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Collective creativity: wisdom or oxymoron?

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate ways in which collective creativity and individual creativity exist in an "and/both" rather than in an "either/or" relationship.

Design / **methodology approach** – This study uses and interrelates a number of dualities using "metalectics", the principal task of which is to balance seemingly conflicting opposites by revealing them and locating them on their strengths.

Findings – Collective creativity, as a bridging metaphor, renders itself as an oxymoron, both literally and as an outcome: where individual and collective creativity are dichotomised, diversity is treated as a constraint, and collaboration is confused with coordination.

Research limitations/implications – An essential of creativity is deviancy, and that this has to be valued to bring about change.

Practical implications – Heterogeneous communities of practice should not be confused with homogenous communities of practice because this causes artificial dialogues that destroy the very creativity they claim to ignite.

Originality/value – The paper offers an alternative way of thinking, arguing for a move away from simplified, unbalanced perspectives of creativity that focus on one-dimensionality and asymmetry.

Introduction

Although the history of humankind holds many examples of individual creativity that are confined to the mental labour of a lone genius working in isolation, in an oppressive social setting that disapproves of deviance, many human achievements, including that of walking on the moon, have involved the collaboration between many creative individuals, each with unique experiences, varying interests and different perspectives. Such heterogeneous communities of interest form naturally in order to meet a multi-faceted challenge of common concern that cannot be met individually. These communities differ markedly from and must not be confused with homogenous communities of practice, whose members specialise and focus on a certain domain

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undertaking similar work. Although organisations that find themselves in a performance crisis elevate collective creativity and its control to the top of their survival agenda, this seemingly easy prize has proved to be illusive. This is strange, because history in relation to creativity shows that the human race has been able to imagine the inconceivable and the apparently impossible. The key question is therefore why collective creativity can be problematic in organisations.

In addressing this question it is important to recognise that creative actions begin with imagination, which is the driver of change and as a mode of thinking is often beyond existing knowledge. Imagination in its creative mental state cannot be touched, tasted, or measured. It has an emotional form before it has a concrete form. Imagination can be seen in the language of freedom used to describe it, which reflects the unworldly understandings of the senses mixed together with practical interpretations of its application (Wittgenstein, 2001). Constructed stories about the process and application of imagination are full of contradictory metaphors, riddled with bewilderment, mystery, faith, belief, and plain prejudice. Imagination is an important part of our "other", embodied, real world that we feel but cannot prove. It is an unpredictable process of creative thought beyond current understanding that begins with someone being confused by existing explanations of reality, or intrigued by their absence. In its pure form, imagination is liberating where there is lawlessness about it; as a process of thinking it is individually self-governed and in this way it is starkly different to those thinking skills needed to acquire knowledge, which are generally passive and can be forms of oppression (Freire, 1972). The nature of creativity is defiant. This is why creativity and social consensus are thought to make uncomfortable bedfellows. Expressions of creativity change things, especially traditional ways of thinking, as the new ideas become accepted. Collective creativity is perceived in current discourse as a commercial opportunity derived from designing the collective context successfully (Taylor, 2002). Yet there is a veil of silence in organisational and management discourses around the anarchistic senses that imagination and its subsequent creative thoughts and acts utilises (Chen, 2006; De Leede and Looise, 2005; Kratzer *et al.*, 2006). Indeed, organisations can simply be seen as representations of political arenas, where organisational story telling defines and controls how senses should be utilised (Easterby-Smith and Araujo, 1999). In the struggle to understand creativity and to move beyond our own situation, a useful starting point would be to ask: "Does current wisdom have to be sacrificed for the other sense, or is it something more than either of these?".

The key consideration is that an over-reliance on traditional rational management methods is held partly to blame for poor creative achievements within organisations. In this connection, there are at least two key factors. First, consensus cultures have been shown to be a process of organising that isolates and often punishes individual difference. Thus, it can be argued that rationally managed organisations have the potential to demonise the very people that have the potential to break free from the mould and think differently (Argyris, 1985). Second, tricky problems in complex markets have been shown to need composite solutions beyond the knowledge and expertise of one person or unitary think tank (Stacey, 2001). The need for change is therefore blindingly obvious. Increasingly, management demands more collective creativity and releases resources in pursuit of achieving it. Nevertheless, there is a general reluctance in training, or awareness sessions to challenge traditional ways of organising. Instead, the individual has become targeted as the devil in the pack. Consequently, programmes designed to improve individual creativity through acquiring more appropriate functional skills have flourished under the banner of change management, creating innovation, and acting creatively. It is as if humankind has never had the wherewithal to be creative, rather than it simply needs to be reignited. Given this apparent reactive, uncompetitive response to a highly competitive problem, it is important to understand why this is happening and what purpose it serves.

The starting assumption in this study is that management decisions have meaning to those who make them. The task here is not to suggest a solution to the creativity problem, but to reveal the meanings behind the actions taken within organisations so that choices and actions can be better understood. By allowing opposing realities to be revealed and the strengths of each developed, this study will demonstrate that organisations fail to bring home the creativity prize because the current practice put in place to generate it, is derived from a mistaken understanding of community and its meaning where creativity is concerned. Further, by revealing a family of creative acts this paper is able to show that one management style and organisational process will not be sufficient to meet all the different types of creativity.

The purpose behind problemitising creativity

It is no secret that conundrums are the lifeblood of social science; truth is difficult to establish, causing (in this case) competing explanations of how to manage for creativity to co-exist. However, there is a significant difference in the way creativity is thought to be liberated when working within an organisation based on collectivism,

whose structures and processes are designed to complement benefits derived from difference, compared to those based on collectivisation, which emphasises the benefits derived from normalising. While both approaches strive to reap added value from organising, their fundamental belief structures are significantly different. Unlike truth, belief is not self-evidenced: it is a cultural construction. The first construction is derived from a heterogeneous community, the second from a homogeneous community. Those who champion individualism, for example, can only perceive collective creativity as useful up to the point where individual needs are met, since in this interpretation of reality individuals are in competition with each other. Any collaboration as a result of an individual being creative can only be short and any community built to aid transactions transient. Social tensions that might arise from "others" being used in any way are nullified by the notion of creative talent. This legitimating process is expressed in everyday metaphors that categorise creative people as special, unique people – champions, eccentric, gifted, natural leaders. Celebrations of these special talents are endemic in organisational stories about success, yet there are no prizes for trying and failing. Thus, within the cult of the individual, at the organisational level of application, lies a conundrum: being creative is actually personally dangerous should the idea fail. Yet all creative acts are fundamentally risky. Given the risk factor involved in being creative within an organisational setting, individuals have to make a choice about the level of risk they are prepared to undertake in the conditions that exist at the time. Eager to celebrate successful creativity, the preponderance of reactive behaviour derived from individuals' personal risk evaluation in a particular organisation has to be demonised; it cannot be acknowledged as a rational and sensible response to a particular condition as this would imply changing the underpinning logic of organising for imaginative outcomes. To protect the underpinning logic of individualism it is necessary that the blame is targeted towards lack of individual creativity, rather than the structure and process of the organisation concerned.

With an organisation constructed to look as if it now needs fixing the conundrum can be resolved. This is because the stage is now set for rational management to take centre stage, "problems" can be targeted and re-branded as personal "opportunities" that should be grasped. To do this the language of certainty replaces the central tenet of creativity, spontaneous emergence. Employees thus become the objects of investigation where management physicians present prognosis and cures based on collectivising organisational communities, which relies on monitoring conformity to process and practice as a way of being productive. Any recognition that actively

using individual difference can be a productive way to be creative would cause the foundations to crumble. Thus the language of the cult of the individual, based on heterogeneity, is deliberately swapped for that of consensus, homogeneity; as if by magic it becomes embedded within rational management to prevent anarchy within. Ignoring the importance of community permits individual employees to be artificially portrayed as the cause of poor imagination within organisations (Dunn, 1991), legitimising the preponderance of training programmes that miss the connections through which creativity merges. Dialogic trickery allows discourse about individual talent to persist at the same time as consensus becomes powerful.

To hide the unpalatable truth that conflict can be productive, rational managers, the physicians, play two character parts using a double dialogue: one which they display to their subordinates and one they keep "behind the scenes" for those who think as they do (Goffman, 1959, p. 107). They create platforms for creativity by bringing together people who think differently, because this is what "state of the art" management discourse demands. Inevitably this fails because whilst it is possible to force cooperation, collaboration is a spontaneous result of interaction between people, which cannot be forced or managed. If people do not bond, no amount of management will change this; without the engagement necessary for creativity the expected outcomes cannot be realised and thus offer the opportunity for what rational mangers do best – regulation. It is at this point that the language of organisational schizophrenia is most explicit. Managers resort to picking on and blaming an individual's incapacity to come up to the mark and be creative; amongst their friends they mourn their lack of success and mollify themselves by resorting to their belief, which gives them solace. Through this process they can claim it is not their fault; how could they possibly achieve anything with such a bunch of misfits? In this way rational managers demand and reject those individuals who have the capacity to think differently. The language of organisational schizophrenia and its use is not a mistake. It is the outcome of a psychotic disorder that is derived from a general dissatisfaction with the amount of creativity rational management creates, combined with reluctance by those who have faith to admit that those very approaches are the cause. Their only choice is to speak in a double dialogue that simultaneously supports belief and disbelief in what they are doing; such self-preservation techniques are appropriate in an individualistic world to hide evident truths and legitimise rational management approaches so that they remain a powerful force.

Those who support collectivism argue that rational managers are missing the key point of creativity – that it is an individual and social activity. They suggest there is a complete failure by rational managers to recognise organisations as "sites of cultural production", with social networks that reflect the community in which the organisation is placed (Herndl, 1993, p. 354). Organising with dependency and interdependency as the ground rules of creative thinking provides connections between discourses, social and cultural structures (Goffman, 1959), and thus a platform from which creativity can be derived. Additionally, the image of managers as rational, emotionless, individuals leaves them without the senses needed to be creative or the language to express it (Chaharbaghi and Cripps, 2004). Hence those who cannot, or will not, accept the social nature of creativity can only live in a schizophrenic world of illusion and denial. They create a "make believe" world where, fooled by their own foolishness, they attempt to fool others. In a fool's paradise the only thing that matters is the ways in which individuals raid the knowledge bank: thus a seemingly harmless metaphor that helps us define creativity has the potential to swap from the merely illustrative to the dangerous (Newman, 2006) as they become expressions of power over discourse.

The double dialogue: overcoming the organisational schizophrenia

A number of interrelated dualities can account for overcoming the organisational schizophrenia surrounding creativity in organisations. These include reason and instinct, content and process, and individual and collective creativity. In capturing these dualities, the methodological underpinnings of this study have been based on what Chaharbaghi and Cripps (2006) term "metalectics", the logic of which they state stems from:

> … the recognition that the world of values is inconsistent because it is made up of antagonistic elements; that full commitment to opposing perspectives simultaneously is impossible, yet each demands total acceptance; that this is not a case of logical contradiction because it involves human values; and that it represents a kind of contradiction that lies at the heart of divergent agendas and practices. Based on these recognitions, metalectics can be considered as a way of describing choice-making through three kinds of complimentary inquiries: namely, an empathetic enquiry, a sympathetic inquiry, and a dialectic inquiry applied dialectically. An empathetic inquiry attempts to understand as much as possible the value assumptions, hidden motivations and arguments of differing positions that support their rationale. A sympathetic inquiry does not deny the value assumptions of assertions, models or paradigms of others but nevertheless raises as many critical

questions as possible about them. The idea is to play the devil's advocate in the role of a critical friend and consider whether alternative arguments are more convincing. At the meta-theoretical level of exploration a dialectic applied dialectically goes beyond competing explanations to establish an alternative way of thinking about choice. A dialectic applied dialectically avoids the limitations of compromise that is reached by a dialectic that is applied objectively i.e. the weakening of polarised discourses through a process of denying the strengths of each position. This is an important point because where compromise between argument positions is reached, individuals have no rational or good reason to accept or reject it. In other words, compromise is founded on an individual's or a group's participation in the solution but weak engagement with the struggle. The artistry involved in metalectics is exposed where the individual perceiving extremes in conflict uses their emotional intelligences such as empathy and sympathy to enable engagement with the struggle without commitment to a particular position. The aim is to keep polarised positions in the struggle of opposition because only through this struggle can true dialectic survive. It is therefore necessary to ensure that each discursive theme is not destroyed. A metalectic discourse is thus one that masters the art of argument using the strengths of each of the diverse argument positions to transform understanding.

In overcoming the organisational schizophrenia surrounding creativity in organisations, using metalectics, reason must first be delineated from instinct. One view is that creative thinking is a process that replaces reason with instinct. Albert Einstein, for example, states: "I'm enough of an artist to draw freely on my imagination, which I think is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited" (Viereck, 1929). Creative people seem unusual because in a largely material world their imagination is not triggered by its usefulness. They are celebrated as unique rule-breakers, because they are not like us and neither are they like each other; with such diversity it is impossible to categorise them as a group or identify particular traits. This poses all kinds of problems when we try to work out how to deal with them, never mind develop them. Grouping, classifying, and labelling become redundant: without these boundaries of description there appears to be no reason or common sense about what they do. Creative people are thus presented as an enigma because their imagination defies what has become accepted as common sense. The real conundrum, hidden by the illusion that imagination is indescribable, is that creative people are not always heroes. The very act of thinking and acting beyond reason can also cause creative people to find themselves feared, resisted, and rejected: feared because such acts cannot be accounted for within accepted reason, thus they increase uncertainty; resisted because creative acts bring about change when it is sometimes unwanted; and rejected because creativity can be seen

as contradicting reason – directly challenging the *status quo*. The truth is, creative people are both loved and hated, and it is this real story that is shrouded by myth when imagination is at play. Where the structure of society is dependent on social cohesion, culturally constructed metaphors serve to hide the unpalatable truth – imagination and the continuous development of knowledge is dependent on the deviant character of creativity, and creative people. To cloak this challenge to social cohesion, Western common sense preferences that which can be touched, felt, or calculated; this has ensured that the stories about creative people makes large an individual's personal character (Ross and Nisbett, 1991). We are encouraged to give thanks to these unique people with innate capabilities: any discussions about unfairness are scuppered.

The "real" story is that social context is a key player in the game of creativity. Social conventions, attitudes, and behaviours have some control over reactions to the new, to its meaning, and to its possibilities (Hagan, 1994). Sometimes this can act to prevent a public launch of new ideas (Miller, 2000). Parables, fables, stories and symbols falsely present creativity as always about personal skills and personal freedom (Alcoff, 1998). In reality, whether a creative act is exploited is a lottery. Difficult to accept creativity does not emerge into the public space as easily as that deemed socially acceptable: "not acceptable" creative deviant thinking will not be celebrated (Foucault, 1980). The level of social concern attached to the expression of deviant thinking can cause its rejection; for example, in the UK eccentric behaviour is admired as an expression of freedom, whereas murder is unilaterally condemned (Hagan, 1994). To be celebrated, deviant creativity has to be socially admired (Taylor, 2002); this might involve having the personality to carry it off, the motivation to keep going, cultural permission to expose your idea, or holding a social position in society that guarantees you a hearing (Bourdieu, 1993).

While the myth of individual talent is deeply embedded in our cultures of understanding, it is not believed: this is demonstrated in the popularity of the Dragons' Den, where innovators are given a "chance" to "make good" by "pitching" for support from a financial dragon. Social limitations over the means to succeed are recognisable and real enough; they also account for why some people who could be creative select instead to conform, retreat, or play the game without any commitment (Merton, 1938a). They may also account for why some choose an alternative deviant game – for example crime – to access material wealth that they would otherwise not achieve (Lea and Young, 1993). Being deviant is a necessary but not sufficient

condition of creativity that benefits society at large. The point of the stories about the heroes of creativity is to show us how we should differentiate between good and bad: they amplify "safe" creativity, that which does not challenge current wisdom and its power structures. In general, the deviant nature of imagination is played down. The metaphors of creativity cloak "good" creativity so that it seems safe; it hides the reality that all creativity is derived from dumping conformity. By association the personality of the creative person is made less dangerous, whereas the truth is that acting from feeling responses creative people are temperamental, unpredictable, and far from safe (Goldie, 2002).

The duality between content and process follows logically from the duality between reason and instinct. To imagine the impossible starts with understanding the limitations of the possible – thus process and content, knowledge and imagination, are intertwined. The process and content metaphors, knowledge and feeling, are placed in opposition to prevent the possibility of thinking about them as intrinsically connected, as different complementary sides of the same coin (Schwartz and Ogilvy, 1979). This is because knowing about creative people and their creative acts, and understanding them, would rely heavily on other intrinsic senses, such as feelings and emotions. This would imply extending the partial view of explanatory sense making that rational management presents. There is a lot to be gained by suppressing this notion by whatever means. The rational argument cites the unpredictability of emotional senses as its weakness. It is true that emotions are very individual, "a person's character, mood, thoughts, feelings, sayings, actions, bodily changes, expressions of emotions, and self interpretations, as well as your own emotions, mood, and character, all play a part in the project of understanding and explaining that person's emotions" (Goldie, 2002, p. 189). However, the language of the emotions is essentially shareable (Hacker, 1990). Creative people are thus not unknowable; they are simply baffling. The workings of these other senses that they use would provide greater depth of understanding in relation to the way they balance and preference the individual and the social – in short, exposing these encounters would add to the account of what creativity is and how it is enacted.

The duality between individual and collective creativity brings together the two dualities considered above in a common cause to overcome the organisational schizophrenia surrounding creativity in organisations. Quite cleverly it could be said, left without a language to express our emotions within organisations, hence an understanding of how we might use our emotions in sense making, creativity is

without explanation; this leaves metaphorical opposites presented as belief and its allegiance. Collective creativity and individual creativity appear as in opposition. Supporters of individual creativity argue you either have it or you do not: "our species is the only creative species, and it has one creative instrument, the individual mind and spirit of man. Nothing was ever created by two men. There are no good collaborations, whether in music, in art, in mathematics, in philosophy. Once the miracles of creation have taken place, the group can build and extend it, but the group never invents anything. The preciousness lies in the lonely mind of a man" (Steinbeck, 1952, p. 131). Supporters of creativity as a collective act argue this view is simply a caricature without real meaning. They argue creativity can only be derived from an interaction between people (Florida, 2002). Presented as opposing metaphors they seem at first glance to offer different explanations of how creativity is derived. However, the meanings of creativity offered by Steinbeck and Florida differ because their beliefs provide different starting points of the journey along the path of creativity. Exposed as descriptions of the same race, that start differently, offers other possibilities.

Connecting the double dialogue: the family of creative acts

In order to place collective creativity in a context within which it is valid, it is necessary to reveal the multiple images of creativity to expose the "family" of imaginative acts and then to identify to which collective and individual creativity might be attached. Picasso is a good example of a creative person driven by something that intrigued him. He played a high-risk, rule-breaking game when he broke away from tradition in his paintings, sculptures and etchings:

> … my first drawings could never have been shown at an exhibition of children's drawings. I lacked the clumsiness of the child, his naivety. I made academic drawings at the age of seven, the minute precision of which frightened me (Walther, 2000, p. 8).

In order to paint what he thought was important Picasso describes his resistance to the norms at play, his self-acknowledged differences of perception, and a fear of knowing he was different. Nevertheless, he continued to do what he thought was right even though his immediate audience failed to celebrate his achievements. In constructing his self-image Picasso was able to continue his work because he relied more on how he thought he should behave as an artist and less on how he was expected to behave: his self-identity remained stable because what he was doing

made sense to him (Giddens, 1991). Using his own senses he was able to keep going, against the odds. His work entered the public domain because it was there, and there was no stopping it. Everyone is involved in this balancing act of identity creation derived from the socially expected and the self-selected (Mead, 1934). This involves weighting the importance of individual free will and an obligation to society in some personal way. Picasso's type of creativity is well and truly "over the edge"; where it transforms the existing system, breaks the boundaries of the understandable by presenting it with an unheard of problem, and replaces it with the unimaginable.

Innovators are also part of the creative family, but they are a different species and the problem they address is in a different class of creative acts to those of Picasso. Innovation is a process of transforming existing ideas into a useful outcome. Innovators are creative within the goals deemed acceptable, though they can sometimes change the means to achieve them if they are excluded from accessing those means (Merton, 1938b). The industrial revolution, for example, relied heavily on the inspiration of the Quakers, who created their own banks to bring their ideas into the public domain: collectively they tackled a root cause of exclusion. Innovators, like the creators, are still rebellious but in a different way and for a different purpose. The individual cannot instigate this type of creativity because they would already be outside of the boundaries by rejecting them. This type of creativity is "leading edge" because the creativity derived is contained by its usefulness. This problem is only definable in a particular paradigm, and without a belief in this paradigm the problem is meaningless: the solutions stretch the boundaries of the understandable, but do not transform them.

Collective creativity, on the other hand, evolves from a spontaneous collaboration between heterogeneous individuals who are drawn together to solve a multi-faceted challenge of common concern, which cannot be met individually. This natural collaboration is received favourably when there is a challenge of common concern. Such collaboration can be viewed unfavourably if it threatens current wisdom, but even so can serve as a catalyst for change: for example, the gay movement was derived from a collective who questioned their behaviour as deviant. Whether it is viewed as acceptable or unacceptable, collective creativity relies on shared forms of knowledge and understanding to derive mutual benefit. Collective creators are in a class of their own; they function in a heterarchy, a system based on equal power sharing, where different types of knowledge and skills function together without any kind of privilege. The character of each group is uniquely derived from the networks

within which the participators participate, and the trust they create (Putman, 1995). Collectively they provide and construct meaning in relation to the problem that must be solved. Collective creation is "leading edge" because the problem is social. Collaboration and trust is derived from existing knowledge, which is then incrementally improved. Problem solutions are about crossing over boundaries, not transforming.

The stark difference between those practising pure creativity, the innovators, and the creative collective is how they and their problem resolution can be classified in relation to the object, the essence of possibility. In pure creativity the possibilities are boundless – there is an abundance of opportunity because these creative people are "over the edge", they break boundaries unconditionally to form the problem outside of reason. In both collective creativity and innovation the possibilities are conditioned by the boundaries created to form society (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). In collective creativity there is an encounter of people around an opportunity. Here the solution is constrained by the definition of the problem, which is derived in a community of practice with all its norming tendencies. This type of creativity is about crossing over accepted boundaries, within reason: that is at the boundaries of acceptability. Similarly, innovation is about "leading edge", constrained possibility. However, in this case problem definition, and solution, is constrained by cultural values attached to feasibility, for example whether it is financially viable or not. This results in change that pushes at the edges using existing reason. Creating a "family" of imaginative acts exposes the creative individual and the creative collective supporting each other's existence; collective creativity does not diminish the importance of individual creativity, each makes the other meaningful. They are not opposites because they are not of the same type, or level. Both "over the edge" and "leading edge" approaches are needed within the appropriate context and in reaction to the particular class of problem. Revealing creativity as a "family" of imagination enables us to draw another conclusion – which is that organisations are designed for action and not for imagination.

In order to illustrate the above considerations it is helpful to place them in the context of change within an organisation. In an organisational setting, creativity is developed from the context of the conditions of understanding and the social practices within which it is placed. In this false encounter the different classes of creativity have become jumbled together in mixed metaphors. Creativity is described both as an expression of pure emotion or pure function; it is sometimes bound together with

causality; in others it is torn apart. It has also become a symbol of change and progress – in this guise creativity is treated as a commodity, where it is claimed there is not enough of it. In this way creativity has become the new "problem"; if there is not enough of it more must be found. In management's pursuit of the solution to the problem contradictory cures abound – these range from forcing to encouraging. Collective creativity has become one such popular management remedy. Espousing rationality and reason, managerialism has negated the importance of uncertainty and the reliance on other kinds of sense making this causes; the emergent nature of creativity is thus ignored and replaced by the notion of boundaries, the feasible and manageable. Organisations have become designed for action, not for reflection or thinking. They contain homogenous communities of practice undertaking similar work. They are shaped as hierarchies, and thus they are unsuitable locations for heterarchical activity and, "over the edge" imagination: both of these encounters do not need to be managed, the creators do not need others to take responsibility for their actions, because the individuals involved take responsibility themselves.

Whilst within the context of organisations, some would argue that creativity derives from the conditions of understanding and the social practices within which it is placed, a counter argument would be that many forms of deviancy, such as those artists who revolutionised art, Picasso being an example, did not consider social acceptability as a requisite for their creativity. However, having said this, the creativeness of such individuals arising from their mental labour became socially accepted once their creative work emerged and revealed itself. It can therefore be argued those who attempt to create conditions to facilitate creativity in organisations are working from a false premise: that the individual is not as important as the social in the process of creativity. Paradoxically, their pursuit of creativity curtails its very emergence to something less than "pure", thus less creative. The source of creativity is therefore an individual's capacity, which can be excited by the collective. However, reversing this process will not necessarily engage an individual's creativity because of the conditions. In this context, creativity often reflects a process of breaking free from organisational or societal allegiances.

If this misunderstanding of how creativity can be achieved continues, and the "family" of creativity is confused as one, there is little hope that individual's creativity can be facilitated in their mission by being taught. For this reason, a distinction between education and training may be helpful in overcoming such a misunderstanding and confusion. Whilst training emphasises the idea of a closed approach, where

outcomes are precise in terms of how to do a specific task well or how to achieve clear cut solutions to well defined problems, education, on the other hand, can never be other than an open approach where the emphasis is on understanding, questioning, and seeing things from a range of alternative perspectives by being critical (Chaharbaghi and Newman, 1998). Thus, whereas training stresses homogeneity and a convergent way of seeing, inherent in education is the notion of heterogeneity, tolerance of difference and shifting understanding. From this perspective, when training obscures education, the potential for creativity can be "trained out" of individuals because an approach to creativity is adopted which is repetitious and convergent, promoting conformity, thereby contradicting the need for thinking differently and encouraging deviance. Whilst this distinction is helpful to aid recognition, education and training are inseparable, although the degree of emphasis varies depending on the level of free thinking and creativity that is expected (Schön, 1991). An important consideration is that while training is part of education, the reverse is not necessarily the case (Rawson, 2000). This is because in training, goals are narrowly defined within a focused context, whereas in education they are ambiguous and cannot be clearly known in advance, because the context within which education is facilitated is necessarily loose and wide-ranging (Garavan and O'Cinneide, 1994). Thus, in facilitating an individual's creativity, there is a need to strike an appropriate synergy between education and training such that individuals are encouraged to be deviant, are allowed to live with failure, learn to take risk and tolerate uncertainty.

Conclusions

This study has shown how wisdom and creativity play together: they are locked together in the trilogy of imagination, action and admiration, and the context within which this trilogy is placed can cause them to tumble together in non-linear ways. the study has presented contexts that create the possibility to consider creativity as located within a "family" of creative events. By allowing the law of the situation to govern, classes and forms of creativity have been presented each valuable in its own way and in its own context. It has been argued that an essential of creativity is deviancy and that this has to be valued to make a difference. In the final analysis organisational schizophrenia and its double dialogues have been shown to hide the unpalatable truth – that change needs to take place in rational managers' minds before collective creativity can be derived. In terms of management training this study has revealed that collective creativity becomes an oxymoron in managerial contexts when difference is valueless. In such contexts diversity is treated as a constraint,

individual and collective creativity are dichotomised, heterogeneous communities of interest are treated as homogenous communities of practice, collaboration is confused with coordination, and the emergent nature of creativity is disregarded. The key consideration is that collective creativity does not diminish the importance of individual creativity. This is because individual and collective creativity exist in an "and/both" rather than in an "either/or" relationship. In such a relationship without individual creativity there is no context for collective creativity and *vice versa*. It is a balance of the individual and societal that makes collective creativity meaningful, and collective creativity is not simply the sum of individual creativities, but rather intensifies and multiplies them in meeting a challenge of common concern.

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