

Creativity and Knowledge

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A recurring theme of philosophical writing about creativity is that there is not enough of it (the philosophical writing, that is). Creativity is an important, valuable feature of human activity, often discussed beyond the bounds of philosophy, and yet it is relatively understudied within our discipline. In seeking to remedy this lack, it is natural, sensible, and fruitful to look to the philosophy of mind and of cognitive science, and to aesthetics, as well as looking beyond philosophy as it is usually understood. In this chapter, however, I propose to explore a number of respects in which epistemology too can contribute to our philosophical understanding of creativity. Both knowledge and creativity involve achievements of different kinds, and from that point of contact we can build a number of useful analogies.

Creativity and Value

The concept of creativity involves concepts from the family of novelty, originality, and surprise. There is significant variation within this family: for example, “original” seems more complimentary than does mere “novel”. But I won’t dwell upon that variation here; moreover, like others I will take it that creativity requires doing something which is new or original to the agent, rather than achieving something unprecedented in human history. Instead, I will focus on a further question: does the concept of creativity also involve the concept of value? Many theorists have thought so, defining creativity such that creative products must be valuable; these include, influentially, Margaret Boden (2004: 1). In his review of the field, Gaut writes “There is a broad consensus that creativity is the capacity to produce things that are original and valuable” (2010: 1039), though he acknowledges that

there are exceptions to this broad consensus. More recently, Gaut (this volume) articulates a more complex connection between creativity and value, whilst (Bird and Hills, this volume) are sceptical about the supposed link.

What is the motivation for including a value condition on creativity, i.e. for denying the possibility of valueless creative products? It is of course true that products which are both creative and valuable are worth pursuing: a creative solution to a global medical challenge trumps a creative solution to the challenge of keeping my sock drawer tidy. Educational programmes which aim to enhance creativity should focus on directing such creativity towards valuable goals, just as programmes which aim to enhance stamina, critical thinking, or teamwork should focus on directing those traits towards valuable goals. (It is an empirical question how easy it is to train people to develop skills for admirable purposes, without thereby enhancing their ability to turn the force towards the dark side.) But we are not tempted to posit a conceptual connection between stamina, or teamwork, and the pursuit of valuable goals; why is creativity different?

Perhaps it seems artificial to separate the quest for originality from the quest for value: what makes creative pursuits so challenging, and so rewarding, are the ways in which they require us to balance the free-form push for originality with a reflective assessment of the value of what we generate. But the same is often true in the quest for knowledge. Seemingly, not all knowledge is worth having, and investigative pursuits – such as academic research or crime detection – require us to balance the search for truth with an assessment of the value of what we discover. Again, we are not tempted to think that being-worth-knowing is a necessary condition for knowledge: there is plenty of practically-useless knowledge. Likewise, it

seems, we could value valuable creative products without making value a necessary condition for creativity.

One central motivation for linking value and creativity is the claim that merely original (or merely novel) products can lack creativity, and that such products lack value. Gaut (2010: 1039) attributes to Kant the view that whilst “original nonsense” is novel, it is neither creative nor valuable. (Bird and Hills (this volume) dispute both the attribution and the view itself.) This is a form of argument from intuition, which is appropriate, given that we are trying to establish conceptual connections: we are to imagine or consider something original yet nonsensical, and then agree that it is neither creative nor valuable.

Some caution is required, since Kant predates Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky” and Edward Lear’s delightfully creative “nonsense” verse. Such products are valuable not despite their nonsensicality but because of it; similarly, comedians such as Ross Noble make a high art out of seemingly-spontaneous “nonsense”. Probably Kant would not have enjoyed a Ross Noble gig, but if we are attempting to capture our ordinary concept of creativity, then the work of Carroll, Lear, and Noble is paradigmatic, not borderline. For the purposes of this debate, then, when imagining “original nonsense” we should imagine something which genuinely lacks any sense, rather than something which is contentful but entertainingly daft. For example, we might imagine arbitrary strings of words and letters, or the equivalent in other media. As Berys Gaut has suggested (personal communication), someone might simply decide to write down every letter or numeral that occurs to her over the course of ten minutes, without following any algorithm, or attempting any sense.

How are we to decide whether such a product is creative, and whether it has value? We can test our intuitions as to whether such a product has moral value, or practical value, or aesthetic value, and if we get the details of the story right, we can conclude that it does not. I personally find it more difficult to generate intuitions about whether such a product can count as creative, i.e. as something which reflects positively on its author's creativity. But that is often the way with contested philosophical analyses, where one can lose track of one's intuitions about crucial cases.

I want to explore a different approach to this issue. There are various ways of thinking about the connection between the value of a product, and the creativeness of that product, where the latter is understood in terms of its counting positively towards the creativity of its producer. We might think that it is the value of the product, along with its novelty or originality, which helps make it creative. Then, conversely, in the case of "original nonsense" it is the valuelessness of the product which supposedly prevents it from counting as creative. Alternatively, we might think of the creativeness of a product as endowing it with value, and conversely the non-creativeness of "original nonsense" as preventing it from having value. Either way, we might regard the creativity and value of a product as flowing from some common source, most plausibly from the manner in which the product is generated by its creator.

We don't need to see this as a dispute over some deep fact of the matter in order to appreciate that keeping these various options in mind can help us open up some alternative ways of thinking about creativity and value. I propose to explore this area by drawing on some parallels with epistemological debate about the value of knowledge. This is a promising strategy, not because epistemologists have reached consensus about what such value amounts

to, but because the volume of work in that area provides ample opportunities for creative borrowing.

Epistemic Value

Let's begin with the *Meno* problem. Since Socrates's discussion of the road to Larissa, epistemologists have attempted to understand the ways in which knowledge of some matter seems superior to mere true belief in that very same regard. After all, a true belief about the way to Larissa seems just as useful a means of getting us to Larissa as is knowledge of the way to Larissa. Nevertheless, we seem to attribute greater value to knowing, over and above merely having a true belief.

A more recent lesson, from Gettier (1963), is that, in addition, we value knowing more than we value merely having a justified true belief. When we consider the diligent but hapless people in Gettier's examples, who hold justified beliefs which only happen to be true, our judgement seems to be not just that they lack knowledge, but that this is some kind of defect: it's better to *know*. We can use the term "epistemic value" as a placeholder for the value which knowledge seems to have, over and above the value attached to the satisfaction of its various necessary conditions such as justification or truth, or combinations thereof.

(Pritchard and Turri 2014 is an overview of current debate about epistemic value; Olsson 2013 is a useful annotated bibliography; Kvanvig (2003) is an influential critique.)

What kind of value is epistemic value? That's a much-disputed matter, because none of the straightforward answers is obviously true. For example, epistemic value does not seem to be mere practical value. *Prima facie*, true belief can get us to Larissa just as well as knowledge can. And we seem to value knowledge over mere true belief even where neither has any

practical value: whether you consider your favourite example of “pure” academic enquiry, or else your favourite example of celebrity trivia, the standard distinctions between really knowing, and merely getting it right seem to apply, as do the standard distinctions between really knowing and merely having justified true belief. It’s better, though no more useful, to *know*, than to believe in a way which falls short of knowledge.

Moreover, epistemic value does not seem to be moral value. In some cases, there is clear moral disvalue in my knowing something, perhaps because I will use my knowledge to evil ends, or perhaps because someone else had a right to my not knowing that fact. In such cases, it’s clear that knowing is not morally better than truly believing. Could knowing be morally worse than merely truly believing? This is a bit harder to establish, but certainly when you find yourself with a belief about someone else’s private business, it’s often proper to avoid obtaining further evidence in that regard; it seems morally better to stick with mere belief, rather than pursuing knowledge.

There is plenty of room for disagreement here. But we don’t need an agreed ethics of belief and knowledge in order to appreciate that, even where it is morally better not to know, there still seems to be some epistemic sense in which knowledge trumps mere true belief. And of course there are many situations in which both knowledge and true belief are morally neutral, yet knowledge seems more valuable. This does not entail that the value of knowledge is some kind of *sui generis* value, something which cannot ultimately be understood in terms of other forms of value; indeed, various epistemologists have proposed different ways of understanding what epistemic value might be. But it is enough for my purposes that none of these accounts is just obviously correct.

Creative Value

The literature on epistemic value suggests a way of connecting creativity and value: we might understand a product's being creative as itself a source of value, not obviously reducible to other forms of value. To motivate this, consider that we often seem to admire the creativeness of a product, over and above its other positive features: a creative solution to a medical challenge is in some sense more admirable than a non-creative solution to the same important challenge. This is not because the creative solution is inevitably more novel or original, either locally or globally, than the non-creative solution: after all, novelty can be the result of sheer accident, of non-agential processes, or of a quasi-mechanical process whereby options are systematically exhausted.

Let us use "creative value" as a placeholder term for what seems to differentiate a genuinely creative product from one which is merely novel, just as we use "epistemic value" for what seems to differentiate genuine knowledge from other states such as mere justified true belief. I do not propose a reductive account of the nature of creative value, any more than I propose a reductive account of epistemic value. But I will explore the analogy in some detail.

What kind of value is creative value? *Prima facie*, it does not seem to be practical value: a non-creative solution to a medical challenge can be just as effective as the creative solution to the same challenge. Analogously, mere true belief can be just as effective as knowledge, when we want to travel to Larissa. And we can distinguish creative from non-creative products even where both are practically useless; compare a folly on a nobleman's estate which ingeniously fits around a jagged rock formation with a standard folly built in a flat woodland clearing. Likewise, if you look around the seminar audience, you will see both creative and non-creative doodling, both seemingly without practical value.

Moreover, creative value does not seem to be identical to moral value. (Cropley 2017) distinguishes negative creativity, which has unintended bad consequences, from malevolent creativity, where the bad consequences are intended. Negative creativity might include the scientific and technical creativity required to generate new theories, experiments and technologies, even where these unforeseeably result in a worsening of climate change or of economic inequalities. Examples of malevolent creativity are commonplace: liars can be very creative in their deceit, whilst the inventive criminal or Bond-style evil genius is a familiar figure. (Cropley usefully reviews research in this area, whilst Kampylis and Valtanen 2010 examine various definitions of creativity with this issue in mind).

As discussed above, knowledge may be morally neutral, or morally bad, even whilst retaining its epistemic value relative to mere true belief (or mere justified true belief). There are some things I morally ought not to know. Analogously, in cases of malevolent creativity it is morally impermissible to pursue an evil project, either creatively or non-creatively. But this is compatible with the claim that creatively-realised evil has a creative value which mechanically or fortuitously generated evil lacks.

There is little temptation to identify epistemic value with aesthetic value, although it's not uncommon for scientists and mathematicians to take aesthetic value as indicative of truth (as discussed in fascinating detail by McAllister 1999). But it is a bit more tempting to identify creative value with aesthetic value, or at least to consider it a species of aesthetic value. The obvious challenge here is that creative value can be found in domains far beyond those normally thought of as the homes of aesthetic value: there can be creativity in science, sports, problem-solving, business, and so on. Conversely, aesthetic value seems to extend beyond

the realm of human creativity, encompassing natural beauty for example. The connection between aesthetic value and creative value is evidently not straightforward, yet it seems worthy of further exploration; I will not pursue that project here however.

The notion of creative value enables us to draw distinctions between creative products and non-creative products, even where these seem to have equivalent practical and/or moral value, as when we value the creative over the non-creative solution to a medical challenge. Moreover, we may distinguish creative and non-creative products even where both seem to lack other kinds of value. This makes conceptual space for the classification of “original nonsense” as creative, even if it is valueless in other ways. But it does not require us to make that move if it is independently unappealing, or incompatible with whatever we might eventually want to say about the sources of creativity. Analogously, we can distinguish knowledge from mere true belief, or from mere justified true belief, even where the subject matter is utterly inconsequential, rendering the knowledge valueless along non-epistemic dimensions.

So there are some suggestive parallels between the value of knowledge and the value of creative products. Thus one way of understanding the value condition on the creativity of products is in terms of creative value. We can accept that malevolent creativity, creative nonsense, and standardly positive creative products all share a special kind of creative value, despite their varying along other dimensions of value. This is a beginning rather than an end to enquiry in this area, since I have not offered anything like a substantive account of creative value. The natural thought is that creative value attaches to novel products in virtue of their being generated by an appropriately creative process, but this only pushes us one step further.

Should we expect to find any substantive account of creative value? As I have framed matters, the task of understanding what it is for a product to be creative as opposed to merely original is analogous to the task of understanding what it is for a mental state to count as knowledge as opposed to mere true belief, or mere justified true belief. This task is famously challenging, as reflected in the post-Gettier literature with its stacks of failed analyses of the concept of knowledge. In light of this, many have been attracted to Williamson's "knowledge-first" programme which rejects the idea of analysing knowledge (Williamson 2000). Others have developed a variety of approaches to knowledge which prioritise either our methods of acquiring and sustaining belief, or else the intellectual character and dispositions of the belief-former. These models are suggestive of a similarly-diverse array of approaches to theorising creativity; I make only a small start on exploring these below.

But there are also some obvious differences between creativeness and knowledge. Although originality or novelty is playing the "truth role" in this analogy, originality is not truth. Moreover a far wider range of entities can possess originality, as compared to the narrow range of entities (propositions, and, derivatively, beliefs) which can possess truth. Thus the range of entities which might potentially possess creative value is far wider than those which might possess epistemic value, and perhaps this will make it even more difficult to provide a substantive account of how creative value is generated.

In addition, the types of feature which differentiate knowledge from mere true belief, or from mere justified true belief, are not the same as those which differentiate a creative product from a merely original or novel product. For example, we can frame the difference between knowledge and mere true belief by focusing on the ways in which knowledge seems to preclude luck. Approximately speaking, if your belief is true only as a matter of luck, given

the way that you acquired it, then it does not qualify as knowledge; to render this claim less approximate would require careful investigation of the varieties of epistemic luck (Pritchard 2005). In contrast, an element of luck seems to be compatible with genuine creativity, even congenial to it. The notion of serendipity seems relevant, and indeed epistemologists' work on the nature of luck in their domain may be a source of insights here. Yet despite these different levels of luck-tolerance, there is an underlying structural similarity: too much luck, and too little skill, seems incompatible with genuine creativity as opposed to mere accidental originality. This reflects the fact that both knowledge and creativity can be understood as types of achievement, albeit different types.

Value and Virtue

Following our path into the literature on epistemic value, it becomes clear that the nature and source of such value is often regarded as pivotal in debate between epistemological reliabilists and virtue theorists (Olsson 2013). Reliabilists take knowledge to be true belief which has been arrived at through a reliable process; the reliability of a belief-forming process is a matter of its tendency to produce true, rather than false, beliefs. There are internal challenges for reliabilists, who must explain how best to individuate processes, set thresholds for reliability and so on. But in addition, according to Linda Zagzebski (2004) and others, reliabilists' core focus on truth-generation leaves them unable to explain why we value knowledge more than mere true belief.

Zagzebski invites us to consider a good cup of coffee which has been produced by a machine which reliably produces good coffee, and to compare it with a good cup of coffee which has been produced by a much less reliable machine, one which occasionally produces good coffee, but more often produces watery rubbish. It is clear that the reliable machine is more

valuable (to coffee-lovers) than is the unreliable machine. But, argues Zagzebski, when the unreliable machine does manage to produce a good cup of coffee, that cupful is just as good as the cupful produced by the reliable machine. A cup of coffee is not itself rendered more valuable by its having been produced by a reliable machine, because the reliable machine is valuable only in virtue of the value of good coffee. Or, to use the standard terminology, the value of a good cup of coffee “swamps” any value associated with the machine’s tendency to produce good coffee.

Analogously, a reliable belief-forming process derives its value from the value of true belief, just as a reliable coffee machine derives its value from the value of good coffee. And, so the argument goes, a true belief is no more valuable for having been generated by a process which reliably produces true beliefs. The value of the true belief swamps the value of the process, leaving us seemingly unable to understand why knowledge has more value than mere true belief; this challenge to reliabilists is known as the “swamping problem”.

Now imagine a “creativity reliabilist”, who argues that a creative product is one which is not merely original, but is generated by a process which reliably produces original products (a creativity reliabilist may sensibly require a lower degree of reliability than does her epistemic counterpart). Creativity reliabilism faces its own swamping problem. The difference between a merely original product and a creatively valuable product is a matter of the processes by which each was produced. But it is difficult to understand why there is any additional value – over and above the value of originality – in having been produced by a method which reliably generates original products. The value of originality in the product swamps the value of the originality-generating process.

Zagzebski and others have seen in virtue theories a resolution to the epistemic swamping problem. Zagzebski suggests that we should understand knowledge as true belief that is obtained through the exercise of the agent's intellectual virtues, in ways which mean we can attribute credit to the agent for this achievement. Creditable true belief, true belief obtained through the exercise of intellectual virtue, is more valuable than mere true belief; or so Zagzebski argues. Thus virtue epistemologists argue that they have an advantage over reliabilists in understanding the nature of epistemic value.

In the case of creativity, the analogous suggestion would be that we should understand the creative value of a product as tied to its having been generated through the exercise of the agent's creative virtues, in ways which mean that we can attribute credit to the agent for her creative achievement. Creditable original work, original work generated through the exercise of creative virtue, would thus be more valuable than merely original work.

Independently of these considerations, Matthew Kieran (2014) theorises creativity as a character virtue, one which requires more than a tendency to generate products of an appropriate kind. For Kieran, the exemplary creative person has intrinsic motivation, and is not driven primarily by desires for money or fame, for example. It is not clear whether Kieran thinks that products generated by such exemplary, virtuously creative people are themselves more deeply creative, or more valuable, but he does argue that "other things being equal, the intrinsically motivated person will often be more reliably creative than the extrinsically motivated person," (2014: 143) i.e. will more reliably generate original, valuable products. So for Kieran, exemplary creativity involves both an admirable achievement, and, as a matter of empirical fact, greater reliability.

Of course, Kieran develops sophisticated arguments of his own in favour of this view of creativity. But consideration of the swamping problem provides further support for a virtue account, support which does not depend upon the empirical claim that the virtuously creative person will in fact be a more reliable generator of original work. If Zagzebski is right about epistemic value and virtue, then likewise it seems that we can understand the ways in which virtuously-generated creative products are more valuable than those produced merely by reliably-novel methods: the value of the creative product exceeds that of the non-creative product, even when each is produced by an equally-reliable method of generating novelty or originality.

Perhaps inevitably, it is controversial whether virtue epistemologists have the upper-hand with respect to epistemic value; Kvanvig (2010) puts the sceptical case. But my point here is not to establish the superiority of a virtue approach to creativity, rather to recommend investigation of the analogous options on display within epistemology.

Creative Value and Creative Failure

The notion of creative value may do further philosophical work, by helping us to understand different types of “creative failure”, and their corresponding types of success. Paradigm creative success involves the generation of a valuable, creative product, but we can fall short in various ways.

Suppose that, bored of my usual stir-fry pork and vegetable dinner, I add chopped banana to the usual ingredients, and the result is novel but disgusting; I fail to create the kind of delicious new dish I was aiming for. The dish lacks culinary value, and indeed it lacks one of the key features I was targeting, edibility. So there is a clear sense in which I have failed, and

fallen short of my aspirations. But perhaps there is another sense in which I have successfully managed to act creatively: I have generated a novel product, through the sensitive use of my skills and dispositions. We can see this situation as analogous to an epistemic enterprise in which I set out to discover something exciting, or financially valuable, but instead gain knowledge of some boring, financially worthless facts. There is a clear sense in which I have failed, and fallen short of my aspirations: I didn't discover anything which was useful to me. But in another sense I have succeeded: I gain knowledge, with its corresponding epistemic value, in a way which a virtue epistemologist would regard as personally creditable.

Suppose instead that I set out to cook more creatively not by adding novel ingredients, but by combining the usual ingredients in an unusual order. I follow my plan, rather than slipping back into my usual habits, yet the result is the same old dish, since with this type of cooking, at my level of culinary skill, it makes little difference how one orders the ingredients. I have generated something which has culinary value (it's perfectly edible), but it is not original, and thus does not qualify as creative. The epistemic analogue would be a situation in which I follow generally reliable belief-forming processes in a responsible fashion, but through bad luck end up with a false belief (recall that originality plays the "truth role" in the analogy between creative and epistemic value). In such a situation, I have everything which is usually needed for epistemic value, except for the central desideratum, truth, and thus I lack knowledge. If the analogy is good, then in the cooking case the creatively-produced but ultimately-boring stir-fry lacks creative value, even though it has been produced in an admirable fashion.

A third type of failure: suppose that I again set out to cook more creatively but find myself just using my usual ingredients in the usual order, because I get distracted, or because I lose my nerve when I contemplate adding either chopped banana or raw pork to cooked vegetables. Here, it seems, I have failed to cook more creatively, even though I successfully prepare a perfectly edible dinner. What I produce has culinary value, being both nutritious and tasty, but it lacks creative value, having been generated by an uncreative process. My failure here is a matter of failing to exercise whatever creative virtues or skills I may possess.

As with discussion around the swamping problem, there is plenty of scope for disagreement here about how best to think of creative value, and the ways in which we can achieve creative success and creative failure, with or without a virtue-theoretic picture as backdrop. But again there seems to be plenty of opportunity for exploring in greater depth the nature and structure of creativity, and the relationship between creative agents, creative processes, and creative products, by drawing on resources from the epistemology literature.

Epistemic Injustice and Creative Injustice

In this final section, I explore a further area in which epistemology can enrich the philosophy of creativity, and vice versa. This concerns the ethics and politics of our practices of recognising creativity and knowledge, in others and in ourselves.

In her important book (2007), Miranda Fricker develops the notion of “epistemic injustice”. Epistemic injustice can take various forms (e.g. those explored by Dotson 2011), but central to Fricker’s book is that of testimonial injustice. This arises when someone’s knowledge or honesty is unfairly underestimated because of an audience’s prejudices about her social identity, for example her race, gender, or social class. Thus the speaker’s testimony –

through which she offers her knowledge to others – is not given the respect it deserves.

(Kidd, Medina and Pohlhaus (eds.) 2017 is a detailed and extensive guide to current debate in this area).

Many aspects of testimonial injustice are connected to the fact that in standard cases of testimony the audience is not able to judge directly whether what the speaker says is true, but must instead rely on features of the speaker and the conversational situation in order to make an implicit estimation of credibility. After all, if the audience already knew the facts of the matter, they would not be seeking testimony in this regard. As Bernard Williams puts it in a different context (1970: 146), the audience for testimony is in the “inquirer’s situation”, attempting to identify someone who knows, without already knowing oneself. This contrasts with the “examiner’s situation” we often default to in epistemology, whereby we assume the truth of what someone believes, then ask whether she is secure or justified enough to count as “knowing.”

In my (2011), I explored some relevant differences between our judgements of others’ purported theoretical knowledge, as when we rate someone as a testifier, and our judgements of others’ purported practical knowledge. When we seek others who know how, we may be in the inquirer’s situation, wishing to acquire know-how ourselves (Craig 1990 refers to this as the “apprentice” situation). We may occasionally be in the examiner’s situation, wishing to test or certify someone else’s skills in an area where we ourselves are already skilled. But often we are in a third type of situation: we do not know how, but we can directly recognise know-how in others. For example, even if I do not know how to make delicious profiteroles, I can recognise someone who does have this know-how, by sampling what she bakes.

Compared to testimonial injustice, the attempt to evaluate others' practical knowledge makes available new opportunities for epistemic injustice (or justice), whilst at the same time making other forms of epistemic injustice less likely in this arena. In particular, when we assess others' knowledge how, we need to make judgements both about the success of their actions (how good their profiteroles are) and about the extent to which that success is due to their exercise of know-how, as opposed to mere luck or accident. Unfair social stereotyping may make us oblivious to others' successful actions, especially in complex situations. But in addition, we may unfairly tend to attribute acknowledged success to luck or perhaps sheer effort, as opposed to skill or knowledge-how. For example, in studies involving simulated job applications, psychologists Biernat and Kobrynowicz (1997) found that women as compared with men, and black people as compared with white people "must work harder to prove that their performance is ability-based."

These distinctions and concepts provide a framework for understanding some of the difficulties we face when attempting to judge creativity in others or indeed ourselves. Several judgements need to be made: we need to assess the products both for originality, and for the creative value, in whichever way we understand that to be connected to the creative virtue or skills of the agent, as opposed to luck, circumstance, or mechanically running through the options. It's not hard to see how preconceptions about social identities, such as gender or race, could play an explicit or implicit role in these judgements about both originality and "appropriate" sourcing in virtue, skill, even genius; this kind of "creative injustice" is territory well-explored by feminist aestheticians (e.g. Battersby 1989). Just as we distinguish the truth of a belief from its full-blown status as knowledge, potentially for unjust reasons, we may distinguish the originality of a product from its full-blown status as creative, again potentially for unjust reasons.

Moreover, the same opportunities for misjudgements – whether or not these depend on social identities – arise when we try to make judgements about the value and nature of our own attempts at creativity. The creative arts are a prime breeding ground for “impostor syndrome” (Sakulku and Alexander 2011 review scientific evidence for what psychologists refer to as “impostor phenomenon”). People prone to impostor feelings take an over-critical attitude to their own supposed achievements, often in the face of seemingly “objective” measures of external success, together with positive feedback from those around them. Anecdotally, they fear being found out or discovered as an impostor, someone who does not deserve the accolades or rewards she receives for her work. Some directly doubt the quality of what they have managed to produce: its originality, or fittingness for purpose. But others are prone to an over-attribution of their successes to luck, or sheer effort, rather than to the kind of skill we associate with creative virtue. Again, the analogies we can draw with epistemology, and the distinction between successful action and knowledgeable action, provide some conceptual scaffolding for our thinking about these problems.

Conclusions

Creative products are not items of knowledge, or at least they are not straightforwardly and exclusively items of knowledge, whilst the skills and virtues central being a creative agent are not simply identical to those central to being a good epistemic enquirer. Nevertheless, the fact that we think of both knowledge and creativeness as achievements of an agent, achievements with inherent value and social currency, opens up a whole range of structural analogies between the two, and thus the potential for philosophers of creativity to take advantage of work already done by epistemologists. In this chapter I have not sought out examples of return traffic, opportunities for epistemologists to take advantage of the work

already done by philosophers of creativity. But surely such opportunities exist, and are a potential source of both knowledge and creative ideas.

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