

# ACTON notes

Acton Institute Newsletter

March 2008, Volume 18, Number 3



*“Connecting good intentions with sound economics”*

The Fish Market on The Beach © Victoria & Albert Museum, London / Art Resource, NY

## In This Issue

- Ten Years of Success for *Journal of Markets & Morality* • From Acton Conference to University Doctorate
- *Call of the Entrepreneur* is Available on PBS • *Call of the Entrepreneur* Premiere Popular in Guatemala

# President's Message

Dear Friends,

“There is no such thing as freedom in a world in which property is not privately owned.”

How important is private property to the idea of freedom? Since the dawn of time, intellectuals have imagined a world in which all things are commonly owned and people achieve perfect freedom. In fact, this is a dangerous fantasy. There is no such thing as freedom in a world in which property is not privately owned.

As a case in point, consider the protests taking place outside St. Joseph's Cathedral in Hanoi, Vietnam. People have set up vigils to make one simple request: that the cathedral be restored to its rightful owner. Today, much of the right of property ownership is being restored in this country. You can trade stocks and own homes and businesses.

What about the cathedral? The government says that it is the property of the communist party. To give it back to the Catholic Church would amount to a full repudiation of communist doctrine, which says that land-use rights can only be granted by the state. Giving the cathedral back to its rightful owner does indeed amount to a repudiation of communist doctrine, and that doctrine is in desperate need of a wholesale global repudiation. Under collective ownership, there is no freedom, only a totalitarian state.

The protesters themselves are dealing with just such a state now, as its agents collect their names, smear them as terrorists, and claim that they are enemies of society. This is the inevitable result of the idea that private institutions cannot legitimately own and control property. So as defined by the state, the protestors are indeed criminals. They are not criminals as defined by the natural rights tradition. The idea of natural rights was embraced by the Church long before it was picked up by John Locke and the liberal tradition.

The whole subject of property restoration is something that Eastern Europe dealt with for years after the fall of communism. In some of these regimes—Vietnam and China, for example—communism remains. The same regimes are in place, but they have gingerly stepped back from strict enforcement—if only to save their countries from sliding into calamity. Justice requires property restoration, and ownership itself is a first condition of freedom. The whole world should join in solidarity with the Hanoi Cathedral vigil.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Robert A. Sirico". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Robert A. Sirico, President

The mission of the Acton Institute is to promote a free and virtuous society characterized by individual liberty and sustained by religious principles.

**ACTON**INSTITUTE

161 Ottawa Avenue NW, Suite 301 • Grand Rapids, MI 49503 • USA • [www.acton.org](http://www.acton.org)

## Ten Years of Success for *Journal of Markets & Morality*

The newest issue of the *Journal of Markets & Morality* fulfills a decade of publication under the leadership of Acton scholar Dr. Stephen J. Grabill. Dr. Grabill has served as the executive editor of the journal ever since joining the Acton Institute ten years ago. The mission of the journal is to provide a forum for the scholarly exploration of the relationship between economics, theology, and ethics.

The new journal issue features a piece from the U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican, Mary Ann Glendon. Glendon authored a piece titled “John Paul II’s Challenges to the Social Sciences.” Glendon’s article is just one example of the engaging and scholarly work inside the pages of the publication. “The single best indicator of the *Journal of Markets & Morality*’s success is the high volume of unsolicited article submissions that seem to increase every year,” said Dr. Grabill. Dr. Grabill also commented on the progression of the journal over the years noting, “When we

“Because the journal is so influential and in high demand there are challenges for the future.”

started we had to ask all of our friends to write for us, but now I am unfamiliar with over 80 percent of the authors submitting their work to us for publication.” Dr. Grabill also discussed the rising popularity and influence of the journal noting, “One of my greatest sources of satisfaction comes when I’m reading a prominent periodical and the author cites something from the *Journal of Markets & Morality*. I’m pleased to say this is fairly regular occurrence for me.”

Because the journal is so influential and in high demand there are challenges for the future. “The biggest challenge currently facing the *Journal of Markets & Morality* is the pressure to increase our publishing frequency, given the authorial demand for our pages, and the need for increased staff to manage its daily affairs.” If you would like to subscribe to the journal contact the Acton Institute or visit our website.



Dr. Stephen J. Grabill



*Journal of Markets & Morality* for 2008

## From Our Conference Participants

Many thanks for all your effort and for my participation with the Acton Institute. It was an enriching experience and I enjoyed it all. The Acton Institute is very generous and I am sincerely grateful.

—John Lavorgna  
Emmitsburg, Maryland

It was invaluable to interact with thoughtful individuals from across the theological spectrum and from a wide variety of professional backgrounds. Thank you again for investing in me through the lectures and financial aid.

—Chad Bogosian  
Springdale, Arkansas

## From Acton Conference to University Doctorate

In 2001, Fr. Kestutis Kevalas, a newly-ordained Catholic priest from Lithuania, attended an Acton Free and Virtuous Society conference in Prague, Czech Republic. The event was life changing. As Fr. Kevalas wrote to Acton president, Fr. Robert Sirico,

I was so thrilled by what I heard from you and from other speakers during that conference, that my perception of Catholic Social Teaching and the ways it can be presented was changed. I understood that what links Christian theology, the free market and the free and virtuous society is the truth about man, and that it is an area requiring enormous exploration.

Fr. Kevalas credits Acton with leading him towards doctoral work on Catholic ethics and free-market ideas. Fr. Kevalas contacted Elly Barnette (now Acton's development director) to ask her if she thought Acton's research director, Dr. Samuel Gregg, would be willing to act as Fr. Kevalas's doctoral supervisor. The doctorate was to be undertaken at Vytautas Magnus University, one of Lithuania's oldest universities. To cite Dr. Gregg: "I had met Fr. Kevalas at the Prague conference and subsequent

Reflecting on Fr. Kevalas being awarded his doctorate, Dr. Gregg commented: "This is an example of the long-term impact of Acton's work. Fr. Kevalas lives in a country that maintained its religious identity despite fifty one years of enslavement to atheistic communism. He's now equipped to teach the principles of the free and virtuous society, showing young Lithuanians the importance of economic liberty in sustaining human dignity. It's a beautiful story that Acton's generous supporters should know about."

## Call of the Entrepreneur Is Available on PBS

*The Call of the Entrepreneur* is available for broadcast by public television stations. Starting at 9:00 PM on Saturday, February 16, 2008, one of public TV's major content providers, the National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA), will make *The Call of the Entrepreneur* available by satellite to PBS affiliates around the country. Each PBS affiliate is free to decide whether to download the master from the NETA satellite feed and air the documentary. You can help influence local PBS stations to broadcast the documentary even after the February 16 date

## ACTON News



Fr. Kestutis Kevalas at his doctoral examination



**PBS**

events. I knew that Fr. Kevalas was a very promising priest with scholarly talent. It took me about five seconds to agree to supervise him."

Over the next three years, Fr. Kevalas worked under Dr. Gregg's guidance, and he defended his doctoral thesis on January 18, 2008. The room in which Fr. Kevalas' examination occurred was packed with clergy and businessmen. As Fr. Kevalas said, "I understood that people are very interested in this theme of the free economy" and its relationship to Christian ethics. During the examination, one examiner—an economist—commented that he "found no contradiction with the logic of economic science."

has passed. PBS affiliates will have the license to air the documentary for three years beyond the date of February 16, 2008. If you would like to contact your local PBS affiliate go to their website [www.pbs.org/stationfinder/index.html](http://www.pbs.org/stationfinder/index.html) and enter your zip code.

To increase the likelihood of the documentary being aired, please take the time to contact your public broadcasting stations so as many viewers as possible can see an in-depth and countering view of the entrepreneur and their role in society and the world.

# Call of the Entrepreneur Premiere Popular in Guatemala

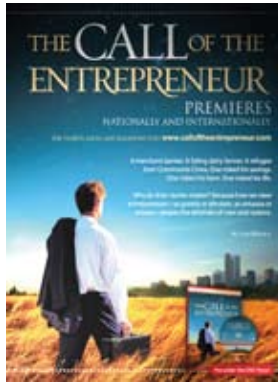
On January 25, the premiere for *The Call of the Entrepreneur* took place at the Milton Friedman Auditorium of Francisco Marroquín University in Guatemala City, Guatemala. The premiere in the city was sold out and about 250 attendees packed the main auditorium. An adjacent room had to be opened to seat all the guests who wanted to view the premiere. Viewers were also treated to a lively discussion with four panelists who discussed and commented on the film. The panelists at the event were Dr. Armando de la Torre, who is the director of political studies and international relations at Francisco Marroquín University, and Dr. Rodolfo Paiz, who is the former finance minister and entrepreneur. The two other panelists were Rodrigo Callejas, who is an attorney and Acton alumnus, and Juan Carlos Eggenburger who is an entrepreneur and director to several private nonprofit organizations.

When Callejas, another dear friend of Acton, shared his thoughts on the premiere.

The documentary's premiere in Guatemala opened up a new kind of dialogue regarding business. On the one hand, it helped to establish the moral importance of the entrepreneur in society and also to begin questioning traditional business paradigms in Latin America. It posed a challenge for both the opponents of business, but also a challenge to traditional business people and academics that only viewed business through a purely materialistic lens.

Another heavily attended premiere of *The Call* took place in Columbus, Ohio, on January 31. The premiere was sponsored by Capital University and had over 300 people in attendance. While the numbers of recent premieres are too many to list individually, the Acton Institute would like to

thank all of the organizers and attendees personally for their dedication and excitement concerning the success of *The Call of the Entrepreneur*.



Panelists at *The Call* Premiere in Guatemala City



## ACTON in the News

Debates like this are explosive, but they get people talking about issues they might normally shy away from, and no topic is more important than this.

—Excerpted from Taylor Cox's article in *The Stanford Review*

Michael Miller

Title: Taking Power From The People

Program: *Intelligent Radio*

Air Date: 2.7.2008

Taylor Cox

Title: Ben Stein Hosts God Debate:

Hitchens vs. Richards

Publisher: *The Stanford Review*

Date: 2.8.2008

John Couretas

Title: In Turkey, a Patriarch in Dire Straits

Publisher: *Assyrian International News Agency*

Date: 2.14.2008

*Reminder***Help Acton Promote Freedom and Virtue!**

The Acton Institute depends on the generosity of supporters like you. If you have not donated to Acton, but enjoy *Acton Notes*, please consider helping us meet our goals! Your help makes possible our continuing mission to promote a free and virtuous society. You may choose to donate using the envelope provided, or you may visit <https://secure.lexi.net/acton> to make a secure donation online. We send our heartfelt thanks to those who have been so generous in the past with your strategic support as well as your prayers. You have a broad vision and a generous heart.



Dr. Glenn Sunshine Speaking at last months Lecture Series



## Acton and You

### Sirico to address on “The Rise (and Eventual Downfall) of the New Religious Left”

Rev. Robert Sirico will present “The Rise (and Eventual Downfall) of the New Religious Left” at the March Acton Lecture Series. A new coalition of the religious left is organizing with other anti-free-market foes to squelch any return to the principles of limited government, while continuing their support to further the cause of big government. Rev. Sirico asks, “Can anybody stop them?” To learn more about the coalitions who make up the new religious left and about their rise in popularity,

please make plans to join us. This lecture will take place on March 13, 12pm, at the St. Cecilia Music Center in downtown Grand Rapids. Also, join us on April 10 for Grace Marie Turner’s lecture titled “Can We Repair What’s Wrong with our Health Care System through Christian Principles?” Grace Marie Turner is the founder and president of the Galen Institute, a public policy research organization that promotes informed debate of free-market ideas for health reform.

# ACTON UNIVERSITY

JUNE 10–13 SYMPOSIUM OF FAITH, ECONOMICS, LIBERTY

Grand Rapids  
Michigan

2008

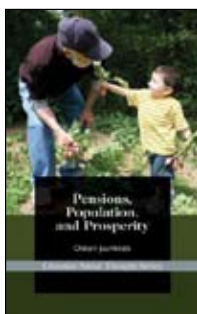
“The seminars and conferences of the Acton Institute provide the world’s foremost training in the theory and philosophy of the free-market model.” *Michael Lee, adjunct professor, Johns Hopkins University*

**Registration for Acton University is already filling up! If you or someone you know would like to learn about the foundations of a society sustained by freedom and virtue, apply today at [www.acton.org/ActonU](http://www.acton.org/ActonU)**



**Apply today at [www.acton.org/actonu](http://www.acton.org/actonu)** *Travel, lodging, and registration scholarships will be offered to select students.*

# ACTON Book Shoppe

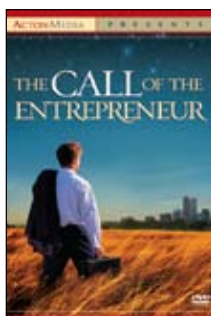


## Pensions, Population, and Prosperity

by *Oskari Juurikkala*

In both developed and developing nations, old age security is a concern of the utmost importance. In this unique and provocative monograph, Oskari Juurikkala, fully cognizant of these differences and drawing on the wisdom of the Christian social tradition, argues that the solution for both groups of nations lies in the same direction—away from reliance on the state and toward strong familial and other private networks.

**Paperback 85 pages Original Price \$6.95 Sale \$6.00**



## The Call of the Entrepreneur DVD

produced by *Acton Media*

A merchant banker. A failing dairy farmer. A refugee from Communist China. One risked his savings. One risked his farm. One risked his life. Why do their stories matter? Because how we view entrepreneurs—as greedy or altruistic, as virtuous or vicious—shapes the destinies of men and nations.

**Length 60 minutes Original Price \$22.00 Sale \$20.00**

**For our fastest service and a complete list of titles,  
visit [www.acton.org/bookshoppe](http://www.acton.org/bookshoppe).**

	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Pensions, Population, and Prosperity	\$6.00		
The Call of the Entrepreneur DVD	\$20.00		

Make checks payable to "Acton Institute." For orders in the United States, Canada, and Mexico: for the first item, add US \$3.75 for shipping; plus US \$1.00 for each additional item. Overseas orders: US \$4.75 for the first item, plus US \$1.75 for each additional item.

Michigan residents add 6% sales tax \_\_\_\_\_

(see below for rates at left) Shipping \_\_\_\_\_

(enclose check or credit card information) Total \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

Mastercard  Visa  Am Ex Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Calendar of Events

### ACTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
<b>March 13</b>	<b>Acton Lecture Series</b> <i>The Rise (and Eventual Downfall) of the New Religious Left</i> Rev. Robert Sirico to speak	Grand Rapids, Michigan
<b>June</b>	<b>Registration now Open for Acton University</b>	Grand Rapids, Michigan

### STAFF ACTIVITIES

Date	Event	Location
<b>March 12</b>	<b>The Spirit of Capitalism</b> Catholic University of America Dr. Samuel Gregg to speak	Washington, DC
<b>March 16</b>	<b>Lecture on Myths Christians Believe</b> Dr. Jay Richards to speak	Grand Rapids, Michigan

Acton Institute • 161 Ottawa Avenue NW, Suite 301 • Grand Rapids, MI 49503 • USA

ACTON  
notes

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
GRAND RAPIDS, MI  
PERMIT 986