

## **Intelligence and Wisdom's Role in Moral vs Amoral Creativity**

Hansika Kapoor,<sup>1,2</sup> Simon Henderson,<sup>3</sup> and James C. Kaufman<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Psychology, Monk Prayogshala, Mumbai, India

<sup>2</sup> Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, USA

<sup>3</sup> Independent Deception Consultant, Edinburgh, UK (deceptionbydesign.com)

### **Abstract**

Whereas research has generally viewed creativity as a benevolent construct, more recent work has started to explore creativity's dark side. Much of this work has focused on the constructs associated with malevolent creativity, such as dark personality traits and deception. Less prevalent, however, is an emphasis on the factors that determine whether somebody gravitates toward the good or the bad. In this chapter, we highlight how intelligence and wisdom play crucial roles in determining the valence, the motives, and the outcome of creative actions. By applying the lenses of intelligence and wisdom, we not only gain insight into the nature of creativity, but we can also explore how dark creativity can be identified and countered.

*Keywords:* ethics; intelligence; malevolent creativity; morality; wisdom

## Intelligence and Wisdom's Role in Moral vs Amoral Creativity

On 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the head of the World Health Organization, commended the US government's support for temporarily waiving intellectual property (IP) related to COVID-19 vaccines. Specifically, he stated that the decision “reflects the *wisdom and moral leadership* of the US to support vaccine equity and work to end this pandemic.”<sup>1</sup> Although the US was by no means the first nation to propose support for such IP waivers – India and South Africa had spearheaded the request in October 2020 (Nioi & Napoli, 2021) – Dr. Ghebreyesu considered this decision of the Biden administration wise and moral.

To set more context, the COVID-19 virus's genome was sequenced and made publicly available in January 2020. Thereafter, pharmaceutical companies made rapid advances in developing technologies associated with vaccines, treatments, and diagnostics related to COVID-19 infections. However, the web of patents held by such large corporations disallowed those in low-income countries to develop and manufacture indigenous COVID-19 vaccines (see also Gaviria & Kilic, 2021; Nature Editorial, 2021). Moreover, numerous patents are associated with specific technologies involved in COVID-19 treatments, which take a considerable amount of time to identify. Applying for individual waivers is a time-consuming process and time is of the essence when combating a global pandemic in which lives are at stake (see also Nature Editorial, 2022). The patents themselves are products of intelligence and creativity; after all, they are included as salient innovative output from a nation when computing the Global Innovation Index every year, published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (Dutta et al., 2021). Therefore, supporting patent waivers to make COVID-19 related technologies more accessible seems to be a wise and moral decision (for counterarguments, see Nioi & Napoli, 2021; Storz,

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://bit.ly/3vN0jE1>

2021). Yet, this global resolution toward the common good has not been made, nearly 2.5 years into the COVID-19 pandemic (at the time of writing this chapter, June 2022).

What (and who) determines whether individuals, corporations, and nation states make wise or unwise choices? Can a creative and intelligent act involve deception and even possible immorality and still be considered wise? The chapter will explore how intelligence and creativity can be used for both wise and unwise purposes, with deception and morality not always playing the exact role we might expect.

First, we situate creativity within the AMORAL model (Kapoor & Kaufman, 2022) and elaborate linkages to intelligence and wisdom. We also propose how wisdom can act as a rudder to determine whether and how intelligence and creativity can be deployed across contexts. Specifically, we elaborate on how wisdom can guide benevolent or malevolent acts of creativity and intelligence. Finally, we will discuss the Robin Hood Effect, in which actions and behaviors that use deception and may appear immoral may actually end up being wise.

### **The AMORAL Model**

Although theories of creativity abound (for a review, see Kaufman & Glăveanu, 2021), few, if any models, acknowledge its dark side. For instance, in an analysis of 120 collocations used in the context of creativity, about 4% alluded to a negative association (Kampylis & Valtanen, 2010). Given the substantial increase in scholarship in the domains of negative, malevolent, and dark creativity since the 2000s (Cropley & Cropley, 2019), the time is prime for a framework that explicitly discusses the dark side. The AMORAL model (Kapoor & Kaufman, 2022) illustrates a combination of Antecedents, Mechanisms (individual), and Operants

(environmental) that contribute to the Realization of a creative act, which leads to certain Aftereffects and in some cases, establishes a Legacy as well.

The amoral nature of the creative process emphasizes its blind nature unless constrained by certain conditions (e.g., Simonton, 2022). These conditions could be moralistic, practical, budgetary, temporal, and the like, depending on the context where the creativity is to be deployed. Despite the AMORAL model having been conceptualized with an aim to explain and describe dark creativity, it can, and perhaps needs to be, applied to all valences of creative actions. The model and its namesake process can help researchers and practitioners decouple creativity from assumptions about its inherent goodness, shedding light on the not-so-good consequences of creativity as well. Similarly, the model can also help explain how and why wisdom can determine whether a creator pursues – and delivers – benevolent or malevolent forms of creativity. But before delving into the intersections of the AMORAL model with wisdom, here is a short summary (Figure 1).

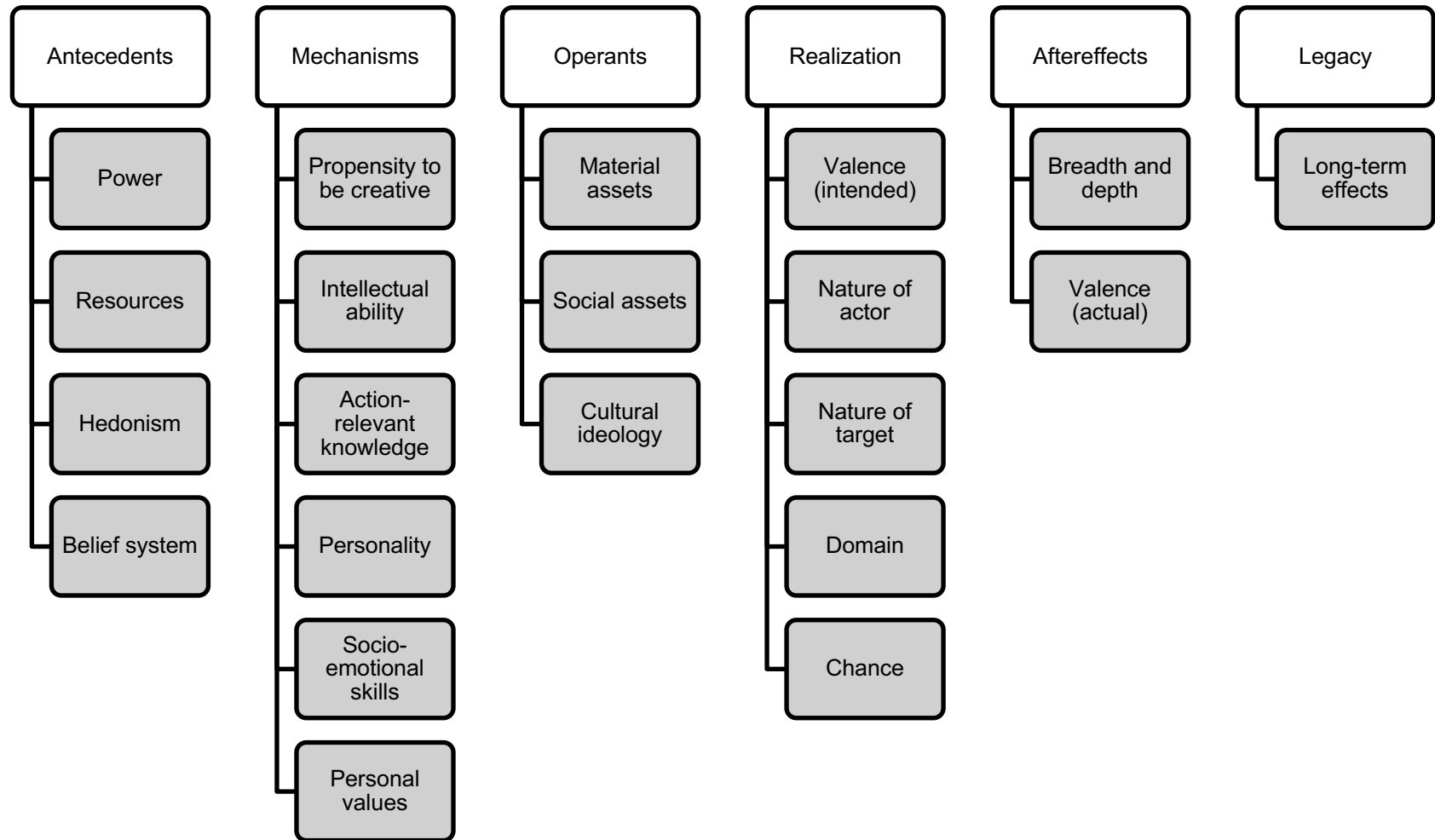


Figure 1. A summary of the AMORAL model of dark creativity.

Beginning with antecedents, the model proposes that a need for power, accumulating resources, fulfilling hedonistic pleasures, and one's belief systems can drive creative acts. Of course, there are more altruistic antecedents as well, including a motive to benefit society or work toward achieving the common good in a novel way. This valence-laden dichotomy among enlisted antecedents gives a glimpse into the versatility of applications that can be deduced from the model. By allowing creativity to advance in multiple directions unencumbered by moral considerations, we can begin to appreciate the deliberate nature of specific creative actions (and how personal preferences can drive the same). Next, mechanisms include characteristics at the individual level, including the propensity to be creative, action-relevant knowledge, personality characteristics like openness to new experiences (e.g., essays in Feist et al., 2017), socio-emotional skills, personal values, and intellectual ability. Of particular relevance to this chapter are the latter two mechanisms: first, personal values are connected to the broad antecedent of a belief system as well as to sociomoral concerns, and second, intellectual ability represents the g factor or general intelligence.

Operants<sup>2</sup> include material assets, social assets (see also the Five A's proposed by Glăveanu, 2013), and a broader cultural ideology within which the creative act is situated. The thread of moral considerations continues to run through to the last operant of cultural ideology, as the dominant zeitgeist at any time contributes to permitted expressions of creativity (see also the Systems Model proposed by Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). Due to bi-directional relationships between such antecedents, mechanisms, and operants, creative acts are realized. The features of such realization include the intended valence of the action, the nature of the actor and target, the domain or context of emergence, and an element of chance. The AMORAL model distinguishes

---

<sup>2</sup> The term operants here refers to environmental factors that affect creativity. It does not refer to operants as defined within behaviorism, i.e., behaviors that lead to outcomes by acting upon the environment.

between the intended valence and actual valence (i.e., the valence of the actual outcome) of any creative act owing to disparities between intent and outcome (see also Cropley, 2010). Righteous intents can lead to unintended and harmful consequences, and vice versa. The valence of the acts can range from noble (positive anchor) to neutral, ambiguous, self-interested, sinful, and evil (negative anchor). Movement along this range can be guided by certain sub-mechanisms (deception, manipulation, and coercion), all of which have moral implications.

Following the realization of the act, aftereffects in the short term and legacies in the long term can emerge. Immediate consequences are often determined by the breadth and depth of harm/benefit that accrues after the creative act; the actual valence of the act is also identified at this time. In terms of establishing a legacy, some creative actors go on to be remembered for their deeds or misdeeds long after their demise. This is similar to Big-C in the Four C model (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009), where creative legacies, both positive and negative, can emerge in the long run.

### *AMORAL Links to Intelligence and Wisdom*

The AMORAL model has been proposed to describe and explain creative acts that are original and task-appropriate (Plucker et al., 2004); however, other higher-order cognitive processes are inevitably intertwined with creative thought. Amongst the many ingredients that comprise creativity, intelligence is an individual-level mechanism that features in earlier creativity theories and models as well (e.g., the investment theory by Sternberg & Lubart, 1992). Intellectual ability, which is necessary though not sufficient for creativity (Karwowski et al., 2016), interacts with other mechanisms, antecedents, and operants to determine how a creative act is realized. We argue that intelligence can also feature in the decisions that creators may

make en route to the realization. To illustrate, compare two criminals who shoplift creatively using concealed pockets in long sleeves. The first one shoplifts and quietly leaves the store with the goods. The second one, who is likely less intelligent, stops and checks their reflection on a store CCTV camera and then looks furtively at their hidden loot.

We propose that creativity and intelligence, whether overlapping or subsumed constructs (see also Plucker et al., 2015), are generally deployed in an amoral manner. Moral universals can attribute further meaning to the ethical value associated with creative and intelligent acts. For instance, the Moral Foundations Theory (MFT; Graham et al., 2011, 2013) proposes five universal moral pillars that facilitate ethical decisions and behavior, regardless of context or culture: harm/care (showing concern for others), fairness/reciprocity (believing everyone merits being treated fairly), ingroup/loyalty (being aligned and concerned with those in your ingroup), authority/respect (showing respect for those in authority), and purity/sanctity (feeling disgust toward what is viewed as being impure). It is interesting to note that creativity is associated with higher concern with harm/care and fairness/reciprocity, whereas lower concern with these two foundations is more associated with malevolent creativity (Kapoor & Kaufman, 2021).

This pluralistic account of morality relies in part on the Social Intuitionist Model (Haidt, 2001), which suggests that moral evaluations occur rapidly with little deliberative thought. However, deliberation and reasoning may be called upon to justify or defend one's choices. Possibly, this is where wisdom makes an appearance as well.

According to Sternberg's (1998, p. 347) balance theory of wisdom, wisdom is "the application of tacit knowledge as mediated by values toward the achievement of a common good through a balance among multiple (a) intrapersonal, (b) interpersonal, and (c) extrapersonal interests in order to achieve a balance among (a) adaptation to existing environments, (b) shaping



of existing environments, and (c) selection of new environments.” The first part of this definition would seem to align with the first two pillars of the Moral Foundations Theory (harm/care and fairness/reciprocity).

Wisdom differs from intelligence in that intelligent choices are not always directed toward a common good, whereas wise choices are. Thus, we propose that wisdom is relevant nearly everywhere in the AMORAL model. This notion of a common good was not discussed at length in Sternberg’s (1998; p. 356) article. In his words,

“I do not believe it is the mission of psychology, as a discipline, to specify what the common good is or what values should be brought to bear in what proportion toward its attainment. Such specifications are perhaps more the job of religion or moral philosophy.”

Philosophical conceptions of the common good highlight its importance within any social relationship (Hussain, 2018). Specifically, working toward a common good entails keeping others’ interests in mind and not hampering others’ welfare. Think about a shared kitchen in a dormitory – people who worked at keeping the counters clean and the fridge stocked could be considered contributors toward the common good. This concept is also related to classical utilitarianism, wherein the sum of collective pleasure over pain is to be considered when taking moral decisions. So, if one housemate decides to finish the ice cream after a particularly rough day, they can justify this decision to others. However, there is an expectation that they will then replenish the ice cream. If they do not choose to refill the stock of ice cream, then it is unlikely that their behavior would be considered to be working toward a common good. Therefore, wisdom and wise choices are inextricably linked to discussions of goodness, values, ethics, and morality.

Within the AMORAL model, we propose that wisdom can feature in an individual's belief system (antecedent), their personal values (mechanism), cultural ideology (operant), and aspects of the valence and domain of the act (realization). We further argue that wisdom, in conjunction with creativity and intelligence, moderates the breadth and depth of consequences (aftereffects) and long-term repercussions (legacy). The first three components—beliefs, values, and ideology—are linked to discussions of morality rather directly and values appear in wisdom's definition as well. We propose that in making a traditionally wise decision (as defined by taking into account the common good), one may have to balance these three and contextualize one's response, all the while keeping in mind the greater good. How one chooses to execute that decision—which may entail using intelligence, creativity, and/or wisdom—is also likely to influence the probability of success.

In a similar vein, Sternberg's (2021a) conception of transformational creativity suggests directing creative acts toward a common good, thereby suggesting that wisdom and utilitarianism can also guide such acts. This differs from transactional creativity, wherein a creative act is performed in anticipation of some reward, intrinsic or extrinsic. Overall, keeping in mind the common good is likely to promote beneficial outcomes for all involved; however, even if someone is actively working toward the common good, they may still commit immoral or bad acts. An example is when one responds to a moral dilemma, such as the crying baby dilemma (which has emerged in some format in several popular shows and movies). In this scenario, "enemy soldiers have taken over a village. They have orders to kill all remaining civilians. You and other townspeople have sought refuge in the cellar of a large house. Outside you hear the voices of soldiers who have come to search the house for valuables. Your baby begins to cry loudly. You cover his mouth to block the sound. If you remove your hand from his mouth, his

crying will summon the attention of the soldiers who will kill you, your child, and everyone else hiding in the cellar. To save yourself and the others you must smother your child to death.” Is it the correct decision for you to smother your child so that you can save yourself and the other civilians? (reproduced from Greene et al., 2004, p. S4).

Although this is a hypothetical instance, one may encounter similar dilemmas where no solution seems to perfectly work for the common good. Do you report a coworker who regularly leaves early (while on the clock) to be with a dying spouse? Do you follow a friend’s significant other if you see them being possibly intimate with someone else? Although in many scenarios, the intended valence of a creative act is clear-cut, it can be ambiguous or the subject of debate.

To move into an analysis of the interplay of intelligence, creativity, and wisdom, we will focus on a sub-mechanism of valence that is generally associated with malevolent or negative actions: deception. Through the detailed use of examples, we will explore how the presence of all three (intelligence, creativity, and wisdom) can illustrate how what might normally be considered a malevolent act is, in fact, the most moral option of all.

### ***The Interplay of Intelligence, Creativity, and Wisdom: Case Studies of Deception***

Deception is a transactional behavior change strategy used by a deceiver to gain an advantage over a person or collective. Various factors can precipitate the selection of deception as the preferred strategy for achieving a goal, including desperation, asymmetry, efficiency, and opportunity (Henderson, 2022). Deception is counterintuitive, surprising, and often unbelievable. Indeed, these characteristics are what make deception so compelling, fooling, and unfathomable to a target. However, these characteristics also challenge an assessment of the contribution of intelligence, creativity, and wisdom to the process and outcome of a given case of deception.

This section considers a variety of real-world case studies involving deception and discusses the role of intelligence, creativity, and wisdom in each. Although a retrospective assessment of these factors is subjective (and, thus, always debatable) the cases highlight how the presence or absence of any of these factors can impact how an action is assessed. It is important to note that when we categorize a behavior as not having intelligence, creativity, or wisdom, we are not necessarily saying that it was stupid, uncreative, or unwise; rather, the factor was not notably present. Table 1 summarizes our seven case studies and the notable presence of intelligence, creativity, and wisdom.

Table 1 — Deception case studies and the presence of creativity, intelligence, and wisdom

Case Study	Intelligence	Creativity	Wisdom
The invisible friend	X		
McArthur Wheeler's lemon juice		X	
The anonymous donor			X
Joseph 'Yellow Kid' Weil's banking scams	X	X	
Round-up micro-donations	X		X
Mark Landis, the benevolent art forger		X	X
Adolfo Kaminsky, the life-saving document forger	X	X	X

Each case is now described.

### The invisible friend

While visiting a friend, a mother is horrified to discover that her daughter has used a sharpie to draw on large areas of her friend's expensive wallpaper. When questioned, her daughter protests her innocence and claims that the drawings were made by her invisible friend, Charlie (see Gleason & Kalpidou, 2014, p.23).

Blaming another child (albeit one who is invisible) to escape punishment entails the child displacing her causal locus to an external source (showing the presence of intelligence). However, simplistic blame without a plausible contextual story demonstrates a lack of creativity and, therefore, credibility. And, as the daughter is the sole intended beneficiary of her attempted deception, her action is not wise.

### McArthur Wheeler's lemon juice

In 1995, McArthur Wheeler robbed two Pittsburgh banks in broad daylight, having made no apparent attempt to disguise himself. Shortly after his surveillance camera footage was broadcast on the 11 o'clock news, he was arrested. When police showed him the surveillance tapes, Wheeler was incredulous to discover that his face was visible, claiming, "But I wore the juice." Wheeler explained to the police that he believed rubbing one's face with lemon juice rendered it invisible (Fuocco, 1996, March 21).

Wheeler appears to have used analogical reasoning (albeit in a flawed manner) to determine that the properties of invisible ink could be transferred and applied to his face to make it invisible (showing the presence of creativity). However, he did not understand how invisible ink works, did not identify previous successful cases of applying invisible ink to a face, and did not study himself in a mirror with the ink applied to see if it worked (hence, not demonstrating

notable intelligence). And, as Wheeler was the sole intended beneficiary of his attempted deception, his actions also lacked wisdom.

### The anonymous donor

Consider a person who donates to charity but wishes to do so anonymously. This could be achieved by mailing an envelope full of cash with an enclosed note explaining that the public had donated the money. The donor has thereby exhibited what Bell and Whaley (1991, p.48-61) identify as two fundamental building blocks of deception — ‘hiding the real’ (by intentionally concealing their identity) and ‘showing the false’ (by claiming the money came from public donation).

Anonymity has been achieved by omitting personal details and attributing the money to the public (not showing specific signs of intelligence). The transaction involves the postal service delivering the envelope (not showing specific signs of creativity). However, the donation itself is a benevolent act (demonstrating wisdom).

### Joseph “Yellow Kid” Weil’s banking scams

Regarded by some as the most remarkable con man in US history (Living History of Illinois and Chicago, 2015), Joseph “Yellow Kid” Weil (the inspiration for the movie *The Sting*) regularly fooled investors into trusting him with large sums of their cash. He would hire out recently vacated banks in small towns and staff them with shills, presenting a convincing appearance that he was a successful banker. Investors would readily leave large amounts of cash for his safekeeping or investment. When they returned, they would discover an empty building. Weil continually honed this ploy, eventually finding that he could talk real bank managers into

lending him their offices for a few hours and then duping the mark with a stand-in “bank manager” to the same effect (Weil & Brannon, 1948).

Weil conducted a great deal of analysis and problem-solving to inveigle himself into and establish credibility within the banking world (demonstrating intelligence). His scams involved highly creative and convincing simulations of banking facilities, staff, and services (demonstrating creativity). However, Weil always benefited personally from his deception while others were harmed (thus, not showing wisdom).

#### Round-up micro-donations

Various charities have recently instituted “round-up” micro-donation facilities at contactless payment points in stores. These facilities effectively “trick” customers into making more substantial donations than they would otherwise be inclined to do. When a customer who has signed up to the charity makes a contactless payment, their bill is rounded up to the nearest dollar, and the surplus payment is donated to the charity. The value of the mere pennies donated is so insignificant that, after a couple of initial donations, subsequent donations fall outside the customer’s conscious awareness.

Automatic micro-donations allow charities to exploit digital point-of-sale systems, marking a clever utilization of technology (reflecting intelligence). Although each donation occurs automatically (and, therefore, does not denote creativity), the contributions accumulate to benefit significantly the customer’s selected charity (reflecting wisdom).

#### Mark Landis, the benevolent art forger

Mark Landis did not want or receive any money for his forgeries. Instead, he donated his paintings as genuine works of art to various museums and galleries across the United States. In

doing so, he believed he was engaged in genuine acts of philanthropy. His donations relied upon using pseudonyms and sometimes even dressing up as a priest to amplify his credibility. His case is unusual because he did not gain financially from his actions, broke no laws, and has never been prosecuted (despite the FBI following his movements closely). Once uncovered, galleries urged him to stop his donations, as his actions unintentionally highlighted their inadequate scrutiny and provenance research. In some cases, four or five galleries would display the same forgery simultaneously (Gapper, 2011).

Landis donated multiple forgeries of the same painting to different galleries, making it easy to detect his deception (thus, not demonstrating significant intelligence). However, his copies were highly skilled and artistic (creativity). And, as Landis accepted no money and viewed his donations as philanthropy, certainly his intent and (to a lesser extent) his actions can be considered wise.

#### Adolfo Kaminsky, the life-saving document forger

When Nazi Germany invaded France, 17-year-old Adolfo Kaminsky joined the French resistance. As a part-time dry cleaner, his knowledge of stain removal was soon put to work altering the identity documents of thousands of French Jews. Kaminsky modified and forged identity cards, passports, food ration cards, and birth and marriage certificates, changing Jewish-sounding names to French-sounding ones and erasing the word 'Jew' from existing documents. As one of the most prolific forgers operating during WWII, Kaminsky is credited with having saved the lives of 14,000 Jewish men, women, and children (Cooper, 2017).

Kaminsky was required to assess each document carefully and identify the most effective and credible means to alter it, drawing from his ever-developing knowledge and experience



(intelligence). He initially applied his knowledge of chemical cleaning processes and his study of real documents to ensure that his forgeries appeared credible, eventually developing a variety of other forging approaches (creativity). Kaminsky's deceptions helped save thousands of lives, and after the war, he was awarded the French Medal of the Resistance (wisdom).

### ***The Robin Hood Effect***

The case studies we have just explored have been relatively straightforward. The deceptions involved in all of the examples considered "wise" were, at worst, ill-considered. Are there scenarios where deception (and even malevolence) might be involved in an intelligent, creative action, behavior, or decision that could nonetheless be considered wise? We propose a *Robin Hood Effect* in which an actor uses deception (and even malevolence) to take from one party and (at least in part) give to another party, thus creating and exhibiting moral relativism.

There are several caveats here. First, the goodness and badness of both parties is explicit, in that the people being helped by *Robin Hood* are likely to be neutral, if not noble, whereas those who are hurt are likely to be sinful, if not evil. Second, those who are helped are often resource-deficient as compared to those who are hurt, who are likely to have ample resources. And third, the proportion of people helped is likely to be greater than those who are hurt. Thus, we argue that in the spirit of *Robin Hoods* working toward the common good, the benefit that accrues to society is much larger than any damage. Therefore, seemingly immoral acts may in fact be moral and exhibit evidence of wisdom under these conditions. However, to consider the *Robin Hood Effect* as proposed in this chapter, it is important to consider the totality of the effects of the person's actions, rather than isolated effects upon some and not others.

Consider the case of Pablo Escobar, the Colombian drug lord and founder of the Medellín Cartel. He amassed an estimated net worth of US\$30 billion at the time of his death, equivalent

to US\$64 billion as of 2021 (Macias, 2015; Percival, 2016). By investing his wealth in the development of highly novel smuggling approaches, Escobar fundamentally reinvented drug smuggling. His cartel pioneered covert global logistics and distribution networks and created private airports, warehouses, road networks, an electric submarine, and new criminal franchising mechanisms. His organization developed new approaches to concealing drugs, including original chemical processes for soaking cocaine into (and later extracting it from) clothing, cardboard, fruit, and other innocuous objects. He employed surgeons to develop techniques for safely implanting drugs inside a person's body. Drugs replaced the air inside vehicle tires, and maritime crews planted (what, at the time, were) cutting edge tracking devices into drug packages so they could be dumped overboard when they spotted a patrol vessel and later recovered (Green, 2015).

Escobar could not spend the vast sums of money earned by his organization. Consequently, he and his entourage regularly visited villages to hand out large amounts of cash to the locals, gaining their support and protection. He built hospitals, created housing projects for the poor, established community football fields and sports stadiums, and even sponsored children's football teams. Escobar's popularity led to his election as a member of the Chamber of Representatives of Colombia, a position from which he could easily bribe other government officials.

While the creativity and intelligence inherent in Escobar's operations are apparent, the wisdom of his actions is harder to argue. His actions, *prima facie*, benefited large parts of Colombian society. His benevolence, however, was enabled by horrendous crimes, including murder, torture, extortion, and blackmail. Taking a utilitarian perspective on the sum of pain versus pleasure might well land in Escobar's favor, at least until one factors in the untold havoc wreaked across the world by his organization's drugs. Although many aspects of the Robin Hood

Effect do apply, in the end, the total bad that Escobar caused through his actions likely outweighs the benefit for the common good. We would argue, therefore, that Escobar and similar criminals who are benevolent toward local populations with lesser resources, yet overlook their misdeeds, are not examples of the Robin Hood Effect.

Similar judgments regarding moral relativism apply to many other cases of deception in which the act of redistributing wealth, information, or justice might make it hard to determine its valence and wisdom. Pretty Boy Floyd was a bank robber and killer who was Public Enemy Number One in the 1930s. Yet he was also a folk hero because (at least according to popular accounts), he would destroy mortgage notes when he would rob banks, thus freeing poor locals from debts (Latston, 2014). His motivation in robbing banks was not altruistic (much as Escobar's motivations were not altruistic). However, if legends are true, then he may well have helped more people than he hurt, and the populations he hurt and helped would potentially qualify him as an example of the Robin Hood Effect.

Similarly, Aaron Swartz was a brilliant young computer scientist who believed knowledge should be free. As part of a larger pattern of activism, he downloaded articles from the JSTOR database from MIT to make them freely available. When the federal government prosecuted him (in a widely criticized move), he committed suicide (Amsden, 2013). Was he wise or unwise? Benevolent or malevolent? Swartz is perhaps the best example of the Robin Hood Effect so far; his initial actions were nonviolent and hurt entities that were much better off than the people he potentially helped. Publishers were harmed, and there are some scenarios in which Swartz's cumulative total damage may have outweighed his total good. Consider, for example, if the publishers lost so much money that they all went out of business. That said, the ethics of many publishers have been the subject of much debate (Van Noorden, 2013), and

Swartz's actions were aimed at these specific ethical issues (i.e., when publishers receive both submissions, editorial reviews, and, often, editors working for free, the exorbitant fees charged for the public to read the papers are hard to justify).

There are countless other possible examples that range from hacking to espionage to misleading advertising to undercover policing that raise questions about which creative and intelligent acts are considered to be wise. In cases when the *Robin Hood Effect* at least partially applies, the answer can be relativistic as assessed against all five pillars of the Moral Foundations Theory (Graham et al., 2011; Graham et al., 2013).

### ***Looking Forward***

The role of intelligence in the AMORAL model of creativity (Kapoor & Kaufman, 2022a) is fairly straightforward. The way in which wisdom weaves through creative actions and, more broadly, the way in which intelligence, creativity, and wisdom may interact to create scenarios of questionable morality and valence, is another matter. The question of what is meant by "common good" is a particularly interesting area to explore through this lens.

One consideration, for example, is who all are included when we draw our *moral circle* (Singer, 1981) or who (and what) is considered to be in our ingroup. Moral circles represent the extent to which one displays moral concern for entities beyond themselves, like a moral boundary. If the wisdom and morality of an action is dependent on how it affects others, then it matters how we value others. If one's ingroup or moral circle is simply one's self, then any intelligent or creative behaviors will unlikely be wise or moral. The question becomes how this may vary with larger and smaller ingroups or moral circles. Do we perceive the common good as

encompassing only our family and friends? People from the same religion, culture, or country? All of humanity? And do the first two really comprise the common good for all? What about the way that animals or the environment are impacted? If an intelligent and creative action benefits all of humanity at the expense of an animal species or plant genus, is it wise and moral? Such questions may bring larger answers about the nature of transformative creativity and intelligence (Sternberg, 2021a, 2021b). What are the calculations of how many and which people or fauna or flora should be helped, and at what cost? On what basis can moral boundaries constrict or expand (Crimston et al., 2018)? These may seem like details, but such considerations could help bring wisdom and morality more sharply into focus within creativity and intelligence research.

## References

- Amsden, D. (2013, Feb 15). The brilliant life and tragic death of Aaron Swartz. *Rolling Stone*.  
<https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-news/the-brilliant-life-and-tragic-death-of-aaron-swartz-177191/>
- Bell, J. B., & Whaley, B. (1991). *Cheating and Deception*. Transaction Publishers.
- Charney, N. (2014). Why So Many Art Forgers Want to Get Caught. Retrieved 14/11/2018 from  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/12/why-so-many-art-forgers-want-to-get-caught/383915/>
- Charney, N. (2015). *The Art of Forgery: The Minds, Motives and Methods of Master Forgers*. Phaidon Press.
- Cooper, A. (2017). How a WWII-era forger saved lives, one fake document at a time. Retrieved 25/07/2022 from <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/how-a-wwii-era-forger-saved-lives-one-fake-document-at-a-time/>

- Crimston, C. R., Hornsey, M. J., Bain, P. G., & Bastian, B. (2018). Toward a psychology of moral expansiveness. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 27(1), 14-19.
- Cropley, D. H. (2010). Summary - The dark side of creativity: A differentiated model. In D. H. Cropley, A. J. Cropley, J. C. Kaufman, & M. A. Runco (Eds.), *The dark side of creativity* (pp. 360–373). Cambridge University Press.
- Cropley, D. H., & Cropley, A. J. (2019). Creativity and malevolence: Past, present, and future. In J. C. Kaufman & R. J. Sternberg (Eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity* (2nd ed., pp. 677–690). Cambridge University Press.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1988). Society, culture, and person: A systems view of creativity. In *The Systems Model of Creativity* (pp. 47–61). Springer Netherlands. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9085-7\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9085-7_4)
- Dutta, S., Lanvin, B., León, L. R., & Wunsch-Vincent, S. (2021). *Global Innovation Index 2021*.
- Feist, G. J., Reiter-Palmon, R., & Kaufman, J. C. (Eds.) (2017). *Cambridge handbook of creativity and personality research*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Fuocco, M. A. (1996, March 21). Trial and error: They had larceny in their hearts, but little in their heads. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, p. D1.
- Gapper, J. (2011, January 21st). The Forger's Story. *The Financial Times*. 221-68.
- Gaviria, M., & Kilic, B. (2021). A network analysis of COVID-19 mRNA vaccine patents. *Nature Biotechnology*, 39(5), 546–548. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41587-021-00912-9>
- Glăveanu, V. P. (2013). Rewriting the language of creativity: The Five A's framework. *Review of General Psychology*, 17(1), 69–81. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029528>
- Gleason, T. R., & Kalpidou, M. (2014). Imaginary companions and young children's coping and competence. *Social Development*, 23(4), 820-839.

- Graham, J., Haidt, J., Koleva, S., Motyl, M., Iyer, R., Wojcik, S. P., & Ditto, P. H. (2013). Moral foundations theory: The pragmatic validity of moral pluralism. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *47*, 55–130.
- Graham, J., Nosek, B. A., Haidt, J., Iyer, R., Koleva, S., & Ditto, P. H. (2011). Mapping the moral domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *101*(2), 366–385.  
<https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021847>
- Green, P. S. (2015). Cocainenomics. Retrieved 18/07/2022 from  
<https://www.wsj.com/ad/cocainenomics-the-logistics.html>
- Greene, J. D., Nystrom, L. E., Engell, A. D., Darley, J. M., & Cohen, J. D. (2004). The neural bases of cognitive conflict and control in moral judgment. *Neuron*, *44*(2), 389–400.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuron.2004.09.027>
- Haidt, J. (2001). The emotional dog and its rational tail: A social intuitionist approach to moral judgment. *Psychological Review*, *108*(4), 814–834. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.108.4.814>
- Henderson, S. (2022). Creativity and Morality in Deception. Forthcoming in: J. Kaufman & H. Kapoor (Eds.), *Creativity and Morality*. Elsevier.
- Hussain, W. (2018). The common good. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2018/entries/common-good/>
- Kampylis, P. G., & Valtanen, J. (2010). Redefining creativity—Analyzing definitions, collocations, and consequences. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, *44*(3), 191–214.  
<https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2162-6057.2010.tb01333.x>
- Kapoor, H., & Kaufman, J. C. (2021). Unbound: The relationship among creativity, moral foundations, and dark personality. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/job.523>

Kapoor, H., & Kaufman, J. C. (2022). The evil within: The AMORAL model of dark creativity.

*Theory and Psychology, Sec 8*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/09593543221074326>

Karwowski, M., Dul, J., Gralewski, J., Jauk, E., Jankowska, D. M., Gajda, A., Chruszczewski,

M. H., & Benedek, M. (2016). Is creativity without intelligence possible? A Necessary

Condition Analysis. *Intelligence, 57*, 105–117. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intell.2016.04.006>

Kaufman, J. C., & Beghetto, R. A. (2009). Beyond big and little: The four c model of creativity.

*Review of General Psychology, 13*(1), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013688>

Kaufman, J. C., & Glăveanu, V. P. (2021). An overview of creativity theories. In J. C. Kaufman

& R. J. Sternberg (Eds.), *Creativity: An introduction* (pp. 17–30). Cambridge University

Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108776721.003>

Kruger, J., & Dunning, D. (1999). Unskilled and Unaware of It: How Difficulties in Recognizing

One's Own Incompetence Lead to Inflated Self-Assessments. *Journal of Personality and*

*Social Psychology, 77*(6), 1121-1134.

Latston, J. (2014, Oct 22). Hero or villain? Why thousands mourned a bank robber. *Time.com*.

<https://time.com/3518207/pretty-boy-floyd/>

Living History of Illinois and Chicago. (2015). Joseph “Yellow Kid” Weil, Con Man, Chicago

(1875-1976) Retrieved 20/08/2022 from

<https://web.archive.org/web/20160205080026/http://livinghistoryofillinois.com/files/Joseph%20-%20Yellow%20Kid-%20Weil%2C%20Con%20Man%2C%20Chicago%20-%201875-1976.pdf>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20160205080026/http://livinghistoryofillinois.com/files/Joseph%20-%20Yellow%20Kid-%20Weil%2C%20Con%20Man%2C%20Chicago%20-%201875-1976.pdf>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20160205080026/http://livinghistoryofillinois.com/files/Joseph%20-%20Yellow%20Kid-%20Weil%2C%20Con%20Man%2C%20Chicago%20-%201875-1976.pdf>



- Macias, A. (2015). 10 facts reveal the absurdity of Pablo Escobar's wealth. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/10-facts-that-prove-the-absurdity-of-pablo-escobars-wealth-2015-9>
- Nature Editorial. (2021). A patent waiver on COVID vaccines is right and fair. *Nature*, 593(7860), 478. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-021-01242-1>
- Nature Editorial. (2022). Time is running out for COVID vaccine patent waivers. *Nature*, 603(7903), 764–764. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-022-00878-x>
- Nioi, M., & Napoli, P. E. (2021). The waiver of patent protections for COVID-19 vaccines during the ongoing pandemic and the conspiracy theories: Lights and shadows of an issue on the ground. *Frontiers in Medicine*, 8(November), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmed.2021.756623>
- Percival, T. (2016). Here's how rich Pablo Escobar would be if he was alive today. *UniLad*. Retrieved 18/07/2022 from <https://web.archive.org/web/20180729013104/https://www.unilad.co.uk/film/heres-how-rich-pablo-escobar-would-be-if-he-was-alive-today/>
- Plucker, J. A., Beghetto, R. A., & Dow, G. T. (2004). Why isn't creativity more important to educational psychologists? Potentials, pitfalls, and future directions in creativity research. *Educational Psychologist*, 39(2), 83–96. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep3902\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep3902_1)
- Plucker, J. A., Esping, A., Kaufman, J. C., & Avitia, M. J. (2015). Creativity and intelligence. In *Handbook of Intelligence* (pp. 283–291). Springer New York. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-1562-0\\_19](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-1562-0_19)
- Simonton, D. K. (2022). The Blind-Variation and Selective-Retention Theory of Creativity: Recent developments and current status of BVSR. *Creativity Research Journal*, 1–20.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/10400419.2022.2059919>

Singer, P. (1981). *The expanding circle: Ethics and sociobiology*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Sternberg, R. J. (1998). A balance theory of wisdom. *Review of General Psychology*, 2(4), 347–365. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2680.2.4.347>

Sternberg, R. J. (2021a). Transformational creativity: The link between creativity, wisdom, and the solution of global problems. *Philosophies*, 6(3).

<https://doi.org/10.3390/PHILOSOPHIES6030075>

Sternberg, R. J. (2021b). Transformational vs. transactional deployment of intelligence. *Journal of Intelligence*, 9(1), 15.

Sternberg, R. J., & Lubart, T. I. (1992). Buy low and sell high: An investment approach to creativity. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 1(1), 1–5.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8721.1992.tb00002.x>

Storz, U. (2021). The patent maze of COVID 19 vaccines. *Expert Opinion on Therapeutic Patents*, 31(12), 1177–1188. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13543776.2021.1945581>

Tout, T. F. (1919). Medieval Forgers and Forgeries. *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 5, 208–234.

Van Noorden, R. (2013). The true cost of science publishing. *Nature*, 495(7442), 426–429.

Weil, J. R., & Brannon, W. T. (1948). “Yellow Kid” Weil: *The Autobiography of America's Master Swindler as Told to WT Brannon*. Ziff-Davis Publishing Company.