

## CHAPTER THIRTY

# MARK A. RUNCO: AN INTERNET-BASED ANALYSIS OF A CREATIVITY RESEARCH CONTRIBUTOR EXTRAORDINAIRE

LARRY KEISER

Weaving from Canada and the United States, through Europe, down to India and Singapore, through China, over to Japan, and a multitude of countries in between, Mark A. Runco, PhD, has worked with universities, colleagues, and organizations across the globe to expand the world's understanding and use of creativity for idea generation and divergent thinking. A prolific researcher, author and presenter, Dr. Runco has published and presented around the globe. You can find his continually updated vita (as of April 2021) at <https://www.markrunco.com> for the specifics and timeline of his fascinating journey following his passion.

I share upfront that I have purposely not talked to Mark about this chapter, and hope that he finds it to be more of an 'homage' rather than an 'inaccurate and vast misrepresentation' of his work. The chapter was gleaned from an array of websites including his own (previously shared) and my own use of his articles, chapters and books in my own teaching and research in the areas of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. It is taken for granted that throughout his various university/college roles, that Mark has continually served as a classroom instructor in addition to all his other activities.

Currently, Mark serves as the Director of Creativity Research & Programming at Southern Oregon University (SOU). SOU is the home of the Creativity Conference at Southern Oregon University. At the time of this writing, a call for submissions is out for the 4<sup>th</sup> annual conference. I presented at the 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2019 and 3<sup>rd</sup> held virtually in 2021 due to the current pandemic (which also caused the 2020 conference to be postponed). Both events were extraordinary as evidenced by the combination of the keynote speakers and the quality of selected presenters and presentations coupled with the welcoming atmosphere, use of communication technology, and the overall care in attending to the conference details by the conference team. The conference is now one of the highlights of my academic year. I wonder too if the hospitality and generosity demonstrated during the conferences might be a residual from Mark's first academic professorship in Hawaii, a state renowned for such.

Mark's academic focus in college was psychology having earned his degrees (BA, MA, and PhD) from Claremont Men's College and Claremont Graduate School. His doctorate, earned in 1984, lead him to an assistant professorship in psychology at the University of Hawaii, Hilo, earning tenure

and promotion to associate professor in 1987. Although Mark's research publications began while he was a student in the area of autism, the articles he published in his professorships seemed to center on creativity and, more specifically, divergent thinking, e.g., "The effect of radio and television on children's creativity (Runco & Pezdek, 1984)" and "The Reliability and convergent validity of ideational flexibility as a function of academic achievement (Runco, 1985)," in *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, and "The reliability and validity of ideational originality in the divergent thinking of academically gifted and nongifted children (Runco & Albert, 1985)," in *Educational and Psychological Measurement*. By 1987, Mark's published articles were primarily centered on creativity and gifted children. The topics in the area of creativity were as varied as the journals in which they were published, e.g., "Interrater agreement on a socially valid measure of students' creativity (Runco, 1987)," in *Psychological Reports*, "The generality of creative performance in gifted and nongifted children (Runco, 1987)," in *Gifted Child Quarterly*, and "The psychometric properties of four systems for scoring divergent thinking tests (Runco, Okuda & Thurston, 1987)," in the *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*.

Concurrently, Mark appears to have successfully continued to develop the collaborative and networking skills that he gained as a graduate student, i.e., a Research Assistant on a MacArthur Foundation Grant on exceptional giftedness and Psychometric Consultant on a National Institute of Health grant on high altitude hypoxia and cognition. Mark continued similar activities while at the University of Hawaii, Hilo, i.e., Psychometric Consultant on a National Institute of Health Grant on Native Hawaiian Children as well as for the Hawaii County Department of Education committee on identifying gifted children. His work and reputation also resulted in being honored with the Creative Education Foundation Research Award (1988) and a Spencer Foundation Research Grant (1989).

It was apparently while transitioning positions from the University of Hawaii, Hilo, back to the U.S. mainland to work (Visiting Associate Professor, Pitzer College, Claremont, CA), that Mark founded the *Creativity Research Journal* serving as its Founding Editor (1988) and where he resigned his role as Chief Editor in 2020 and is now Emeritus Editor. Skipping ahead for a moment in Mark's timeline, he also founded two other journals in 2015, *Business Creativity and the Creativity Economy* and the *Journal of Genius and Eminence*. In addition to these journals, Mark has served on the Editorial Board of a number of other creativity focused journals throughout his career including: *Creativity and Innovation Management*; *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*; *Creativity: Theories-Research-Applications*; *Journal of Creativity and Business Innovation*; *Frontiers in Educational Research*; *Kindai Management Review: Bulletin of the Institute of Creative Management and Innovation*; and the *Creativity & Human Development International eJournal*.

Moving back to the timeline of this chapter, in 1991, Mark joined the California State University, Fullerton (CSU-F), where he became a tenured professor and would he remain for 22 years (2008). Through his work there, Mark made contacts and collaborated across the U.S. and international-

ly. He served as a Visiting Scholar for the Cognitive Unit of University of Bergen (Norway) (1992), Chief Curator for the Milken foundation Creativity Museum (1994-95) and as an adjunct professor for the Norwegian School of Economics & Business Administration (2003-08).

Mark's professorship at CSU-F during the 1990s also allowed him to engage with colleagues and organizations from around the world serving, most of which he seems to remain active to this day, e.g., as a Consultant for the National Research Center on Gifted & Talented (since 1991) Advisory Board for the Centre for Child Development, Hong Kong Baptist College (since 1994), Adjunct Curator for the Museum of Creativity Project (in Santa Monica, CA, since 1995), and the Advisory Committee for the Gifted Education Program at Chinese University of Hong Kong and as External Examiner of the Psychology Department at the University of the West Indies – Barbados (both since 1996).

The 1990s was also a prolific time publishing-wise for Mark, who continually published more exclusively on aspects of creativity throughout the decade. The topics of his articles and chapters in books included, divergent thinking, self-actualization, economic theories related to creativity, problem finding and solving real-world problems, ideation, a psychoeconomic approach to creativity, creativity predictors, giftedness, health and clinical perspectives of creativity, developmental trends, group creativity, and much more. Mark published his books, *Theories of Creativity (SAGE Focus Editions)*, in 1990 and *Divergent Thinking*, in 1991, as well as edited, *Problem Finding, Problem Solving, and Creativity*, in 1994 and *The Creativity Research Handbook, Vol 1 (Perspectives on Creativity)*, in 1997. Capping off the decade, 1999 was an especially active year where Mark had 26 articles or chapters published including several chapters in the *Encyclopedia of Creativity* for which he also served as a co-editor. For specific details, again review Mark's vita on his website, <https://www.markrunco.com>.

The 1990s also was a time for Mark to be recognized for his ongoing achievements and contributions to creativity research. Samples include his receiving the Huges Aircraft Research Award (1990), the Early Scholar Award from the National Association of Gifted Children (1993), the Outstanding Service Award (1997) and Outstanding Scholarly and Creative Activity Award (1998) from the California State University, and Fellow (1995) and President (1997) statuses of the American Psychological Association (Division 10).

Mark's very active research and other scholarly activities and partnerships continued into the new millennium. From 2000 through 2009, Mark published an estimated average of 8 publications a year, as well as the first edition of his book, *Creativity: Theories and themes: Research, development, and practice*, (2007), a book that is still referenced heavily in the foundations of creativity course at Drexel University, where I teach, albeit the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (2014). [Thank you, too, to Mark, for the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition that hopefully will be available before Fall 2022!]

Adding to Mark's previous awards and honors, he was recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award by the National Association for Gifted Children in 2000. He was also designated a Faculty Scholar by the College of Human Development, California State University.

Although Mark no doubt ‘presented’ often during the 1980s and 90s, Mark’s formal documentation of his more formal presentations on various aspects of creativity begins in 2000. He presented to an array of organizations over the next 10 years across the globe. Norway, Taiwan, Hawaii, California, Iowa, and Georgia to name but a few places. A particular presentation though stands out from March 2006. Specifically, Mark presented “Creative potential and divergent thinking,” at the University of Georgia’s (UGA) E. Paul Torrance Lecture Series. The presentation foreshadows Mark’s next transition that occurred two years later, 2008, when Mark transitioned from CSU-F to serve as the inaugural E. Paul Torrance Professor of Creative Studies and Gifted Education at UGA.

Mark’s role at UGA, in addition to his serving as the E. P. Torrance Professor of Creative Studies and Gifted Education, a post he held for six years (2014), was that of Executive Director of the Torrance Center for Creativity and Talent Development from 2008-2010. The Torrance Center is housed in the College of Education’s Department of Educational Psychology and Instructional Technology (Sartor, 2009). In 2015, Mark transitioned within the College of Education from the E. Paul Torrance Professor of Creativity Studies Director to a tenured Professorship in Educational Psychology.

Mark’s collaborations, research publications and presentations did not slow down during the 2010s. Mark published in the U.S. and internationally an estimated 14 to 15 articles and chapters on creativity a year from 2010-2019. In addition to divergent thinking, self-actualization, creativity testing, and previous themes of his previous research, “Innovation” seems to appear more frequently in his publication titles, e.g., “Abilities that contribute to creativity and innovation at work (Mumford, 2019),” “Further evidence that creativity and innovation are inhibited by conservative thinking: Analyses of the 2016 Presidential election (Runco, Acar & Cayirdag, 2017),” in *Creativity Research Journal*, and “Management for creativity and innovation, 2014)” in *Research: Journal of the International Foundation for Research and Analysis*. In addition, Mark contributes a book chapter on a topic that intrigues many creative researchers and students, “*The dark side of creativity: Potential better left unfulfilled* (Plucker, 2016)” which seems to follow up the book he co-edited, “*The dark side of creativity*, (Cropley, Cropley, Kaufman & Runco, 2010). The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of his co-edited book, “*Encyclopedia of Creativity*,” also was published, as was the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition in 2019.

Uniquely, in 2010, Mark also published the Runco Creativity Assessment Battery (rCAB). The rCAB is a comprehensive battery for the measurement of creativity that covers the entire lifespan. It uses subtests for all age groups providing both individual measurements as well as assessments that parents, teachers, or supervisors can complete to provide triangulation and objectivity. (Creativity Testing Services, n.d.). Mark and his collaborators describe some components of the rCAB, i.e., the “Figural DT (Divergent Thinking),” “Titles,” “Realistic Presented Problems,” and “Realistic Problem Generation” tests providing helpful and detailed information in Runco’s article, “Which test of divergent thinking is best (Runco, Abdulla & Paek, 2016)” in *Creativity: Theories – Research – Applications*.

Mark continued his service during the 2010s to the U.S. and international advisory boards, consultantships, and other partnerships begun in the

1990s. He additionally served as Distinguished Consulting Faculty for Saybrook Graduate University in San Francisco, CA, (2015-2018). He also accepted additional Advisory Board positions. The following Advisory Boards are highlighted and have continued into the present: Bay Area Discovery Museum's Center for Childhood Creativity in San Francisco, CA (2011), Institute of Creative Management & Innovation for Kinki University in Japan (2012); Utrecht Platform for Creativity and Innovation in the Netherlands (2016); Institute for Creativity and Innovation in Ismaning, Germany (2017), Lego in Billund, Denmark (2017), and Creativity & Innovation Center for Webster University in Geneva Switzerland.

Mark also was honored with being named a Steinecker Lecturer for the University of Regina, Canada and Claremont McKenna College Psychology Alumnus of the Year, the American Library Association's Outstanding Academic Title in 2013 for the "Encyclopedia of Creativity", and the Haass Lecturer for the Technische Universität in Kaiserslautern, Germany, and Honorary Dean for the Chinese & American Creativity Research Institute in Beijing in 2016.

Mark also seemed to present non-stop throughout the U.S. and abroad on varied topics from 2010 through 2018. These presentations include trips to California, Colorado, Georgia, Louisiana, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Maryland, Mississippi, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Netherlands, Spain, and many more... and most, more than once. You are encouraged to review the full list on his vita via his website to try to imagine how Mark accomplished the travel and preparation while conducting his teaching, research, and extraordinary publication output (Acar, Runco & Park, 2020).

Mark accepted an opportunity to serve as Director of Creativity Research & Programming at Southern Oregon University (SOU) in 2019. For Mark, that year saw no slowdown in productivity. He published 16 articles and chapters, including new chapters in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of "Encyclopedia of Creativity," (Runco & Pritzker, 2019). Most of Mark's presentations of 2019 were made closer to work – at least occurring on the West Coast in California and at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Creativity Conference SOU, although he did make time to present at Harvard on the East Coast and sojourn to South Korea before the pandemic shut the world down, travel-wise. Although new to SOU, Mark's work was recognized in his first year with receiving SOU's University Service Excellence award and being named a Transdisciplinary Fellow for University of Southern California's Santa Barbara's College of Creative Studies.

Mark's 2020, although light on presentations due to the pandemic, continued strong in research publications. He had 12 articles and book chapters published on a wide range of topics. These include book chapters such as, "Malevolent creativity (Glaveanu, 2020)" and "Subjectivity in creativity research (Carducci, 2020)" and the journal articles such as, "What should people be told when they take a divergent thinking test? A meta-analytic review of explicit instructions for divergent thinking" in *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* and "Does Cognitive Style Moderate Expected Evaluation and Adolescents' Creative Performance: An Empirical Study (Lei, Deng, Zhu, Runco, Dai & Hu, 2020)," in the *Journal of Creative Behavior*. In

addition to teaching at SOU, Mark currently lectures regularly for Shaanxi Normal University in Xi'an, China, and at the Universidad de Cantabria, Spain.

As shared in the beginning of the chapter, Mark's vita was last updated in April 2021, almost a year prior to the writing of this chapter. At that time, Mark had 12 articles or chapters in press for 2021 with four articles or chapters already published, as well as delivered a creativity presentation to a company in Minnesota. (It is not known at this time if the event was held virtually or in person.) As also shared, he is tasked with coordinating the 2022 SOU Creativity Conference. By sheer volume, the amount of research, publications, presentations, and services provided to the various advisory boards and organizations he completes year after year is not only staggering, but inspiring – particularly when his teaching effort is considered. It speaks volumes to his passion regarding creativity as a research area. From any measure I can think of, Mark A. Runco, PhD, is clearly a Creativity Research Contributor Extraordinaire.

**Articles Mentioned and Other References:**

Acar, S., Runco, M. A., & Park, H. (2020). What should people be told when they take a divergent thinking test? A meta-analytic review of explicit instructions for divergent thinking. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 14(1), 39–49. <https://doi.org/10.1037/aca0000256>

Creativity Testing Services, The Academy of Creativity, (n.d.). “Creativity Tests.” <http://creativitytestingservice.com/page/tests/>

Cropley, D. H., Cropley, A. J., Kaufman, J. C. & Runco, M. A. (Eds.) (2010). *The dark side of creativity*. Cambridge University Press.

Lei, W., Deng, W., Zhu, R., Runco, M. A., Dai, D. Y., & Hu, W. Does Cognitive Style Moderate Expected Evaluation and Adolescents' Creative Performance: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Creative Behavior*, 55, 120-129. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.439>

Runco, M. A. (1984). Teachers' judgments of creativity and social validation of divergent thinking tests. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 59, 711-717.

Runco, M. A. (1987). Interrater agreement on a socially valid measure of students' creativity. *Psychological Reports*, 61, 1009-1010.

Runco, M. A. (1987). The generality of creative performance in gifted and nongifted children. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 31, 121-125.

Runco, M. A. (2010). Creativity has no dark side. In D. H. Cropley, A. J. Cropley, J. C. Kaufman, & M. A. Runco (Eds.), *The dark side of creativity* (pp. 15-32). Cambridge University Press.

Runco, M. A. (2014). Management for creativity and innovation. In *Research: Journal of the International Foundation for Research and Analysis*, May-June, pp. 34-39

Runco, M. A. (2016). The dark side of creativity: Potential better left unfulfilled In J. A. Plucker (Ed.), *Creativity and innovation: Current understandings and debates* (pp. 49-59). Prufrock Press.

Runco, M. A. (2019). Abilities that contribute to creativity and innovation at work. In M. D. Mumford (Ed.), *Creativity and Innovation in Organizations* (pp. 69-87). Taylor & Francis.

Runco, M. A. (2020). Malevolent creativity. In V. Glaveanu (Eds.), *The encyclopedia of the possible*. Palgrave. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-98390-5\\_80-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-98390-5_80-1)

Runco, M. A. (2020). Subjectivity in creativity research. In V. Dorfler & M. Stierand (Eds.), *Handbook of research methods on creativity* (pp. 27-45). Edward Elgar Publishers.

Runco, M. A. (2021). "Mark A. Runco, Director of Creativity Research Programming, Southern Oregon University." <https://www.markrunco.com/>

Runco, M. A. (2021, April). "Curriculum Vita: Mark A. Runco, PhD." <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5401caa2e4b0a7034af9a827/t/608d5967b39de4473e8eb4e0/1619876200131/runco-cv-april2021.pdf> accessed through <https://www.markrunco.com/>

Runco, M. A., Abdulla, A. M. & Paek, S. H. (2016). Which test of divergent thinking is best? *Creativity: Theories-Research-Applications*, 3, 4-18.

Runco, M. A., Acar, S. & Cayirdag, N. (2017). Further evidence that creativity and innovation are inhibited by conservative thinking: Analyses of the 2016 Presidential election. *Creativity Research Journal*, 29, 331-336.

Runco, M. A. & Albert, R. S. (1985). The reliability and validity of ideational originality in the divergent thinking of academically gifted and nongifted children. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 45, 483-501

Runco, M. A., Okuda, S. M. & Thurston, B. J. (1987). The psychometric properties of four systems for scoring divergent thinking tests. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 5, 149-156.

Runco, M. A. & Pezdek, K. (1984). The effect of radio and television on children's creativity. *Human Communications Research*, 11, 109-120.

Runco, M. A. & Pritzker, S. (Eds.) (1999). *Encyclopedia of creativity* (1st ed.). Academic Press.

Runco, M. A. & Pritzker, S. (Eds.) (2011). *Encyclopedia of creativity* (2nd ed.). Elsevier.

Runco, M. A. & Pritzker, S. (Eds.) (2019). *Encyclopedia of creativity* (3rd ed.). Elsevier.

Runco, M. A., Abdulla, A. M. & Paek, S. H. (2016). Which test of divergent thinking is best? *Creativity: Theories-Research-Applications*, 3, 4-18.

Sartor, J. (2009, March 6). "College of education welcomes Mark Runco as new professor." *UGA Today*. <https://news.uga.edu/college-of-education-welcomes-mark-runco-as-new-professor/>