

TEMPLETON REPORT

NEWS FROM THE JOHN TEMPLETON FOUNDATION

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Purpose and the “Encore Career”

In our youth-centered culture, Marc Freedman points out, social innovation is often considered the exclusive province of idealistic strivers in the early years of their work lives. Freedman, founder and CEO of the San Francisco-based group Civic Ventures, thinks it is time to change our notion of who can be a social entrepreneur. For the past three years, Civic Ventures has given out the Purpose Prize to men and women over the age of 60 who are taking on “society’s biggest challenges.”



With a \$4.3 million grant from the John Templeton Foundation and the support of the Atlantic Philanthropies, the Purpose Prize has been awarded to dozens of social entrepreneurs from across the country. The most recent round of awards (six \$100,000 prizes and nine \$10,000 prizes) were announced on December 5 in a ceremony at Stanford University.

Catalino Tapia received one of the \$100,000 awards. A first-generation immigrant gardener who arrived from Mexico at age 20 with a sixth-grade education, Tapia now lives in Redwood City, California, where he has started the Bay Area Gardeners’ Foundation, an organization that raises money from gardening clients to fund scholarships for young Latinos to go to college. At age 64, Tapia has begun what Freedman calls an “encore career.” “We want to encourage people to use their midlife experience to create better ideas.”



Catalino Tapia



Jock Brandis

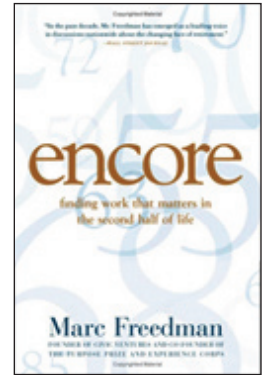
Kimon Sargeant, vice president for human sciences at the Templeton Foundation, attended the award ceremony and was particularly touched by Tapia’s story. “It’s a great example of American innovation—a guy of modest circumstances who was able to take his idea and run with it.” When Tapia got his moment on stage at the ceremony at Stanford, Sargeant recalled, he told the audience that he could not have imagined such recognition in his wildest dreams. A decade earlier, Tapia said, the only reason he would have been on the Stanford campus was to trim the trees.

Jock Brandis, another of this year’s winners, is a former Hollywood lighting director who noticed on a trip to Africa that women were making a living by shelling peanuts by hand. He promised them that on a return trip, he would bring a machine that would do the work faster. Once home, he discovered to his surprise that no such machine existed, so he set about inventing one. Now the “universal nutsheller,” which costs just \$28, can quintuple the amount of peanut processing that an African village can accomplish.

Originally, Freedman admits, he was worried about whether the contest would get enough applications. “We had a moment of panic. If we build it, will they actually come?” But the Purpose Prize has generated enormous interest. Over the past three years, Civic Ventures has received more than 3,500 nominations, from all 50 states. The 23 judges for 2008 included the actor Sidney Poitier, former presidential advisor David Gergen, former Senator Harris Wofford, and journalist Cokie Roberts.

Publicity has grown steadily for Freedman’s efforts to encourage social entrepreneurship among older Americans. His book *Encore: Finding Work that Matters in the Second Half of Life* was the subject of a column by Nicholas Kristof of the *New York Times*. Civic Ventures was listed on *Fast Company*’s “Social Enterprises of the Year Honor Roll,” and the *Wall Street Journal* featured the organization’s website as “a terrific resource.” Catalino Tapia’s story was recently featured on National Public Radio.

Previous winners of the Purpose Prize include a one-time used-car salesman from New Hampshire who now gives credit counseling to low-income people so that they will not be exploited by other used-car salesmen. Another winner, who once worked in the food-distribution industry in California, helped find a way for the state's growers to send fresh produce to area soup kitchens. Yet another winner led an effort in Florida to spare siblings some of the hardship of foster care by helping to keep them together in one family.



Finding purpose in life after retirement was an issue particularly close to the heart of Sir John Templeton, according to Sargeant. The Templeton Foundation itself was, in a sense, “Sir John’s encore career.” JTF has agreed to fund another three years of the Purpose Prize, and in 2009, there will be five \$100,000 prizes and five \$50,000 prizes. The deadline for applications is March 5.

NOTEBOOK

Revenge, Forgiveness, and Self-Control

JTF grantee Michael E. McCullough, a professor of psychology at the University of Miami, was the featured guest at a Templeton Book Forum held at the Harvard Club in New York City in mid-December. Barbara Bradley Hagerty of National Public Radio interviewed him about his book, *Beyond Revenge: The Evolution of the Forgiveness Instinct*, which draws on the latest findings in the biological and social sciences to explain the origin and durability of these intimately human instincts. As McCullough explained, both revenge and forgiveness have been adaptive strategies for our species. The practical challenge for today is how we choose to accommodate them. For video clips of the Templeton Book Forum event, go to http://www.templeton.org/video/mccullough_hagerty/1.html.



A different part of McCullough’s Templeton-sponsored research was also the subject of a December column by John Tierney of the *New York Times*, titled “For Good Self-Control, Try Getting Religious About It.” McCullough and his colleague Brian Willoughy reviewed eight decades of research for an article they just published in the *Psychological Bulletin*, and they discovered remarkably consistent findings: religious belief and piety promote self-control. As Tierney summed up, McCullough thinks that religious people are “self-controlled not simply because they fear God’s wrath, but because they’ve absorbed the ideals of their religion into their own system of values, and have thereby given their personal goals an aura of sacredness. He suggested that nonbelievers try a secular version of that strategy.”

The Evolution of Cooperation

Templeton grantee Martin A. Nowak, of the Program for Evolutionary Dynamics at Harvard University, made not one but two recent appearances in the prestigious journal *Nature*. In an essay called “Generosity: A winner’s advice” (December 4), he writes, “Biologists recognize two fundamental forces of evolution: mutation and selection. I want to add a third: cooperation,” which occurs “when one individual pays a cost so that another receives a benefit.” Mathematical models, he observes, have demonstrated that “winning” evolutionary social strategies “tend to be generous, hopeful, and forgiving. Generous here means not seeking to get more than one’s opponent; hopeful means cooperating in the first move or in the absence of information; and forgiving means attempting to reestablish cooperation after an accidental defection.”



A month later, Nowak and his co-authors Hisashi Ohtsuki and Yoh Iwasa published in *Nature* an example of this research. Their paper concludes that “indirect reciprocity,” which operates through reputation, is a “key mechanism” in the evolution of human cooperation. Using game-theory analysis, they show that “costly punishment” (that is, punishment in which the punisher accepts a cost for his action) and the escalation of conflict do not promote efficient cooperation. A better strategy, they find, is “to withhold help for defectors [from social cooperation] rather than punishing them.”

For more information about Martin Nowak’s research on evolutionary dynamics, see the April 29, 2008 issue of the *Templeton Report* by visiting http://www.templeton.org/templeton_report/20080429.

For more information, write to communications@templeton.org.

JOHN TEMPLETON FOUNDATION

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