

ACTON notes

Acton Institute Newsletter

May / June 2017, Volume 27, Number 3



“connecting good intentions with sound economics”

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President's Message

"Join us and expand your shoulders from which future generations may cast their respective gazes."

It's difficult to discern how best to describe the honor one experiences for having known so many special people without coming across as "humble-bragging." I've had the good fortune to meet some truly amazing intellectuals and spiritually inspiring people. I'm proud to say some of these luminaries became my friends and mentors, but this by no means suggests I'd ever place myself in the same league as my recently deceased friends Michael Novak and Kate O'Beirne.

Perhaps the first example of humble-bragging occurred in the 12th century. The French philosopher Bernard of Chartres declared his insights were derived from standing on the shoulders of giants—those great thinkers who preceded him and performed much of the intellectual heavy lifting that made his work possible. The philosopher also made the distinction that not only were he and the thinkers of his generation beneficiaries of the view from the historical shoulders of giants but also that he and his peers were mere dwarves by comparison.

Seventeenth-century mathematician, astronomer and physicist Isaac Newton adapted this saying to humbly credit his scientific predecessors' efforts: "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants." Note that Newton avoided describing himself as a dwarf, so he's farther removed from the humble-bragging end of the pride spectrum.

There is no arrogance in the declarations of Bernard and Newton, however, as there should be no perception of arrogance in the pride I feel for having known and befriended Michael and Kate. Both of them were razor-sharp thinkers and highly moral individuals. Both represented all that is best of Western civilization since the advent of the Christian faith. Both conducted themselves in a quietly dignified fashion that I and so many other people fortunate enough to travel in their orbits sought to emulate. I was lucky to have known them.

Luck, it's been written, favors the prepared. Each year, Acton University presents wonderful opportunities for individuals of all walks of life and from every corner of the planet to scramble upon the shoulders of those giants who previously perched upon the shoulders of Michael, Kate and so many others before and after them. Join us and expand your shoulders from which future generations may cast their respective gazes.



Sincerely,

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

Rev. Robert 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

98 E. Fulton Street • Grand Rapids, MI 49503 • USA • www.acton.org

Mark Murray Auditorium to undergo major upgrades

In the quarter century of promoting good intentions and sound economics, we at Acton have incorporated many new technologies in our efforts to share our work with a growing audience. First, we relied on the printed word in magazines, books and journals. With the rise of the internet, we embraced email and the explosion of social media. For a number of years, we have been sharing our events—after the fact—on YouTube and at acton.org.

We recognize yet another shift in the way people consume content; it's impossible to ignore the rise of video content on the internet. This year will see online video account for 75 percent of all online traffic, with that number expected to keep rising in years to come. YouTube, the largest online video site, has over a billion users worldwide. More and more web users—especially among younger demographics—expect to see video on websites they visit, spend more time on pages with video and absorb video information more thoroughly than they do written content. In fact, four times as many

customers would rather watch a video about a product than read about it. If Acton is to effectively spread the message of faith and freedom to a new generation, we must embrace these trends.

“...to effectively spread the message of faith and freedom to a new generation, we must embrace these trends.”

That's why we're embarking on a significant technology upgrade in the Acton Building's Mark Murray Auditorium. This will not only provide a better audio-visual experience for our in-house guests but also allow us to stream our events live on the newly redesigned Acton.org.

The project will upgrade our wireless microphone technology, add microphone capacity, and give us the technology to present high-quality, live online video of events.

We're also exploring ways that this technology can allow us to expand our outreach and education programs through multisite meetings and distance learning initiatives. Stay tuned for all the different ways we can use technology to serve you! We expect this new feature to be available this fall.



Acton's Mark Murray Auditorium will embark on significant technology upgrades.



The technology will present live online video of our events.

From Our Conference Participants

My time in Grand Rapids [at Acton University] was encouraging, vision-building and refreshing! It reinforced many ideas I had been wrestling with for a number of years and gave me some practical steps forward.

—Jeff H., Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Thank you for a wonderful week in Grand Rapids! Acton University was a great joy and an intellectual gift. I was very encouraged by the common focus and the amazing opportunity to meet fellow Christians from different traditions.

—Dino B., Portland, Oregon

Acton research fellow joins “What Good Markets Are Good For”

Senior research fellow and director of publishing at Acton, Jordan Ballor, has joined the “What Good Markets Are Good For: Towards a Moral Justification of Free Markets” project as a postdoctoral researcher in theology and economics.

The project is a multiyear, multifaceted endeavor, focusing on the idea that “societies with free-market economies flourish because and in so far as states, businesses and individuals respect morality, and act virtuously.” The project is headed by Govert Buijs at the VU University Amsterdam and includes partner institutions from across the Netherlands.

The project includes a variety of subprojects, and Ballor be working primarily on the “Human Flourishing” initiative, specifically the question, “How do various religions and worldviews define human flourishing in relation to the market and what are their views on virtues, vices, human weakness and responsibility in this regard?”

New monograph explains Acton Core Principles

Acton’s research department has been especially busy lately. The latest monograph from the Acton imprint is *Foundations of a Free & Virtuous Society* by Dylan Pahman, with a foreword by Director of Research Samuel Gregg. Pahman, a research fellow at Acton, has written this monograph to make Acton’s mission more accessible.

Foundations of a Free & Virtuous Society is designed to be an understandable, ecumenical introduction to Acton’s integration of faith and economics, more or less covering the content of the four introductory Acton University lectures and Acton’s ten core principles. The style is popular, the content is intellectual and the total length is roughly 140 pages. This new tool can be used by professors and students, clergy, bloggers, businesspeople and anyone else looking to deepen their knowledge of Acton and its work.

Gregg addresses the importance of the monograph in his foreword:

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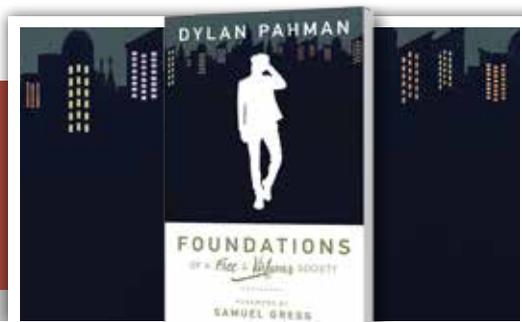


Acton's Jordan Ballor has joined the “What Good Markets Are Good For” project.

Ballor will also be involved to a lesser extent with another aspect of the project focusing on the theological and sociological contexts of Adam Smith’s work.

Ballor will be stepping down as executive editor of the *Journal of Markets & Morality*, with the Spring 2017 being his final issue. He will remain director of publishing and a senior research fellow at the Acton Institute.

You can follow the progress of the project at the newly launched website, www.moralmarkets.org.



One of the Acton Institute’s concerns, from its beginning, has been to provide people of all confessions across the world with this type of integrated approach to understanding the human condition in light of the fullness of truth that we find in Divine Revelation and reason.

The monograph is broken into two sections: Christian Anthropology and What if? Pahman addresses what it means to be human and to be a society, and what exactly an economy is. Acton’s core principles are included as an appendix to the monograph. The monograph is now available at shop.acton.org and on Amazon.

New tool for alumni launching at Acton University

Acton University is already a huge undertaking for all of us at Acton, but this year has even more buzz. On June 20, the first day of our flagship conference, we will officially launch the Acton Institute Alumni Association Web Portal. After months of listening to the needs of our alumni network, we have built a platform that will simplify alumni interactions with us and among one another.

After attending of conferences, we want to ensure that you are equipped with the resources and connections you need to implement the principles of virtue and free markets in your community, work and personal life.

Boasting a user-friendly interface, the portal will provide you with a few valuable resources:

- a job board where you can search for career opportunities with partners from our network;
- a geo-locator that helps connect you with other Acton alumni located in your local community;
- regular alumni spotlights that highlight the great work that men and women in our net-

work are accomplishing around the world; and

- alumni-exclusive resources, including webinars, free/reduced cost books, alumni reading groups and special discounts on Acton media resources.

For the past year, the nation has been swamped with empty political rhetoric from both sides of the aisle. Fake news has taken the place of honest reporting, and personal insults have largely replaced polite debate. The goal of this new web portal is to provide everyone in our network with the tools to fight the populist climate, but more importantly, to build up local networks that promote economic freedom, personal liberty and virtuous citizens.

Follow us on social media and online to keep up with the latest information regarding the launch of the Alumni Association Web Portal so you can figure out the best way to use this tool. Please contact our alumni relations department if you have questions about how to get further involved with the Acton Institute.



On June 20 we will officially launch the Acton Institute Alumni Association Web Portal.

ACTON in the News

“People derive a significant amount of their lives’ meaning from their work. This does not mean that most people consider their jobs meaningful in themselves.”

—Excerpted from Dylan Pahman’s article
in *Public Discourse*

Rev. Robert Sirico

Title: How Michael Novak changed my life, and yours
Publication: The Hill
Date: 02.19.17

Dylan Pahman

Title: Protectionism and a universal basic income won’t solve our economic problems
Publication: Public Discourse
Date: 02.28.17

Samuel Gregg

Title: Las sociedades no florecen y las personas no salen de la pobreza sin crecimiento
Publication: DiaroFinanciero
Date: 04.10.17

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 mission to promote a free and virtuous society. You may choose to donate using the envelope provided, or you may visit the Acton website to make a secure donation online. We send our heartfelt thanks to those of you 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.

INTRODUCE ACTON TO A FRIEND

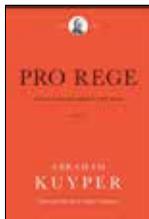
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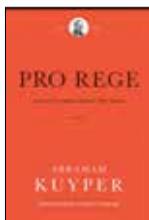


Pro Rege: Living under Christ's Kingship (Volume 1)

By Abraham Kuyper

Kuyper wrote *Pro Rege* to remove the separation between the believer's life inside the church and the believer's life outside the church. He saw the Kingship of Jesus as the key to bridging the two. He discusses the darkening of Christ's Kingship, the undermining of Christ's Kingship, and the Kingship of Christ.

Hardcover 576 pages Sale \$49.99

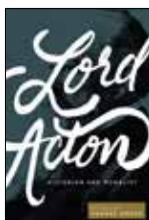


Pro Rege: Living under Christ's Kingship (Volume 2)

By Abraham Kuyper

Kuyper firmly believed that Jesus Christ was King not just of Christians, but of the entire cosmos. In volume two of *Pro Rege*, he continues his analysis of the extent to which Christ rules—first in the human heart, then in the life of the church and continuing to the life of the Christian family.

Hardcover 528 pages Sale \$49.99



Lord Acton: Historian and Moralist

Edited by Samuel Gregg

Written by some of the world's most respected authorities on Acton, these essays grapple with Acton's ideas about history, morality, politics, religion and revolution—all with an eye toward understanding that delicate and glorious ideal that impelled Acton himself, freedom.

Paperback 190 pages Sale \$14.95



PovertyCure Global Edition DVD

Produced by Acton Institute

Join host Michael Matheson Miller on a journey around the world to explore the foundations of human flourishing, and learn how people are moving toward partnerships and pursuing entrepreneurial solutions to poverty rooted in the creative capacity of the human person made in the image of God.

DVD 6 episodes Sale \$24.95

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Pro Rege: Living under Christ's Kingship (Volume 2)	\$49.99		
Lord Acton: Historian and Moralist	\$14.95		
PovertyCure Global Edition DVD	\$24.95		

Make checks payable to "Acton Institute." For orders in the United States, Canada and Mexico: for the first item, add US \$6.75 for shipping, plus US \$1.00 for each additional item. Overseas orders: US \$8.75 for the first item, plus US \$1.75 for each additional item.

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Calendar of Events

ACTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
Jul 20	Acton Lecture Series Book Lecture: The Fifth Estate James McGann to speak	Grand Rapids, MI
Aug 10	Acton Lecture Series Russell Kirk Seth Bartee to speak	Grand Rapids, MI
Oct 2	A&M United Methodist Church Rev. Robert Sirico to speak	College Station, TX
Oct 3	Houston Luncheon Globalization or Global Governance Rev. Robert Sirico to speak	Houston, TX