

QUESTIONS FOR MACKINNON, "CREATIVITY: A MULTIFACITED PHENOMENON"

MacKinnon was a psychologist who taught at Berkeley

The author lays out the aspects of creativity he thinks are important and then begins with the first of these, The Creative Process.

p. 1: Under number 3, surprisingly, he requires that the creator walk away from the project for a time. What is this part of the process called? It is a period of _____

p. 1: Why is the creative person often unpopular?

p. 1: Here it is said that one quality that Einstein possessed was his "in ability to _____"

p. 1 bottom: Here (1970) it is said that creativity is now being studied by psychologists for the first time. After these words were written, what entire field (involving technology and machines) has made it possible to go much further (we will look into this in our next session)?

N.B. at bottom of page: creative thought is not a single, unitary process.

p. 2 top: Name two of the three processes that are involved in creativity.

p. 2: Uncreative people are likely to be too

a. anxious b. complacent c. money hungry d. inattentive

p. 2: Creative people are a. happy b. discontent c. dominant e. focused

p. 2: To make process and to be creative, one must be:

a. cognitively flexible b. cognitively focused c. cognitively symbolic d. symbolically cognizant

p. 2: According to what is said here, is it ever possible to have too much information? Yes or NO

***p. 2 Should a novice ever try to solve a difficult, complex creative problem. If so why, if not, why not?

p. 2: Do those trained in one field ever succeed in another? Can you think of an example?

p. 2: Why might straight ahead focus and analytical perception "sometimes be the enemy of creative insight"?

p. 3: Is it good to be childlike? Why might that be good or bad?

THE CREATIVE PRODUCT

O.K. HERE MACKINNON MAKES AN IMPORTANT POINT. It is one that we have talked about. For me, and MacKinnon too, what we have been talking about up to this point in the article is really ORIGINALITY or NOVELTY. CREATIVITY requires at least two parties, the originator and society. Only when originality is embraced and society changes do we have creativity.

ORIGINALTY + CHANGE=CREATIVITY But we'll stick with MacKinnon

p. 3: To be original a thought has to be what? a. your own b. one that no one or few have had (to some degree, this standard is also the basis of copyright law)

p. 3 What else must an original idea do in order to be judged creative? Name two other things.

p. 3: This may be problematic. Think about and be prepared to discuss in class M.'s fourth criterion: "the solution must be both true and beautiful" What might be a problem with this?

p. 3: What are the three examples of M's fifth and highest criterion for creativity—the idea must be a real game changer? Begin to think about which of these people has suffered a diminution of prestige or importance since 1970. One of these has. What does that tell us about "truth"?

p. 3 bottom: Here M posits that the arts involve one kind of creative process and the sciences another. What is the difference as he sees it?

p. 4 top: Following this line of reasoning, the scientist wants to resolve a problem of

a. an exterior cosmology b. an internal emotional turbulence

GO TO THE BOTTOM OF P. 4

P. 4 bottom: What is M's opinion of IQ scores as it interfaces with creativity? What does he think about using test scores and grades as a measure for college admissions?

p. 5: According to M, if colleges want to admit people who will be creative, they should look for indicators of a. focused thinking b. interest and motivation c. community involvement

p. 5: True or false: The real creators (true of Einstein) get high grades in some subjects and low grades in others (or drop out!).

p. 5: True or false: According to this, an education leading to creativity will provide ample opportunity for independent study (independent research or long final paper).

p. 5: Should the creative person focus intensely on one field? Would M support Yale's policy of distributional "wandering"?

p. 5 bottom: Be prepared to briefly explain what M means by "psychic turbulence" combined with an independent spirit may be a very good thing (and again, why others might not be comfortable with it).

p. 6 top: This is a rich paragraph. But why might analogies, similes, and metaphors be important to the creative process?

p. 6: Ultimately the truly creative idea will result in

a. an overarching theory that is elegant b. a contradictory resolution c. a practical application

p. 6: Here M goes into a bit of Freudian/Jungian analysis, but the take away is this: There are two (opposite) sides or aspects of the human mind, the _____ and the _____.

p. 6 toward bottom What "c" word (with found it Leonardo) does M require of every creative person? _____

p. 6: Finally, M believes that:

a. creativity can be taught under the right circumstances

b. creativity cannot be taught, but an environment in which it might flourish can be established

c. creativity cannot be taught or encouraged; it proceeds from natural ability and no amount of teaching or nourishing will affect the outcome