

EVERGREEN CREATIVITY

Why does a human being look up to the night sky and wonder what makes the stars bright and the earth spin? What causes someone to watch another at work, then go off and build a tool to make the task easier? What moves someone else to gather together pigments and sit outside at dusk to capture images of the fading light? Where do ideas come from? The thing that separates us from other creatures on earth is our ability to invent... We are the only creatures who seem capable of spontaneous invention, of making something from nothing, of thinking something up and making it so. It's our glory as a species; it may, as well, lead to our destruction. Such is the power of creativity. -
Chris Petty (2001, p. 1)

That power of creativity as succinctly captured by Chris Petty remains evergreen ever since Joy Paul Gilford (1950) set ablaze contemporary interests in creativity research to the pioneering efforts of Ellis Paul Torrance (1962, 1974). And despite the fact that subject experts and investigators do not 'share' a language for creativity (Welsh, 1973; Ford & Harris, 1992; Parkhurst, 1999; Joubert, 2001), the *evergreen* nature of creativity, as Sternberg (2006) posits, continues to endure the subject to hearts and minds of creativity enthusiasts across our world. And why not?

Of course no-one expects subject experts and investigators to share a language for creativity after all creativity is never a single variable, but as Reisman (2013, 2014) demonstrates, a complex multifaceted and multidimensional process that might not be easily straitjacketed in definition and application.

Yet, there a general agreement among investigators that creativity—at least a varying degree of traits of creativity—not only exist in every human, but it is also a 'decision that anyone can make ...' (Sternberg, 2006, p.97); and that the attributes of creativity can be so subtle in humans as to make an individual oblivious of his or her creative behaviour and practices. Craft (2001) and Beghetto & Kaufman (2007) underline the significance of the latter point in what they characterise as 'little c creativity' and 'mini-c creativity' respectively.

Think about a twenty first-century woman who, in the course of her everyday life, negotiates or divides her time between work, home, family and possibly part-time education. Creativity in her case is used daily as a 'coping strategy', an ability possess by every individual (Timmerman, 1985); and not

a preserve of 'genius' or the gifted few (Lytton, 1971; Webster, 1989a, b; Ogunleye, 1999). In fact, Ripple (1989, p.190) and, as stated earlier, Craft (2001, p. 45 drawing on the work of Gardner (1993a, b)), call this type of creativity 'ordinary creativity' or 'little c creativity', which is what people draw upon to solve 'everyday real-life problems of less than heroic proportions and [which], helps people to get through the day better and or more effectively' (Ripple, 1999, p.190). See also Kaufman & Beghetto (2009).

And so to keep the work on creativity evergreen, this *KIE Handbook of Creativity* seeks to add to the repository on the subject. It is a small but important contribution by the KIE Conference to scholarly work in the field. By so doing, this book builds on the pioneering work of Guilford and Torrance, and the two dedicated journals on creativity—*Journal of Creative Behavior* and the *Creativity Research Journal*—as well as a number of handbooks on the subject notably Sternberg & Lubart (1996), Runco & Pritzker (1999), and Sternberg (1999).

Credit in all this belongs to every author and co-author of this book led of course by Dr Fredricka Reisman, guest editor. On behalf of the KIE Conference Team and KIE International Advisory Board, I thank you all.

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