



PALGRAVE STUDIES IN CREATIVITY AND
INNOVATION IN ORGANIZATIONS

Creativity at Work

A Festschrift in Honor of Teresa Amabile

Edited by
Roni Reiter-Palmon
Colin M. Fisher
Jennifer S. Mueller

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Palgrave Studies in Creativity and Innovation in Organizations

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A Festschrift for Teresa Amabile: An Introduction

In August 2019, a day-long seminar to celebrate the research and work of Teresa Amabile took place on the campus of Harvard, where Teresa has been a faculty member until her retirement. Teresa Amabile has started her Psychology career in 1977 with a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Stanford University. During the 40 years she has been a faculty member she has contributed significantly to the research and study of creativity. Her work focusing on the social psychology of creativity is considered foundational to the study of creativity. Students and researchers studying creativity recognize her many contributions to the development of the field. Most notable are the development of The Consensual Assessment Technique (CAT), the componential model of creativity, the development of a measure of creative climate, and the progress principle. The chapters in this volume were written by those that have gathered to celebrate Teresa Amabile's research and accomplishments. They include her students, colleagues, and other creativity researchers. The chapters are based on presentations given at the Festschrift in August 2019.

The first chapter by Justin Berg drills down on a less known paper published by Teresa—"Brilliant but Cruel"—a paper that showed that

those who gave negative reviews were perceived to be more intelligent than those who gave positive reviews. He proposes and provides initial evidence to support a fascinating idea: Rather than being critical, being optimistic and benevolent may actually contribute to more accurate evaluations of creative ideas.

The next chapter, by Regina Conti and Brynn April, introduces the concept of inspiration into Amabile's componential model of creativity, focusing on its relationship with intrinsic motivation. In doing so, the authors summarize research linking inspiration, intrinsic motivation, and creativity and detail a new empirical study on how the physical environment can inspire creativity. The chapter is book-ended by Conti's reflections on her work with Teresa Amabile and the inspiration she received from it.

The chapter by Jonathan Cromwell focuses on two aspects of the componential model—intrinsic motivation and creative thinking skills. He posits that Amabile's work has shown that social environment shapes both intrinsic motivation and creative thinking skills, which has led him to investigate how external constraints can enhance creativity (rather than harming it, as prior research has suggested). Building on his own experience working with Teresa, he also recounts how both her ideas and guidance have affected his own development as a scholar.

The chapter by Colin Fisher, Poornika Ananth, and Ozumcan Demir Caliskan elaborates how Teresa's work contributed to theoretical discussions and observations of the creative process. This chapter identifies how Teresa's view of the creative process changed and expanded over time to include more social and dynamic aspects and identifies key questions to guide future scholarly efforts. The chapter ends by describing the first author's own creative process journey with Teresa, and how Teresa's ideas shaped and honed his own contributions to the field.

The chapter by Lucy Gilson lists the many major theoretical contributions Teresa's work has made in no particular order of importance—making the claim that they are all important. In particular, she emphasizes specific contributions which inspired her and her colleagues to publish important insights that extended Teresa's work in the domain of understanding the conceptual definition of creativity, the relationship

between motivation and creativity as well as the interactionist perspective on creativity, and the crucial insight that creativity and innovation were separate and distinct parts of a process critically related to organizational success.

Spencer Harrison provides a novel reflection on the influence of Teresa Amabile and her work—in both the content and format of his chapter. Harrison ranges from discussing the role of memes in creativity and science, to reflecting on the influence of Teresa’s ideas on scholarship, as well as her personal impact on him. He concludes with expressions of that impact in the form of a poem and figure that we will not spoil for readers by attempting to summarize it here.

The chapter by Beth Hennessy describes her intellectual and personal journey with Teresa which started when entering graduate school and continued until today as she contemplates retirement herself. In particular she describes the development and cultivation of a tremendous intellectual synergy with Teresa and how this synergy contributed to their publishing many pieces together over many years across a range of topics related to creativity. In particular, she describes her journey studying the consensual assessment technique, early studies of intrinsic motivation as well as later “immunization studies” aimed at making school culture more conducive to creativity.

In his chapter, Giovanni Moneta revisits Amabile’s componential theory and five-stage process model by considering the concept of flow. Moneta argues that moving toward a flow state in creative work creates disturbances in creators’ subjective experiences. These disturbances can help account for dynamism in the creative process and the role that failure plays in going “back to the drawing board.”

The chapter by Jennifer S. Mueller focuses on how people evaluate creativity. She describes her interest starting with her work with Teresa Amabile, and identifying that while employees and managers state explicitly that they prefer creativity, this is not always reflected in their actions. She summarizes her research in which she attempts to identify the reasons why this happens. Her research indicates that uncertainty and evaluations from authority figures play an important role. She then proceeds to discuss the implications of this to the componential model. Specifically,

the componential model takes the perspective of the employee but not that of the decision-maker.

The chapter by Michael Mumford and Mark Fichtel focuses on the environment in which creativity occurs, specifically, a climate for creativity. Amabile was a pioneer in this work and developed a measure of climate for creativity. In this chapter, Mumford and Fichtel highlight the dimensions of creative climate, and apply those to the study of creativity in professionals. They then address the conflicting demands of risk and safety, both important attributes of a creative environment. They argue that the integration of these two aspects is critical, and understanding the mechanisms by which this integration occurs is important for our understanding of creativity and creative environments.

Paul Paulus focuses his chapter also on the Social Psychology of creativity and the connection between the work of Teresa Amabile and his own work on group or team creativity. He notes that the componential model, while focusing on the individual creator, provided a roadmap for the study of creativity in groups. The chapter further details how the consensual assessment technique was important in the facilitation of the study of group creativity moving the research beyond just counts of ideas. He then details the implications of Amabile's body of work for the future of group creativity research.

This chapter by Gregory Fetzner & Michael Pratt drills down into a recent addition to the componential model—in 2016—Pratt and Teresa wrote an article which infused the componential model with theory around meaningfulness. This chapter expands upon this insight to explore two new lines of inquiry: (1) uncovering conditions that motivate different orientations to be creative; and (2) understanding how creative persistence may unfold in the long term.

The chapter by Jill Perry-Smith chronicles her intellectual journey which was strongly shaped by her advisor Christina Shalley—both of whom were inspired by Teresa's componential model. In early works Jill and Christina examined Teresa's idea that intrinsic motivation and resulting creativity might be undermined by evaluation—work which began her focus on examining the "social side of creativity." Today, inspired by Teresa's work, Jill has expanded our understanding of how network and social interaction can help and hinder creative efforts.

The chapter by Gerard Puccio focuses on the crucial contribution polarity thinking, that is the integration of opposite qualities and characteristics, makes to creative achievement. Second, Puccio revisits Amabile's seminal work and integrate the notion of polarities with her componential model. Puccio focuses on four specific polarities that are critical for creativity, with two being specific to the work of Amabile. Task motivation is reexamined from the perspective of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as a polarity dimension. Finally, the balance between creativity and domain-relevant skills is framed as opposing poles within a dialectic relationship.

The chapter by Roni Reiter-Palmon details the extension and modification of the consensual assessment technique over the years it has been used in research. In her chapter she indicates that modifications were necessary due to the use of everyday problems and the lack of expert judges. She then provides information on the specific modifications such as the use of separate ratings for solution quality (usefulness) and originality (novelty) and rater training.

Next, Mark Runco discusses how Amabile's work has influenced the development of his model of creative cognition to incorporate intrinsic motivation. The chapter examines intrinsic motivation within a larger context where it intersects with cognition. Runco then moves to discuss the consensual assessment technique and the creative product. He raises a concern about the generalization from judges used in the consensual assessment technique, an area that needs further study.

The chapter by Christina Shalley reflects on both the influence of the componential model and consensual assessment technique for the field and her own influential body of research. Specifically, she recounts how the intrinsic motivation principle influenced her work on goal setting, expected evaluation, and competition, which ultimately led her to examine additional motivational and contextual factors involved in creativity.

Dean Simonton recounts in his chapter the genesis of the term "the social psychology of creativity," focusing on the context within social psychology prior to both his and Amabile's pioneering work. Simonton argues in his chapter that, although Amabile and others have credited

Simonton with coining the term “the social psychology of creativity,” Amabile deserves the credit for establishing creativity as an accepted area of research in social psychology.

The chapter by Jeff Steiner focuses on Teresa Amabile’s more recent work, the progress principle. Steiner highlights the role that this work had in emphasizing the importance of inner working life, an area that has been understudied. He suggests that this work is unique due to its person-centered approach and the use of rigorous methodology to study a difficult area. He further notes that this research provides a unique contribution to practitioners in the field. The chapter concludes by discussing the future of the progress principle, both in terms of its application and additional research.

Robert Sternberg provides an overview of the work by Teresa Amabile as it relates to creativity. He notes that Teresa’s work transformed the field of creativity, and discusses a number of major contribution to the study of creativity. First, the new focus on the social psychology of creativity, and the integration of creativity into the wider field of social psychology. Second, the development of the componential model of creativity, which provided a theoretical model for the study of creativity. Third, her study of the role of intrinsic motivation in creative performance. Finally, the development of the consensual assessment technique which allowed for the previous development in a scientifically rigorous way.

Jing Zhou also blends a personal account of Teresa’s work with her professional influence. Zhou commends Amabile’s research for three main reasons: (1) creating a coherent body of work, (2) being courageous in challenging assumptions, and (3) making a positive contribution to the community. She then details how these commendable aspects of Amabile’s work have helped inspire her own research contributions, including the interactional effects of personal and situational variables on creativity, her recent work on the receiving side of creativity, and many valuable reviews of the literature on creativity in organizations.

Teresa Amabile herself then offers an afterword on these chapters. In it, she reflects both on her research career, its roots, and the many people who have offered support and love to her over her 40 years of

creativity research. She draws three main lessons from her experience about drawing power from uncertainty, failure, and “confident humility.”

Roni Reiter-Palmon
Colin M. Fisher
Jennifer S. Mueller

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Notes on Contributors

Teresa M. Amabile has researched and written about creativity for 45 years. Beginning with a series of empirical and theoretical papers in the 1970s and 1980s, she was instrumental in establishing the social psychology of creativity—the study of how the social environment can influence creative behavior, primarily by influencing motivational state. Originally focusing on experimental studies of individual creativity, Teresa’s research expanded to non-experimental, field-based studies that also encompassed individual productivity, team creativity, and organizational innovation. Her more recent research incorporates the study of creativity into broader investigations of two topics: the day-by-day psychological experience and performance of people doing creative work inside organizations, and American professionals’ experience of transitioning to retirement. Teresa’s scholarly work has appeared in a variety of psychology and organizational behavior journals, as well as her books, including *The Social Psychology of Creativity* (1983), its update, *Creativity in Context* (1996), *Growing Up Creative* (1989), and *The Progress Principle* (2011). Teresa has received the Distinguished Scholar Award from

the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Organizational Behavior Division of the Academy of Management, and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Israel Organizational Behavior Conference, as well as other honors and grants. Teresa holds a B.S. degree in Chemistry from Canisius College and a Ph.D. in psychology from Stanford University.

Poornika Ananth is a Ph.D. candidate at University College London School of Management. Her research explores the challenges, experiences, and practices associated with creativity and sustainability at work. She received her Master of Science in International Strategy and Economics from the University of St Andrews, Scotland. Poornika also has a background in banking, having worked with Citibank in Europe and the Middle East in their Treasury and Trade Solutions Group.

Brynn April graduated summa cum laude from Colgate University in May 2020, receiving her B.A. in both Psychological Science and English. She completed an honors thesis on inspiration in the creative writing process with Regina Conti as her faculty mentor. Brynn also published an article entitled “We Run by the Mirror” in the University of Melbourne Periodical in 2019 and has authored several creative works including personal poems and a novel. She currently works as a Junior Associate at Gasthalter & Co., a New York-based financial communications firm.

Justin M. Berg is an Assistant Professor of Organizational Behavior at the Stanford Graduate School of Business. His research focuses on creativity and innovation. He studies how to successfully develop, evaluate, and implement creative ideas in and outside organizations. This includes research on job crafting, which is the process of employees creatively reshaping their own jobs to better suit their personalities and interests. He received his Ph.D. in Management from The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania and his B.A. in Organizational Studies and Psychology from the University of Michigan.

Ozumcan Demir Caliskan is a Ph.D. candidate at University College London School of Management. She aims to integrate her experience in the field of design with organizational theory to understand creativity and

innovation in organizations. Her research focuses on how new technologies and new forms of organizing affect creative processes and the experience of creative workers. She received her Master of Science and Bachelor's degrees in Industrial Design at Middle East Technical University (METU).

Regina Conti received her Ph.D. in social psychology from Brandeis University in 1995 where Teresa Amabile was her faculty mentor. She is currently an Associate Professor of Psychology at Colgate University. She teaches courses in the areas of human motivation, research methods, and the psychology of work. Her research investigates motivational processes in school, work, health, and family contexts. Most recently, she is exploring how the motivational dynamics of family life are influenced by a diagnosis of autism in a child or children.

Johnathan Cromwell is an Assistant Professor in the department of Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Strategy, and International Business at the University of San Francisco. His research focuses on creative problem-solving in organizations, particularly how individuals and groups tackle vague, open-ended, and ambiguous problems. Through this research, he aims to develop a new theoretical framework called “dynamic problem solving” that explains why, when, and how people change their problem-solving style as they respond to various constraints throughout the creativity and innovation process. He earned an S.B. in Chemical-Biological Engineering from MIT and a Doctorate in Management from Harvard Business School.

Greg Fetzer is a Doctoral Candidate at the Carroll School of Management at Boston College. His research focuses on creativity and meaningful work: what makes work novel, useful, and worth doing. In particular he focuses on the temporal experience of creative work and the social and cultural influences that shape work meaningfulness.

Mark W. Fichtel is a Doctoral Student in the University of Oklahoma's program in Industrial and Organizational (I/O) Psychology. His research interests include leadership, creativity, and ethics. He has worked on grants examining ethical decision-making and technology use during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Colin M. Fisher is an Associate Professor of Organizations and Innovation at University College London. His research explores how people lead, help, and coach teams and individuals in situations requiring collective creativity, improvisation, and effective decision-making. His research has been published in leading journals, such as *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, and *Harvard Business Review*. Colin received his Ph.D. in Organizational Behavior from Harvard University. In his work as a professional jazz trumpet player, Colin was a long-time member of the Grammy-nominated Either/Orchestra, with whom he toured and recorded several critically acclaimed albums.

Lucy L. Gilson is the Associate Dean for Faculty & Outreach and serves as the Faculty Director for the Geno Auriemma UConn Leadership Conference, the faculty advisor to the UConn women's MBA association, a visiting Scholar at Universidade Catolica Portuguesa (Lisbon), and the Senior Associate Editor of *Group and Organization Management*. She is a Fellow of the Southern Management Association, and in 2019 she was named by the Web of Science Group as one of the world's most highly-cited researchers. Her research focuses on creativity, virtual teams, and team effectiveness; in particular, she is interested in examining teams in different organizational settings performing a diverse range of jobs. Specifically, she studies how creativity, employee empowerment, diversity, fairness issues, leadership, and virtual communication influence team effectiveness. Her research has been published in the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Group and Organization Management*, *Journal of Management*, *Production and Operation Management (POM) Journal*, *Innovation: Organization & Management*, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, and many other international journals and books.

Spencer Harrison's research is typically an answer to one of three broad questions: 1) Creating: how do managers and leaders help people be creative together? 2) Coordinating: how do groups and teams work together in patterns that lead to optimal outcomes? 3) Connecting: how

do people connect with the organizations they work for? He is always on the lookout for quirky settings where he can learn new things.

Beth A. Hennessey received her Ph.D. in Social/Developmental Psychology from Brandeis University in 1986. Before pursuing graduate study, Beth taught at the elementary school level. She was a member of the Wellesley College's Psychology Department from 1985 until her retirement in 2020. Beth served as the Faculty Director of Wellesley's Pforzheimer Learning and Teaching Center from 2007–2011. Across her career, Beth was involved with a number of international investigations of the connection between intrinsic motivation and creativity. She has also worked with the Lego corporation and the government of Singapore to better understand the connection between creativity and play across cultures.

Giovanni B. Moneta is a Senior Lecturer teaching personality psychology, work psychology and research methods. His main research interests are in positive psychology, with a focus on optimal experience (flow), creativity, adaptive metacognitions, and on how these influence performance in occupational and educational contexts. He is Author of *Positive Psychology: A Critical Introduction* and co-editor of *Psychology of Creativity: Cognitive, Emotional, and Social Processes*.

Jennifer S. Mueller (jmueller@sandiego.edu) is an Associate Professor of management at the University of San Diego. She received her Ph.D. from Brandeis University. Her research examines implicit beliefs (e.g., stereotypes, cultural narratives, and lay scripts) that harm effective collaboration, assessments of leadership potential, as well as the recognition of creative ideas.

Michael D. Mumford, Ph.D., is the George Lynn Cross Distinguished Research Professor of Psychology at the University of Oklahoma. He has published more than 400 peer-reviewed articles on creativity, leadership, planning, and ethics. Dr. Mumford has served as senior editor of *The Leadership Quarterly* and the *Creativity Research Journal*. He is a recipient of the Academy of Management's Eminent Leadership Scholar Award and the Society for Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts' Lifetime Scholarly Contribution award.

Paul B. Paulus received his Ph.D. from the University of Iowa and is a Distinguished University Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Texas at Arlington. He served as the Director of the Industrial/Organizational Psychology program and for 10 years taught the high performing teams course in the executive MBA program. He has published about 160 papers and chapters and five edited volumes related to group processes. About 100 of these papers and chapters are related to group creativity, with much of this research done in collaboration with cognitive and computer scientists in the past 20 years. With Bernard Nijstad he has edited two volumes on group creativity—*Group Creativity: Innovation Through Collaboration* (2003) and *The Handbook of Group Creativity and Innovation* (2019). He has served as Chair of the Department of Psychology and Dean of the College of Science and has been a visiting scholar at nine different institutions.

Jill Perry-Smith is Professor of Organization and Management in the Goizueta Business School at Emory University. She earned her Ph.D. from the College of Management at Georgia Institute of Technology. Professor Perry-Smith researches and writes about creative problem-solving, entrepreneurship, and social networks. She is fascinated by people dynamics and informal relationships that undergird the formal organization. In another stream of research, she explores how family influences work engagement and the role of company policies that help employees integrate life and work. Her research has appeared in leading management journals such as *Academy of Management Journal*, *Organization Science*, and *Journal of Applied Psychology*; she also has contributed to several books including *Encyclopedia of Creativity*, and *The Oxford Handbook of Creativity, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship*. She has served as an Associate Editor of *Academy of Management Journal*. Prior to her academic career, Professor Perry-Smith worked in the oil and gas industry overseeing large refinery expansion projects across the United States.

Michael G. Pratt (Ph.D. University of Michigan) is the O'Connor Family Professor at the Carroll School of Management at Boston College. In addition to his work on creativity, his recent research focuses on identity processes, meaningful work, trust in organizations, as well as

on the writing, evaluating, and publishing of qualitative research. He is an Academy of Management Fellow and currently serves as an associate editor for the Administrative Science Quarterly.

Gerard J. Puccio is the Department Chair and Professor for the Creativity & Change Leadership Department at SUNY - Buffalo State. Dr. Puccio has written more than 60 articles, chapters, and books. In recognition of his outstanding work as a scholar, Dr. Puccio received the State University of New York Chancellor's Recognition Award for Research Excellence, as well as the President's Medal for Scholarship and Creativity. The Teaching Company selected Dr. Puccio as one of America's great lecturers and as such released a Great Course titled "The Creative Thinkers' Tool Kit" that features Dr. Puccio and his work.

Roni Reiter-Palmon is the Varner Professor of Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology and the Director of the I/O Psychology Graduate Program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). Her research focuses on creativity and innovation in the workplace, cognitive processes, and individual difference variables that influence creative performance of individuals and teams, leading creative individuals, and development of creativity and leadership skills. She has over 80 publications in leading journals. She is an Associate Editor for the European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology and Frontiers: Organizational Psychology. She was the former editor of The Psychology of Aesthetics Creativity and the Arts. She serves on the editorial boards of a number of journals, including *The Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, *Journal of Creative Behavior*, and *International Journal of Problem Solving and Creativity*. She has received UNO's College of Arts and Science Excellence in Research Award in 2013, UNO's Award for Distinguished Research and Creative Activity (ADROCA) in 2014, and the Nebraska University System Award for Research in 2017.

Mark A. Runco earned a Ph.D. in Cognitive Psychology from the Claremont Graduate School. He studied creativity as a student and has kept it since graduating in 1984. He earned tenure at the University of Hawaii, Hilo, and then moved to California State University, Fullerton

and in 2008 was awarded an Endowed Professorship at the University of Georgia, where he was also Director of their Creativity Center. He has held adjunct positions at Buffalo State University and the Norwegian Business School. He is currently the Director of Creativity Research at Southern Oregon University (www.soucreativityconference.com), as well as a Fellow and Past President of Division 10 of the APA. He is the Founding Editor of the Creativity Research Journal. His creativity textbook has been translated into 10 languages. The 3rd edition of that text and 3rd edition of the Encyclopedia of Creativity, which he co-edited, are being released in 2020 (www.markrunco.com).

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Jeff Steiner is a Doctoral Student in the Organizational Behavior program at Harvard Business School. His research interests lie at the

intersection of well-being and work. He is interested in how individuals think about what it means to live a good life, and the extent to which experiences with work helps or hinders the realization of it. Jeff was formerly a Talent Development Director at Morgan Stanley, as well as a Research Associate to Professor Teresa Amabile at Harvard Business School. Jeff earned his B.B.A. in Management and Psychology from the University of Miami.

Robert J. Sternberg is Professor of Human Development at Cornell University and Honorary Professor of Psychology at the University of Heidelberg, Germany. His B.A. is from Yale, his Ph.D. from Stanford, and he has 13 honorary doctorates. He has won the Grawemeyer Award in Psychology and the James and the Cattell Awards from the Association for Psychological Science. According to Google Scholar, he has been cited over 186,000 times with an h index of 208. He is past-president of the American Psychological Association and the Federation of Associations in Behavioral and Brain Sciences. He has been a university dean, provost, and president.

Jing Zhou is Mary Gibbs Jones Professor of Management at Jones Graduate School of Business at Rice University. Dr. Zhou has built a systematic program of research into creativity and innovation, receiving over 25,000 citations for her work (Google Scholar, 2020). Her research interests include antecedents of creativity, creativity receiving, and impact of creativity on organizational innovation and performance. She served as an Associate Editor of *Journal of Applied Psychology*. She is Fellow of the American Psychological Association, Association for Psychological Sciences, and Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

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Brilliant and Benevolent: The Optimism of Teresa Amabile's Legacy for Creativity in Organizations

Justin M. Berg

In 1982 and 1983, Teresa Amabile almost singlehandedly laid the methodological and theoretical groundwork for studying the social psychology of creativity. This is when she first published her consensual assessment technique (Amabile, 1982) and componential model of creativity (Amabile, 1983a). Paradigm shifts are by definition rare, and it is even rarer to be able to trace a paradigm shift back to a single scholar at a particular moment in time. Yet, we can point to Amabile's work in 1982 and 1983 as the foundation of a paradigm shift that led creativity to be a core area of study in both social psychology and organizational behavior.

During the same two years, she also published two papers that have received comparably less attention (Amabile & Glazebrook, 1982; Amabile, 1983b). From my view, these papers contain profound insights

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