

Here is Wosdom

by Robert Jameson



Intelligence is born out of the willingness to question what we are told - whatever it may be! Each chapter in this book asks us to do just that - question accepted ideas and popular opinions - and, through questioning them, develop the ability to overcome the prejudices that stand between us and greater intelligence.

Warning: Contains material some may find offensive!

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This book celebrates freedom of speech and contains ideas, opinions and language which some may find offensive. Please also note that this is a book of opinions and that none of the contents of this book are intended to be read as statements of fact. Furthermore, the opinions in this book are designed to encourage people to question commonly-accepted ideas. It should not be assumed that these opinions necessarily reflect the author's own personal views.

Preface

Intelligence is born out of the willingness to question what we are told - whatever it may be! Each chapter in this book asks us to do just that - question accepted ideas and popular opinions - and through questioning them, develop the ability to overcome the prejudices that stand between us and greater intelligence.

You probably won't agree with all the opinions expressed in this book - that's not important - the idea is that they provoke you to think, perhaps in ways you've never dared think before!

You can look at this book as a coursebook in intelligent thinking. Alternatively, you can see it as merely a collection of interesting opinions on a diverse collection of topics.

Each chapter in this book contains a self-contained article, linked by a common theme. You can read this book from start to finish if you like, but it is designed so that you can equally well dip into any chapters that interest you in any order you prefer.

Thankyou for taking an interest in my book! I hope you enjoy it.

Robert Jameson

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Intelligence

There are many sketchy notions around as to what intelligence really is.

People often confuse intelligence with the simple capacity for regurgitating knowledge or the ability to think quickly. Computers are extremely capable at storing and retrieving data and can perform calculations at incredible speed, but they are not intelligent - essentially all they do is follow numbered instructions.

IQ tests may try to identify intelligent people, but the capacity to solve abstract problems (and the particular and rather narrow selection of problem types used in IQ tests) is often very different to the capacity for dealing rationally and successfully with real-world problems.

Intelligence is concerned with the capacity to solve problems, but the intelligence we're really interested in is of the type that can help us to understand difficult real-life situations and problems and develop solutions that are consistent with the principles and values we consider important.

So what is the secret of such intelligent thinking? Many people imagine that exceptional intelligence is characterised by some sort of complex thinking that they do not understand and are not capable of. However, the reality of even complex thinking is that it is made up of a number of relatively simple steps. Much intelligent thought does not really require complex thinking at all. The key to intelligent thinking is not complexity, but clarity.

The incapacity of many people to think intelligently on a given issue is not usually due to an innate

inability to perform the mental calculations required, but rather a combination of laziness and an inability to think clearly without unhelpful influences and prejudices. People are frequently influenced by selfish motivations or social influence into accepting certain ideas without ever properly questioning them and subjecting them to rational scrutiny.

As a simple example, many people stick to prejudiced beliefs and ideas in the face of all rational argument essentially because they are emotionally immature and simply don't want to admit when they are wrong.

People also accept certain commonly-held opinions, such as the idea that theft is wrong or that democracy is a good thing, because society has conditioned them to believe these things without ever questioning them. They have never thought intelligently about these issues, because they have never really *thought* about them at all - they have simply swallowed the socially-accepted opinion and, perhaps, on occasion, regurgitated it!

There are so many influences with the potential to prejudice and hinder our capacity for intelligent thinking, that the major bulk of the population becomes unable to offer an intelligent and rational opinion on any number of important topics.

It takes an unusual degree of self-awareness to be able to understand and control the emotions and external influences that can inhibit intelligent thinking. The capacity for such self-awareness may take a lot of hard work and many years to develop. Without this capacity, most people's thinking processes are so clouded by prejudice that their ability to think intelligently is severely limited.

The chapters in this book are each designed to

stimulate intelligent thinking by taking a topic and asking the reader to question what they might not previously have ever doubted and to think along lines which might differ considerably from accepted norms (the accepted wisdom of society). Hopefully, the reader might then be encouraged to see new possibilities and explore further the extraordinary power of the human mind once it begins to free itself from prejudice and inertia.

But there is a word of warning I ought to place here: The essential skills of intelligent thinking can be taught - they are not so remote or complex as many people might imagine. A person can *learn* to be intelligent - it is not just a matter of innate ability. However, the capacity to become intelligent requires certain character traits which are not so easily taught. The skills of intelligence can be taught, but the determination to learn them is another matter. The desire to excel, the strength of character to question what you are told by others, the willingness to express what might be unpopular - to imbue these characteristics in a person that does not possess them is an onerous task. Yet for someone who does possess the necessary character, a gentle nudge in the right direction may be all they require to set them on the path to acquiring the skills of exceptional intelligence.

Political-Correctness

There is a continuing campaign, backed by many influential people, to encourage, pressure and perhaps even compel us all to abide by a variety of politically-correct views.

Don't be racist! Don't be sexist! Homosexuality is perfectly normal! Don't offend people! Don't hurt people's feelings! Don't criticise Islam! Be sensitive to people's feelings, however illogical, irrational and unreasonable they might be and pander to them, being careful never to say anything they are likely to disagree with and never, never to say anything that might suggest they are wrong about anything at all!

There are some people who still believe the drive for political-correctness is a good thing - but let's at least consider that perhaps it isn't!

A lot of "politically-correct" ideas are good ideas - not being racist or sexist for example. However they are not good ideas *because* they are politically-correct. They are good ideas anyway - it just so happens that they are also politically-correct in our society at this point in history. However, in other times and places, neither idea would have been politically-correct. Even in some societies today - for example, in some Islamic communities - the very idea of giving women equal rights to men might be considered to be not just politically-incorrect, but possibly even offensive.

Political-correctness essentially means to be in concert with the socially-accepted "correct" view. In pre-war and wartime Germany this would have meant hating Jews and believing they should be exterminated from the face of German society -

the "politically-correct" view at the time!

The important question we need to ask ourselves is not whether we can oppose racism when this is the politically-correct thing to do, but whether we could stand up against racism when it isn't so popular to do so or when doing so might put our own well-being at risk.

The drive to be politically-correct just for the sake of it is a curse on our society. What our society really needs are people who will think for themselves and stand up for their principles, regardless of whether they happen to be popular at the time. Just as we accept that many popular views that were politically-correct in the past are now considered to be totally wrong or even reprehensible, we need to have the humility to accept that many views that are currently politically-correct might quite rightly be regarded as wrong or even reprehensible in the future.

For example, it is politically-correct in the education world to reject firm discipline in schools - yet perhaps future generations will be appalled by how we allowed several generations to be denied a good education because we refused to insist upon decent standards of behaviour in our classrooms, preferring to spout airy-fairy, 1960s-inspired hippy claptrap instead!

And it has also become politically-correct to support the idea that we should suppress freedom of speech and put people in continual fear of the consequences of saying something that might offend someone. Much of the population has become programmed to slavishly follow an unimaginative, colourless, hypocritical BBC middle-line of inane, sickeningly inoffensive and timid opinion that completely fails to address with any

gusto the key political, economic and social issues of our day.

This is the sort of claptrap that continually stuffs propaganda about recycling down our throats, but dares not breathe a word in favour of windfarms for fear of upsetting a bunch of hysterical old women worried about the mythical effect on their TV reception. It is the shameful self-righteousness that bangs on about equality for women and opposes discrimination against homosexuals, yet is too fearful to tolerate the slightest criticism of any Muslims who believe that women should not be allowed to show their faces in public and that homosexuals should be stoned to death!

Unfortunately, many politically-correct views are largely nonsense, some of them are immoral, and the effects they have are often extremely damaging to our fundamental freedoms and the future of our society.

If we cast aside the misguided notion that the drive to be politically-correct for the sake of it is a worthy pursuit, then we can learn to distinguish between those politically-correct ideas that have merit and those that are little more than the propaganda of special-interest groups and an insult to our intelligence.

Theft

Is theft wrong? Most people go about their lives with the working assumption that it is. The idea that theft is wrong is so ingrained in our culture - in our laws, customs and religions - that most people hardly ever give it a thought as to whether it really is wrong. Many people would struggle even to properly consider the possibility that it might not be wrong. Yet one can hardly expect to offer an intelligent view on the issue unless one is genuinely able and prepared to consider that maybe it isn't wrong. Otherwise any view is little more than an expression of prejudice.

This issue presents a key opportunity to break free of the shackles that frequently constrain most people's minds. The ability to think clearly is bound up with the ability to overcome natural or socially-encouraged prejudices. The lazy route is to accept the view that society thrusts upon you. The intelligent route is to think it through for yourself.

So why might theft not be wrong? Why not start with an example? Robin Hood famously stole from the rich to give to the poor. We instinctively know that he's the good guy in the stories and yet he was a thief! So why is he the hero of the stories and not the villain? The implicit assumption in the Robin Hood stories is that wealth was not distributed fairly - the rich did not always deserve to be as rich as they were and the poor did not always deserve to be poor. Robin Hood was therefore helping to right a wrong - to redress an imbalance and fight injustice.

So what about our society - do the rich deserve to be rich and the poor deserve to be poor? There are

many factors that contribute towards a person becoming rich. They might have become rich through hard work. They might have become rich by being naturally talented. They might have become rich through good fortune. They might have become rich by using deceitful and immoral practices. In most cases, it will not be just one of these factors which led them to be rich, but a combination of several of them - or even all of them!

And which of these factors ought to lead to riches in a fair society? Perhaps most people would agree that someone who worked hard should be rewarded for their efforts, but what about someone who is talented - isn't it just good fortune that made them more talented than other people? If so, this doesn't seem to be a very fair way to determine who should be rich and who should not be. And we wouldn't want people to become rich through lies!

Any fair-minded person would surely agree that we do not live in a meritocracy - a society where people are rewarded according to pure merit. A very large proportion of wealth - probably the overwhelming majority of it - is not fairly distributed according to who deserves it.

A millionaire businessman might say he worked hard to earn his money, and perhaps he did, but many other people, from coalminers to air-hostesses, work hard and yet are not millionaires. Furthermore, some dishonest, incompetent people become wealthy whilst other honest, hard-working and talented people remain relatively poor.

It ought to be fairly clear that there is not a very close correlation between those who deserve to have money and those who actually have lots of it.

Clearly, many people do not really deserve to be as rich as they are - and if this is the case, then it seems entirely fair that some of their wealth should be redistributed to people who are less well off but more deserving than themselves. If the distribution of wealth is unfair, then is it still wrong for a relatively poor person to "steal" from a rich, less deserving person? Obviously it is very far from the case that all thieves are deserving of their gains, but the point is that we cannot assume all acts of theft are necessarily unjust.

Perhaps we should be tackling the subject of theft on a more fundamental level. In order to make theft possible, we have to have the existence of property. Unless someone owns something, that item cannot really be stolen. Owning something means not only that you have the right to use that property, but also that you have the right to deny the use of that property to other people. If you own a piece of land, for example, you generally have the right to decide who can and who cannot use that piece of land.

But what gives someone the right to own something, such as a piece of land? Is it right that someone should be able to fence off a piece of land that was once common property - as all land once was - and to call it his own, preventing other people from using it? What gives him the right to do this? If it isn't right, then perhaps the very existence of property is not right - and if property did not exist, then theft could not really exist either.

As a Marxist might say, "Property is theft," since the very act of owning property entails effectively taking that property away from other people and denying them the use of it. You don't have to be or

describe yourself as a Marxist to see that there is a great deal of sense in this idea. This is not a new idea, of course, and you might not agree with it - but it does illustrate that intelligent thinking often requires us to put aside some of the assumptions we normally take for granted.

A man takes an apple from a tree. He calls it his own property, but does he really have the right to do so? If someone "steals" the apple from him, can this really be said to be wrong if the first man had no right to "own" the apple in the first place?

If a man owns a shop and a woman steals from that shop, is that wrong? What, morally speaking, gave the man the right to own the shop in the first place? Perhaps the man inherited the shop from his father. In which case, he was lucky enough to have a father who owned a shop - he hasn't actually done anything to deserve to own the shop.

Society has a system for deciding who owns what; for deciding who should own a lot and who should own very little. When someone steals something, they are defying that system. If that system was fair, then theft, in general, might be wrong. But what if the system is not fair? Can we really make a convincing argument that it is?

We might imagine a time, long ago, where an early man has been out on a hunting trip, living rough on the trail of his prey for several days over large tracts of wilderness, and he has trekked back to his village with his prey to bring much needed food for his wife and young family. If some other bloke from the village clubbed him over the head and stole the food, we would instinctively know this was an injustice - the man who put in all the work to provide the food lost out, whilst the thief, who did nothing for the benefit of his community, got all

the benefit from the other man's hard work.

To suggest that it is an injustice on a similar scale when a modern-day poor man with a family steals something from a large and extremely rich and profitable corporation that has made its money largely on the back of selling substandard goods and services and paying its workforce the minimum wage, is stretching the imagination to an unreasonable degree.

Yet we are encouraged to instinctively accept that all theft is wrong. The law against theft does help to prevent vulnerable old ladies from having their well-earned pension money stolen by young thugs, but it also serves to protect the interests and possessions of rich people and corporations who acquired their money through deceitful and far less sanitary means, however legal they might have been!

It is neither fair nor intelligent to condemn every act of theft to the same degree. Indeed, for most people, the belief that theft is wrong is nothing more than the result of consistent brainwashing and the censorship of alternative viewpoints.

Perhaps we need to look at things from a different perspective altogether - by considering what people *do* with their money and wealth rather than how they accumulated it in the first place.

If a rich person spends all their money on themselves - on expensive clothes and several sports cars for their personal pleasure, then how can this be right, regardless of how they got their money in the first place? Surely with all the poverty and other problems in the world, they should have put it to better use - they could have been generous with their money and used it to help others and support good causes.

Perhaps we should take the view that everyone has a moral responsibility to use their resources, including their money, wisely and justly. Perhaps the concept of theft has more to do with protecting the interests of the rich than with fundamental moral issues of right and wrong. Despite being a thief, Robin Hood was not a "bad guy" - he was a "good guy" because he used the money he stole for a worthy purpose.

In our society today, theft is generally assumed to be wrong - but an intelligent person should never be lazy enough to blindly accept such thoughtless assumptions.

Freedom of Speech

Ask someone at random whether they support free speech and there's a reasonable chance they will say they do - but there's also a very high probability that they will have little idea what they are talking about and have thought very little about what free speech actually means, what it actually entails and how important it is!

This is a problem, especially at a time when we face continual demands that our freedom of speech be curtailed for a whole manner of fashionable reasons. Our fundamental freedoms, including freedom of speech, are currently the target of a severe and persistent attack from an unholy alliance of influential interest groups.

Some of these groups may be well-meaning, seeking perhaps to fight against discrimination, such as racism or sexism, but the measures they demand are (besides being ineffective) unprincipled, immoral, and an attack upon the very foundations of a decent society.

These interest groups are supported by the legions of the Taliban of Political-Correctness - the bureaucrats with an hysterical drive to force the entire population to comply with a list of state-sponsored acceptable opinions.

Let us add a little historical context to the conversation! In times gone by (as in many places even today), many places were ruled by very powerful and often rather violent and intolerant rulers. If you said something which displeased the king, he might easily have you killed. History is full of examples of people who were killed simply because their views did not coincide with those of

their rulers. Catholics were killed by Protestant rulers and Protestants killed by Catholic rulers simply because they believed in slightly different versions of the same Christian faith.

It must be terrible to live in fear for your life and those of your family simply because one of you might say something which displeases someone - that you might be killed, not for acting on your beliefs, but simply for saying what your beliefs are! Naturally, many people were very unhappy about having to live under such oppression. Thus, as civilisation developed, so the idea grew that people should be allowed to have and express whatever opinions they wanted to - and that being able to do so was a fundamental part of being free.

But freedom of speech is also a fundamental ingredient for the success and development of society as a whole. When something is wrong, progress often depends on people being able to point out what is wrong and how things can be improved. If people fear for their safety when they express criticism, the progress of society may be largely halted. How can science, art, politics or philosophy flourish in such circumstances?

So much for history! Today, many of the lessons of the past seem to have been forgotten. In some countries, it is still your life that may be at stake - such as, for example, if you said something deemed to be an insult against Islam.

Even in the UK today, there is a growing list of things that you cannot say, lest you risk suffering severe consequences for doing so. In some cases, you might end up in prison. In many cases, it won't come to that, but it may well be that you lose your job for saying an unacceptable word or expressing an unacceptable opinion, even if that

word or opinion were expressed outside of work or even in private.

Amongst the first things to go on this list were opinions deemed to be racist or sexist. Many people might think there was nothing wrong in effectively banning the expression of such opinions. One very obvious problem with such a position - which is nevertheless almost always overlooked - is that stopping people expressing racist or sexist views is a ridiculously ineffective way of tackling prejudice. It does not stop them holding racist or sexist views and neither does it stop them actually being racist or sexist. If we do not allow people to express their prejudices, then we miss out on the opportunity to challenge their opinions and point out the flaws in their arguments. We don't want to have sexism or racism causing problems in our society, but banning people from expressing sexist or racist views is not the answer!

The bigger problem, however, is the very existence of such a list - of opinions we cannot express - and its implications for the future of our society. We have crossed a line that means we have abandoned free speech as a principle. We have, as a society, accepted that the state and other people can dictate to us what we can and cannot say and that they can base their rules simply on what they happen to believe is or isn't "acceptable." What a poisonous word "acceptable" is!

And, now the principle has been abandoned, there have been many measures in recent years to extend this list of what you cannot say. For example, measures against racism and sexism have been extended to cover homosexuality.

The expression of negative views on homosexuality

has, in many circumstances, been effectively outlawed. To say, for example, that men who like to insert their penises in other men's arseholes are perverts, could cost you your job.

And now things have been taken even further! Many demands for restricting freedom of speech arise from situations where some people find other people's views offensive in some way. Indeed, there is a commonly expressed (and rarely challenged) view that we should have some sort of right not to be offended. When subjected to careful scrutiny, however, the case for such a right quickly disintegrates.

One problem is that almost anything you could say might very well be offensive to someone! A conversation about a corned-beef or ham sandwich might, for example, offend certain religious people. Suggesting that "black" people should have equal rights to "white" people will offend a lot of racists, but should this mean I shouldn't be allowed to express this view? Of course not! Simply telling people they are wrong is often enough to cause them offence, even if they are demonstrably wrong by the fact that they are contradicting their own arguments! Not effecting a meticulous, protracted, meandering avoidance of anything which might make people feel awkward or - God forbid! - inadequate in any way is often plenty enough to cause offence!

We may not like to be offended, but the suggestion that we could ever stop everyone from ever being offended is laughably absurd, no matter what draconian laws we might be prepared to resort to to try to make it happen.

We should note that it takes two people to "cause offence": one person to say something potentially

offensive - and that covers practically everything one might possibly say - and another person to take offence at what is being said. When offence is taken, why should we place the burden of blame entirely on the speaker? Shouldn't we at least be encouraging people not to take offence simply because they don't agree with what someone is saying?

Furthermore, causing offence by no means always ends up with a negative and undesirable result. Even when someone holds an offensive opinion which is clearly based on prejudice and stupidity, allowing them to express their opinions provides us with an opportunity to enter into discussion which might result in them reassessing their opinion. Failing that, it might at least allow people on different sides of an argument to come to a better understanding of each others' points of view. Forcing people to suppress their opinions deprives us of these valuable opportunities.

Whilst there is an ever-growing range of circumstances where causing offence can be construed to be a criminal offence, most demands for censorship are not yet actually imposed, or even supported, by the law - thank goodness!

However, it is perhaps more worrying that censorship is frequently self-imposed! There has been a persistent campaign of brainwashing - running in our schools, our workplaces and in the media - the effects of which are, in many ways, worse than draconian laws. With such laws one could harvest the hope that people were still free-thinkers and would one day burst forward and reject the oppressive regime that shackled their freedom to express themselves - but with brainwashing, even the desire to freely express

oneself may be lost!

Once you've programmed people to censor themselves in the name of "being sensitive" and bullied them into being frightened of the mere possibility of offending anyone, you have a dangerously oppressed and impoverished society.

We've developed a culture where people are trained to be constantly worried about the reaction they might receive following anything they say - obsessed with the fear that something they say might be unpopular or - most terrifyingly of all - "inappropriate!"

One result of this is dull conversation. People talk about what they did the previous evening or what such-and-such said - merely reporting events. Rarely do they express or ask one another what they think about something - what their actual opinions are! For millions of people, a simple conversation about what they think about a topical or controversial issue is beyond what they would ever be expected to contribute to.

Without any opportunities to express opinions, generations are now growing up who don't seem to see much point in even *having* any opinions in the first place. Our appalling education system does very little to encourage children to develop their own opinions - but, conversely, does a great deal of brainwashing to convince them to keep quiet about any opinions they do have, save those mantras of political-correctness they have been bullied into submitting to.

Making kids aware of how they make others feel may seem reasonable in moderation, but kids need to be kids! They need to be given the space to develop their own personalities without being crushed by the pressure not to hurt anyone's

feelings or say anything "inappropriate."

Our namby-pamby society seems unwilling to allow people to have their own character and opinions. It appears to be intent on trying to turn everyone into a vegetable, only allowed to espouse unimaginative, politically-correct, socially-sanctioned views - and in the process, we lose so much of the cultural richness and colour that used to flourish in our society.

Being sensitive to what might offend other people is just a form of censorship - albeit self-censorship - and it creates problems rather than solves them. By pandering to people's ludicrous sensitivities, we are simply encouraging them to become even more ridiculously sensitive than they were before and creating a *less*, rather than *more*, tolerant society. People are becoming ever more fragile, increasingly unused to and unable to cope with even the mildest criticism or discomfort.

Not being allowed to say things which might offend other people is like living, not under a single dictator, but under 60 million of them, each one with the right to impose their personal beliefs on everyone else and dictate what we can and cannot say, vetoing any opinions they wish to suppress.

What has our society come to when, for fear of losing your job, you aren't allowed to express negative opinions about homosexual practices, bemoan the effects of Islam on British culture or say that mothers of young children should be at home looking after their kids rather than in full-time employment?

Right or wrong, it is obviously a fundamental part of a free and healthy society that people should be allowed to say such things. Even better if they can feel uninhibited, possibly even encouraged, to

express whatever ideas appeal to their minds, without regard for what is or isn't politically acceptable.

Yet the current reality is that the list of things we are banned - or at least heavily discouraged - from saying continues to grow. We have sacrificed the principle of free speech to worship at the altar of sickly conformity and acceptability.

What a disgrace that people should be so contemptuous of our most precious and fundamental freedoms that they willingly support measures to expediently suppress freedom of speech in the name of whatever ludicrous sensitivities happen to be popular at the time!

We can't all agree on everything, and no amount of discussion will prevent people holding views other people find offensive - but isn't it about time we just grew up? Disagreements and sometimes being offended by what other people do and say is all part of the richness of life. Being part of an oppressive society where free expression is outlawed and basic liberties have been abolished doesn't have to be!

Popularity

Many people crave popularity! Perhaps more pertinently, they are scared stiff of the possibility of being unpopular - it is a constant fear and preoccupation hanging over their lives like the sword of Damocles (You know - that bloke with the sword dangling over his head!).

When a schoolchild is killed or dies in some appalling accident, the news cameras are quickly sent round to the school and numerous people queue up to say how popular the girl or boy who died was - not that they were kind or intelligent or thoughtful or even academically gifted, but POPULAR!

When did you ever hear of a schoolchild killed in a terrible tragedy who was very principled and stood up for what they believed in despite this making them incredibly unpopular?

It is a well-known fact that only popular people die in tragic accidents and murders! Unpopular people are immune to such occurrences! They have a sort of forcefield around them so strong that if a drunk driver drove a juggernaut into them, the vehicle would merely bounce off the forcefield, causing it to career into the nearest popular person and splatter them all over the road!

And have you noticed that there is often something terribly wrong with and sinister about popular people? People need to be reminded (more often than they are) that Hitler was popular. Some people may wish to pretend to themselves that Hitler was sustained in office merely by the brutality of the SS and the Gestapo, forcing people to obey his orders, but that would be nonsense!

When he took Germany out of its economic depression and avenged their humiliation in World War I by defeating France and marching his troops up the Champs Elysees, he was wildly popular and millions of Germans thought it was wonderful that he had made Germany a great power again. None of this popularity, however, stopped him from being an evil mass-murderer.

Conversely, many great people who have brilliant ideas or stand up for worthy principles are often wildly unpopular. Look at Socrates – condemned to death! Look at Jesus – he only said it would be a good idea if people started being kind to each other and stopped being selfish money-grabbing bastards (though not in those words!) – and what thanks did he get? They killed him for it!

This is not to say that it is impossible for a good man to be popular, but there does seem to be a distinct correlation between being principled and being unpopular.

This makes sense – after all, if you want to be popular, you often have to sacrifice principles whenever they do not coincide with the popular mood.

If your principles happen to coincide with popular opinion at a particular point in time, then woop-de-do-da for you, as you may experience a brief period of popularity, but since popular opinion is fickle, and your principles, if they are to count as principles, cannot change so easily, you are unlikely to remain popular for long!

If you are a good, principled person, then the popularity of your opinions will make no difference to what your opinions are. It is not something to be proud of if your values and principles are popular, since their popularity is in no way a

reliable indication that they are right.

Fortunately, these days, in civilised societies, unpopularity doesn't usually carry a death sentence.

So hurray for all the deeply unpopular principled people - living into old age and completely failing to get mowed down by drunk drivers or killed by violent gangs of criminals!

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End of sample!

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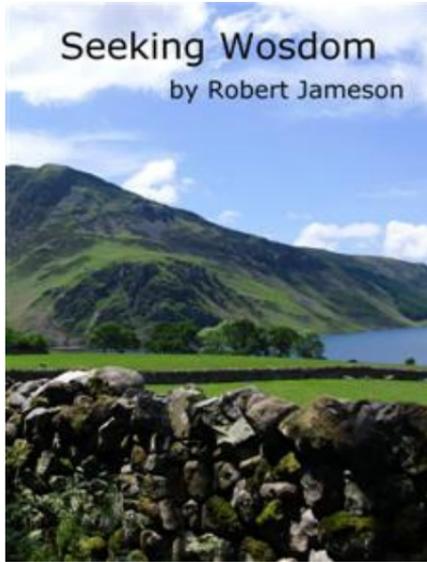
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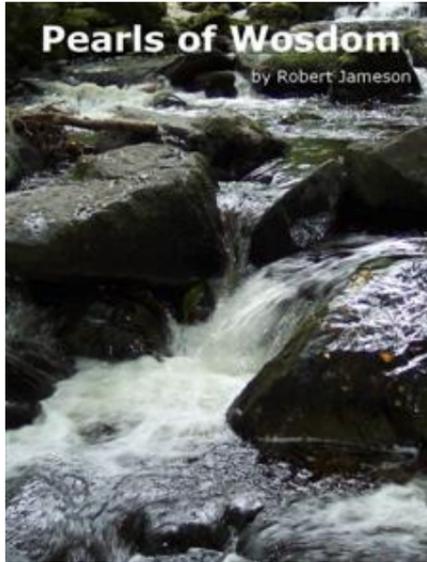


"Why conform when it's so much more interesting not to?" Following on from "Here is Wosdom," Robert Jameson offers another selection of opinion pieces illustrating how intelligent thinking has almost nothing to do with political-correctness! Please note that the Wosdom books can be read in any order.

Available from: [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk) and [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Find out more at: [IMOS.org.uk](https://www.imos.org.uk)

Pearls of Wosdom

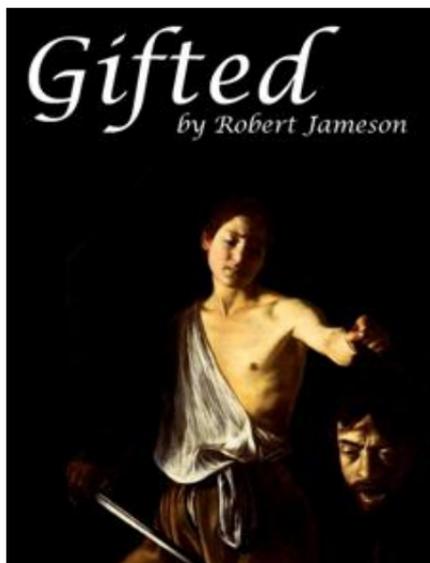


The key to intelligence is to be able to overcome the prejudices of the society we live in and thus free our minds to think beyond what society assumes to be correct and beyond what it deems to be 'acceptable.' Please note that the Wosdom books can be read in any order.

Available from: [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk) and [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Find out more at: [IMOS.org.uk](https://www.imos.org.uk)

Gifted



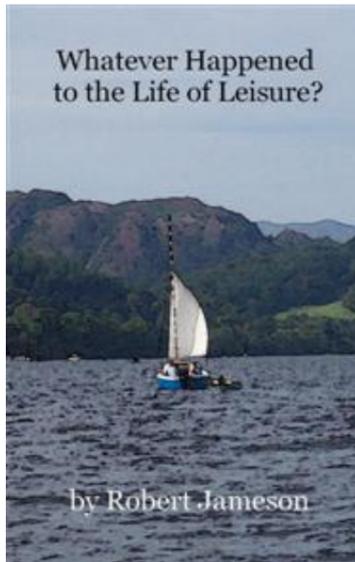
This is a sort of guidebook for gifted students, designed to help you nurture your potential as an exceptionally intelligent and thoughtful person.

From the introduction: "I didn't write this book in order to help people become 'moderately clever.' I wrote it for those people with the determination to develop the sort of exceptional super-intelligence that only a few people even know exists"

Available from: [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk) and [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

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Whatever Happened to the Life of Leisure?

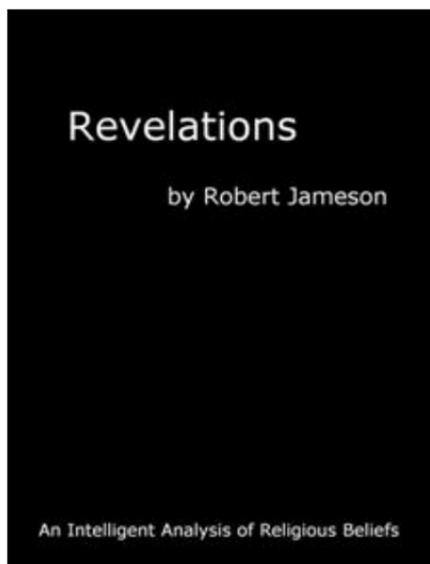


Longer working hours, later retirement, lousy pensions - hardly the life of leisure we were promised for the 21st century! We also have dirty hospitals, troops without proper equipment and schools that provide an appalling standard of education. So what went wrong and what can we do about it?

Available from: [Amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk) and [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Find out more at: [IMOS.org.uk](https://www.imos.org.uk)

Revelations: An Intelligent Analysis of Religious Beliefs

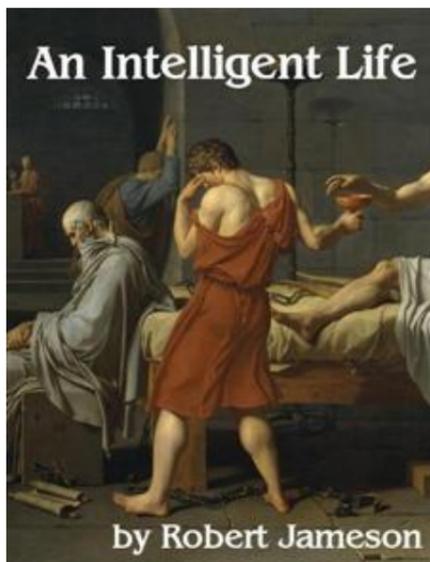


Are you irritated by dogmatic religious belief on the one hand and by close-minded, pompous atheism (of the angry Richard Dawkins variety) on the other? Would you be interested in a more intelligent perspective on religious ideas?

Available from: Amazon.co.uk and Amazon.com

Find out more at: IMOS.org.uk

An Intelligent Life

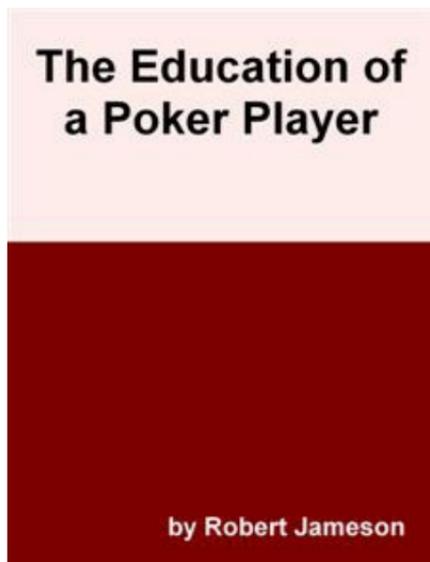


An unusual portrayal of a thoughtful, intelligent man appalled by the stupidity, conformism and arrogance he sees all around him. He rants to himself and ruminates on his disgust with the human species in general before deciding on a more targeted, fruitful, enjoyable and thoroughly violent course of action.

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The Education of a Poker Player



A poker strategy book with a difference. If you've never read any poker strategy books, that's great, because this is the place to start - this is strategy for typical players looking to improve the fundamentals of their game.

On the other hand, if you have read poker strategy books or magazines or listened to poker 'experts' on the television, then this book is designed to focus your mind on the fundamentals that those other sources of advice often overlook.

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