

Making the CASE for Shadow Creativity

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Abstract

In this paper we focus on systematically overlooked forms of creative expression and propose the CASE model to account for them and the reasons why they often go unrecognized. This model points us to four main reasons why creative outcomes can easily remain in the shadows or go unrecognized even if they demonstrate novelty and usefulness to different degrees. These are: lack of capital (C); lack of awareness of being creative or doing creative work (A); lack of spark or of having the original creative idea (S); and lack of exceptionality or the property of visibly standing out from other productions (E). Each one of these is discussed and exemplified given that lacking one or more of the above dimensions significantly decreases the chances of the contributions being considered creative, or even potentially creative, by the outside world or even the creator. We conclude with some reflections on why appreciating shadow creativities can foster personal development as well as increase social justice for the benefit of all.

Keywords: creativity, overlooked creativity, CASE model, capital, awareness, spark, exceptionality

Making the CASE for Shadow Creativity

Remember: It costs nothing to encourage an artist, and the potential benefits are staggering... - Discourage an artist, you get absolutely nothing in return, ever."

-- Kevin Smith (2012, p. 135)

One of the most frustrating paradoxes that can occur to an academic studying creativity is to have a student tell you that he or she is "not creative," and then proceed to discuss and brainstorm many clever, imaginative, and compelling ideas for studies. Believing you are creative and actually being creative are related but distinct phenomena (Kaufman, 2019). The relationship is weakest with measures such as divergent thinking (Haase, Hoff, Hanel, & Innes-Ker, 2018). Certainly, some of this lack of overlap is due to people who think they are creative but are not. For example, narcissists rate themselves as being very creative, but their performance is no more creative than that of people low on narcissism (Goncalo, Flynn, & Kim, 2010). Additional parts of the overlap, however, come from people who do not consider themselves creative despite engaging in what could easily be called creative behavior. These instances of overlooked creativity often represent a waste of talent and a missed opportunity on a personal and societal level.

Why would creativity be overlooked (by the creator or by audiences)? One reason may be the art bias or the tendency to rate artistic work as more creative than other domains (e.g., Glăveanu, 2014). Creativity within domains beyond the arts has become an important topic of

discussion in recent decades (Kaufman & Baer, 2002; Kaufman, Glăveanu, & Baer, 2017). This interest has enabled more work on how creativity may be manifested in non-arts domains such as engineering (Crompton, Crompton, & Sandwith, 2017) and business (Agars, Kaufman, Deane, & Smith, 2012), as well as domains that have been traditionally less connected with creativity, such as cooking (Beghetto, Kaufman, & Hatcher, 2016) or law (Mandel, 2017). If these ideas can further permeate from the academy into the real world, some of the de-identification with creativity may be reduced in people with non-artistic pursuits and passions. This means that people might lack the awareness that they are actually doing creative things because of certain (mis)conceptions of creativity, a few of which are mentioned below.

Art bias is only one reason why some people do not believe they are actually creative. Another is a tendency to believe that creativity is only truly manifested as genius (Plucker, Beghetto, & Dow, 2004). People who are creative but at lower levels of eminence may assume that their creativity doesn't "count." It is interesting to note that if people are primed to think about creativity geniuses (such as Albert Einstein), they are more likely to then demonstrate a fixed creativity mindset – in other words, to believe that one's creativity is predetermined (Karwowski, Czerwonka, Lebuda, Jankowska, & Gajda, 2019).

There is also a stereotype, often endorsed by laypeople, that associates creativity and mental illness (Kaufman, 2016; Kaufman, Bromley, & Cole, 2006). Although there may be a connection at the Big-C, genius level, there is scant evidence of a connection at the mini-c or little-c everyday level (Simonton, 2014). This association with a stigmatized attribute may be one of many reasons why people can demonstrate an implicit bias against creativity (Mueller, Melwani, & Goncalo, 2012). It is possible that some people may not want to be creative because

they perceive it as being associated with negative traits. Thus, for some people the issue may go beyond awareness; rather, their beliefs may kill off the mere intention to be creative.

Toward making creativity more inclusive

In more recent years, creativity theories and models have begun expanding to include aspects of creativity that were once be overlooked or unclaimed. Some focus on creators. For example, the Four C model includes mini-c, which is personally-meaningful creativity that may not be appreciated by others (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2009; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009).

Karwowski and Jankowska's (2016) Typological Approach to Creativity considers creative ability, openness, and independence to produce four types of creativity. One type, Subordinate creativity, covers people who have the ability and personality traits that lend themselves to being creative, but are mindful of the status quo and focused on group harmony.

Other theories emphasize specific creative actions. The Propulsion Model of Creative Contributions (Sternberg, 1999; Sternberg, Kaufman, & Pretz, 2002) specifies several types of accomplishments that are often overlooked. These include replication, in which someone produces their own version of someone else's creative work, and redefinition, in which someone repurposes a creative product or idea to have a new use, and several others that may not be prototypes for creative work (see Glăveanu, 2012). Unsworth (2001) proposed another interactive typology, this one aligning type of problem (open or closed) against motivation (internal or external). Three of the four resulting types of creativity are often overlooked (whereas proactive creativity, in which someone chooses to solve a new problem, is more likely to be recognized). Responsive creativity is responding to and solving an external problem.

Contributory creativity is helping someone with a set task. Perhaps the least appreciated is expected creativity, which is being asked to do a specific task and doing it as part of your job or another non-intrinsic reason.

These are strong advances. The field is more and more recognizing that if we want to celebrate and encourage creative genius and expert work then we also need to highlight the beginning points of the trajectory and the types of small modifications or movements that may make more eminent contributions possible or that should simply be recognized as creative in their own right. Our goal, therefore, is not to propose yet another taxonomy or categorization system, but rather to offer a map that points to areas where creativity remains in the shadows and shed light on why and when this is the case.

We use two core pieces of creativity scholarship to help guide our way. First, we use the twin components of creativity's definition, novelty and appropriateness (Hennessey & Amabile, 2010), as our x and y axes. As can be seen in Figure One, the bottom left corner consists of contributions that are in essence nothing; they are in no way novel or appropriate (e.g., Simonton, 2018). This corner is comprised of acts that are clearly not creative. The upper right corner consists of contributions that are both novel and appropriate. This corner represents obvious creativity – not necessarily Big-C or even Pro-c, but a product or idea that would be recognized by most people as fitting the definition of creative (Plucker et al, 2004).

The extreme upper left corner is gibberish – it is pure chaos that may be very original but has no task appropriateness. The extreme bottom right corner is rote – basic repetitions that may be task appropriate but have no novelty. Such actions could be following directions or sticking exactly to a specific, previous-taught method (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2013a; Simonton, 2018). It

is between the gibberish and the rote, between the Not-Creative and the Obviously-Creative, that we see shadow creativity.

We will highlight different examples of shadow creativity using our CASE map. This acronym stands for four components, other than novelty and appropriateness, that we consider essential for Obviously-Creative works: Capital (the integration of the creator within the social or cultural field of a creative domain), Awareness (the knowledge that one's work is or can be creative, and the explicit intention to pursue creative expression), Spark (having the initial creative idea or creative vision), and Exceptionality (some element or dimension that stands out in such a way that it reminds of works done by masterful creator).

The CASE model aims to make a few conceptual and practical contributions. At a conceptual level it calls to our attention that there is a large “grey area” of creativity that lies in between clearly novel and appropriate and clearly not novel and not appropriate responses and outcomes. These “shadow” forms of creating depend on much more than the properties of the creative product (i.e., novelty and appropriateness). In fact, in the way we identify creativity in a variety of applied contexts we notice that much more is at stake beside product properties including the relation between creators and their audiences (capital), the beliefs of the creator (awareness), the temporality of creation (spark), and its relation to what already exists (exceptionality). The four criteria that make up the CASE model can serve, thus, to understanding when and why something that could be recognized as creative in principle is not seen as such in practice. This knowledge, we believe, has enormous practical consequences: it can help those assessing creativity become more sensitive in their evaluations and it can help creative people recognize themselves as such. Behind the conceptual contribution of contextualizing our current definition of creativity, CASE can be used to understand why a lot of

creative expression remains unacknowledged and how creators can ultimately bring their “hidden” creative expression from the shadows into the limelight.

The CASE of Shadow Creativity

Capital

It is clear that, besides a novel and useful product, creators need the right Capital – the language, tools, status, and timing that allow them to enter a domain – in order to be recognized as creative and to get their contributions seen as such. The notion of capital has been widely used in economy and sociology, most famously in the latter by Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu’s best-known book, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1984) has specific relevance for creativity. He argued that those people with a high level of cultural capital within society (for example, those with a high level of education) get to decide what constitutes good taste. Bourdieu further distinguished between various forms of capital, such as economic, social, and cultural. The first designates money and assets or, in other words, what most economists would see as capital proper. The second – social capital – refers to the network of connections within society that can help people move ahead of others. It is this type of capital that resonates widely with Csikszentmihalyi’s (1988) systemic models and, in particular, his notion of the field. For something to be creative, Csikszentmihalyi believed, it needs to make a contribution to a (cultural) domain and, in order to do this, the creator and the creation need to be supported by the (social) field of gatekeepers.

Further, although the creation stays constant, the domain and the gatekeepers can change over time. In order to be perceived as creative, a work must appeal to contemporary gatekeepers and members of the domain. To continue to be viewed as creative, a work needs to continue to

resonant with future generations of gatekeepers and members of the domain. Beyond social and cultural capital, creators must have what one might call *zeitgeist* capital – the luck or intuition to generate ideas that are accepted by their contemporaries.

Creativity can remain in the shadows whenever the creator lacks social, cultural, or *zeitgeist* capital. Without social capital, the creator is an outsider to the field of social and institutional relations that recognize creativity in a particular domain. Without cultural capital, the creator lacks the basic cultural tools (e.g., concepts and arguments) that could get a new artifact recognized as a product of creativity (as opposed to merely technical skill or chance). Without *zeitgeist* capital, the creator's best efforts may fall flat to an unready audience.

Following this logic, creative activity can fly under the radar when it is either too different from the current status quo of a domain or when it goes against accepted norms. In these cases, the creator may intend to make a creative contribution and have a great deal of expertise. However, if the output does not incorporate at least some of the conventions or jargon of the existing domain, it risks being seen as incomprehensible, difficult, or even amateurish. In such cases, the gatekeepers of the domain are likely to either ignore or dismiss the new proposition. One common example is when scholars try to make a contribution outside their primary area of specialty, they may be unfamiliar with the relevant language or literature. We are not arguing that researchers do not need to conduct due diligence before entering a new arena – that is a key responsibility – but some flexibility by the gatekeepers can go a long way. Interestingly, those with extremely high levels of expertise can be more flexible than those with a more moderate amount (Bilalic, McLeod, & Gobet, 2008)

From a historical perspective, several revolutionary creators started as outsiders in their domain and succeeded in transforming it from such an outside position. For example, the Impressionists struggled for recognition, with artists such as Manet and Monet being deemed inferior to Salon-style painters such as Meissonier (King, 2006). They eventually won public interest and, with time, critical appreciation.

There is a danger though in focusing too much on such historical accounts because we run the risk romanticizing what it means to create without social capital from outside a domain. The creators and creations selected to illustrate this dynamic are, by necessity, the ones that managed to change the domain. For each one of them there are countless examples of creative people whose work has never been recognized and who tried to change the domain in vain. Consider, as Gillman (2015) compiled, such failures as drive-through strip clubs, chocolate sausage, or homeless tours. All of these ideas are creative, if not necessarily pleasant, and challenged many of our basic assumptions. Most people associate going on a tour with seeing the sights of a city or perhaps notable spots associated with history or a popular movie or show – not pretending to be a homeless person for a few days (Ellis, 2013). Some expectations, perhaps, are not meant to be challenged.

It is difficult to simply look at the ultimate success of a creator or creation to gauge whether the challenge to a domain was successful. Sternberg (2018) recently proposed a triangular theory premised on the idea that defiance is essential for creativity to take place. Creators consistently need to challenge themselves, their discipline, and even their own society and its *zeitgeist*. Often they must challenge more than one of these at the same time. This view is a development of the investment theory of creativity (Sternberg & Lubart, 1995) which again claims that creative people go against the grain by, for instance, “buying” low (when new ideas

don't attract attention) and "selling" high (moving on and looking for new ideas exactly when their proposal gets traction within the field).

One difference between the defiance inherent in the triangular theory – that come with being a "creativity investor" who embraces less popular ideas from a "hidden creator" – is that the investors tend to be already established within their domain. This status offers a kind of cultural capital which makes it easier to keep investing in new ideas and projects. In addition, the investors are able to persuade others of the value of their ideas. In contrast, the hidden creators may be motivated and experienced but what they produce is too far away from the norm to be accepted or integrated by the domain.

Conversely, the hidden creators may lack the communication ability common to the cultural domain to be able to convince others. A scientific article written without proper terminology or citations may have interesting fundamental ideas yet be quickly dismissed. We are not criticizing the gatekeepers who may reject such papers that do not fit the model of a standard scientific article. As Cialdini (2009) notes, both humans and animals make snap, automatic judgments which allow some obvious misjudgments to occur. Yet we make these shortcuts for a reason: They usually work. Anyone who has edited a journal knows that most submissions with these types of obvious mistakes or omissions are usually quite bad. It is not necessarily efficient to consider every potential stimulus with the point of view that it may be a diamond in the rough.

There are many ways in which a creator may lack either social or cultural capital as well as *zeitgeist* capital. For example, such shadow creativity can be manifested in an amorphous domain or one that does not yet exist. Consider if someone constructed a mathematical equation

on the ground using petals from locally-grown flowers, and then used a drone to take a photograph of the final product. What domain of creativity would this product be? Some creative acts might be flying under the radar because they do not yet have a domain of their own. Or, conversely, they may be close to an existing domain but be ignored or excluded due to gatekeepers who actively and conservatively guarding the boundaries of that domain.

For example, we have witnessed rapid developments within the field of technology which are transforming the world. The concept of technological and digital literacy has become popular in schools over the last two decades (see Drakes, 2006). These skillsets, now considered a key part of education (Koltay, 2011), would have been of little concern for most of the 20th century. In the same vein, young people were generally discouraged from “wasting” too much time playing with technological gadgets, let alone being recognized for any creativity displayed when doing so. Such creative activities, however, are becoming more and more appreciated both in schools (Kafai & Peppler, 2011) and in the workplace (Travis, 2017). Indeed, highly skilled hackers have tremendous power that they can use for good or evil, depending on whether they are “black hat” and act maliciously or are “white hat” and help law enforcement (Barnett & Romeike, 2017).

The above example illustrates a set of abilities that were initially outside of the cultural capital of a defined domain. Over time, however, they were recognized and valued. There are, unfortunately, many more examples of creators working in areas that never gained cultural or social capital (indeed, most are completely forgotten today). Other creators were productive in domains that lost their historical legitimacy. For instance, astrology was considered a serious occupation for centuries until astronomy emerged as a genuine science. Although one may still

potentially be a “creative” astrologer today, the appreciation for this activity is much more limited.

There are other times when a creator seems to intentionally eschew social and cultural capital and makes intentional decisions that contribute to anonymity. Writers such as Franz Kafka and Emily Dickinson avoided publicity (although contrary to myth, both writers were published multiple times in their lifetimes). At the furthest extreme may be Vivian Maier, a photographer who took thousands of pictures yet left many undeveloped and never pursued any outlet or recognition. Her eventual acclaim happened posthumously and by accident (Bailey, 2013).

Finally, there are times when a creator can have both social and cultural capital yet be lacking *zeitgeist* capital and thus go unrecognized. It is important to distinguish such cases from the Propulsion Model’s category of advanced forward incrementation (Sternberg et al, 2002). In that category, a creative work is unrecognized in its time but is eventually acknowledged as an important contribution. For those lacking in *zeitgeist* capital, they may be lucky enough to be appreciated at some point – or they may not, and remain in the shadows. One example that is starting to get recognition is the Luis and Clark instruments¹. The company was founded by the accomplished cellist Luis Leguia. Leguia, also a sailor, noticed that his carbon fiber hull produced resonant sounds (“Meet Luis, Stephanie, and Caroline Leguia,” 2017). He fashioned a cello out of carbon fiber and was struck by its deep, resonant sound. Today, Luis and Clark is but one of many carbon fiber instrument makers (Scott, 2009). Many hold onto the idea of older, wood-based violins (such as the Stradivarius) as being superior. However, multiple

¹ The authors would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for suggesting this example

scientific comparisons of the older instruments versus the newer, carbon fiber ones show that players strongly prefer the latter (Fritz, Curtin, Poitevineau, Borsarello, Wollman, Tao, & Ghasarossian, 2014; Fritz, Curtin, Poitevineau, Morrel-Samuels, & Tao, 2012). Will carbon fiber instruments overcome the inertia and resistance to change in the field, or will they end up a historical footnote? Only time will tell. In summary, capital – from social to cultural to *zeitgeist* – is important for recognizing creativity at all levels. Those who lack these forms of capital are often considered outsiders and their work labelled as either meaningless or incomprehensible. Given that the boundaries of a domain and the social networks of the field are continuously changing, eventually, some of this hidden creativity gets appreciated but it is often too little of it or too late for those who engaged in it.

Awareness

At first glance, Awareness seems an odd addition. Having the self-knowledge that your work is creative (and intentionally so) seems to be straightforward. Certainly, it is clear how this may be the case for non-human animals. There are many ways that animals can be intentionally innovative, such as engaging in problem solving activity and using tools to get food (e.g., A. Kaufman & Kaufman, 2014, 2015). Yet consider animal art. It tends to be either an animal's nose or foot being covered in paint and pressed on a canvas or else an animal is given paint to splash on it. The animal is likely aware there is play going on, but it would be unlikely a chimpanzee is reflecting on the perspective of light or use of colors when creating art.

We argue it is also possible for a human to be creative with low levels of self-awareness or intent to create; these actions range from unintentional (e.g., accidents) to motivated by other goals (e.g., to make something, to communicate, to beautify). Note that we are not proposing that

human creativity can take place without any kind of social or personal validation. If someone writes a poem that he or she thinks is uncreative and then shows it to several people who agree that the poem is indeed not creative in the slightest, then we are not defending that poem as actually representing a creative work. We are instead referring to those products which would be accurately labeled as being created by their producers or consumers if they better understood the complexity of everything that comprises the term “creativity.” Such creators’ lack of desire to be creative does not arise out of specifically wanting to not be creative but rather from a misunderstanding (or at least a narrow understanding) of what it means to be creative.

Such a misunderstanding can easily occur if someone demonstrates a genius bias as mentioned earlier. Examining different types of creativity manifest in some of the previously discussed theories illustrates how legitimate creative contributions may be dismissed by the creator him or herself. For example, Karwowski and Jankowska’s (2016) concept of subordinate creativity includes the idea of a student being creativity without feeling the need to be revolutionary or challenge authority. Their everyday creativity is more likely to be used for productive if unremarkable work that will meet the teacher’s approval. Similarly, Unsworth’s (2001) responsive, contributory, or expected creativity can all occur as part of a typical day at work. Such individuals may engage in regular creative activity that is not recognized as such by other people. At some point in the process, however, the creator has the awareness that an aspect of it is novel or different. Even when someone does not have the initial intention to be creative, that does not necessarily mean the action itself is necessarily uncreative.

This situation could also occur for people with low creative metacognition (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2013b; Kaufman, Beghetto, & Watson, 2016); some people are poor at recognizing their own creative abilities. It is possible to argue that such people are not likely to be good

creators. The Dunning-Kruger effect (Dunning, Johnson, Ehrlinger, & Kruger, 2003; Kruger & Dunning, 1999) argues that people with less ability are also worse at accurately evaluating their work. There appears to be a similar interaction between intelligence and creative metacognition such that people of lower intelligence overestimate their creativity – particularly their less creative ideas (Karwowski, Czerwotka, & Kaufman, 2018).

Can we therefore infer that people with low creative metacognition are unlikely to produce worthwhile contributions? We return to the central premise of this paper, which is that our aim is not to identify creativity that is better than or even at the same level as currently recognized creativity. Rather, we hope to highlight creativity that may progress over time or simply be rewarding to the creator. In this manner, we have similar aims as Beghetto and Kaufman (2013) in recognizing mini-c creativity or to those who study creative self-efficacy (Beghetto, 2006; Jaussi & Randel, 2014). Some mini-c may evolve to little-c (or higher) and some may not, but there is still value in all mini-c. Creative self-efficacy may not necessarily lead to more creative work, but it is often associated with positive outcomes.

It is also important to note that people with low creative metacognition may well lack self-insight not out of any deficit, but rather because they are not fully aware of the breadth of what can be considered creative. As mentioned, most laypeople are more likely to associate creativity with the arts (Glăveanu, 2014; Hass, 2014). One study examined student implicit beliefs about their own creativity and other people's creativity. They saw creativity in other people as being associated with individualism and popularity yet saw their own creativity as being more linked with awkwardness and impulsivity (Ward & Wickes, 2009). People whose creativity is manifested in everyday work, in revisions, or in the service of practical results may

not consider what they do as fitting into their mental schema of creativity. This lack of articulated desire to be creative does not negate its potential contributions.

In order for people to accurately assess their progress and performance, they need to be able to monitor, control, and regulate their thinking and learning (Schraw & Gutierrez, 2015). Such aptitudes are related to the trait of mindfulness, which is being aware and receptive to current surroundings and happenings (Brown & Ryan, 2003). It has been proposed that mindfulness can enhance metacognitive ability, but such calls often come from organizations looking to increase productivity (Kudesia, 2019). Certainly, this connection is straightforward when considering simple tasks. But where does creativity fit into this equation?

Mind wandering can be cast as the polar opposite of mindfulness. It is often defined as thinking that occurs that is unrelated to the task at hand (e.g., Smallwood & Schooler, 2006). As a construct, it is not strikingly different from Singer's (1975) earlier work on daydreaming. Given that daydreaming has long been associated with imagination and creativity (e.g., Zedelius & Schooler, 2016), it makes sense that mind wandering is also linked to creativity (Baird et al, 2012; Gable, Hopper & Schooler, 2019).

Mind wandering is a complex construct. It can arise deliberately or spontaneously and can focus more on realistic content or fantasy (see summary in Barnett & Kaufman, in press). Its relationship with creativity can also be moderated by mindfulness, metacognition, and other intellect-related variables. Much depends on the type and extent of mind wandering. One study found no overall connection between state mind wandering (induced in an incubation period, as in Baird et al, 2012) and creativity, but did find a connection with fantasy-based mind wandering (Smeekens & Kane, 2016). However, the authors suggest that, based on the data, it may be that

creative people are more likely to embrace a mind wandering task and think of more fantastical concepts during incubation rather than fantasy-based mind wandering enhancing creativity.

Agnoli, Vanucci, Pelagatti, and Corazza (2018) examined the interaction of mindfulness and mind wandering. The mindfulness component of describing (i.e., being able to communicate well) was most predictive of creative achievement. However, people high on mindfulness-describing who were low on spontaneous mind wandering were the least original. The authors postulate that someone who suddenly has unrelated thoughts and spends time articulating them will not have time or energy for being creative. They also found that people high on both deliberate mind wandering and on mindfulness were the most original – but people high on deliberate mind wandering and low on mindfulness were the least original. Again, this interaction makes sense intuitively. If you are consciously having many different thoughts and are aware of your process, then you can use these connections to make more remote associations and be more original (Mednick, 1962). Consistently, and bringing the discussion back to metacognition, students with high trait mind wandering showed higher creativity only if they also had high metacognition (Preiss, Ibaceta, Ortiz, Carvacho, & Grau, 2019).

In summary, awareness can mean many things. A giraffe pressing its painted nose onto a canvas may be completely unaware that any type of creativity is happening (and, likely, would not be able to define the construct in any coherent manner). People who have misconceptions about what creativity entails may not realize when they are being creative. Those with particularly poor creative metacognition may not recognize their creative work. And, finally, people may be unaware of their surroundings and staying more in their head.

Spark

There are other times when what is missing for creativity to be recognized as such is the initial Spark. The originator of the initial idea that drives a creative work is often seen as the true visionary, yet there are many people whose creative contributions continue on a path established by another creator. Sometimes this sequence happens simultaneously, with a lead creator being in charge of many others. Other times, it can happen sequentially, with people following up on earlier creative work years or even generations later.

When this shadow creativity occurs simultaneously, it typically includes what H. Becker (2008) called “support personnel.” He used this term to designate those people (in this instance, in the arts) who make a big creative achievement possible by working with the creator. Their contributions are rarely visible. Support personnel are not limited to the arts, of course. Ross and Wolfe (2016) analyze the Hoover Dam as a “hero project” (a term coined by E. Becker, 1973). Such large-scale, Big-C endeavors have a profound impact on everyone working on them at all levels of involvement and eminence (Kaufman, 2018).

Support personnel who work behind the scenes often get little credit. Film is considered a director’s medium, for example; the auteur theory holds that the director is the “author” of the film (Stam, 2017). Legendary director Alfred Hitchcock, for instance, famously once said that actors were no different than cattle (Jeffries, 2015). Although actors are generally recognized for their creativity, much of the crew are not. Some professions (such as art directors of cinematographers) may not be known to the lay public but have guilds and even their own awards. Others, however, may fall through the gaps.

Although the auteur theory may not be applied to television as commonly, the author of a television show is usually considered to be the creators and producers of a show. They establish

the look, feel, and tone of the show, and often stay involved for several years. Some show franchises (such as *CSI* or *Law and Order*) last more than a decade and have spinoffs. In most cases, the original creators have long moved on. The new person brought in to oversee season nine or ten is tasked with many of the same responsibilities – assembling and leading teams of writers and directors, working with the cast and guest stars, and being the one who speaks to both the producing studio and the crew. Such people may be appreciated within the industry, but Norman Lear or Aaron Spelling and other well-known show creators are known by many entertainment fans. In recent years, established show creators often get the opportunity to direct big-budget Hollywood movies (such as J. J. Abrams). The showrunners who make sure that the show continues to be active and viable get little credit. Dick Wolf created all of the *Law and Order* shows; he is not a household name, but many television fans in the United States may know his work. But Rick Eid, who was the showrunner for season 18 of *Law and Order*, is a footnote.

One can debate if a showrunner is a simultaneous or sequential shadow creator (when Eid was running *Law and Order*, Wolf was still broadly overseeing the show). Other times it is clearly sequential. In historical times, it might be a painter or sculptor following in the tradition of another, better known artist (perhaps even signing the original artist's name). In modern times, internet culture has encouraged collective and anonymous forms of creativity (Glăveanu & Kaufman, 2019).

Being creative online can often fall into this category. Teenagers constantly appropriate songs, images, text, and videos and then create new content based on them. This mix and remix culture can be highly conducive for creativity (Kligler-Vilenchik & Literat, 2018). Indeed, there have been studies of creativity within text messaging (Tagg, 2013) and in YouTube memes (Xu,

Park, Kim, & Park, 2016). Much of the creativity in these realms is lower-scale, often taking an existing well-known current idea and applying it to a specific situation or slightly new context. Yet dismissing these forms of creative expression as unimportant is dismissive. It is worth noting – and we will return to this issue – that these contributions often have a wide distribution and a high level of social recognition.

Such creativity is not limited to online activity. In the Propulsion Model (e.g., Sternberg et al, 2002), discussed earlier, the first type of contribution discussed is replication. Someone in essence recreating an earlier work may not conjure up images of a very creative person. An art student sketching her own version of a classic painting is someone trying to refine her craft. A company that develops a generic version of a popular drug is seeking a way of earning money without conducting their own research and development. A director who films a sequel or remake that deviates little from the original hit may be labeled a hack. Yet although there are certainly examples that would be hard to argue as representing even shadow creativity, replications should not be overlooked.

Another important example in this category is fan art – it does not have the spark of the initial idea, but it can be highly original nonetheless. Many fans of a creation (such as television show or other popular culture work) do not simply enjoy viewing, playing, reading, or any other type of passive consumption. They prefer to engage interactively. In the past, if fans wanted to develop a community, share ideas, and contribute their own musings on a shared interest, it would often be in the form of self-published zines or VHS tapes distributed independently. As technology and the internet has diminished the power of the gatekeepers (Gangadharbatla, 2010; Henriksen, Hoelting, & Deep-Play Research Group, 2016), fans can much more easily connect and share their work. Writers of fan fiction can reach more people and be able to communicate

with people who read and review their work (Magnifico, Curwood, & Lammers, 2015). The longest piece of fiction ever written is a piece of *Smash Bros* fan fiction that is over four million words long and has been reviewed more than 3,000 times (Romano, 2013). In addition, different subcultures may engage in cocreation with their own wikis about their joint passion (Booth, 2009). Fan creation is not limited to the basic arts; it can include everything from dressing up as a favorite character (Chen, 2007) to developing sexually explicit content (Anisimowicz & O'Sullivan, 2017).

Some fan-based art would be considered replication, such as recording your own version of a hit song and uploading it to SoundCloud, painstakingly recreating a world landmark out of virtual bricks in Minecraft, or refilming a classic action movie shot for shot and uploading the result to YouTube. Other types of creations from fandom may come closer to redirections, defined by the Propulsion Model's (Sternberg et al, 2002) as presenting a new perspective on an older concept. These may include remaking exciting scenes from movies with the actors dressed up like animals or writing parody lyrics for a pop song. Such redirections can become very popular. Disney princesses are frequently redrawn to emphasize a particular theme or agenda, such as imagining them grown up, in jobs, of a different gender or culture, or with more accurately human features.

Fan-based art may sometimes reach the level of what the Propulsion Model would call a forward incrementation, which is adding a new dimension to an existing piece. For example, *CollegeHumor* remade the Alanis Morissette song "Ironic," notorious for providing inaccurate examples of irony, by rewriting the lyrics to reflect situations that were genuinely ironic (Cassels, 2009). Similarly, although some fan fiction is simply stories that take place in the world

of a television show or book series, others try to answer unresolved questions or provide backstories for smaller characters.

In the end, it is interesting to contemplate that many of these fan creations are seen, read, or listened to by many more people than those who consume obscure literary fiction, atonal modern classical music, or a tiny independent movie. Obviously, popularity does not mean there is any artistic merit to the works; several studies have shown that novices do not agree with experts on the creativity of movies (Plucker, Kaufman, Taylor, & Qian, 2009) or poems (Kaufman, Baer, Cole, & Sexton, 2008), among others. Critical appraisal is a spotty predictor of box office performance (Simonton, 2009). We are in no way suggesting that fan-created art is better than more obscure professional work; we are not even proposing that the two are of the same quality. We are simply noting that dismissing artwork because it is created by fans as a tribute to something they love is both unfair and inaccurate. It may lack the spark of initial creation and stay at a mini-c or little-c level, but it is creative in its own right.

Exceptionality

Last but not least, there is Exceptionality. Creative outcomes often need more than being novel and useful, especially in moderation. Creative recognition often comes from their exceptionality of ability to stand out when compared to other productions. Two examples of shadow creativity are ephemeral contributions by novices and habitual forms of creativity.

When a novice is creative during the learning process, it is often called mini-c (Beghetto, 2016; Beghetto & Kaufman, 2011) and can be seen as a first step in a trajectory that can either result in positive learning outcomes (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2013) or higher levels of creative production (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009). These manifestations of mini-c are well-understood by

researchers and laypeople alike (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2013a). Yet mini-c happens to people of all ages and of all educational backgrounds. There are many times when mini-c creativity takes place outside of a classroom and does not necessarily lead to further creative development.

For example, museums are a shared location where a great deal of personal creativity can take place (Smith, 2014). Educated adults going to a museum are surrounded by new information, emotions, and stimuli. As they experience and discover art, science, history, or culture, they are making new mental connections and metaphors. Perhaps they forget these ideas as soon as they leave, and their journey is only temporary. Conversely, they may apply their new insights to a current project at work, thereby using their acquired knowledge toward improving a Pro-c creation. But these thoughts may instead be shared in a passionate conversation with a friend, or else allowed to flourish in their imagination for several months. There may be no further pursuit of these ideas, but their mini-c experience is still real and powerful. However, when such lower-level creativity occurs without the trappings of potential or education, but as an outcome in their own right, it gets little respect in the creativity pantheon.

A lack of exceptionality is not restricted to beginners. Turning to our second type of example, creativity is often thought of as the exact opposite of habit. Whereas habits tend to be repetitive, predictable, and dull, creativity is spontaneous, surprising, and leads to exciting new outcomes. And yet, as early psychologists consistently argued (Baldwin, 1894; James, 1890), and contemporary research supports (Orbell & Verplanken, 2015; Phillips & Gardner, 2016), most of our daily activities are habitual in nature. This is due to the fact that habits presumably save us mental and physical energy, reduce cognitive load, make the world more predictable, and generally facilitate our action within it by being more or less automatic (e.g., Aarts & Dijksterhuis, 2000). Despite habits being seen more positively, considering these two concepts as

a dichotomy is still common; Simonton (2016) argues that habitual responses are the opposite of being creative. The implication of this view, however, is that creativity is a rare occurrence rather than the norm of our existence. The risk becomes to arrive at an elitist and exclusive conception of creativity as something revolutionary, difficult to achieve, and generally reserved for some people or some activities and not others (Montuori & Purser, 1995).

Certainly, there are creative accomplishments that only emerge when someone has extended time, a great deal of unconventional thinking, and the ability to break from routine. However, reducing the whole category of what is “creative” to these parameters would make it unachievable for many. Our goal is not to blindingly or ideologically stretch the concept so that it becomes more inclusive and participative (although there are many good reasons to advocate for this; Beghetto & Kaufman, 2007; Clapp, 2016). Instead, we argue that taking habitual creativity out of the shadows is a valid conceptual move and also one that is long overdue (see Glăveanu, 2012).

It is easy for regular actions to be unnoticed. Part of the way that creativity is represented in Sternberg’s theory of successful intelligence (Sternberg, 1996; Sternberg, Kaufman, & Grigorenko, 2008) is in one’s ability to adjust to new stimuli such that the information is eventually automatically processed. In other words, it may take a great deal of cognitive resources to handle a new situation, such as driving a car or learning the latest smartphone. However, over time we partake in these activities without thinking, much as we can wash our face without actively using our brain. Making any activity habitual frees up our mind to think about other ideas, much as someone can reduce cognitive load when engaging in an activity within an area of expertise (Kalyuga, 2011).

Habituation allows us to free our attention and direct it towards more challenging aspects of the task. In the end, this regularity is precisely what allows creativity in habitual action to flourish: a well-exercised habit allows someone to focus on the novel or aesthetic dimensions of what she is doing (Caffin, Lemieux & Chen, 2006). Yet, because the habitual part generally goes unnoticed, it is also less often the subject of reflection. On those occasions when habitual action is discussed, it is not in terms of “creativity” but rather “efficiency” or “adequacy.”

Crafts, a close companion to the arts, are usually both habitual and lower on the Four C spectrum (Glăveanu, 2017). But while artistic creativity is often favored over other domains (Glăveanu, 2014; Hass, 2014), crafts do not receive a boost from being in the vicinity of the arts. Craft creativity is often overlooked despite the fact that it requires expertise and the final products are usually quite useful (consider, for instance, the many objects surrounding you that are the products of craftwork and their value, both practical and aesthetic). However, because of the artificial dichotomy between crafts, habits, and lower levels of creativity on the one hand, and art, change, and often higher levels of creativity on the other, the producers of handmade objects often find it difficult to think of themselves as “creators” (see Glăveanu & Tanggaard, 2014). They may aspire to be creative, but that these aspirations are formulated in different terms. For example, they might identify as people who continue a certain tradition. Given that all traditions are, in fact, *neo-traditions* (i.e., they need to constantly adapt and re-create themselves in order to continue; Negus & Pickering, 2004), the creativity invested in the products of craft can remain in the shadows within the trappings of the conventional. In studying work orientations, people who have a craftsmanship orientation focus on producing high quality products (Amabile & Pratt, 2016; Lepisto & Pratt, 2017); it is other work orientations (such as passion or calling/service) that are more directly connected to creativity.

Going beyond crafts, creativity lacking exceptionality can also be found in the Do It Yourself (DIY) movement, which is rapidly gaining momentum (Kuznetsov & Paulos, 2010). The DIY philosophy is based on the improvisational nature of answering concrete challenges in efficient ways. One example might be making household repairs without having all the tools of a handyman, such as unclogging a toilet without a plunger or other tools. There is certainly a lot of creativity invested in doing this activity, especially when successful. However, it again flies under the radar of creativity researchers, and even of the actual people engaged in DIY or crafts.

Another example in children is participating in Makerspace activities, which combine a set of materials with additional, optional materials and, of course, anything else the child may imagine. Although some children make products that do not require much individual creativity, others are highly original (Lille & Romero, 2017). Indeed, Makerspace is considered to be conducive to creativity (Wohlwend, Pepler, Keune, & Thompson, 2017). Nevertheless, even if such non-exceptional creators may have a great deal of experience and the public may recognize their products as being useful, many of them don't see themselves as actually "creative."

In summary, due to the lack of perceived exceptionality of the outcome, we are often discouraged from recognizing the creative value of novice, ephemeral, and habitual activities.

Shadow Creativities

The goal of the CASE model is not to argue that the types of works we have referred to throughout the paper are better – or even equal – to creative contributions that easily fit into our current conceptions. It is, instead, to shed light on some types of creativity that tend to be systematically overlooked because they are missing one (or more) of the elements that make up CASE, even as newer theories encompass and highlight more and more expressions of creativity

(Glăveanu, 2015a; Karwowski & Jankowska, 2016; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009; Sternberg et al, 2003). More specifically, the goal of the model is to point us to what may be lacking: capital, of awareness, of spark, and/or of exceptionality. Our assumption is that by knowing which elements are missing from achieving recognition for one's creativity, the creator – or others around him or her – can either work towards addressing the lack (e.g., by building more social capital or cultivate one's awareness that there are more ways than one of being creative) or, alternatively, argue more convincingly why lacking elements like spark or exceptionality don't invalidate the actual novelty and appropriateness of one's outcomes (in other words, their creativity).

As presented in Figure Two, there are potential solutions to be explored at the micro and macro level. Creators who are missing capital, for example, can seek collaborators or mentors who are established members of a field. They can consult with those in the field (or their intended audience) to maximize their timing and presentation. Those lacking awareness can utilize feedback and guidance to become more connected to their creative abilities. Creators missing spark can try to find the most original components of their work to develop, if so desired, a creation that can serve to inspire others. Those without exceptionality can hone their expertise, examine their routines, and find what is special in their daily experiences and abilities.

At a macro level, there are many potential research areas that can be further explored. We can study outsiders and underrepresented creators. There is a great deal of work on creativity training and teaching, but we still need to better test and validate specific applied interventions and programs. We can discuss what we mean by originality and authenticity and how these concepts can help or hinder creative output. Finally, we can continue to articulate and study the nature of exceptionality across different creative domains, levels of accomplishment, and cultures.

Early work on creativity (Guilford, 1950; Torrance, 1963) emphasized the creativity in everyone. Creativity was seen as a cognitive process that children, everyday people, and geniuses alike could all share. We want to push for this continued democratization of creativity. Once someone or something is called or categorized as “uncreative” – by a teacher, parent, supervisor, consumer, or the person herself – then it is very difficult to overthrow this label. Indeed, some may lose their impetus to try again (Beghetto, 2014).

Again, we are not arguing that everyone is a creative genius. We are not proposing that everyone and everything is creative at all times; indeed, there are rather specific examples of what is clearly not creative (Glăveanu, 2015b; Simonton, 2018). Instead, we posit that being generous with the definition and scope of creativity costs us nothing – as a society and as researchers. There are ample terms to distinguish levels of creative eminence, specific creative processes or stages, and creative production across a multitude of domains. The accomplishments of a Mozart are not diminished by using the word “creative” to describe someone who composes for independent video games or who makes melodies with half-filled wineglasses or who produces renditions of 1980’s television sitcom themes on a children’s xylophone. Mozart’s legacy is not in jeopardy; further, he also has claim to such descriptors as “legend,” “genius,” and dozens more. We could reserve the word “creative” for Mozart as well but there is little added benefit for him or his music. Yet recognizing creativity that may lack Capital, Awareness, Spark, or Exceptionality makes the construct more accessible for the rest of us and can have wide-ranging consequences.

Our argument resonates, for instance, with old and new research into the developmental benefits of creativity (Rasmussen, Ostergaard & Glăveanu, 2019; Winnicott, 1971). This type of scholarship argues for focusing less on creative end products and their immediate impact or

success (usually appreciated as social recognition), and more on the creative process and its importance for the person's lifespan psychological development. Such benefits can easily be compromised by an environment that adopts narrow definitions of what it means to create.

This message of inclusion is also consistent with a rising interest in creativity's role in social justice. This role has been explored from many angles. Some examine how creativity can relate to countering stereotypes (Gocłowska & Crisp, 2013; Gocłowska, Crisp, & Labuschagne, 2013). Others point to creativity's potential role in increasing fairness in gifted, college, and graduate school admissions (Kaufman, 2010, 2015; Luria, O'Brien, & Kaufman, 2016). Yet another approach examines how equity and a participatory culture can increase creativity in education (Clapp & Jiminez, 2017; Luria & Kaufman, 2017).

Despite these efforts and the immense potential of creative to work towards social justice, in current times creativity remains an elitist, privileged concept. Most colleges that highly value creativity (such as those that have included it as a supplementary admissions variable; Pretz & Kaufman, 2017; Sternberg, 2010) are private schools with high tuition. Parents who want to give their children an edge in creative activities are often faced with exorbitant fees for supplies or lessons. In addition, many celebratory creative events, such as science fairs or end-of-the-year concerts, take place during work hours. If parents want to show support for their child's creative endeavors, it is much easier for them to do so if they have the luxury of a salaried job that allows a flexible schedule. Finally, although there are no differences by gender or ethnicity if creative products are anonymously evaluated (Kaufman, Baer, & Gentile, 2004), creative work that is thought to be by Caucasians (Kaufman, Baer, Agars, & Loomis, 2010) or men (Proudfoot, Kay, & Koval, 2015) is assigned higher ratings – regardless of the gender or ethnicity of the actual creator.

We believe that shining a spotlight on shadow creativity and expanding our conception of what is considered “creative” would not only strengthen creativity’s theoretical link to social justice and psychological development but, more importantly, help creativity become a notion everyone is welcome to appropriate. There is a long way to go in this regard. Even with this new, CASE model, we have not directly addressed the immeasurable creativity needed for many people to simply survive. This creativity is not only desired but required. It is not expert-level in the classical sense of the word, but nonetheless requires exceptional skills. It is, not notable to society at large but vital at an individual level. The homeless, minorities, immigrants, and oppressed groups around the world must constantly use not only their wits but also their creativity to stay alive, to safeguard their human dignity, and work toward a more hopeful tomorrow. Such creativity is, perhaps, the ultimate shadow creativity in that most of us are not even aware it is happening. Recognition in such extreme cases is never enough, but as the bare minimum, it is a place to start.

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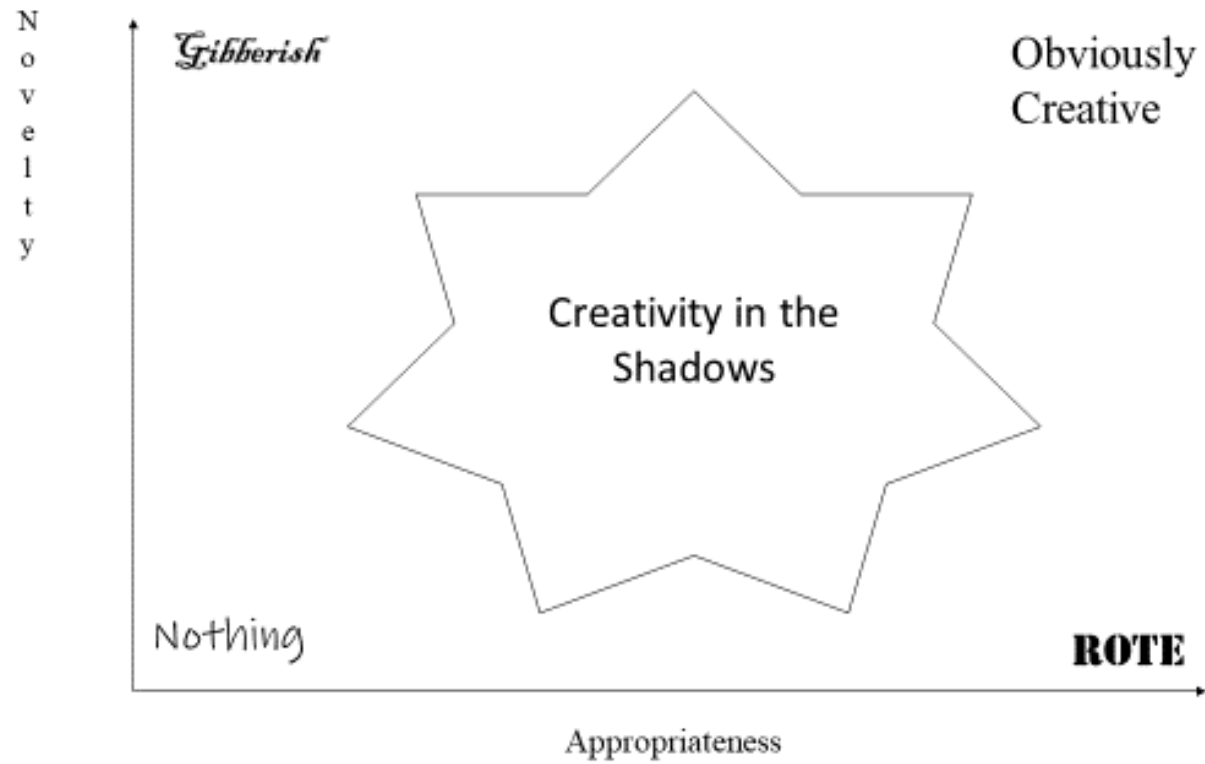
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Figure One

Creativity in the Shadows



Component	Capital	Awareness	Spark	Exceptionality
Definition	The language, tools, status, and timing that position a creator to enter a domain	The self-knowledge that a creator's work is creative and is intended to be so	The initial idea that drives a larger work	The special quality that stands out and makes a creation distinctive
Examples of its absence	A researcher whose scientific paper is rejected because it does not include relevant citations or jargon	Workers who are creative as part of their jobs yet do not realize that it "counts" and may not realize their most creative efforts	A writer who contributes to a narrative initiated by a different creator	Someone whose creative work – regardless of level of accomplishment – is generally seen as being good but never outstanding
What its absence costs the creator	New and possibly valuable ideas that are expressed in the right manner, by the right person and/or at the right time	The self-efficacy that can come from recognizing one's creativity and the metacognition that can help one improve	The appreciation of talents that may be otherwise misattributed or taken for granted	The ability to stand out and be noticed because of one's creative expression
How can this absence be addressed?	The creator can try to pair with an established member of the field or consider the right time for launching a creation	The creator can receive feedback and guidance, allowing practice and improvement, while recognizing that creative expression is diverse and everyone holds the potential to be creative	The creator can learn to discover what is most creative in his or her work and can spark the creativity of others	The creator can build off of their existing expertise and routines to find the optimal outlet or domain to help them reach a creative peak
Suggested area for additional study	Outsiders and underrepresented creators	How feedback, training, or teaching can improve people's accuracy in identifying and performing creative work	Societal discourses regarding of "the original" and "the authentic" and their role in promoting and	The nature of exceptionality across different creative domains, levels of accomplishment, and cultures

			inhibiting creativity	
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Figure Two

The CASE Model