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In Search of an Operational Definition of Social Creativity

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IN SEARCH OF AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF SOCIAL CREATIVITY

A Thesis Presented

By

CONSTANCE JOAN O'BRIEN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies
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Critical and Creative Thinking Program
IN SEARCH OF AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF SOCIAL CREATIVITY

A Thesis Presented

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"The more technology we introduce into society, the more people will want to be with other people," concludes John Naisbitt (1982) in emphasizing the need for human touch. On a recent talk show Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, author of "Living with Death and Dying" (1981), related that she had earned many honorary degrees for her work with the terminally ill. She wondered why she had been so rewarded, saying, "All I've done is listen to the dying and hear what they say." A mother writes to the Boston Globe's Confidential Chat column (1983) asking for help in identifying ways to love her baby more. "Can you tell me some little ways of loving my baby?" These three quotes overwhelmingly support the idea that now, as in the past, human beings need social understanding, the capacity to give an empathetic response, and skills in solving social problems that are new to them. These needs taken together may be described as the need for a creative social response.

In everyday social activities, professional circumstances, (e.g., counselors, teachers, doctors), and industrial relations, (e.g., managers, laborers, union officials), there is a clear need for imaginative and effective social
problem solving. Some people seem more naturally able to deal adequately with social interactions and problems and seem more open to a deep understanding of others.

What a person perceives, thinks, feels, and does at any moment is influenced by a multitude of factors. Sex, age, the consequences of the action, intelligence, physical appearance name only a few of the variables research has found correlate to person perception. This begins to suggest the complexity and uniqueness of social understanding. Having offered an argument for a need for creative social response and an indication to its complexity, this paper will continue with arguments for what appears to be a need for a new perspective on social understanding of others and social interaction.

Problems with Current Perspectives

In daily life, people exhibit behaviors and these behaviors are perceived, integrated and categorized by those who observe them and by the acting persons themselves. Cognitive and social psychologists identify small parts of the whole process of interaction to study. These individual elements of social behavior have been researched from various points of view as well as in varying combinations. The combinations of variables and differences in the choice of elements produces differing directions in study. Thus the study of social interaction is often im-
peded by varying definitions used within the research and disagreement about which features are crucial in researching social behavior. Predictably the results often provide contradictory information. Few research studies attempt to examine larger clusters of behaviors or to study social interaction in a natural setting. The problems with current perspectives seem to be terminology, orientation of the researchers, and measurement methods.

A noted cognitive psychologist, Walter Mischel, argues against a single, narrow approach to the study of social understanding. Mischel (1973) suggest three complimentary perspectives from which to study interpersonal perception, that of the clinician, theorist, and experiencing person. The clinical psychologist seeks procedures or operations necessary to produce changes in performance and so focuses on environmental conditions, (e.g., conditioning, reinforcement, modeling). The theorist is concerned with the person variables and how these operations produce their effects in subjects, (e.g., specificity in constructs, expectancies, subjective values and heuristics). On the other hand, the experiencing person speaks of these same events as thoughts, feelings, and wishes, and other internal states of experience. Mischel (1973) argues, "Ultimately, conceptualizations of the field of personality will have to be large enough to encompass the phenomena seen from all three perspectives."
Communication is difficult to achieve among researchers even within fields of psychology because of inconsistent terminology and differing theoretical orientations. This lack of communication is succinctly described by Walker and Foley (1973) in a review of the history of the study of social intelligence.

The present failure to recognize that one person's social intelligence may be another's interpersonal competence or role-taking and communication is apparently based not only on the diversity of terminology but the difference of theoretical origins of the various approaches.

Methods of measurement also vary widely as do the personality variables under study. For example, the complexity of the research on person perception or on social intelligence rests on controversies about construct validation and appropriate measurement devices. The laboratory based scientific paradigm and the Piagetian view that perception of the physical world is exactly parallel to that of the social world have been influencing factors on direction of research. Movements away from the above positions are toward research undertaken in naturalistic settings and are viewing inter-social perceptions as more than merely the same as perceptions of the physical world. These changes in research direction suggest the need for new methods by which to study a broadened view of person perception.
Need for a New Perspective

Social interaction observed in naturalistic settings suggest a needed new perspective. The following examples show a range of subtly differentiated aspects of sensitivity to social problems and empathic intelligent responses. The examples below describe a powerful cluster of traits that I argue should be called social creativity.

1) A teacher sits at her desk with her head held up by her hands. A small voice next to her says, "Your head must really hurt. Is there something I can do for you?" Are you alright? -- seems to be a question overlooked and not valued by some. Yet others like the student in this example display a sensitivity to feelings and tone.

2) A child runs from the room in tears, unable to continue with his report. Another child addresses the class, "I think he cried because he was nervous. Maybe when he comes back we can all smile and say how well he did on part of his report." This student shows a real motivation to address the hurt of others and the willingness to risk peer ridicule in order to respond supportively to an out-group member in adversity.

3) A teacher gives only brown-eyed children candy on Martin Luther King Day to teach about discrimination. A brown-eyed child throws her candy away, unable to enjoy it when others in her class don't have any. All other brown-eyed children happily eat their candy. This example
shows a strong sensitivity to something missing in a scenario, a moral issue that needs to be addressed in some way.

4) A mother is asked how she deals with her children by several friends and neighbors because she seems instinctively to know just the right solution for every large or small situation. Adults (and children) like this mother seem to produce comprehensive solutions to social problems.

5) A boy talks his friends into playing a different game other than the one generally played so a new child can be included. He does this because he is aware that a new child would not fit in the old game. Prior to his suggestion, no one else in the group seemed aware of any potential problem. "How did you think of that?" is often a question asked of people who predict social problems before they happen, as the boy in this example shows.

6) A child leading a group discussion seems interested in the remarks of another child. He even appropriately and positively comments at the conclusion of the shy, stammering and lengthy commentary. All others in the group have lost interest. The group leader exhibits imaginative performance in perception, cognition and response. The child noticed a problem, understood the meaning of the situation, especially to the speaker, and took a position of action under risk in front of an uninterested group of peers.
7) At recess, a teacher sends a child whose feelings have been hurt to the classroom to write notes to two other children who have been teasing her. Other teachers have never been able to find a way to persuade other children to include this child. They laugh at the note strategy, but it works and the excluded child is included in a game during the next recess. Socially creative people are optimistic and touch and persuade others through example, as this teacher did.

8) A child finds out at school that a parent has been taken to the hospital. Another classmate finds just the right words to ease the tension, "I'll bet the ride in the ambulance was fun. Just think, the doctors are fixing your Mom right now." Being effective in a social crisis, knowing the comforting thing to do or say without extended thought is another trait that seems to belong to the cluster of socially creative traits.

The above examples are taken from my classroom experiences in the fourth grade over a fourteen year period. These and similar examples have occurred and have been observed time and again. Previous studies seem to attempt to correlate these behaviors and traits with social intelligence or with emotional factors, such as empathy. It seems to me that these traits are distinctive and powerful examples of creativity manifested in social problem solving, or social creativity.
A pattern of features generally recognized as belonging to the realm of creativity seems to evolve in the eight examples of social interaction. The features that identify this pattern of traits as those belonging to the world of creativity are uncommon sensitivity to tone and feelings, openness to ideas and people, motivation to address sensitive issues with an action under risk attitude, rare sensitivity to missing pieces in a scenario, comprehensive solution production, foresight to predict social problems before they happen. In creative processes and creative products (e.g., a musical composition, a painting, a scientific discovery) one can find these same elements.

This pattern of creative traits seems to divide naturally into three categories, that of perception, cognition and response. For clarity sake, I will use the term perception to mean noticing and data gathering; cognition to mean processing data, meaning making, and understanding; and response to mean action or inaction. (Inaction and silence are included because they are sometimes assessed to be the most beneficial response.) Rational and affective elements also characterize performance in each of these three categories.

In example six, the child leading the group discussion noticed (even at his young age of nine years) that the class was losing interest in the stammering commentary
being given by a child with language processing problems. Most children did not notice, nor seem concerned. Secondly, the leader understood the meaning of the disinterest of the other children to be embarrassing to the speaker. Again that cognition, inclusive of rational thinking skills and empathic understanding shows a rare sensitivity and openness to people who are different which led to an observable response. Risking peer ridicule, the leader chose an interested attitude, asked questions of the speaker to spark class interest and made favorable comments as summary remarks. In this example, the discussion leader illustrates uncommon social perception, cognition, and response, as recognized in domains of creative performance. Effective functioning in any one of these categories is worthy of attention and value (e.g., noticing a formerly unidentified problem, understanding a new relationship, and taking original action to solve a problem that someone else may have identified and conceptualized).

When social behavior is creative it is marked by the integration of what others call social cognition, empathy, and social intelligence. It will be the purpose of this paper to argue that the term, social creativity, incorporating cognitive and affective factors, is needed because it is more than social cognition, more than empathy, more than social intelligence alone.
The term, social creativity, was first coined and studied by Hendricks, Ghilford, and Hoepfner (1969), but used differently from my use. These researchers, working within Guilford’s structure of the intellect model, used the term to mean creative social intelligence. In fact, Guilford, et al. (1969) state, "The major id disadvantage of this approach (equating social creativity with social intelligence) is that non-intellectual qualities that contribute to creative performance are not included in this view." The term, social intelligence, does not suggest the contributions of the whole person, of both intellectual and affective factors. This seems especially unsatisfactory since the materials being processed here are interpersonal events. Thus all further use of the term, social creativity, will refer to my more holistic interpretation of the concept (see page nine).

A Proposal for a Creative Combination

The following paragraphs will argue for the viability of the concept of social creativity identifying support for the concept in the work of experts in the field of creativity.

Bruner (1973) writes that,

An act that produces effective surprise -- this I shall take as the hallmark of a creative enterprise. The content of the surprise can be as various as the enterprises in which men are engaged. It may express itself in one's dealing with children, in making love,
in carrying on a business, in formulating physical theory, in painting a picture... What is curious about effective surprise is that it need not be rare or infrequent or bizarre and is often none of these things... Effective surprises seem rather to have the quality of obviousness about them when they occur, producing a shock of recognition following which there is no longer astonishment.

The examples of behavior listed previously have the defining features Bruner demands, especially the production of an effective surprise.

Creativity, as commonly used, refers to behavior that yields a tangible product, such as a poem, a scientific theory, or a musical composition. Guilford (1974) writes, however, that a product is not always necessary. He says, to the psychologist, there can be creative thinking even when there is no tangible product. There are always some products of thought and it does not matter whether or not they are expressed. They can still be detected in a number of ways. The approach must be largely indirect and inferential, which is not to suggest that we cannot make observations, for we can.

Thus, Guilford's statement eliminates the "non-tangible product" problem, offering further support for describing the cited true-life social behaviors as creative.

Torrance's description of the processes accounting for creative behavior in recognized domains offers further support for the description of creative behavior in the social domain. Torrance (1963) states,

Creative learning brings into play such abilities as evaluation (especially the ability to sense problems and missing elements), divergent production (fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration) and redefinition (seeing something in a way different from the usual, established or intended way, use, etc.).
This description captures the processes outlined in the eight observations listed previously. They reveal the ability to sense problems and missing elements, a rare sensitivity to missing pieces in a scenario, uncommon comprehensive solution production, and seeing something in a way different from the usual.

Thus it may be enlightening to view social interactions in relationship to creativity studies. Even though these two lines of research, social understanding and creativity, seem to have different goals, it has been argued that the similarities of features are too clear to ignore. Perhaps, the term, social creativity, is the creative combination that will result in a more holistic theory that encompasses the concepts of person perception, empathic response and social intelligence.

Assessing Social Creativity

Even among cognitive psychologists one can find support for looking holistically at social problem solving. A recent approach gaining recognition among cognitive researchers "focuses on cognition during actual social interaction," using observation in naturalistic settings as its method, Damon (1981). Moment-to-moment interaction and social understanding cannot be reduced to cognition about the physical world. This movement away from viewing the perception of the social world as being the same as
perception of the physical world has been a significant change of direction, yielding perhaps, a more enriching view of social understanding. Properties and relationships that exist in the social world do not exist in the physical world. Placing the emphasis on social realities and focusing on observations of actual social interactions in natural settings demands a multidimensional measurement model. Perhaps, this trend that Damon (1981) identifies among social cognitive developmental psychologists forecasts the identification and recognition of the new concept I argue for.

I believe the concept of social creativity, which juxtaposes elements of social problem solving and creativity, is necessary and useful because it will help identify similarities across constructs and suggest new methodologies for psychology and education.

Direction of the Paper

Having argued for the existence of social creativity as observed in daily life, I will proceed in chapters two through four with a selective review of the psychological literature on social cognition, empathy, and social intelligence to determine whether any of these concepts can adequately account for the behavior cited. I will proceed to identify the connections between these concepts and creativity. Examining the concepts, their relationships
to each other, and the degree to which any of these concepts alone can account for imaginative social problem solving will demonstrate the need for a new unified concept and for an integrated or multidimensional theory of social creativity.

Addressing the problem of measuring social creativity, I will conclude the paper with some suggestions for classroom appropriate activities that might facilitate the study of this concept, in a natural setting. These classroom activities may be useful as an explanatory device for the concept of social creativity.
CHAPTER II
SOCIAL COGNITION AND PERSON PERCEPTION

The review of the psychological literature provided in this chapter addresses two questions: are the concepts of social cognition and/or person perception adequate to account for the complex act of social creativity, and second, are the methods of study used in examining these concepts appropriate methods for the study of social creativity. This chapter will begin with a review of the trends in the study of social cognition.

Researchers in the field of social cognition have shifted emphasis in recent years from studies of group responses to studies of individual responses. In addition, the research reveals a change from a sole concentration on the rational principles affecting cognition to the inclusion of information about the non-rational biases and intuitions of the experimental subjects. Early work was founded in the assumption that social cognition is exactly parallel to cognition of the physical environment. Recent work questions that assumption and suggests that motives, moods and biases have a strong effect on social cognition and therefore experimentally investigate these
factors. This chapter points out continuing strands of study, demonstrates changing patterns and hopefully identifies a common unity, that of the relationship of social cognition to creativity (social creativity).

**Early Studies**

The study of social cognition has its roots in the 1920's literature on social intelligence (to be reviewed in Chapter IV). Thorndike (1920) distinguished social intelligence from two other human intelligences, abstract and mechanical thinking. He defined social intelligence as "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls to act wisely in human relations." Thorndike (1920). In the 1920's and 1930's studies and tests of social intelligence as related to interpersonal judgments were bountiful.

Interest in the study of social intelligence slowed, however, as experimental developments showed the increasing complexity of the problem. Researchers encountered difficulties in taking into account the personal orientation of subjects and individual differences. The focus of this research was concerned with the ability to judge people. The methods used were mainly rating or ranking of personality traits. Group tendencies were observed with similarities as their focus, rather than a focus on differences among persons, individual differences. The
results were contradictory and confusing and a widely accepted definition of social intelligence was not attained. Thus, measurement complexity problems contributed to the decline in attention to social intelligence.

Several decades later cognitive psychologists began to give attention to the interaction with social environment. They, however, accepted, for the most part, the traditional position of Piaget (1963) that "the reaction of intelligence . . . to the social environment is exactly parallel to its reaction to the physical environment."

Much of this developmental work focused on intellectual skills in the non-social or impersonal environment. Subjects were asked to answer questionnaires and perform cognitive tasks in the solitary confinement of the laboratory. The intent of the research was to demonstrate the existence of a social ability that was different from general intelligence and verbal ability. An important shift occurred as the emphasis turned from Thorndike's cognition and action to cognition or perception, integration and categorization alone without emphasis on the second part of Thorndike's definition, that of action. The terms, person perception, interpersonal processes and social perception and social cognition were used, often interchangeably, instead of the term social intelligence. Action and interaction, behavioral products, were all but ignored.

Critical of this development, Bronfenbrenner (1958)
For an American psychologist nothing is so attractive as an operational definition and when such a definition can be combined with an objective procedure yielding a numerical score, temptation to gather data is virtually irresistible. Nowhere is this tendency more clearly evidenced than in the field of interpersonal perception.

Cognitive responses of the individual were analyzed to provide group data. The response of the individual in a laboratory setting without the influence of factors occurring naturally in the environment and in the relationships of interaction with other people can only be seen as one-dimensional. If the individual brings preconceptions and individual influences to the social cognitive response then group data developed from these individual responses gathered in isolation hardly seem a sound basis for generalizations about the natural responses of individuals functioning in groups.

The Contribution of Recent Social Psychology

Social psychology, in the late 1960's and 1970's, produced many important changes both in the focus of studies and in the methods used. Researchers became concerned with individuals, shifting the emphasis from group data to individual cognitive responses. The Attribution Theorists carried this research forward. Kelley (1973) greatly influenced this trend in social psychology. A renewal of the inference perspective was a focus of the
Attributionists. Ross (1981) points out that the focus is on two closely related cognitive tasks confronting the social perceiver. The first task is that of causal judgment whereby the perceiver seeks to assess the personal or situational causes to which some particular effect (e.g., action or outcome) may most reasonably be attributed. The second task is that of social inference whereby the perceiver deduces the abilities, traits, or other dispositions of particular actors, and the demands and constraints of the situations to which those actors have responded.

Making causal inferences and judgments is an important part of social effectiveness.

Attribution Theorists were concerned with the successes of individuals not necessarily their failures. Theorists attempted to develop general principles of making correct causal judgments. However, a shift of emphasis came when it became increasingly intriguing to identify biases that might cause distortion of causal judgments and social inferences. This gradual shift from the study of logical construction of principles to a study of attribution error and bias "... has led us to look beyond the specific tasks of social attribution to other equally important tasks involved in human inference and understanding." Ross (1981)

Prediction, estimating the future from the past or working from the known to the unknown, became a focus of debate. Studies (e.g., Lord, Ross, Lepper, 1979; Tversky and Kahneman, 1971) seemed to show that social prediction
was based on prior conceptions and categorizations with little weight given to immediate information. Increasingly, investigators concerned themselves with the questions of a rational/irrational debate. The general rational principles of judgments, estimates and inferences purported by the attributionists have often been shown to be subject to the irrational effects of bias, attitude, mood, and reliance upon intuition, (see Ballenbach and Madigan, 1981; Berndt, 1981; Kurdek and Rodgen, 1971; Lord et al., 1979).

Clearly, the outcome of these debates was beneficial as a focal point of not only differences in theories but similarities that can be seen even in the different viewpoints. The preoccupation with general cognitive principles to the neglect of affective and motivational processes, excluding what intuitively and as a result of the rational/irrational debates is known as real-life social behavior, has been alarming to many social cognitive theorists. One consequence of the debates seems to be a movement toward the study of multidimensions in social cognition, rather that the development of principles of cognition, to the exclusion of other social, personal and environmental influences. Investigating social cognition in terms of cognition, inclusive of affective and environmental influences, can only suggest further investigative routes and enlarge our understanding.
The debate over whether cognition of the social environment is the same as cognition of the physical environment continues with social cognitive developmentalists being divided on the issue. Is social cognition exactly parallel to cognition of the physical environment as Piaget (1963) suggests or are there influencing factors on social cognition and interrelationships that make social cognitions different from those of the physical world? This question still remains the basis of debate today.

Entering this debate, Berndt (1981) states, "Research on social cognition stands at the intersection of two older research areas, studies of nonsocial cognition and studies of social behavior." He proposes that exploring similarities and differences between the two areas would lead to integration of research and perhaps valuable insights.

Flavell (1981), although not advocating that social cognition is exactly parallel to nonsocial cognition, says that social cognition could be thought of as guided, monitored and maintained similarly to nonsocial cognitions. Flavell (1981) suggests that "... application to social cognition of previous ideas concerning the nature and development of nonsocial cognition is useful." He proposes,
social cognition enterprises are monitored (i.e., overseen, appraised, regulated, guided) through the actions of the interactions among metacognitive knowledge, metacognitive experiences, goals (or tasks) and actions (or strategies). Flavell (1981)

Hoffman (1981) sees the two domains of physical and social environments as quite separate and operating under different rules. "... It is based less on logic and more on probability, shared cultural belief systems, cultural stereotypes, and scripts." Hoffman (1981)

Yet even in the disagreement of debate, useful similarities can be discovered between social and non-social cognition. The cognitive study of prototypes, principles, scripts and categorizations can give further insight to what Hoffman (1981) calls more intuitive systems, cultural stereotypes, scripts.

The following summaries of recent research show that whether studies today follow the traditional laboratory paradigm or take place in more naturalistic settings, the newly emerging model seems to be that cognition of the social world is distinct from cognition of the physical world.

Fellman (1983) following the more traditional laboratory model of individualized cognitive testing, studies decoding (recognition) of emotional expressions and encoding (posing) of emotional expressions. He found that four and five year old children demonstrated the ability to correctly identify expressions (in pictures) of anger,
sadness and happiness. Yet the results of this experiment are discussed in terms of social cognitive developmental factors, not physical cognition parallels.

Gottman et al. (1975), following a more naturalistic model of observation and interview, though cognitive in nature, emphasize the social environment rather than a comparison to the physical cognitive world. They researched friendship and social competence in third and fourth graders. They conclude that popular children are more socially skillful than unpopular children and interact differently with their peers. Popular children are more knowledgeable about how to make friends and have a high verbal fluency.

Viborg (1982) studied cognitive understanding of social situations in children ages five through eight. Using the causal judgment and social inference paradigm, Viborg determined that prior to age eight social perception is restricted to single causal reasoning and aspects of a situation as overt actions and feelings of sadness, gladness, and anger. Interpersonal motives and multiple causal reasoning had not begun to emerge. In this study the children were shown scenes on videotape and asked to describe the actions and emotions of the actors. The inclusion of actions and emotions follows the social environmental emphasis rather than social cognition in sole
relationship to the physical world and brings back into focus Thorndike's 1920 definition which included both cognition and action.

Additional Variables Emerge in Recent Developmental Studies

The literature of the late 1970's and 1980's is filled with studies of social cognition, which are based on recognizing a more multifaceted definition, linking affective characteristics to cognition. Kurdek (1975) found support for his hypothesis that perspective taking is a multidimensional social cognitive construct "... whose dimensions themselves are multifaceted." He names three dimensions of taking another person's perspective (perspective taking) as perceptual, cognitive and affective. He finds facets of even those dimensions. For example, his study sees an increase in the perceptual and cognitive dimensions' development through the third grade. After that age Kurdek theorizes that the older children could be using projection.

Marsh et al. (1981) found a positive relationship between affective perspective taking and effective interpersonal functioning. They state,

In light of the absence of such a relationship for social perspective taking, it would appear that feelings may play a more important role than cognitions in interpersonal relations.

Ballenbach and Madigan (1982) add mood to the list of influences on social cognition. They state in their
... emotional states can influence social cognitions."

In a summary chapter in a volume on social cognitive development, Flavell and Ross, Eds. (1981) state

We will close by renewing our plea for closer and more sympathetic contact between developmentalists and nondevelopmentalists who, sometimes inadvertently and sometimes deliberately, blaze exciting trails for one another to follow.

Each shift of emphasis and model of study have value. Yet, as Damon (1981) laments, social cognition "... is a many-sided phenomenon, and it is not surprising that neither of the major approaches to its study has succeeded in investigating all of the sides together."

I see here a perfect example of one of the main points of this paper; that is, to exclude factors in research, to consistently remain one-dimensional, limits an investigator and restricts experimental results. Rather, to combine results, to view ideas in the light of opposing principles (a tactic of creative individuals) can add further insight and lead to more effective experimentation. A combined look at developments within the area of social cognition with those studies in the areas of empathy, social intelligence and creativity (to be discussed in subsequent chapters) may be a key to evolving a more valid view of the understanding of others, one closer to what we know intuitively from common-sense, real-life observations.
A Proposal for a Creative Commonality

The rational/nonrational debate, the physical environment/social environment dilemma, the shift of emphasis from the physical to the social, the developmental stand of comparison of individual differences and the nondevelopmental stand of generality, gathering group data to determine general principles, might be unified with a commonality of creativity in the social realm. Some creative thinking techniques found to be useful in gaining a new perspective are rearranging, combining, substituting, adapting and finding forced relationships. Throughout this chapter I have pointed out combinations, adaptations and relationships that have led to a more thorough understanding of social cognition. Perhaps, an even more powerful combination might be achieved by joining the studies of social cognition and those of creative thinking. The recent trend which emphasizes social environment and personal interaction, along with the trend to include affective dimensions rather than solely rational cognition in the study of social cognition seem to be leading in the very direction of the combination that I have labeled social creativity.

Bruner (1973) thoughtfully theorizes,

... I propose that we define the creative act as effective surprise -- the production of novelty. It is reasonable to suppose that we will someday devise a proper scientific theory capable of understanding
and predicting such acts... It may be, however, that there is another mode of approach to knowing how the process generates itself and this will be the way in which we understand how symbols and ideas... capture men's thoughts. Often it is the poet who grasps these matters most firmly and communicates them most concisely. Perhaps, it is our conceit that there is only one way of understanding a phenomenon.

The concept of social creativity, discussed in Chapter one of this paper, could be the conceptual commonality between social cognition and the poet's ideas. Social creativity could be a link between scientific understanding and metaphorical understanding. The concept of social creativity which juxtaposes the concept of social cognition and creativity could lead to insights and similarities across the available constructs of social cognition, in all of their variety. The approach of combining the study of social cognition with the study of creativity, of seeing the creative thinking involved in social cognition, and in measuring it in a natural setting, could be the most fruitful approach to the many unanswered questions in social cognition. This approach will be discussed thoroughly in Chapter five of this paper.
Empathy has been defined and redefined in theoretical and operational terms. On the way toward unifying my position that a concept of social understanding must be inclusive of affective as well as cognitive factors, this chapter reviews some of the most recent definitions of empathy and focuses on salient studies linking empathic understanding to the variables of age, moral development, sex, motivation, similarities of the perceiver and the observed, flexibility, and predominant affective state of the perceiver. Following a discussion of Rogerian empathic listening therapeutic paradigm and his views on empathy and therapeutic change, the relationship of empathy to social cognition, the usefulness of distinguishing similarities and differences therein, and the adequacy of the concept of empathy to account for the complex act of social creativity as described in Chapter one is presented. The need for a new approach which shows the relationship between a multidimensional conception of empathy and creativity, is considered.
Confusion in Definition and Methods of Measurement

The literature seems to be filled with a variety of definitions that, although similar in nature, view empathy in slightly different ways. Walker and Foley (1973) quote Dymond, who in 1950 developed an instrument to measure "empathy which means . . . the imaginative transposing of oneself into the thinking, feeling, and actions of another." Walker and Foley (1973) also state that Kerr and Peroff, in 1951, devised another instrument of measuring empathy, defining it essentially as "the ability to put oneself in the place of another and anticipate their behavior." Although these definitions are similar, it can be argued that they lead researchers in slightly different directions. Cognitively, it could be said that understanding how another feels is empathy. Affectively, it could be said that feeling the same as another is empathy. Alternately, empathy has been defined affectively as almost an emotional communion and cognitively as a mechanism of identification and understanding. A definition that combines new features might be worthy of consideration. It would define empathy as an emotional communion that could also cognitively articulate and understand the other's view. Such a definition seems to achieve a creative and needed synthesis, that is, of emotionally and cognitively understanding and articulating another's view.

Confusion seems to reign in definition, instruments
of measure, and the dichotomy of affective and cognitive approaches. One might ask at this juncture, however, if the dichotomies need to exist. An examination of the relationships between existing research studies may lead to a more multidimensional view.

Role-taking, Projection, and Sympathy as Related to Empathy

The term, role-taking was first coined by G.H. Mead in 1934. Grief and Hogan (1973) quote Mead as describing empathy as, "the capacity to take the role of the other" thus adopting different roles and perspectives. Mead suggested that role-taking practice leads to social sensitivity. Hogan (1975) expresses this role-taking model theoretically in terms of the development of moral conduct and understanding of moral development. "The concept of empathy, which refers to a sensitivity to the needs and values of others," is an essential underlying element of role-taking and moral development. Role-taking and empathy become synonymous in the explanation of moral development and social sensitivity.

A further review of the literature shows empathy being used interchangeably with projection, social sensitivity, intuition, altruism and even at times sympathy. Feshback (1975) restricts empathy

... to a match in affective response between subject and object. Thus a sympathetic emotional reaction, although like empathy, implying an understanding
of the emotional state of another person, is not equivalent to and should be distinguished from an empathic reaction.

Feshbach (1975) continues the debate pointing out that projection and empathy, though similar, must be differentiated.

For projection, characteristics of the subject or perceiver are attributed to the stimulus object, while in the case of empathy the subject assumes the emotional attributes of the stimulus person.

Shantz (1975) states that

... the difficulty in conceptualizing empathy as something different than sympathy and projection and the issue of empathy as a process or product suggest that a more systematic "nomological network" is needed for the construct.

Here action and reaction, projection and attribution, process and product seem to bring to mind the rational/irrational debates of the cognitive developmentalists. If one assumes the emotional attributes of the stimulus person, it would seem that they must cognitively perceive and attribute those emotions first. An interaction of ideas, a juxtaposition of definitions and approaches point to a relationship worth consideration of the affective/cognitive domains of social cognition and empathy.

The problems of measurement of empathy have led to a refinement of definition and a reduction of the concept of empathy to elements of the process of social sensitivity. The influence of projection on "raw empathy" scores (the disparity between the subject's predictions of response of
an associate and the actual associate's response) compelled Bender and Hastorf (1953) to propose a method of measuring "refined empathy" (score received without influence of projection due to similarity of subjects and associates). The purpose was to eliminate the influence of projection in a subject's predictions of the response of an associate. Hogan (1975) tried to resolve the dilemma of measurement distinguishing between state and trait empathy. Hogan argues that the empathy scale he developed measures trait empathy (inherent in some individuals) and the Truax (1971) scale assesses state empathy (seemingly empathic behavior, not necessarily genuine).

It would seem that the issues of construct definition, measurement differences and terminology confusion need refinement in all areas that touch upon interaction and interpersonal associations. Can the self of the subject ever be totally eliminated in a social situation? I contend a negative answer needs to be given to that question. To carry this thought further, perhaps the gestalt whole needs to be viewed and not its parts or their unequal sums.

**Empathy Variables and a New Trend in Measurement**

Age, intelligence, cognitive and behavioral differences, affective domains, and sex differences are variables that have been studied in relationship to empathy. As in the study of social cognition (e.g. Damon, 1981) the trend
of empathy research seems to be moving toward more naturalistic settings without the limitations of the laboratory paradigm.

Developmentally, age emerges in the literature as important in relation to empathy. Borke (1971) reasons that social sensitivity increases with age. He suggests that very young children are not totally egocentric but have some capacity for responding empathically. Along these same lines of thought, showing that age increases internalized values, Eisenberg-Berg (1979) states that "elementary school children's reasoning tends to be hedonistic, stereotyped, approval and interpersonally oriented and involved with concern with other's needs." With advanced age, high school students reflected "strongly empathic and more abstract internalized moral concerns."

Rothenberg (1970) testing social sensitivity defined as "the ability to accurately perceive and comprehend the behavior, feelings and motives of other individuals" found a relationship between social sensitivity and age in testing third and fifth graders and that intelligence is important in the ability to understand another's behavior. Rothenberg (1970) called for testing on empathy to be done in more "realistic situations" than the laboratory. Perhaps this method would yield results more directed toward the whole person rather than parts leading to the whole.

Strayer (1980) following Rothenberg's call for realis-
tic situational studies, devised a naturalistic study of preschool children and found that prevailing affect (happy/sad) matching responses indicate empathy. Mood, Johnson, and Shantz (1978) examined forty-six month to fifty-nine month old children and found a relationship between egocentric affect matching and social comprehension, but concluded that social comprehension can occur without affect matching.

Hughes et al. (1981) interviewed kindergarteners and second graders about feelings and thoughts during slide presentations. They found older subjects used personal cues and psychological reasons rather than situational factors. However, younger "subjects increased understanding about others following reflection on their own reactions to other's feelings." The more a person if perceived to be similar to the observer the stronger the empathic reaction. Again, however, a natural rather than laboratory setting was used.

A study done by Cutrona and Feshbach (1979) focuses on cognitive and behavioral differences that were found among children who used "dispositional information" (feelings, motives and personality traits) as opposed to children who primarily used "situational information: (external circumstances) to predict behavior. The "dispositional information" users were found to be less aggressive
and exhibited more prosocial behavior as rated by their teachers than the "situational information" users. The suggested classroom activities, described in Chapter five of this paper, are based in part on this finding. The combination of cognition, behavior, and affect together with the notion of creativity could bring areas of philosophy, psychology, and education closer to the true meaning of social cognition, social understanding, empathy, and, in the case of this thesis, the synthesis term of social creativity.

Sex differences are interesting variables in terms of empathy and again seem to raise great controversy. Hoffman (1977) defining empathy as a "vicarious affective response to another person's feelings" found it to be more prevalent in females than in males. Females were not found to be more adept at assessing affective, cognitive or spatial perspectives, however. Hoffman (1977) suggests that females may be "part of a prosocial affective orientation" whereas males due to socialization may "have a set to act rather than to feel."

Gilligan's (1982) treatment of the subject of sex differences in the areas of empathy and moral development is one that attempts to question the experimental results of a male dominated philosophical and psychological world. She points out that studies have been based on constructs devised by males, while studying young boys, which some-
what eliminate female differences when they are placed within those constructs.

Gilligan (1982) writes,

> When one begins with the study of women and derives developmental constructs from their lives, the outline of a moral conception different from that described by Freud, Piaget, or Kohlberg begins to emerge and informs a different description of development.

The female mode of relating to the world seems to stem from attention to the issues of care and responsibility rather than from attention to the issues of fairness and rights, a condition more common to males.

Gilligan (1982) laments,

> This different construction of the moral problem by women may be seen as the critical reason for their failure to develop within the constraints of Kohlberg's system . . .

of six stages of moral development.

It seems that the concept of social creativity, described in Chapter one of this paper, encompasses both a male and female construction. A male emphasis on fairness and logical rules, whether brought about genetically or through socialization, need not be in competition with a female emphasis on care and responsibility, whether brought about through nature or nurture, in socially creative processes or actions. In fact, perhaps, either conception or a combination of both can be open and sensitive, with a motivation to address hurt, and an ability to predict social problems and produce solutions under risk. This
may be so because the concept of social creativity combines the affective, cognitive and behavioral variables.

Rogerian Views on Empathy, Therapeutic Change and Measurement

In an examination of relevant literature on empathy, one cannot overlook the profound impact of Carl Rogers on theoretical formulations and clinical practices. Roger's client-centered therapy is based on empathic understanding of the therapist for the client. In the 1950's he outlined necessary and sufficient conditions for the therapeutic change: 1) accurate empathy (empathic understanding), 2) nonpossessive warmth (unconditional positive regard), and 3) genuineness (congruence, non-phony). His early (1959) definition of empathy as related in a later work, Rogers (1975) is in part,

The state of empathy or being empathic, is to perceive the internal frame of reference of another with accuracy and with the emotional components and meanings which pertain thereto as if one were the person, but without ever losing the "as if" condition.

The last two decades have witnessed a proliferation of studies based on the works of Rogers. Some research concerning relationships of variables to empathy have been mentioned previously in this chapter. The trend is toward naturalistic studies, but Rogers and his students have been criticized for lack of controls in their studies.

Bergin (1971) suggested that the results of client-
centered researchers could not be generalized to other types of therapy. Lambert (1978) reviews the client-centered view of empathy research debate, concluding that the results are ambiguous and "Rogerian conditions have not been proven." Other researchers have questioned client-centered research methodology. Rachman (1973) stated, "Unfortunately, however, most of these lack adequate control groups." Luborsky et al. (1971), on the other hand, tried to identify therapeutic skills showing up across all studies. They conclude that empathy shows a reliable relationship with desired results in therapy. Gladstein (1977), however, concluded a review of the literature without being able to find a reliable relationship between empathy and positive change in therapeutic situations.

Rogers (1975) himself reviews his earlier studies and definitions and concludes,

I would no longer be terming it a "state of empathy" because I believe it to be a process, rather than a state... The way of being with another person which is empathic has several facets.

Rogers (1975) continues to mention entering the private perceptual world of another, being sensitive moment to moment, sensing meanings without making judgments and ends by stating,

In some sense it means that you lay aside yourself and this can only be done by a person who is secure enough in himself that he knows he will not get lost in what may turn out to be the strange or
bizarre world of the other, and can comfortably return to his own world when he wishes.

Growth and change, building upon previous works must continue in the study of empathy. Out of controversy, dilemma and debate, one may hope to find areas of similarities and new means of combinations. For example, Gladstein (1977) deduced that empathy is unnecessary in counseling. In an article of refutation, Bellingham (1978) says, "I would recommend that counselor preparation programs view empathy as necessary but not sufficient."

Commenting on the interactive relationship between measurement tools and the concepts under review, Lambert (1978) states,

Improvements in methodology may yet lead to a significant revision of the client-centered hypothesis and an increase in its ability to specify conditions leading to therapeutic change.

Improvements in methodology, manipulations and combinations of variables may lead to a more holistic definition of empathy, a more true-to-life construct.

Feelings and thoughts, perhaps a combination of affective and cognitive, yield a complicated yet plain picture. Real life states and products, complicated as they may be, could be thought of as simply combinations. Davis (1981) discusses a recent movement towards integration.

In fact, it is a growing belief among empathy theorists and researchers that our understanding of empathy can improve only with the explicit recognition that there are both affective and cognitive components to the empathic response.
I could not agree more enthusiastically, but would also add creativity to complete the understanding. The combination of social cognition, empathy and creativity may allow one to conceive of an individual in an interesting and more complete way.

Training and Creativity Factors Involved in Empathy

If understanding others and being in tune with them can help better the lives of self and others, then perhaps it is important to know whether empathy can be learned and will remain with the individual. It is generally accepted that some form of empathic understanding can be learned. Using a Rogerian definition of empathy, Goud (1975) studied undergraduates receiving empathy training. He found the students to be capable of learning empathic understanding and that learning can occur in large groups over a short time span and also that learning can be maintained over time. Gantt et al. (1980) studied empathic sensitivity in paraprofessionals and demonstrated that training could increase empathy and maintain it six to fourteen months when subjects were re-examined. It is important to keep in mind the learning of empathy strategies, since it is a component of the idea of social creativity.

Self-disclosure and flexibility are creativity factors that can also be associated with empathy. Neimeyer and
Banikiotes (1981) found "self-disclosure flexibility, defined as the variability in self-revelation across targets and situations," has been associated repeatedly with social perceptiveness. They found that groups (dyads) of students all highly flexible "evidenced greater predictive accuracy (e.g., empathy) and interpersonal attraction" than groups (dyads) of students all with low self-disclosure flexibility. Being flexible and giving of the self in interpersonal revelation seems to be related once again to an aspect of creativity. In the realm of interpersonal relations it would seem that openness, flexibility and self-disclosure would be vital. In the realm of creativity, whether it be social or personal, it would seem that these same characteristics are necessary. For example, the painter or the actor opens self to others through their works as does the teacher, counselor or friend, even if their original purposes may differ.

Actors take another's role. They creatively develop a sensitivity toward the person whose role they are taking. Creatively role-taking and creatively acting, then, might be closely related. Perhaps social creativity is more than empathy alone, more than social cognition alone and more than social intelligence alone, but rather a combination of all these factors with creativity.
A New Direction for Study

If, as Rogers (1975) says, "being empathic is a complex, demanding, strong yet subtle and gentle way of being," then one could reason that these dichotomies could be resolved in a creative act, a new approach called social creativity.

Barron (1968) concludes a discussion of the difficulties of researching the creative process with,

One can only shoulder the burden, accept the limitations and try to reconstruct with the aid of imagination the living process of which our correlation coefficients give us a murky picture.

Dissertation studies have begun to lead in this direction. Morisette (1978) found support for the hypothesis that children with a high imaginative predisposition who engage in fantasy and role-taking types of play early in childhood develop skills which are necessary for the development of empathy, while studying fourth graders. Frank (1978) in a study of college students found the results of his study supported the hypothesis that training in flexibility shifting between reality-oriented and imaginative behavior can increase the ability to navigate the social environment, empathize with another, and reason about social interactions.

Rogers (1975) stresses the vital role empathy plays in human interaction. "Empathy gives that needed confirmation that one does exist as a separate, valued person with an identity." Social creativity may be that encompassing
concept including social cognition, empathy, social intelligence and creativity, with the clarity to reach beyond for the identity and value of each person, as measured by observation and interview in natural surroundings.
"Plato compared the intellect to a charioteer guiding the powerful horses of the passions; he gave it both the power of perception and the power of control." Cattell (1971). Within that power of perception, one wonders if the perception of others, the understanding of others is complete and included the passions.

In creative literature, novels, short stories, plays, songs, lyrics, and poetry, the power of perception of others is considered. Though our tests of intelligence do not measure social intelligence per se, the study of it is alive and well. In the literature, social intelligence exists, many times synonymously, with role-taking, empathy, interpersonal competence, social cognition and person perception. This paper has examined two of these so-called synonyms, (social cognition and empathy) and, through a review of current salient literature, will discuss social intelligence, shifts of emphasis in its study, current dilemmas, debates, problems of measurement, and its relationship to creativity. The goal is to determine if the construct of social intelligence alone is adequate to account for the complex act of
social creativity. A more indepth discussion of Guilford et al. (1965 and 1969) will show that, although the term, social creativity, was coined by Guilford, it was used in a more restrictive way than the meaning proposed in this paper and thus, it did not include the affective factors shown in the empathy research to be such an important element in the understanding of others. Again, openness, sensitivity to problems and flexibility, all defining features of creativity, appear to be the common attributes seen in examples of effective social intelligence, social cognition, and empathy. The concept of social creativity captures those elements and seems to have explanatory power in accounting for deep imaginative understanding in a clear and useful way.

A Renewed Interest in Social Intelligence

Social intelligence and social cognition had their beginnings in Thorndike's 1920 definition which distinguished social intelligence from abstract and mechanical intelligences (discussed in Chapter two). The diversity of approach and findings in the study of social cognition and social intelligence had several sources. Experimenters had limited success devising a valid and reliable test of social intelligence; and they had difficulty with the many individual differences of their subjects while desiring their studies to yield more general group data. Method and orien-
tation caused researchers to choose divergent paths. The complexity of these conceptual and methodological problems caused the study of social intelligence to decline.

Although interest waned for two decades, there was renewed interest in the study of social intelligence in the last twenty years. This began when Guilford (1959) proposed a general theory of intelligence that found a place for social intelligence. In his structure-of-the-intellect model, there are four kinds of intelligences. One dealing concretely with things through the senses, he calls figural intelligence. The second dealing with mathematics and languages, he named symbolic intelligence. The third, abstract intelligence, deals with thoughts and the fourth, social intelligence, is how Guilford says we deal with the human behavior of the people with whom we come in direct contact.

Referring back to Thorndike's original conception of social intelligence as having two parts, most social intelligence researchers now incorporate attention to both those parts, understanding or perceiving and coping or acting, in their studies. The first part, understanding or perceiving others, has been defined as having six behavioral social cognition abilities by O'Sullivan, Guilford and deMille (1965); "1) cognition of behavioral units, 2) classes, 3) relations, 4) systems, 5) transformations, and 6) implications."
A later study by Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner (1969) concerns itself with the second part of social intelligence, coping or acting upon the behavior of others, dealing primarily with the basic solution-finding skills in interpersonal relations. Using the method of factor analysis, six abilities, and many other subabilities, were defined and related to the structure-of-intellect paradigm in both of these studies.

A brief description of the six factors of behavioral cognition might be useful here. Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner (1969) define each.

1) "A unit of behavioral information is a single condition or state of an individual's disposition of the moment." The person is amused or angry or alarmed. We can discern these units by cues such as a smile, a frown, or raised eyebrows.

2) "A class of behavioral information, like a class of any other kind, is a generalized affair." The units become categorized into classes of units having common entities, i.e., states of pleasure or disgust.

3) "A relation is some kind of recognized connection between two states or actions." These relations can come between opposite states, such as pleasant/unpleasant or between two persons.

4) "A behavioral system can be found in the interactions of three or more persons." An example is that of a policeman
arresting a traffic violator while enduring bystanders' threats.

5) "A transformation is a change or shift . . . a modification of one's conception of the behavior in question." An example used is one of first thinking a victim is drunk until we find he has suffered a heart attack.

6) "An implication is an item of information suggested by other information." An example used here is when handed a bag of groceries the clerk expects money in return. It is explained that individuals use these abilities with varying degrees of success and some are exceptionally high or some low in their use of all six, but most individuals are uneven in their ability to use these six factors.

The O'Sullivan, Guilford and deMille (1965) study and the Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner (1969) study are important because they offer more complete pictures of understanding others, that of perceiving and responding. The importance of this work also lies in the more structured attempt at construct measurement through an individual differences approach. In addition, Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner (1969) point to creativity as a factor in the realm of social action and problem-solving. This is a first attempt at identifying a social behavioral creativity in relation to the intellect.
Social Psychology of Creativity

No researcher recognized the concept of social creativity until the Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner (1969) study, "Measuring Creative Social Intelligence." These authors accounted for social creativity as a particular form or example of social intelligence. It is claimed by these authors that other investigators attempting to correlate intelligence and creativity have been measuring cognitive abilities, as do most IQ tests, not behavioral divergent abilities as their tests do. As noted in Chapter one of this paper Guilford et al. (1969) recognize the shortcoming of their position when they state, "The major disadvantage of this approach [equating social creativity with social intelligence] is that non-intellectual qualities that contribute to creative performance are not included in this view."

We might question at this juncture whether it is appropriate to relate the behavioral or action ability or even the perception or understanding ability solely to the intellect when affective components are stressed in both studies of creativity and empathy. Yet the affective factors are left out of Guilford's explanation of social understanding or social intelligence. Creativity, most assuredly, is inclusive of affective behaviors. Empathy, an ability most notably linked with the affective domain, has been tied to person perception, social cognition, social
intelligence, role-taking, projection, so much so that the terms are used interchangeably throughout investigative literature.

Now that cognitive and behavioral factors have been combined with social intelligence in this important study, Guilford et al. (1969), affective factors cannot be ignored. An attempt must be made to develop the concept of social understanding multidimensionally and holistically. Amabile (1983) suggests that there is virtually no research on the social psychology of creativity, the interaction of social/environmental factors with personality characteristics and cognitive abilities and the effects of such factors on observable creativity.

Perhaps, the time is now.

We might, then, be able to conclude reasonably that a concept of social ability, inclusive of cognitive and affective factors, under the commonality of creativity, could yield a relationship worthy of study. To restrict the idea of social creativity to a relationship void of the wholeness of human beings is to restrict its fullest conception. If social understanding and social interactions are a part of the concept of creativity inclusive of cognitive and affective domains, then perhaps individual differences can be conceptualized in an interesting way, social creativity.
Definition and Measurement Problems

There is as much disagreement on definition of creativity and measurement of creativity (e.g., Klein, 1982; Treffinger et al., 1983; Torrance and Hall, 1980; Guilford, 1982) as there is with social intelligence (e.g., Neisser et al., 1979; Keating, 1978; Fisk, 1971; Ford, 1982; Shanley et al., 1971; Ford et al., 1983)

Guilford and his co-workers have their critics of course. Criticizing all of Guilford's creativity tests, including that of creative social intelligence, Cattell (1971) states that they have

...gone to abilities beyond intelligence, nevertheless have defined creativity in the test performance itself, instead of by some life criterion through which the designation of a test as a creativity measure could be validated. The result is that the verdict that a test measures creativity is only a projection of the test constructor's view about what creativity is.

Urging the most fundamental skepticism, Keating (1978) warns empirical investigators against using the "construct of social competence or social intelligence as if it were a clearly defined domain... in the absence of confirming evidence."

Neisser (1979) accepts the concept of social intelligence but refers to it as "everyday intelligence." He says of its measurement,

Tests of everyday intelligence, like those of creativity, are so inadequate to the construct they seek to measure that one cannot decide the theoretical
issue on the basis of the operational measures currently used to address the issue.

Sternberg et al. (1981) studied the layperson's versus the expert's view of intelligence. They state that the factor of social competence is implicit in layperson's conception of intelligence and show "...the experts, like the layperson, perceived intelligence as comprising quite a bit more than is presumably measured by IQ tests." They conclude by saying, "None of the currently available explicit theories seem to do justice to the full scope of intelligence, broadly defined. Perhaps no one theory ever could."

Despite their complexity, however, the issues of social intelligence and those of creativity will not disappear. Neisser (1979) points out that,

It may be that there is no one unified construct of everyday intelligence but several constructs. Such multiplicity of constructs would explain why no one trait has emerged in the research that has been done to date.

Neisser (1979) urges researchers to explore a "multiplicity of constructs." Kurdek (1975; see Chapter two of this paper) goes a step further and suggests that social intelligence may be a multidimensional, social-cognitive construct "whose dimensions themselves are multifaceted." Davis (1981; see Chapter three of this paper) argues that both the "affective and cognitive components to the empathic response" must be attended to.
The limitations of the concepts currently used in the empirical literature as pointed out by these researchers support the argument for a new and more comprehensive concept with greater explanatory power. Social cognition (or person perception), empathic response, social intelligence (or everyday intelligence), and creative social intelligence could be integrated into a multidimensional theory of social creativity, studied in a naturalistic observational approach, that could allow for a broader structure for analysis and understanding.

Current Research and its Implications

Howard Gardner (1984) in a recent controversial volume, proposes a theory of seven intelligences. He challenges current definitions and measurements of human potential. His theory stems from his work with brain diseased veterans. He claims these seven personal intelligences can be developed and trained. Gardner identifies the seven intelligences as linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences.

Based in Eastern philosophies and the literature on self-actualization, knowledge of self, Gardner (1984) argues, "The more you understand about other people, the more potential you have for understanding yourself, and vice versa."
Regarding methodology, Gardner (1984) also advocates "getting rid of numbers entirely" and doing away with "the unitary dimension called intelligence."

Like Gardner, the recent work of Torrance and Hall (1980) has raised similarly fundamental questions. Torrance and Hall (1980) recommend that a study of creativity should examine and address "further reaches of creative potential." Some of the "reaches" or domains they name and suggest investigation of are charisma, precognition, super rapport, telepathy, intuition, and group creativity. In their analysis of empathy or super rapport, Torrance and Hall (1980) say, "Another human ability that seems to lie outside of the realm of rational thinking is that of empathy and super awareness of the needs of another." They suggest that empathy should be understood as a supra-rational behavior instead of a rational response. They propose that flexibility (resistance to premature closure) and originality (seeing things in unusual perspectives) are basic to the nature of super awareness.

Therefore it appears that creativity, empathy, social intelligence, and social cognition are most recently being seen as necessarily interrelated. Torrance and Hall (1980) argue,

...perhaps the key to understanding this ability supra-awareness of the needs of another is the findings from creativity research that highly effective creative people integrate into their personali-
ties a number of polar opposites. Highly creative people are at the same time more masculine and more feminine, more conforming and more nonconforming, more independent and more dependent, more serious and more playful, more timid and more bold, more certain and more uncertain, and more receptive and more self-acting than their less creative peers.

The integration of these polarizations suggests that the socially creative person has the ability to defy logical rational explanations.

Perhaps these polarizations have impeded the evolution of a unified concept to date which could totally explain the real-life phenomena I have labeled social creativity. But we see in this recent work, however, both on creativity and on social intelligence, the beginnings of a new approach, broadened beyond the scope of Guilford’s model of the intellect. Based on this, my proposal that we account for social creativity with a multi-dimensional concept which includes both cognitive and affective components, both perceptive and responsive, follows logically.

**Recent Assessment and Research Approaches**

Arguing the need for their "creative reaches" concept, Torrance and Hall (1980) say the ways of seeing creativity could open a whole new understanding, and go even a step further and recommend combined procedures. They propose new research approaches they suggest would not go against reason, but simply be outside the realm of reason.
Measurements of creativity are difficult especially when creativity is viewed as having such a large number of complex ways in which it might be demonstrated. The measurement methods Torrance and Hall (1980) suggest are varied. They propose

... autobiographical instruments, collections of critical incidents, observational studies, peer and teacher nominations and similar devices might also be used to assess motivational and other variables associated with the further reaches of creative potential.

Clearly, these new and expanded conceptions of social intelligence and creativity require new tools for measurement, as does the combined concept of social creativity.

Identifying some problems in developing tools of measurement, Klein (1982) points out,

Researchers can identify only what they can measure, and they measure only what they can quantify. Hence what becomes known as creativity is that which can be quantified. The result is an academic metonymy or an identification of one small part with the whole concept.

Rejecting this, he proposes a paradigm of creativity and its measurement that is inclusive of product, process, personal and environmental factors. Klein recognizes the interactive relationships between cognitive and affective

1In an article responding to Torrance and Hall, Guilford (1982) disagrees, I would maintain that from a rigorous point of view all human behavior, including creative thinking, is rational or logical, and it is up to psychologists to discover the nature of that rationality.
factors in the operation of the creativity process. He compares the current processes of the measurement of creativity to catching butterflies with a bear trap, and concludes with the suggestion that observational data be used and quantified.

Creative writers often make the suggestion of the powerful and illuminating idea of lightning. In Emily Dickinson's poem, *Tell all the Truth*, I find support for the "further reaches of creative potential" proposed by Torrance and Hall (1980).

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Tell all the Truth but tell it slant--
Success in Circuit lies
Too bright for our infirm Delight
The Truth's superb surprise
As lightning to the Children eased
With explanation kind
The Truth must dazzle gradually
Or every man be blind--
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It seems as if researchers in the three areas examined in this paper thus far, social cognition, empathy, and social intelligence, are moving toward a multifaceted approach, difficult to measure, but observable in naturalistic settings. Perhaps a "circuit" method of collecting data, such as observation, a method of many directions, would be more illuminating than a straight forward logical and quantifying method which would be like looking at lightning straight on and being blinded by it. The more "circuit" method of many directions may be one way of getting many perspectives on social creativity, on "Truth's superb surprise."
CHAPTER V
A POWERFUL COMBINATION

In this chapter I will put forth a proposal of explanatory devices and measurement for the concept of social creativity that I advance, which includes product, process, personal, and environmental factors. I have recognized the cognitive/affective dichotomy in social creativity throughout the preceding chapters. This chapter proposes that the concept of social creativity is the unity for which psychological, philosophical, and educational theorists in the forementioned fields have been searching. I propose that creativity is the synthesizing factor which unifies the cognitive and affective elements of social understanding and action allowing them to be better understood and explained.

Although creativity has been discussed throughout this paper and extensively in Chapter four, it was always reviewed in terms of social understanding or social intelligence or empathy. Following a discussion of the need for a new concept, this chapter will take a theoretical look at creativity itself, and then view creativity in relation to the proposed concept of social creativity.
A Need for Synthesis

The importance of creativity in all human endeavors, especially in today's social interactions, should never be minimized. Solving problems in all areas of society requires social understanding and imagination. Defining appropriate innovations in the field of science, for example, pollution, energy and disease, requires recognizing the validity and different perspectives and skill in resolving conflicts arising from these. The fields of psychology and sociology need to creatively answer questions of mutual trust, aid and understanding in order to achieve problem solutions. The areas of art and literature are needed as a vehicle to achieve levels of social harmony which are admittedly necessary by most concerned persons. The joining of social understanding with creativity builds a relationship worthy of consideration if only for the innovations that could result in all fields of human inquiry and endeavor.

We wonder about the future. A noted futurist, Isaac Asimov (1984) maintains that schools will become increasingly essential as centers of social interaction and understanding. Asimov (1984) in his address to educators as reported by the Boston Globe, said that computers will suffice for the informational elements of education. "This, in turn, will free students to develop in the areas of insight, intuition, fantasy and creativity -- human attributes that are not
transferable to even the most advanced computers." If
Asimov's predictions hold true, then social creativity,
that collection of traits discussed throughout this paper,
perhaps, is a concept that should be fostered and developed.

Creativity, a Synthesis

A review of the study of creativity points to a
variety of concepts stemming from differing perspectives.
There are theoretical approaches emphasizing the cognitive
and rational aspects of creativity (e.g., Guilford, 1965,
1969; Torrance, 1979). There are theoretical approaches
emphasizing the affective nature of creativity and the
contribution of personality traits to the creative person
and creative act (e.g., MacKinnon, 1978; Barron, 1972; Roe,
1952).

Guilford maintains that creativity is essentially a
cognitive function, the most important being divergent
thinking, characterized by productive thinking. Koestler,
in his bisociation theory, portrays the creative process
as mental occurrences associated with incompatible con­
texts. Freud saw a similarity between neurosis and crea­
tivity and located its origin almost totally in the uncon­
scious and brought to the realm of human consciousness by
creative individuals. Arieti maintains that psychiatry
can make major contributions in the field of creativity
by indepth study of individual cases. Many approaches stress the self-realization or self-actualization of the individual as related to the openness and flexibility needed in order to process information creatively (e.g., Rogers, 1961; Maslow, 1959).

It seems as if these theories and approaches are in need of a connector. In the collection of cognitive/affective traits called creativity, one might find the connector to be metaphor. Arieti (1976) states, "A poet sees similarities in the dissimilar in the process of creating a metaphor." Arieti (1976) also quotes Aristotle's Poetics, "The greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor; . . . it is also a sign of genius since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in the dissimilar."

Creativity, expanded to include the relationship of creativity and social understanding could only aid in extending the direction and scope of psychologists, philosophers and educators toward unraveling the human mystery of social understanding. The poet, the artist, the scientist put together many different elements to bring about unified ideas, creatively. Viewing creativity multidimensionally, bringing together dissimilar associations, inclusive of cognitive, affective and social domains could yield a broader structure, a holistic human metaphor. The social creativity of social human beings,
perhaps, could be an important part of this human metaphor.

"The Magic Synthesis" is what Arieti (1976) sees as the essence of creativity, as his title suggests. Creativity has been divided and dissected; at times it is illusionary and ill-defined. Arieti (1976) differentiates between "ordinary creativity," that of every man, and "great creativity," such as that of Shakespeare. In most measurable constructs there seem to be degrees of ability (e.g., intelligence, cognition, empathy). Of course, creativity would be found in varying degrees in individuals as well. Does that necessitate minute differentiation, another series of dissections? Arieti (1976) recognizes two major approaches in the study of creativity; a holistic study, a study of the total creative person, and a study of "specific ingredients" of a creative personality. Arieti claims a true magic synthesis, an understanding of creativity, will only come about through a study of the synthesis of personality variables and the unconscious and conscious processes.

I contend that to evolve a deep understanding of elegant and fit solutions to complex problems of social interaction, one needs to incorporate the concept of creativity and social understanding. The concept of social creativity allows one to look at divergent responses applied to the subtle and complex stimuli of social behavior and see the ways in which our knowledge of increasing creative problem
solving can be applied to crucially important human problems.

Problems of Measurement

Having viewed creativity and social creativity as a synthesis and determined its need, the problem of measurement must be addressed here. All investigators must choose a valid and reliable measurement tool. Fiske (1971) states, "The comprehensive and fully adequate measurement of a whole concept in current personality theory is an awesome task." The tendency, then, seems to be, Fiske (1971) says, to divide constructs and "analyze them into subconstructs for pertinent modes of observation, each such subconstruct subsuming others that designate separate manifestations and situational aspects." One might inquire here, if the portion studied may in fact lose some important aspect of the whole. Perhaps, the call by some social cognitive developmentalists and investigators of the concept of empathy and social cognition to investigate all sides of a construct together, inclusive of all its subwholes and their interactions, in more naturalistic settings is more in tune with measuring a multidimensional whole, even if an awesome task (e.g., Damon, 1981; Strayer, 1980; Rothenburg, 1970). Barron (1972) summarizes this argument by stating, "The whole self creates."
Cheek and Buss (1981) argue that,

Experimental laboratory research is so complicated that researchers have tended to limit themselves to one personality variable at a time. Perhaps the time has come to confront the complexity of using several different personality dispositions as the independent variables of the experiment. Such usage might not only make a difference in the results . . . but also offer a better view of the complexity of personality as it influences social behavior.

I agree and would like to carry the view one step further by recommending a change in the site of the studies from the laboratory and into real-life situations, such as classrooms.

Bekdal (1977) advocates the use of personality inventories to test for creative potential. An inventory, observation in natural settings (classrooms), personal descriptions, checklists are all legitimate and available means of measuring a concept holistically (Torrance and Hall, 1980).

**Education and Training**

It seems important to interject a discussion of the work on training and education for creativity, social intelligence and empathy at this juncture, since education strategies are a crucial part of my proposal for the measurement of social creativity. In addition the potential real-world gains that educating for social creativity can make is one of the important underlying concerns of
this paper. Writers and theorists in the field of education have suggested that creativity can be developed and increased in individuals by particular training strategies (e.g., Torrance, 1963; Guilford, 1974; Bleedorn, 1981; Renzulli, 1977; Gallagher, 1975). These strategies of creative problem solving and imaginative thinking have been field tested in classrooms.

Studies showing a relationship between jobs assumed to require high levels of social intelligence or empathy (e.g., social worker, counselor, child care worker) and the creative factors of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration have been somewhat illuminating (e.g., Reardon et al., 1979; France and Kay, 1976; Wheeler, 1976; Hesselroth, 1979). What has emerged from these studies is evidence that empathy, social intelligence, and creativity can be successfully increased through training. Pre and post test situations show that the training and education produced by the specific strategies remains with the subjects for long periods of time (e.g., Organ, 1977; Meline, 1976; Torrance, 1974; Ganto et al., 1980; Gaud, 1975; Treffinger, et al., 1983). If training and education were given in the powerful combination of creative thought production, social understanding, and empathic reaction, some interesting and beneficial results could occur.
A New Concept: Social Creativity

Classrooms, especially elementary classrooms, are models of everyday social living. Children constantly interact, cognitively and affectively, with each other and with one or more adults. They are together daily for at least seven hours in a variety of social situations. A participant observer of fourth grade children, as their teacher, for fourteen years, I have watched certain children display unusual amounts of the qualities of social cognition and intelligence, empathy, and creativity in dealing with other children and adults. These children emerge above most others in their outstanding sensitivity, openness, understanding, social solution production, motivation and foresight to address social problems and hurt.

For the past three years, I have given the label, socially creative, to these children (and to some adults). They seem to be at once shy yet outgoing when needed, not strongly aggressive yet leaders when necessary to address some hurt. Some show artistic or literary talents and yet their creativity shines most when interacting with others. They aren't usually at either extreme of intelligence. They can have a certain playfulness and sense of humor as long as it is not hurtful humor. They seem to have the ability to form close friendships and yet are flexible and gregarious in their relationships. These characteristics seem very close to characteristics of creativity that have
been identified by Tests of Creative Thinking and biographical or life experience inventories and checklists throughout the creativity literature (Torrance, 1972).

Sensitivity to tone and feelings, openness to ideas and people, motivation to address hurt, sensitivity to missing pieces in a scenario, comprehensive solution production are the characteristics named in Chapter one of this paper as a cluster of socially creative behaviors. There is something being identified here that could, on the basis of similarities and differences across the concepts reviewed in Chapters two through four of this paper, be operationally defined as social creativity. These behaviors can be observed in natural settings and deserve to be studied.

Although illusive to measure, it is obvious when socially creative characteristics are lacking in a person. There may be a way to measure this observable concept, this combination of opposites, this human metaphor, this social creativity. There may be a link between proper scientific understanding and metaphorical understanding.

**Approach to Measuring Social Creativity**

Likewise disagreement exists among theorists in the areas of social cognition, social intelligence and empathy, as can surely be noted in Chapters two, three and four of this paper. There is the same disagreement among theorists
as to the validity of creativity as a construct and even to the validity of the tests that measure it. Perhaps, as Bruner (1973) states, "We can do worse than to live with a metaphoric understanding of creativity." A metaphoric understanding may be a necessary and informative beginning to the understanding of social creativity. Clearly, this paper has utilized such an understanding.

There may, however, be an approach that while qualitative in its design and use of descriptive instruments and naturalistic in its operation, may, nonetheless, still be quantifiable. Scarlett, Press and Crockett (1971) and Peevers and Secord (1973), in studies of similar design, were able to reliably use free description of peers technique. These free descriptions can be either oral or written. Content analysis was done on the descriptions as to the simplicity or complexity of the items ranging from concrete constructs (e.g., his hair is red) to abstract constructs (e.g., he is kind).

Livesly and Bromley (1973) in support of a more naturalistic method of experimentation states,

It can be argued that some investigators seem to have assumed that the processes and variables in person perception were fairly obvious and that all that was required was a kind of rigorous experimental proof. This assumption could lead investigators to experimentally manipulate what they consider to be key variables only to find that their results cannot be corroborated by the findings of simpler and more naturalistic studies. . . Further research in person perception seems to require
less emphasis on variables chosen for ease of experimental manipulation and more emphasis on issues related to fundamental concepts and problems, such as the content and organization of naturally occurring impressions.

Natural methods for obtaining response data (such as free descriptions), no artificial constraint by inappropriate conditions, and freedom of subjects to select whatever information they find relevant are valid experimental designs concludes Bromley (1970). "Evidence at its simplest forms should be studied first." states Bromley (1970).

Free descriptions of peers, discussion of video presentations of social situations, and role-playing for social problem solving are all classroom activities that could be used as explanatory devices or measurement tools for social creativity. These activities could also be used as strategies of education to increase this much needed humanistic behavior.

A Proposal for the Measurement of Social Creativity

Adopting the assumptions of Livesly and Bromley (1973) and Bromley (1970), the free descriptions response method seems experimentally sound. In a classroom, children could be asked to write four peer descriptions each, keeping the subjects anonymous. They could be instructed to write a description, including any information they determine as relevant and necessary to fully describe that person's
looks, actions, thoughts and feelings, using one girl and one boy they like and one girl and one boy they do not like or like least in their class. Using peers they actually know makes the exercise more relevant and true-to-life. Doing this exercise in a regular classroom setting as an ordinary class exercise would provide the benefits of a naturalistic response setting for children.

I have been using this free description activity for three years in a fourth grade classroom setting. There are a number of advantages to using the free descriptions method. The subjects have a choice of response in a natural fashion. Factors such as anxiety, aggression, duplicity, embarrassment, and lack of writing skill may influence the descriptions, but to a lesser degree than in a laboratory situation and/or oral situation. Leaving the subjects free to respond in their own way reduces the effects of experimenter bias and assumptions. Finally, its advantage over ratings, Q sorts, and checklists for this age group is the similarity the task bears to familiar classroom exercises, allowing for more self-expression, for more creativity and metaphor because the children are not responding in fixed categories.

Some examples of statements from the free description activity gleaned over a three year period and assessed intuitively, perhaps, would be valuable here to demonstrate
their potential for quantification along with several available criteria, e.g., concrete versus abstract, unelaborated versus detailed, socially sensitive versus self-absorption. One could reason that the more abstract descriptions, especially by fourth grade children, may be ones of socially creative children, or at the very least highly socially perceptive children.

Examples of Concrete Descriptions: She has long hair sometimes in a pony tail. She likes sports. The boy I like wears blue pants a lot and sits next to me in school. The girl I like has long brown hair and is short and likes kickball.

Examples of Abstract Descriptions: The boy I like acts kindly. Since I've known him he hasn't ever picked a fight. He can think of very good ideas and is liked by a lot of people.

The girl I like acts real nice. She feels real good about something when she does it right and she tries to do better if she does it wrong, but she doesn't show off. She loves sports and hates school lunches.

I would describe the abstract descriptions as demonstrating qualities associated with social creativity. The description shows sensitivity to the social behavior of others (e.g., acts kindly, fights), an awareness of the feelings and sources of the behavior of others (e.g., feels good when she does it right), and interest idea production and assessment (e.g., can think of ideas and is liked).
The concrete descriptions reinforce the observable and affect is based on action directed to subject versus others. Although I have read and assessed only intuitively the three year collection of free descriptions, they could be analyzed in such a way to yield both qualitative and quantitative information which Light and Pillemer (1982) say is the "best synthesis that makes the most out of both types of information." Content analysis by two raters could be used to assess the reliability of the tool.

If the information resulting from free description analysis were combined with teacher checklist information on social characteristics of the children, or with information on creative solutions to social problems presented orally or visually or in a role-playing situation of action under risk, perhaps some insight might be captured that no other related area of research (social cognition, social intelligence, or empathy) has gained. This combination has useful explanatory power and holds potential as a training approach.

The free description classroom activity used in a variety of situations could become a method for teachers to assess the levels of social creativity within the class. Activities extending the free descriptions, such as class discussions of them, and other activities, such as analyzing philosophically a video presentation of a
social problem, could extend the understanding of others and even raise the level of social perception of individuals. In a manner similar to the successful use of video presentations in the field of moral education, a video could be shown of parents and children riding in a car. The children are arguing over a toy. A class discussion of the situation and socially creative solutions could be held or the free description activity could be used as a writing exercise. Another video situation might be that of children on a playground trying to organize a game and choose teams. A video could be made of any situation listed in Chapter one of this paper without the socially creative ending. The teacher would simply ask what different thing might be done. Why? What other alternatives are there? What if you were in charge?

Role-playing is a powerful training strategy used in classrooms for subject content review and understanding. The role-playing tool could be used for social problem-solving and decision-making since it allows a person to see a situation from at least two points of view, a natural personal point of view and that of another, whose role the child could take. Role-taking can have an enormous influence on how one perceives events, problems and people. It can cultivate creative social understanding, a tolerance for human differences and ambiguity, and a decision-making strategy in the solution of social problems. The
risk in action of role-taking is somewhat reduced through fantasy but nonetheless holds potential for helping the actor to develop a tolerance for risk-taking, independence of judgment, and persistence in defending one's convictions. It can creatively extend the understanding and tolerance for differences and the decision-making processes used in social situations. Also a video tape could be made of the role-playing situation to view for the students as later analysis.

One example of socially creative role-play that I have used in my fourth grade classes begins as an imagination exercise. The children are grouped in a circle on the playground and asked to imagine that a large hole has appeared there. The children are asked to list all the ways that the hole could be made (a fluency exercise). Then the class is divided into groups and told to name other ways the hole could have been made but they must list a new category for each new idea (e.g., idea: a space ship; category: outer space invaders). This device for extending flexibility adds the category dimension to the thinking process. Each group then is asked to role-play social situations revolving around an idea and category they select from the ones they have listed (e.g., idea: bomb; category: enemies or idea: airplane with people on board; category: accidents). Making decisions and finding problems that could arise and solutions for these problems
certainly is an exercise that appears to stimulate socially creative thoughts. Each student must change sides (roles) at least once. At the fourth grade level, the children view this exercise as a game which allows them to function at psychological safety and authenticity. It provides an opportunity for social understanding in action, the social creativity in human development that results can be used as a useful explanatory device as well as a method of training for social creativity.

While I have described these activities and recommendations in the setting in which I have developed and piloted them, I fully believe that their structure is useful and appropriate at a wide variety of levels as measure and training devices. I suspect they will be found to be appropriate from kindergarten to adult. A belief I hope further research will confirm.

**Conclusion**

Behrens (1974) theoretically analyzed a Chaplin film, "Easy Street," to illustrate the similarity between comedy and creative solutions to problems. Forced equations or metaphors according to Behrens (1974), going outside the bounds, were common in Chaplin's humor and yet this metaphoric thinking, this tendency to extract forced relationships is needed to solve problems creatively, both
practical and social, in daily life (e.g., Duncker, 1945, creativity experiment, using nail, weight and cord to make a pendulum).

Perhaps, this paper has raised some forced equation questions also. Perhaps, the juxtaposition of the concepts of creativity and social cognition with the affective response will illuminate the social characteristics of creativity or the creative characteristics of social cognition. Emotion could be seen as firing and sustaining the process of social interaction. My hope is that further consideration by the readers of this paper, of this new approach, this powerful combination of creative social understanding and action called social creativity will broaden the understanding of this necessary and useful ability and tool.

As Spring
Agitates the earth
to bestow greenery
blossoms and
gently breezes on it,
so is man
shaken and endowed
when he becomes aware
of the
creative force
in him.

Johann Magrohofer
1787-1836

That creative force, when turned socially to interrelationships, could change the person, the community, the
world. Do not ask, why; ask, why not? The combination of the art and the science of social creativity should be the focus of continued study in naturalistic settings.


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