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Wisdom remembered: recovering a theological vision of wisdom *for* the academe

Celia Deane-Drummond*
University of Chester, UK

In considering issues of public and global importance, social scientists are coming to an increasing recognition of the importance of religious belief in motivating particular attitudes and actions. If one of the tasks of academe is to articulate those values that are important in the public sphere, it must necessarily include careful discussion of the religious dimension of human existence. This paper addresses the issue of what a theological vision of wisdom might look like and its relevance in serving the public good in the context of a university. John Henry Newman's *The idea of a university*, proposed in the nineteenth century, gives some insights into what wisdom informed by theology might look like when applied to higher education. Prudence, or practical wisdom, as found in the medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas offers a mediating strategy between philosophical and theological approaches to wisdom. An argument will be put forward for a recovery of prudence as relevant for shaping the ethos of universities. In this, universities can also serve the public good and promote human welfare in contested areas such as environmental decision-making or new reproductive technologies.

Introduction

Consider one of the most contested issues for public debate in recent years, namely, the genetic modification of foods. When social scientists first engaged with this problem they largely ignored the possibility that religious questions and issues might be relevant. For example, social scientists working at Lancaster University interviewed a number of different groups in order to glean what might be motivating public interest. The published report—entitled *Uncertain world*—contained virtually no reference to religion (Grove-White *et al*., 1999). When these same transcripts received greater scrutiny some time later, it soon became clear that implicit religious issues were highly significant in shaping public opinion (this was published in Deane-Drummond *et al*., 2001, and in Deane-Drummond &

* Department of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester CH1 4BJ, UK. Email c.deane-drummond@chester.ac.uk

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Szerszynski, 2003). This short story illustrates a number of issues. In the first place, the fact that religion was ignored in the first instance shows that religious issues have become marginal to the thinking of many serious academics. As a subject discipline, where religious studies is accepted at a university, it tends to ape other areas of science, and be treated methodologically in the same sort of way as a detached academic discipline in order to give it greater credibility in the academe. Theology is even more the Cinderella subject, often appearing as a laughing stock to other academics as illustrated in David Lodges's popular but fictional University of Rummage (Lodge, 1991). This is a far cry from theology's role as 'queen of the sciences' in the thirteenth century. A second point, however, is that even in Britain, arguably a largely secular society, the public have not forgotten the long history of religious experience that is embedded in their consciousness. This is often not necessarily explicit religious practice, but it surfaces in the recognition of the importance of religious concerns for informing the way we live, however far they may be from traditional theological formulations. I suggest that attempts to suppress this wisdom comes about, at least in part, from the captivity of universities to the Enlightenment agenda that has served simply to reinforce a utilitarian means for education.

In fact, in order to survive, theology has been forced to capitulate to the academic agenda dictated by its secular partners. Students are now asked to make sense of scripture, instead of scripture making sense of them. Theology becomes 'domesticated and secularized', most important of all, theology is prized apart from praxis, so that skills learnt in theology are now named as 'transferable skills' (D'Costa, 2002, pp. 186, 189). Those engaged in religious studies take this detachment still further, so that students are encouraged to keep an entirely neutral stance towards religions, combined with objectivity and Enlightenment reasoning. But, say the critics, surely such neutrality is essential to foster mutual respect and understanding in this world of divided religious sensibilities and religious fundamentalisms? Some even suggest that any idea of promoting the possibility of a Christian University is paramount to a perversion of the true intention of a university, namely to encourage free thought. The assumption in this case, is that tradition of any kind is inimical to free enquiry (Thiessen, 2002). Indeed, the search for truth as evidenced in the modern university is one dogged by the legacy of the Enlightenment and a utilitarian attitude to knowledge, reflected in methodologies that are there to provide rules and systems of analysis, but are thereby constricting in their perception of epistemology. Consider, for example, the increasing interest across different universities in providing courses in empirical methodologies for doctoral students, as if all theses need to be squeezed into appropriately sanctioned methodologies even before they emerge.

John Henry Newman's vision for higher education

The seeds for much of the developments we see today have a long history, and were apparent to Cardinal John Henry Newman, writing in the middle of the nineteenth century, at just about the same time as when Charles Darwin was penning his *Origin of species*, a work whose influence continues to reverberate even outside the discipline of biology. John Newman's work is less well known and appreciated by the public. He lived at

a time when individualism was coming to the fore, and epistemic narrowness and simplicity replaced former, broader ways of thinking (for a discussion of his work see Robinson (2002). The dramatic advances in science that began in the seventeenth century were beginning to be felt in the public domain, and alongside this an aping of the epistemology of science throughout the university environment, that is, the Academe. Newman recognized there was some worth in scientific knowing, that he described in terms of *notional* apprehension, that is, apprehension that is deductive, scientific and logically conclusive. However, he also argued for *real* apprehension, that is, knowing from a variety of factors through a collection of what he terms weak evidences. These included notions, images, historical occurrences, and emotions. The illative sense constructs knowledge through practice, so that there is a 'going round an object, by the comparison, the combination, the mutual correction, the continual adaptation of many partial notions, by the employment, concentration and joint action of many faculties and exercises of the mind' (Newman, 1852). Hence, for real apprehension there needs to be a greater sensitivity to the complexity of truth, for the world is also complex. Newman believed that if we oversimplify we fail in imagination, for we are not recognizing the truth that emerges out of daily activity.

The essence of ideology and indeed for him, heresy, is a failure to see tensions embedded in truths that are not necessarily resolvable. Such a view also echoes the thoughts of modern contemporary theologians, such as Nicholas Lash, who claims that univocal thinking such as that portrayed in much science, has effectively shut out other imaginative ways of knowing (Lash, 1996). Newman also compared education to the nature of divine reality, so that the more one knows, the more one realizes that one does not know. Such a way of knowing that is also informed by practices means that it can be of service to the public good because it is influenced by a more rounded approach to truth. Newman believed that the only authentic university is also Christian because he believed that knowledge of God was necessary for complete learning. This is a different way of reasoning compared with that common among utilitarians, that views learning as only useful if it is practical. The idea that knowledge of the natural world could be gained through construction became dominant over more contemplative forms of knowing that had been the case in earlier centuries (see Funkenstein, 1986, p. 12, 297ff.). Here the knowledge base is monocular. Instead, for Newman, the task of a university is purposefully to complicate the process by introducing convolution of learning that belies simple conveyance of information and techné (Robinson, 2002, p. 89). Universities are, instead, to become in this way, 'seats of wisdom', such that they encourage a multidimensional approach.[1] Indeed, according to this model, interdisciplinary study is not simply a good idea or a particular educational philosophy but essential in order to promote a well-rounded student.

More important, perhaps, for Newman education is not just a passive reception of knowledge, but a way of life, so that 'universities inspire learners not to knowledge as a goal, but to the wisdom that a life of learning instils' (Robinson, 2002, p. 93). He also believed that knowledge ceases to be knowledge in so far as it tends more and more to the particular. How different from the fragmentation in departments across universities with their urge to ever greater specialization as a way of attracting greater recognition of

the 'expert', itself showing a limited understanding, especially in the public sphere (see comment of this aspect in Deane-Drummond *et al.*, 2001, pp. 24–25). For Newman, university life needs to be more conscious and rely on close cooperation between people, for it needs to reflect the collected wisdom of those from different subject areas, experiences and levels of education.

Why might we need theological wisdom?

If, according to Newman, God is the fount of wisdom, what might this mean? Biblical scholars have become more focused on the wisdom literature, reflecting neglect in earlier scholarship. The question that concerns us here is, in what way might the tradition of theological wisdom serve to inform the ethos of higher education? I suggest that wisdom does have something useful to say in debates about the role of the university today. In the first place, theological wisdom draws on education in the context of family and community. This way of learning was *practical* and *contextual* long before theologies bearing such a name came to the fore, largely in reaction to more theoretical doctrinal discussions about God that seemed far too detached from ordinary life. This *praxis* or theory informed by practices, is very different from utilitarian methods that simply emphasize usefulness for its own sake and as a means of control, detached from other forms of knowing and contemplation. If we apply this to the university, then the context of students' living and community life is just as important as what they learn, a point that the university where I teach is keen to make, for smaller institutions are able to achieve this sense of community more easily than the mega-universities that have grown up from mergers of smaller institutions, supposedly to succeed in becoming 'world class' institutions of learning.

Secondly, theological wisdom is expressed in the Hebrew Bible in feminine categories.[2] Christian theology has been dogged in its history by interpretations of theology that are influenced by patriarchal societies and assumptions. Catherine Keller, a leading feminist theologian, has drawn on the idea of *emancipatory wisdom* as that which best describes the future of theology in the university (Keller, 1991). It is wisdom that can straddle the world of the academic and ecclesial communities to which theology must give an account of itself. For Keller, wisdom 'at least as practised in the indigenous and biblical traditions, is irredeemably implicated in the sensuous, the communal, the experiential, the metanoic, the unpredictable, the imaginal, the practical' (Keller, 1991, p. 143).[3] This differs significantly from the coercive control of matter by mind, which is the agenda of modernity. Rather, it takes time to 'let things become' and includes the social and well as the cosmological. Theological wisdom, therefore, is not individualistic, but operates from within the social context, and reaches out more widely than this to the natural world as well. It has the capacity, therefore, of enlarging a person's horizons to think of those issues that are important not just to the human community, but to the community of others in the world that God has created. Indeed, based on reflections on Proverbs 8, God could be said to create the world in love, but through wisdom.[4] Hence wisdom is a fundamental characteristic of the way God is perceived to create and sustain the world, perceived as a child at play, ever present with God at the dawn of existence. Yet such a theological interpretation

of creation in wisdom is not at loggerheads with cosmological and evolutionary accounts of the origin of the earth (Deane-Drummond, 2006b). Rather, it adds to such an account a dimension that fills out an interpretation of human origins in a way that complements the voice of science.

Thirdly, a theological voice is one that needs to be heard, for without it more extreme voices start to force their way into education's agenda. Such a worrying trend is only too apparent in the way that those wishing to promote creationism, the belief that the story of Genesis is literally true and an alternative to the evolutionary account of science, has begun to creep its way into the school curriculum in the UK. While creationist science's voice has become rather more sophisticated through the notion of Intelligent Design, it still seeks to provide through ideology an alternative to Darwinian notions of evolutionary science. It is hardly surprising that, given this trend, virtually all universities in the US wish to keep theology out of their agenda. Yet, perhaps it is for this reason that such counter-reactions have found their force? For if people are inculcated into utilitarian methods of learning and thinking at universities, then a culture that is generally religious will sense some disorientation and so be more inclined to an equally narrow reaction to that utilitarianism. In other words, a narrowing of epistemology through a secularist agenda as that expressed in university education leads to a counter reaction that is ironically a very reflection of such narrowness, but this time it is expressed in religious terms. Hence, the importance of a rich understanding of theological wisdom that will discourage such retreats into apparently safe havens, excluded from the worst excesses of those particular forms of scientific knowing that then subsequently become expressed in narrow public policies and practices.

Fourthly, and more radical perhaps, the New Testament theological wisdom finds expression through paradox of suffering, rather than a celebration of human wisdom, in the wisdom of the cross.[5] While not doing away with the wisdom of the sages, the wisdom of the cross points to another way of being that makes most sense in the context of the Christian community. Yet could the wisdom of the cross also have wider relevance as well? Certainly, it shows that a Christian image of God is one that is on the side of those who are suffering and in pain. One of the important tasks of the university is pastoral; students do not achieve in a vacuum, but are enabled through their lived experiences. If such experiences are too traumatic, learning may suffer, at least temporarily. It is here that a university needs to include not just a curricula programme, but also provide for pastoral needs of its students through adequate counseling and Chaplaincy provision. Discussions of the wisdom of the cross in the epistle to the Corinthians are also set in the context of an early Christian community where different groups were vying for authority according to different perceptions of wisdom. Instead of such rhetorical game playing, the author of the epistle encourages reflection on the wisdom of the cross. Such wisdom speaks, of the need for humility, rather than jockeying for positions of power through clever forms of speech. Is such a goal realistic in a university context? What would the shape of university management be like if such an approach was adopted by vice chancellors? I suggest that the cooperation indicated as necessary in the previous section presupposes this form of wisdom to some extent, for without mutual respect and understanding will fail to emerge.

Why might we need practical wisdom?

The medieval theologian Thomas Aquinas distinguished between the intellectual virtues of speculative reason and those of practical reason. The intellectual virtues of speculative reason included understanding, science, and wisdom, where wisdom is the appreciation of the fundamental causes of everything and the connections between them, including God. The practical virtues, on the other hand, included art and prudence, or practical wisdom.[6] Prudence in the classical sense, includes deliberation, judgement and action. How might prudence inform institutions such as a university? First, prudence is both individual and political. Hence, it has a social dimension as well, so that there is a need not just to encourage students to think prudentially, but also apply this to forms of management and institutional structures as well. Yet prudence in a popular cast of mind is often portrayed as caution about taking risks, at least as applied to political decision making. The classical notion is so different that it is worth considering whether the term prudence should still be used in such a context. I suggest that it can, as long as appropriate care is taken to explain what prudence might be.

Prudence, for the classics, has a number of different facets that are worth highlighting in this context. In the first place, it is sensitive to memory of the past, that is, it is conscious of the history of what has gone before and learnt the lessons from this history. John Henry Newman's approach to university education has been largely ignored, at least in terms of practical application. It is time, therefore, to propose an alternative style of university ethos compared with the current focus on utilitarian management so that universities are enabled to become, as Newman suggested, 'seats of wisdom'. Alasdair MacIntyre argued in this vein when he suggested that there are three rival versions of moral inquiry, only one of which has served to inform the modern university, namely the one based on the Enlightenment project of liberal modernity (MacIntyre, 1990). The second tradition that he identifies is what he terms the geneology of Nietzsche, which leads to forms of postmodernity that seek to deconstruct all foundations for knowledge. If such a postmodern project were taken too literally, then it is hard to imagine how universities might function.[7] The third form of inquiry that he identifies is that of Thomas Aquinas, that he suggests provides a bridge between universal forms of disembodied reason found in the first Enlightenment project, and the second form that encourages relativism. Certainly, the Aristotelian tradition of prudence influences that of Aquinas, but I suggest that Aquinas's view goes even further than just providing a bridge between modern and postmodern views in the way that MacIntyre suggests. For Aquinas holds fast to the importance of theology in his construction; it is not simply an 'add on', in the manner of grace being added to nature in the way he is sometimes portrayed in basic textbooks in theology. Rather, Aquinas, is sensitive to the importance of religious experience, even admitting towards the end of his life that he had not given sufficient attention to such experience in his great *Summa Theologiae*. There is, in other words, in Aquinas a sensitivity to the presence of God, a contemplative dimension, that MacIntyre has not taken sufficiently seriously. Prudence for Aquinas is not simply learnt in the human community; it is also a gift of the Holy Spirit received by the grace of God. In addition, for Aquinas, prudence, along with the other cardinal virtues, also presuppose the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity.

Secondly, practical wisdom in Aquinas is conscious of what is the case in the present, and is open to being taught. This openness is an essential ingredient of all learning, whatever level and whatever the final goal of such learning. Deliberation needs to include, therefore, consultation with others, both within and outside the discipline to which individuals belong. Furthermore, are such disciplines open to being restructured? Theology, that Gavin D'Costa has described as being 'in Babylonian captivity' by its aping of secular agendas, could arguably be the first to remember its lost wisdom and seek alternatives (D'Costa, 2002). While other disciplines might find it hard to extricate themselves from the specialism that seems to engender authority and funding, at least as a first move different subject areas could seek to scrutinize the overall goals of their research and knowledge transfer programmes. Practical wisdom is also able to make correct decisions in the face of the unexpected. If universities are to become those seats of wisdom, then they too will have something to say when unexpected events happen that need public comment, as discussed in more detail in the final section below.

Thirdly, practical wisdom combines both caution, and also foresight. Caution is awareness of where mistakes have been made in the past, and being able to adjust future policy in the light of those mistakes. Have universities really learnt from their mistakes, or are they bent on ever more accumulative strategies that are orientated to utilitarian goals? Can foresight enable universities to see into the future as to what different strategies might entail, and how each might be implemented? If universities continue to be led by market driven policies, then not only will the basis for learning be undermined, for some subjects will disappear as being unfashionable, but also universities will become narrowed to centres for vocational training, the curriculum adjusted to what is needed for a market economy. In this way, the university is no longer a place where new questions are asked of society, but one where values in society are simply reinforced.

What might an alternative vision include? In Aquinas, practical wisdom is wisdom orientated towards the good. Although there are philosophical debates about what this good might entail, a vision for the public good, that is, the good for the whole community, goes some way towards expressing what he intends. A Christian university would also wish this good to be grounded in an understanding of theological good, for Aquinas this Divine Wisdom is reflected in practical terms through the Decalogue, that is, The Ten Commandments. Although detached from its origins, the legal structure that exists in Britain is also influenced by the Christian context in which it emerged. Yet universities need to seek not just to encourage its students to be law-abiding citizens, though certainly they can do this, but might also seek to serve the communities in which they are placed.

Practical wisdom in service to the public good

In order to illustrate how practical wisdom might inform the public good I am going to use two different areas of public discussion, namely, environmental concerns and the new reproductive technologies. Both areas are subjects of considerable contested public debate. What might a prudential approach, understood according to the classical tradition that I have been elaborating, have to say on these issues? While it is quite possible to understand prudence without any reference to Christian theology, I suggest that retrieving

a classical and Thomistic notion of prudence that acknowledges its links with Christian virtue serves to provide a bridge between secular and religious aspects of human community that also help serve the public good. In other words, we do not just need a bridge between modern and postmodern, that MacIntyre correctly identifies as one of the roles of virtue traditions, but also a bridge between secular and religious streams of human life.

This essay need hardly convince its readers that environmental issues are important. Nearly every day some topic is discussed in the media, the issue of climate change has somewhat surprisingly surfaced comparatively late in terms of media reporting, and popular wildlife programmes have engendered greater sensitivity to the importance of thinking holistically about our planet and its future. The language that has begun to dominate the discussion of environmental responsibility is that of sustainability. Sustainability is a subject that lends itself to a multidisciplinary approach, from geography, through to social science, anthropology and theology. It is, also, subject to captivity to the market in common with other ways of thinking, in that it can become a market commodity that merely serves to promote economic interests. It also allows for a theological dimension for a number of reasons.

In the first place, the religious aspects to sustainability processes are often thought of by practical campaign groups as simply there to reinforce a sustainable agenda. If Christians are able to support sustainability because of their faith commitment, then, the argument goes, so much the better, for religious motivation will reinforce commitment. Yet, in consultations on what sustainability might mean, which often includes an account of future generations, little account has been taken of what Christian communities might have to say on sustainability and what sustainability might or needs to include.[8] This exclusion of Christian communities as having something worthwhile to say reflects, it seems to me, a lack of prudence or practical wisdom, for it narrows thinking accordingly to a materialistic agenda.

The Revd. John Rodwell is seeking to correct this anomaly by research that deliberately interrelates social, economic and environmental patterns alongside patterns of church activity. As a former professor of ecology he brings to the subject both experience of practical ecology alongside experience as a Christian minister. He has also investigated the way particular environmental groups in a given area understand sustainability. The need for specific measurable targets for sustainability that could be demonstrated and assessed in groups such as RSPB is one that is largely controlled by Government funding which seeks particular performance indicators. This example illustrates that the public good in the area of sustainability is one that is narrowed to information gathering, reflecting an equally pervasive narrowness that characterizes universities. Hence, if universities are to demonstrate that practical wisdom that I have argued is necessary in order to expand notions of the good, then there needs to be wider political scrutiny not just of what sustainability might mean and how it is defined, but also how it is practised in given environmental organizations as well.

In addition, environments that are sustainable need to be places where we feel at home, engendering connectivity with the past. Does sustainability in its current definitions take into account this need for *memory*, which is also another vital aspect of prudential reasoning? Rodwell questions whether 'the sustainability process knows how

to handle the past at all' (Rodwell, 2006). There is, furthermore, a lack of appreciation in visions of a sustainable future as to whether justice has been done to the past, for the focus is on the needs of future generations, or that of the more immediate ecological community.

A second example that is worth noting in this context is that of new reproductive technologies (for a detailed discussion of the application of prudence to discussions about genetics see Deane-Drummond, 2006a). One reason for this is that while Christian views may be excluded from public debates about environmental questions, or perhaps only aired in Christian communities, religious attitudes to new reproductive technologies are more often than not aired in public. One of the reasons for this difference may be that Christian reflection is not perceived as having something of interest to say on the matter of the environment, even though this is a misconception, as illustrated above. Secondly, the very public feuds over human dignity and religious passions surrounding this issue generate stories that the media like to portray, for it leads to two different rhetorical strategies focused on the embryo as personal or as a pinprick ball of cells that make for good broadcasting (for a discussion of this aspect see Kitzinger & Williams, 2006). Yet, just as in the above account, the portrayal of religious views as equated with conservative ethics, more often than not pitched against the new reproductive technologies, is far too simplistic. In the first place, practical wisdom would encourage a more holistic understanding of issues that takes into account different facets of knowledge, rather than tying religion to a specific conservative ethic in the manner of media debate. In the second place, prudential reflection would seek to engage with the overall goal of the technologies themselves, and ask social justice questions that are broader than questions simply about the moral status of the embryo. Thirdly, prudence is a stance that encourages some flexibility in approach to new reproductive technologies, even though the boundaries of what is acceptable may be defined through particular principles.

A good example of this is the current discussion on the use of chimeras in order to generate embryonic stem cells. For scientists, this alleviates the need to find women who are prepared to be donors, with the associated risks that this entails. The relaxation in the law that allows donors to offer their eggs for research, with generous 'compensation' payable, rather than their use in the fertility treatment of themselves or others, also increases availability of eggs. In this case it treats eggs more like commodities that can be bought and sold in a manner that would not be acceptable for other body parts. It is therefore not surprising that many theologians are suspicious of the new technologies and their futures, not just because they seem to be an affront to embryos, but also because of the underlying control over life and the drive towards perfectibility that this implies (for discussion of a range of different theological standpoints see Deane-Drummond, 2003; Deane-Drummond & Scott, 2006).

Debates exist as to how far and to what extent technological intervention is desirable or acceptable. While some theologians warm to the possibility of technological change, and celebrate advances in medicine, viewing such human capacities as representing humanity as co-creators, others are more wary. In the latter case theologians believe that human life in particular should be treated as gift, where chance as an element in the formation of life is respected, and where sexuality is not separated from human reproduction. Clearly,

universities need to involve themselves in debates such as these, by hosting public forums, for example, in such a way that public debate is informed by accurate representation of all facets of the topic, both from the medical, social, philosophical, ethical, historical and theological perspectives.

Conclusions

I suggest that a religious dimension to public debate is forgotten at its peril. Universities are also subject to this same form of forgetting. I have argued that we can learn some important lessons about the possible shape of university education by returning to the work of John Henry Newman. He lived at a time when knowledge was becoming ever more narrow in its focus, excluding what once had been presupposed as a good. His concept of a Christian University is not simply an argument for permission of existence of such institutions. Rather, I suggest that his thinking has wider application, and can contribute to the construction of an overall shape for university education. Not all universities will have the same agenda, but all can be challenged to encourage in their students more holistic ways of learning. This includes a seeking of wisdom that is multidimensional in its scope.

I have also argued that theological wisdom is important in that it has become a voice that is often marginalized and excluded from university educational agendas. Yet this very exclusion is a mistake, for within theology there are resources that can make a valuable contribution to re-envisioning an agenda for higher education. In particular, this agenda needs to be emancipatory, but such emancipatory knowing is one that is practical, and well as multifaceted.

Newman's vision of cooperation comes to the fore here, for without mutual respect for the contribution of different disciplines, soon universities start to imitate that divided community of Corinth where each group vied for its own superiority.[9] Instead, proper account needs to be made of the common good, and how to reach this goal in the context of the local and wider community.

Thomas Aquinas' brilliance in synthesizing the thought of Aristotle with Augustine still has relevance today, especially in his discussion of practical wisdom or prudence. universities too need to be places where synthetic knowledge is encouraged, especially if they are to form seeds for alternative ways of thinking that resist monocular thinking.

Public debates are too often ill informed not only about science, which is perhaps recognized, but also about the place of religious understanding, as illustrated from discussions of sustainability and new reproductive technologies. Universities need, therefore, to be places that can inform public opinion so that more accurate representation takes place. In this way, a public that is better informed than would otherwise be the case will serve to help shape Government policy.

Moreover, universities need to be places that instill in those who study there the love of learning that goes far deeper than simple success at examinations. For the kind of wisdom that is instilled offers skills that are not just 'transferable', but help to foster *citizen virtues*, those who are able to take active and full responsibility not just in their family life, but in the public sphere as well.

Notes

1. Newman did recognize that some universities would be specialist, but he argued that the ideal of universality should prevail, rather than some subjects being excluded as a matter of principle.
2. I am confining my discussion of wisdom to Christian theology, but this should not be taken to imply that I think that other religions have little to offer debates on wisdom.
3. Note that metanoic has meaning here of being capable of changing hearts, from *metanoia,* change of heart.
4. A full discussion of this is outside the scope of this chapter. For more detail see Deane-Drummond (2000).
5. The first letter of Paul to the Corinthians, for example, especially I Cor. 1.8–2.5.
6. Aquinas distinguished wisdom, a virtue of speculative reason, from prudence, a virtue of practical reason, by naming wisdom as that which dealt specifically with theological matters, and prudence as that which dealt with human affairs. For his discussion of wisdom see Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, volume 34 (1975, 2a2ae). For his discussion of prudence see Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, volume 36 (1973).
7. A caveat for this view is that arguably Derrida's own view of endless questioning means that the University is still obliged to remember the older universal story in its questioning, rather than simply cast this to one side. See Loughlin (20002).
8. I am drawing here on the work of Rev. Professor John Rodwell and his M.B. Reckitt Lecture, 'Forgetting the Land', delivered at Mirfield College, 7 September 2006.
9. I am referring here to the portrayal of this community by the apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians.

Notes on contributor

Celia Deane-Drummond is Professor of Theology and the Biological Sciences at the University of Chester and Director of the Centre for Religion and the Biosciences, which was founded in 2002. She has published widely on the theme of wisdom, including for example, *Creation through Wisdom: Theology and the New Biology*, T & T Clark, 2000.

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