

BOUND TO OUR ENDLESS HISTORY: EXPLORING HUMAN CREATIVITY

The Human Being is a Determined, Yet Malleable Beast

Throughout our history and before such hardships had been recorded, it is evident that our race has encountered innumerable problems to which no previously applied solution has been able to dissolve. As we face impenetrable walls of physical and mental boundaries, it appears that a force somehow guides us to these solutions through the use of spiritual attunement and by the sheer effort applied in order to overcome these situations. Mistakes have led us to new solutions and; therefore, new problems arise to continue the struggle we have in taming this world to maintain our survival and create a better life for ourselves and others.

1. The Cycle of Defeat

The author first cites Mark Twain's small misanthropic essay entitled What is Man? involving a debate between a passionate young man and a wise older man as they discuss the possibility for human creativity when examining the present capabilities seen in nature and the cycle of limitation posed on the human race by our internal physical capabilities observed over time. The rhetorical strategy of the essay is to show; contrary to each and every intuition one has on the matter, that the human is indeed a determined, yet malleable beast.

“Man originates nothing. All his thoughts, all his impulses, come *from the outside*...
None but the gods have ever had a thought which did not come from the outside.”¹

“From the cradle to the grave, during all his waking hours, the human being is under training. In the very first rank of his trainers stands association. It is his human environment that

¹ Twain, Mark. *What is Man?*. 1906. (10-11).

influences his mind and his feelings, furnishes him his ideals, and sets him on his road and keeps him on it.... He is a chameleon; by the law of his nature he takes the color of his place of resort. The influences about him create his preferences, his aversions, his politics, his tastes, his morals, his religion. He creates none of these things. He *thinks* he does, but that is because he has not examined the matter.”²

It seems ignorant and redundant despite the wisdom possessed by the older man to accept a truth that remains useless when faced with problems that seem unsolvable. Without the ability to create, man would continually repeat his mistakes throughout history, and in many ways obviously does repeat these errors, but not without acknowledging the power and precedence of such issues in determining a causal relationship to the solution that must be found in order to gain access to new dimensions of problems and yet more limitations to be crossed in order to achieve new understanding.

2. **Blocked by Our Senses.** Their dialogue continues for days, the older man asserting his inability for creation and the younger man, still too infatuated with the wealth of his potential goodness, he is moved again and again to propose counterexamples to the older man’s well-worn wisdom. The old man cites Adam has a good head, but was provided everything by god from the outside... leaving him unable to create anything. The brain is constructed as a machine that works automatically, not by a soulful will power.³

“It has no command over itself; its owner has no command over it.”

The young man agrees that Adam was borne into his disposition, yet Shakespeare must’ve created the plays and other works himself. The older man asserts Shakespeare had

² Twain, Mark. *What is Man?*. (57).

³ Wisniewski, J. Jeremy. *Assertions, Clarifications and Recommendations: Theories of Agency in a Wittgenstenian Key*. American Philosophical Quarterly. Vol. 39. No. 2. April 2002.

produced imitations. He created nothing and could not create. He was a machine and cannot create.⁴

It is true that we are bound by physical limitations and associations which we can retain and bring about in our minds, yet because there are many minds and many times constantly moving forward, we have the hope to *learn* how to solve these problems, which by the grace of time's movements and our own physical wellness permitting, will bring us to a solution or to the grave.

3. **One in a Million.** I disagree with the old man's point of view citing the example of a monkey or many monkeys bashing on keyboards would eventually produce the likeness of one of Shakespeare's works, yet because of the strangeness of this disposition and by the efforts applied, he had used his powers to produce these plays by himself and that a million monkeys (who must be trained at least to type at the rate and consistency of a mastery of the English language) would not amount to validate the unique examples of powerful creations (especially in the number and rate at which he produced them). He had indeed created, yet was *inspired*, introducing the authority of a spiritual attunement or operation within the man's spiritual communion and decisions.

4. **Looking at the Bigger Picture**

The old man's view is positioned in philosophical anthropology, which examines the scope of broader topics regarding our growth in history, providing a theory of agency which makes sense of the actions in light of the self, environment and activity.⁵ It is known that the view of the forest is unable to be seen when examining the trees, or even leaves in regard to life's many details and large landscapes of history. The philosophically minded have long suspected

⁴ Twain, Mark. *What is Man?*. (11).

⁵ Wisnewski, J. Jeremy. *Assertions*. (136).

that any theory that attempts to explain *everything* – even its own counterexamples – was explaining too much and therefore leaving no room for creativity; therefore, any theory in virtue of its explanatory power that could not have counterexamples was in principle problematic.

5. Outside the Lines. While he may be able to bind his argument to the environmental aspect of determinism, the self and activity are interdependent qualities that must undergo a process of selection and various factors of competition, unable to be simply described when there are yet forces external to our own environment and those that are infinitesimal which compose our internal being. Examining the issue in the manner as one looks through a telescope, all issues seem to be irrelevant to the overall cause of action, and make the minutest details seem frivolous and non-differential to the general cause for creative activity. While examining from the other extreme, issues in the smallest detail seem no more to create a sense of security in the matter as even the smallest particles have randomized activity which seem to emit a sense of creativity, yet these forces are still bound by yet smaller particles and the factor of space and time and are unable to be predicted by any means.

6. Erupting from Within

The author suggests that the various multitudes of theories or perspectives concerning human agency take the form of simply recommending the ways in which to examine and understand the significance of human action. Nietzsche's "Will to Power", Marx's "Creative Capacities", Freud's "Id and Superego", Twain's "Inner Master" and self as the site of these forces which process the requests and demands of the outer forces. He suggests that one is recommended new and "often disturbing" rubrics at which to compare and prospect one's value's and goals; simply a baptism. While adjusting one's personal values to the ones of others past, it seems only logically valid to use history to orient oneself in a cultured and cosmopolitan

manner that accepts the disgusting nature of our human race, yet seeking a path that attempts to pave new and better roads toward a better future for oneself and the betterment of others in society.

7. **Knowledge is Power.** When examining the statement “The morning star is the evening star,” one must make reference to the assertion of a singular object in the meaning of “star” and classify the statement as true because it remains the same externally from the subjective view, and is referring to the Sun. This is called an empirical consideration and is necessary for determining the validity of the statement; it would be hard-pressed to find any example that contradicts the statement as the semantics are very secure in stating that one quantified object *is* another object, yet remains the same. Because we all live on Earth and the sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening, there is no room for creative response.

8. **Breaking it Down**

In The Construction of Social Reality, Searle claims that the form “x counts as y in context c” is a constitutive rule. This is the basics of association. The x in this term is supposed to reference 1) a physical behavior (moving a wooden piece in a diagonal line) or 2) some physical object (the wooden piece). An example that would be hard to refute is: “moving this piece of wood along a diagonal (x) counts as moving a bishop (y) in the context of the game of chess (c). In Wittgenstenian logic, *Assertion* rests as a discovery: x is the case, *Recommendation* is strongly normative: x *should count* as y, and *Clarification* is the articulation of constitutive rules of a practice, weakly normative: x counts as y; forming the basis of association.⁶

9. **Evaluating Personal Creation**

⁶ Wisnewski, J. Jeremy. *Assertions*. (137).

The author uses examples of psychologists who are convinced of the personality traits theory, and on the other hand, those who support the situationalist point of view. The former suggesting that they believe certain people possess and retain certain genetic structures that dictate their responses to the environment, and the latter suggesting a possibility of creativity when implementing an action in a new situation, such as exploring a new culture.

“Individuals may behave in consistent ways that distinguish them from their peers not because of their enduring predispositions to be friendly, dependent, aggressive, or the like, but rather because they are pursuing consistent goals, using consistent strategies, in light of consistent ways of interpreting their social world.”⁷

10. Clarification of Terms. Though the above statements may be true, the way of *explaining* in terms the observations can only be done using personality traits, which hopefully work to dissociate from their broader stereotype counterparts. It is difficult to make assertions about these claims in regard to metaphysical issues of creativity and personality, though recommendations and clarification are fluid and valid explanations for the phenomenon in question. This makes it inevitably bound to stereotyping people and their characteristics, which is a useful but unfair tool our brains use to easily and quickly categorize such features that are distinguishable from more familiar ones. Because no two people are alike, even twins, the differences come from within and it is up to the individual to attempt to eradicate these forms in order to see into the truth self of others, which is projected in a similarly confusing manner, leading us to more and more roads and pitfalls.

11. What Makes Us Move?

This ineffable being or essence we must admit exists in all of us which allows creation through determination and is invariably affected by chance and human error as well as strong

⁷ Ross, L. and R. E. Nisbett. 1991. *The Person and the Situation*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

situations of coincidence. It is true that a mind limited to its own powers may not be able to create anything through the actual association of various elements unless it is a combination of many factors, yet the outside forces guide us to new hopes through spiritual communion that we may accept and work in accordance with or reject and allow our mechanical limitations in ignorance to display themselves through repetition and consternation. The explanation I have explored is that there is a force that retains a position on earth and in any other space we may be able to conceive in the same fashion that all of us humans hold a physical location on earth that may not be held by another person or thing at the same space of time. This being has contributed to our physical structure as well as our mental capacity by enabling us to understand that there is a solution to a given problem and that we must fill the gap with many ideas until we are able to find a piece that fits in the appropriate manner so as to dissolve the illusion of an inability to simply create, but rather replace the space or problem with another form to complete the puzzle.

12. Is God at Work? Based on the biblical demonstrations quantifying God as omnipotent and existing as the Alpha and Omega, this essence is claimed to be the likeness of all humans, and we are very spiritual creations of our own through the powers granted to us. Conceptually, we may perceive many subjective phenomenons; yet arrive at physical limitations and potentially objective experiences that are culturally unable to be experienced by anything or one except this true creator. It appears that when all pieces of the mind bound by association and creativity are assembled, they resemble a large puzzle. In this puzzle, there is no complete form without assuming the continuation of time and an additional piece to be added. When complete, the purest form of such a puzzle still always misses a piece and is therefore never complete by our own minds or standards of thought; time will always present a new problem that requires a new situation when being moved around. The puzzle is therefore closest to those in which you

shift 9, 15, 24, etc number of pieces to complete the known form but the space is necessary in order to slide the pieces forward into a more accurate form to resemble the structure we appear to “know.”

13. **Stalemate.** We are bound to our mistakes and it is evident in the reoccurring paths in history that seem to make it the “best of all possible worlds” despite the madness and destruction, it seems to be unfolding unto itself and is relatable to the natural laws that bind us biologically; physically and spiritually, yet remain off topic with regard to the quality of soulful experience, gained by the expression and acquisition of various forms presented by God. Because it is impossible to effectively understand creativity in its purest and natural form, we are only able to jump around the borders of this force and allow ourselves to be consumed by the creative drive that is the main power that builds and maintains our civilization. It is a necessary tool in the process of life, yet within us it is unexplainable, only observable from outside the thick fog that surrounds the rest of the mysteries of our human condition.

14. **Conclusion**

By examining the ideas of the author and his sources of interest, it seems that there is no clear path understood by all to be the one factor that moves us all, yet there still is a place held for this being. With regard to theological precedence, it appears that there is actually some logical sense involved in the belief system of various customs when allowing the person to compare themselves to a Higher Power in order to more accurately and modestly propose a state in which none is the better and we collectively help others make it to a universally better condition; these are the ideas of heaven ringing clearly. With regard to Wittgenstenian logic, there seems to be little use for assertion with relation to truths other than the greatest knowledge

is that “I know nothing” which contends that there is always going to be another problem to which we will not know or understand until we climb over the boundary. Using these logical premises, it seems only useful to apply recommendations and clarifications to our findings in order to effectively communicate a message in which all sides are given room to stand in the paradoxical and bipolar world in which we live.