat to the development prospects of the city’s strong points which are evident particularly in the concentration of creative talents in diverse subsectors of the ‘creative economy’ and further knowledge-intensive activities. Here we might draw the conclusion that a city needs coherence of its creative potential in terms of a socially productive interplay between the economic, social and political actors. [Krätke 2004:527-528]

These observations in Berlin highlight concerns regarding the approaches associated with creative development and the presence of neoliberal practices. In addition to financially crippling the city, self-interests within development practices tailored to the creative economy ultimately threatened the city’s “creative resources.”

The findings of this research illustrate how relationships among artists and supporting communities produce and institute value in their art and how these practices themselves produce value. Further, the value of these productions is subject to the position and orientation of the field of production and its producers. In Tampa’s restricted fields of cultural production, actors navigate imposing neoliberal
policy and economic structures in an ongoing process of constructing and maintaining identities of kind and form. In the context of fieldwork, I observed identities constructed and expressed among individuals, groups, and places within the context and setting of an arts community as observed among anthropologists (Bird 2002; Greenbaum 2002; Sökefeld 1999; Williams 2002; Yelvington 1995). These observations raise questions concerning the formation of identity at the interface of group practices and development. In the case of the OCI, relationships were forged and maintained across private, public, and non-profit domains in a shared effort to develop “the arts.” Consideration of these relationships stimulates questions as to the emergence of identities found within, and acquired by a development initiative. Moreover, what changes occur regarding inherent cultural processes, political structures, and exercise of power? Lastly, how might the identities and processes differ according to the scale and conditions in which development occurs? While my efforts did not aim to answer these broad theoretical questions, my research does offer some insights concerning the approach and methods of community development specific to the arts in Tampa.

Conclusion and Recommendations

When Creative City was launched in 2003, the economy was growing at unprecedented rates and the term “creative” stirred excitement and debate. In 2006, when I began conducting research for this thesis, the city was years into its arts-based development efforts and had developed many inroads among Tampa’s commercial sector through the OCI. By this time the OCI had completed a tri-county media campaign introducing Creative City, and participated in various community forums and projects related to the aims of Creative City. While the OCI played a central role in branding Creative City throughout private, public, and non-profit
sectors, it appears the little progress was made in efforts to establish productive relationships among the artists I encountered. Moreover, the OCI was largely unsuccessful in building the kind of broad based coalition and infrastructures required to sustain this type of initiative on behalf of the city.

The central problem posed in this research involved the degree to which cultural change associated with artistic innovation emanates from a participatory, grass-roots, as opposed to, top down approaches founded in primarily economic concerns and methods. The findings of this thesis suggest that in order for an arts-based initiative to succeed, it must be strongly and genuinely rooted in the arts community at all levels, and must encompass a broader definition of “the arts,” in addition to demonstrating appreciation of the vitality of the arts sectors not traditionally valued by elite. While I suspect this was understood by OCI staff and partners, a lack of funding placed this grass-roots kind of effort out of reach for the city. While this is easily stated, correcting it would be a complex undertaking, given the pervading neo-liberal logic shown in relation to OCI’s service population. Instead, in the wake of recent statewide legislation to reduce property taxes, creating cutbacks in municipal budgets, decisions have been made to eliminate OCI’s staff positions.

The central question of this research asked whether there was an effective meshing between the vision/goals/policy of the city and those of the artists. While I am unable to answer this question in any conclusive way, I feel the findings presented in Chapter IV, and the above discussions, elucidate conditions, processes, and tensions underlying the relationships maintained by the OCI and members of Tampa’s arts community. In the previous section, I presented some broad theoretical considerations. While beyond the scope of this thesis, discussions inspire additional questions concerning the identities and relationships under which art is produced.
What are the conditions (environmental, social, personal, etc.) and processes through which producers (artists and their supporting community) institute value (cultural, social, symbolic, monetary, etc.) within an autonomous restricted field? What, if any, are the motivations for producing art within restricted fields? What are the material outcomes associated with such practices? In addition to calling for more research on the fields of cultural production, I now offer concluding reflections and recommendations drawn from my experiences in producing this thesis.

Looking at arts-based development efforts, Phillips (2004) presents some problems associated with arts-based development efforts, arguing that the arts are limited in development contexts and prone to competitive environments, low pay associated with arts industries, stressed infrastructure, and the potential loss of a sense of place (Phillips 2004:119). Building from this and the recommendations of participants, I recommend that city governments should seek to facilitate growth through the provision of resources such as materials and space, rather than attempt to manage cultural production. Further, given the range of non-financial capitals possessed by city administrations, work can begin through assembling a knowledge base of contacts and past initiatives indigenous to each administration. Through cumulative tracking of development efforts (i.e. people, places, processes, and prevalent issues encountered, etc.) a city government can better navigate the pitfalls of past mistakes and begin developing best practices. Cities can gain assistance in these efforts through collaborating with local universities to launch research campaigns focused on evaluating community impacts and best practices. To accomplish this, the city will require infrastructures and protocol through which knowledge and material resources can be easily actualized. Beyond these considerations, additional opportunities exist in the strategies of locating and involving service populations within development initiatives.
Academic scholarship on the creative class focuses attention on new talent or young professionals and entrepreneurs with little consideration of large segments of the adult population and their role in economic innovation. Contrastingly, the work of the OCI and its partners (business owners, industry leaders and administrators) was largely carried out by adults, most beyond 40 years of age. While I was successful in gaining perspectives among adults of varying ages, this thesis lacks voice in highly-valuable youth perspectives. For these reasons, future research should look to incorporate perspectives across a broader range of ages.

I observed very little diversity outside white and Hispanic populations in the activities of the OCI. While working on one grant funded initiative, I learned that Tampa has a large population of Asians. From the perspective of a community liaison I spoke with, many communities were living and working outside Tampa’s financial economy. In Chapter I, I state previous findings (Cortright 2006) indicating Tampa Bay possesses relatively low numbers of entrepreneurship comparative to other areas. In conducting research, I observed a lack of business knowledge among artists and some entrepreneurs, however, some entrepreneurs demonstrated capacities and experience in collaborating with artists in their business practices.

For city governments engaged in planning, implementing, or reviewing cultural policy, ethnographic research can provide valuable insights concerning potential or existing impacts otherwise not obtainable due to the time required to understand ground level perspectives. For the city, building a learning community through compiling and managing knowledge using relational infrastructures can prove an invaluable resource for designing and implementing new development initiatives. For artists and art-entrepreneurs, efforts focused on organizing and communications (for example community forums, web based resources, etc.) can
facilitate processes of discovering shared concerns, determining structural solutions, and strengthening community ties through which to lobby for change.

The Knowledge produced through this research is rooted in the perspectives and lived experiences among economic actors identified as members of the OCI’s service population. The findings of this research are an example of knowledge produced in the context of community development through applied anthropological methods. Designing this research was a complicated, due in part to the unique formation of the OCI, but in particular to apparent guarded position among some of its partners. Consistent with the dismissive attitudes experienced among some participants of this research, one partner of the OCI advised that the information I would collect was “already known.” While this disposition was not representative of the great many individuals I encountered through my work with the OCI (largely engaging, open, supportive, and facilitating), it does constitute an important consideration for a City Government looking to engage new partners in public-private initiatives.
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Appendix A: Satellite Image of Downtown

Appendix B shows a satellite image of Downtown Tampa and surrounding areas.
Appendix B: Interview Protocol

1. Tell me about yourself: What is it you do? This question opens the first phase of the interview, the goal of which involves eliciting the creative qualities inherent to the participant’s occupation, the process through which this creative capacity developed/reproduced as well as relevant values and aspirations.

2. Why Tampa? This question opens the second phase of the interview, which is concerned with how the participants and/or their families came to Tampa Bay and their experiences while living in the area. Further, this phase is also concerned with evoking narratives of place specific to Tampa and other Cities. Narratives of place outside the Tampa Bay area offers a point of transition into the third phase of the interview.

3. What is the role of a city in the promotion and production of culture and creativity? In this final phase, I am concerned with eliciting constructive criticism and recommendations from the participants.
   a. What issues are significant for an organization in the city of Tampa?
   b. What issues are significant for others with whom you work?