

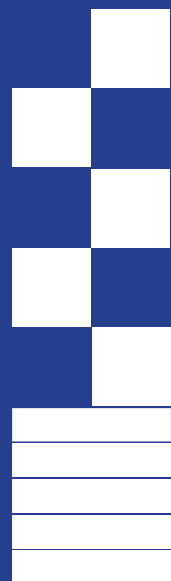
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Creativity: Process and Personality

Larry Gross

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with a new
preface by
Larry Gross



Larry Gross

CREATIVITY

Process and Personality

A MEDIASTUDIES.PRESS PUBLIC DOMAIN EDITION

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Chapter II: Structure of Investigation

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BEFORE PROCEEDING WITH THE actual case-study data, it seems to me that it would be suitable to explain the method by which the data was gathered. The interviews were structured through the use of an outline consisting of topic headings which was given to the subject, and which he was asked to respond to in a free, self-determined and open-ended manner. Each topic-heading was meant to suggest an area of potential interest, those which the subject felt to be relevant he would discuss. The outline also contained possible specific responses, but here, also, the suggestion was that the subject might indicate only those which he felt to be applicable. It was inevitable, in such an interview, that there would be over-lapping areas, but, by and large, the topics tended to remain discrete. Naturally not all of the subjects responded to all of the headings and not in the same detail. For one thing, due to external circumstances, the interviews varied in length from over 4 hours to 1 hour. For this reason, some of the interviews are more complete in one aspect, others in another aspect. On the whole, however, they cover the full range to a fair extent. The actual outline, as it was presented to the subjects (except in the case of Herbert Simon, that interview having been more of a pilot study), is as follows:

I. SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

A. Family background. Family constellation. General family information. Religion. Family influences—personal, intellectual, professional. Feelings of apartness? Isolation? Difference? Persecution? Superiority?

B. Education—training. School—teachers, peers, influences. College—teachers, influences, changes of direction.

C. Teachers and Mentors. Related to intellectual development and specialization, choosing field, choosing problems. Restructuring, questioning. Learning specific things from specific people? Widening horizons? Acceptance of new ideas? Rejection of ideas? Conflicts with teachers? Collaboration?

D. Peers. "Invisible colleges", discussion groups, effects of peers on intellectual life. Widening horizons? Acceptance, rejection of ideas? Collaboration? Conferences? Seminars? Criticism, feedback? Support? Extension. Revision. Attack? Limitations?

E. Students. Teaching. Assistants. Carry out ideas? Contribute ideas? Expand? Refine? Criticize?

F. Organizational Context. University environment—as student, teacher. Cross-disciplinary influence? Isolation from reality? Ivory tower? Relations with official duties, administrators? Official pressures?

II. MOTIVATION AND PERSONALITY FACTORS

A. Achievement motivation? Conscious of n-ach? Sense of destiny? Crusader's zeal? Messianic fervor? Prophetic voice? Related to home background, schooling? Organizational pressures (publish or perish)?

B. Independence. Weighing of information. Accepting the suitable, rejecting the unsuitable? Deliberately, reluctantly, defiantly? Enjoyment of iconoclastic role (being right and different)?

C. Self-actualization. Are security needs satisfied? Love needs? Belonging? Power needs? When not? Would you call yourself self-actualized? Creativity—would you call yourself creative? Effortless? Tough?

D. Peak experiences? Related to what? When? Effects? Frequency? Nature? Ecstasy? Joy? Bliss? Enthusiasm? Excitement?

E. Life Goals. Fulfilled? Unfulfilled? Secret desires? 3 wishes? (Day-dreams?) What would you most like to be doing?

III. PREPARATION

A. Formulation of significant (paradigmatic?) questions? Goals? Sub-paradigms, sub-problems, sub-goals? Re-formulations?

B. Acquisition of information. Before formulation? After? Recall of information?

Gathering new information? Design, execution of surveys, experiments? New methods to gather information?

C. Information found. Answers found? Satisfactory? Why not? Reformulations in light of information?

IV. PRODUCTION

A. Movement of information? Storage? Retrieval?

B. Analysis of information? Reduction? Factoring? Combination? Accept, reject, preview ideas? Theories? Heuristics? Models? Formulate sub-problems? Structure information in light of sub-problems?

C. Synthesis of information? Generation of novel ideas? Theories? Belief systems? Heuristics? Models? Combination, recombination of old and/or new ideas, theories, etc.? Structuring information in light of new systems? Formulating solutions? Labelling?

D. Evaluation, testing, validation. Intuitive? Rational? Logical? Experimental? Criticism? Feedback? Collaboration? Revision?

E. Definition of product. Elements of distinctness, uniqueness? Elements of similarity?

V. COMMUNICATION-DISTRIBUTION

A. Writing. Organizing for communication? Labelling? Relating to field? Discipline? Other disciplines?

B. Marketing. Articles? Books?

C. Feedback. Acceptance? Support? Confirmation? Extension? Rejection? Attack? Contradiction? Rewards? Social? Personal? Further work? Directly related? Influence of feedback?

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