

ACTON notes

The Newsletter
of the
Acton Institute
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St. Cecilia Academy, Nashville, TN

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- Premiere of *Call of the Entrepreneur*
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- Samaritan Award Application
Deadline May 31 at www.acton.org/guide

Connecting good intentions with sound economics

President's Message

Dear Friends,

What's really missing in the "small is beautiful" movement is an understanding of economics.

Economic fallacy comes in waves of fashion. One shared by left, right and many religious leaders these days is that small business is beautiful and big business is somehow ugly and wrong. Many clergy believe that big business, merely for being big, is immoral.

Of course, small can indeed be charming. But charming is not the same as "virtuous." Big or small, the work and genius involved in making a vegetable stand profitable also makes a company like Verizon Wireless profitable, because entrepreneurs face the same major challenges. They do not know the future. They must acquire their resources before they are sold. They must pay their employees before the profits appear. And there is no certainty that the consumers of tomorrow will do the same thing that they did yesterday.

Of course, if some corporation gets large due to subsidies or protectionism or government contracts, that's harmful and wrong. But in a market economy, there is only one means toward getting bigger: serving consumers. All big businesses started as small business, and their growth stems from doing a good job at what business is supposed to do.

Let's say the vegetable stand was sold out by noon every day. It then has to expand inventory and tables and employees. At some point, the costs are too high to set up and take down every day. So they acquire a permanent structure. That structure gets bigger, so they set up another structure across town. Then the people from the neighboring town want the same service for themselves.

This process continues until there are 100 stores in the region, and then the charming vegetable stand suddenly gets denounced as "big business"—exploiting people, dehumanizing communities, and homogenizing the culture! Well, we have to ask the advocates of "small is beautiful" at what point in the process of growth the veggy stand owner should have stopped serving people what they want.

What's really missing among religious advocates of the "small is beautiful" movement is an understanding of economics, one which the Acton Institute is promoting in its work, and you are supporting with your generous spirit.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Robert A. Sirico".

Rev. Robert A. Sirico, President

ACTON INSTITUTE

161 Ottawa Avenue NW, Suite 301 Grand Rapids, MI 49503 USA www.acton.org

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

Top Catholic High Schools

Applications are now being accepted for the 2007 Catholic High School Honor Roll. The Honor Roll is an annual list of the top fifty Catholic high schools in the United States, where schools are examined on the criteria of *academic excellence, Catholic identity, and civic education.*

Since the Honor Roll's inception in 2004, schools have found that placing in the Top 50 list is powerful publicity. Whether it is with media coverage, institutional recognition, or praise from the local community, schools are seeing increased enrollment, energized staffs, proud donors, and a tremendous marketing opportunity. More than 200 media stories have helped highlight the good work Catholic high schools do.

The extended application deadline is May 31, and free for schools to participate. All of the nearly 1,400 Catholic secondary schools in the United States are eligible to apply. Schools can apply by returning the three surveys that were recently sent to schools in an application packet, or schools may apply online

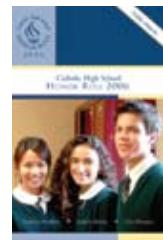
"The Honor Roll desires to better prepare students for fruitful vocations in politics, business, and the church."

at www.chshonor.org. If a school completes each of the three surveys online, it will be entered in a drawing for \$1,500 in scholarships.

A new feature for 2007 is the ability for anyone to nominate a school. If you think a school deserves to be recognized, fill out the online form at www.chshonor.org so they have the chance to participate.

Also new in 2007, every school that applies will receive a detailed, comprehensive evaluation that gives feedback, offers tips for improvement, shows where it stands amongst its peers, and details its strengths and weaknesses. This evaluation alone will be worth the time it takes to apply.

The primary goal of the Honor Roll is to encourage schools to educate students as effectively as possible, in a way that integrates Catholic faith and prepares students for active engagement with the world. In promoting rigorous education, the Honor Roll desires to prepare students for fruitful vocations in politics, business, and the church.



CHS Booklet



www.chshonor.org



Holy Family Academy gets front page recognition for the Honor Roll



From Our Conference Participants

Leaving the conference, I felt strongly aware of the beauty and capability of the freedom of individuals to give themselves to others through appropriate societal means.

—Sean O'Connell
St. Francis Seminary
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

My experience at the Acton Conference was invaluable. It reinforced my convictions about the natural law basis of all human societies and gave me new insight into concrete problems from the perspectives of multiple academic disciplines.

—Kony Kim
Westminster Seminary California
Escondido, California

ACTON MEDIA

P R E S E N T S

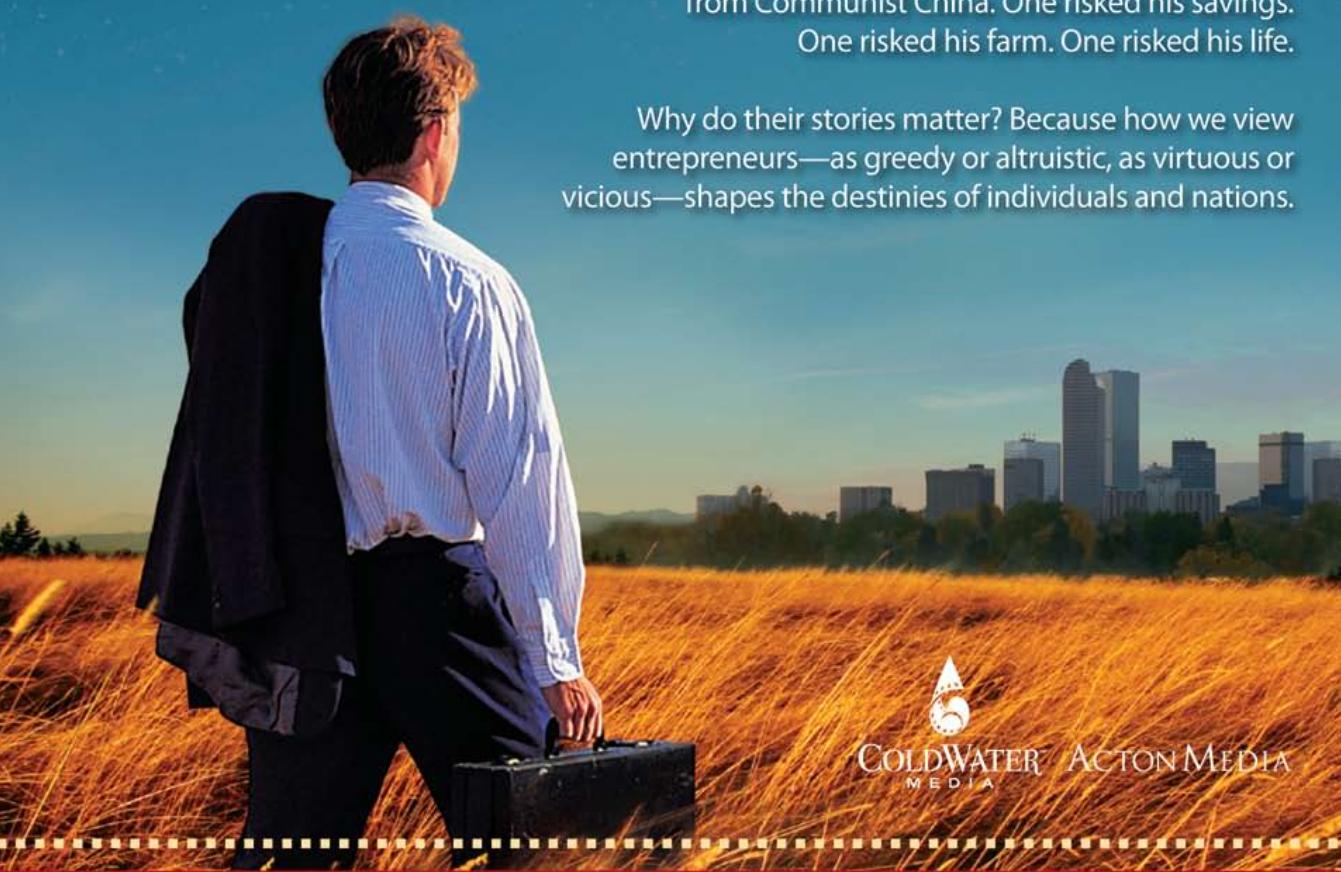
THE CALL OF THE ENTREPRENEUR

PREMIERES
NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY

FOR TICKETS, DATES, AND LOCATIONS VISIT www.calloftheentrepreneur.com

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 individuals and nations.



COLDWATER ACTON MEDIA
MEDIA

Acton Welcomes New Summer Interns

Interns are a vibrant part of busy Acton summers, and the institute is eager to welcome the next group of young scholars this June. Summer 2007 interns will help to organize Acton University, the Catholic High School Honor Roll, and other key projects throughout June, July, and August. Last summer, Acton hosted eight interns from colleges and universities across the nation at its offices in Grand Rapids and Rome. Research and writing, assisting with Acton University, and interacting with the institute's own scholars kept the interns on their toes and thoroughly immersed in matters of faith and freedom. Steve Van Beek, a George Mason University law student, said he benefited intellectually and experientially from his time at Acton. Informal "Lunch & Learn" sessions hosted by Acton staff helped to ground his understanding of religious and economic issues; but beyond that, Van Beek said his internship allowed him "to experience the free-market movement." In Rome, Diane Barberini researched curricula on economics, philosophy, and the history of Catholic social teaching. The interns

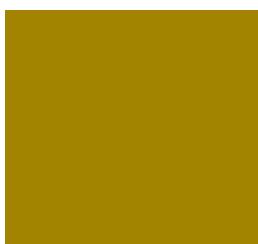
"Many summer interns said they had a greater sense of direction in their professional callings"

also enjoyed getting to know one another in an environment that combined real intellectual challenges with ideological common ground. The program kicked off last summer with a barbecue meet-and-greet to help connect the students before they began their work.

One of Acton's aims in hosting interns is to equip budding scholars in all fields to articulate free-market economics from a faithfully Christian perspective. Many summer 2006 interns said they had a greater sense of direction in their professional callings after participating in the program. Although Acton interns tend to study the humanities, government, or journalism, civil engineering major Elizabeth Kovalak found herself able to experience the best of both worlds through her academic internship at Acton. Other interns said they are better prepared to meet challenges that lie ahead. "The experience and opportunity was invaluable in allowing me to develop my voice in analyzing politics from a moral or Christian perspective," said Notre Dame junior Andrew Lynn.



Intern Katrina Kelly



2006 Summer Interns



ACTON in the News

It is amazing how often what's not wasteful is not only best for the environment, but also saves you money.

—Quoted from Jordan Ballor's interview on *The Paul Edwards Program*

Dr. Samuel Gregg

Title: Morally Taxing
Publisher: *The Wall Street Journal*
Publication Date: 3.12.2007

Kishore Jayabalan

Title: Pope Benedict XVI: A Second Anniversary Review
Program: *Kresta in the Afternoon*
Air Date: 4.19.2007

Jordan Ballor

Title: Earth Day and Environmentalism
Program: *The Paul Edwards Program*
Air Date: 4.30.2007

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.



Participants at the Toward a Free and Virtuous Society conference last month in Seattle, WA



Dr. Samuel Gregg addresses an audience at ALS

Acton and You

Acton's director of research, Dr. Sam Gregg, presented "The Crisis of Europe: Benedict XVI's Analysis and Solution" for the 2007 Acton Lecture Series on April 10, attended by more than seventy Acton supporters in the broader Grand Rapids community.

Dr. Gregg explained that Europe is in economic and demographic crisis, with poor economic performance, languishing entrepreneurial activity, stagnating birth rates, and aging populations. In addition, Europe has undergone an influx of immigrants, largely from Muslim countries, accompanied by a lack of assimilation to their new locales, creating more tension. Europe has

lacked the political will to respond effectively to these problems, reflecting how historically and culturally embedded the crisis is.

Gregg offered a summation of Pope Benedict XVI's analysis and solutions for Europe's predicament. Benedict identifies the rise of secularism, relativism, liberal Christianity, failed implementation of Vatican II, and the severance of faith and reason as roots of Europe's cultural failures. To counter these elements, Benedict suggests ideas, not politics, as a medium for change, calling on like-minded secular thinkers, prominent Catholic Europeans and other Christians to contribute to a cultural revolution.



ACTON UNIVERSITY

JUNE 12-15 SYMPOSIUM OF FAITH, ECONOMICS, LIBERTY

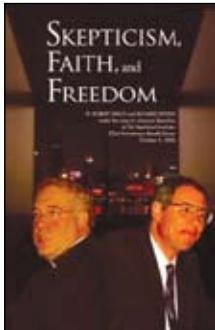
Grand Rapids, Michigan

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

"The seminars and conferences of the Acton Institute provide the world's foremost training in the theology and philosophy of the free-market model."

— Michael Lee, adjunct professor of finance, Johns Hopkins University

ACTON Book Shoppe



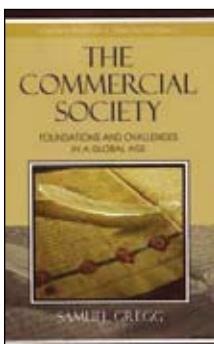
Skepticism, Faith, and Freedom

by Rev. Robert Sirico and Richard Epstein

The theme was "Skepticism, Faith, and Freedom." The speakers were Prof. Richard Epstein and Fr. Robert Sirico. Their presentations, transcribed and very lightly edited, are presented in this booklet. The goal of the program was to showcase two different defenses of classical liberalism. Classical liberalism is the political philosophy of the Founding Fathers. It calls for maximum individual freedom, respect for private property rights, and limited government.

Paperback 37 pages

Price \$6.00



The Commercial Society

by Samuel Gregg

Guided by the thoughts of Alexis de Tocqueville, Samuel Gregg's *The Commercial Society* identifies and explores the key foundational elements that must exist within a society for commercial order to take root and flourish. Gregg studies the challenges that have consistently impeded and occasionally undermined commercial order, including the persistence of "corporatist" values and political movements seeking to equalize social conditions. This book offers a historically grounded analysis for modern audiences interested in philosophy or the history of economics.

Paperback 177 pages

Price \$14.95

**For our fastest service and a complete list of titles,
visit www.acton.org/bookshoppe.**

	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
<u>Skepticism, Faith, and Freedom</u>	\$6.00		
<u>The Commercial Society</u>	\$14.95		

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.

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Calendar of Events

ACTION INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date Event/Location

Date	Event/Location
May 17	Action Lecture Series (Grand Rapids, Michigan) "Intelligence Was My Line" Ralph Hauenstein to speak
May 23	The Call of the Entrepreneur (Grand Rapids, Michigan) Film Premiere at Celebration Cinema North
May 31	Luncheon lecture (Detroit, Michigan) Detroit Athletic Club "What's Wrong with Europe?" Dr. Samuel Gregg to speak
June 12-15	Catholic HS Honor Roll Extended Application Deadline Action University (Grand Rapids, Michigan)

STAFF ACTIVITIES

Date Event/Location

May 21-29	Lecturing in Singapore and Hong Kong Dr. Jay Richards to speak
May 20	Assumption Grotto Catholic Church Mass/Dinner (Detroit, Michigan) Rev. Robert A. Sirico keynote speaker
March 17-19	Conference on Business Management (Princeton, New Jersey) Princeton University Dr. Samuel Gregg to speak
June 21	Book Launch (London, England) "Catholic Social Teaching and the Market Economy" Dr. Samuel Gregg to speak

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