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**To cite this article:** Louise Mansfield, Norma Daykin, Alex Golding & Nick Ewbank (07 Jul 2022): Understanding everyday creativity: a framework drawn from a qualitative evidence review of home-based arts, Annals of Leisure Research, DOI: [10.1080/11745398.2022.2089183](https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2022.2089183)

**To link to this article:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/11745398.2022.2089183>



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Published online: 07 Jul 2022.



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# Understanding everyday creativity: a framework drawn from a qualitative evidence review of home-based arts

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## ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic propelled the arts and leisure into crisis. Public and policy responses have shown positive adaptations and the potential of *everyday creativity (EC)* in response to restrictions. This is the first qualitative evidence review on EC in home-based arts. We reviewed over 2000 research papers published within the past 10 years. Nine papers met our inclusion criteria. Four domains of EC are identified (i) self-actualization; (ii) time, process and immersion; (iii) relationship building and connection; (iv) learning and development. EC in home-based arts is potentially transformative but also complex and contested. We offer a novel, multidimensional understanding of EC. Our findings are significant for shaping future research and policy in the arts and leisure, including advancing conceptual understandings of EC in leisure, highlighting the relationship between 'elite' and 'everyday' forms of creativity, and examining the role of EC in navigating crisis and restriction, and connections between EC and inequalities.

## KEYWORDS

Everyday creativity;  
creativity; arts; leisure

## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on leisure, restricting contact, preventing face-to-face participation, paralysing policy making, closing arts and leisure venues and threatening financial viability, and presenting long-term strategic challenges for the sector (Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance 2020). Despite these severe challenges, a surge of creative solutions, often focused on home-based creativity and arts practices has been associated with the pandemic (Mak, Fluharty, and Fancourt 2021; Mughal et al., 2022). Most often presented online, individual creations of 'home-made' costumes, inventions of sporting facilities, equipment and events and sharing of creative practices and skills including music arts and crafts littered the public response to and (re)imagination of our creative resources during the Covid-19 crisis (Drake, Papazian, and Grossman 2022; Kapoor and Kaufman 2020; Pauly et al. 2022). The ability of an extensive and eclectic range of home-based arts activities to provide positive experiences and good feelings in people (Tang et al. 2021) arguably resulted in an upturn in inventiveness

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and adaptation during the Covid-19 crisis and beyond. Such creative reactions also signal the potential for structural adaptations and strategic solutions to the crisis and remind us of the need to address acknowledged long-term sectoral problems, such as inequalities in opportunities and access.

As a result of the above factors and the consequences of the pandemic, public recognition of the notion of *everyday creativity* (EC) is growing and there is increased awareness of its potential significance for population health and wellbeing (Cohen and Cromwell 2021), personal and community development, and social cohesion (Khlystova, Kalyuzhnova, and Belitski 2022). However, a lack of clarity and consistency about how EC is conceptualized has come to the fore. There is a long history of philosophical and scientific debate about creativity, drawing on for example, psychology, sociology, behavioural science, theology, linguistics, economics and mathematics (Pope 2005; Sternberg, 1999). Historical contexts have shaped the meaning and legitimization of ideas about creativity over time. For example, pre-Christian ideas associated mystical powers with an exceptional gift to bring about prosperity and protection. Early Western conceptions (second century A D) retained the established idea of creativity as divine (male) artistry. Embedded in the long-term and complex shifts in science and knowledge throughout what is known as the (English) Enlightenment period a contested conceptualization of something akin to creativity was evident in debates about originality of ideas, talent, and freedom of expression (Albert and Runco 1999). The dawn of (Western) science and scientific methods ushered in more searching questions and albeit limited to research on natural and individual difference, provided a foundation about how to define and characterize creativity, how to understand who has it, whether it can be enhanced and what benefits it brings (Becker, 1995). It was not until the end of the C18th according to Albert and Runco (1999) that debates included distinctions between the creative as exceptional unpredictable genius, and the more ordinary predictable creativity of everyday life. There is of course a wealth of literature on conceptualising the everyday which is relevant to a longer discussion about everyday creativity. Here, it is very much worth noting that everyday creativity reflects ideas about everydayness and the mundane, banal and taken-for-granted practices of life (Bennett 2005; Featherstone and Lash 1995), the study of which can reveal the extraordinary in the ordinary (Lefebvre and Levich 1987). Moreover, everyday creativity invokes the notion of culture presented in Raymond Williams's (2011/1958) account of the significance of non-elite characteristics of cultural life and the need for a democratization of cultural activity like the arts. We have provided a necessarily brief historical overview highlighting the complexity in the concept of creativity and the significance of exploring ideas about everyday creativity. The purpose of this current review was to explore inductively conceptualizations of everyday creativity present in qualitative research on home-based arts. We focused on the everyday in home-based arts because, as noted in our opening comments, the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the potential for such cultural and leisure activities to offer positive creative experience framed by informalized opportunities for innovation and novel forms of discovery and (re) identification.

We present the beginnings of a framework grounded in a particular evidence base in home-based arts, with potential links to broader leisure experiences and policy making. Prior to outlining our research methods and process, we provide an overview

of the extant literature on creativity and everyday creativity in arts and leisure research. The paper then explores four key domains drawn from the evidence: (i) self-actualization through everyday creativity; (ii) time, process and immersion in everyday creativity; (iii) relationship building and connecting as everyday creativity; and (iv) learning and developing through everyday creativity. We critically assess how these domains might provide a framework for understanding everyday creativity in times of crisis and restriction, and more broadly in terms of creative engagement in home settings. To our knowledge this is the first review of everyday creativity and home-based arts. Its significance lies in the contribution of a synthesis and analysis of available evidence as a way of articulating what a theory of everyday creativity means for understanding practice and potentially policy in the arts specifically and culture and leisure sectors more broadly.

### **Everyday creativity and creativity in arts and leisure**

Sternberg (1999) offers a comprehensive overview of the field of creativity highlighting the significance of mystical, psychoanalytical, pragmatic/practical, psychometric, cognitive and social-personality approaches, as well as more recent multidisciplinary strategies that have been variously employed in understanding creativity. Across these differing perspectives, creativity is often linked with notions of discovery, innovation, divine inspiration, intellect, imagination and cognition, and establishes the realm of creativity as exceptional, the preserve of eminence, associated with creative types and cultural heroes/heroines (Albert and Runco, 1999; Featherstone 1992; Helson 1996).

Within the sphere of arts specifically and leisure broadly, growing evidence suggests that participation in creative activities can support flourishing and enhance health and wellbeing (Fancourt & Finn, 2019). For Hegarty (2009) creative leisure is defined by the perception of freedom, intrinsic desire, creation for its own sake and a belief one is being creative. Yet the precise character of creativity in arts and leisure; what it is, how it works and to what effect is not necessarily agreed upon. Some conceptualizations of creativity address the broader question about what outstanding creative individualism, (the big 'C'), can tell us about everyday creativity, (the small 'c'), that is so central to the way we live our lives (see for example Richards 2009; Sternberg, 1999). Such work draws insights from the Four C Model of Creativity (Beghetto and Kaufman 2015; Helfand, Kaufman, and Beghetto 2016; Kaufman and Beghetto, 2013, 2009). The Four C Model offers a dynamic lifecourse or activity-specific framework for understanding creativity in four domains: (i) Mini-c – explorative behaviour that is individually inventive and meaningful, (ii) Little-c – everyday creativity, the ordinary daily actions humans engage in to create new ways of doing things, (iii) Pro-c – a level of expert creativity not classified as exceptional, and (iv) Big-C – the preserve of the creative genius. In this review, our interest lies in the area of Little-c, defined as everyday creativity. We were cognisant here of the parallels with ideas about culture as ordinary and non-elite, requiring attention to the democratization of ideas and practices like the arts (see for example Williams) although these connections are not necessarily realized in the existing literature on EC. Creativity has become increasingly associated with personally transformative actions and insights and it is

generally agreed that being creative involves the production of something innovative and original. In Gauntlett's (2007) multidisciplinary account of the history of ideas on creativity, artmaking is argued to be central to the way that human beings make sense of themselves and the world. Human creativity has also been characterized as exploratory, involving processes of taking something already existing and extending its limits to create new forms of ideas or objects (Du Sautoy 2020). In Csikszentmihalyi's (1997) account of creativity and flow, the centrality of deep involvement in a creative process, a balance between challenge and achievement and a sense of autonomy define and drive the creative experience. Such flow experiences in creativity contribute to feelings of personal achievement and a sense of control. The intersection of creativity with flow is argued to have wider significance in engendering personally meaningful engagement in creative practices which are a route to enhanced wellbeing (happiness) (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, 2014).

Whilst creativity has most often been associated with positive processes and outcomes and identified as a force for progressive transformation, there is also growing interest in what has been termed 'the dark side of creativity' (Cropley, Cropley, and Kaufman 2012). This alludes to a wide range of potentially damaging effects of creative processes, experiences and acts on mood, thoughts, behaviour and relationships. The literature on dark leisure attests to such issues (see for example Spracklen 2018; Rojek 1999, 2010). As Rojek (1999, 31) argues, the dark side of leisure involves what he refers to as abnormal, yet nonetheless creative engagement in recreational activities. Such activity may be characterized by invasive or immersive practices encouraging a retreat from ordinary social interaction, and/or a rejection of societal norms and rules, and/or a 'wild' abandonment of corporeal and emotional control.

Understanding of EC in arts and leisure has been impeded by the assumption that creativity belongs in the realm of the exceptional. Artistic talent has traditionally been viewed as a gift that only a few people possess, one that can bring exceptional rewards even if there is often a price to pay. Such thinking reflects romantic, essentialist and exceptionalist portrayals of the artist as uniquely talented, separate from society and necessarily suffering (Boyce-Tillman 2000; Daykin 2005). Rather than supporting artists' wellbeing, these ideas can reinforce isolation, discourage connection and obscure the nature of art as work that could be organized, supported and underlined by a rights perspective (Daykin 2005). However, drawing a sharp distinction between exceptionalism and everyday conceptualizations of creativity fails to recognize the complex connections between creativity, individualism and society (Daykin, McClean, and Bunt 2007). It is important to recognize the political and socio-economic basis of creativity in developing understandings of the creative act, process and product. For example, commentators have suggested the rise of the creative class: an amorphous grouping that includes scientists, artists, educationalists, engineers and entertainers whose work serves an economic function to create new ideas, technology, content and/or products (Florida, 2005). This group represents a type of human capital characterized by individual creativity, skill and talent whose purpose serves wealth, economic advancement and job creation (Rodriguez-Ferrandiz, 2014). However, such human capital pertains to a narrow definition and celebration of culture and creativity. Recently, Brook, O'Brien, and Taylor (2020) have exposed the

way in which exclusion from culture begins at an early age, with people from working class backgrounds, women, and people of colour systematically excluded from cultural institutions and the creative industries (Brook, O'Brien, and Taylor 2020). In a detailed critical analysis of creativity and the creative class, Edensor et al. (2009) argue that a focus on creativity as exceptional serves as a foundation for the production and reproduction of (urban) spaces which serve to rank different spaces and places against each other. Thought of in this way, creativity is framed by an instrumental strategy for space/place-making in which the so-called creative class is synonymous with cool innovation and the spectacular, set against the unfashionable, unimaginative and unremarkable 'spatial 'other'' (Edensor et al. 2009). Typically, the urban, the metropolis and the city and associated creative hotbeds within them have come to dominate as established places of creativity. Creativity – in elite, reductive terms then, is central to innovation and to economic progress. Missing from this formulation of creativity is an understanding of vernacular creativity in which everyday creative landscapes are recognized, understood and promoted for germinating and sustaining alternative, creative processes (Edensor et al. 2009). Spaces of vernacular creativity are much broader than the urban – indeed as Edensor and Millington (2018) point out, creative production is central to many different community spaces and places in both face-to-face and digital forms, including the home.

A focus on creativity as exceptional has at times been fostered as part of an instrumental strategy for urban renewal by governance and leadership organizations particularly in the arts, such as in Australia and the UK in the 1990s, and in European policy in the mid-2000s (Rodriguez-Ferrandiz, 2014). There are, however, increasing calls for a more inclusive understanding of creativity (Edensor et al. 2009; Florida 2005; Rodriguez-Ferrandiz, 2014). Mead's (1960) early work on leisure and creativity illustrates the way that exceptionalism overlooks widespread experiences of freshness, newness or strangeness that can be encountered in many forms of leisure and creativity. The increasing blurring of boundaries between leisure, work and consumption, and the focus on new or previously hidden models of leisure practice as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic opens a space for further exploration of everyday creativity as a way of making sense of the world, addressing wellbeing concerns and affording new meaning to life (Rodriguez-Ferrandiz, 2014).

The extant literature illustrates the importance of understanding creativity as a universal human quality marked by an individual's sense of originality and innovation in everyday life (Richards 1993; 2010). In this sense, everyday creativity refers to 'a broad innovative capability defined by *originality* and *meaningfulness* – indeed a fundamental survival capability – which may be found in many forms of human endeavour but may go unrecognised'. (Richards 2007, 500). The idea of everyday creativity as a fundamental human capability which enables inventiveness and adaptation raises the importance of understanding the diverse activities and contexts in which such creative processes take place, the social and economic constraints that act to inhibit people's creativity, and the dynamic impact of creativity on human health and wellbeing. Everyday creativity is a core characteristic of daily life in a range of different contexts, including work, communities, education, the digital realm and the home. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided the stimulus for fresh interest in the significance of the home as a place and space for hitherto unrecognized

everyday creativity through arts engagement thus providing a justification for the focus of our review.

### **Research process and methods: establishing evidence reviews in policymaking in the leisure sector**

This evidence review was prompted by critical concerns expressed about the neglect of everyday creativity in research and policy by members of our wider stakeholder group, drawn from a range of UK arts and creative health leadership organizations. We agreed that there was a need for an evidence-led approach to conceptualize and understand experiences of EC within the arts, reflecting a shift in focus that had recently been emerging in the arts sector in the UK (see, for example, APPG 2017). We employed a systematic review method, following established principles, to provide a rigorous, comprehensive synthesis of literature concerning everyday creativity and home-based arts. As is widely established, such systematic evidence reviews allow information to be found, selected, appraised, summarized and integrated to provide a foundation for rational decision making in a range of policy and practice arenas (Coren and Fisher 2006; Petticrew and Roberts 2008). Systematic review methods are extensively used in a number of disciplines and there are established rationales, methods and databases for systematic reviews in health care, health policy, and health research (see The Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews), public policy (see The Campbell Collaboration) and education (see The Research Evidence in Education Library). Systematic reviews are widely accepted as providing high quality evidence synthesis in the arts (particularly in terms of public health and wellbeing) although we would argue that their use and acceptability in the wider field of leisure studies is, as yet, limited. Systematic reviews, along with meta-analysis and meta-interpretation, are key ways of synthesizing research to produce new insights and construct more efficient and effective processes of evidence-led decision making (see, for example, Weed 2005).

Perhaps the most well-known methods for systematic review work are those developed by the Cochrane Collaboration which provides specific strategies for searching for and identifying controlled trials and existing systematic reviews. But it is erroneous to consider Cochrane approaches as a single method with a narrow approach to reviews. Indeed, the Cochrane reviewers' handbook acknowledges the limitations of narrow reviews and recognizes the use of broad and inclusive approaches to identifying evidence. For those interested in research questions that cannot be informed by controlled trial designs and would be best answered by incorporating qualitative research, as is largely the case for reviews of social interventions of the arts, sport and other leisure practices, alternative and specific search strategies can be developed. As Petticrew and Roberts (2008: p. 76) emphasize, 'Systematic reviews can include a range of study designs as required to answer the question'. It is the reviewers who make decisions on which studies to include in a systematic review, and their decisions are guided by the research question, theoretical issues and the audience for the review.

Our focus on home-based arts emphasizes the position of the home as a significant site for the promotion of EC through appreciation, expression and engagement with creative practices. The potential for everyday involvement in literary, performing and visual arts to

engender originality, innovation and meaning within the home has not yet been fully explored. These priorities shaped the review strategy and the review question:

How can everyday creativity be conceptualized from qualitative studies on adults engaging in home-based arts?’

The review followed established PRISMA guidelines for conducting and reporting systematic reviews (Moher et al. 2015). We used a recognized and published search tool for ensuring rigour in qualitative evidence synthesis: the SPIDER (Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research Type) framework (Cooke, Smith, and Booth 2012; Methley et al. 2014). The SPIDER framework was used to guide the setting of eligibility criteria and is summarized in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Eligibility criteria.

SPIDER criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Sample	People 18+ years (healthy or with any morbidity) not in full-time education or training who participate in arts activities in the home. Populations based in an OECD country.	Participants who are paid arts professionals or training to be professional artists
Phenomenon of Interest	Everyday creativity in home-based arts activities Visual, literary, performing arts and non-traditional arts activities taking place at home. Home defined as a permanent living space occupied by an individual, family or household.	
Design of Studies	Qualitative studies conceptualizing everyday creativity and home-based arts	
Evaluation Approach	Qualitative data analysis techniques	
Research Types	Empirical research, qualitative, published January 2010 to July 2020 Grey literature: evaluation report, issued January 2010 to July 2020 and including details of authors (individuals, groups, or organizations)	

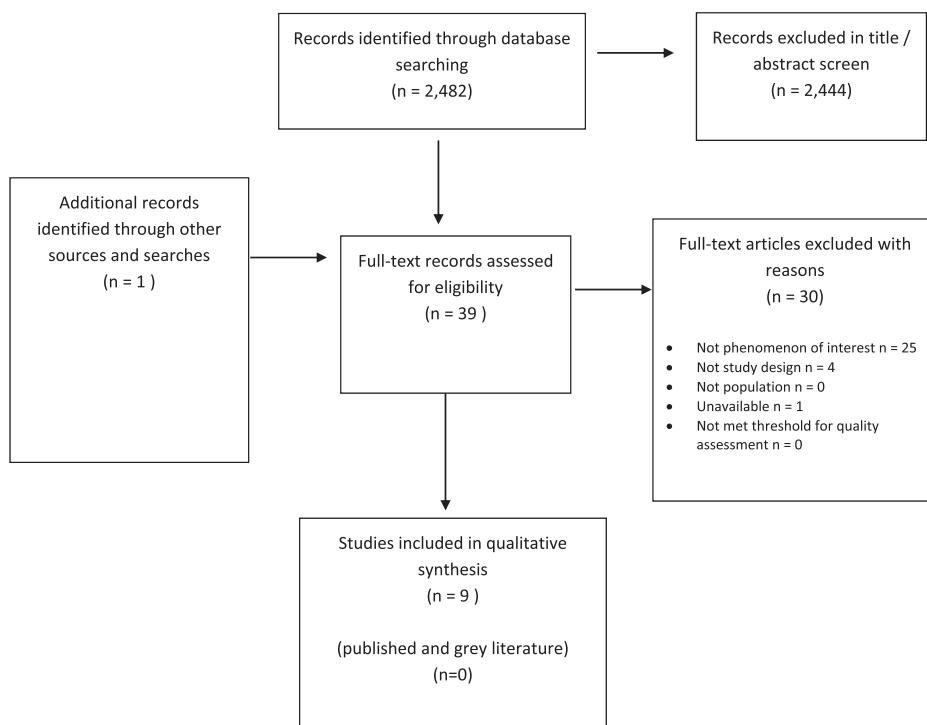
Five electronic databases were searched for sources published between 2010 and 2020: Scopus, Ovid Medline, APA PsycInfo, and Taylor and Francis. Searches were based on the following example search string (Scopus):

(creativ\* AND home\* AND NOT care home\* AND NOT nursing home\* AND everyday AND art\* OR [list of art terms above]).

Search results were independently checked by two reviewers against the eligibility criteria initially based on title and abstracts and then full papers. Only studies written in English language were included. A table of excluded studies is available on request from the corresponding author. Data were extracted independently by reviewers using a standardized form and cross-checked by a second reviewer. Discrepancies were resolved by consensus between reviewers.

The electronic searches returned 2482 records for screening. Of these, 38 full papers were retained after abstract and title screening and assessed for eligibility against the inclusion criteria. One additional text was included through a review of key authors. The full text screening process identified nine published qualitative studies on everyday creativity and home-based arts. The search screening process is illustrated in Figure 1.





**Figure 1.** PRISMA flow diagram of the search screening process.

We also sought to identify and hand search the reference lists of any other relevant systematic review in our search strategy but no relevant reviews were returned. A search of grey literature was conducted via a Google search using the key words ‘creativity’, ‘arts’, ‘home’ and reviewing titles of the first 50 hits. To be included, grey literature had to be a final evaluation or report on empirical data, have the evaluation of home-based arts and everyday creativity as the central objective, be published between January 2010 and July 2020, and include details of authors (individuals, groups or organizations). No grey literature met our inclusion criteria in this review. A summary of the characteristics of included studies is reported in [Table 2](#).

We used standard approaches for assessing the quality of included studies, employing the Critical Appraisal Programme (CASP) checklist for qualitative studies (CASP, 2020; Snape et al. 2017). Quality assessment of each individual study was based on a broad analysis of trustworthiness, relevance and adequacy of results using a criterion-based checklist. The quality checklist scores included studies are presented in [Table 3](#). The most frequent methodological weaknesses within the studies were limited discussion of recruitment strategies, a lack of rigour in data analysis, a lack of adequate discussion of the relationships between participants and researcher, and a lack of detail regarding ethical issues. One study did not make a fully explicit connection between the findings and everyday creativity and in another the link between the research question and the statement of findings was not entirely clear. The results of the quality checklist for included qualitative studies varied with Rampley, Reynolds, and Cordingley (2019) scoring the best (meeting eight out of eight criteria) and Merrill (2010) scoring the worst (meeting four out of eight criteria).

Data analysis proceeded in a broadly inductive way (Noblit & Hare, 1988), to identify domains or themes proposed by authors in the literature as key conceptual characteristics of everyday creativity. These were then organized through a reflexive approach to thematic analysis and via discussion and agreement with the project team with the stakeholder group (Braun and Clark, 2014, 2019). Following established guidelines in systematic review work, a narrative synthesis of these themes (Campbell et al., 2016) revealed key thematic domains under which processes in everyday home-based creativity are conceptualized which we argue are also relevant to, and able to help in addressing, broader theoretical and conceptual concerns in research on everyday creativity in the leisure sphere. We also rated the quality of the body of evidence in the final thematic domains using an approach to assessing confidence in findings from qualitative evidence syntheses – GRADE-CERQual (Lewin et al. 2015). The domains were subject to GRADE-CERQual quality assessment for four components: methodological limitations; relevance to the review question; coherence of the thematic finding; and adequacy of the data in the thematic finding (see Table 4). The use of the GRADE-CERQual schema for judging the quality of the body of this thematic qualitative evidence means that, despite the inclusion of one study which met all quality criteria (Rampley, Reynolds, and Cordingley 2019), one study which met all but one criteria (Elisondo and Vargas 2019), and four others meeting all but two criteria (Hicks 2020; Enko 2014; Finke, Hickerson, and Kremkow 2018; Tobin and Tisdell 2015), overall we can have moderate confidence in the quality of published qualitative evidence on everyday creativity and home-based arts. This judgement reflects the limited qualitative evidence in total and the methodological limitations noted.

### Strengths and limitations of the review process

The substantial number of citations following initial searches means that it is possible that some relevant evidence has not been included in this report. The focus on a specific target group and context (adults/private homes) will have excluded evidence from studies that have explored everyday creativity with children and in populations living in group settings such as care homes. However, we undertook a comprehensive search strategy, following established systematic review methods to identify all existing eligible studies published within the search dates. The review and agreement of our protocol with an advisory board ensures methodological transparency and mitigates against potential *post-hoc* decision-making which can introduce bias to the process. Dual screening of searches and data extraction and independent quality assessment using published criteria ensured a rigorous process.

Taking published studies as the sole evidence increases the potential risk of publication lag, wherein possible important new evidence that has not yet been included in published reports is not identified and included. The grey literature review would have allowed recent unpublished data from evaluations completed in the last three years to be reviewed, although none met the inclusion criteria for this review.

The use of quality criteria introduces an element of subjective judgement. A consistent and widely established approach to quality judgements across the different studies and the body of evidence as a whole has been applied, while recognizing that these judgements are open to interpretation.

**Table 2.** Characteristics of included studies

Author surnames (date, location of study)	Study objectives	Qualitative approach and methods	Description of study including activities and participants	Details of qualitative analysis	For the qualitative themes, describe emergent conceptualizations of everyday creativity through home-based arts	Study conclusions
<sup>1</sup> Adams et al (2014, Australia)	To determine the benefits of gardening for health and wellbeing and the impact of water restrictions on gardening practice.	Phenomenology In-depth qualitative interviews lasting approx. one hour undertaken after a walk in the participant's garden.	The study focuses on the lived experience of gardening at a time when water restrictions impacted on gardening activities. Participants were 10 gardeners aged 60–83 (eight women and two men) who had tended their garden over an extended period.	Hermeneutic phenomenological analysis, iterative process.	Emergent themes describe the experience of gardening as part of a development process and highly individual. The findings are aligned with three key themes: engagement, connection, and wholeness. Engagement describes a period of commitment and time where participants develop a relationship, collaborating with and nurturing the plants in their care. Engagement also emphasized physical and cognitive activity, including learning about the conditions needed by different plants. Water restrictions created additional work, which led to distress and worry about the future, but some participants showed an ability to adapt, apply new skills and find new admiration for their plants. Connection includes deeper awareness of self, e.g. through memories and family history of gardening, as well as an awareness of	The crisis imposed by ongoing drought and restricted use of water generated a strong impetus for adaptation, resilience, and acceptance of change. The spiritual nature of gardening practice clearly emerged and seemed to intensify the experience of gardening and consolidate adaptation to change.

Elisondo and Vargas (2019, Argentina)	To analyse the voices of women to understand constructed meanings regarding the actions, emotions, relations and contexts involved in unfolding processes of everyday creativity (home-based activities are the focus although not noted in title or abstract).	Daily registration of creative actions through WhatsApp	20 Argentinian women aged between 21 and 69 years participated. Educated to high school or university level. Range of occupations including housewife, teachers, university academics. Daily questions at time of choosing. What did you do that was creative during the day? Why do you consider it to be	Thematic Analysis Codified and analysed the data with the QDA MINER LITE programme.	the life cycle. Social connection was stimulated by gardening, through visits to neighbours' gardens and membership of clubs. Connection to the broader environment was shown through a deepening awareness and joy in the beauty of the local natural environment. Wholeness described attainment of a sense of well-being, linked with a form of spirituality, and experienced through relaxation, relief, calm and a sense of peace. The garden offered a means of resilience and coping in the face of difficulties such as ill health and bereavement. Some participants came to recognize a life force beyond their own.	Four categories of Analysis Doing Creative Things: creativity reported in different fields of action, e.g. cooking, handicrafts, academic activities, design, and solving everyday problems. Everyday Creativity characterized by originality in work and free time and encompasses all activities of daily life. Others and Creative Contexts: sociocultural context important. Home is	Women in the study connect creativity to different types of activity. Others play an important role in creativity as the recipients of creative work, collaborative co-workers or helpers who facilitate creative tasks. The development of everyday creative activities is also linked to well-being, positive emotions and empowerment. Creative
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(Continued)

**Table 2.** Continued.

Author surnames (date, location of study)	Study objectives	Qualitative approach and methods	Description of study including activities and participants	Details of qualitative analysis	For the qualitative themes, describe emergent conceptualizations of everyday creativity through home-based arts	Study conclusions
<sup>3</sup> Enko (2014, Poland)	To examine creativity and self-determination among creative writers.	Semi-structured interviews lasting approx. 2 hours undertaken via an internet text communicator.	Explores experiences of creative writers who were regularly engaged with writing and had relatively long experience of publishing their work on online fora. Participants were four non-professional creative writers, two men and two women, aged between 22 and 25. Participants were	Grounded Theory. Open coding and further theory building.	<p>a central context. Solitude and groups (clubs, organizations) can enhance Everyday Creativity. Creator and audience interaction can develop creativity. Home is the place where most of the participants express developing creative processes. Emotions in Play: Everyday Creativity connected to positive and emotions and wellbeing, pleasure, passion, desire, relief, satisfaction. Creative Self-Belief: emotions are a driver for self-belief, self-actualization, and empowerment through Everyday Creativity.</p> <p>Analysis revealed the role of autonomy as necessary, but not by itself sufficient, for creative writing. Autonomy comprises authorship beliefs (perceptions about themselves as creators), and the autonomous regulation of the creative process. Authorship beliefs include four sub-categories: (i) naturalness/need/</p>	<p>identity is a complex construction of expectations, self-evaluations and metacognitive processes.</p> <p>A model of self-determination is posited with autonomy as the core category and authorship beliefs and autonomous regulation of the creative process as sub-categories. Based on this model, autonomy-supporting surroundings are reported as positively influencing the development of participants' creative</p>

recruited on an internet forum for creative writers, selected for their relatively long experience and positive feedback gained from peers.

permanence of creativity in everyday life;  
(ii) importance of creativity to one's life in terms of pride, satisfaction, making the best of one's talents and a sense of ennoblement;  
(iii) personal commitment to creative work and  
(iv) independence. Autonomous regulation comprises five sub-categories:  
(i) autonomous undertaking of a creative activity, something intrinsic that cannot be forced;  
(ii) putting an effort into finishing the creative product, working with discipline and overcoming obstacles such as laziness and frustration;  
(iii) autonomy in interactions with other people regarding the creative work, deciding what level and type of external influence is acceptable or desirable;  
(iv) interactions with the product and process drawing on emotions, not just the inner logic of the product;  
(v) the author's personal message and expression contained in the creative product.

talents. The following four hypotheses are formulated:  
1. Naturalness (sense of need/permanence) enables and enhances autonomous creativity  
2. Sense of responsibility for one's talent and conviction about the importance of creativity facilitate creative activity and effort.  
3. Striving for independence facilitates autonomous creative activity and autonomous engagement with other people regarding creative work.  
4. Personal commitment facilitates creative activity and effort, contributing to process, product and personal expression.  
The proposed model of self-determination could be considered in the design of creativity-fostering environments, although the findings may not apply to professional writers or to different art forms.

*(Continued)*

**Table 2.** Continued.

Author surnames (date, location of study)	Study objectives	Qualitative approach and methods	Description of study including activities and participants	Details of qualitative analysis	For the qualitative themes, describe emergent conceptualizations of everyday creativity through home-based arts	Study conclusions
<sup>4</sup> Finke, Hickerson, and Kremkow (2018, USA)	To examine the perceptions of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) who play video games as their primary leisure activity regarding the role of video games in their lives and their motivations for playing video games.	Semi structured interviews.	Explored gaming experiences of people with ASD who play video games for at least 1 hour per day on at least 7 days a week. Participants were 10 young adults (aged 18–24) with ASD. Nine were male and all but one were white. Their average playing time was 26.8 hour per week (3.8 hour per day).	Grounded theory coding with co-researcher validation.	The themes focused on social engagement and emotional regulation are not discussed here as they are not related to this review. The theme of everyday creativity is linked with escapism. Some participants used video games to access new experiences and see places that were outside of their everyday lives. Participants also mentioned using video games to get away from the pressures of the ‘real world’ and reset. Participants valued the fact that games allowed a second chance, it is possible to make mistakes without feeling punished.	Playing video games may allow young adults with ASD the opportunity to safely explore different experiences and identities.
<sup>5</sup> Hicks (2020, Scotland)	To explore how residents of a low-rise estate describe ‘craftings’ of atmosphere to understand questions of belonging, welfare and community.	Qualitative, field research over a 3-month period in the summer of 2016, including visual and contextual mapping of participants’ homes, participant observation, semi-structured interviews and follow-up diaries.	The study examined residents’ perspectives in the creation (or production) of images and atmosphere through interacting with their home and the wider environment. (Only home-based creativity is considered in this review.) Participants ( <i>n</i> = 17) were residents, including ( <i>n</i> = 8) men	Thematic analysis, coding by research team.	Home-making is an important means of self-expression for participants. The home is both a material and an imaginative space. Home-making involves visual staging, using objects and memorabilia to produce desired effects such as cosiness, energy or being present (at home) and to distinguish one’s home from that of others. This	Neo-liberal narratives have stigmatized those living in housing estates, and these environments engender a range of positive and negative feelings. Professionals can counter the ‘othering’ of residents by attending to their creative engagement and feelings about the home and the surrounding environment.

and ( $n = 9$ ) women, from a mixture of middle- and working-class backgrounds, aged from 28 to 66 years, with the majority in the 30s or 40s.

process also includes using home décor to demonstrate political sentiments and to mark distinctions of class and status (e.g, symbolism surrounding the visibility of TV satellite dishes). The stigma that residents may feel associated with a type of housing that has fallen out of favour may be offset by representations of 'others', relating to concerns about crime, drug use and antisocial behaviour. Residents found the atmosphere of their home and estate hard to describe. Interior design aspects and lighting, which altered the atmosphere at different times of day, were important to participants' sense of wellbeing, creating points of aesthetic interest and belonging. Buildings and spaces do not create atmosphere in themselves, this is generated by residents who interpret spaces and create layers of meaning through everyday usage. These include positive and negative characterizations of the environment.

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(Continued)



Table 2. Continued.

Author surnames (date, location of study)	Study objectives	Qualitative approach and methods	Description of study including activities and participants	Details of qualitative analysis	For the qualitative themes, describe emergent conceptualizations of everyday creativity through home-based arts	Study conclusions
<sup>6</sup> Linderoth (2012, Sweden).	In-game ethnography to explore how role-players find creative ways to become immersed in the narrative of games and how this can be hindered by technology rather than facilitated by it.	In-game ethnography undertaken as a member researcher during a longer research study with the same group of participants. Three structured interviews and video analysis were also employed. Details of the participants have been omitted from the study, which instead uses their in-game characters' names and roles within the game. The study refers to a 'small group of devoted role-players' but with no further information as to their protected characteristics or total number. Six separate character names are introduced throughout the report with one of them belonging to the author.	The researcher, an already embedded member of the community, looked at how players of World of Warcraft within a specific community (Solstice) wrote, developed and fiercely protected the backstories of their own in-game characters. A study exploring creativity/imagination/story telling in video gaming in the context of avatars and online worlds.	Goffman's frame theory and frame analysis were used.	The study focused on form of digital creative writing with an immersive element and strong sense of community attached to it. The researcher was able to observe how the participants handled changes to the game which threatened their individual creativity and stories of their online world, including devising ways to overcome threats to individual aspects of creativity from the community	This study looks at how immersion is not the default game experience and how, in contrast to this often-held belief, the players strive to find creative ways to become and remain immersed. The study explores how, for many, technology can be a hindrance to role-playing and to creativity. The results suggest that it might be interesting for future studies to ask about what roles personally constructed narratives and the active urge to be in a fictional world have for the single-player game experience.
<sup>7</sup> Merrill (2010, USA)	To explore the role of songwriting and home-based recording technology in memory and selfhood.	Auto-ethnography with unstructured interviews and observations amongst 42 participants (M = 40, F = 2) aged	An investigation of song writing and home music recording in creating memories and reflexively constituting	Thematic analysis assumed using grounded theory but not detailed in methods section.	The study shows how song-writers and 'recordists', through the process of making music at home, employ multiple mnemonic strategies and	Home music making and recording provides a case study to develop a concept that explains the relationship between memory, technology, and

between late 20s and 47 years old.

and re-constituting the self.

technologies to create and revisit memories, and in the process to constitute selves.

selfhood. The concept developed here, technologies of memory, is applicable to other forms of recorded media production, such as photography, blogging, home movie making, and digital scrapbooking. This story of home recording points to how interactionist notions of self are enhanced by closer consideration of the relationship between self, technology, and memory. Technologies of memory might also be explored in terms of social, cultural, economic, and demographic factors that influence the technologies people do and do not employ.

<sup>8</sup>Rampley, Reynolds and Cordingley (London, UK 2019)

To critically examine, from an occupational science perspective, the writing experiences of individuals for whom creative writing is a form of serious leisure.

One-off interviews 50–90 min with 5 male non-professional creative writers.

Insights gained into the writing process to explore: complex relationships between writing, wellbeing and identity; disparate forms of creativity in the writing process.

An interpretive phenomenological approach (IPA) of interview transcripts and reflexive researcher journal.

The themes were:  
Creative and communicative freedom: creative writing is pure communication, genuine self-exploration of any topic inc. sensitive ones not communicable elsewhere, uncensored, creative flow of expression, cathartic endeavour  
Escape from reality: losing oneself, casting off social

Creative writing can be a highly valued serious leisure occupation that facilitates a sense of escape from the real world and presents the opportunity to enjoy self-expression without having to comply to social constraints. Creative writing is an occupational experience and using the concepts of

(Continued)

**Table 2.** Continued.

Author surnames (date, location of study)	Study objectives	Qualitative approach and methods	Description of study including activities and participants	Details of qualitative analysis	For the qualitative themes, describe emergent conceptualizations of everyday creativity through home-based arts	Study conclusions
<sup>9</sup> Tobin and Tisdell (2015)	To explore the role of embodied learning in the writing processes of creative writers	Narrative interviews with creative writers at the beginning and end of the study; in the middle, the participants engaged in a body awareness activity of their choice and then wrote about it, bringing greater attention to the body and writing. Self-chosen bodily practice (yoga, walking, meditation etc) for 5–10 minutes at least twice per week, for 6 weeks.	Narrative journeys/stories obtained about non-professional creative writers’ experiences of the writing process and the impact of body awareness activity on their lives, creativity and writing. Data: interview transcripts and participant journals.	Narrative thematic analysis of qualitative data	The themes were: Expanded body awareness consciousness that encourages flow (in creative process). Creativity develops through bodily practices like walking, yoga etc. Visceral reactions linked to generation of new ideas and ways of thinking about things. Flow in movement expands creativity. Pre-reflective becomes reflective and inspires creativity. Creative writing for sense of healing: embodied	Writing is a way to learn, reflect, heal. Engaging the body enables participants to practice a more holistic embodied learning approach to support creative writing – and other forms of creative engagement as well. Facilitate dialogue between corporeal awareness and inspiration/creativity as part of adult learning. Corporeality has central role in creativity.

Two women and two men - Joe (age 30), an ex-military man and current graduate student; Mimi (age 64), a visual artist and poet; Dave (age 57), a CEO of a private non-profit organization, and Joan (age 67), an English professor.

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experience as a source of deep knowing.

Encourage an embodied and felt sense to support creativity.

**Table 3.** Quality checklist scores for included studies (published).

Authors (date)	Is the research design appropriate for addressing the aims of the research?	Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?	Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?	Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?	Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?	Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?	Is there a clear statement of findings?	Does research contribute to how everyday creativity in home-based arts is conceptualised	Total score Maximum = 8
<sup>1</sup> Adams et al. (2014)	Y	CT	Y	CT	CT	Y	Y	Y	5
<sup>2</sup> Elisondo and Vargas (2019)	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	7
<sup>3</sup> Enko (2014)	Y	Y	Y	CT	CT	Y	Y	Y	6
<sup>4</sup> Finke, Hickerson, and Kremkow (2018)	Y	Y	Y	CT	Y	Y	Y	CT	6
<sup>5</sup> Hicks (2020)	Y	CT	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	6
<sup>6</sup> Linderoth (2012)	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	5
<sup>7</sup> Merrill (2010)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	4
<sup>8</sup> Rampley, Reynolds, and Cordingley (2019)	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
<sup>9</sup> Tobin and Tisdell (2015)	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	6

Key: Y = yes; N = no; CT = can't tell.

**Table 4.** CERQual qualitative evidence profile.

Review findings	Studies contributing to the review findings	Methodological limitations	Relevance	Coherence	Adequacy of data	Overall assessment of confidence	Explanation of judgement
Self-actualization through everyday creativity	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9	Moderate concerns about methodological limitations (3 studies with several limitations, 5 studies with minor limitations and 1 with no limitations)	Minor concerns for relevance (all studies examined the phenomenon of interest)	Moderate concerns for coherence (data limited on consistency within studies, with low consistency across studies in terms of population and context)	Minor concerns about adequacy (1 study has moderate to thin data and 7 studies have rich data)	Moderate Confidence	Graded as moderate confidence due to moderate concerns with methodological limits, coherence, and adequacy
Time, process and immersion in everyday creativity	1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9	Moderate concerns about methodological limitations (3 studies with several limitations, 3 studies with minor limitations and 1 with no limitations)	Minor concerns for relevance (all studies examined the phenomenon of interest)	Moderate concerns for coherence (data limited on consistency within studies, with low consistency across studies in terms of population and context)	Moderate concerns about adequacy (mixed quality re: rich versus thin data)	Moderate Confidence	Graded as moderate confidence due to moderate concerns with methodological limits, coherence, and adequacy
Relationship building and connecting through everyday creativity	1, 2, 5, 6	Moderate concerns about methodological limitations (2 studies with several limitations, 2 studies with minor limitations)	Minor concerns for relevance (all studies examined the phenomenon of interest)	Moderate concerns for coherence (data limited on consistency within studies, with low consistency across studies in terms of population and context)	Moderate concerns about adequacy (mixed quality re: rich versus thin data)	Moderate Confidence	Graded as moderate confidence due to moderate concerns with methodological limits, coherence, and adequacy
Learning and developing through everyday creativity	1, 2, 7, 9	Moderate concerns about methodological limitations (2 studies with several limitations, 2 studies with minor limitations)	Minor concerns for relevance (all studies examined the phenomenon of interest)	Moderate concerns for coherence (data limited on consistency within studies, with low consistency across studies in terms of population and context)	Moderate concerns about adequacy (mixed quality re: rich versus thin data)	Moderate Confidence	Graded as moderate confidence due to moderate concerns with methodological limits, coherence, and adequacy

## Findings from the qualitative evidence review on everyday creativity and home-based arts

The nine qualitative studies included in this review conceptualize EC in home-based arts in different ways, reflecting different disciplinary approaches and methods (e.g. interviews, participant observation, ethnography, video analysis, and diaries). The review includes published data from 116 participants from seven countries – Argentina, England, Scotland, Sweden, Australia, Poland and the USA. Reported demographic characteristics reveal a mix of gender, age, socio-economic status and health status. Activities included recognized art forms such as creative writing, song writing, home music recording, traditional home-based activities such as cooking, gardening and home design, and online arts such as role-play and video gaming. Across this variation, four key domains emerged: (i) self-actualization through everyday creativity; (ii) time, process and immersion in everyday creativity; (iii) relationship building and connecting as everyday creativity; and (iv) learning and developing through everyday creativity. All studies emphasized at least one of these and some considered the interconnections between two or more different domains. We discuss these domains below prior to examining how they may be considered part of a preliminary framework for critically understanding everyday creativity in the arts and leisure more broadly.

### **Domain 1: self-actualization through everyday creativity**

The domain of self-actualization encompasses two broad themes of *individualism* and *transformation* in everyday creativity through home-based arts. Individualism is generally viewed as a positive aspect of everyday creativity and is expressed through notions of autonomy, innovation and originality, creative freedom, and personal expression. Transformation is also viewed as a positive process and is linked to notions of imagination, escapism, metaphysical experience, change and personal development.

Eight of the included studies examined the relationships between home-based arts and everyday creativity in terms of self-actualization <sup>[1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9]</sup>. In these studies, the themes of individualism and transformation often overlapped. The studies emphasized the importance of arts at home in promoting personal and individual worth and providing an opportunity to establish and focus on one's own interests, goals and desires. In addition, self-actualization was explained as the realization of a positive sense of pride, satisfaction or empowerment. Freedom from external influences and organizational rules and regulations was often emphasized, as was valuing solitude in everyday creative activities which were connected with self-actualization. A study of the ways that residents of a low-rise estate in Scotland, UK<sup>[4]</sup> created meaning in their homes and living environment revealed the importance of individual interpretations of space and place and home-making (interior home design) as an imaginative endeavour. Participants showed that home-making involved visual staging to create an authentic sense of self marked by feelings of cosiness, energy or presence which also distinguished one's home and self from others. Similarly, in a study of home gardening in Australia<sup>[1]</sup> with men and women (60–83 years), the garden space and the activities involved in nurturing plants and flowers and creating the look and feel of the garden were described as highly individual and leading to a deeper awareness of the self. Gardening was explained as a medium for

evoking the spiritual through a sense of relaxation, calm, peace and connection to nature. Non-professional creative writing was explored in three studies<sup>[2, 7, 8]</sup> in which participants revealed the role of autonomy as a necessary part of the creative experience. Self-directed control over the creative process was characterized by the regulation of when and how writing took place and also in the freedom to think and generate ideas for content. In addition, self-actualization through creative writing was intertwined with the emergence of the identity of the writer and perceptions of the writer as creator. One study with women in Argentina<sup>[2]</sup> aged 21–69 years reported the importance of solitude in the experience of everyday creativity in activities including cooking, handicrafts, academic tasks, and design. The home was reported as a central context for developing self-belief in one's creativity. A study of the role of songwriting and music recording with men and women aged 20–47 years showed that interactions between songwriting, technology and music recording provided opportunities to form and adapt memories and thus to reflexively constitute and re-constitute the self in similar ways to photography, home movie making and digital scrapbooking.<sup>[6]</sup> All studies illustrating the centrality of self-actualization in home-based arts pointed to the transformative potential of everyday creativity via the process of personal and innovative expression. This idea was developed in a study of individuals with autism spectrum disorder engaged in video gaming which found that gaming was linked to everyday creativity via the experience of escapism.<sup>[3]</sup> Participants valued the fact that games allowed them to step outside of reality and cast off the social norms that brought negative feelings about autism, while providing them with opportunities to make mistakes without real world consequences. It was noted, however, that a total immersion in video gaming in which participants, albeit momentarily, can lose their grasp of reality could be socially isolating.

### ***Domain 2: time, process and immersion in everyday creativity***

This domain encompasses ideas that reflect the positive value and sense of gratification that arises from dedication to creative practices. Themes include notions of personal commitment and effort, experiencing a sense of immersion or state of 'flow', making time for creativity, and upholding daily rituals or practices involved in everyday creativity in home-based arts.

Whilst creative outputs often resulted from everyday creativity, seven studies suggest that for participants the end product is of lesser importance than immersion in the process of everyday creativity, which is a defining feature and overriding factor.<sup>[1,2,3,5,6,7,8]</sup> Making regular time for arts activities at home was identified by these participants as a marker of commitment to creative acts and experiences. Gardeners in the study based in Australia emphasized the experience of engagement, defined as a personal commitment to gardening in which creativity was fostered through time spent on nurturing the garden and learning about it.<sup>[1]</sup> In two studies of creative writing, participants explained the process as an occupational experience in which doing writing and becoming and being a writer could only be achieved by disciplined and regular focused routines and practices.<sup>[2,7]</sup> In a third study on creative writing the individual, embodied, visceral nature of everyday creativity was highlighted in the writing process, by emphasizing that combining creative thinking with physical activities such as walking and yoga could engender a creative 'flow', thus connecting bodily movement with cognition and



inspiration in everyday creativity.<sup>[8]</sup> In the study on women, the home and everyday creativity the connection between creativity and the production of positive emotions (e.g. pleasure, passion, desire, relief, satisfaction) was used to illustrate the way that everyday creativity can empower women through processes of self-actualization.<sup>[2]</sup> Two studies of video gaming pointed to the creative opportunities afforded by the immersive experience of gaming and the associated personal commitment in the digital arts.<sup>[3,5]</sup> Themes in this domain overlap with those in the domain of self-actualization and highlight the complex ways in which home-based arts interact with everyday creativity. The study of songwriting and home music recording emphasized the importance of processes of production and curation in everyday creativity, illustrating that composing, performing, recording, cataloguing, revisiting and revising home-based music defined the music-making process through which participants experience creativity.<sup>[6]</sup>

### ***Domain 3: relationship building and connecting as everyday creativity***

This domain encompasses ideas about positive impacts of creativity in terms of relationship building and connecting with others. This domain includes attention to the significance of social connection and human relationships, the construction of the self as a social-cultural entity and connecting with the non-human environment in the experience of everyday creativity in home-based arts.

Three studies identified relationship building and connectivity as important aspects of everyday creativity.<sup>[1,2 4,5]</sup> In one study, gardeners revealed that acts of nurturing and caring for plants reminded them of their connection to family and also stimulated a deeper connection to nature.<sup>[1]</sup> Also, social connection was generated through visits to neighbour's gardens or through engagement with members of gardening clubs. Participants reported that gardening at home had led to a raised awareness about the environment more broadly and to the natural beauty of local places and spaces. In another study, residents of a low-rise estate (Scotland, UK) showed that deeply personal choices in homemaking activities were a means of self-expression that was inextricably connected to staging of the self for others, either through political sentiments in homemaking or through symbolic representations that could mark out individuals as distinct from and of a different (class) status to others.<sup>[4]</sup> Similarly, the study of Argentinian women's everyday activities at home highlighted the interconnection between individual, innovative creative processes often generated in solitude and the importance of the relationship between the creator and an audience (e.g. family or members of a club or organization) in further developing everyday creativity<sup>[2]</sup>. The study of video gamers in Sweden also demonstrated the complexities of self/other relations in home-based (digital) arts.<sup>[5]</sup> Participants in this study were personally invested in the creation of avatars and detailed, innovative personal online storylines. Yet these could be significantly challenged by others in the virtual world, potentially destroying the creative outcome in the digital arts process.

### ***Domain 4: learning and developing through everyday creativity***

This domain encompasses themes linked with beneficial cognitive and physical processes including learning, discovery, knowledge and different ways of knowing, adaptation, and

personal development that are central to experiences of everyday creativity through home-based arts.

Three included studies show the ways that everyday creativity relates to positive experiences of learning, discovery and development.<sup>[1, 2, 6, 8]</sup> In the study of gardening in Australia, participants identified their commitment and engagement to their gardens not only as a central feature of the outcome of nurturing the plants, lawn and garden environment but also as part of the process of building their knowledge and learning more about gardening and their selfhood.<sup>[1]</sup> In this sense, everyday creativity was defined in terms of the twinning of physical and cognitive elements of a personal commitment to gardening. Similarly, one study exploring the role of embodied learning in the processes involved in creative writing emphasized the holistic physical and cognitive dimensions of everyday creativity.<sup>[8]</sup> Creative writers in this study revealed that combining the creative writing process with bodily movement practices such as walking or yoga expanded their sense of body awareness and consciousness and encouraged creative thoughts and ideas. The importance of the sensory dimension of creativity was reported by the participants who came to see writing through embodied practices to reflect and engender a deeper sense of knowing and learning about the self. In one study the interconnection between positive emotions, wellbeing and everyday creativity at home was emphasized as a mechanism of learning and developing a belief in one's self-creativity and sense of empowered (female) self.<sup>[2]</sup> In another study, participants creating and recording music at home entered a process of memory making through music and also engaged in processes of learning and discovery about technology and themselves through a form of music autobiography.<sup>[6]</sup>

## **Discussion – towards a conceptual framework for everyday creativity in arts and leisure**

Our review of everyday creativity and home-based arts suggests that EC refers to a capability defined by varying shades and grades of overlapping domains: individualism and personal transformation, a commitment to process, and the growth of socio-cultural connection that is consonant with personal development. We do not wish to suggest that the domains we identify are singular, unrelated dimensions. Rather, they provide us with a foundation for a multidimensional conceptual framework for understanding the complexities of EC in the arts specifically and leisure more broadly. Our review findings emphasize EC as a process, elicited in everyday practices in home-based art making that engender pleasure and purpose. One does not have to be a 'creative type' in order to experience exploration, creativity, flow and enhanced control described by Du Sautoy (2020), Csikszentmihalyi (1992, 2014) and others. On the contrary, our findings suggest that the processes of home-based art making can foster new ways of thinking about life and a range of positive benefits. Originality was an implicit characteristic of EC in the evidence in this review for example in reports of trying a new arts activity, or seeking to do or experience an arts practice in a different way from previously. We therefore suggest the significance of originality in EC in arts practices, including in the context of crisis and restriction merits further investigation as part of a developing theory of EC in the wider leisure field.

The findings, whilst limited to home-based arts, resonate with established literature on everyday creativity that similarly emphasize the personal and individual character of EC

and the centrality of meaning-making in the EC process (Richards 1993, 2007, 2010). Meaning-making has been a core concept in arguing the value of arts and wider leisure practices although not yet fully connected to EC. Leisure, in its variety of forms provides a site for the interpretation of situations, events, people, objects and discourses based on both current and previous experience. Meaning-making in the arts is central to personally creative and enriching experience (Connery, John-Steiner, and Marjanovic-Shane 2010). Moreover, the personal, individual and potentially transformative meanings experienced by participants in home-based arts in this evidence review have a contextual, place-based component to them. The home was the place where personal meaning in the arts practices took shape and evolved. The home afforded participants a space for vernacular creativity in Edensor and Millington's (2018) terms; a space for original and alternative creative processes to emerge. Like the knitting groups in a city centre in Platt's (2019) study, the evidence here shows art as a practice of the self and of place. We argue then that everyday creativity brings personal meaning derived not simply from the type of art in question but from the contextual place-based engagement in arts practice (Ernstman and Wals 2013). Such thinking arguably goes beyond individually oriented explanations of flow with a suggestion of the centrality of fleeting moments of being 'in the zone', to recognize and understand the individual within context. For a theory of EC in the arts and in leisure studies, a focus on what Ernstman and Wals (2013, 1658) have called 'locative meaning making' is significant and certainly worth exploring in future research. A deeper consideration of how and why the home invokes a sense of self, safety, change, social connection or personal development in relation to arts practices is needed. There is a need then to develop knowledge and understanding of the ways in which the spaces and places of the home are central to the construction of people's identities (Blunt and Dowling, 2006) and manifest in a diverse array of home-based arts and wider leisure practices.

The included studies revealed complex links between individual identification and meaning and relational aspects of EC in home-based arts. The notion of self-actualization that emerged from the studies reflects an understanding rooted in the psychology of the individual personality which may underplay the significance of the context in which EC takes place. We argue that a theory of EC in the arts and leisure should not only explore the significance of place, but the interplay of individual experience and social relations. As suggested above in our discussion of place-based everyday creativity, it seems impossible to separate notions of individual creativity from social connection and context. The individualism that defines EC in the studies always had a relational component, and the positive experience of EC appears to be strengthened through the feedback and recognition of others. Even those practices that require solitude ultimately draw their meaning from human interactions and relationships. The type of social connection and degree to which people seek out or value connections as part of the EC experience differ, but even those who maintain a stance of resisting the judgement of others often elicited a response and/or constructed some relational exchange. It is extremely rare that people are so totally detached from others in society that they are immune from social relations (Elias 2001). As such, there is a dynamic interplay between the individual and others in the EC experience which is central to shaping people's capability for innovation and change. This interplay argues for the challenging binary thinking in a theory of EC in the arts and leisure between the individual and society, or between personality and

culture. We emphasize the importance of understanding the complex relationship processes that shape human experiences of EC in the arts, leisure and life more broadly.

While we eschew the idea that EC is the reserve of the genius creative, it is also important to challenge thinking that separates EC from 'elite' creativity in an instrumental strategy which can create economic divisions, reinforce social exclusion and limit public policy (Edensor et al. 2009, Florida, 2005, Rodriguez-Ferrandiz, 2014), as well as restricting flourishing in both EC and Big C contexts. What seems more fruitful to developing a theory of EC in the arts and leisure is the idea that that EC and 'elite' forms of creativity may not be separate domains but are discursively connected through shared notions of freedom and dedication. Freedom in EC in home-based arts was characterized by deregulated experiences in this review and by a sense of escapism articulated through descriptions of the immersive process. To some extent this is connected to the capacity to dedicate time to the creative process, to ritualize it. Yet, immersion goes beyond time spent to an experience that is arguably mesmerising and deeply affective. Again, we emphasize that this characteristic of the absorptive, engrossing, consuming, hypnotic aspect of EC should not be reduced to individual flow experiences. Rather, the personal and contextual characteristics of freedom and escape require focused exploration. For us there is merit (and work to be done) in exploring the embodied and sensory nature of this aspect of EC. Our review indicates the significance of broadening thinking about (multi) sensory immersion as a way of developing a theory of EC which captures the deeply affective and embodied aspects of the immersive domain of EC. Yet this suggestion comes with a potential challenge to the predominance of the positive benefits of EC and risks the omission of important explorations of the darker side of creativity.

It is important not to overstate the benefits of EC or assume that these are universal. We have identified a small number of examples of immersive practices that seem to isolate participants with negative consequences despite most of the data reporting positive EC experiences. Further, it is important to acknowledge forms of exclusion from EC that arise from inequalities in access and resources, including home-based assets and environments. These inequalities have been highlighted and compounded in recent times of societal crisis and pandemic restriction. Defining EC in terms of a commitment to creative practices emphasizes that EC is to an extent predicated on the availability of time and the ability to immerse oneself in a process. This raises questions about who has the opportunity and capability to make the required commitment to creative endeavours in the arts or other leisure practices. It also raises the question of what practices are recognized as creative. The privileging of established arts practice arguably reinforces hierarchies and risks reinforcing an elitist and exclusive notion of arts-based creativity. Whilst the evidence base in this review is small, it does indicate that a broader definition of engagement with a wide set of arts-based practices is important in developing a more inclusive theory of and strategy for EC in the arts and leisure. The question of whether specific types of art taking place in particular spaces can elicit EC is an important. Understanding the role of different arts practices is important because different types of arts, accessible for different people in diverse place/spaces and locations will shape the precise experience and impact of EC. For example, the ability to devote time and effort is a precondition for professional careers in the arts, and also shapes who can engage in EC. In the context of the home, engagement is also underpinned by material conditions: of home occupancy, patterns of ownership, characteristics of

home life, internet provision, availability of physical resources, competing demands such as childcare and emotional labour. Policy and funding decisions in the arts and beyond can recognize and mitigate these inequalities and forms of exclusion. Important in this debate is Sundararajan and Averill's (2007) argument that creativity in the everyday is shaped by societies and culture. Cultural difference in everyday creativity is reflected in individual EC and the very capability that an individual has to be creative is inextricably connected to societal mores and cultural norms in which they live (Shao et al. 2019). In this regard, we emphasize that not only is it important to think of EC as individual and transformative but *at the same time* cultural and contextual. While there is a need to democratize EC and look beyond the Western canon of definition, policy making and practice, this cannot be achieved by ignoring the interconnections between the different domains we have identified or through polarizations, between, say, product and process, individual and society, elite and the everyday.

## Conclusion

There is limited research on EC and home-based arts, but the evidence in this qualitative systematic review shows that the home is a significant place for the development and enactment of everyday creativity through appreciation and expression of, and engagement with, a variety of arts practices. Everyday creativity in the home-based is defined by their ordinary, vernacular nature. A potential conceptual framework for understanding everyday creativity in arts and leisure more broadly may be fruitfully founded on overlapping domains focused on individual transformation, commitment to process, socio-cultural connection and personal development through discovery and innovation. These characteristics are also centrally shaped by cultural context and the place-based nature of arts and leisure experiences.

We propose the focus on a multidimensional framework for everyday creativity as one that should embrace a critical focus on the role of inequalities in influencing who can be creative, how and in what contexts. Practices of EC often require suitable environments, such as the home, with access to assets and resources as well as time and privacy. These inequalities have been highlighted and compounded during Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns. Cultural and leisure policy rarely steps inside the home, for well-established reasons of privacy. But this has risked neglecting an important setting where people spend a great deal of their leisure time and where family comes together in intergenerational engagement. The pandemic has sharpened the focus on the home and its role as a bedrock of EC through the arts. Home and EC are not going to stop being important, particularly as working from home becomes increasingly embedded and normalized – but the policy debate is only just getting going and this paper provides a timely debate about how to conceptual EC in arts and leisure.

There remains an overarching debate about how to capture the impact of EC, an issue that was beyond the scope of this review but that will need to be explored if EC is to be taken up as a policy and practice issues in the arts and leisure sectors. Deciding on which of the myriad of metrics are most appropriate to understanding EC in the arts and leisure needs to be part of this work. In addition, detailed consideration of the significance of quantitative and qualitative assessments of creativity and those that can effectively

capture the role of culture in developing and supporting EC is an important future direction for researchers, policy makers and practitioners.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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