Rethinking Creativity and Approaches to Teaching

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The Systems Model and Creative Writing

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Abstract: Creativity is a term much used but seldom defined. Given that creativity has been seen as a mystical gift, inherited genius, a form of madness, a series of personality traits or a collective social experience it is easy for misunderstandings to occur when discussing books and creative writing. This paper deals with the development of ideas on creativity, including common misconceptions that have real world implications for cultural production. Despite the common assumptions about creativity and the continuing existence of the Inspirational and romantic frames of reference, as well as their strongly held adherence by the general populace, there is now enough research at the empirical and rational level to identify a more useful conception of creativity. For example, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1988,1997,1999) contends that creativity is the result of a system of interactions between the individual writer and the broader social and cultural context in which they write. The system is comprised of a domain of knowledge, a field or social organisation that understands that knowledge and an individual whose task it is to make changes in the domain. This systems model of creativity not only contextualises creative writing and the production of books but provides an insight into a rational basis for the teaching of creativity that goes beyond romantically inspired approaches.

Keywords: Creativity, Creative Writing, Teaching, Csikszentmihalyi, Systems Model

Creativity is a term much used but seldom defined. Most often in a lay sense it is used only in association with artistic activity. Furthermore this limited understanding has tended to view creativity primarily in one of two ways. These can be labelled the inspirational and romantic views (Boden, 2004). The inspirational view owes much to Plato and the Judeo-Christian view of divine creation (Liesch, 1999). For example, although some accounts see the muse as a supplementary source of inspiration, Plato argues a poet is only able to create that which the Muse dictates while he is in a state of irrationality, “for a poet is a light and winged thing, and holy, and never able to compose until he has become inspired, and is beside himself, and reason is no longer in him” (1996: 32). This inspirational view of creativity is still common in modern parlance with writers referring to inspiration from an (often divine) external source. Rudyard Kipling (1937) gave in to his ‘Daemon’; Henry Miller’s (1957) writing came direct from the ‘celestial recording room’; Ray Bradbury’s ‘lighting strikes’ had to be written down immediately (Zdenek, 1983).

The romantic view builds on these ideas but centres creative activity within the extraordinary individual. This is seen most readily in Kantian ideas on genius and developments in thinking from the eighteenth century onward that reacted strongly to the rationalist turn the west had taken post-renaissance. Romanticism proposed a return to nature, reliance on feelings and belief in the inexplicable, all human elements made redundant in the ‘narrow’ view of the world offered by scientific rationalism, the enlightenment and the industrial revolution. Though not anti-rationality or anti-science, Franklin L. Baumer argues proponents of the romantic movement saw the divide between their philosophies as the difference between ‘reason’ and ‘understanding’.

Romantic Man thus contrasts rather sharply with the Rational Man of the Enlightenment or the “classical” tradition. He was at once more many-sided and more complicated. In him “reason” was not pre-eminent (though he was not necessarily anti-rational….) but took orders from the deepest feelings or intuitions. Few romantics would have disagreed with Coleridge’s opinion “that deep thinking is attainable only by a man of deep feeling” (1974: 202).

These ideas were maintained by Romanticism in the stereotypes of artistic genius; living alone in a garret and starving for his art, the romantic artist is mythologised as misunderstood genius as well as a social deviant, often characterised as mad, who is permitted to live and act outside the realm of accepted social behaviour.
However, if these perceptions are seen to be true, despite their basis as myth and misconstruction that "are rarely critically examined" (Boden, 2004: 14), then they will continue to have very real implications for the daily practice of creativity. As W.I. Thomas asserts "if men [sic] define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (in Thomas & Thomas, 1928: 571-572). In practical terms, writers operating under commonsense assumptions of divine or supernatural inspiration must wait until they are hit with a bolt from the blue before writing can occur. Furthermore, following the romantic perspective, individuals will either have the talent to be creative or not. As Boden contends this position "implies that the most we can do to encourage creativity is to identify the people with this special talent and give them room to work. Any more active fostering of creativity is inconceivable" (2004: 15).

Fortunately, despite the common assumptions about creativity and the continuing existence of the inspirational and romantic frames of reference, as well as their strongly held adherence by the general populace, there is now enough research at the empirical and rational level to identify a more useful conception of creativity.

Undeniably, creative bursts of insight do occur (Feldman, 1988). However, the evidence suggests that major creative achievements are generally logical extensions of existing ideas, involving long, hard work and many small, faltering steps forward (Weisberg, 1988, 1993). Creative ideas do not come out of nowhere. Creative ideas come from a deep well of experience and training in a specific area, whether it’s music, painting, business, or science. As Snow (1986) puts it, “Creativity is not a light bulb that is in the mind, as most cartoons depict it. It is an accomplishment born of intensive study, long reflection, persistence, and interest” (p.1033) (Weiten, 1998: 373).

In line with these ideas the latest empirical and rational research on creativity, which had a significant impetus from Guilford’s (1950) address to the American Psychological Association, sees creativity as an all inclusive activity. It is common to science just as readily as it is to other areas of human cultural production.

The research, as summarised by Sternberg (1999), Runco & Pritzker (1999), Negus & Pickering (2004) and Sawyer (2006), has tended to eschew Romanticism in favour of more pragmatically focused ideas. By examining the literature to this point (e.g. Stein 1953; Sternberg 1999; Bailin 1988; Csikszentmihalyi 1988; Weisberg 1993; Gardner 1993; Amabile & Tighe 1993; Boden 1994 & 2004), and starting firstly with Aristotle’s ideas on being as the precursor to this rationalist perspective, a definition of creativity can be put forward. It can be claimed that creativity is:

an activity whereby products, processes and ideas are generated from antecedent conditions by the agency of someone, whose knowledge to do so comes from somewhere and the resultant novel variation is seen as a valued addition to the store of human knowledge (McIntyre, 2006: 202).

While there has been a focus at the level of the individual in the research, Sternberg and Lubart have argued more recently that these have most often left “an incomplete explanation of the phenomenon… recently, theorists have begun to develop confluence approaches to creativity” (1999: 9-10). These confluence approaches can be seen in the work of Amabile (1983, 1996), Gardner (1993), Simonton (1994, 2000), Sternberg & Lubart (1999), Dacey & Lennon (1998) and Csikszentmihalyi (1988, 1997, 1999) as well as the extensive work on cultural production presented by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977, 1993, 1996).

For Pierre Bourdieu cultural practice is underpinned by the concepts he labels ‘cultural capital’, ‘the field’, the ‘field of works’ and an individual’s ‘habitus’. Cultural capital is a “form of knowledge, an internalised code or a cognitive acquisition which equips the social agent with empathy towards, appreciation for or competence in deciphering cultural relations and cultural artefacts” (in Bourdieu, 1993: 7). In order for a person to become a practitioner utilising the knowledge base, the internalised codes and manner of thought of that cultural domain, that person must firstly acquire the cultural capital pertinent to it. In acquiring this knowledge they undergo a long process of inculation or immersion in the knowledge developing a feel for it, a sense of how it operates. Bourdieu (1977) calls this feel for the way things are done habitus. Habitus is, in part, operative in relation to a person’s sense of how the field operates.

According to Bourdieu (1977), fields are structured and dynamic spaces built around objective sets of social relations which denote arenas of production and circulation of goods ideas and knowledges. The field is occupied by other agents who also have access to the cultural capital pertinent to the field. It is to the field that a cultural producer must take their work in order to have its merits judged as a worthwhile piece of cultural production. A cultural producer is therefore the person who instigates a creative work drawing on the specific sets of knowledges pertinent to their cultural practice, a set of knowledges that exist within the traditions and conventions of that practice. In doing so they exemplify the notion
that “practice is always informed by a sense of agency (the ability to understand and control our own actions), but that the possibilities of agency must be understood in terms of cultural trajectories, literacies and dispositions” (Schirato & Yell, 1996: 148).

This possibility of action occurs within, or is produced, in a field of works. The field of works is the accumulated cultural work done to this time in a particular field. According to Jason Toynbee (2000), it includes techniques and codes of production. For Bourdieu the “heritage accumulated by collective work presents itself to each agent as a space for possibles, that is as an ensemble of probable constraints which are the condition and the counterpart of a set of possible uses” (1996: 235). Bourdieu’s life’s work, as he claimed himself, was an attempt to resolve the agency-structure dichotomy. His concern with cultural production, coming about through practice that is both enabled and constrained and is manifest in a person’s habitus, allows for the conception that creativity may occur in just this way.

In a similar manner Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi contends that creativity is the result of a system of interactions between the individual writer and the broader social and cultural context in which they write. Csikszentmihalyi sees this complex system as less Ptolemaic than Copernican in operation (1988). He doesn’t ascribe sole responsibility for creativity to the productive agent but neither does he assert that creativity is beyond the locus of individual producers and located solely within the structures of the societies and cultures they inhabit. He suggests that the system is comprised of three interactive components: a domain of knowledge; a field or social organisation that understands that knowledge; and an individual whose task it is to make changes in the domain. He argues that

for creativity to occur, a set of rules and practices must be transmitted from the domain to the individual. The individual must then produce a novel variation in the content of the domain. The variation then must be selected by the field for inclusion in the domain (1999: 315).

It is the task of the person working within the creative process to produce some variation in this inherited information or domain.

The person may be an unusual individual in one of many ways pre-disposed to make variations whether biological, social or environmental. For instance they may be born with sensitivities to light or sound not possessed by others or have a set of environmental factors operate on them such as sibling position, social class or educational opportunities which predisposes them to information processing strategies in an unusual way. In terms of family background, studies on commonalities in writers’ backgrounds have not painted a pretty picture. Unhappy childhoods were a common factor for more than 80% of poets, novelists and playwrights in a study by Goertzel and Goertzel (1962). Jane Piirto (1998, 2002) revealed more than 60% of the writers in her study had experienced some form of trauma during childhood. However, Swiss psychoanalyst Alice Miller (1990) argued a traumatic environment could be the catalyst for creativity when warmth was also present. In many of the case studies she presents, love, protection and physical affection from family or friends redirected a potentially destructive experience into creative behaviour. If what the writer produces is seen to be creative by the people working within this area then creativity is said to have taken place. “It is the task of the ‘field’ to then select promising variations and to incorporate them into the domain” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988: 330).

The ‘domain’ is the symbol system that the person and others working in the area utilise; it is the culture and conventions the person is immersed in. In his in-depth interviews with creative writers, for example, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) found writers were more voracious readers than people in other creative areas, immersing themselves in the domain of the word constantly and over long periods of time. There are, Csikszentmihalyi asserts, three main ways the domain can contribute to the creative system. These include the clarity of structure of the domain, its centrality within the culture, and its accessibility (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997: 38). Clarity of structure within the domain works to hinder or help creativity, by providing a basis for assessment. The more consistent the internal logic of a domain, the more there is no doubt about what constitutes novelty and the easier it is to make decisions about creativity within the domain. For example, with subjective appraisal of content and the reliance on personal taste within the field, as well as formal and informal rule systems such as grammar and genre, it is not always easy to resolve problems of creativity within the domain of fiction writing. In comparison, physics is an exceptionally well structured domain that makes it much easier to perceive what a creative contribution is within it. In terms of the centrality within a culture of particular domains, to use the example of physics again, this is a central discipline within western societies. Therefore it is easier for those concerned with this domain to access resources to contribute to creative endeavours within it. The allocation of resources to produce books is more problematic. The third dimension, accessibility, is important for creativity as the speed with which information is processed within the domain correlates directly to the amount of novelty the domain is capable of generat-
ing. Traditional channels of support from the government alone in the form of libraries, primary and secondary school English curricula and direct funding of the arts and arts programs mean the domain of books and creative writing is accessible not only to current writers but also encourages and fosters interest from children, teenagers and adults of all ages. New technologies have also changed the creative writing domain. Short stories and poetry published on the internet, for example, may generate novelty at a faster rate than longer manuscripts published in a physical book format. The dramatically longer turn-around time for book-length manuscripts means members of the field such as fellow writers and the book-reading public are exposed to this incoming novelty at a slower rate. These field members are thus delayed in their decision making by comparison.

For Csikszentmihalyi “the easiest way to define a field is to say that it includes all those who can affect the structure of a domain” (1988: 330). ‘Field’ in this sense is related to the social organisation of the world the person operates in. A field “is necessary to determine whether the innovation is worth making a fuss about” (1997:41). Publishers, editors, agents, arts committees, judges, peer groups, teachers, workshop leaders, booksellers and even readers make up the field of creative writing, each making judgements on manuscripts and books based on their own knowledge of the domain. Csikszentmihalyi (1988) asserts that fields can affect creativity in three different ways. Firstly, they may be reactive or proactive. A reactive field, according to this thesis, does not solicit novelty whereas a proactive one does by actively demanding novelty from the artists concerned. Some of the social organisations that govern fiction writing, for example, require constant novelty in order to maintain their commercial base. In this way, reactive publishing companies may utilise services such as Bookscan (2006) to act as filters to assess book buying patterns and commission works in a particular genre; proactive publishers, on the other hand, may accept unsolicited works and choose future books from a slush pile of manuscripts. Secondly, the field can effect creativity by choosing a broad or narrow filter in the selection of novelty. As Csikszentmihalyi asserts;

Some fields are conservative and allow only a few new items to enter the domain at any given time. They reject most novelty and select only what they consider best. Others are more liberal in allowing new ideas into their domains, and as a result these change more rapidly. At the extremes, both strategies can be dangerous: It is possible to wreck a domain either by starving it of novelty or by admitting too much unassimilated novelty (1997: 44).

Thirdly, the field effects creativity by being “well connected to the rest of the social system and thus able to channel support” into that particular domain (1997: 44). Public and professional access to members of the field of creative writing is growing rapidly with a rise in the number of writing festivals, retreats, centres, workshops and dedicated diplomas and degrees. Not only are writers more exposed to their readers than ever before, but editors, publishers and agents have a more visible public profile as well. In terms of funding from the social system, financial support can be channeled not only from government sources such as England’s Arts Council, Australia’s Literature Board and the United States’ National Endowment for the Arts (Harris, 1973) but also from private enterprise (Chomsky, 1998) and not-for-profit organisations like Americans for the Arts.

In summing up his model Csikszentmihalyi (1997) gives a neat analogy that explains the interdependence of the three components in this system. He uses the idea that a fire cannot exist without tinder, air or a spark. However, it is the spark or, in this case, the person that appears to be active in the process and thus is seen as having chief responsibility. Not so according to Csikszentmihalyi. “The spark is necessary but without air and tinder there would be no flame” (1997: 7). Each is equally important in the production of the flame. Given this reconceptualisation of creativity by Csikszentmihalyi it could be argued that this systems model of creativity not only recontextualises creative writing and the production of books but provides an insight into a rational basis for the teaching of creativity that goes beyond romantically inspired approaches.

While the model sets up a strong action relationship between an individual, the society they exist in and the culture they operate with, decisions about the eventual value of what results from that relationship are not governable by the individual in the long term. Whether the writer is lauded in the wider societal and cultural context for their contribution to literature this praise may be well beyond their personal control. In this regard there have been a set of bipolar oppositions used to account for the difference between so called ‘ordinary’ creativity versus ‘extraordinary’ creativity. Some have been labeled big ‘C’ versus little ‘c’ while others have been called paradigm-shifting versus everyday creativity.

Looking at the same set of differentiations, Margaret Boden (1994) applied a further set of names to the same phenomena. For her the first form is personal or psychological in basis. She labels this P creativity. P creativity is valuable if that person hasn’t had that idea before. It is irrelevant to the individual if other people have had the idea and how many times they’ve had the idea. On the other hand Boden’s second category, historical creativity, or what she
calls H creativity, possesses value if it is both P creative and no-one in human history has ever had the idea before. H-creativity is thus the most difficult to pin down as many ideas attributed to one person have in fact been partially attributable to others (Charles Darwin’s work on evolution being a prime example) and some creative ideas have been lost or simply misunderstood at one point in time and then reappeared later (Bach’s musical pieces and their eventual recognition as truly creative works serves as an example here). Boden (1994) makes the pertinent observation that it is these vagaries of recognition that make it hard to systematically explain H creativity. She states that “there can be no psychological explanation of this historical category. But all H-creative ideas, by definition, are P-creative too” (1994: 77). The implication is that there is a continuum from one form to another which lessens the supposed distinctions. This idea not only gives a useful supplemental framework for explaining paradigm-shifting examples of creativity but it also, importantly, highlights the similarities that exist between these ways of being creative. In doing so Boden’s ideas again reinforce the notion that creativity is not the result of operating with some universally fixed and transcendent process but is, in part, a matter of selection by contextually dependent processes.

If this is the case then there are factors involved in creativity that individuals have little or no control over. As Boden (1994) contends, they cannot govern the way society will react to a revolutionary idea or, as Csikszentmihalyi (1996) asserts, govern the era or the family they are born into nor govern the sets of genes acquired from that family. Despite this, there are still many factors, many external to an individual orientation, that can be controlled or manipulated that themselves have implications for both the learning and teaching of writing. Building on the work of Csikszentmihalyi, Keith Sawyer (2006) suggests an individual can actively choose a domain, a body of knowledge and works, out of the ones on offer that is right for them. Fiction writers, for example, may have a preference for the format of their writing based on their earlier experience with books, short stories, scripts, plays or poetry. They may also be taught to acquire knowledge of particular subcategories that influence their work such as early Greek tragedy, English pastoral poetry or modernist American narrative. Others may be lead to choose a particular literary style, technique or genre within creative writing because of a personal preference for either problem solving or problem finding.

Sawyer argues most creative writers in the loosely structured literary genre use a problem finding style where the story develops as writing continues. “They don’t know what they’re doing until they’ve done it” (2006: 211). The crime writing genre, however, is a more tightly defined domain, often requiring pre-planning and in-depth research, which may be more attractive to those interested in problem solving. Once a domain is chosen, Sawyer (2006) argues it is important to focus on it, rather than divide attention between several domains as it often takes years of internalising knowledge and building skills until it becomes, in Bourdieu’s terms, part of the writer’s habitus. It is a teacher’s responsibility to foster a sharp focus on a particular domain and help in actively developing aspects of their writing student’s habitus.

In conjunction with this a person would be best aided by those teaching them to learn to choose a field, a social organisation that understands and makes decisions about the domain, that is right for them. Writers may decide or be taught early on whether to freely disseminate work on the internet, enter competitions, self-publish or to publish with an independent press or an international corporation, all of which have varying decision making processes dependent on which field one enters into. Other writers may be taught, or learn, to use a combination of these options at various stages in their career depending on the degree of development, experience or confidence they have learnt. While the solitary nature of the writing process may attract introverted personalities, there is a growing expectation by the field for writers to be involved in publicity and promotion through book tours, speaking engagements and festival appearances. Those writers interested in self-publishing, for example, may need to be taught to interact with booksellers and self-promote in order to get their books to the public. As Sawyer states, “the most successful creative people are very good at introducing their ideas to the field” (2006:309).

An introverted person may prefer to publish on the internet, publish anonymously or under a pseudonym, or arrange a deal with a publishing company that requires little to no networking. Teachers may need to identify these types and guide them appropriately.

Being taught an awareness of the field, its structures and selection process is important to a creative writer. This knowledge will help the individual negotiate entry into this active arena of social contestation. Overall, Sawyer (2006) suggests a field is more likely to experience creativity if it has: a system of training in place to aid the individual’s learning of the domain; a system to identify potential new comers and provide mentoring; and provision for newcomers to work and gain vital experience in the domain. Some connection and interaction with the field may be necessary in order to gain support, albeit emotional or financial, to allow creative work to take place and continue. Teachers need to thus not only teach the domain knowledge but give equal importance to establishing or increasing knowledge of the field.
Support from the field can also come in the form of collaboration. Despite the often romantic image of the writer engaged in a solitary activity, collaborating with other people working in the same area is often built into the process of publication. Writers build relationships with critical readers such as agents, editors, teachers or even family and friends, who may each contribute to the creative work through suggestions and comments. Writers have experienced these contributions at many levels from radical restructuring of the plot line to tightening of language and changing character names (Roberts et al, 2002; Phelan, 2005). This level of feedback can also help writers learn previously unknown or developments in the domain. Creative writing classes not only engage students in critiquing a work’s form and content but also encourage networks of like-minded people, such as writers’ groups, which can be crucial to developing new and unlikely ideas. Members of writers’ groups such as these can act not only as critical readers for each other’s work but also help develop ideas in new or unexpected directions. Sawyer (2006) argues the sharing of ideas is more important here than credit for individual contributions; a fear of losing out could prevent a critical collaboration. “Ultimately, your own idea won’t be as good as it would have been if it had gone through the collaborative process” (2006: 311). However, the field in these circumstances must be assessed wisely. With copyright and hence publishing rights linked to a writer’s income, it is necessary for individuals to choose collaborators they trust as well as those who will be motivated enough to push them beyond their comfort zones. This ability to ‘read’ the field can be learned and a teacher, acting as a learned mentor, can guide the student through these potential legal minefields.

Sawyer (2006) also suggests that a writer needs to be intrinsically motivated. However, there is too much evidence to say that extrinsic motivators are just as crucial for creativity to occur (see, for example, Deci & Ryan, 1985; Eisenberger & Shanock, 2003). On the evidence it seems that the best motivator for individuals is to ignore whether they are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated and simply become motivated. This is, it is argued, often done through seeking out what has become known as the ‘flow’ experience. According to Csikszentmihalyi (1990), flow occurs when a sense of clarity and enjoyment derived from a balance of skill and challenge leads to an ‘autotelic’ experience, where the activity is worth doing for its own sake. This experience appears to drive writers back to the work time and time again. Sawyer, however, argues even those who master a domain need to push themselves to experience flow.

The flow state of peak experience tends to occur when your skills are matched by the challenges of the task. If you find that your work is becoming easier as your experience and skill level increases, then don’t just sit back and get comfortable. Instead, find a way to increase the challenge facing you. Seek out new projects, move to a new company, make a lateral move, change careers (2006: 310).

The experience of this state of flow acts as motivation to pursue writing even during seemingly mundane or tedious tasks.

Despite the romantic and inspirationist myths portraying creativity as easy or instantaneous, creative writing and publication often require long hours of hard work. Realising that inspiration comes about from perspiration and, despite some deeply held beliefs, not some mystical muse sitting on their shoulder, a lot of writers can be taught to foster creative work habits that maximise their productivity. For many writing students this means being taught disciplined work habits through dedicating long blocks of time to sitting at their desk and drafting, writing, revising and editing (Phelan, 2005). For individuals absorbed in their task this will be no effort. Time may seem elastic. Rather than constraining creativity, Sawyer advises these types of work habits engender numerous insights. “Expect creative breakthroughs to come in small mini-insights while you’re doing the work” (2006: 311). Conversely insights may also come during periods of rest.

Creative people work harder than other people, but paradoxically, they also take more time off. Mini-insights often come during a period of idle time that immediately follows a period of hard work. In fact, creative people seem to sleep longer than average (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, pp. 351-355). People who work 365 days a year and never take a vacation rarely realize their creative potential (Sawyer, 2006:311).

Sawyer’s final advice to those looking to learn creative habits is to set out to be confident and take risks: “timidity, anxiety and fear always get in the way of creativity” (2006: 311). By being taught to find the right domain, as well as a supportive field and productive environment to work in, writing students who experience a few successes often build the confidence to take further risks. Failures also prove to be excellent teaching and learning tools and strong motivators in moving forward with many experienced writers and creative writing teachers advising that a new writer should collect and celebrate rejection letters. Indeed, many writers are often unaware of how many failures it takes to create a success. Many successful people “seem to others to be arrogi-
ant or to have big egos, because they have immense self-confidence” (Sawyer, 2006: 311-312) borne of failures and most importantly success that allows them to take risks. As Sawyer asserts however;

Being confident isn’t the same thing as being naïve. Confidence will come from years of preparation in the domain, and from additional years of hard work once you’ve learnt the domain (2006: 312).

Ultimately writing students should be taught that it takes more energy to be a creative thinker rather than a routine thinker and there is no guarantee that the field and domain will turn personal creativity into cultural or historical creativity (Boden, 2004) and allow a writer to go beyond their personal narrative and enter the history books. However, as has been explored above this does not mean that creativity is entirely beyond the control of the agency of the individual writer or those teaching them. Whether in the arts or sciences, the individual can be taught to engage fully in creative activity and to place themselves within a particular creative milieu.

In summary, the misconceptions of romanticism and the inspirationist approach have had genuine and real world implications for creativity and cultural production. Despite the continuing existence of these inspirational and romantic misconceptions, there is now enough research at the empirical and rational level to identify a more useful conception of creativity. It has been argued here that the systems model of creativity not only contextualises creative writing and the production of books but provides an insight into a rational basis for the teaching of creativity that goes beyond the romantically inspired approaches. As such, a reorientation and reconceptualisation of approaches to teaching and learning creativity are necessary.

References


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Phillip McIntyre has worked as a music journalist interviewing and writing feature stories on a wide range of musicians including David Bowie, John Fogerty, Paul Kelly, Don Walker, Daniel Johns, Mandawuy Yunupingu, Tim Rogers and many others. He also owns and operates an audio production company, producing and engineering audio and video recordings. A number of the music videos he has produced, directed and edited have been broadcast on ABCTV and he continues to produce and engineer CDs for local artists. He is a respected music industry figure in Newcastle having worked with well known professionals such as Silverchair, TMG and the Cockroaches. His academic interest is in communication, creativity and cultural production. His PhD research investigated the creative process of songwriters as cultural producers and he sits on the Editorial Board of Perfect Beat: The Pacific Journal of Research into Contemporary Music and Popular Culture. He currently teaches courses in the discipline of Communication and Media at the University of Newcastle. He is the Communication and Media Honours Program Convenor in the School of Design, Communication and Information Technology.

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