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In Character:
A Journal of Everyday Virtues
Published by the John Templeton Foundation

explores

WISDOM

Fall 2009 Issue Available Now at www.incharacter.org

Featuring:

[Are Politicians Today as Wise as Those Who Produced the U.S. Constitution?—Two Views](#)

Pulitzer Prize-winning historian **Jack N. Rakove** argues that today's politicians are as wise but that a more demanding exercise of political wisdom is required of them, while the Claremont Institute's **William Voegeli** argues that the Founding Fathers were wiser than today's politicians because they possessed a clear, unsentimental understanding of human nature. (p. 33)

[The Best Medicine](#)

Jerome Groopman, author and Rezanati Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, finds that a deep understanding of biology and disease is just the beginning of wisdom. For a doctor, wisdom also requires insight into how his or her own mind works. (p. 18)

[Is There Such a Thing as Wisdom? If So, Can It Be Taught?](#)

A distinguished panel—**Henry Alford, Shmuley Boteach, Amitai Etzioni, E. J. Dionne, Betsy Lunz, Kenneth Minogue, Joan Roughgarden,** and **Roger Scruton**—debates whether wisdom exists and the practicality of teaching it to others. (p. 59)

[Quantum Buddha](#)

In practice, Buddhism doesn't look so different from Christianity or Judaism—but the wisdom that animates it can seem practically other-planetary. **Jeffery Paine** explores the place where folktales and modern science meet. (p. 76)

[War and Wisdom](#)

In conversation with *In Character*, the political philosopher **Michael Walzer**, author of a classic work on just war theory, discusses war and its aftermath, delving into the differences between the battlefield's prudential calculation, military ethics, and the morality of torture. (p. 14)

[Mind and Matter](#)

Prominent historian of science **Ronald L. Numbers** traces the development of concept of wisdom in the natural sciences—from the Greeks to the present day. (p. 82)

[The More, The Wiser](#)

Jonathan V. Last considers who we should trust more—the crowd or the lonely genius. (p. 26)

[New Life for Old Words](#)

Seeking wisdom together as Jews, Christians, and Muslims may be one the most important items on the twenty-first century agenda, says Cambridge University's Regius Professor of Divinity **David F. Ford**. The wisdom literature of the three Abrahamic faiths could point the way to true ecumenism. (p. 44)

[Wisdom of the Ages](#)

Most modern thinkers have not been much concerned with the virtue of wisdom. Irish author and classics professor **William Desmond** suggests it may just be time to put the *sapiens* back in *homo sapiens sapiens*. (p. 4)

[These Foolish Things](#)

There are three kinds of fools—Real Fools, Professional Fools, and Unsuspecting Fools. But, Washington Post book columnist and Pulitzer Prize-winner **Michael Dirda** finds the Professional is nobody's fool. (p. 52)

Also in this issue:

- **Diana West** asks whatever happened to being seen but not heard in [Out of the Mouths of Babes](#) (p. 40)
- **Mark Lasswell** wonders why the ancients get credit for being wiser than we are in [That's the Way the Cookie Crumbles](#) (p. 86)
- **Charlotte Hays** reflects on a gift from a retired schoolteacher in [A Gift from Miss Carrie Lee](#) (p. 90)
- **Charlotte Allen** shows that Pallas Athena wasn't an ivory tower girl in [Athena's Surprising Portfolio](#) (p. 10)
- [Ten Great Moments in Wisdom](#) (p. 58)

About In Character

Nominated for best design and best cultural coverage by *Utne Reader*, ***In Character*** continues to stimulate, charm, and astonish. It is distributed to 6,000 of the most influential opinion-makers in the English-speaking world—an ideologically and professionally diverse group of journalists, professors, policy wonks, writers,

scientists, and business leaders. The journal is also available to the public by an annual paid subscription (\$27.00). For more information, please visit www.incharacter.org.

In Character's publisher, the John Templeton Foundation, serves as a philanthropic catalyst for research on what scientists and philosophers call the Big Questions. It supports work at the world's top universities in such fields as theoretical physics, cosmology, evolutionary biology, cognitive science, and social science relating to love, forgiveness, creativity, purpose, and the nature and origin of religious belief. It encourages informed, open-minded dialogue between scientists and theologians as they apply themselves to the most profound issues in their particular disciplines. And it seeks to stimulate new thinking about wealth creation in the developing world, character education in schools and universities, and programs for cultivating the talents of gifted children. For more information, visit www.templeton.org.

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