

## **Creativity Definitions 22/06/07**

**Provided by members of the IOCT Jiscmail list**

creativity is the production of new ideas that are fit for a particular business purpose.<sup>1</sup>

Seeing what everyone else has seen, and thinking what no one else has thought.<sup>2</sup>

Imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value.<sup>3</sup>

The production of novel, appropriate ideas in any realm of human activity from science, to the arts, to education, to business or to everyday life.<sup>4</sup>

"T'ain't what you do (it's the way that you do it)" (written 1939, originally recorded by Sy Oliver) [Chris Joseph]

Creativity is whatever isn't something else. [Peter Shillingsburg]

The ultimate aim of all creative activity is a building!

The first words of the Bauhaus manifesto (so: Walter Gropius, 1919) [Robert Richardson]

Creativity is a pattern! [Martin Richardson]

creativity can be defined as an ability to bring into existence something new out of nothing.

..... Those 'something's can be anything, not necessarily a physical object, for example, a new method, i.e., a new sequence of (new) operations. I think that the whole history of mathematics and more recently, numerical and programming methods, will fall within this definition.

[Sergei Grishov]

I would elaborate on Sergei's suggestion and propose that creativity can be defined as an ability to bring into existence something new out of something old, some new knowledge created from the already-known.

I am very sympathetic to the notion that the value of an idea is only understood if it can be comprehended in relation to something else e.g. we understand that a computer keyboard has similarities with a typewriter, there are shared contexts which help us grasp their similarities and differences.

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<sup>1</sup> Pryce, V. (2005) *Creativity, Design and Business Performance*. DTI economics paper No. 15. November 2005. p.iv

<sup>2</sup> Einstein or Feynman, quoted in Pryce, V. (2005) *Creativity, Design and Business Performance*. DTI economics paper No. 15. November 2005. p.4.

<sup>3</sup> NACCCE (1999) quoted in Pryce, V. (2005) *Creativity, Design and Business Performance*. DTI economics paper No. 15. November 2005. p.4.

<sup>4</sup> Amabile (1997) quoted in Pryce, V. (2005) *Creativity, Design and Business Performance*. DTI economics paper No. 15. November 2005. p.4. In the

But an idea which has no context whatsoever is very likely to be dismissed, ignored and not recognized as creative. Hence the notion of an existing idea whose 'time has finally come'.

In the IOCT, by definition of its very remit, a good proportion of our ideas have not yet reached that stage. But they will!

[Sue Thomas]

"Creativity is the ability to see relationships where none exist." -- Thomas Disch. [ @ [http://www.mycoted.com/Creativity\\_Quotes](http://www.mycoted.com/Creativity_Quotes)] and this may be expressed by different people in different ways.

I'm looking at gaming principles [I don't play MMPOGs but the cultures and how they play out interest me] and the ways in which they are transferable to the/a curriculum. Not earth-shattering, but relatively creative for many staff/students and wholly built by seeing relationships between apparently disconnected things.

And this seems to correspond with Csikszentmihalyi's view of that "there is no way to know whether a thought is new except with reference to some standards, and there is no way to tell whether it is valuable until it passes social evaluation."

Reference: Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1997) Creativity. New York: First HarperPerrenial. p.23.

[Stephen Brown]

This innovative spark for later adopters of a thing [e.g. a technology] changes their self-expression and to them is \*creative\*. To me or you it may be old-hat, but a continuum of creativity and innovation is important in building participation and intrinsic, emotive engagement. [Richard Hall]

Margaret Boden, one of our proposed external speakers, distinguishes between what she calls psychological creativity (P-creative) and historical creativity (H-creative). P-creative ideas are novel with respect to the individual mind which had the idea. This same idea is H-creative if no one has ever had the idea before. Is that what you are getting at Richard?

Reference: Boden, M. (2005) (Second Edition) The Creative Mind: Myths and Mechanisms. Oxford: Routledge. p.43.

[Stephen Brown]

'What is now proved was once only imagin'd' – William Blake [Simon Perill]

Creativity is a mental process involving the generation of new ideas or concepts, or new associations between existing ideas or concepts.

Or

'Creativity, it has been said, consists largely of re-arranging what we know in order to find out what we do not know.' George Kneller

[Thom Corah]

Creativity is the innovation of the arts. Innovation is the creativity of engineering.

[Thom Corah]

Good stuff, Stephen. I guess I'm interested in the personal/societal/cultural contexts in which innovation flourishes/emerges, so Boden's dichotomy makes some sense in grounding that for me because I'm thinking more-and-more about how those contexts interact with Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 approaches to life [where the latter are therapeutic and enfranchising personal motifs].

The Project New Media Literacies latest occasional paper on Participatory Culture [[@http://www.projectnml.org/files/working/NMLWhitePaper.pdf](http://www.projectnml.org/files/working/NMLWhitePaper.pdf)] notes:

"We must push further by talking about how meaning emerges collectively and collaboratively in the new media environment and how creativity operates differently in an open-source culture based on sampling, appropriation, transformation, and repurposing." [p.20]

I'm going to have to do some more thinking about how we create/build/frame/scope spaces for both P- and H-creative things to happen.

[Richard Hall].

Ezra Pound's famous slogan puts this in three words: ['Make it New'](#)

...and what's more, he did it!

[Bob Richardson]

This is something we have been trying to think about recently in dance. The ['Petit Robert Dictionnaire'](#) defines ['créativité'](#) as ['pouvoir de création, d'invention'](#). So I'd see it as concerned with potential, and with an openness to possibilities in a situation which closed or habitual modes of thought might not be able to recognise or grasp.

[Ramsay Burt]

I like Ken Robinson's definition at TED last year:

['the process of having original ideas which have value'](#)  
<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4964296663335083307> 13m 32s

[Toby Moores]

Can we distinguish between creative as an attribute, creativity, the creative process and the resulting artefact? I think creativity is a state of mind, a state of being. One possible definition for creativity could be:

a state of mind which recognises the limitations of the present and the opportunities of the future.

[Neil McBride]

A couple of weeks ago I defined from-the-hip the act of creativity at an 'art & complexity' event as:

*'disciplined play'*

Alec R.