

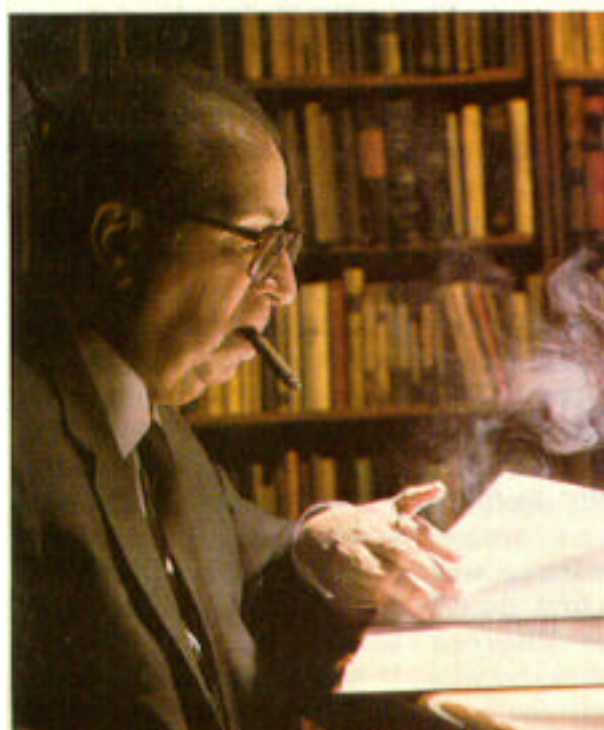
# THE GREAT IDEAS ONLINE

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Feb '01

Center for the Study of The Great Ideas

# 119



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## **RESCUED TREASURES: THE GREAT IDEAS**

A Relatively Unknown Story about Mortimer Adler

*by Max Weismann*

The story begins nearly fifty years ago in the San Francisco Bay area when an extraordinary educational event took place—Mortimer Adler made his television debut.

Unbeknownst to most of us, in the years 1953 and 1954 Mortimer Adler hosted a live, half-hour, weekly television series comprised of 52 programs entitled THE GREAT IDEAS. These programs were produced by the Institute for Philosophical Research and were carried live as a public service by the American Broadcasting Company, presented by (NET) National Educational Television, the precursor to what is now PBS.

Unfortunately, only Bay-area residents were privileged to see and hear Dr. Adler deliver these highly instructive and penetrating programs. Were it not for the forethought of Dr. Adler and his colleagues to film each telecast (as this was a time before videotape) they would have been lost. Sadly, since that time, these films have rested undisturbed in the Institute's storage room in Chicago.

Then the building that housed the Institute was going to be razed forcing Dr. Adler and his staff to move into the Encyclopaedia Britannica headquarters. Fortunately during this move, the films were found and rescued. I am pleased to report that Dr. Adler has donated these films to the Center as it has been his wish to make these films readily available as inexpensively as possible to you, educational institutions, and the general public.

The happiest ending to this story would be to carry out Dr. Adler's wish and release these programs while at the same time preserving these outstanding examples of our intellectual and educational history. To accomplish this, we conducted a fund-raising campaign to underwrite the cost of restoring and transferring these films to video. We are pleased to announce that the campaign was successful and has provided the necessary funds to produce this video retrospective.

These programs will now make Dr. Adler's work available to our universities, colleges, high schools, libraries, fellow citizens, and particularly to our young people who may not be aware of his important contributions. These half-

hour programs are the perfect length for use in your home, office, classrooms, or discussion groups. The fifty-two (52) different program titles on twenty-two (22) video cassettes are listed below.

I cannot begin to convey to you how profound and instructive these programs are. Although television presentation techniques have improved drastically since then, it is the content of these programs that remains timeless and relevant to our world today.

- 1    SERIES ON ART
  - The Nature of Art
  - The Kinds of Art
  - The Fine Arts
  - The Goodness of Art
- 2    BEAUTY
- 3    CHANGE
- 4    DEMOCRACY
- 5    EMOTION
- 6    FREEDOM
- 7    GOD
- 8    GOOD and EVIL
- 9    SERIES ON GOVERNMENT
  - The Necessity of Government
  - The Nature of Government
  - The Powers of Government
  - The Forms of Government The Best Government
- 10   JUSTICE
- 11   SERIES ON LABOR
  - The Parts of Life Sleep, Work, Play, Leisure, and Rest
  - The Distinction of Work, Play, and Leisure
  - The Kinds of Work and the Dignity of All Forms of Labor
  - Labor and Leisure in Pre-Industrial and Industrial Societies

Liberal Education in Relation to Labor and Leisure

- 12 LANGUAGE
- 13 SERIES ON LAW
  - The Nature of Law
  - The Kinds of Law
  - The Making of Law
  - The Justice of Law
- 14 SERIES ON LEARNING
  - The Nature of Human Learning
  - Adult Learning
  - Learning from Books - How to Read a Book
  - Learning from Discussion - The Art of Conversation
  - Learning Through Television - How to Watch Television
- 15 SERIES ON LOVE
  - The Nature and Kinds of Love
  - Love as Friendship A World Without Sex
  - Sexual or Erotic Love
  - The Morality of Love
- 16 SERIES ON MAN
  - Issue About Man's Nature and Origin
  - Does Man Differ from Animals in Kind or Degree?
  - The Darwinian Theory of Man's Origin
  - The Answer to Darwin
  - The Practical Consequences of Taking Sides on This Issue
- 17 SERIES ON OPINION
  - The Nature of Opinion
  - The Difference Between Knowledge and Opinion
  - Opinion in Relation to Freedom and Government
  - Controversy, Freedom of Speech, and Majority Rule
- 18 SERIES ON PHILOSOPHY
  - The Use of Philosophy
  - How Philosophy Differs from Science and Religion
  - Unsolved Problems of Philosophy
  - The Conditions of Progress in Philosophy
- 19 PROGRESS
- 20 PUNISHMENT

21 TRUTH

22 WAR and PEACE

Order the entire set for \$495 (less than \$10 per program)  
An audio version is available for \$195.00

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**THE GREAT IDEAS: A Seminar Approach To Teaching  
And Learning**

Produced by Dr. Patricia Weiss, President of The Paideia Group, the University of North Carolina, and Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.

The purpose of these programs is to teach anyone how to conduct Socratic seminars. In these programs, Dr. Adler conducts seminars with 20 high school students on the readings below. After each discussion there is a question and answer session between Dr. Adler and a group of the students teachers.

- 1) THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE - (60 min.)
- 2) APOLOGY —Plato - (60 min.)
- 3) ANTIGONE —Sophocles - (60 min.)
- 4) THE PRINCE —Machiavelli - (90 min.)
- 5) POLITICS —Aristotle & THE SOCIAL CONTRACT —Rousseau - (60 min.)

This set sells elsewhere for \$595.00, the Center price for “Members Only” is \$60.00 each or \$250.00 for the set.

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**FIRING LINE**

William F. Buckley, Jr. interviews Mortimer Adler.

A GUIDE FOR THE 20TH CENTURY PAGAN (1980)

*How to Think About God* (60 Minutes - \$30.00)

MORTIMER ADLER AND HIS GREAT IDEAS (1981)

*Six Great Ideas* (60 Minutes \$30.00)

IN WHAT SENSE ARE HUMAN BEINGS ANGELIC?  
(1982)

*The Angels and Us* (60 Minutes - \$30.00)

RETURN TO EDUCATION (1982)

*The Paideia Proposal* (60 Minutes - \$30.00)

HOW TO SPEAK; HOW TO LISTEN (1983)

(60 Minutes - \$30.00)

MORTIMER ADLER'S GREAT IDEAS

PARTS I & 2 (1984)

*A Vision of the Future* (120 Minutes - \$45.00)

TEN GREAT PHILOSOPHICAL MISTAKES

PARTS I & 2 (1985)

*Ten Philosophical Mistakes* (120 Minutes - \$45.00)

CONTINUING TO LEARN (1986)

*A Guidebook to Learning* (60 Minutes - \$30.00)

HOW DOES IT GO WITH REVISING OUR TEACHING?

(1986)

*The Paideia Proposal* (60 Minutes - \$30.00)

MORTIMER ADLER ON THE CONSTITUTION

PARTS I & 2 (1987)

*We Hold These Truths* (120 Minutes - \$45.00)

MORTIMER ADLER ON THE CLOSING OF THE

AMERICAN MIND (1988) (60 Minutes - \$30.00)

MORTIMER ADLER AND EDUCATION (1989)

*Reforming Education* (30 Minutes - \$30.00)

WHAT IS INTELLECT (1990)

*Intellect: Mind Over Matter* (30 Minutes - \$30.00)

ARE ALL RELIGIONS EQUAL (1991)

*Truth in Religion* (30 Minutes - \$30.00)

IS COMMUNISM REALLY OVER? (1991)

*Haves Without Have-Nots* (30 Minutes - \$30.00)

MORTIMER ADLER SUMS UP (1993)

*A Second Look in the Rearview Mirror* (30 Minutes - \$30.00)

IS PHILOSOPHY WORTHWHILE? (1993)

*The Four Dimensions of Philosophy* (30 Minutes-\$30.00)

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**SIX GREAT IDEAS** (1981)

TRUTH, GOODNESS, BEAUTY, LIBERTY, EQUALITY  
& JUSTICE

(Six one-hour cassettes) \$35.00 each - \$185.00 for the set.

“Adler offers enough reassessment of classical concepts to make one a more thoughtful human being, or want to become one.”—Chicago Tribune

“A vigorous, sane alternative to both academic murk and popular pseudo-philosophies.” —The Kansas City Times

Each summer since 1951, Mortimer J. Adler conducts a seminar at The Aspen Institute in Colorado. At the 1981 seminar, fifteen leaders from the worlds of business, literature, education, and the arts joined him in an in-depth consideration of the six great ideas that are the subject of this book: Truth, Goodness, and Beauty--the ideas we judge by; and Liberty Equality and Justice--the ideas we act on. The group discussions and conversations between Dr. Adler and journalist Bill Moyers were filmed for broadcast on public television, and millions of people followed their exploration of these important ideas. Discarding the out worn and off-putting jargon of academia, Dr. Adler dispels the myth that

philosophy is the exclusive province of the specialist. He argues that “philosophy is everybody’s business,” and that a better understanding of these fundamental concepts is essential if we are to cope with the political, moral, and social issues that confront us daily.

*The Participants:*

*Alan Bullock*, Fellow of the British Academy, Oxford, England

*Francis Mading Deng*, Ambassador of the Sudan to Canada

*Betty Sue Flowers*, V P & Dean of Graduate Studies, University of Texas

*Jamake Highwater*, Writer and Artist, New York

*Joseph E. Slater*, President, Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies

*Soedjatmoko*, Rector, United Nations University, Tokyo

*Rudiger von Wechmar*, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Rome

*Jeremy Bernstein*, Dept of Physics, Stevens Institute of Tech., Hoboken, NJ

*Robin C. Duke*, New York

*Shirley Hufstедler*, Hufstедler, Miller, Carlson, & Beardsley, Los Angeles

*Alexander A. Kwapong*, Vice Rector, United Nations University, Tokyo

*Ruth B. Love*, General Superintendent of Schools, Chicago

*Robert A. Mosbacher*, Aspen Institute Trustee, Houston, Texas

*Jon O. Newman*, U.S. Circuit Judge, U.S. Court of Appeals, West Hartford, CT

*Gus Tyler*, Ass’t to the President, Intl. Ladies Garment Workers Union, NY

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**WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS**

Mortimer Adler discusses America’s Testament with the notables listed below in these nationally broadcast programs. (Five one-hour cassettes) \$30.00 each.

**#1 THE TWO BICENTENNIALS**

Walter Dellenger - Professor of Law, Duke University

John Hope Franklin - James B. Duke Professor of History,



Duke University

#2 THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

Ellen Futter - President, Barnard College  
Charles Percy - Former U. S. Senator, Illinois

#3 PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION

Gerhard Casper - Professor of Law, University of Chicago  
Theodore Hesburgh - Past President, University of Notre Dame

#4 AMENDMENTS - BILL OF RIGHTS

Henry Grunwald - Former Editor-in-Chief, TIME Inc.  
James Hoge - Publisher and President, New York Daily News

#5 CHANGING AND GROWING

Jon Newman - Judge, United States Court of Appeals  
Douglass Cater - President, Washington College

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**IN SEARCH OF THE CONSTITUTION**

*We Hold These Truths: Understanding the Ideas and Ideals of the Constitution*

Bill Moyers and Mortimer Adler with students of St. John's College, Annapolis, MD

Students at St. John's College in Annapolis, MD, challenge Adler, the noted philosopher, author, and educator, on his views about fundamental ideas in the Constitution and their relevance today. Adler discusses Americans' lack of familiarity with the Constitution, the checks and balances provided by the Supreme Court, "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" and the welfare state, foreign policy, and legislating morality.

(60 minutes) \$35.00

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**THE DICK CAVETT SHOW (1978)**

(Two half-hour shows) \$ 35.00

Dick Cavett conducts a wonderfully entertaining interview with Mortimer Adler on his past, his career, philosophy, and *Great Treasury of Western Thought*.  
Lot's of laughs.

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**BILL MOYERS' JOURNAL: ADLER ON ARISTOTLE**  
(1979)

Mortimer Adler with Bill Moyers at The Aspen Institute  
(One-hour cassette) \$40.00

. . . I could fill a book with examples. One of my favorites happened some years ago after you had broadcast a special I did with Mortimer Adler, the educator and philosopher whose lifelong passion has been to awaken students of any age--16 or 60--to the power of critical thinking. In the two weeks after our program on his book *Aristotle for Everybody*, over 12,000 people wrote for the transcript.

But the real payoff came in Penn Station a few weeks later. I was traveling with CBS friends who were skeptical when I told them what the response to the series had been. We were waiting for the train and a fellow, rather shabbily-dressed approached us. I thought he was a panhandler looking for a handout. He held his hand out, all right--only to take mine in it, and shake it vigorously. He said, "Mr. Moyers, I want to thank public television for introducing me to Mortimer Adler and Aristotle, with them as friends I'm a very rich man."

Bill Moyers

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**ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS**

Book I: The Theory of Happiness.

Encyclopaedia Britannica's Classical Greece - Lesson 3

Written and presented by Mortimer Adler, this is an invaluable addition to your library and an ideal program for students and children.

(30 minutes in color, with animation and music) \$30.00

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**PLATO'S APOLOGY -**

Encyclopaedia Britannica's Classical Greece - Lesson 2

Written and presented by Mortimer Adler, this is an invaluable addition to your library and an ideal program for students and children.

(30 minutes in color, with animation and music) \$30.00

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**THE GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD**

Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer J. Adler introduce and explain the development of the Syntopicon and Britannica set of Great Books. (1952)

(30 minutes) \$30.00

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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Dear Max,

You may have heard a lot lately about eBooks-electronic books you can read on your notebook or desktop computer. But did you know that only Adobe delivers an eBook solution that recreates the rich visual experience of a printed book?

See for yourself. Download the FREE Adobe Acrobat eBook Reader <http://adobe.0mm.com/ADB184001+72904> today and experience high-fidelity Adobe eBooks, complete with the formatting, fonts, photos, and graphics you expect from the printed page.

The easy-to-use Acrobat eBook Reader interface simplifies and extends online reading with features such as single and two-page display to match the traditional reading experience; integrated bookstore access and immediate download of eBooks into a personalized library; seamless access to Web links inside of eBooks; and highlight, annotation and search tools that make it easy to locate specific passages.

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## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

**Angela Massiah**

**Laura Siering**

**Daphne Throne, Esq. (Honorary Member)**

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**As always, we welcome your comments.**

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**THE GREAT IDEAS ONLINE** is published  
by the Center for the Study of The Great Ideas  
Founded by Mortimer J. Adler & Max Weismann  
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