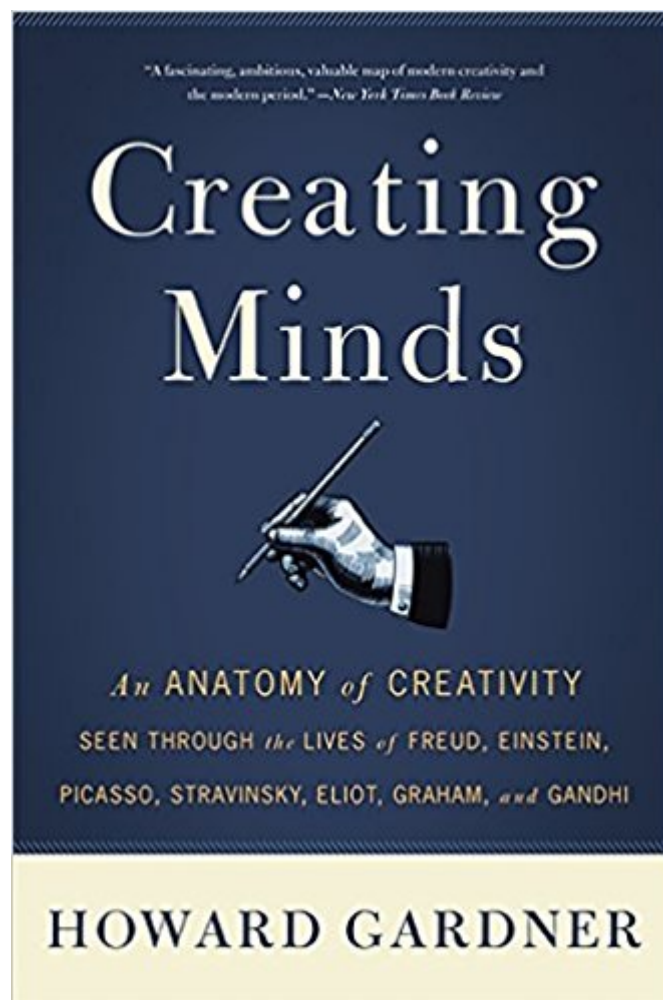




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# Creating Minds: An Anatomy Of Creativity Seen Through The Lives Of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, And Ghandi



## Synopsis

Since it was first published in 1993, *Creating Minds* has served as a peerless guide to the creative self. Now available as a paperback reissue with a new introduction by the author, the book uses portraits of seven extraordinary individuals to reveal the patterns that drive the creative process—and to demonstrate how circumstance also plays an indispensable role in creative success.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In this boldly ambitious study, Gardner ( *Frames of Mind* ) profiles seven creative giants. Creativity, he argues, is not an all-purpose trait but instead involves distinct intelligences, as exemplified by Picasso's visual-spatial skills or by Gandhi's nonviolent approach to human conflict or Martha Graham's search for a distinctly American form of bodily expression. Each of the seven creative geniuses whom Gardner incisively limns transcended interpretive frames or conventions that became entrenched during the 19th century; each forged a new "system of meaning

It takes chutzpah to come up with a scheme for analyzing creativity--especially in subjects already exhaustively examined. But for psychologist and MacArthur fellow Gardner (Harvard Graduate School of Education), it amounts to a natural progression from his earlier dissections of intelligence: *Frames of Mind* and *Multiple Intelligences* argued that, instead of a generalized intelligence, there are at least seven varieties (musical, logical-mathematical, visual, etc.). Here, Gardner chooses

prototypes of each variety and provides capsule biographies and analyses along such themes as the child versus the adult creator, and the creator in relation to others and to the work. Gardner finds sufficient commonalities among his seven types of intelligence to provide a synthesis: an "exemplary creator" (E.C.). This individual (whom Gardner calls "she") is somewhat "marginal" in the social milieu, born into a reasonably comfortable family away from the creative center (Picasso and Stravinsky moved to Paris, Freud to Vienna...). There may not be much family love and affection but there may be a devoted nurse or a role model. The child is strong-minded and exhibits ability but isn't necessarily a prodigy. She moves into a decade of mastery of the domain and accomplishes a critical breakthrough that may include the affirmation of a few chosen peers (Picasso and Braque; Stravinsky and Diaghilev). Second and third breakthroughs may develop in successive decades until old age takes its toll. The E.C. retains childlike characteristics, including self-centeredness, even exploitation of others (Stravinsky's litigiousness; Picasso's sadism). E.C.s may make Faustian bargains, often leading to disastrous domestic life and parenthood. One can come up with counterexamples, and argue that there might be Western/20th-century biases at work here. But one has to hand it to Gardner for offering some provocative post-Eriksonian thoughts on creativity that are a lot more stimulating than those that measure creativity according to the "100 uses of a safety pin" school of thought. -- Copyright ©1993, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Creating Minds has been a favorite of mine for years! I use it to motivate students to write their extended essays for the IB. Take any temporary group and use the same triangular framework (beginning, achievement, and results); it moves students to tell the story in their own words! My favorite tale is still the first student who took on the challenge; he selected sports commentators of a particular time span, explained their beginnings, their preparation, their relationships to get to the top, and their achievements. It worked!

Very innovative and brave on part of the author to pick up seven persons of fame and keen intellect, from different stratas and walks of life, different countries and analyse each one's unique creativity and contributions in their own respective fields. Especially liked the chapters on Picasso, Stravinsky and Graham as it gives insight into their complex and complicated minds. This book is not only a great read for those who have interest in psychology as a subject but also for people who wish to expand their knowledge and increase their depth of understanding. Also the author has very subtly but poignantly revealed their human side, which beautifully describes the many agonies and pains

behind 'genius' and 'success'.

This book examines the creative process by reviewing the lives of seven highly creative people. I enjoyed the seven mini-biographies, but the attempts to generalize from them seemed ponderous. Some of Dr. Gardner's generalizations seem overly broad, some don't seem to be universally true even among the seven individuals he studied, and in any case seven cases isn't enough to generalize from with much confidence. This book reminded me of Eric Erickson's biography of Gandhi, which I read years ago with great interest. Erickson's theories about the life cycle and how it applied to Gandhi's life were more satisfying to me than Gardner's generalizations. There is an excellent 1955 film (Le Mystere Picasso) that shows time-lapse photography of Picasso's work in progress. The film helped me to feel better about my own frequent revisions when writing. It is available on DVD from a French company, Cinestore.com.

Entraining and in-depth look at the lives of several creative geniuses. The author's main premise of different types of intelligence is well argued. In my view the book's weakness is that the author uses a rigid and heavy structure to carry us through the lives of these geniuses.

A magnificent book by a magnificent man. Wildly informative across a 7 discipline range. Add it to your library. Use it in a class or for a book-club or discussion group. It will prepare you for your own wider & deeper studies of---Picasso, Stravinsky, T.S. Eliot, Gandhi, Freud, Einstein, Martha Graham. And open you to the range of possible forms of minding that are your own. F. Braio

I haven't finished reading this book however so far it has been a wonderful reading experience dense with the history and fundamentals of creative thinking. As the book serves almost as a focal point for different experts in the field of creativity, I had become distracted in the first few chapters and ordered flow by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi which turned out to be another exceptional read.

Very good for my researches, enriching and informative. This is the kind of book I like to read. Very interesting. :-)

I acquired the book for a class assignment and turned out that I really enjoyed this book. Incredibly insightful about some of the greatest minds in history

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