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CREATIVITY, SOCIETY, AND GENDER: CONTEXTUALIZING AND REDEFINING CREATIVITY

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Abstract:

Creativity is currently being redefined in more inclusive and complex ways. This article examines old and new ways of viewing creativity, focusing especially on how historically creativity has been considered a male preserve and the need for a more inclusive definition that includes areas such as "everyday creativity." It places definitions of creativity in their social and historical context, showing how a society's orientation to a partnership model or a dominator model affects what and who is considered creative. It proposes an un-gendered definition of creativity, highlights the need for this broader definition to meet the enormous contemporary challenges we face, and distinguishes between innovativeness and creativity.

Key words: creativity, gender, partnership dominator, everyday creativity, arts, crafts, culture

Creativity, that ongoing mystery and subject of continuous fascination, has moved from the rarified realm of the arts and sciences to become a topic of considerable public interest at the opening of the 21st century (Montuori & Donnelly, 2013). The economy is driven by creativity and so-called 'disruptive innovation.' New disciplines and practices like design and social innovation reflect a greater role for creativity, as does the recently popular idea of 'self-reinvention' (Elliott, 2013; Elliott & Lemert, 2009).

The context for this increased focus on creativity is the growing recognition that ours is a time of massive social disequilibrium: one epoch is ending and a new one has yet to emerge. The frequent use of the prefix post-, as in post-industrial, post-modern, and post-materialist, to describe our time is an indicator that ours is a transitional period, so much so that Sardar has used the term "post-normal," to refer to an era in which an old world is dying and we need creativity and imagination to create a new world (Inglehart, 1997; Lyotard, 1984; Ogilvy, 1989; Sardar, 1999, 2010, 2015).

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At the same time that creativity is seen as important, even vital, to the economy, our understanding of creativity is changing. If in Modernity creativity was identified with the classic image of the lone genius and *his* masterpieces, whether works of art or scientific discoveries, today there is much greater emphasis on collaborative creativity, on creative networks, and on "everyday" creativity (Eisler, 2000; Eisler & Montuori, 2007; Montuori, 2011a; Montuori & Donnelly, 2013; Richards, 2007a, 2007b; Runco & Richards, 1997).

To understand the impact and nature of creativity in this new context, it is important to approach creativity from a larger historical, and transdisciplinary perspective. Yet, ironically, there has been a movement in the psychology of creativity to actually shorten the traditional definition of creativity (stressing novel and useful or valuable), to simply novel (Weisberg, 2015).

In contrast, we will expand the definition of creativity in a number of critical respects. We will examine creativity as an interconnected and interdependent phenomenon. In another departure from conventional approaches, we will focus attention on the hidden subtext of gender underlying how creativity has been socially constructed. We will also propose a contextualized approach to creativity that takes into account *both* its individual and social dimensions and how these relate to what Eisler (Eisler, 1987, 1994, 2007) has called a partnership rather than dominator or domination model of society.

TOWARD A GENDER-HOLISTIC VIEW OF CREATIVITY

Until fairly recently, discourse about creativity has been almost exclusively by and about *men* (Eisler & Montuori, 2007; Ghiselin, 1985; Helson, 1990; Montuori, 1989; Nochlin, 1973). This was so taken for granted that it was rarely even noted, much less challenged. The justification, when offered, was simply that men are more creative, as evidenced by the fact that the vast majority of important writers, artists, scientists, and inventors have been male. Hans Eysenck (1995), an eminent psychologist and creativity researcher, wrote that "Creativity, particularly at the highest level, is closely related to gender; almost without exception, genius is found only in males (for whatever reason!)" (p. 127).

In recent years a far more complex picture has begun to emerge, overturning many earlier assumptions about creativity. Research on gender differences in creativity has

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not borne out the assumption that men are more creative than women. Studies show either no substantive differences, or that in some cases women and girls actually score higher than boys and men on creativity tests (Baer, 2012; Baer & Kaufman, 2008; Kogan, 1974).

Given the equal if not potentially superior creative potential of women, the question arises as to why this potential has not been recognized (Eisler, 2000; Eisler & Montuori, 2007). This question in turn leads to a second question: Have women in fact not expressed their creative potential at all or has their creativity manifested in ways that have not been recognized as creative?

As we will see, even adopting the conventional definition of what constitutes creativity, we are increasingly learning that women have in fact made substantial literary, artistic, scientific, and technological contributions, (Helson, 1990; Montuori & Purser, 1995; Ochse, 1991a; Piirto, 1991). And they have done so even though the construction of traditional gender roles has placed enormous obstacles in the way of women's entry into the male-controlled domains of literature, art, science, and technology.

Moreover -- and this will be a major focus of this paper -- the virtual exclusion of women from discourse about creativity has led to a gendered definition of creativity: one that has excluded from the categories of what is "creative" those activities stereotypically associated with women.

We will further argue that the kind of creativity that is contextualized in day-to-day life, rather than in rarified domains such as the arts and sciences, is where women have all along expressed their creativity. We will also propose that it is time to leave behind the old de-contextualized discourse about creativity that ignores the fact that creativity can also be an "everyday" phenomenon – that it is not just an individual but a social phenomenon.

 We believe that a new gender-holistic or gender-inclusive definition of creativity is more congruent with recent creativity research focusing on social aspects of creativity (Amabile, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Glăveanu, 2010a, 2010b, 2011, 2014a; Mockros & Csikszentmhalyi, 1999; Montuori & Donnelly, In Press; Montuori & Purser, 1995, 1999; Sawyer, 2012; Shenk, 2014). We also believe that as a first step toward a new gender-holistic and contextualized discourse about creativity, we need to more

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fully understand how extremely gendered, rigidly binary, and exclusionary the old discourse has been.

To this end, we will first explore some of the social and psychological implications of rigid gender boundaries, how these have affected not only creative women but also creative men, and how the contemporary loosening of these boundaries and changes in traditional gender valuations has begun to affect the social construction of creativity. We will then show that because women's creativity has traditionally been more social and contextual in nature, its study is essential for understanding the concept of social creativity, as well as for finding creative strategies to meet the mounting ecological, economic, and social crises of our time. Finally, moving from deconstruction to reconstruction, we will propose new approaches to creativity that are gender-holistic and contextualized, and thus more congruent with contemporary creativity research focusing on social aspects of creativity as well as with what we call a partnership rather than dominator social organization.

THE PARTNERSHIP AND DOMINATION MODELS

In placing creativity in a social context, our guiding framework for inquiry will be Eisler's (Eisler, 1987, 1990, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2007; Eisler & Miller, 2004; Eisler & Montuori, 2001, 2003) template of dominator and partnership social systems. We therefore begin our discussion with a brief overview of these models, which transcend conventional classifications such as Eastern versus Western, ancient versus modern, religious versus secular, or industrial versus pre-or post-industrial. These earlier categories focus on factors such as geographic or historical location, ethnicity, or level of technological development, rather than on the kinds of relations a social system supports or inhibits. Moreover, they fail to take into account the impact of the social construction of gender and parent-child relations on what people learn to view as normal, moral, and even inevitable.

Taking these foundational relations into full account, Eisler's historical and cross-cultural study of relational dynamics reveals social patterns that are otherwise invisible (Eisler, 1987, 1995, 2014, 2016a, 2016b). Looking at this more complete picture of social relations makes it possible to identify two underlying social configurations: the *partnership model* and the *dominator or domination model*.

Reduced to its essentials, the dominator or domination model is characterized by three interactive, mutually supporting components: a generally hierarchic and

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authoritarian family and social structure; the rigid ranking of male over female, and (as is required to maintain rigid superior-inferior rankings), a high level of institutionalized social violence, ranging from domestic abuse of women and children to chronic warfare (Callahan, Eisler, & Loye, 1993; Eisler, 1987, 1990, 1995, 2007, 2016b; Eisler & Miller, 2004).

Societies orienting primarily to the partnership model are characterized by a more democratic and generally equitable family and social organization, much greater gender equity and an accompanying high valuing of traits and activities stereotypically viewed as feminine rather than masculine, and a low level of systemic or institutionalized violence, since there is no need to maintain rigid rankings of domination – be it man over man, man over women, race over race, religion over religion, and so forth. That is, although there is some violence, in this model of society, violence does not have to be built into the social infrastructure or idealized as manly or heroic (Callahan et al., 1993; Eisler, 1987, 1990, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2007, 2014, 2016b; Eisler & Miller, 2004).

Of particular relevance to the study of both gender and creativity is that societies orienting closely to the dominator side of what Eisler calls the dominator/partnership continuum, are characterized by rigid masculine and feminine stereotypes, with fixed (and polarized) notions of what are appropriate traits and domains of activity for women and men. By contrast, in more partnership-oriented societies, there is no need for such sharply distinguishable "masculine" and "feminine" characteristics and domains as the basis for ranking one gender over the other.

Also of particular relevance is that in societies that orient primarily to a dominator model, men, and those characteristics and domains associated with "masculinity," are considered more significant and valuable than women and the traits and domains associated with femininity. An extreme example is how female infanticide may be socially condoned in cultures or subcultures orienting very closely to the dominator model. A more widespread reflection of this devaluation of women and girls is the low value given to "women's work," as the contemporary challenge to the worldwide earnings gap between women and men dramatically attests (Eisler, 2007, 2012; Peterson & Sisson Runyan, 1993).

But not only is what women do considered less important than what men do in societies orienting to the dominator model; male activities that do not conform to stereotypes of "masculinity" are also devalued. Thus, for much of recorded Western

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history, when society still oriented far more to the dominator model, the only acceptable career for 'noblemen' was the military. One result of this association of manliness with domination and violence was the view (still lingering in our time) that gentler men and boys are effeminate -- as illustrated by derogatory terms such as "sissy" or weak sister (Brod, 1987; Kivel, 1992; Koegel, 1994). Still another result, reflected in the lingering social ambivalence about artists, is that in this stereotypical kind of thinking, artists are considered "effete" or "effeminate" (Citron, 1993).

Looked at from this perspective, the fact that creativity is increasingly valued could be seen as an important sign of movement toward a more partnership-oriented society. But, as we will see, this movement has been slow and uneven.

The fact that because of the need for flexibility, creativity, and innovation, many business institutions are leaving behind rigid top-down hierarchies of command and control is also a sign of movement toward the partnership side of the continuum. But here again, even in the sector in which this shift is most obvious, the high-technology of Silicon Valley, women are still struggling (Kirk, 2009; Palomino, 2016; Romero, 2015).

Another indicator of movement toward a partnership model of society is the greater entry of women into traditionally male domains -- as a consequence of which more and more women are being counted as creative, including a growing number of Nobel Prize winners. Yet once again, women are still held back from top leadership by a gendered 'glass ceiling' and by the still entrenched definition of only male-dominated realms as places of real creativity.

Nonetheless, the very definition of creativity is today being reexamined, and is slowly beginning to change, both in scholarship and in popular discourse (Montuori & Donnelly, 2013). We are proposing in this paper that because creativity is defined differently in the context of societies orienting primarily to a partnership or a dominator model, this expansion of what is considered creative is a sign of movement toward a partnership social and ideological organization, Accordingly, we will situate the contemporary debate about the nature of creativity in the context of the tension between the partnership and dominator models as two basic possibilities for social and ideological organization.

Our departure point will be a re-examination of women's 'lack of creativity,' and with this, how creativity has traditionally been defined. We will then explore the

contention of creativity researcher Ravenna Helson that "the understanding of creativity in women requires attention to the social world, to individual differences in motivation and early object relations, and to changes in society and the individual over time," and that "the study of creativity in general needs all of these directions of attention" (Helson 1990, p. 57).

THE DOUBLE STANDARD FOR CREATIVITY

A great deal of recent scholarship has focused on the fact that the myth of women's lack of creativity is in large part due to the fact that women's creative contributions have not been recorded. For example, it has been suggested that Katherine Greene and not Eli Whitney was the true inventor of the cotton gin (Vare & Ptacek, 1988). Moreover, even when women's contributions were recognized by their contemporaries, they were often not acknowledged by those in a position to give or withhold long-term approbation. An example is the Italian Renaissance artist Sofonisba Anguissola, who was so highly regarded in her time that the king of Spain appointed her his court portrait painter. Yet so effectively was she erased from art history that she remained essentially forgotten until the art historian Ilya Sandra Perlingieri brought her work back to public attention (Perlingieri, 1992).

Many scholars have also documented what Germaine Greer (Greer, 2001) has called "the obstacle race" of women attempting to enter the professions that have conventionally been defined as creative (Ochse, 1991b). One example of such obstacles is pointed out by Nochlin (Nochlin, 1971), who documents that "careful and prolonged study of the nude model was essential to the training of every young artist, to the production of any work with pretensions of grandeur, and to the very essence of history painting, generally accepted as the highest form of art," but until the 20th century, women were not allowed access to nude models (p.55).

Similarly, in a discussion in the early 1980s of the social constraints on creativity (as conventionally defined) for women, Hayes (Hayes, 1981) pointed out that: (1) Western culture tended to undermine the confidence of women in their ability to compete in certain creative fields. (2) There were relatively few female role models in creative fields. (3) Men often resented, and discriminated against, women in professional education and work. (4) Our culture discouraged women from taking an interest in science-related fields and encouraged them to be interested in homemaking instead. 5) It is much more difficult for women to mix marriage and career than it is for men, largely due to the assumption that domestic duties such as

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cooking and childcare are more the responsibility of women and that the husband's career is more important than the wife's. So in any conflict of interest, the resolution must be in favor of the husband's career (Hayes, 1981, p.226). Unfortunately, in 2016 this assessment from 1981 is still valid to a surprisingly large extent.

Since the exclusion of women from anything considered part of the "men's world" (in opportunities for training as well as possibilities for bringing their work to public attention, and even from feeling that the creation of a "great work" is a proper womanly pursuit) has been so formidable for so long (Proudfoot, Kay, & Koval, 2015), it is actually remarkable that so many women (far more than those included in the conventional lists) have made important literary and artistic contributions. It is particularly remarkable that this has been so even in the field of technological creativity, as recent works such as Stanley's *Mothers and Daughters of Invention: Notes for a Revised History of Technology* catalogues in a volume that is over 1,000 pages long (Stanley, 1993).

Today more and more women are entering fields traditionally reserved for men, with a commensurate increase in women who are considered creative. Still, there are enormous obstacles in women's way (Shih, 2006), obstacles that relate to the very essence of what in dominator systems is considered masculine and feminine. These obstacles are particularly complex because women's successes have also called into question men's traditional roles and sense of identity (Hymowitz, 2011).

It is certainly the case that stereotypical gender roles and attributes are changing. The almost unquestioned given that men are simply more creative than women seems to be crashing down. As noted earlier, it turns out that women score higher than men on tests assessing for creativity (Baer, 2012; Baer & Kaufman, 2008).

However, in open-sourced contributions to science problems, women's contributions are accepted more often only if the contributor's gender is *not* identifiable. If it is identifiable, women's contributions are rejected *more often* (Kennedy, 2016; Terrell et al., 2016).

So it is painfully clear that although women's creativity is by no means inferior to that of men (and according to assessments which judge potential, may in some cases even be superior to that of men), it is the *source* that matters. In other words, creativity is still closely associated with men, and if a contribution is seen to come from a woman it is much less likely to be accepted (Proudfoot et al., 2015).

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GENDER IN DOMINATION AND PARTNERSHIP CONTEXTS

As a result of the virtual explosion of research about gender in the last few decades, the vast majority of traits once thought to be biologically fixed have been shown to be primarily a function of an intensive socialization that begins at birth and continues throughout life (Fine, 2010; Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988). Obviously there are some biological (primarily reproduction-related) differences between women and men. There are indications that there may be some differences in brain structure, such as a thicker corpus callosum connecting the left and right brain hemispheres in women, but the topic is still extremely fraught with the historical baggage of cultural conditioning of gender stereotypes, and efforts to propose radically different male and female brains have largely been discredited (Fine, 2010).

As shown by the pioneering works of Bernard (Bernard, 1981), Gilligan (Gilligan, 1982), and Miller (Baker Miller, 1976), largely due to millennia-long separate men's and women's spheres, there are definite socially-constructed differences in the psychology of men and women, and with this, in their perspectives on the world. In other words, what we are dealing with are general cultural tendencies that are largely the result of socialization processes that are our legacy from a long span of history when our society oriented primarily to a dominator model, and not differences inherent in women and men.

We will here focus on two major gender differences of particular relevance to a reconceptualization of creativity: independence versus interdependence and dependence, and abstract and objective versus contextualized and relational (Montuori, 1989). We will place these differences in the context of the contrast between a dominator system, in which human traits are polarized by gender and viewed as hierarchical oppositions (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988), and a partnership system, in which there can be greater integration between stereotypically masculine and feminine traits -- an integration that research shows is potentially a sign of creativity, as well as of both psychological and sociological health.

1) Independence vs. Interdependence/Dependence
Field independence is associated with freedom to compete, encouragement of aggressive impulses, and analytical or reductive approaches to problems, i.e. with culturally defined 'masculinity'. Field dependence, on the other hand, is associated

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with synthetic, global perception; cooperation; social dependence; and the inhibition of aggression, i.e. femininity as it has traditionally been defined (Witkin & Goodenough, 1980). Accordingly, and reflecting their different socialization, McClelland (McClelland, 1975) found that for girls "interaction or interdependence with the environment [including other people] is greater than for boys, who are likely to barge ahead assertively, no matter what is happening around them" (pp. 84-85).

 A related consequence of the stereotypical dominator 'masculine' and 'feminine' socialization is that men have been culturally taught to define their identity in terms of domination and control -- be it over women, whom they are supposed to 'conquer,' or over men, with whom they are supposed to successfully compete to achieve a dominant social, economic, and/or political position (Kreisberg, 1992). Men are also encouraged to manipulate their surroundings in such as a way as to ensure that they are 'in control.' By contrast, women have been taught to equate their 'femininity' with being properly submissive and deferential to men, whom under no circumstances they are supposed to control either by direct assertion or through manipulation. Or, to quote Dowling (Dowling, 1982), "women are not trained for freedom at all, but for its categorical opposite, dependency."

 Again, this is not to say that many women do not try to achieve some measure of independence, or for that matter, that men cannot be interdependent, a fact that is particularly evident in cross-cultural research (Williams & Best, 1990). Nor is it to say that women do not try to dominate and control others, or that there have not been any changes over the last decades pointing towards more "agency" in young women (Twenge & Campbell, 2008). But in both these endeavors, women have been hampered by a socialization that encourages them to be passive and even 'silent' (as we find in some traditional religious scriptures).

Of particular significance is that a critical part of stereotypical female socialization is to teach girls and women to subordinate their needs to those of others. Gilligan's (1982) female subjects illustrate the nature of this process: the emphasis on relationship often occurred at the expense of self.

Wilden (1987), discussing how women and men are taught to view women in what we call dominator systems, writes that "woman -- as 'body' -- is the environment that man -- as 'mind' -- depends on for his daily comfort, emotional support, sexual needs, and above all for his existence as a supposedly 'manly' man. And just as 'body' is viewed as the property of 'mind', so too woman is viewed as the property of man" (p.66). In

short, in this dominator scheme of the world, woman not only winds up at the bottom of the hierarchy; she is reduced to property rather than being viewed as completely human.

But in fact in this kind of social system, neither woman nor man can access their full humanity or their full creativity. And while there has been some movement to the partnership end of the dominator/partnership continuum, there has also been enormous resistance (both conscious and unconscious), There have also been periodic regressions to rigid dominator dynamics, as we see in today's political efforts to control women's reproductive rights, and even more starkly in horrific regimes such as ISIS, where women are under brutal male control.

2) Abstract/Objective vs. Contextual/Relational
Another polarization often associated with masculinity and femininity relates to an abstract/objective versus a more relational/contextual mode of operation. Thus, it used to be said that men excel in abstract thinking, whereas women are more competent in relational thinking. Similarly, it is still often said that men have a greater capacity for spatial and mathematical skills and women have greater language skills (Fine, 2010) -- even though findings such as those of Linn (1989, p.13) show that because educators are beginning to encourage rather than discourage girls to study mathematics and the sciences, "gender differences in spatial and mathematical ability have declined almost to zero."

Nonetheless, the female socialization for relationship and communication does affect the way women have learned to function. For example, Gilligan found that whereas the stereotypical male conception of morality is generally in terms of absolutes, of abstract ideals and laws, women as a group, due to their socialization, tend to be more situational and contextual, more personal in their interpretation of ethics, with a perspective more open to process and more context oriented (Gilligan, 1982).

We want to emphasize that what we are dealing with are general tendencies, as obviously there are men who, despite a male socialization for independence and 'objective' detachment, have a more stereotypically feminine approach, and women who, despite all the pressure to conform to stereotypes of femininity, have a more stereotypically masculine style, again demonstrating that what we are dealing with is not innate in women and men. But to the extent that both women and men continue to be socialized to conform to these stereotypes, they continue to shape, and all too often misshape, the expression of women's and men's full humanity. And, as we will

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probe in the next section, it has also had a significant effect on how women and men express, or fail to express, their creativity.

CREATIVITY AND GENDER STEREOTYPES

Recently Abraham has reviewed the psychological and neuroscientific literature (Abraham, 2015), concluding that differences in creative cognition can best be explained "with reference to the gender-dependent adopted strategies or cognitive style when faced with generative tasks" (p.1). Indeed, there are many ways in which the different socialization of women and men is reflected in their art.

For instance, women and men have often focused on different themes. This is borne out by Osterkamp's (1989) research on ego development and object relations, which focuses on the way "female/connectedness" and "male/separateness" are expressed in the work of artists. She writes that "the predominant modes for the women were 'relational/interpersonal' and 'realistic/factual,' while the predominant modes for the men were 'depersonal/mechanistic' and 'idealistic/romantic.'" Her findings also show that women often choose to use more "oval/curvilinear" and "repetitive/patterned" configurations than the men, and that "the women chose to depict more nature images and themes (species other than humans, landscapes, flowers) than the men did" (pp. iv-v).

In accordance with the independence versus interdependence/dependence gender socialization discussed earlier, Osterkamp (1989) also notes that "the separation of the heroic self from the 'other' is a predominant choice of imagery for the male artist, in contrast to the predominant image by female artists of an unromanticized 'natural' female" (p.45). Similarly, a typical theme in male literature has been "the hero's journey," stories of battle and self-realization and differentiation from "the pack," whereas much of women's literature has been more domestic and relationship-oriented in nature, as for example the work of Bronte, Austen, and George Eliot.

Women's and men's motivations for being artists have also tended to be different. When Barron (1972) asked artists what bothers them most about the life of an artist, men were far more concerned with financial difficulties, whereas women's concerns were more "social or intellectual than economic: how they would relate to their families and friends; what other people thought of them; how introspective one had to be." Another revealing finding was elicited by Barron's question, "Would you want

to paint (etc.) if the results did not endure after the making of them?" All the women who answered said they would, but only half of the men did. The men also made statements such as "My painting is the only thing that gives me real happiness" or "I am my work" (p.35). Three among the most talented women interviewed stated that "I'm looking for communication in my work" and "All of my work has to do with people" (p.37). These answers suggest that for the men, art was perceived as primarily a personal affair, which gave meaning, pleasure, and fulfillment, whereas for the women it was also a process of communication and connection. More recent research by Kammelmeier and Walton has found that women perform less well on creative tasks under conditions of threat, but tend to outperform men if the creativity task is performed under safe conditions *and is beneficial to others* (Kemmelmeier & Walton, 2016).

In addition to different themes and attitudes about art and the artist's life, Barron found that there are dramatic differences in the self-image of female and male artists (Barron, 1972). For example, when student artists were asked, "Do you think of yourself as an artist," 67% of the women said no, but 66% of the men said yes. Again in line with findings about independence versus interdependence & dependence, Barron writes that "the women are less likely to display single mindedness in their commitment to art. Their concerns are more diffuse, involving a variety of considerations and covering a broader area of life" (p.36).

It is also interesting that men viewed themselves as only artists, indicating an independence and isolation from other social roles and relationships, whereas women remained embedded in them. In both cases, we would suggest that there are deleterious consequences to creative people from the internalization of these stereotypical gender roles. To men, because of their feeling of isolation, and to women, because of their inability to alternate roles, being tied by social-role expectations which do not allow the time away from their sex-role duties as daughters, spouses, etc., to fully dedicate themselves in their art.

Even more dramatic are the consequences of the differential valuation based on gender that go along with these stereotypes. Since in societies orienting to the dominator model, men, and whatever men do, are considered more valuable than women and so-called women's work. When women have managed to enter male-dominated domains such as the arts, they have often evaluated themselves according to this male superior/female inferior scale. For instance, in his interviews with young art students, Barron (1972) found that a considerable number of women (40%) felt

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their work to be inferior to the work of others, whereas the same proportion of men (40%) felt their work to be superior to others, or unique. These differences would not be so startling, Barron writes, if the men in fact did produce better work. But when the work was rated by a wide variety of judges *without any identification of the artist as female or male*, the women's work was rated just as highly. Barron's research was conducted in the early 70s, but in an article published in 2016, Kemmelmeier and Walton find that women still seemed to be more attuned to the objective level of their originality than men do (Kemmelmeier & Walton, 2016).

This systematic devaluation of whatever is considered stereotypically feminine that is our dominator heritage also helps explain why so many male artists have used an exaggeratedly masculine, gruff exterior or resorted to excessive drinking and other forms of stereotypically macho activities to cover their greater sensitivity in public. It obviously helps explain why some creative women -- George Sand and George Eliot, for example -- have even resorted to calling themselves by male names.

In short, both genders have suffered under the dominator system, and both have been straight-jacketed into abnormally restrictive roles. As a general rule, women have downplayed or even negated their abilities, the expression of which would have inevitably required 'unfeminine' self-assertion. And men have been forced to outwardly blunt their sensitivity, being unable to communicate it anywhere but in their art, with a resulting isolation that, according to Berman (Berman, 1999), may well be pathogenic.

TOWARDS A GENDER-HOLISTIC CREATIVITY

It is instructive that even despite the strait-jackets of this gender socialization, studies indicate that healthier women and men do not see themselves as either entirely separate and independent from their environment or entirely absorbed and dependent on it -- and that this is particularly true for highly creative women and men, who often try instead to achieve a form of balance (Barron, 1968; Kaufman, 2013; Norlander, Erixon, & Archer, 2000). The problem, however, is that in the context of a dominator society this balance is extremely difficult to achieve.

In the same way, the gender stereotypes that are a legacy of our dominator past and the higher valuation that dominator-oriented societies give to what is labeled

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masculine rather than feminine are a major obstacle to the redefinition of creativity in ways that include social creativity.

Albert Einstein (1956) wrote that "one of the strongest motives that lead men to art and science is to escape from everyday life, with its painful crudity and hopeless dreariness" (p.227). But it is precisely in our daily lives, and in the social institutions and practices that shape our daily lives, that we today most urgently need creativity: for example, in finding ecologically sustainable ways of living and conducting business, in addressing our healthcare and childcare problems, and in finding ways of nonviolent conflict resolution in our homes and cities as well as among nations.

Moreover, why should everyday life be characterized by "painful crudity" and "hopeless dreariness"? Would it be so in a society that no longer excludes from the realm of creativity the domains typically identified with women's work, such as creating a comfortable and aesthetic environment and nourishing relationships? What would happen if we no longer associated creativity just with objects found in art museums and with other products that can be abstracted from their environment? In short, what would happen if we shift the focus from independence, individualism, and abstraction to consider, value, and support more relational, interdependent, and contextualized forms of creativity?

UNGENDERING THE DOMAINS OF CREATIVITY

We are used to thinking of the arts and sciences as highly valued creative domains. Van Gogh and Picasso, Einstein and Newton - these are names that immediately come to mind to exemplify creative genius in the popular imagination. We are also used to making a differentiation between 'arts' and 'crafts,' between 'high culture' and 'low culture.' And, typical of the rank ordering of our dominator heritage, the crafts and low culture are those domains in which women have been allowed to work, whereas until recently, the sciences, fine arts, and high culture were not. In other words, all those domains in which women have historically been prominent have been those domains that until recently were not considered "creative domains" (Eisler, 2000).

This gendered classification of what is and is not a creative domain has effectively reinforced a gendered conception of what is and is not important. In the process, it has also served to maintain the devaluation of precisely those activities that constitute the main part of our lives -- and deflected the support for creativity from

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these areas. Not only that, it has led to a very narrow definition of creativity that often arbitrarily follows lines of gender rather than what is and is not creative.

For example, women generally have had the responsibility to nurture children, which requires a great deal of both planned and improvisational creativity -- and which is certainly an extremely important task. Yet while this and other 'domestic' activities have often been over-idealized, they have also been undervalued -- and certainly they have not conventionally been classified as creative.

As we continue to reexamine creativity from this new gender-holistic perspective, we also see that many of women's creative activities have been relational -- for example, cooking a meal, decorating a house, or embellishing a utilitarian object such as a quilt (a contemporary remnant of women's traditional role in weaving and making clothes for the family). In other words, they have been directed toward making the lives of others more comfortable and/or aesthetically pleasing or, more dramatically, ensuring the survival of the family by making do with whatever is at hand, as minimal as it may be.

From this perspective, we further see how arbitrary some of our conventional canons for creativity have been -- and how extremely gendered. An example is how the devaluation of anything associated with women or 'femininity' and the elevation of men and 'masculinity' to a superior status have ensured that stereotypically female activities such as cooking, decorating the home, and clothes-making have been generally devalued -- at the same time that when they have been performed by men they have been valued as 'creative.' Thus, while women have traditionally performed most of this work on a daily basis in the private sphere of the home, until recently a predominance of male chefs, designers, and interior decorators working in the public sphere have received recognition for 'creativity' in these areas.

There are other matters of particular relevance to a reconceptualization of creativity that only become apparent from a gender-holistic perspective that includes its social and relational dimensions. One is that women's creativity has often been a group activity -- for example working together in the kitchen with other women or quilting. A second is that it is often a form of creativity that provides a context for the creativity of others, as in encouraging a child's first attempts to create words or draw. A third is that often the creativity is itself contextualized, since it cannot be abstracted from its context like a painting or a sculpture, but is rather part of the texture of our lives.

So by ungendering creativity -- that is, by no longer only associating creativity with the domains and activities in the public sphere stereotypically assigned to men as a group -- we not only revalue what have historically been domains of women's creativity; we also enlarge our horizons about creativity itself.

In particular, we take the discourse of creativity to where we most need it: to our daily lives, more broadly opening up the possibility of what Montuori and Donnelly have called "everyone, everywhere, everyday" creativity (2013). By so doing, we also begin to change the definition of what is and is not creative, and what is and is not important -- and to recognize as a legitimate and important part of creativity what has in recent years been identified as "ordinary" creativity (Bateson, 1999).

DEMOCRATIZING CREATIVITY

What Bateson calls "ordinary" creativity (Bateson, 1999) and Richards calls "everyday creativity" (Richards, 2007a, 2007b; Runco & Richards, 1997) includes activities which do not necessarily result in technological inventions or art objects placed in galleries. It is a very different creativity from what has stereotypically been considered heroic creativity, with 'the hero's journey' as the thread running through the novel, including such stereotypically male concerns as separation, independence, conquest, control, and upholding abstract principles. For its essence is one of connection and/or interdependence rather than abstraction and/or independence. And its primary emphasis is on developing creative ways of dealing with life's daily rhythms and realities.

The inclusion of this largely private domain in the category of creative domains leads to what we may call the 'democratization' of creativity, based on the recognition that all areas of life are potentially the locus of a creative act. It shows that 'ordinary' people, working in domains that have historically not been deemed to be the locus of creative activities, can in fact be creative. In other words, it makes it possible to see that creative activity exists in all domains and is not just the exclusive province and property of a few privileged men. These are the "everyone" and "everywhere" dimensions of the emerging creativity.

Put another way, the gender-holistic and contextualized approach we are proposing broadens the domains of creativity from a dominator hierarchy of creative domains to a partnership heterarchy or holarchy of domains, each of which provides a context for

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creative acts. *Perhaps most important, it changes our understanding of not only creativity but also of the so-called 'ordinary.'*

In general parlance, the word ordinary is synonymous with the words routine, customary, and normal, and an antonym of exceptional and unusual. What this definition implies is that the everyday, the common and routine ordinary life can not be creative, aesthetically appealing, rewarding, or significant. It establishes an opposition between the exceptional and the ordinary in a way that excludes the kind of domestic, 'nonheroic' activities of women a priori. It ignores that creative products such as paintings can be ordinary in the pejorative sense, and that we can make the everyday extraordinary through creative actions.

For example, as the concept of the family is undergoing yet more changes due to rapid technological and economic change, creative thinking is needed to reconstruct families in creative ways. Similarly, creative thinking is needed to end domestic violence, to address problems of childcare and healthcare, and to find ways of utilizing the accumulated talents and wisdom of the elderly.

The creative process in this more everyday sense is much more contingent and idiosyncratic. It is also often improvisatory in nature, the word improvise deriving from the Latin *improvisus* or unforeseen (Montuori, 2003). Sternberg in fact argues that all encounters with novelty and the unexpected can elicit displays of creativity (Sternberg, 1988). Certainly in our daily lives we are repeatedly confronted with unforeseen events, whether it is guests dropping in, no change for the parking meter, or a sudden career change. A mother's or father's relationship with their infant constantly puts them in unforeseen situations, and much of domestic life is a process of improvisation.

Gray's collection of essays, *Sacred Dimensions of Women's Experience*, while not using this terminology, describes creative approaches to tasks that are usually considered menial -- speaking of such matters as the Zen of housework and the art of listening (Gray, 1988). Musical improvisation, particularly as it occurs on a nightly basis in jazz, occurs in this same spirit (Berliner, 1994; Montuori, 2003). One has to compose on the spot, within the constraints and possibilities provided by one's interaction with the larger context one is a part of. The pieces tend to be short, improvised over a shared context (the 'form' of the song), may be lost forever after a performance or repeated the next night.

The shift here is from a linear, cumulative view to a more cyclical or spiralic one, in which repetition and recombination play an important role. Moreover, it takes us to a broader view of the creative process that includes not just the creation of a product, but the whole network of social interactions which brings the product to life.

CONTEXUALIZING CREATIVITY

As we have seen, part of the legacy from our dominator past has been a view of creativity that only recognizes achievements in the so-called public sphere or 'men's world' from which women in rigid dominator societies are barred. Obviously this has been an effective means of rationalizing the higher valuation of men and 'masculinity,' and thus of maintaining the subordination of women. This equation of difference -- beginning with the difference between male and female -- with superiority or inferiority has also provided a basic model for the barring of members of different races, religions, and classes from highly valued domains as a means of rationalizing their 'inferiority' (Eisler, 1995, 2007). Nonetheless -- and this too is an important mechanism for dominator systems maintenance -- these 'inferior' people were expected to render support services to their 'betters' -- for example, the serfs who were expected to grow the food that fed their masters. Similarly, women have in this scheme of things been expected to support men's achievements in the public sphere -- as in the well-known adage about the woman behind every successful man.

As we begin to shift more to a partnership society, writings about creativity have begun to recognize these supportive activities (the activities that provide the context for achievements recognized as creative) as creative in themselves. For example, in his discussion of the Western male conception of the self, Sampson refers to Ochs's work on the Samoan concept of the *maaloo exchange*: what, from our perspective, might be considered the Samoans' appreciation for the relational, supportive matrix of creativity (Sampson, 1993). He uses the example of a driver told he has driven well, to which the driver replies: "Well done the support." Ochs (Ochs, 1988) notes how "any accomplishment can then be seen as a joint product of both the actors and the supporters. In the Samoan view, if a performance went well, it is the supporters' merit as much as the performers" (p. 200).

Loye writes of the nurturing "feminine matrix of creativity" in social systems (Loye, 1988). His research on the Hollywood movie industry reconceptualizes the role of managers, agents, producers, and other behind-the-scenes people by viewing them as the providers of the supportive matrix that makes creativity possible. In other words,

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for artists to function effectively, they often require a number of supporting persons who provide a context in which they can flourish. Indeed, some creative activities, particularly ones involving a large number of people, such as theater or movie productions and the performance or recording of musical groups, are by definition social processes. As anybody who has ever engaged in such an activity knows, the quality of human interaction is vital for the success of any project -- as it is for the long-term sustainability of any organization.

Taoist philosophers likewise argue that creativity cannot be viewed separately from its context. Chang (1963) discusses the Taoist notion of *the invisible ground of sympathy* which underlies creativity, stating that "without sympathy there is no ground of potentiality to support creativity" (p.68).

Not coincidentally, Taoism is a philosophy that came out of an ancient time before the yin or feminine principle was subordinated to the yang or masculine principle -- a time that was not male-dominated and was more peaceful and just (Blakney, 1955; Eisler, 1987). In other words, it was a time orienting more to a partnership rather than a dominator model. So it is not coincidental that as we today move more toward a partnership society, this "invisible ground of sympathy" which underlies creativity is again being recognized as a creative activity. Here too we come back to the invisible subtext of gender (or more specifically, dominator gender stereotypes and the socialization of boys and girls for rigidly differentiated roles in rigidly segregated domains) that has until now so profoundly affected what is and is not considered a creative activity. For as we have seen, the creation of this ground (or 'feminine' nurturing matrix) has stereotypically been considered 'women's work.'

As we have also seen, women have been socialized to perform these supportive functions. Thus, in her study of children's interactions, Maccoby discusses the different styles of boys and girls. The girls' style she describes as "enabling," the boys' as "restrictive" (Maccoby, 1990). The girls' style advances and supports interaction, whereas boys tend to respond critically and make an effort to derail or end the interaction by making the other withdraw. Again, we are dealing with broad generalizations that reflect not innate gender differences but the degree to which the socialization of the dominator system for men and women has been effective -- just as the valuation of male above female and the categories of what is and is not creative have been a function of a social understanding shaped by the requirements of a dominator rather than partnership form of social organization.

Another area in which this difference between how creativity is defined in the context of a partnership and a dominator society becomes dramatically evident is in connection with how conflict is resolved. In rigid dominator systems, there is a tendency for 'solutions' to come from the top down. There is also the tendency for solutions to be forced by a crisis. As Baker Miller (1976) points out, this may be related to the tendency of such systems to systematically suppress conflict and disagreement and deal with it only when it has become out of hand, at which point there is a tendency to escalate, and violent solutions are often imposed. By contrast, in a partnership system attention can be given to the creation of a context which allows for the emergence of creative strategies and solutions to problems, with the conciliatory and relationship-building skills women are socialized for included in a more contextualized definition of creativity (Eisler, 2004, 2016b).

Some of the new research conducted in organizations is relevant here. Many organizational theorists have begun to focus on the role of "relationship-maintaining" or "appreciative systems" rather than just "goal-seeking systems" (Cooperrider, 1990; Eisler, 2016a; Eisler & Montuori, 2001, 2003; Montuori & Donnelly, 2014; Senge, 1994). The emphasis here is again on the context: on the ability of organizations to create environments that are "enabling" rather than "restrictive" of creativity and innovation. As Eisler notes, this research points to the need to move away from the hierarchies of domination characteristic of dominator structures (with all their pent-up frustrations) to the more flexible and empowering hierarchies of actualization and other structures more in line with partnership principles. These kinds of structures make it possible to no longer rely just on orders from above but instead create "self-organizing" teams and work units capable of designing their own creative strategies to tackle problems (Eisler, 1995, 2007, 2016a).

These trends are manifestations of the emergence of a more contextualized view of creativity: the kind of creativity needed in our complex and rapidly changing world. And though this is more implicit than explicit, they are also manifestations of the recognition that the integration of stereotypically feminine skills into the public sphere is urgently needed at this time when dominator institutions and systems of valuation continue to escalate our economic, ecological, and social problems.

GENERATIONAL CHANGES AND CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

It is increasingly clear that there are generational differences in how creativity is experienced and expressed (Montuori, 2011a; Montuori & Donnelly, 2013). Research

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conducted in 2010 showed that millennial college students associated creativity with everyday activities and social interactions (Pachucki, Lena, & Tepper, 2010). Whereas for Baby Boomers creativity is associated with "eminent creatives" such as Einstein, Van Gogh, or individual popular artists, in today's "participatory" culture (Jenkins, 2008, 2009) the focus is not so much on "eminent creatives" but on participatory, relational processes with peers and family, in which "making is connecting" (Gauntlett, 2013).

Many of the most interesting innovations in the social sphere over the last 20 years or so have been about networking, participation, and grass-roots efforts. These innovations are connected to the emergence of the Internet, social media, the rise of a networked society, the changing role of women, and the values of the millennial generation.

Examples of more participatory, grass-roots creativity include (and this is limited to mostly U.S./U.K. examples): YouTube, Etsy, Facebook, Wikipedia, WebMed, farmers' markets, artisanal foods and the Slow Food movement, MySpace, blogs, vlogs, Twitter, flash mobs, *Britain's Got Talent*, independent music labels and movies, Garageband, DIY culture including DIY education (Kamenetz, 2010), Yelp, TripAdvisor, Craig's list, *Dancing with the Stars*, *American Idol*, and some of 'reality television.' The phenomenon of crowdsourcing to solicit funds via social media has also opened up new avenues of funding for entrepreneurial activities. The emerging Makers movement is another sign (Anderson, 2012), as is Toffler's related concept of "prosumer" which brings together the terms producer and consumer to illustrate how the traditional opposition between the two roles is becoming blurred (Toffler & Toffler, 2006).

As conventional categories of creativity such as high and low art, originality, and progress were deconstructed by the "postmodern debate" (Barthes, 1977; Kearney, 1988, 1995, 1998, 1999; Spretnak, 1991), and by more systemic, relational ways of thinking (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988; Glăveanu, 2014a, 2014b; Glăveanu & Lubart, 2014; Montuori, 2011b; Montuori & Purser, 1995; Sawyer, 2008), we have the opportunity as thinkers and researchers in the field of creativity to lay the foundations for a new approach to creativity. Specifically, rather than leading us to abandon all creative categories (as in claims about the 'death' of the author, the novel, painting, art, and the imagination) (Barthes 1972; Kearney 1988), the growing understanding that the old canons of creativity were socially constructed can open the way for the

reconstruction of creativity in ways that are appropriate for a partnership rather than a dominator model of society.

CREATIVITY IN A DOMINATION AND A PARTNERSHIP SOCIAL CONTEXT

As we have seen, much of the conventional discourse about creativity has come out of its social construction to fit the requirements of a dominator model of society. But this type of top-down, male-dominated, chronically violent, and conquest-oriented social organization is incapable of successfully dealing with our mounting ecological, social, and economic crises. This is not surprising, since many of these crises are the outcome of this type of social organization.

For example, many of the ecological problems we are experiencing today arise out of the effects of the pollution and waste created by the kind of creativity' this system values: of technologies created with little if any concern for the 'women's work' of maintaining a clean environment. Numerous other problems have arisen this way, including those caused by the enormous expenditure of money and energy to encourage innovativeness in weaponry.

Eisler has argued that in a dominator system an inordinate emphasis has been placed on what she calls "technologies of destruction," and very little on "technologies of conservation" (Eisler, 1990, 1994, 2004). However, technologies such as recycling, conversion, waste management, wilderness preservation, and so forth would be the kind of technologies which a partnership system supports, since here the job of preserving, cleaning up, and maintaining our environment -- the context in which we live -- would not be seen as "just women's work," devalued in the public realm and confined to the private realm (Eisler, 1987, 2007).

Similarly, in the context of a partnership rather than a dominator social organization, there would be a much greater focus on the impact of technology on communities, education, health, and quality of life, with recognition of the importance of childcare and other activities stereotypically considered 'women's work' which have been devalued in industry's decontextualized obsession with innovation (Rushkoff, 2005). There would also be much greater emphasis on the social support systems in a community, the larger ecology, and all those areas that count as a creative system's environment -- the social and natural environment in which a factory operates, or the community in which individuals live and engage in their various creative activities.

The emphasis in creativity research would also no longer be only on individual creativity, but as we are already beginning to see, on the phenomenon of social creativity (Montuori & Purser, 1995). This research would recognize the historically more social nature of women's creativity. It would also look at more collaborative forms of creativity, in the form of creative interactions (in families, schools, etc.). And it would recognize the vital importance of the social context in which creativity can flourish.

The who, how, where, when, and why of creativity would all be expanded to move towards "everyone, everywhere, everyday" creativity, with a Partnership rather than a Dominator value orientation. For example, Gablik (1991), discussing gender differences, has written about the need for "partnership art," stating that "when art is rooted in the responsive heart, rather than the disembodied eye, it may even come to be seen, not as the solitary process it has been since the Renaissance, but as something we do with others" (p.106). Gablik's comments parallel discussion of women's epistemology and research methods, particularly the importance of contextual forms of participant observation as opposed to methods which abstract the self from the process of inquiry. Gablik's reference to the responsive heart also recalls the call for the inclusion of empathy in feminist inquiry (Code, 1991). And all of this points to a larger shift occurring both in art and in research that reflects the emergence of women's perspectives.

Different methodologies will also provide us with important new understandings of creativity, as will dialogues among scholars from different disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, literature, and even political science and economics (Rubenson & Runco, 1992). Moreover, by using a systemic, gender-holistic approach, research would not focus so much on creativity abstracted from its social context, but, as is also already beginning to happen, on the need to study creativity as a social phenomenon that would manifest itself very differently in the context of a partnership and a dominator form of social organization.

In this connection it is interesting that one of the most creative ancient Western civilizations, the Minoan civilization that flourished on the Mediterranean island of Crete approximately 3,500 years ago (whose extraordinary art is characterized by scholars as "unique in the annals of civilization" for its love of life and nature) oriented more to a partnership model (Eisler, 1987, 1995). As the Greek archaeologist Nicolas Platon writes of the Minoan's civilization, the influence of women and of what he terms a "feminine" sensitivity is evidenced in every sphere (Platon, 1966). In

contrast to the sharp divisions between haves and have-nots, and masters and slaves, of other ancient 'high civilizations,' Minoan Crete was also not a slave society. Rather, it had what Platon describes as a remarkably high general standard of living. Moreover, while the Minoans are noted for their beautiful frescoes, sculptures, and other fine arts, they also expressed their great creativity in more contextualized ways, with much attention paid to creativity in making daily life more comfortable and aesthetically pleasing (Platon, 1966). In addition, the Minoans were the great traders of their day. While they had technologies of destruction such as swords to defend their ships, given the danger from pirates on the high seas, rather than acquiring wealth largely through armed conquest like more dominator-oriented ancient civilizations, they acquired wealth by selling their beautiful crafts far and wide (for example, the fine Minoan pottery found in Egypt). In short, here the distinction between a focus on what Eisler calls technologies of destruction and technologies of production, reproduction, conservation, and actualization (Eisler, 1987, 2007, 2016a) comes dramatically to the fore -- with critical implications for all aspects of culture and of life.

CREATIVITY AND INVENTIVENESS

The new contextualized, gender-holistic approach to the study of creativity we are here proposing would also make an even more fundamental distinction: the differentiation between *creativity* and *inventiveness*, with the latter original but not creative (Eisler, 2004), also a differentiation proposed by Runco and Weisberg (Runco, 2015; Weisberg, 2015). Just as in our high technology age it is important that we distinguish between different kinds of technologies, it is also extremely important that we no longer look at all inventions, no matter what human and/or ecological damage they do, as 'creative.'

Thus, newness or originality for the sake of it, or in and of itself, would not be described as a priori creative, but rather as merely original or inventive, meaning new and unusual. For example, the creation of a clean bomb, which kills only people but leaves property untouched, might be described as inventive but not creative. Likewise, the Nazi's use of gas chambers to murder millions of Jews and other 'inferior' people, would be characterized as innovative but not creative.

As Eisler has suggested, the term creativity, rather than just innovativeness, would be reserved for that which supports, nurtures, and actualizes life by increasing the number of choices open to individuals and communities. It would therefore not be

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applied to the development of technologies that kill. Nor would it be applied to the development of better means of dominating, exploiting, and/or limiting the choices available to people (Eisler, 1988, 2004).

This distinction between creativity and innovativeness would make it possible to introduce the element of social, and hence ethical, judgment into discussions of creativity -- something that creativity researchers have long called for. For instance, Barron (1988), Gruber (1988), and McLaren (1993) have argued for the need to put creativity to work on pressing social issues. McLaren has discussed "the dark side of creativity," pointing out the nature of what he terms "destructive creativity" in a close parallel to Eisler's "technologies of destruction" (McLaren, 1993). Loye has called for a "moral creativity," distinguishing between a dominator morality of coercion and a partnership morality of caring. And Richard Kearney (1999) has argued that humans have an ethical demand to imagine otherwise; in other words, to go beyond what is to what could be and, indeed, what should be.

Kearney (1988) writes that "the kind of imagination required to meet the challenge of postmodernism is fundamentally historical" (p.392). We must be able to envision what comes after postmodernism, as well as what things were like before it. The emerging imagination, he writes, can learn from our history: from premodern thought "it learns that imagination is always a response to the demands of an other existing beyond the self." From modernism, "it learns that it must never abdicate a personal responsibility for invention, decision, and action." And from the postmodern age, "it learns that we are living in a common Civilization of Images -- a civilization which can bring each one of us into contact with each other even as it can threaten to obliterate the very 'realities' its images ostensibly 'depict'" (p.390).

TOWARD A PARTNERSHIP CREATIVITY

Kearney's suggestion that we need to develop an "ethical imagination" of what the world can be challenges us to use creativity to create a society in which creativity, in the sense Eisler has proposed, can inform our relations in both the so-called private and public spheres. It is an enormous challenge. But it is one that is already being taken on in bits and pieces.

Creative approaches to problems in communities, reflect the movement in the research literature to the social, every-day, "ordinary" and collaborative dimensions of creativity. This kind of work ranges from the creation of artists' collectives in North

America to women's banks in Latin America, from centers for education in parenting to creativity programs for the unemployed, and the worldwide use of the arts by social activists as consciousness-raising and/or fundraising tools. A variety of movements today focusing on social innovation apply creativity to a range of social issues, and while there is a lot of initial excitement it is to be hoped there will be a greater focus on grounding these efforts in a coherent partnership approach.

Arieti (1976) has written of what he calls the 'creativogenic' nature of societies: the capacity of communities to self-organize to address problems in a creative manner. Again, an integral component in this social creativity consists of the kinds of relational, enabling skills women have traditionally been socialized for, along with their contextual focus.

Certainly the entry of more women into the public sphere (be it in government, business, or academia) is essential if we are to meet Kearney's challenge of using creativity to imagine and actualize a partnership society. But as we have emphasized all along, both women and men are capable of the more stereotypically feminine contextual creativity. And certainly both women and men can work together in reconceptualizing creativity in ways more appropriate for the creation of an ecologically sustainable, more peaceful, and more truly humane future.

It is our hope that our efforts to outline a gender-holistic, contextual perspective on creativity can make a contribution to this process by pointing to the need to view creativity as embedded in a particular set of social relations. We are well aware that these relations are, at this point in time, still based far too much on dominator dynamics. But we believe that, as creativity becomes more gender-inclusive and contextualized, we have an opportunity to transform not only creativity, but the social and moral web of human relationships in a partnership direction.

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