Wikipedia Page Assignment
Creativity Group

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Assignment Note: Need 5 references and 2 links to other Wikipedia pages.

Creativity and Society

I. Impact

Justification: The current Wikipedia page on the broad topic of Creativity does not address this topic in any detail whereas many of the papers make note of it.

The impact of society requires attention when researchers are trying to address the nature and development of creativity.

Sternberg proposes an investment theory of creativity he denotes as "*a confluence theory according to which creative people are those willing and able to 'buy low and sell high' in the realm of ideas" and further, "Buying low means pursuing ideas that are unknown or out of favor but that have growth potential. Often, when these ideas are first presented, they encounter resistance*."[1] This principle of confluence states that ideas that go against the '[[status quo]]'[W1] are annoying, offensive, and often give rise to their rejection. As Sternberg notes, "*People typically want others to love their ideas, but immediate universal applause for an idea often indicates that it is not particularly creative*."[1] One example of this in modern times is the political philosophy of 2012 Republican presidential candidate, [[Ron Paul]][W2]. Representative Paul often remarks himself as being against the status quo, which may have led to his rejection by much of the mainstream.

The effect of society on creativity has also been observed by Csikszentmihalyi .[2] Many ideas throughout history have been directed and even encouraged by the social turmoil created by wars. Examples are abundant such as, "Freud's theory of the unconscious, Eliot's free form poetry, Picasso's deformed figures and James Joyce's stream of consciousness prose," all of which were accepted during periods where prior uncertainties were rejected by a new order and belief system as brought on by war. [2]

When addressing creativity, some researchers believe a more holistic approach is necessary. Simonton refers to "Sociocultural Environment" as one of several external factors that should be accounted for when regarding creativity. Creativity, or development of creative potential, is said to flourish within political environments where civilization is fragmented into peacefully coexisting states. Simonton makes note of the fact that many nations enjoy golden ages after winning independence from foreign domination, for instance ancient Greece. [3]

The culture of a society heavily influences the amount of creativity as well. Csikszentmihalyi points out that *"information is not distributed evenly in space but is concentrated in different geographical nodes" and "certain environments facilitate interaction and provide more excitement and a greater effervescence of ideas."* [2] In other words, certain geographic areas may be hotbeds for creativity within certain creative domains. For example, Silicon Valley has been a hotbed for innovation in computational technologies since the 1970's (when the term '[[Silicon Valley]]' was coined) and South London has been a hotbed for innovation in [[dubstep]] since the late 1990's. [W3][W4] Research Universities around the world also provide an environment for innovation, some in different disciplines than others.

In recent decades, there have been studies on the effect that gender roles within a society have on a society's creativity. It has been conjectured that societies which do not have distinct gender roles –

where individuals are more psychologically androgynous – are more creative. [2] This hypothesis has been supported in recent years by the research of Stoltzfus et al. and Norlander et al. [5][6] In both their studies, results showed that individuals who were psychologically androgynous scored higher on creativity than their psychologically masculine or psychologically feminine counterparts. [5][6]

Often, past creative solutions call for future creativity. According to Csikszentmihalyi, *"many of today's problems, which we hope creativity will solve, were brought about by yesterday's creative solutions."* [2] For example, many people believe that the Industrial Revolution and technological advances over the past two centuries have allowed us to break out of the Malthusian growth model, resulting in an inevitable overpopulation problem. [4] The stress that overpopulation puts on our planet and its resources has called for new innovation in energy, transportation, food/water, and other things. [4]

Citations

[1] Sternberg, R. J. (2006). The Nature of Creativity. (H. H. Anderson, Ed.)Creativity Research Journal, 18(1), 87-98. Harper and Row.
[2] Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1996). Creativity: Flow and the psychology of discovery and invention. 1996. New York. Harper Collins
[3] Simonton, D. (2000). Cognitive, Personal, Developmental, and Social Aspects. American Psychologist, 55(1), 151-158.
[4] Lahart, Barta and Batson (2008). "New Limits to Growth Revive Malthusian Fears". Wall Street Journal.
[5] Stoltzfus, Nibbelink, Vredenburg and Thyrum (2011). Gender, Gender Role, and Creativity. Social Behavior and Personality, 39(3), 425-432.
[6] Norlander, Erixon and Archer (2000). Psychological Androgyny and Creativity: Dynamics of Gender-Role and Personality Trait. Social Behavior and Personality, 28(5), 423-436.

Wikipedia Articles

[W1] status quo: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Status_quo
[W2] Ron Paul: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ron_Paul
[W3] Silicon Valley: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silicon_Valley
[W4] Dubstep: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dubstep

II. Everyday Creativity

Justification: The small section on everyday creativity does not reflect current theories and research in the field.

Researchers that investigate everyday creativity do not emphasize creativity as the unique contributions of a select few geniuses throughout history, but rather see creativity as a fundamental part of the human condition[1]. From this perspective, each individual engages in a creative process of adapting to unique situations everyday. Examples include configuring furniture in a living room, landscaping a yard, or resolving issues in a relationship. Each of these mundane activities can be handled more or less creatively, and these small acts of creativity exist on a personal level. Runco[2] outlines three components for his theory of personal creativity:

1. **Interpretation:** The information an individual chooses as salient for a scene and the resulting meaning assigned to it. Runco's idea of interpretation is based on [[Jean Piaget's]] theory of

assimilation and accommodation, whereby individuals first select information they understand to assimilate it and then change their cognitive structure to accommodate new information.[3]

2. **Discretion:** Choosing when to be creative versus when to conform.
3. **Intention:** An individual's motivation and reason's for determining what is valuable to invest their time and energy in (i.e. practice, buying resources).

Runco describes creativity as fundamentally personal in nature; however, his three factors also connect to social cognition. How individuals interpret information is dependent to some extent on the culture in which they are situated. For example, Shore describes a certain type of [[mental model]] called shared *cultural models* that are learned through social interaction and collectively influence how individuals interpret information in the environment.[4]

Cultural influence may play a factor in what [[Robert Sternberg]] describes as the Investment Theory of Creativity. The Investment Theory of Creativity describes certain personality traits of individuals, such as being open to new experiences and willing to take risks.[5] The investment theory proposes that creative individuals buy into ideas when they are low or out of favor and sell them when they are popular. The parameters by which ideas and skills are judged as valuable can be influenced by environmental factors such as culture and education. In certain circumstances, education has been shown to diminish creativity when students are not rewarded for creative thinking. [5] Other environmental factors also play a role in creativity.[6] Although there may still be social influences playing a role in personal creativity, the main distinction that is made in the everyday creativity research is that all humans are inherently creative in their day-to-day lives.

Creativity at the individual level may serve a larger overall purpose, according to Maslov, in helping a person live a fuller, more satisfying life. [7] Maslov described a [[hierarchy of human needs]], [w1] where immediate physiological needs are at the bottom of the hierarchy followed by other basic needs such as safety and a sense of belonging. At the very top of the hierarchy is a state of self-actualization, which is reached once the more basic needs are met. Maslov and Rogers found this state to be highly correlated to creativity, so much so that Maslov stated that they "may turn out to be the same thing". [8] However, Rhodes has mentioned it is not possible to infer the direction and nature of causality between self-actualization and creativity with the available data from personality and creativity tests, offering instead the suggestion that they may be correlated due to an association with a tendency or trait common to both such as "effective coping or adaptive skills". [8]

The therapeutic use of creativity has been utilized for decades in the field of mental health and has been shown to be effective recently in other areas such as [[psychosocial oncology]][w2] and the treatment of autism spectrum disorder. [9] Patients in art therapy programs meet in regular group sessions with a psychotherapist and are taught various techniques and encouraged to both express themselves and share their art with the group. [10] Visser and Hoog employed creative art therapy to explore the possible benefits for cancer patients in coping with the stress and anxiety typically accompanying the illness and found significant positive changes in patients' emotions facilitated by the art therapy, which allowed them to "discover, express, and deal with their feelings, the disease, experience personal growth, and have supportive contact with fellow patients". [11]

Citations
[1] Richards, R. (2007). *Everyday Creativity and New Views of Human Nature*. American Psychological Association.

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[2] Runco, M. A. (2007). To understand is to create: An epistemological perspective on human nature and personal creativity. In R. Richards (Ed.), *Everyday Creativity and New Views of Human Nature* (pp. 91-107). Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association.

[3] Piaget, J., & Cook, M. (1953). *The origin of intelligence in the child*. Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited.

[4] Shore, B. (1998). Culture in mind: cognition, culture, and the problem of meaning. *Culture in mind: cognition, culture, and the problem of meaning*. Oxford University Press.

[5] Sternberg, R. J. (2006). The nature of creativity. *Creativity Research Journal*, *18*(1), 87-98. Taylor & Francis.

[6] Amabile, T., Constance N. H., & Steven J. K. (2002). Creativity under the gun. Harvard Business Review, 80(8), 52-61.

[7] Coon, Dennis, John O. Mitterer, Shawn Talbot, and Christine M. Vanchella. Introduction to Psychology: Gateways to Mind and Behavior. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2010. Print.

[8] Runco, Mark A., and Ruth Richards. Eminent Creativity, Everyday Creativity, and Health. Greenwich, CT: Ablex Pub., 1997. Print.

[9] Epp, Kathleen Marie. "Outcome-Based Evaluation of a Social Skills Program Using Art Therapy and Group Therapy for Children on the Autism Spectrum."*Children & Schools*. 30.1 (2008): 27-36. Print.

[10] Malchiodi, Cathy A. Medical Art Therapy with Adults. London: Jessica Kingsley, 1999. Print.

[11] Visser, Adriaan, and Mayke Op 'T Hoog. "Education of Creative Art Therapy to Cancer Patients: Evaluation and Effects." Journal of Cancer Education 23.2 (2008): 80-84. Print.

Wikipedia Articles
[W1] hierarchy of human needs: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hierarchy_of_human_needs
[W2] psychosocial oncology: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psycho-oncology
[W3] Jean Piaget: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Piaget
[W4] Mental Model: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mental_model
[W5] Robert Sternberg: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Sternberg