

The following five sources, from various forms and fields, are a selection of references that I plan to make note of within the composition of my own written thesis. Each source was chosen for its relevance to my topic area of the human development through creativity, and will provide valuable insights to inform and strengthen the key arguments within my thesis.

Solnit, R. (2005) *A Field Guide To Getting Lost*. Canons 2017 ed. New York: Viking Books.

In *A Field Guide To Getting Lost*, Rebecca Solnit discusses the redefining of the words “loss”, “losing” and “lost”, integrating themes of navigation and direction both physically and morally. Solnit speaks of the importance of these topics through stories of personal and family history whilst also proving the relevance of the perception of “lost” within indigenous tribes and more remote peoples. This book is in-fact the very thing that presented me with my thesis subject matter in the first place. Specifically, the second chapter of *The Blue of Distance*, within which Solnit discusses the idea of growth and loss being a synonymous occurrence, and presents the metaphor of the metamorphosis of the caterpillar and its development to butterfly being a direct translation of this loss. This pointed me neatly on towards my questioning of this process of growth and loss. Is this synonymous process absolute and inevitable, or is it, as is the majority of questions and answers in the philosophical world, a more subjective, interpretive warning for artists to take heed of. This source will play to the themes of childhood creativity and development through this creativity into adulthood that will make up my written thesis. I will be discussing the alleged “loss” of childhood spontaneity, in relation to growth, and the potential that we have to alter our perspective of “loss” just as Solnit does.

Valentine, C. W. (1956) *The Normal Child And Some Of His Abnormalities; a general introduction*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.

Whilst acknowledging the age of *The Normal Child* – having been published in 1956 – the majority of its theories remain sound and mostly unchanged within today’s psychological reports. Valentine discusses various theories and their explanations surrounding the psychology of children and childhood. The writing ranges from themes on nature versus nurture, impulses, emotions and the importance of play. This last point is where I will be focussing most of my attention within the use of this source; more specifically, the chapter within which Valentine speaks on the definition of “play” and how it presents itself moving through childhood, alongside its importance as an element of developing cognitive skills. This source will aid my research greatly, as it speaks directly to my themes of childhood creativity from a psychological perspective. Alongside my other research, which is largely philosophical, the studies of Valentine will stand as part of the scientific basic for my thesis. This source will provide a reference point for concepts such as the uninhibited creativity that children experience, and how this links to the way this can be observed as adults later in life; thus, tying into my main subject area of growth through creativity.

Wilson, E. O. (2017) *The Origins of Creativity*. s.l.:W W Norton & Company Inc.

Although its title is rather telling, *The Origins Of Creativity* ultimately contains much more than a simple recount of human history. Discussing both the humanities and sciences, Wilson writes of the nature of human creativity and the roles that each of the aforementioned areas play within the assessment of this trait, heavily emphasising the vital inclusion of each practice within the other, rather than the isolation and even partial ignorance of the two. I will mainly be utilising this source for its repeated mention of human creativity as a “defining trait” and Wilson’s strong insistence that this trait should not be taken for granted. This matter is precisely what brings him onto discussing the “idiosyncratic” intents of the artist, the “emotional checkpoints” of the subconscious mind, and thus a direct link from art to biology to serve his argument of the “science-humanities continuum”. These concepts will support my own contemplation of questioning the equilibrium of perceived “value” that the modern education system places on each end of this theorised continuum, and whether this has an impact on the way we observe the creativity shift as we enter into adulthood.

Robinson, S. K. (2006) *Do Schools Kill Creativity*. Los Angeles, TED.

In this TED Talk, Sir Ken Robinson proposes the idea that schools are killing creativity. Robinson challenges the idea that academic achievement should be valued above creative freedom, and discusses the ways in which children are taught to focus more on the “core” subjects such as mathematics, science and English. Topics such as the assessment of what the education system regards as intelligence are acknowledged, and Robinson repeatedly reinforces the neglect that the creative subjects receive, and in that regard, how vital it is that we start to nourish these areas again, if we want to keep them alive for future generations. These are points that I plan to elaborate upon within my writing, alongside the idea that children possess an innate uninhibited creative spontaneity that Robinson comments on as rather than growing out of these traits, “we are educating people out of their creative potential”. This subject matter is directly relevant to my own thesis topic, and goes hand-in-hand with the next source in this bibliography.

Nachmanovitch, S. (1990) *Free Play*. New York: The Penguin Group.

Speaking to similar themes to those I am basing my own writing around, such as the importance of play, improvisation and idiosyncrasies, *Free Play* serves as perhaps my most directly relevant source. In this book, Nachmanovitch describes the role that whimsical impulsivity plays in the production of artistic results, and how – much like the opinion of Sir Ken Robinson – the education system seems to be tailoring these traits down to produce cookie-cutter individual to continue the role of the political, predictable member of society. He speaks of how “schools can nurture creativity in children, but they can also destroy it” and goes on to say that this unadulterated freedom in creativity that children cultivate is all too soon pruned down by surrounding adults, their “wings are clipped” and most often this gift of creative freedom is pushed aside for the academic subjects to take its place. As stated within my explanation of my previous source, this topic of discussion will compliment my area of study quite effectively, as this will once again allow me to elaborate upon themes of the artistic potential that is lost as childhood comes to an end, which will also provide a proficient method of bringing my sources and own writing altogether, in order to create a well-rounded thesis.