SEATTLE PACIFIC LIBRARY

Seattle Pacific University
Digital Commons @ SPU

Honors Projects

University Scholars

6-8-2021

CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS AND THE PRECIPITATING FACTORS OF BURNOUT

Natasha E. Koval
Seattle Pacific University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.spu.edu/honorsprojects

 Part of the Business Administration, Management, and Operations Commons, Industrial and Organizational Psychology Commons, Labor Economics Commons, Organizational Behavior and Theory Commons, and the Other Economics Commons

Recommended Citation

Koval, Natasha E., "CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS AND THE PRECIPITATING FACTORS OF BURNOUT" (2021). *Honors Projects*. 127.
https://digitalcommons.spu.edu/honorsprojects/127

This Honors Project is brought to you for free and open access by the University Scholars at Digital Commons @ SPU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ SPU.

CREATIVE OCCUPATIONS AND THE PRECIPITATING FACTORS OF BURNOUT

BY

NATASHA KOVAL

FACULTY MENTORS:
DR. GERI MASON, DR. BAINE CRAFT

HONORS PROGRAM DIRECTOR:
DR. CHRISTINE CHANEY

A project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Bachelor of Arts degree in Honors Liberal Arts
Seattle Pacific University
2021

Presented at the SPU Honors Research Symposium
Date: June 7th, 2021

Abstract

Creativity is an intrinsic part of the human life; however, it is one of the most challenging concepts to be understood. In this paper, I am examining occupations driven by creativity, their economic significance, and how sustainable these occupations are for the creative employees. I will be particularly looking at burnout and its precipitating factors as a way to understand the wellness of the creative workforce. Creative occupations, if fostered properly, can lead to job growth, increased income, and potential for investment in vulnerable communities. This makes them valuable resources for urban economic development goals. Literature suggests that there is a negative relationship between creativity and burnout but, it is largely understudied so I note organizational features that could contribute to burnout as well as offer areas for future research.

Introduction

The nature of work today looks vastly different than in years past. We are living in an age where convictions, content, and culture are shifting at breakneck speeds. To stay competitive and relevant one must pursue innovation, and to be innovative one must be creative. In fact, one of the most sought soft skills in the modern workforce is creativity (Council, 2019; "Soft Skills: Definitions and Examples", 2021). Employers recognize its significance and researchers across multiple disciplines are also starting to register how important creativity is for more than just a successful job interview. Creativity, if fostered in the right environment, can have massive impacts on micro and macro scale economic development goals such as job growth, equality in resource availability, and investment in impoverished communities (Falck, et, al, 2017; Mathews, 2010). Fostering creative occupations may be a promising way to achieve these goals.

However, not all jobs are created equal. Jobs that could be considered creative will have varying degrees of creativity that are required to effectively perform the work. For example, a cashier at a gas station does not need to think of innovative ways to accomplish their job in the same way that a graphic designer needs to meet the needs of a client. The cashier may be creative, but their work does not depend on their creativity. This distinction helps to illustrate the group of jobs that rely on creativity as a necessary skill: creative occupations made up by creative workers.

Creativity is the production of something novel and of value (National Endowment for the Arts, 2011). It is what separates creative occupations from other occupations in industries such as law enforcement, teaching, health care, or service. However, these creative occupations go beyond industry, making them historically challenging to identify. Despite this, there has been an increase in attention being paid to creativity by thought leaders and city governments. In fact,

in many smaller economic units, such as cities or counties, creative occupations are growing at faster rates in comparison to other non-creative occupations (2020 Otis Report on the Creative Economy, 2020; Crawford-Gallagher, 2019). This affirms that proper attention should be paid to what separates them from the rest of the workforce, as well as their wellbeing. Wellness is a crucial piece of economic growth and cannot be ignored, hence my investigation of burnout.

The duties and expectations that are unique to a certain occupation can shape the organizational structure and work environment. In certain circumstances, a creative occupation will have a different management structure, level of autonomy, and work-life balance as compared to someone in a law enforcement or service occupation. The software engineering has vastly different demands, incentive structures, and goals as compared the E.R. doctor. To extend this thought further, the work environment has a major impact on the well-being of the worker. The increased dialogue surrounding wellness and work-life balance has encouraged academic's pursuits to understand burnout and its precipitating factors. Burnout is continually being studied but much of the literature cites the Masloch Burnout Inventory as one of the primary ways to measure and understand the workplace phenomena (Masloch, et al., 2001).

Due to the positive benefits of creative work, I am claiming that those in creative occupations are more resilient to burnout than other occupations. With creative occupations gaining more notoriety in professional and academic settings, it is important to acknowledge the positive contributions and risk factors involved in pursuing creative work. Creativity is a promising tool to better the lives of the individual as well as a whole nation's economy. For this reason, future research and investment should be used to encourage the workforce to develop their creativity, incentivize cities to facilitate creative work, and inform future decisions made by economists, government officials, and more.

Creativity

In order to understand creative occupations, it is important to understand creativity. It is a prominent part of life, especially when considering how much humanity has developed since the dawn of time. That development was arguably driven by creativity as seen through technological innovation and improvements. However, the true essence has been hard to grasp by scholars. A paper published by the National Endowment for the Arts recognizes that creativity is not just limited to stereotypical art productions such as a painting or a song. Rather, at its core it is the production of something novel and of value ("How Creativity Works", 2015). Novelty on its own is simply the production of something new, however, it is not inherently valuable. Similarly, if a produced thing is of value but not novel, it is simply a copy of something that has already been created. Novelty and value must both be present if an object or idea is to be considered creative.

The National Endowment for the Arts has also noted that there is no general theory for creativity. There is not a universally accepted definition to date, but researchers are starting to identify some key features. It has been described as a complex or syndrome, emphasizing that it is multifaceted and varied (*How Creativity Works*, 2015). Some neuroscientists and cognitive psychologists have been able to identify more concrete aspects of creativity. The four features are memory, divergent thinking, convergent thinking, and flow (*How Creativity Works*, 2015). None of these on their own are synonyms for creativity; rather, each feature must work together and often simultaneously within the brain in order to create the right environment for creative thinking, process, and production. Again, the degree in which these features are expressed are

varied and are still under research but, these are the foundations for the cognitive understanding of creativity.

Memory

Researchers have differentiated types of memory into two categories: declarative and non-declarative. Declarative relates to remembering certain facts or events whereas non-declarative relates to the learned experience (*How Creativity Works*, 2015). Creativity taps into non-declarative memory by integrating past experiences to a specific purpose. For example, creative non-declarative memory could be exemplified by remembering a process or product that did not work and using this to direct their next actions to not repeat the same mistakes (*How Creativity Works*, 2015).

Divergent and Convergent Thinking

Divergent thinking is known as the "ability to associate and combine ingredients, a capacity for which an infinite number of potentially unique recipes may exist" (*How Creativity Works*, 2015, p. 19). Novelty is particularly revealed in the process of divergent thinking. Originality is often affirmed in circumstances that require divergent thinking and helps to work against "functional fixity" or rigid and routine thought patterns (*How Creativity Works*, 2015). It is important again to note that this does not exclusively make up creativity. Convergent thinking, the process of making strategic and logical decisions, is vital to creativity when used in conjunction with divergent thinking. Divergence and novelty are important, however, to be used effectively and in a way that creates value there must be discretion, or convergence (*How Creativity Works*, 2015).

Flow

The appropriate use of the previous three factors can contribute to a state called flow. Robert Bilder, a professor of psychology and psychiatry, defines this process as "clear balance of [the brain's] stable and flexible regimes" (*How Creativity Works*, 2015, p. 21; Bilder & Knudsen, 2014). Within this state, an individual can experience heightened productivity and production, increased flexibility in declarative and non-declarative memory, more control over intrusive habits, and increased focus. Some have described this as a suspension of the self for a creative process and this introduces a newer and massively important dimension of the creativity process: emotions. For example, jazz musicians, when deep in flow via improvising, have shown that certain parts of their brain were shut down for a sort of hyper use of another part of the brain. There is removal of self-evaluation that is replaced with emphasis on the process. This is seen as more pleasurable and can even be more productive for those who can successfully tap into this (*How Creativity Works*, 2015).

In terms of the working world, flow is an ideal state and would be in an employer's best interest to create environments where flow is encouraged. If a worker is in an environment where there would be negative incentives to let go self-evaluation or emotional vulnerability in relation to work, flow might be harder to come by. The same circumstances that can encourage flow can also discourage burnout. For example, if an engineering is given autonomy to create a product as effectively as they know how, there is a better chance of them being engaged. To get to a state of flow, one must be invested in the work they are doing. One of the biggest contributors to burnout is that of cynicism in which a worker is disengaged with their work. This concept will be explored further.

In sum, creativity is an incredibly nuanced concept which may be expressed in variable ways depending on the individual and their goals. A meta-analysis of creativity's definitions

across disciplines would greatly help to guide future research. It is clear that creativity still requires much more understanding in how it functionally occurs in our bodies. With increased technology and understanding of the brain, experts will be able to slowly unlock these mysteries. Despite not fully understanding how creativity lends itself in the working environment, we can definitively see that it is a feature of human capital. Human capital is defined as "the collective skills, knowledge, or other intangible assets of individuals that can be used to create economic value for the individuals, their employers, or their community" (Dictionary.com). Workers with higher human capital are more desirable by workplaces, and if creativity has as much potential for increased human capital as the literature notes, then it will be imperative to continue devoting resources to understanding how creativity can be sustained and cultivated in the working world.

The Creative Economy

The concept of an economy based on creativity is gaining popularity in the academic world. It is not an economy built on just the fine arts, rather it recognizes creativity as the lowest common denominator in urban development. It consists of the industries and occupations that use creativity as a means to innovate. This is a subset of the widely recognized knowledge economy that is defined as the "...production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advance, as well as rapid obsolescence" (Powell & Snellman, 2004). The knowledge economy, and consequently the creative economy, would be nothing if not for the highly skilled individuals who are often, but not exclusively, highly educated.

The creative economy is a subset of the knowledge economy, however, these two are not synonymous. Creativity as a concept is still being understood, giving it a slippery and highly

contested definition, especially in the social sciences. As an extension of this, the distinction between creativity and knowledge is contentious throughout the literature (Florida, 2019; Glaeser, 2005). I argue that these two, though dependent on each other, are unique and therefore must be understood separately. Creativity requires knowledge as a prerequisite, but the production of knowledge does not necessarily require creativity. This distinction holds significance in the way that we define creative occupations and measure their impact. For this project, knowledge is defined as information gathered through experience or education, which then informs the nature of knowledge-based work (Powell & Snellman, 2004). Again, creativity is the production of something novel and valuable, and therefore, creative occupations are based on this foundation.

Even without delving deeper into this distinction between knowledge and creativity, there is a clear shift away from the primarily physical factors of production to the more abstract and intangible. John Howkins was the first to define the creative economy in the way we understand it today: "Economic systems where value is based on imaginative qualities rather than the traditional resources of land, labour and capital" (Creative Vitality Suite). This is in line with the knowledge economy where "the key component of a knowledge economy is a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities than on physical inputs or natural resources" (Powell & Snellman, 2004). Richard Florida, one of the world's biggest proponents for the creative economy, has made the term more popular in recent years. Florida notes that creativity is the lowest common denominator between STEM, business, and art and design. In fact, Florida mentions that "creativity is an unlimited resource that cannot be depleted as compared to other types of resources" (Florida, 2014, p. 197). In sum, the intangible (i.e., knowledge and creativity) is the defining factor for progress and power.

With the burgeoning research and recognition from academics, city leaders, and urban developers, the creative economy and creativity are deserving of further exploration. If creativity is as powerful as Florida or Howkins says it is, then we must expand our understanding of how to best facilitate it. Progress no longer relies strictly on the availability of resources; rather, it relies on these resources being used in tandem with creativity.

Creative Occupations

The creative economy can be broken down into industries and occupations. As an overview, "Industry classifications describe the activities of businesses while occupational classifications describe the activities of workers" (Crawford-Gallagher, 2019, p. 18). Creative industries include all workers in a particular industry, whether the nature of an occupation's work is creative or not. For example, the shipping industry encompasses all workers that work for these individual companies and organizations, ranging from drivers and mechanics to graphic designers and marketing agents. Creative occupations, however, are more focused on the jobs that largely utilize creativity and excludes all other jobs that do not include creativity. For the purpose of this question, creative occupations will be the primary focus as it decreases the extraneous occupations that are not based on creativity. Richard Florida summarizes creative occupations to mean "jobs in knowledge-intensive industries that involve the production of new ideas and products, or that engage in creative problem solving" (Florida, 2014, p. 197).

To further illustrate previous comments, creative occupations are difficult to define due to the fluctuation in the definition of creativity. As a result of this, some sources focus on the more universally known creative occupations in the world of arts and culture. Again, a collection of the various definitions of creativity would yield helpful discussion for future work. This

excludes a number of highly influential positions such as lawyers, engineers, and top executives who use creativity as a primary part of their work. As a counter to this, some studies, such as Richard Florida's, have a much broader metric for who can claim the label. Florida's categorization includes the following:

> "design, entertainment, and media; computer and mathematical sciences; management; law; architecture and engineering; medicine; finance; life, physical, and social sciences; education; and of course, the super-creative occupations like university professors, thought leaders, actors, musicians, dancers, novelists, and poets" (Florida, 2014, p. 197).

A study that only includes arts and culture related occupations could be criticized for being too narrow, however, the breadth of the industries and occupations in Florida's study have been criticized for being too broad. Critics base this on the loose definition of creativity, which has inflated Florida's numbers and, to his detriment, has in part weakened his arguments (Glaeser, 2005). These thinkers are consistently trying to grapple with the huge range in earnings, GDP contribution, and employment structure throughout all occupation groups in the creative economy. There are also other facets that we do not currently have metrics for such as the impact on values and behaviors. The measurement obstacle is a major limitation of the creative economy and should be a topic for further research.

Though Florida's initial observations overstate the significance of creative occupations, they have provided an important foundation for others to build off of. One of particular note is a study that recasts Florida's creative class based on the more focused definition of creativity

provided by the Dictionary of Occupational Titles. It states that creativity is constituted by "developing, designing or creating new applications, ideas, relationships, systems or products, including artistic contributions" (ONET; US Department of Labor). With this definition, authors McGranahan and Wojan were able to define a number of occupation groups and specific occupations that are deemed to have a significant amount of creativity. Due to the more focused definition of creativity used, these definitions will be the basis for this paper's classification of creative occupations (McGranahan & Wojan, 2007). See table 1 for definitions.

Economic Significance

The literature around urban development emphasizes that innovation and efficiency are crucial to progress. Many scholars as of late have been tracing these innovative characteristics back to features of human capital, including creativity (Florida, 2019; Marrocu, 2012; Powell & Snellman, 2004). Richard Florida elaborates on this idea by defining the 3 T's of economic development, as detailed in his book, *Rise of the Creative Class.* These T's stand for technology, talent, and tolerance and are helpful to understand how creativity can change the urban workforce. Florida argues that small changes related to each of these three subsets will allow for more job growth, attraction of highly skilled laborers, and the subsequent urban renewal of communities. Put in another way, proper fostering of creative workers and their respective occupations can lead to a more robust and adaptable labor pool in a given area.

Technology

Technology, a ubiquitous contributor to economic development, "enables capitalism to constantly revolutionize itself" (Florida, 2014, p. 198). To support this, Florida sites the Solow growth model which examines how much technology affects the output of an economy.

Technology does not evolve in the same way a natural organism can. It depends on human interaction with it to manipulate it into something novel and of value.

Talent

Talent speaks to Florida's creative class theory. People with talent are those who "create new products that engender completely new markets" (Florida, 2014, p. 198). Florida sites Romer's theory of endogenous growth which exemplifies the impact that research and development as well as education have on returns in the long run. To restate this, Florida is defining human capital as talent, and anything contributing to human capital is then contributing to talent.

Many scholars recognize knowledge as a primary way to increase human capital. In the world of the knowledge economy, education is the most basic unit. It is easily measurable and has extensive data all around the world. However, scholars like Florida argue against the use of education to fully encapsulate what the creative economy has to offer. Education is often used in relationship to wealth or income that is garnered from certain education levels whereas creativity is often linked to productivity. Furthermore, education by its very nature is exclusive and leaves out a valuable percentage of the population that have great creative potential, but no education to back it up. For example, Steve Jobs or Bill Gates took unconventional routes with their careers but became some of the most successful individuals in the creative economy. These individuals laid the foundation for a technological revolution without a college education. A significant number of artists and musicians also had unconventional careers whose creative success was not measured through a degree. Education is simply one way of understanding the new frontier of productivity and efficiency, not just privilege through education.

The National Endowment of the Arts found in 2010 that 59% of artists have at least a bachelor's degree under their belt (National Endowment for the Arts, 2011). Though this is the majority, there is still a significant percentage of those in creative occupations that would not be accounted for because of their lack of a bachelor's degree. Because of this, it is important that we do not reduce measurement of creative workers to only their education.

There is a distinct tension in the literature between creativity and education. Creativity as a metric is nebulous at the moment. Because of the conflation between knowledge and creative economy workers, creative workers are often minimized and lumped in with knowledge workers. This means that they and their economic output (i.e., total factor production, GDP, etc.) are categorized by education level. This distinction is further cemented in with one study noting that "effects of creativity can unfold only when high levels of formal education are present, while the economic relevance of creativity per se seems scarce" (Marrocu, 2012, p.392). This particular study separated the workforce into three groups: creative graduates, non-creative graduates, and bohemians. Creative graduates were those in creative occupations with a college degree (i.e., a software engineer), non-creative graduates were those in any other non-creative occupation with a college degree (i.e., a high school teacher), and bohemians were primarily arts and culture related occupations without a degree (i.e., a DIY musician). Marrocu found that creative graduates contributed the most to total factor productivity, which is one way to measure efficiency and economic performance. Following were the non-creative graduates then bohemians who had a weaker significance (Marrocu, 2012). This proves to be notable pushback to the significance of creativity alone. It helps us to recognize that creativity, when used along with education, helps to bridge the gap of understanding, yielding a much more thorough picture of what it means to be talented or highly skilled.

Tolerance

The third T, as defined by Florida, is that of tolerance. Tolerance describes the nature of the place that creatives and highly skilled workers are attracted to. Despite the pushback presented by Marrocu, he does affirm the importance of conducive environments for highly skilled workers to operate in. Having open-minded, inclusive, and culturally diverse environments is imperative to enhanced productivity (Marrocu, 2012) and aligns with much of the literature surrounding cultural agglomerations. Cultural agglomerations are groups of individuals, organizations, or ideological movements in a geographic area that attracts others of similar caliber or values. A study by Falck, et al. (2018) found time series data in Germany that showed economic and cultural development were centered around opera houses. Over time, highly skilled workers were attracted to the areas with the opera houses because they indicated of quality of life. This study in particular highlights the significance of amenities, often driven by arts and culture occupations, in attracting highly skilled workers. For example, it was the creatives operating the opera house that set the foundation for rich agglomerations. Furthermore, other studies have noted that highly skilled knowledge economy workers desire to be around like-minded people. This proximity to one another in an environment where creativity and new ideas are welcome is the key to innovation. (Faggian, et al, 2017; Florida, 2019). There is also plenty of other research supporting the importance of having strong arts community. In the best-case scenario, these communities can yield creative clusters, these clusters can yield larger cultural agglomerations, these agglomerations can eventually attract high-skilled workers. Therefore, it is in the city's best interest to attract highly skilled workers. A chain reaction can then occur in which the city's labor pool is more competitive and the city is able to achieve their

development goals. Many scholars are suggesting that arts communities and similar creative and cultural amenities can be the key to attraction (Falck, et al, 2018; Mathews, 2010).

Creative Occupation 2019 Snapshot

The creative labor force, full of highly skilled workers, attract other skilled workers to given areas which can be an effective tool for urban renewal. Certain geographic areas or cities might have a significantly larger percentage of creatives. For example, Los Angeles and New York City have larger creative industries as compared to places such as Grand Rapids or Boulder (2020 Otis Report on the Creative Economy, 2020; Florida, 2019). This allows for these cities to pursue successful urban development projects such as arts-led revitalization, reinvestment into disinvested communities, and take advantage of the positive effects of gentrification (i.e., increase in income, increase in property values, more job opportunities) (Mathews, 2010; Moch Islas, et al., 2019). Though there are many positive potential effects of creatives in an area, it is important to recognize that this group constitutes a relatively small part of our labor force when we look at the U.S. as a whole. Using the recast creative class definition as provided by McGranahan and Wojan, we can see that there are 20.2 million creative occupations in the U.S. which only makes up 13% of the total U.S. occupations as of 2019. Arts and cultural related occupations make up only 2% of the total U.S. occupations with 3.3 million occupations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020).

Burnout

Creative occupations could hold the key to effective and equitable urban development. However, it is not wise to catapult resources into encouraging the creativity economy without seeing how it affects those who work within it. It is much too big of a topic to understand so I

will only be focusing on the condition of burnout. Burnout has become increasing relevant as conversations surrounding work-life balance are paired with the statistics on how little Americans take vacation time. For example, 47% of Americans were shown to not use the full amount of vacation time allotted by their employers for a myriad of reasons. A common cause for the lack of vacation time can be boiled down to extremely high demands from supervisors, themselves, or their culture (Lipman, 2018). Another study found that one in five workers worked 50 hours or more ("The Workplace and Health", 2016). These are simply symptoms, pointing to a much larger issue relating to the workforce's relationship with work.

Burnout is a workplace phenomenon that is characterized by feelings of excessive exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness in one's work (Masloch, et al., 2001). In order to understand how burnout relates to creative occupations, it is important to tease apart these three main characteristics. First, exhaustion is the physical experience of fatigue. Second, cynicism describes the general feeling of depersonalization that is used as a defense mechanism against the work organization. Third, ineffectiveness is a result of feeling a decline in personal accomplishment (Masloch, et al., 2001, p. 399). Burnout is specific to work, which is important to differentiate from other mental and behavioral conditions that are present in other areas outside of work (Masloch, et al., 2001, p. 403).

Masloch and colleagues suggest that the antithesis of burnout is work engagement. In each of the three characteristics of burnout, there is an opposing characteristic that represent engagement. Rather than exhaustion, an engaged worker has energy; rather than cynicism, the worker is involved; rather than ineffectiveness, the worker is efficient. The authors differentiate between burnout and job engagement further by noting that burnout is more associated with the demands of a job, whereas engagement is more associated with available resources. If job

demands exceed the ability of the individual, then burnout is a more likely outcome. However, if the individual has an appropriate access and control over resources, job engagement is more likely (Masloch, et al., 2001, p. 416-418). These features of work engagement align well with the four components of creativity: memory, divergent thinking, convergent thinking, and flow. To extrapolate further, work engagement and flow point towards the same type of beneficial work environment that allows for higher quality work with more effective results.

Masloch and colleagues have developed a framework, called the Masloch Burnout Inventory, or MBI, which is intended to help understand burnout in different industries. This is one of the most popular frameworks throughout burnout literature and will therefore be used as the main informant for how this paper understands burnout in the creative occupation context. The MBI originally started in the health and service industries but has since been adapted into a General Survey that does not cater as directly to a certain industry. (Masloch, et al., 2001, p. 401).

Effects of Burnout:

Through the MBI survey data, Masloch and colleagues were able to identify the effects that burnout has on job performance. It includes the following: withdrawal, turnover, absenteeism, intention to leave job, lower productivity and effectiveness, decreased job satisfaction or decreased commitment to organization, and negative impacts on colleagues. Particular to an individual's health, burnout can also be predictive of stress-related outcomes, it can cause mental dysfunction, and there has been a parallel between burnout and substance abuse. The authors noted that those who are mentally healthier may be able to handle burnout better than those who are less healthy (Masloch, et al., 2001, p. 406). To reiterate what was

stated before, burnout and flow appear to be antithetical. Flow yields higher engagement, higher productivity, and greater pleasure whereas burnout shows withdrawal, ineffectiveness, and at its worst, negative health effects. Properly recognizing that creativity is a tool to address burnout could be a huge step for how organizations structure themselves and how we as a society prepare for future generations.

To investigate the relationship between creative occupations and burnout, precipitating factors will need to be identified. Masloch and colleagues identify a series of groups in which detailed antecedents can be laid out. First, are situational job factors that largely relate to the demands that a job puts on an individual. They found that large workload and time pressure are the most strongly and consistently associated with burnout. Furthermore, conflicts of interest or ambiguity in the tasks and expectations contribute greatly. Similarly, lack of social support within the organization, lack of feedback on work, lack of participation in decision making, and overall lack of autonomy are also shown to be contributing factors. This can also be seen through a sort of social isolation in which an individual is not around like-minded individuals. This speaks to the literature surrounding agglomerations. The latter antecedents have weaker relationships to burnout as compared to the quantitative and qualitative job demands.

Though situational factors were shown to have the greatest relationship with burnout, Masloch and colleagues also identified other antecedents that provide more depth to our understand. They found that unsatisfactory person-to-person interactions, breaking of the psychological contract, and certain individual and demographic factors also contribute to burnout but at lesser degrees and with less clarity. A full list of all precipitating factors can be found in Table 2 of the appendix.

The authors also identified six areas of work that can either match with an individual or be mismatched, with the mismatch leading to higher probability of experiencing burnout. These six account for the organizational antecedents: 1) workload, related to exhaustion. 2) Inefficient control that affects the efficiency of work. 3) Reward structures. 4) Isolation or chronic conflict. 5) Inequity or unfair circumstances in the workplace. 6) Ethical or moral values mismatch.

Link Between Creative Occupations and Burnout

There is a sparse body of research that connects creativity and burnout. Schaufeli et al. (1996) found there was a negative relationship between burnout and creativity. This study was based on tests such as the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking which looks at divergent thinking, problem-solving skills, and more. In addition, this study portrayed creativity as leisure activities that were distinct from work. For example, creative endeavors such as painting or writing are used as tools for healing or coping with stressful environments (Ornestein, 2006). However, there are very few studies that look at creativity as work. This leads me to question what happens when the nature of one's work is inherently creative. Do the demands of the job and limitations of the workplace nullify the positive benefits one gets from creative activities? Can the creative worker depend on creativity outside of their occupation in the same way that a non-creative worker can?

Creative work looks vastly different from occupation to occupation, however, all of them share a common motivation: to create something novel and of value. The very feature that makes these occupations distinct is also the reason why they are so challenging to study. It will be very difficult to prescribe a one-size-fits-all guide to how individual creative occupations can address and avoid burnout in their respective environments. Due to the lack of empirical evidence around

creative work and burnout, there are severe limitations to what can be discovered. For this reason, I will be looking at what can be observed and changed in response to burnout: work environments. The following section serves to identify these areas and how creative workers could be more or less inclined to experience burnout.

Work Environment

Organization Size

The size of an organization matters to the experience of the employee. Some organizations may have more resources than others based on their goals. Again, because of the breadth of industries and organizations included in the creative economy it will be important to address each organization respective to their size in order to understand their goals and values. Small business are underrepresented in the literature so further research should be done in this area, however, there are promising results on their significance in the creative economy. One study from 2001 noted that many disadvantaged or minority groups were more represented and supported by small businesses (MacDermid, et al., 2001). Furthermore, this study found that small organizations had more favorable working conditions, work environments that were supportive, better value and lifestyle fit, loyalty, lower work-family tension, and lower rates of burnout (MacDermid, et al., 2001). Larger organizations, however, were more favorable when it came to compensation and security, benefits, and showed that workers had more education (MacDermid, et al., 2001). More updated statistics show that small businesses make up 49.2 percent of private-sector employment as of 2010.

Different organization sizes offer different conditions that might fit an employee's values, goals, and personality more. For this reason, it is not fair to claim that one size is better than the

other. Burnout may be brought about by lack of structure and resources in a small organization, or it could be caused by a failing feedback system in a larger one. Both are susceptible to burnout, and again, should be understood based on size.

Management Styles

One study differentiated management styles into three levels: innovativeness, individualism, and increased centralized control (Härenstam, 2005). Innovativeness saw the best results for work environment as it provided stimulating tasks, learning opportunities, appropriate amounts of control from management while allowing for autonomy. Overall, the innovative management style saw the best work environment and was especially present in the high tech and knowledge-based organizations. The second level of management, individualism, saw mixed results. This type yielded relatively good learning opportunities, control, and motivation as well as having healthier environments for employees. However, this also saw that higher demands were put on employees. The third type of management saw the poorest working conditions. Increased centralized control came in the form of remote control and results measurement, meaning decisions and work assessments were happening at greater distances to where the work was actually taking place. The tasks were routine, employees had less autonomy and control, and fewer opportunities to learn. (Härenstam, 2005).

Though the above styles are not unanimous throughout the literature, they illustrate three different archetypes of styles and possible effects it could have on employees. The primary feature of burnout that can be triggered by ineffective or inappropriate management is cynicism. If the psychological contract between employee and manager are broken, burnout is more likely to happen. Miscommunication of expectations, little autonomy, or lack of proper feedback can be

detrimental to any of employee, but it may especially hinder one's creative process. Creativity, as previously stated, works well in free environments where individuals have the ability to make choices without fear of repercussion. That is not to say that creativity should exist in a vacuum. Management has a significant role in establishing expectations and boundaries of the workplace, but it comes down to the ability to communicate those boundaries in a respectful and effective way.

Workplace Culture

To emulate some of Florida's three T's at a micro scale, a workplace must foster a culture of open-mindedness and flexibility. Management style and organization type can play a large role in the determination of workplace culture, but an organization's values are also a major player. Masloch noted six areas of potential mismatches between the employee and the employer. Of those six inefficient control, reward structures, conflict management styles, inequality, and ethics can be brought up under the workplace culture category. The culture is less about the work, but how the work is completed and under what circumstances. If there is a proper alignment with workplace culture, theoretically an employee would feel engaged and better able to tap into their creative abilities. However, if there are mismatches relating to culture, this can contribute to all three of the burnout characteristics. I would argue that this is the area that will truly determine if an organization will suffer from burnout, therefore, workplace leaders should take the time to see if the organization's institutions and expression of beliefs are helping or hindering their employees (Härenstam, 2005).

Employment Type

The creative economy cannot be understood without self-employed individuals. In fact, occupations related to arts and culture have seen a greater amount of self-employed or non-

traditional workers as compared to non-arts and culture creative occupations. This usually comes in the form of freelance, gig-oriented work that differs from traditional wage and salary occupations. The 2020 Otis Report, which details the creative economy for the state of California, noted that 41.6% of their arts and culture related occupations were self-employed (2020 Otis Report on the Creative Economy, 2020). Though, California's creative economy is skewed by the mecca that is Los Angeles, the point still remains. Creative occupations cannot be understood without understanding self-employed and nontraditional working conditions.

One of the challenges that arises with the nature of self-employed or nontraditional work is that it is significantly more nebulous than traditional employment opportunities. This means there is not as much consistency in measurement. Similarly, individuals in these types of working conditions may have multiple sources of income and choose to report their work in alternative ways. All of this to say that we may not have completely accurate reporting on the number of people who are self-employed or working in nontraditional settings. A paper from the National Endowment for the Arts noted that artists occupations were three times more likely to be self-employed than the rest of the U.S. workforce as of 2010 (National Endowment for the Arts, 2011).

Self-employment requires quite a bit of self-starting, entrepreneurship, and perseverance because these roles often have very little support structures to help when challenges arise (Bujacz, et al., 2019; Warr, 2018). This differs from any traditional work setting. The key feature of burnout that could be brought about in self-employed and non-traditional work settings is that of exhaustion and ineffectiveness. Without the support of others or safety nets, there may be excessive amounts of pressure put on an individual to complete their work well, complete it

efficiently, and still maintain their own physical and financial stability. This is the area of most risk for incurring burnout.

Despite this, self-employed individuals, especially within the arts and culture occupations have found that their work is very liberating and rewarding (Härenstam, 2005). There is a tradeoff between the support of a formal organization and flexibility of working on one's own terms. It appears that most arts and culture workers fall on the latter end of the scale. However, we are also running into the measurement problem again. The NEA study only looked at individuals with arts and culture occupations as their primary source of income. This study also notes that as of 2010 there were over 260,000 individuals with arts and culture occupations as their secondary job. This discrepancy makes it difficult to fully understand and measure how all arts and culture individuals are contributing to economic development. (National Endowment for the Arts, 2011).

Conclusion and Future Research

The popularity that creativity, as a form of human capital, has received in the past few decades is an important marker for the direction of urban development. The conversation around creativity is no longer sequestered to the arts, rather, we are noticing its significance in all parts of life, both in the individual and in the workforce. It is the building block for innovation and this innovation opens the door for communities to flourish. Creative occupations can be indicators of rich and robust local economies. They represent cultural capital in geographic regions, which can attract highly skilled workers who often want to be in lively and open-minded places. With an increase in highly skilled workers can come an increase in financial capital. These highly skilled creatives and their neighbors then participate in the local economy. With proper fostering and

direction from a local government, this invested money can help to fund many urban development initiatives that can even out socioeconomic inequalities.

Creativity is deeply connected to the idea of human flourishing. When we think of wellness for our fellow humans, we want them to be happy, to enjoy what they do, and for them to share their enjoyment with others. Creative occupations are a formalized way of doing this. Creative occupations are focused on creating something new. This can sometimes come with all the stigma of consumerist hedonism, but it can also open the door for responsible stewardship. Innovation is based on change. Changing resources into the novel and valuable good or service that can contribute to other's lives. Creativity is is the key for this change to occur. It is obvious that the current state of the world is damaged. This can be seen in how we treat others, the earth, and ourselves but I believe that creativity can be the thing that pursuit deep and true healing.

Burnout has the potential to be very damaging to the workforce. Employees are showing increased levels of stress and anxiety and the feeling that they are unable to take the time they need to get rest. This a red flag that encourages us to critically examine the structure of our working environments. With the increased conversation around creative occupations and their potential economic impact, it is imperative to look at the relationship between creativity and burnout. There is a negative relationship but it is largely understudied, especially in the context of the modern work environment.

With all of this in mind, national and local government leaders, along with economists, artists, and community developers should shift their attention more towards the promising nature of creative occupations. Cities such as Seattle or Los Angeles are already starting to recognize the significance of their own creative economies. More cities should adopt these tactics to recognize the potentially untapped resources that are already located in their cities. Furthermore,

I suggest that education programs be utilized to equip future generations to practice expressing their creativity. This will prepare them not only for more adaptability in their future job search, but it can equip them to pursue healthy work and work environments.

As stated before, the relationship between creativity and burnout is rich with research opportunities. I suggest more work be done on defining creativity through an interdisciplinary lens. This will help to establish a universal language that could provide a firm foundation for more specific research on how creativity affects individuals and the workforce. Furthermore, I suggest more investigation of how creativity is played out in creative occupations. It is not realistic to examine each occupation at a macro level so instead, it would be beneficial to observe and survey just a few occupations at a time. This would begin to answer the question of how impactful creativity is on wellbeing in the work setting.

Works Cited

2020 Otis Report on the Creative Economy. (2020). https://www.otis.edu/creative-economy/2020

Bilder, R.M., & Knudsen, K.S. (2014). Creative cognition and systems biology on the edge of chaos. Frontiers in Psychology: Psychopathology, Opinion Article, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01104; PMID: 25324809 http://journal. frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01104/full

Brookings, Florida, R., & Seman, M. (2020, August). Lost art: Measuring COVID-19's devastating impact on America's creative economy. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/20200810_Brookingsmetro_Covid19-and-creative-economy_Final.pdf

Bujacz, A., Eib, C., & Toivanen, S. (2019). Not all are equal: A latent profile analysis of well-being among the self-employed. Journal of Happiness Studies: An Interdisciplinary Forum on Subjective Well-Being. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-019-00147-1

Council, F. C. (2019, January 22). 15 Soft Skills You Need To Succeed When Entering The Workforce. Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2019/01/22/15-soft-skills-you-need-to-succeed-when-entering-the-workforce/?sh=2d45f88410ae

Crawford-Gallagher, John, et al. "There's Something About Seattle: 2019 Creative Economy Report ." City of Seattle, 2019.

Creative Vitality Suite. Creative Economy. https://cvsuite.org/resources/creative-economy/#what%20is

Definition of human capital | Dictionary.com. (n.d.). Www.Dictionary.Com. https://www.dictionary.com/browse/human-capital

Falck, O., Fritsch, M., Heblich, S., & Otto, A. (2018). Music in the Air: Estimating the Social Return to Cultural Amenities. Journal of Cultural Economics, 42(3), 365–391. Retrieved from http://ezproxy.spu.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip&db=eoh&AN=1722199&site=ehost-live

Faggian, A., Partridge, M., & Malecki, E. J. (2017). Creating an Environment for Economic Growth: Creativity, Entrepreneurship or Human Capital? International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 41(6), 997–1009.

Florida, R. (2014). The Creative Class and Economic Development. Economic Development Quarterly, 28(3), 196–205. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891242414541693

Florida, R., The Rise of the Creative Class: Revisited. Basic Books, 2019.

Glaeser E. (2005) 'Review of Richard Florida's The Rise of the Creative Class', Regional Science and Urban Economics 35, 593–596.

Härenstam, A. (2005). Different development trends in working life and increasing occupational stress require new work environment strategies. Work: Journal of Prevention, Assessment & Rehabilitation, 24(3), 261–277.

How Creativity Works in the Brain Insights from a Santa Fe Institute Working Group, Cosponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts. (2015, July). National Endowment of the Arts. https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/how-creativity-works-in-the-brain-report.pdf

Lipman, V. (2018, June 1). Why America Has Become 'The No-Vacation Nation'. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/victorlipman/2018/05/21/why-america-has-become-the-no-vacation-nation/#79c575594c53

Marrocu, E., & Paci, R. (2012). Education or Creativity: What Matters Most for Economic Performance? Economic Geography, 88(4), 369–401.

Mathews, Vanessa. “Aestheticizing Space: Art, Gentrification and the City.” Geography Compass, vol. 4, no. 6, 2010, pp. 660–75. Crossref, doi:10.1111/j.1749-8198.2010.00331.x.

Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job Burnout. Annual Review of Psychology, 52(1), 397–422. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.397

Mcgranahan, D., & Wojan, T. (2007). Recasting the Creative Class to Examine Growth Processes in Rural and Urban Counties. Regional Studies, 41(2), 197–216. https://doi.org/10.1080/00343400600928285

Moch Islas, Aline, et al. City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, 2019, Assessing the Creative Economy of Seattle through a Race & Equity Lens, www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Arts/Downloads/Reports/Creative%20Economy%20-%20Final%20Report%20-%20June%202019.pdf.

National Endowment for the Arts, “Artists and Arts Workers in the United States: Findings from the American Community Survey (2005-2009) and the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (2010),” NEA Research Note #105, October 2011, p12, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/105.pdf.

Ornstein, A. (2006). Artistic creativity and the healing process. Psychoanalytic Inquiry, 26(3), 386-406. Retrieved March 24, 2008, from Academic Search Complete database.

Powell, W. W., & Snellman, K. (2004). The Knowledge Economy. Annual Review of Sociology, 30(1), 199–220. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.soc.29.010202.100037

Psychological Contract | Factsheets. (n.d.). CIPD. https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/relations/employees/psychological-factsheet

Schulz, R., Greenley, J., & Brown, R. (1995). Organization, Management, and Client Effects on Staff Burnout. Journal of Health and Social Behavior, 36(4), 333-345. doi:10.2307/2137323

Schwager, E. (2001). Listening with the creative ear. Psychoanalytic Review, 88(5), 597-652. Retrieved May 11, 2008, from Academic Search Complete database.

Soft Skills: Definitions and Examples. (2021, March 3). Indeed Career Guide. https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/soft-skills

U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS. (2020, January). Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey CPS CPS Program Links. https://www.bls.gov/cps/aa2019/cpsaat11.htm

Warr, P. (2018). Self-employment, personal values, and varieties of happiness–unhappiness. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 23(3), 388–401. https://doi.org/10.1037/ocp0000095

Workplace Stress Continues to Mount. (2018, November 14). Retrieved from https://www.kornferry.com/insights/articles/workplace-stress-motivation

Appendix A: Tables

Table 1: Creative Occupations

Occupation Group	Specific Occupations
Management	Top executives
	Advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and sales managers
	Financial Managers
	Operations specialties managers, excluding financial managers
Business and financial operations	Accountants and auditors
Architecture and engineering	Architects, surveyors, and cartographers
	Engineers
	Drafters, engineering, and mapping technicians
Life, physical, and social science	Life and physical scientists
	Social scientists and related workers
Legal	Lawyers
Education, training, and library	Post-secondary teachers
	Librarians, curators, and archivists
High-end sales (component of sale occupations)	Sales representatives, services, wholesale and manufacturing
	Other sales and related occupations, including supervisors
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	

Table 2: Antecedents to Burnout (Masloch et al.)

Situational	Occupational	Organizational	Individual (Demographic)	Individual (Personality)
High demands	Unsatisfactory person-to-person interactions	Psychological contract broken	30-40 year olds	Low hardiness
Lack of support			Single	External locus of control
Lack of feedback			Highly educated	Passive or defensive

Situational	Occupational	Organizational	Individual (Demographic)	Individual (Personality)
Few decision making opportunities				Low self-esteem
Lack of autonomy				Neutoricism
				Type-A
				Feeling type

Table 3: Areas of Mismatch Types (Masloch et al.)

Workload
Inefficient control
Reward structures
Isolation or chronic conflict
Inequality or unfair circumstances
Ethics or moral

Appendix B: Symposium Script

Creativity is an intrinsic part of the human life, however, it is one of the most challenging concepts to be understood. Despite the lack of certainty, many academics have landed on creativity being the process of producing something novel and of value. This has many important implications for the individual who creates, but also for a whole economy. It can be an instrument of deep healing and liberation that, in my opinion, is akin to the divine.

Creativity is a powerful tool that has been gaining increasing popularity in the world of economics. It is a highly sought after feature in employees and has the ability to produce goods and services that can influence the values of a whole nation. Creativity's significance is drawing the eyes of many academics, experts, and thought leaders around the world. In my project, I am continuing this attention by looking at creative occupations, their economic significance, and how sustainable these occupations are for the creative employees. I will be particularly looking at burnout and its precipitating factors as a way to understand the wellness of the creative workforce.

Creative occupations are jobs that use creativity as the main driver of their work. This can come in the form of jobs one would traditionally associate with creativity, such as artists, actors, writers, and more. However, for the purpose of my project, I am expanding the definition of creative workers to include non-traditional folks such as engineers, lawyers, top executives, and more. I am not separating occupations by industry, rather on the creative quality of their work, therefore these non-traditional creative occupations need to be included to get the full picture.

There is a burgeoning body of literature supporting the claim that creative occupations have deeply important implications on urban economic development. Though there are many nuanced effects, I can pinpoint them to two areas. First are the knowledge agglomerations. Creative occupations are made up of highly skilled workers who are well-trained in the respective areas they work in. Research has shown that these highly skilled workers like to be around others at their same caliber, meaning if there are groupings of certain highly skilled folks, it is likely for others to move to those areas as well. This movement of highly skilled workers represents a move of capital into these communities, making them

incredibly valuable for cities who want to tap into these resources. These groupings of highly skilled workers are able to form agglomerations where ideas and values can be shared more efficiently and organically. An example of this is the tech hub in Silicon Valley in California. The second way creative occupations contribute to urban development relates to amenities. Highly skilled workers want to be in environments where people are open-minded, flexible, and non-judgmental. Creative workers, especially those who may not be traditionally educated, play a huge role in creating these environments. Areas with vibrant art and music scenes are good indications of quality of life and accepting life-styles. There is an extensive body of literature to support that highly skilled workers prefer to be high-amenity areas more so than low-amenity areas. The presence of these creative occupations and the subsequent agglomerations and amenities, if fostered properly, can lead to job growth, increased income, and potential for investment in vulnerable communities.

With all of that in mind, it is fair to say that creative occupations have great potential to bring a lot of good to local and global economies. However, there are still a lot of unknowns relating to what life is like within the creative occupation. It is important to recognize the context that this project is arising in: Americans have previously had a negative relationship with work. An article by Deloitte found that 91% of professionals felt unmanageable stress in their work environment. Similarly, a study by Harvard found that 47% of employees used less than their allotted vacation time. These are symptoms of a larger the problem or burnout. The same study from Deloitte noted that 77% of respondents reported experiencing burnout from their job. That is an extreme statistics that should be pointing us to further investigate what is going on.

Christina Masloch has been widely cited for her definition of burnout that notes three distinct features: exhaustion, cynicism, and ineffectiveness. Furthermore, some of the precipitating factors of burnout include the following: high demands, lack of support and feedback, lack of autonomy, miscommunicated expectations, and more. There are also six areas of potential mismatch that can occur between an employee and the organization they work for. These include workload, inefficient control, reward structures, isolation or chronic conflict, inequality, or ethics and morals. If an employee does not

agree with the way the employer handles any of the above areas, there is a higher likelihood for burnout. With the concerning burnout statistics that I listed earlier, this should be a wake up call for organizations to look critically at the environments they are creating for their employees.

In my project, I have differentiated burnout potentials into two areas. First, the nature of work and second, the structure and values of an organization. All creative occupations share their creativity, though the process and output may look different. For example, the lawyer is creating something novel and of value just as the designer is. However, the major difference lies in the environments they are working out of.

As stated before, creativity has many benefits that can aid the creative worker in maintaining wellness in their work environment. Psychologists have been able to pinpoint a state called flow that seems to suspend the self while in the process of creating. The individual is focused, more productive, and able to throw out expectations in order to simply create. This has shown many positive emotional responses. Not to mention a number of studies where artistic pursuits have helped those facing chronic illness cope and even heal from their ailments. The literature suggests that there is a negative relationship between creativity and burnout but it is largely understudied. Specifically, it lack qualitative evidence especially in the context of the modern work environment. Because these thoughts are only theoretical at the moment, we should refocus our attention to see how environments can best facilitate this “flow” state.

Organization structure and values will make or break an employee’s experience. This is true across any industry or occupation. The organization size, management type, and work-life balance have been seen to have major effects on the work environment, and therefore, the wellness of the worker.

As a caveat, the breadth of occupations included in my project does challenge the ability to make universal judgements or prescriptions. It is important to look at each occupation and organization at an individual level. I recommend future research be pointed in this direction to create surveys and models to better understand more of this relationship between the creative worker and the environment they exist within. Though burnout has extensive research to back it up, there is very little to offer on how burnout plays out in creative occupations. This gap in the literature necessitates more findings and should guide

future leaders to investigate further. I argue that creativity is able to make those who work in creative occupations more resilient to burnout, and therefore more sustainable.

The overarching question that is driving this question is as follows: what is good? How can we pursue a virtuous, moral life that leads to the wellness of all those participating? My project addresses wellness at a very practical level which has the potential to isolate itself from the more abstract concepts of morality. I have needed to remind myself that my project, especially in relation to my colleagues's projects, is just a different approach to the meaning of flourishing. Whether that is examining the self, the economy, or the institutions we exist in as a whole, we are all pushing towards flourishing.

In the case of my project, I would argue that there is something deeply divine about the nature of creativity and work. This has roots in the creation story as detailed in Genesis. We are products of a creation, made by a Creator, with the intent to use the resources available to create more. We were given dominion with a responsibility to steward these resources well. This idea of stewardship is essentially an economic concept informed by ethics. Again, we can see in the creation story that we were made in the image of God. However, when humanity pushed past the boundaries set up by God, pushed past the limits of ethics, work became "painful toil". My project confronts a modern version of the fall. Work, and creative work at that, is an extension of God's will for humanity. However, the striking statistics around burnout show that "the sweat from our brows" are taking its toll.

Burnout represents an antithesis to creativity, and therefore an antithesis to ethical work. If ignored, burnout can leave intense physical, emotional, and spiritual damages that take us further away from true flourishing. For this reason, our society needs to reevaluate what drives our economy. Is it acquisition and exploitation? Or is it wellness and remembrance that we are made in the image of the true Creator. We need to reground ourselves in an understanding of boundaries and limitations. We cannot and should not consume all things, even if we can. The workaholic mindset must go and be replaced with sustainable and rewarding work that can be seen through creative occupations.

I have many lingering question as a result of my project and, to be frank, my process for investigating this relationship has been a frustrating one. I have previously had an understanding of

research that led me to think in a sort of binary: right or wrong, understood or not understood. It reflected my own need to know something exhaustively and invalidate what I know in part. This, I've come to find, is unrealistic and cheapens the process of understanding. In creativity, the output is of course important, but in many circumstances, the process holds quite a bit of significance as well. As I researched I continued to find gap after gap in the literature. One study would address a very niche question that partly contributed to my own research but nothing ever fully answered my question.

This limitation taught me about the humility of inquiry. I thought that perhaps I wasn't researching well enough. I felt that I was not contributing to academia in the way I should be, but in hindsight I realize that this is simply the process. One has to come to the end of their understanding, struggle in the mystery, recognize the limitations, then make a choice as to what to do next.

This research and synthesis, over and over again, is just one expression of creativity. Unbeknownst to me, I had become a sort of case study for myself. There was this merger of the subject and the observer which has helped me to ask more pointed questions that I wouldn't have otherwise been able to access. Now looking back at all the work that I have done, I feel that the questions I asked that are still unanswered are more powerful than the answers I did find. For example, a common question I kept coming back to is this: what if the work is creative in and of itself? What if the process of creating is what is causing burnout? In short, I don't know at this moment, nor does the academic world. I have come to the end of my understanding, I am struggling through the mystery with limitations recognized. Now I get to decide whether or not I want to pursue these questions further .

The work of inquiry is important for the individual and for all of humanity. My personal interest in creativity as a tool for economic development has opened my eyes to the promising real world implications it can have. I am able to see where city leaders, government officials, and other experts can continue their work in effective ways that pursue wellness for their constituents. There are opportunities for education, rehabilitation, and healing of our brothers and sisters. That is real human flourishing. I am also seeing a way that I can personally contribute to this flourishing! There is an invitation at hand for me

and my colleagues to grapple with the mystery of the world around us and to throw ourselves into the creative process of understanding.