

UNKNOWN KNOWNS

*the mystic origin of human creativity and
irrational behaviour*

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INTRODUCTION

Le coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point

(The heart has its reasons which reason does not know) Pensées, nr 277. French mathematician Blaise Pascal (1623 - 1662)

There are certain decisive characteristics in the mental faculties that distinguish the human species from other mammals, in particular our creative capacity with its ability to bring about extraordinary productivity and innovations, and our seemingly irrational behaviours that make accurate projections of human actions, both individually and collectively, at times, difficult. These capabilities have however proven stubbornly difficult to explain, such as the critical junction of creative breakthroughs which often come through so-called *Eureka* moments, but its activation and origin remain enigmatic, and deliberately trying to provoke it into action is often futile. Equally difficult has it been to analyse irrationality where little is known of its functionality and its motivations, to the extent that in social sciences, bar some aspects of behavioural economics and finance, it is routinely overlooked, where the paradigm of *the rational man theory* is assumed to average out any quirky behaviour, even as it appears collectively. And this has consequences as societal structures, including legislations, are developed on the assumption of its citizen's rationality. It remains one of the least researched areas of the human behaviour, generally swiftly glossed over, considering any occurrence of irrationality as an act of ignorance or even (emotionally driven) stupidity.

There are however plausible theories, supported by a body of research, that can explain the advent of breakthrough creative thoughts, as well as, irrationality, and intriguingly enough both appear to originate from the same source. But does that mean that *nouvelle* innovations will at first appear as *irrational* in the contemporary context, and by its very nature alter the juxtaposition boundaries between irrational and rational? If so, at least certain aspects of, irrationality becomes a highly valuable characteristic from the commercial and scientific perspective.

What could this source then be, and if ascertained, can it be modelled? A number of independent studies from different academic perspectives point to *unknown knowns*, sometimes labelled as strange attractors, archetypes, reference classes, or neurological patterns, to which the human thought process arranges and categorises itself. These unknown knowns as the name alludes typically operate under our level of awareness, therefore being of an allusive nature, and whilst they often carry a feeling of familiarity, they also include aloof attributes, hence the *double-entendre* label is apt. This ambiguity makes unknown known difficult to articulate and formalise into a blueprint as it is hard to fathom their influence on shaping human thoughts. Thus, it is not unusual that creative manifests are considered crafted through irrational means with their seemingly relaxation of the dictates of the rules of inference, as well as, the occasional quantum leap. However, it *must* be that the unknown knowns come with structures and rules, otherwise it would always appear completely chaotic and random, much like the mental inner world of a schizophrenic patient. But as they are residing in the unconscious part of the human mind, our comprehension of them remain superficial, at best. Given that this phenomena is so poorly understood, it carries mystic, even magic properties, and have been described in areas outside scientific innovations and breakthroughs, such as poetry, art, music, and even religious experiences. Albeit even in such disparate processes, there are shared

commonalities that can be observed, indicating an universal mental mechanism, agnostic of scope and topic as it transcends at the meta level.

At the root of unknown knowns is the enactment of an enlightenment process of sorts, where suddenly a problem that has been deliberated on finds a solution, or it could be the artist's impromptu inspiration to depict, write or compose, or a religious insight of celestial magnitude. It is typically preceded by extended periods of frustration and procrastination where in this prelude, strenuous mental efforts are invested. For the surrounding *entourage*, and indeed often for the innovators or artists themselves, most of the creative process appear irrational, even mystical, and it is often only with the historical hindsight at hand that a sense of rational insight materialises.

Unknown Knowns - the mystic origin of human creativity and irrational behaviour is a book for anyone with an interest in psychology, in particular the unique human faculties of creativity and acts of irrationality, tied together through structures in the unconscious part of the mind. By understanding the hidden rules they operate by, the reader is equipped with the insight and knowledge to forecast irrationality that so much forms human behaviour, as well as, an improved capacity to creative thinking through a blueprint creativity machine, a facilitated artificial intelligence tool developed to automatically enhance the creative process.

Unknown Knowns is structured in six chapters;

Chapter 1) The Mystery of Irrational Thinking

Irrationality has often come to equalise madness as it tends to so distinctively conflict with logic inference, but is it really so? This chapter reviews what is known about irrational thoughts and behaviour, and how come it is so prevalent in a world supposed to operate on rationality alone.

Chapter 2) Creativity Is an Act of Destruction

A lot of research has been put into the creative process, given the great value it holds, both commercially and intellectually, on our lives. Many interesting findings have been made which will be covered in this chapter, however of the most critical part of the process surprisingly little is known. The chapter will also ponder over the question whether it is possible to consciously produce targeted creativity.

Chapter 3) The Magic of Creation

The creative genius, sometimes seen as also having a streak of madness, is clouded by mystery as their creation of art, music, poetry, even mathematics and religious insights often carries seemingly divineline properties. Interestingly enough when comparing the creative process for innovation and scientific breakthroughs with the creative process for artists, in accordance with, for instance, the painter Wassily Kandinsky's theoretical writing on art, as well as, religious experiences such as the theologian Rudolf Otto's concept of the *Numinous*, their descriptions share remarkable similarities. Is it so that the process of creativity, independently of themes, carries universal properties?

Chapter 4) The Unknown Knowns

The unknown knowns have been described in different academic disciplines, however given the various labels, a comparative analysis where disparate scientific evidence can be paired together and form a holistic view of any structures and rules that organises and augment creativity, has rarely been done in a

comprehensive manner. With a more facilitated understanding of the unknown knowns, irrationality comes in a different light altogether, perhaps it is not irrationality after all, but rather an enhanced and expanded view of reality being contemplated through relaxing, in parts, the laws of logic and conjugating it with categorisation albeit of the more unusual type?

Chapter 5) Computational Creativity - A Blueprint

With a thorough understanding of the unknown knowns and how they operate within the confines of the human mind, an interesting value proposition arises, can we artificially create creativity? By modelling the structure and patterns of the human mind, it should be possible to design a blueprint of a creativity machine of sorts, in other words, computational creativity capable of producing human-level creativity. The power of developing such an artificial intelligence tool lies in;

- its scenario generating capacity which by far exceeds that of what humans are capable of, and;
- its ability to create random scenarios, even such of a *bizarre* nature that supersedes that of human imagination.

Such a tool can in a bespoke manner be crafted and 'loaded' for designated research projects and similar. Methodologies like *conceptual blending*, drawing from the intersection of different frames of references, can be deployed to generate creative scenarios. This chapter sums up the design steps of a blueprint that the reader can apply to develop his own creative contraption to enhance his innovative capabilities.

Chapter 6) Conclusions

The concluding chapter summarises the findings and highlights the development of robots capable of generating creative solutions with the apparently irrational behaviour, much in accordance in how, at least some of us, humans behave.