The Dark Side of Creativity

With few exceptions, scholarship on creativity has focused on its positive aspects while largely ignoring its dark side. This includes not only creativity deliberately aimed at hurting others, such as crime or terrorism, or at gaining unfair advantages but also the accidental negative side effects of well-intentioned acts. This book brings together essays written by experts from various fields (e.g., psychology, criminal justice, sociology, engineering, education, history, and design) and with different interests (e.g., personality development, mental health, deviant behavior, law enforcement, and counterterrorism) to illustrate the nature of negative creativity, examine its variants, call attention to its dangers, and draw conclusions about how to prevent it or protect society from its effects.

David H. Cropley is Deputy Director of the Defence and Systems Institute at the University of South Australia, where he is also Associate Professor of Engineering Innovation. His interest in creativity and innovation is centered around the role that they play in the design and development of products, processes, systems, and services of a technological nature, for which functionality is as important as form in determining the value of creative solutions. Cropley co-authored the book Fostering Creativity: A Diagnostic Approach for Higher Education and Organizations (2009) with Arthur J. Cropley and has published articles in the Cambridge Journal of Education, the International Journal of Technology and Design Education, the Creativity Research Journal, and the APA journal Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts.

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For John Baer, colleague and friend, who has shown me 
the good side of creativity in all that he does
James C. Kaufman

For Colin, Moe, and Howie, friends whose scholarship is 
apparent throughout this volume
Mark A. Runco

For AJ, without whom …
David H. Cropley
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