Introduction: Reclaiming the Creative Imagination

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Authors' penultimate version

Abstract:

This introductory chapter has three main goals. First, it aims to provide relevant background on the state of philosophical research both concerning imagination and creativity. There is a particular focus on creative imagination as a way of using the imagination and on several key distinctions concerning creativity put forth in both the psychological and the philosophical literature. Second, it aims to provide some reflections on ways that imagination and creativity can be seen as connected; these reflections give the reader some guidance for the chapters, many of which take up these issues in more in detail. Third, it gives an overview of the chapters to follow: from general framing and history of imagination and creativity to imagination and creativity in mind and action, to artistic and societal domains, and finally to emerging lines of inquiry on imagination and creativity in philosophical research.

At the turn of the century, in a systematic discussion of imagination that has proved to be highly influential, philosophers Gregory Currie and Ian Ravenscroft (2002) distinguished two capacities often picked out by the word "imagination." First is *recreative imagination*, the imaginative capacity responsible for perspective-shifting, i.e., in putting ourselves in the position of someone else or in the position of our future, past, or counterfactual self. Second is *creative imagination*, the imaginative capacity that leads to the creation of something new and valuable. While granting that there are probably important connections between these two imaginative capacities, and more particularly, that the creative imagination of human beings is likely often underpinned by exercises of recreative imagination, Currie and Ravenscroft were nonetheless committed to a constitutive difference between them. In fact, they insist not only that recreative imagination fails to be a necessary condition for creative imagination but also that the former fails even to play a role in the definition of the latter. Drawing upon a passage in which Hume refers to imagination as "magical" and "inexplicable" (T 1.1.7) – a passage that they take to be a characterization of creative imagination – they express certainty that "the recreative imagination

is more amenable to description and analysis" (2002, 11). Thus, after a mere two pages of discussion, they decisively set creative imagination aside.

This lack of interest in creative imagination is both symptomatic of, and a contributor to, a tendency among philosophers to neglect or even dismiss creativity as a fruitful subject of philosophical inquiry. Its roots go back as far as Plato, who denied that human activity is at all responsible for poetic creativity; rather, it owes merely to divine inspiration by way of the muses.[1] With the rise of analytic philosophy in the early twentieth century, and behaviorist inclinations shifting focus away from inner processes, philosophers had little interest in exploring creative imagination (or, indeed, in exploring imagination in any of its forms). Matters were likewise among philosophers of art and aesthetics, who focused primarily on formalist and structuralist approaches rather than on the creation of art (for discussion, see Gaut and Livingston 2003, 3). Though work in philosophical aesthetics began to attend to imagination in the late twentieth century in the context of fiction, the discussion was dominated by how the reader should reconstruct fictional truth rather than on how works of fiction are created. More recently, in the opening decades of the 21st century, amidst an explosion of work on imagination across a wide array of philosophical subfields, an increased focus on the epistemic value of imagination has tended to shift philosophical discussion away from its creative uses. In thinking about how imagination can play a role in such activities as thought experimentation, mindreading, empathy, and decision-making, not much attention has been paid to how imagination can serve creative ends.

Nor has much attention been paid directly to creativity. Elliot Samuel Paul and Scott Barry Kaufman introduce their volume *The Philosophy of Creativity* (2014) with the following thoughts:

> There is little that shapes the human experience as profoundly and pervasively as creativity. Creativity drives progress in every human endeavor, from the arts to the sciences, business, and technology. We celebrate and honor people for their creativity, identifying eminent individuals, as well as entire cultures and societies, in terms of their creative achievements. Creativity is the vehicle of self-expression and part of what makes us who we are. One might therefore expect creativity to be a major topic in philosophy,

[1] For further discussion of Plato's view, see Chapter 4, "Historical Treatments of Creativity in the Western Tradition," this volume.

> especially since it raises such a wealth of interesting philosophical questions […] Curiously, it isn't. (3)

This situation in philosophy is yet all the more surprising in light of the fact that the second half of the 20th century witnessed an explosion of empirical work on the topic of creativity. Though as of the middle of the century, as J.P. Guilford noted in his presidential address to the American Psychological Association, creativity was "an area in which psychologists generally … have feared to tread" (Guilford 1950), the situation soon changed – owing, in large part, to Guilford's own efforts in this regard.[2] Indeed there are now a number of journals focused specifically on empirical research on creativity, from *The Journal of Creative Behavior* (founded in 1967) to the Journal of Creativity (founded in 1990 under the name *The International Journal of Creativity and Problem Solving*) to the *Creativity Research Journal* (founded in 1998).

Over the course of the last decade, however, there is some evidence that the philosophical tide may have started to turn. As evidenced by the publication of several substantive edited collections on the topic, including the one from which we just quoted (Paul and Kaufman 2014; see also Gaut and Kieran 2018 and the earlier Gaut and Livingston 2003), some philosophers have recently begun to engage seriously with issues surrounding creativity – though it's still fair to say that the topic remains relatively underexplored.[3] The connections between imagination and creativity also remain underexplored – though here too the tide may have started to turn (see, e.g., Gaut 2003; Beaney 2005; Stokes 2014; 2016; Kind 2022; Arcangeli 2022; Langkau forthcoming).

Moreover, further exploration of both imagination and creativity looks to be especially welcome in light of pressing societal crises concerning matters such as the environment, animal rights, global health, technological threats, and political polarization. It's increasingly clear that to make any progress on these crises we will need to develop new ways of seeing and doing things; any such progress, that is, will require both imagination and creativity. Moreover, insofar as various lines of research in applied areas of philosophy are inspired at least in part by these

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[2] As noted by Jonathan Plucker (2001) in a collection aimed at commemorating the 50th anniversary of Guilford's APA address, Guilford was largely responsible for popularizing the psychological study of creativity and giving it its focus.

[3] For example, as Matteo Ravasio discusses in Chapter 19, "Imagination, Creativity, and Music," the philosophical treatment of creativity in music "has not been as common or as systematic" as the philosophical treatment of imagination in music.

pressing global concerns, theoretical philosophical work on imagination and creativity has the potential to pay great dividends for applied philosophical work as well.

Thus, as philosophy of imagination has taken off and come into its own, and as philosophers start to attend more to creativity, the time seems right for a sustained and detailed investigation of creative imagination – or, more generally, of issues at the intersection of creativity and imagination. It is precisely such an investigation that the 37 chapters of this book aim to undertake.

We have organized this volume into five parts. We open in Part I with nine chapters that provide some framing and history on the philosophical study of imagination and creativity, along with an overview of the empirical literature as well. Part II includes eight chapters that explore imagination and creativity as they manifest in, and in turn shape, the individual subject – from considerations to their role in cognition and agency to considerations about how they play a role in identity-formation, especially with regard to gender and race. The eight chapters of Part III survey the role of imagination and creativity across a wide variety of artistic domains, from the visual and performing arts to literature and film. Part IV turns from the arts to other domains, with seven chapters focusing on the role of imagination and creativity in realms such as science, religion, and the law. Finally, in the five chapters of Part V, we expand the way we've been thinking about the subjecthood of imagination and creativity, zooming in to some specific classes of subjects and zooming out to consider imagination and creativity in group form.

Below we will discuss these chapters in more detail. Before doing so, however, we will use the bulk of this introduction to accomplish two aims. First, we will provide some important background on the state of philosophical research into imagination and creativity. In doing so, we have had to be selective; we aim not only to give a sense of the big picture, but also to elucidate relevant terminology and introduce readers to several common taxonomies of imagination and creativity found in the literature (for more comprehensive overviews, see Liao and Gendler 2020; Paul and Stokes 2024; Kind 2022). Second, we will provide some opening reflections on ways that imagination and creativity are connected – with the hope that readers will then be well positioned to think further about these connections when reading the chapters that follow.

1. Imagination

In their entry on imagination in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Shen-yi Liao and Tamar Gendler open with the following characterization:

> *To imagine* is to represent without aiming at things as they actually, presently, and subjectively are. One can use imagination to represent possibilities other than the actual, to represent times other than the present, and to represent perspectives other than one's own. Unlike perceiving and believing, imagining something does not require one to consider that something to be the case. Unlike desiring or anticipating, imagining something does not require one to wish or expect that something to be the case. (Liao and Gendler 2020)

Some examples will help to elucidate this characterization. Suppose you're in a hurry to catch a flight and you're waiting in a long line at airport security. As the minutes tick by, you might imagine what would have happened if you had opted for the right-hand lane rather than the left-hand one. You might also imagine running to the gate once you finally do make it through the security line. You might imagine what the TSA agent is feeling as they deal with a confused and combative passenger. And finally, as you impatiently wait for your backpack to emerge from the Xray baggage scanner, you might imagine its having been pulled aside for closer inspection. The first three of these imaginings represent the various aims that Liao and Gendler differentiate: in the first, you aim at a *possibility* different from the one you're actually experiencing, in the second you aim at a *time* different from the one you're presently experiencing, and in the third you aim at an *experiential perspective* different from the one you're subjectively experiencing. The fourth imagining exemplifies how imagination departs from other kinds of mental states like perception, belief, and desire: Even absent any reason to think that your backpack has been singled out, and even though you don't wish or expect that it has been, you can still imagine this scenario.

Types of imagination

Further consideration of this fourth imagining will help reveal some other key points about imagining that are common in philosophical discussion. One natural way to characterize this imaginative exercise is as the imaginative consideration of the content *that the backpack has been pulled aside.* Imaginings of this form are often referred to as *propositional imaginings* – so called because the content of the imagining is propositional in form, the same kind of content to

which you might take a different kind of attitude, e.g., you might believe or fear that your bag has been pulled aside.

But maybe when engaging in the imaginative exercise, you don't consider any propositional content; perhaps you just picture the bag itself. You might, for example, form a mental image of it on the TSA agent's table. This kind of imagining is often referred to as *imagistic imagining*. Note also that imagistic imagining need not be restricted to *visual* mental imagery. As your imaginative exercise unfolds, you might go on to auditorily imagine the clanging alarm of the Xray scanner or olfactorily imagine the putrid smell of the holding cell where they take people who have been found with illegal substances in their backpacks. Though propositional imagining and imagistic imagining are distinct forms of imagining, note that propositional imagining too can involve imagery.[4] Imaginatively considering the content *that the bag is pulled aside* might very well involve imagery of the bag being pulled aside. What makes this imagining classified as an instance of (so-called) propositional imagining rather than (so-called) imagistic imagining is its propositional form and not the absence of imagery.
In addition to distinguishing imagistic and propositional imagining from one another, the literature often introduces a third kind of imagining called *experiential imagining*. Were you to imagine how it would feel to have your bag singled out for additional screening – imagining the feelings of dread and worry – your imagining would be experiential in nature. Insofar as we can stretch the notion of imagery to include experiential presentations as an extended kind of imagery, however, one might naturally classify experiential imagining as a special type of imagistic imagining.[5]

Does this exhaust the types of imagining there are? Having drawn a distinction between what he calls imagistic imagining and attitudinal imagining (the latter of which seems to map on to what we've called *propositional* imagining), Neil Van Leeuwen (2013) points to a third type of imagining that he calls *constructive imagining*. As Van Leeuwen describes it, when one engages in constructive imagination one "is engaged in a temporally-extended constructive process of assembling mental representations" (2013, 221). Since temporally-extended constructive

[4] Indeed, one of us believes that it must involve imagery; see (Kind 2001).
[5] Alternatively, one might group imagistic and experiential imagining together under a different name; Kind (2022) uses *sensory imagination* to refer to both these types of imagining. A different alternative uses the term "experiential imagination" to pick out a complex kind of imagining that may well contain imagery but is typically multi-modal, emotional, and embodied (e.g., Langkau 2021).

imaginative processes are plausibly implicated in creativity, many of the contributors to this volume invoke constructive imagination in their discussions.

Exactly how constructive imagining should be understood, however, needs further discussion. Given that both imagistic and propositional imagining can themselves be temporally extended, one might naturally wonder whether constructive imagining simply reduces to these other forms. Importantly, Van Leeuwen doesn't think that this is the case. Consider his example:

> A detective, for example, may engage in a constructive imaginative process to figure out how a crime was committed, where known pieces of evidence constrain her imagining. But she may still believe the output of this constructive imagining, say, the content that the murder was committed with the garden tool. (2013, 221)

Whether this is enough to establish that constructive imagining is a distinct *kind* of imagining might be questioned. Note that the constructive process Van Leeuwen has in mind does seem to operate with propositional imaginings and imagistic imaginings – for example, the detective might imagistically imagine the dead body and propositionally imagine that the garden tool was stored in the shed prior to the murder. Moreover, as part of the constructive process, the detective might propositionally imagine a series of different possible murder weapons – perhaps she first propositionally imagines that the murder was committed with a golf club, next that it was committed with the garden tool, and next that it was committed with a frying pan – and perhaps it's only having tried out all three of these scenarios in imagination that she concludes (i.e., believes) that the garden tool was the murder weapon. If this is how the constructive process unfolds, we seem to have reason not to treat it as a new or different kind of imagination over and above propositional and imagistic imagination but rather as a particular way of *using* these kinds of imagination. Having raised this possibility, however, we won't attempt to adjudicate this matter here.

Recreative vs. Creative Imagination

Another question now arises: How does the taxonomy just discussed connect to the taxonomy we encountered above, namely, the one between creative and recreative imagination developed by Currie and Ravenscroft (2002)? In our view, the best way to understand the relationship between them is to see them as cross-cutting one another. It seems plausible that creative imagination might proceed by way of any (or all) of these kinds of imaginings, and

likewise for recreative imagination. To see this latter point, however, we need to attend more closely to what Currie and Ravenscroft mean by creative and recreative imagination. Let's take them in reverse order.

As noted earlier, recreative imagination is the imaginative capacity responsible for perspective-shifting. But there are lots of different ways to shift perspectives. This might be a perceptual shift; you shift your perceptual perspective by way of imagistic imagining, as when you imagine your backpack on the TSA agent's table. You don't actually see your backpack there, but you imaginatively see it there. The perspective shift might instead be a cognitive one. You shift your cognitive perspective by way of propositional imagining, as when you imagine that your backpack has been pulled aside. You don't actually believe your backpack has been pulled aside, but you imaginatively believe it there. We might think of propositional imagination as a way of imaginatively "trying on" different beliefs – beliefs other than the ones that we actually hold.

Currie and Ravenscroft also claim that we can imaginatively try on attitudes other than belief as well (though for a contrasting view, see Kind (2011), Spaulding (2015)). In addition to using imagination to make a cognitive shift, we might use it to make a conative shift, i.e., to imaginatively try on desires that we don't actually have. In an influential discussion, Tyler Doggett and Andy Egan (2007) suggest that we think of this kind of conative shift as a case of wanting what we don't want. As an illustration of this, they point to conative states we have in connection with fiction and film, as when viewers of *The Sopranos* root for Tony to elude police capture, even though they don't really want mob bosses to get off scot-free. Though this isn't something that the viewers desire, Doggett and Egan take it to be something they *imaginatively desire* – or i-desire, for short. Extending this line of thought would lead us to i-emotions and other i-states as well, with such states perhaps mapping onto what we earlier referred to as experiential imagination. Thus, as Currie and Ravenscroft define it, recreative imagination:

> involves the capacity to have, and in good measure to control the having of, states that are not perceptions or beliefs or decisions or experiences of movements of one's body, but which are in various ways like those states – like them in ways that enable the states possessed through imagination to mimic and, relative to certain purposes, to substitute for perceptions, beliefs, and experiences of movements. (2002, 11)

Let's now return to creative imagination, about which (as noted earlier) they have much less to say. In their view, the capacity for creative imagination manifests "when someone puts together ideas in a way that defies expectation or convention: the kind of imaginative 'leap' that leads to the creation of something valuable in art, science, or practical life" (2002, 9). As should be clear, this "leap" might come about by way of either propositional or imagistic imagining, or by the two in combination. Thus, as suggested above, we can now see why the distinction between propositional imagination and imagistic imagination crosscuts the distinction between creative and recreative imagination.

We are also now positioned to make an important clarification about this latter distinction. Since it seems possible for individuals to engage in recreative imaginings towards creative ends and in ways that make the relevant sort of imaginative leap, it looks as if recreative imagination and creative imagination overlap at least in part. And Currie and Ravenscroft are indeed explicit about this point; as they suggest, the capacity for creative imagining is likely underlain, at least in humans, by the capacity for recreative imagining. As they also suggest, however, humans can likely manifest creative imagination "without the support of perspective-taking," i.e., without utilizing recreative imagination (2002, 9).

With this characterization of creative imagination before us, it seems that we have reason for an assessment similar to the one we considered earlier about constructive imagination: Creative imagination does not appear to be a distinct kind of imagination, but rather a use to which imagination is put. The term "creative imagination," in other words, seems to be just a synonym for "creativity" – or at least, there is some significant overlap in meaning. We will have more to say about creativity in Part 2 of this introduction. Before closing Part 1, however, more needs to be said about the different uses of imagination, over and above its creative use.

Uses of imagination

Imagination is employed in a diverse set of everyday activities. As young children, we call upon imagining when we engage in pretend play. We might imagine that a cardboard box is a rocket ship, that we ourselves are astronauts, and that our favorite pig stuffie is flying with us to the moon. Though games of pretend often fall by the wayside as we age, we might call upon imagination in similar activities like improvisational games or acting. No matter how old we are, imagination is recruited in our engagement with fiction, as we imagine the characters and

happenings that we're reading about. Our efforts to understand and empathize with other people are infused with imaginative exercises. When we're daydreaming or fantasizing, or planning and making decisions, imagination plays a key role. And, depending on our career paths, we may find ourselves calling upon imagination in activities such as thought experimentation, artistic creation, lesson planning, theory development, or design – and many others as well. Reflection on these varied activities suggests that imagination is not always playing the same kind of role in them. In some, like pretending and daydreaming and artistic creation, we call upon imagination to escape or transcend the world in which we live. In others, like thought experimentation, planning, and empathetic understanding, we call upon imagination to learn about the world in which we live. In line with prior work by Amy Kind and Peter Kung (2016), we can call the first *the transcendent use* of imagination and the second *the instructive use* of imagination.

Given the fundamental difference between these two classes of use, we might find it puzzling that imagination can successfully achieve both of them. It might thus be tempting to propose that the kind of imagination operative during transcendent uses is different from the kind of imagination operative during instructive uses. In our view, however, this conclusion should be resisted. Rather, as argued by Kind and Kung when originally proposing the distinction between these kinds of use (2016), we can explain the ability of imagination to be put to both these uses by way of the notion of *imaginative constraints*. Imagination is often lauded for its freedom, and indeed, in comparison to mental states like belief and perception which are constitutively constrained in various ways by the world, imagination is comparatively unconstrained – at least by nature. It's because imagination is not constitutively subject to the same kinds of worldly constraints as belief and perception that is especially well-suited for transcendent use. But the fact that imagination is not constitutively subject to worldly constraints does not mean that it must always operate wholly in unconstrained fashion. Rather, we can voluntarily impose constraints on imagination and, when we are able to do so effectively, we are able to learn from our imaginative activities. Indeed, our ability to meet our imaginative aims successfully will often hinge on achieving just the right balance between the imposition and the release constraints. Interestingly, as we will see throughout this volume, this same balancing act proves important in creative endeavors as well.

And with that said, we now turn more directly to an examination of creativity.

2. Creativity

It is not in itself surprising that there is no consensus on how to define creativity in the literature, since a lack of consensus surrounds many concepts in philosophy. However, it seems that work on creativity is still at a stage of exploring the very basics. In what follows, we will present some concepts and distinctions drawn from both the psychological literature and the recent philosophical literature that shape many of the contributions to this volume. We will then address the question of how creativity has been defined in philosophy.

The scope of creativity

Take a child who comes up with an unexpected way of answering a question and an artist who uses new material to achieve a certain effect. We can use the term "creative" to refer to the child and the artist, to the processes involved in their coming up with an answer or their using certain material in a certain way, and also to the products they come up with, i.e., the answer itself and the artwork (for discussion, see, e.g., Stokes 2016).

This suggests that creativity is a complex phenomenon involving at least three interconnected constituents: the creative subject, the creative process, and the creative product. After the first surge of interest in creativity in the 1950s, educational scientist Mel Rhodes added one more constituent into the mix, namely, what he called the "press," which refers to the relationship between the environment and the creative person (Rhodes 1961). This gives us the 4 P account of creativity: the phenomenon of creativity is constituted by the person, the process, the press and the product.

More recently, even more constituents have been suggested. Drawing on literature from sociocultural and ecological psychology, Vlad Glăveanu's (2010) framework sees five constituents of the phenomenon of creativity. His *5 A's Framework* includes an actor, an action, an artifact, an audience, and affordances. In this model, "person" and "process" have been replaced by "actor" and "action," a terminological shift acknowledging the fact that creative processes are not always inner processes. Consider, for example, an artist who spontaneously uses a new material they stumble upon, without having imagined anything in advance. Further, "audience" and "affordances" replace Rhodes' notion of press, taking into account two different

ways in which context can play a role. The *material context* reflects what is available in the environment to enable a creation. The artist may have certain materials available but not others, for example, and is thereby constrained in their choice. The *social context* accounts for the interaction with others, both assisting the creation and judging or using it. The artist may present their work to a certain audience for assessment and approval. How the audience plays an important role in creativity will become clear in various contributions to this volume, particularly the contributions in Parts III and IV.

One question that arises is whether these constituents should play into a general definition of creativity, or whether they simply map out areas of research related or relevant to the broad phenomenon of creativity. Besides providing a definition of creativity, philosophers could explore these areas as belonging to what we might think of as the "pragmatics" of creativity. Rhodes, in any case, thinks that disregarding one of his four aspects would be like "explaining a hurricane by describing wind" (Rhodes 1961, 306).

Types and levels of creativity

Besides distinguishing the constituent aspects within the scope of the phenomenon, we can also distinguish different types of creativity. Margaret Boden (2004; 2010) does so using a criterion of how surprised we are by the new product. This yields three types of creativity: *combinatorial*, *exploratory* and *transformational* creativity. In *combinatorial creativity*, familiar ideas are combined in an unfamiliar way. For instance, the artist uses material that has never been used for the kind of artwork they produce. The new idea surprises us, but only in the sense that it is unfamiliar. In *exploratory creativity*, something new is revealed in a known area, for instance in a conceptual space. Here, the new idea surprises us in a stronger sense, in that we didn't expect it. An example may be when we work out unexpected consequences of a philosophical theory. Finally, *transformational creativity* surprises us radically in the sense that we couldn't think of the idea as possible before; it transforms our known conceptual space. Examples are artists who introduce a radically new style, or scientists who start a new paradigm. While Boden takes these different kinds of artifacts or ideas to be reflections of the creative processes that lead to these outputs, her approach is oriented towards the product. The product and our reaction to it determine the type of creativity we are concerned with, and hence allow us to determine what the subject must have done in order to bring about the product. In the case of

combinational creativity, for example, this will be the combining of known ideas in unusual ways. One might, however, doubt whether this kind of backwards inference is a good way of determining the mental process a subject is undergoing. We will come back to this question below.

Boden introduces another important distinction that has proved influential: one between *personal creativity* (P-creativity) and *historical creativity* (H-creativity). Here, the distinguishing factor is to whom the creative product is new: to only the subject in P-creativity; to all humanity in H-creativity (e.g., Boden 2004). For instance, the child who comes up with a new way of answering a question is not coming up with something that's new to everyone, so they manifest P-creativity without manifesting H-creativity. The artist, in contrast, may create something of a completely new kind that nobody has seen before, thereby manifesting both P-creativity and H-creativity.

Capturing a similar contrast, some philosophers distinguish between a *descriptive* and a *normative* (or *honorific*) sense of creativity. For Noël Carroll (2014), an act is creative in a descriptive sense if it is an act of human intelligence that brings about something appropriate to the situation, whereas an act is creative in the honorific sense if it is "strikingly original or virtually unprecedented and of great value." (Carroll 2014, 68).

In another parallel to the distinction between P-creativity and H-creativity, psychologists and others have distinguished *everyday* creativity from *eminent* creativity. For a long time in the history of creativity research, the focus has been on eminent creativity of well-known "geniuses," but towards the end of the 19th century researchers started to investigate creativity as a wide-spread phenomenon which can be observed in ordinary individuals (see Amabile 2017).[6] James Kaufman and Ronald Beghetto (2007; 2009) noted that the category of everyday creativity is too broad to account for the differences between various levels of creativity below historical achievements, and they have thus introduced the *Four C Model* of creativity. Very basic creativity, *mini-c*, occurs whenever a subject learns something new and integrates it into existing knowledge. Everyday creativity, *little-c*, happens when we solve a problem, for instance, or find a way to fix a device or give an unusual but fitting answer. Ordinary inventive creativity, *Pro-c*, involves the professional creative act – this could be the work of a scientist or an artist who

[6] See also Chapter 2, "Theories of Creativity," this volume.

works within a certain school. Extraordinary creativity, *Big-C*, is reserved for big, H-creative achievements – often mentioned are Nobel Prize winners or globally admired artists.

The creative process

Note that the distinctions discussed in the previous section directly concern the creative product and only indirectly the creative process. But some work on creativity focuses specifically on the creative process, and it is here that we see connections to imagination being especially salient.

First, we can distinguish *passive creativity* from *active creativity* (Gaut 2003). In passive creativity, the subject is not aware of the creative process itself but experiences the creative idea as something that happens to them. Consider, for example, a case when we suddenly have an idea while walking home after work, seemingly without effort or intention. Imagination doesn't seem to play a role in coming up with the new idea. But matters are otherwise when it comes to active creativity. It is in active creativity that imagination seems to play a crucial, perhaps even constitutive role, in coming up with a new idea. We will return to the question of what this role may be below.

In their entry on creativity in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Elliot Samuel Paul and Dustin Stokes integrate both passive and active operations in their 5-step model of creativity: In the *Preparation* stage, we acquire knowledge, skills, and expertise in the relevant domain. In the *Generation* stage, we produce new ideas, either by actively searching for such ideas, or unconsciously and passively through what psychologists call "incubation". In the *Insight* stage, we have an experience of novelty or surprise, in the *Evaluation* phase we then assess the idea and finally we express it in the *Externalization* stage, where our idea becomes accessible to others as well.

Boden's approach to the creative process discussed above is a functional one, and similar approaches can be observed in most of the philosophical literature. Philosophers identify a process as creative by inference from the creativity of the product: if the product is creative, the process that brought it about must have (usually) been creative (see, e.g., Carroll 2003; Gaut 2003; Currie and Ravenscroft 2002). But creating arguably comes with a specific phenomenology, an element of creative processes that the functional approach entirely leaves out. Analyzing this phenomenology, Bence Nanay (2014) suggests that the employment of

creative processes involves an experience of the outcome as something we have not taken to be possible before and as something that doesn't come from someone else. According to Nanay, a phenomenological account needs to explain, among other things, why we often think creativity is something that happens to us rather than something we do on the one hand, and why we take creative actions as genuine actions as opposed to mere bodily movements on the other hand. This brings us back to a distinction already touched upon above: creativity is often seen as a mental process, but it can also be understood as a practice or an action that is not necessarily exclusively mental. Creative practices or actions can involve several subjects or whole groups. For instance, in the sciences, several people might work on a solution to a problem, discuss methods, design experiments, and eventually reach a creative result. Similarly, several people might together come up with a creative story, or work together on a piece of art – one example being Christo and Jeanne-Claude, who collaborated in the creation of many large-scale outdoor installations, such as *The Gates* at Central Park in New York in 2005.

Philosophical definitions of creativity

Finally, let us return to the question of what creativity is. Very few psychologists actually give a definition of creativity (see J.C. Kaufman 2009, 19). When they do, they typically state that (1) novelty and (2) value or appropriateness of the product are necessary for creativity (Bruner 1962, 18; Sternberg & Lubart 1999, 3; Runco & Jaeger 2012; S.B. Kaufman & Gregoire 2016). Many philosophers agree that these two conditions are necessary for creativity and define creativity as the ability or disposition to bring about ideas that are new and valuable (Klausen 2010). As we have seen, novelty can either be historical or personal, and can come in various degrees. Some authors add further conditions on novelty, requiring that it be surprising (see above, Boden 2004; 2010), unexpected (Baehr 2018) or at least not obvious (Grant 2012).

Despite disagreeing on some of these specific details, philosophers generally treat novelty as an uncontroversial ingredient of creativity. The value criterion, in contrast, is considerably more contested. Think of a useless new product or, alternatively, of an evil innovation such as a torture device (for a defense of evil creativity, see Livingston 2018). These sorts of counterexamples have led to the rejection or qualification of the value requirement. For example, some have attempted to capture the point negatively by arguing that, by definition, creativity cannot be immoral (Novitz 1999).

Counterexamples also can bring to our attention the fact that not all kinds of process count as creative. Think of the example of a person who accidentally paints a beautiful picture with random movements (see Kieran 2014). Thus, another necessary condition, besides novelty and value, is often added: the product has to be brought about in a certain way. Some argue that it must be produced intentionally or through agency (e.g., Carruthers 2006; 2011, Stokes 2008; 2011, Paul and Stokes 2018, Kieran 2014; Gaut 2010; 2018). Some say that the agent must be intrinsically motivated in producing it, because creativity is a virtue of character (Kieran 2014; for a response, see Gaut 2014). Others contend that the process has to be spontaneous in the sense of being unplanned (Kronfeldner 2009; 2018, Gaut 2018). Imagination is yet another candidate for such a condition on the creative process. (See Paul and Stokes 2024 for an overview and discussion.)

3. Imagination and Creativity

One of the main goals of this volume is to bring together research on imagination and creativity and further explore the relationship between them – both on a theoretical level and as applied in various domains. In this last section of the introduction, we will briefly outline a couple of possible ways to think about this relationship.[7]

Most authors who address the question explicitly agree that imagination is not necessary for creativity (e.g., Stokes 2014; 2016, Kind 2022, Langland-Hassan 2020) and hence not part of the definition of creativity, but most also allow that it often has an important function. One question is whether imagination can play a *constitutive* role in creativity, or whether it just *facilitates* the creative process. Berys Gaut (2003) and Michael Beaney (2005) have discussed this issue. According to Gaut, imagination is a "source" of creativity if it is the faculty constitutive for the creative result, and it is a "vehicle" of creativity if it merely presents that result, but some other faculty (perhaps an unconscious one) is responsible for it. The latter seems to be the case in passive creativity, but given its features outlined above, we might expect a more substantial role of imagination in active creativity.

As we have seen in our discussion of Currie and Ravenscroft above, one might think that there is a *kind of imagination* with the specific function to bring about new ideas. But we have

[7] See also Chapter 9, "The Relationship between Imagination and Creativity," this volume.

argued that given the flexibility of imagination and the fact that we can put it to different uses, it seems unnecessary to posit a distinct kind of imagination to account for creativity (see also Arcangeli 2022).

In our view, a more productive suggestion is that there is *a particular way* of using imagination creatively. One way to flesh out this suggestion is to say that imagination is used creatively when it serves to put new ideas together in a novel and valuable way. This is implied by Boden's first type of creativity, *combinational creativity*, and has been suggested as a plausible general model of how we use imagination creatively (Currie and Ravenscroft 2002; Beaney 2005, Kind 2022, Langkau forthcoming). In exploring this suggestion, we would also need to revisit the distinction between propositional and sensory imagination. Can both types of imagination be used creatively, or is this use limited to just one of these types? Langkau (forthcoming) suggests that what is particular about the creative use of experiential (including sensory) imagination in the arts is that it is guided by our attention to subjective values. External constraints such as epistemic goals or constraints imposed by affordances will then further shape the creative process.

Another question is whether the creative use of experiential or sensory imagination and the creative use of propositional imagination cut across different domains. Gaut thinks that while creativity in the arts involves experiential (including sensory) imagination, propositional imagination will likely be involved in "trying out different solutions to intellectual problems" (Gaut 2003, 159). We think it is unlikely that there is such a clear divide. However, an account of the particular creative use or uses of propositional imagination has yet to be provided. Importantly, many processes that end with a creative product are collective processes. When more subjects are involved, some of the imaginative processes are externalized and generally, imagination is expected to play less of an important role. We see some ways of dealing with the resulting tension between the mental processes of single individuals and the efforts of a group in Parts IV and V of the volume.

Future research on the interplay of imagination and creativity, as we see it, needs to address in particular the following topics: the use of different kinds of imagination in creating, the use of different kinds of imagination in relation to different domains, the interplay of different kinds of imagination in creative processes, the relationship between mental processes including imagination on the one hand and collective creative actions and practices on the other

hand, as well as pragmatic aspects such as the role of the audience and the role of affordances in creative processes.

We are hoping that this handbook takes a step into this direction by providing some detailed suggestions and thereby opening up new avenues of research. To make good on this hope, we now turn to an overview of the 37 chapters in this volume.

4. Chapter Overviews

Part I: Theories and Approaches

Part I brings together philosophical research on imagination and creativity in an effort not only to provide frameworks for thinking about each individually but also to show how they relate. Exploration of this relation also enables us to set the stage for branching out into new directions and laying the groundwork for future research. The chapters in this section address both Western and non-Western approaches to imagination and creativity, and they provide overviews of both philosophical and empirical research into these topics.

In **Chapter 1**, "Theories of Imagination," Peter Kung distinguishes two approaches to imagination research: the *generalist strategy*, which aims to give an account of the core features of the phenomenon, and the specialist strategy, which addresses only one aspect of it, not necessarily aiming to cover the whole phenomenon. Much of the recent research on imagination has taken the second approach. Kung distinguishes several different types of imagination such as sensory imagination, belief-like and desire-like imagination and discusses how one influential generalist theory, recreativism, accounts for them. Yet, as Kung also notes, recreativism has several shortcomings. Before discussing some possibilities for alternative generalist theories, he turns to mapping out various features of imagination such as voluntary control, lack of rationality constraint, effort and resistance, and connection to action. According to Kung, future research is needed to develop a satisfying generalist theory of the phenomenon of imagination.

Just as Chapter 1 aims to show what's required for an adequate theory of imagination, **Chapter 2**, "Theories of Creativity," aims to show what's required for an adequate theory of creativity. To do so, Julia Langkau begins by fleshing out key tendencies in philosophical theories of creativity and showing how they relate to creativity theories in psychology, where extensive research on the topic started in the 1950s. Langkau works with the assumption that research in psychology may have unduly influenced how we think about creativity in philosophy.

She provides reasons to be critical of certain tendencies in current philosophical research – such as a focus on exceptional people, abilities, and products – and to explore new paths within the explanatory possibilities and strengths of philosophical theories. In her view, to properly account for the phenomenology as well as the function and value of creative processes, philosophers should look at creative processes (Process Creativity) separately from looking at what makes a product creative in a specific context (Product Creativity).

After providing these theoretical overviews of imagination and creativity, the next four chapters dive into the history of imagination and creativity, with the first two focusing on Western philosophy and the second two focusing on non-Western philosophy. In **Chapter 3**, "Historical Treatments of Imagination in the Western Tradition," Lucia Oliveri introduces a framework which identifies six functions historically attributed to imagination: making the absent present, serving as the analogon of reason, arousing passion, explaining errors, mediating between perception and thought, and using signs. This framework serves to contrast contemporary treatments of imagination with historical ones and helps us to identify differences among historical philosophers in terms of how they explicate imagination's relation to creativity. Since one cannot hope to survey the whole of Western philosophy in a single chapter, she chooses to focus primarily on five philosophers: Aristotle, Hobbes, Hume, Leibniz, and Kant. As she shows, three of these philosophers – Aristotle, Leibniz, and Kant – locate the creative role of imagination in its mediating role between perception and thought. In transforming sensory processes into cognitive ones, imagination plays an active, productive role rather than a reproductive one, as it does for Hobbes and Hume.

In **Chapter 4**, "Historical Treatments of Creativity in the Western Tradition," Elliot Samuel Paul focuses on six key figures, while noting comparisons to several others. In Ancient Greece, (i) Plato advances the *thesis* that the poet is a passive vessel inspired by a muse. (ii) Aristotle replies with the *antithesis* that the poet creates through skilled activity. (iii) Longinus provides the *synthesis*. Plato is right that poets are passively inspired with original ideas – though the source is natural genius instead of some muse. But Aristotle is also right that the poet must actively employ skill. In early modern Europe, (iv) Margaret Cavendish argues that we are most autonomous when we are creative, and that by creating fictional worlds women can enjoy some freedom and happiness in the face of oppression. Her literary fiction, plays, and poems are case studies in such radical creativity. (v) Alexandar Gerard and Immanuel Kant both inherit the

Longinian synthesis. Prefiguring a theory in contemporary psychology, Gerard says we form original ideas through remote associations. (vi) Kant notices that although the genius must be passive in the origination of ideas, she must also be active in the very same process, because she merits acclaim for her originality. Kant designs his theory of genius to resolve this Paradox of Creative Agency.

The guiding question in **Chapter 5**, "Non-Western Treatments of Imagination," concerns the value of imagining in two different Asian traditions: West Asian Arabic philosophy and East Asian Chinese philosophy. Within both these traditions, Reza Hadisi and Jing Iris Hu find two competing ideas about the value of imagination: conservativism and radicalism. Both groups agree that imagination can be valuable in limited instructive uses when it is constrained by intellectual and perceptual knowledge. However, while conservativism is pessimistic about imagination's transcendent or unconstrained use and reach, radicalism sees its revolutionary potential in these types of imagining. We see traces of conservativism in the Arabic tradition via the value Avicenna places on imagination merely as an instrument for reason or intellect, and we see similar conservatist traces in the East Asian Chinese tradition via the value Mencius places on moral sense. In contrast, we see traces of radicalism via the value that al-Ghazālī (in the Arabic tradition) and Zhuangzi (in the East Asian Chinese tradition) place on transcendent uses of imagination as an instrument to break out and discover new possibilities. But despite these similarities across the two traditions, Hadisi and Hu also highlight some important differences between them. For example, in the Arabic tradition the intellect is taken to be a special cognitive faculty, different from perception and imagination, whereas this kind of dualism does not play a central role in Confucian and Daoist texts.

In **Chapter 6**, "Non-Western Treatments of Creativity," Nicolas B. Verger and Vlad Glăveanu survey several different non-Western approaches to creativity, with a special focus on African, South American, Buddhist, and Taoist traditions. While Western treatments of creativity tend to focus on the individual, non-Western approaches often see innovation as a characteristic of social groups. In the traditions they survey, creativity is understood relationally – with the relational bonds forming not just within and across societies but also with the natural world itself. This focus on the role that creativity can play in bringing about social and ecological growth contrasts sharply with what we see in the West, where creativity research was first introduced in an effort to spur the economy and ensure economic growth. As Verger and

Glăveanu suggest, given the destruction of the environment that humans have brought about, we would do best to move beyond an androcentric approach to creativity. On their view, it is only by considering new forms of creativity that challenge some of our current Western values – for example, by placing a value on ecological and social growth over and above the value we place on economic growth – that we will be able to achieve the ideals of a more socially inclusive and diverse society.

In the next two chapters of Part I, special attention is paid to empirical research on imagination and creativity – both the empirical research in disciplines such as psychology and neuroscience and the empirical research in the discipline of philosophy itself. In **Chapter 7**, "Empirical Treatments of Imagination and Creativity," Dustin Stokes points to the fact that features of creativity such as novelty, incubation, and insight have led much of the philosophical tradition to endorse a kind of "romantic skepticism." According to the romantic skeptic, creativity cannot be meaningfully illuminated by science. Over the course of his chapter, however, Stokes paints a more optimistic picture about the possibility of scientific explanation. As he demonstrates, empirical research addresses creativity not by treating it as a unified phenomenon but rather by investigating various mental mechanisms or faculties which contribute to it. Among these faculties, imagination plays a crucial role. The empirical research discussed by Stokes concerns several different phases of the creative process, most specifically, preparation, generation, insight and evaluation. As he notes, the substantial progress that has been made in explaining these phases serves to demystify the features of creativity that had given fuel to romantic skepticism.

As philosophers in the late 20th and early 21st century have increasingly taken up empirical methods, they have begun to address imagination and creativity empirically themselves. In **Chapter 8**, "Experimental Philosophy of Imagination and Creativity," Michael T. Stuart first distinguishes between "narrow" and "broad" conceptions of experimental philosophy ("xphi"). On the former approach, xphi is seen as a reaction to the use of armchair intuitions in philosophy; on the latter, it is understood more broadly in that empirical results can and should be used to address philosophical questions. Stuart, who endorses the second conception, argues that philosophers themselves should engage in empirical research concerning the philosophy of imagination and creativity. Besides reviewing existing xphi research in areas ranging from imaginative resistance to cognitive architecture to vividness, he helpfully provides a list of

questions relating to both imagination and creativity that would be especially promising avenues for future empirical research. With respect to imagination, some such avenues concern vividness, machine imagination, and aphantasia. With respect to creativity, some such avenues concern the nature of creativity, its value dimension, and issues concerning how credit is assigned for creative endeavors (with this last topic likely to yield important insights into our thinking about the possibility of machine creativity).

While the first eight chapters in this part address various approaches to both imagination and creativity, **Chapter 9**, "The Relationship between Imagination and Creativity," offers a particular view on how these two topics might be related. Though it is widely held both that imagination is not necessary for creativity and that creativity is not necessary for imagination, it is also widely held that there must be some important connections between them. To achieve a better understanding of their relationship, Margherita Arcangeli argues, we need to distinguish various ways in which both notions can be understood. On the side of imagination, Arcangeli distinguishes creative imagination, attitudinal imagining, imagistic imagining, and constructive imagining. On the side of creativity, she distinguishes process creativity from product creativity and works with Boden's notions of combinatorial, exploratory, and transformational creativity. By laying out these distinctions, Arcangeli is then able to map out the relationships between various kinds of imagination and different kinds of creativity in a more refined manner, and this yields a more precise answer to the question motivating the chapter.

Part II: Imagination and Creativity in Mind and Action

With the chapters in Part I providing some useful conceptual framework, the eight chapters in Part II take up various ways that imagination and creativity are involved in mind and action, from the roles they play in our cognitive lives, to how they impact us as agents in the world, to how they shape our social identities.

In **Chapter 10**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Skill," Amy Kind highlights an important commonality between imagination and creativity, namely, both can be seen as skills. As she shows, the skills-based framework that has been developed in the context of imagination and the skills-based framework that has been independently developed in the context of creativity share important commonalities, and they seem to be motivated by very similar considerations. They have also been subjected to very similar sorts of criticisms about teachability and trainability.

Taking up these kinds of objections, as well as several others that apply more specifically just to imagination or just to creativity, Kind shows how they can successfully be dispatched. Ultimately, her discussion concludes that imagination and creativity are different skills. But though neither of these skills is necessary for the other, they can nonetheless be seen to be mutually reinforcing.

Bency Nanay's discussion in **Chapter 11,** "Imagination, Creativity, and Attention," takes up two different forms of attention: (1) internal attention, i.e., attention directed inside towards aspects of our mental lives, and (2) external attention, i.e., attention directed outside towards aspects of the world. As he notes, external attention has been most extensively studied in connection with perception. After reviewing empirical work that shows how attention increases the determinacy of the perceptually represented properties, Nanay argues that attention plays a similar role with respect to sensory imagination. In this way, attention enhances imagination. Interestingly, however, when it comes to creativity, the effects of attention are not uniformly positive. While there are some ways the attention training has been seen to have enhancing effects on creativity (specifically in connection with meditation, mindfulness, and certain drugs such as LSD), attention also serves to thwart creativity. In particular, the kinds of attentional drain that results from demanding attentional tasks hinders our creative efforts.

In **Chapter 12**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Agency," Caterina Moruzzi explores the role of agency in our imaginative and creative pursuits and, in doing so, provides support for the claim that imagination has epistemic value. By developing an original framework that she calls *the Imagination-in-Action framework*, Moruzzi highlights the critical role that imagination plays in creative endeavors. Her discussion is organized around an extended example in which a chef aims to introduce some new dishes to their restaurant's menu that will appeal to customers without negatively impacting profitability. Using this example, she suggests that a creative process involves six stages. One begins with a mental model of the problem to be solved and then enters an imaginative phase of idea generation, simulation, and prediction. Ultimately the process issues in some sort of action that is then subject to validation. As Moruzzi shows, exercises of agency – both online agency and offline agency – are interwoven throughout all six stages of this creative process.

Following an approach typically associated with R.G. Collingwood, the relations between imagination, creativity, and emotion are commonly spelled out by seeing creation as a process of

the expression of emotions through imagination, with art serving as the product of such expression. But in their discussion of these relations in **Chapter 13**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Emotions", Julien Deonna and Fabrice Teroni chart a different course. Instead of focusing on the expression of emotion, they focus on emotion's role in providing access to values. In their view, emotions play two such roles – one instrumental and one constitutive. First, emotions serve to sustain creative cognitive processes; they are instrumental in bringing about both imagination and creativity. Second, in virtue of their valuable and novel contributions to the understanding of value, emotions partly constitute a creative product themselves – a product that Deonna and Teroni refer to as *value understanding*. In discussing these two positive contributions made by emotions, Deonna and Teroni are also careful to note some related potential downsides: first, the rigidity of emotions might at times have stultifying effects; and second, the tendency of emotions to falsely apprehend value might at times lead us astray.

Though imagination and creativity are often associated with free thought, constraints play an important role in both these domains. In **Chapter 14**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Embodiment," Adriana Clavel-Vázquez and María Jimena Clavel Vázquez focus on one particular kind of constraint, namely, that arising due to embodiment. Because a creative process requires the manipulation of ideas in a conceptual space, it is natural to see imagination as playing a central role in creativity. Thus, insofar as imagination is constrained by factors arising from embodiment, so too is creativity. Clavel-Vázquez and Clavel Vázquez identify and distinguish three different senses of embodiment: cognitive embodiment (stemming from the 4E tradition), situated embodiment (stemming from the phenomenological tradition), and robust embodiment (which combines elements from both traditions). Having discussed these three kinds of embodiment, they close by considering a puzzle: If a creative agent is constrained by a concrete body that is marked by its sociohistorical situation as reflected in the non-neural body, as robust embodiment dictates, then how would transformational creativity be possible? In answer, they suggest that transformational creativity is possible but that we need to recognize that it is less sudden and more gradual than is typically recognized.

While Chapter 14 focuses on embodiment considered in a general sense, the next two chapters narrow in on two specific forms of embodiment: gendered embodiment and racial embodiment. In **Chapter 15**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Gender," Luke Roelofs flips the dialectic in taking up the connection between imagination, creativity, and gender: Instead of

exploring how gender impacts imagination and creativity, they explore how imagination and creativity impact gender. Roelofs suggests that if we accept the idea that gender is in some ways a performance or useful fiction, we should conclude that is also therefore something imagined. They also explore how the psychological formation of a gender identity might be a creative process. After spending most of the chapter focused on individual gender identity, the final section of the chapter looks at gender identity at the societal level and, correspondingly, turns to considerations involving collective imagining. In showing how collective imagining plays a role in the social construction of gender, they also show that this process is sometimes, but not always, a creative one.

Chapter 16, "Imagination, Creativity, and Race," shares a similar dialectic to Chapter 15, but in relation to race. Over the course of the chapter, Nicholas Whittaker surveys and synthesizes some of the many ways that creativity and imagination contribute to "the assemblage of race." Importantly, Whittaker does not work with a static conception of race; rather, they are committed to focusing on processes of racialization and treating them as dynamic in nature. In the first part of the chapter, they suggest five ways in which the capacities for creativity and imagination are rendered invisible by processes of racialization: what they call *plain narration*, *ornamentalism*, *traditionalism*, *primitivism*, and *imaginative excess*. In the second part of the chapter, they look at ways that imaginative and creativities capacities can serve both as liberatory tools – by way of the exercise of resistant imagination and creativity in transforming the conditions of violent racialization – and yet also as active tools of racialization itself. Ultimately, the chapter aims to show how a focus on the concepts of creativity and imagination helps us to think through the relationship between race and humanness.

In the concluding chapter of this section, **Chapter 17**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Child Development," Thalia Goldstein and co-authors survey the empirical work in developmental psychology on how imagination and creativity develop in children. As they note, this development begins as early as 12 months of age, and though it continues across the lifespan, the discussion of the chapter focuses primarily on the first 12 years of life. Goldstein et al. begin by following the common practice in the empirical and experimental literature of treating the topics of imagination and creativity separately. The studies reviewed suggest that young children generally focus their imaginative engagement on everyday stories. At this stage, children stick close to reality and do not engage in much creative exploration. It's when children reach middle

childhood that their imaginative explorations become less reality-bound and their creativity increases. Thus, argue Goldstein et al., children's capacities for imagination and creativity develop simultaneously and naturally, with such development shaped by the culture and environment in which they find themselves. Ultimately, they conclude that the development of imagination and the development of creativity are importantly intertwined; on their view neither can exist without the other.

Part III: Imagination and Creativity in the Arts

Turning now to Part III, we have eight chapters that take up issues relating to imagination and creativity in the arts. In **Chapter 18**, "Imagination, Creativity, and the Visual Arts," Claire Anscomb focuses on visual art such as painting, photography, and sculpture and explores how imagination and creativity are involved both in the creation of such artworks and in their reception by viewers. Though Anscomb sees imagination as being central to artistic creativity, she offers reasons to reject the historical picture on which artists must visually imagine their works before bringing them to materiality. Some of these reasons stem from consideration of aphantasic artists, i.e., artists who lack the capacity to produce voluntary mental images. Other reasons stem from considering the role of nonvisual forms of imagination in the production of art. In the second half of the chapter, Anscomb turns to issues concerning the role of imagination and creativity in the reception of art and argues for an understanding of artworks in terms of issuing invitations to the viewers rather than laying down rules for them. On her view, doing so allows for a better account of how viewers come to exercise both aesthetic and cultural agency in their creative reception of works of visual art.

In **Chapter 19**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Music," Matteo Ravasio explores several different ways that imagination and creativity are relevant to the composition, performance, and reception of music. Ravasio begins by sketching some of the key elements from historical discussions, where philosophers invoked imagination primarily in connection with musical composition. Turning next to the contemporary period, where discussions have tended to invoke imagination primarily in connection with the reception of music, Ravasio focuses on two specific debates about the role of imagination: first, its role in constituting the very nature of musical experience; and second, its role in constituting musical expressiveness. The second half of the chapter is devoted to debates about creativity, where Ravasio focuses on the relationships

between creativity and composition and between creativity and improvisation. As he notes, future philosophical work will be needed to show how these debates about imagination and creativity in the domain of music interact. In the final section of the chapter, he offers an innovative proposal about what he calls "imaginative heuristics." On his view, imaginative engagements with music can function as helpful heuristics for both performing and listening.

In recent years, there has been a strong consensus in the aesthetics literature that there's a definitional relationship between something being fictional and something involving imagination. In **Chapter 20**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Fiction," Hannah H. Kim rejects this consensus; on her view, fiction is intimately connected not to imagination but creativity. As she goes on to argue, it's in virtue of creativity's connection to imagination that so many have had the mistaken impression that it's imagination with which fiction is intimately connected. The key to unraveling these relationships is to recognize the important connection between fiction and fabrication: it is a standard expectation of fiction that such works invite the readers to expect that fabrication has been involved. In addition to developing this line of argument, Kim also explores what it means for authors to produce fiction that is creative in content and form, the varieties of kinds of imagination deployed by readers and critics when properly engaging with works of fiction, and how metaphysical debates about fiction affect the kind of creativity we may attribute to authors.

In **Chapter 21**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Dance," David Davies and Anna Pakes begin by exploring the role of creativity in both the creation and performance of dance. With respect to musical works, it is typically easy to separately assess the creativity of the composer and the creativity of the performer. But matters are different with respect to dance, where it is much harder to separate what counts as choreographic creativity from what counts as a creative contribution in performance; as Davies and Pakes suggest, dance presents unique challenges in evaluating artistic agency, authorship, and ontology. In turning to consider the involvement of imagination in dance, Davies and Pakes point to a second important distinction between dance works and other types of art works, namely, that dance works prescribe kinesthetic imaginings to a much greater extent. In the final section of their chapter, they consider how the incorporation of AI into dance choreography and performance impacts our analysis of the creative and imaginative dimensions of the generation and appreciation of dance performances. Ultimately,

their discussion reveals some important ways in which consideration of dance illuminates the relationship between imagination and creativity.

What does it mean for culinary products to be creative? Addressing this question is Patrik Engisch's task in **Chapter 22**, "Imagination, Creativity, and the Culinary Arts," and he does so by developing a tripartite distinction between what he calls *idle creativity*, *productive creativity*, and *super-productive creativity*. When a product is idly creative, its creativity fails to relate to its constitutive end; rather, the creative elements are mere bells and whistles. In contrast, when a product is productively creative, its creativity does relate to its constitutive end, i.e., the constitutive ends are realized in a new and valuable way. Finally, when a product has super-productive creativity, it opens up a new way for products of that kind to be valuable. In developing this distinction, Engisch draws upon a variety of examples from Netflix cooking shows to Modernist Cuisine to show that the culinary arts can achieve all three forms of creativity. Then, after leveraging this distinction to draw a further distinction between two different types of creative domains, locked-in ones vs. expandable ones, he argues that the culinary arts are expandable. Finally, he explores the ramifications this has for the role of imagination in the culinary arts.

In **Chapter 23**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Film," Murray Smith explores the tandem role played by imagination and creativity in the making and viewing of film. Drawing from a wide range of examples from both classic and contemporary film, Smith shows how filmmaking involves a cyclical process of creation and recreation on the part of both filmmakers and viewers, thereby recruiting both the recreative and creative imagination. In turning next to the way that imagination and creativity work together in the production of film, Smith focuses on instances of active creativity and the role that imagination plays in creative agency – an agency that is flexible and open-ended even while being purposeful in nature. As he argues, filmmakers' ideas are often worked and reworked via iterative processes of imaginative exploration before taking form in film. As he also argues, much of the imaginative and creative work involved in film proceeds collectively, since most filmmaking is collaborative, and it is also scaffolded by environmental factors and material tools. Over the course of the discussion, Smith shows how imagination and creativity have significance in a multitude of facets of filmmaking and film viewing, as well as in the development of filmmaking technology and methods of production.

Considerations about the body loom large in the discussion of **Chapter 24**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Acting." As Tzachi Zamir notes at the start of this chapter, since acting is an embodied form of creating and imagining, it yields different insights into the nature of these activities than most of the other artistic domains considered in this section (though see Chapter 21 on dance). To understand the kind of creativity involved in acting, Zamir invokes the notion of divine creation (*barah)* from the Old Testament. In his view, key to understanding the creativity of acting is attention to the respects in which it not only breathes life into something, bringing it into existence, but also sustains its vitality. To understand the kind of imagining involved in acting, Zamir develops an account of roleplaying. In his view, acting is aesthetically-governed, embodied roleplaying. Moreover, acting involves an expansion of selfhood that unfolds in imagination – a process he refers to as *existential amplification*. Interestingly, this means that the kinds of imaginative activities involved in acting might give rise to various moral concerns and, correspondingly, engender imaginative resistance.

In the last chapter of Part III, **Chapter 25**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Fashion," Laura T. Di Summa argues for an embodied and performative understanding of fashion that leads us to see creativity in fashion as a virtue not just of fashion designers but of ordinary individuals who use fashion as a creative outlet for expression of their bodily identity. The chapter begins by fleshing out the concepts of fashion and creativity, and the relation between them, in the context of prior philosophical discussion of the topic. She then turns to three more specific ways in which creativity and imagination are exercised in fashion. First, to show how fashion has strong ties to sociohistorical contexts, she focuses on American fashion; as she shows, there are important connections in its development to both Hollywood and to the economic and political realities of war (and in particular, to WW2). Second, she looks more closely at connections between fashion and the body. Third, she explores how an emphasis on how materials *feel* as opposed to just how they *look* can provide important avenues for creativity in fashion that distinguishes this exercise of creativity from its exercises in many other domains.

Part IV: Imagination and Creativity in Society

In addition to being implicated in the artistic domain, imagination and creativity are implicated in other domains as well. Part IV comprises seven chapters addressing the role of imagination and creativity in societal domains of collaborative thinking and action like science

and politics. Because these domains are action oriented, imagination and creativity are often viewed as being sharable, and creativity in particular is often seen to be the product of a group. Yet, as the chapters reveal, this leads to some tension with the idea that imagination is essentially a matter of an individual subject. How this tension is to be resolved is handled differently in the different domains explored.

In **Chapter 26**, "Imagination and Creativity in the Scientific Realm," Alice Murphy positions her discussion of central issues in contemporary philosophy of science against the familiar distinction between the "context of discovery" (how new ideas are generated) and the "context of justification" (how such ideas are assessed). She begins by discussing the role imagination plays in models and thought experiments, and how science can be seen in parallel to fiction. Central to this discussion are questions of how constraints on scientific imagination affect creativity in this domain. She then explores whether the collective nature of science has an impact on the role that imagination and creativity play in this domain. In her view, science provides the opportunity to resist the general assumption that imagination and creativity are abilities only especially talented individuals have. In the chapter's last part, she addresses the need to investigate the impact that social structures and material conditions have on an individual's abilities to imagine and to produce creative outputs; future research is also needed on how marginalized individuals can come to see the value of their own creative and imaginative capacities. All this suggests that the "context of discovery" should not be thought of as mysterious or unworthy of our attention.

In **Chapter 27**, "Imagination and Creativity in the Moral Realm," Tim Mulgan discusses the various ways in which imagination and creativity are morally relevant on the one hand and can play a role in moral thinking itself on the other hand. The first part distinguishes different kinds of value and different ways in which creativity could be valuable. Mulgan then turns to an exploration of imagination and creativity in the moral realm itself. Defining "moral imagination" as the use of imagination in moral judgment, he sees it as linked to P-originality. Moral creativity, which involves the creation and implementation of historically new moral norms or values, is thus linked to H-originality. Mulgan also sees moral creativity as necessarily collective: what is valuable in the moral realm has to be judged to be so collectively, and moral norms have to be established by a group of people. He ends with a discussion of whether moral creativity is possible and worth the risk. His answer is positive on both counts: there is no

alternative to imaginatively departing from moral traditions and values. In fact, it is our duty to practice our moral imagination for the purpose of moral progress.

Avshalom Schwartz takes a similar approach to political imagination and political creativity in **Chapter 28**, "Imagination and Creativity in the Political Realm." He notes that political imagination is often shared imagination and as such a precondition for collective action. Collective action, in turn, is crucial for reshaping and reinforcing the shared imagination of a group. The first part of the chapter takes a historical look at how imagination has been viewed in both philosophy and political thought, namely, as an active and creative faculty, responsible for political transformation and change as well as instability and unruliness. Schwartz then turns from the historical context to the contemporary one, and he explores the association between imagination and action, its connection to utopian vision and critical rejection of the present, and its role in individual and collective autonomy. In the final part of the chapter, Schwartz takes a critical approach to the tight connection seen between imagination and creativity in the political ream, and he suggests that imagination has at least two other political roles: it can hinder innovation and change and provide resources for social and political critique. The destructive potential of the creative imagination suggests that a society cannot be built on innovation alone but also needs stability to make the best of the power of creativity.

In **Chapter 29**, "Imagination and Creativity in the Law," Del Mar similarly addresses the challenge of connecting the mental imaginative process of an individual with the collective and interactive process of law-making. The chapter starts out with an exploration of contemporary legal scholarship, which brings out two main ways to view the relationship between imagination and law: some scholars see it lacking imagination and thus see a need to develop and practice imaginative skills, while others see imagination and creativity as deeply embedded in the practice of law. Scholars of the second kind divide into two classes: those that see this tight connection as a problem, since it is used by those in power, and others who see sensory imagination as crucial to legal cognition as an embodied practice. Del Mar then turns to discussing the relationship between legal imagination and legal creativity on the one hand and the development and employing of a particular kind of language on the other. A future advocate needs training in imagination to verbally describe their case in court, in front of an audience; doing so is necessary for the audience to have an emotionally rich and embodied imaginative experience of what they did not themselves witness.

Neil Van Leeuwen's **Chapter 30**, "Creativity and Imagination in the Religious Realm," begins with the observation that deities are neither perceptible nor causally reliable, yet religious people in some sense believe in Gods and take themselves to interact with Gods nonetheless. Believers, according to Van Leeuwen, thus face two problems. According to *the evidential problem*, religious people's evidential basis for their belief in Gods is impoverished; according to *the interaction problem*, interaction with Gods, given that they aren't perceptible, appears impossible or at least extremely difficult. This is where imagination and creativity enter. To solve the evidential problem, Van Leeuwen argues that "believing" in God should be understood in terms of propositional imagination—albeit in a sacralized form. To solve the interaction problem, Van Leeuwen calls on what he calls *constructive imagination*, the capacity of a subject to bring about novel ideas, which needs to be deployed in a creative way. In the religious realm, these novel ideas come connected to artefacts, often works of art, that give believers a feeling that they are personally interacting with deities even if they are not. Creativity is involved not only in generating sacred ideas but also in the act of connecting those ideas to physical props in order to experience the presence of deities.

In **Chapter 31**, "Imagination and Creativity in Business," Eric Peterson starts by providing a toolkit for scholars of various disciplines in the business world, such as accounting, finance, marketing, and management. This toolkit aims to facilitate our thinking about various aspects of these disciplines and, in particular, how imagination and creativity could help understand this domain. For Peterson, imagination is essential to creativity and therefore creativity inherits all relevant aspects of imagination. Having developed his toolkit, he next provides an overview of the literature from organization studies/management, entrepreneurship, and business ethics, where the role of imagination and creativity have been recognized and are often discussed in relation to innovation defined as the implementation of ideas. For each of these domains, Peterson shows how the toolkit can serve or already implicitly serves to clarify the role of creativity and imagination and their intersections. On his view, an understanding of imagination as crucial for creativity, as well as an understanding of it as a skill, can encourage the practice of imagination and creativity in the domain of business.

In recent years, various crises ranging from health to politics to the environment have led to calls for increased imagination and creativity. In **Chapter 32**, "Imagination and Creativity in Times of Crisis," Jennifer Fraser and Noah Stemeroff address the role that imagination and

creativity can play in challenging times. As they argue, both phenomena are not only a tool for navigating crises and overcoming them but also can serve as a prompt in Kendall Walton's sense. After giving a detailed history of the notion of "crisis," the authors proceed to show that philosophers and social scientists have thought of crises in two different ways: (1) as a chance to envisage new futures and possible worlds and a motivation for new scientific developments; or (2) as a way to maintain the status quo. Labeling something as a "crisis" can sometimes signal a need to restore rather than imagine something new. Finally, the authors explain how crises can themselves be thought of as imaginative, creative acts. The authors conclude that philosophy can indeed provide useful sources to approach and overcome crises.

Part V: Emerging Issues in Imagination and Creativity Research

In Parts I-IV of the volume, discussions tend to focus on matters concerning creativity as instantiated in individual (neurotypical) humans. In the last part of the volume, Part V, we broaden our focus and consider questions related to how imagination and creativity interplay with particular features of creative subjects as well as different kinds of creative subjects: non-human animals, artificial intelligence, and groups. Many of these questions are just starting to emerge in the philosophical literature.

Though it has long been known that there are vast individual differences with respect to mental imagery, researchers had not paid much attention to these differences until the term "aphantasia" was coined by Adam Zeman to refer to the individual difference marked by a reduced ability to produce mental imagery. In **Chapter 33**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Aphantasia," Andrea Blomkvist defends the view that imagination plays an essential role in creativity and then uses aphantasia as a case study to explore some of the implications of this view. After reviewing the findings of recent empirical research on aphantasia, Blomkvist argues that the reduced mental imagery capacities of individuals with aphantasia does not mean that they lack imagination: Though they may have a reduced capacity for sensory imagination, for instance in the visual modality, they can still exercise propositional imagination. She then supports this claim by invoking a particular theory of the neuro-cognitive underpinnings of imagination, one that sees the same neural network (the default mode network) as being operative in both episodic memory and future-directed imagining. Ultimately, she concludes that

the fact that imagination plays an essential role in creativity poses no challenge to the view that individuals with aphantasia can be genuinely creative.

The claim is sometimes made that neurodivergence is a creative "superpower." In **Chapter 34**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Neurodivergence," Sofia Ortiz-Hinojosa calls this claim into question. The chapter begins with an interrogation of the very notion of neurodivergence. As she discusses, this term is social-political rather than medical. She then turns to an overview of the various ways that creativity is operationalized in the empirical literature (e.g., tests of divergent thinking, tests of convergent thinking, tools that draw from interview or self-report data, and so on) and discusses how these operationalizations may relate to imagination. Having made these conceptual clarifications, she spends the bulk of the chapter reviewing a wide variety of empirical research relating to five classes of neurodivergence: mood disorders, schizophrenia and schizotypy, conditions on the autism spectrum, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, and dyslexia. As she shows, the evidence does not reveal any obvious link between neurodivergent conditions in general and creativity in general. That said, she notes that the evidence does point to correlations between some of the specific forms of neurodivergence and some of the specific measures of creativity, though such correlations tend to be strongest with respect to subclinical manifestations of neurodivergent traits.

In **Chapter 35**, "Imagination, Creativity, and Non-Human Animals," Henry Shevlin provides an overview and assessment of debates concerning the imaginative and creative capacities of animals ranging from corvids to porpoises to the great apes. He begins by surveying some of the cases that provide especially strong evidence for the presence of imagination and creativity in non-human animals. Some of this evidence comes from cases of problem solving – both insight-based problem solving and more complex problem solving involving multi-step reasoning. Additional evidence comes from studies on episodic and prospective memory in a variety of different animal species and studies concerning innovation. He then turns to consider various conceptual and methodological issues that arise when we step back from demonstrations of apparent imagination and creativity to think more broadly about how and why we would be justified in making attributions of imagination and creativity in non-human cases. In the final section of the chapter, he details some promising areas of contemporary research on animal creativity and imagination – research that seems well poised to yield important insights in the near future.

In 1950, Alan Turing famously explored whether machines can exhibit intelligence. In **Chapter 36**, "Creativity, Imagination, and Artificial Intelligence," Peter Langland-Hassan explores two related questions: First, can machines exhibit genuine imagination? And second, can they exhibit genuine creativity? Though he does not offer definitive answers to either question, he suggests that we have good reasons for optimism about the imaginative and creative abilities of machines. Of course, machines of the early 21st century are very different from machines of the mid 20th century that interested Turing, and Langland-Hassan focuses mainly on systems involving generative AI and deep neural networks. As he suggests, understanding how such systems work – and in particular, seeing them as *trained* rather than *programmed* – plays a crucial role in assessing their capabilities. Key issues that arise concern whether and to what extent works produced by AI are derivative, whether AI manifests consciousness (and whether this matters for assessments of AI imagination and AI creativity), and the relation between creativity and imagination. On this last point, Langland-Hassan offers reasons to accept a claim that he calls *Creativity Requires Imagination*: all genuinely creative products are the result of imagination. An upshot he suggests is that assessments of AI creativity could be prior to and help to motivate subsequent assessments of AI imagination.

Finally, in **Chapter 37**, "Collective Imagination and Collective Creativity," Nick Wiltsher tackles the topic of collective imagination and creativity head on. Drawing parallels to the literature on group belief, Wiltsher distinguishes between two classes of views. *Elliptical* views construe talk about a group's mental state as really just a way of talking about a collection of individuals' mental states. *Literal* views claim that talking about a group's mental state should be taken at face value. Wiltsher then explores how one might develop analogs of these views for collective imagination and collective creativity. In doing so, he relies on an implicit analogy between collective imagination and collective belief, and a second implicit analogy between collective creativity and joint action. Doing so, as he notes, ends up pulling the accounts of collective imagination and collective creativity apart from one another. But if we were to think of imagination as a mental *action* rather than as a mental *state*, there may be a pathway towards a more unitary account of collective imagination and collective creativity.

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