

Psychology 708 – Psychology of Creativity, Spring 2007

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Thursday, 1:30 – 4:30, Weiss Hall 704

*Texts:*

Weisberg, R. W. (2006). *Creativity: Understanding innovation in problem solving, science, invention, and the arts*. John Wiley. (Abbreviated as **W** in the outline below. Available at Zavelle's or on-line; not ordered through Temple.)

Watson, J. D. (1980). *The double helix*. Norton. (Not ordered at Temple or Zavelle's. It is available on-line or at any good book-store. More than one version is available, with the same text; the Norton Critical Edition has ancillary information – reviews, commentary, etc. – which are a lot of fun but not critical.)

All other readings will be posted on the course site on Blackboard.

***Students' Responsibilities***

(1) In order to ensure a lively discussion, the readings must be done before class. In order to make it more likely that that will occur, students are required to submit by e-mail three comments on each reading. Comments are to be posted on Blackboard by 6:00 PM on the Wednesday before the class in which reading will be discussed. This will enable all of us to read and think about the comments before class, so that we will have common ground for stimulating discussion. I hope to use the comments as the basis for much of our in-class discussion. In the case of multiple readings, three comments are due for each reading. *The Double Helix* is only one reading; only three comments are due. I will grade these comments on a 3-point scale, based on how much thought seems to have gone into them. Basic level of acceptability involves simply summarizing three points from reading. To the degree that you go beyond simple summaries, the grade will be higher. Written comments will constitute 20% of the course grade.

**In order to not waste the first class, I am requesting that you carry out the first assignment over the break.** Hopefully, with this much advance notice, you will be able to buy the two books and carry out that assignment. *The Double Helix* is not very long and is fun and stimulating to read, so that task should not be too onerous.

(2) Each student will have the responsibility twice during the semester of leading the class discussion of an assigned non-text reading. Presentations will count 20% of the final grade.

(3) Each student will prepare a case study of any creative achievement that is of interest to him or her (and, hopefully, to me). The only other criterion limiting your selection of a particular case study is that there be literature available on that case. Literature means hard copies – journal articles and books – not web sites. You can use web sites – e.g., Wikipedia – as the beginning of your search for references, but you should go into the “real” literature when preparing the case study.

I am not asking you to do original archival research in some area like the history of science, the history of technology, art history, or music history or musicology. Look upon the assignment as you would an assignment in any content course outside your area of expertise. Let's say you were taking a course in the psychology of memory, say, and that was not your area

of interest. If the assignment were to prepare a research paper examining some area in which recent significant advances had been made, you would have little problem getting to work. The paper in this course should be looked upon as analogous to a research paper in any other course. There are many interesting creative accomplishments that are available in forms that we can understand. Possible case studies are: Van Gogh's development of his distinctive late painting style; Einstein's development of the theory of relativity (either general or special relativity; *if* you know enough about physics to go beyond the superficial and to explain things to me); development of the 12-Tone system in music; etc.

Discuss any idea you have with me as early as possible, so you will have a chance to change topics if it turns out that there is no available literature or if you cannot understand what is available. The case study counts for 45% of the grade.

(4) Useful participation in class discussion will count 15% of grade.

### SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic and Reading Assignment (read in order of listing)</i>
1) 1/16	Two case studies of creative thinking: (1) Creation of Picasso's <i>Guernica</i> ; (2) Discovery (creation?) of the double helix  <b>Readings:</b> (1.1) <i>Double Helix</i> . (1.2) W ch. 1
2) 1/23	Introduction to the Study of Creativity: A bit of history; questions of definition  <b>Readings:</b> (2.1) Sternberg & Lubart (1996) (2.2) Csikszentmihalyi (1988) (2.3) W ch. 2
3) 1/30	The Cognitive Perspective on Creativity: I. Problem Solving and Creative Thinking  <b>Readings:</b> (3.1) Dunbar (1998) (3.2) Newell, Shaw, & Simon (1962) (3.3) W ch. 3
4) 2/6	The Cognitive Perspective on Creativity: II. Expertise and Creativity; General versus Specific Skills in Creativity; Expertise and rigidity  <b>Readings:</b> (4.1) Ericsson (1998) (4.2) Sternberg (1996) (4.3) Snyder (1998)

(4.4) Root-Bernstein & Root-Bernstein (2004)  
(4.5) W ch. 4

5) 2/13 Questions about the Cognitive Perspective on Creativity: The Question of Talent

**Readings:**

(5.1) Howe, Davidson, & Sloboda (1998) – target article  
(5.2) Howe, et al. (1998) – commentaries and authors' reply  
(5.3) Feist (2004)

6) 2/20 Case studies of creative thinking. I

**Readings:**

(6.1) Kozbelt (2006)  
(6.2) Galenson (2002)  
(6.3) Galenson (2005)  
(6.4) W ch. 5 209 – 237.

7) 2/27 Case studies of creative thinking. II

**Readings:**

(7.1) Klahr & Simon (1999)  
(7.2) Dunbar & Blanchette (2001)  
(7.3) Hoddeson (2007)  
(7.4) W ch. 5 237 – end.

8) 3/13 The Question of Insight in Problem Solving and Creative Thinking.

**Readings:**

(8.1) Weisberg & Alba (1981)  
(8.2) Metcalfe & Weibe (1986)  
(8.3) Knoblich, Ohlsson, et al (1998)  
(8.4) Chronicle, et al. (2003)  
(8.5) Jung-Beeman, et al. (2004)  
(8.6) W ch. 6

9) 3/20 Out of One's Mind: Muses, Primary Process, and Madness

**Readings:**

(9.1) Richards, et al. (1988)  
(9.2) Kaufman (2003)  
(9.3) Ludwig (1998)  
(9.4) Sass (2000 – 2001)  
(9.5) Becker (2000 – 2001)  
(9.6) W ch. 7

## 10) 3/27 The Question of the Unconscious in Creativity

**Readings:**

- (10.1) Csikszentmihalyi & Sawyer (1995)
- (10.2) Seifert, et al. (1995)
- (10.3) Christensen & Schunn (2005)
- (10.4) Wagner, et al. (2004)
- (10.5) W ch. 8

## 11) 4/3 The Psychometric Perspective: I. Theories of Creative Ability

**Readings:**

- (11.1) Guilford (1950)
- (11.2) Baer (1994a); Cramond (1994); Baer (1994b)
- (11.3) Plucker (1999)
- (11.4) W ch. 9

## 12) 4/10 The Psychometric Perspective: II. The Creative Personality

**Readings:**

- (12.1) Feist meta-analysis (1998)
- (12.2) Feist model (1993)
- (12.3) King et al. (1996)
- (12.4) Carson, et al. (2003)
- (12.5) Abuhamdeh & Csikszentmihalyi (2004)
- (12.6) W ch. 10

## 13) 4/17 Theories of Creativity: I. Amabile's Social-Psychological Theory; Sternberg &amp; Lubart's Investment theory.

**Readings:**

- (13.1) Sternberg & Lubart ( )**
- (13.2) Amabile (1979)
- (13.3) Eisenberger & Rhoades (2001)
- (13.4) W ch. 11, to p. 552

## 14) 4/24 Theories of Creativity: II. Simonton's Darwinian theory

**Readings:**

- (14.1) Simonton (2004)
- (14.2) Kozbelt (2004)
- (14.3) Simonton (2007)**
- (14.4) Weisberg & Hass (2007)**
- (14.5) W ch. 11, remainder; W ch. 12