

Notes

July/August Vol. 29 No. 4

INSTITUTE



A message from our president

Rev. Robert A. Sirico

We live in a world shaped by institutions; by the families we are part of, the businesses in which we express our talents and the churches in which we worship. These institutions are the sources of our society's moral culture. Vibrant social institutions are animated by their own principles in their own spheres and are neither created nor made legitimate by the state. In a free and open society, the state respects the autonomy of these institutions and provides the necessary support and legal framework for their orderly operation in their own spheres of

society and culture.

The Acton Institute, one of those vital institutions, seeks to form and equip persons to work toward a free and virtuous society. In these pages, you will find encouraging news about a recent ruling by the Supreme Court concerning questions of religious liberty. You will also hear from Garreth Bloor, an Acton University alum, on entrepreneurship, free trade and justice. Acton provides support to numerous scholars, such as Professor Giuseppe Franco, the 2019 Novak Award winner profiled in this issue. Lastly, James Patterson's recent lecture at the Acton Institute on the venerable Fulton J. Sheen is covered.

Thanks to all the attendees and speakers at

this year's recently concluded Acton University. It was a wonderfully inspiring four days of discussion and fellowship. We look forward to seeing many of you again next year!

We could not have an institution like the Acton Institute or put on programming like Acton University without our generous donors who make it all possible. Thank you for your continued support of the Acton Institute. If you are just learning about Acton, we invite you to find additional resources on our website and prayerfully consider supporting us in our mission to build and sustain the moral culture necessary for a society of free and responsible people. **N**

Acton Events

[REGISTER AT ACTON.ORG/EVENTS](https://acton.org/events)

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
SEP 19	Acton Lecture Series Ride-Sharing, Fatal Crashes and Crime : Uber and the Social Good	Grand Rapids, MI
OCT 15	Acton Institute's 29th Annual Dinner Featuring Andrew Klavan	Grand Rapids, MI
OCT 16	Business Matters 2019 Featuring leading experts and accomplished business leaders	Grand Rapids, MI
OCT 24	Acton Lecture Series Reason, Faith and the Crisis of the West	Grand Rapids, MI
NOV 7	Liberty & Markets Series Evaluating the Idea of Social Justice	Grand Rapids, MI

Victories at the Supreme Court

Clare Martin, 2019 summer intern

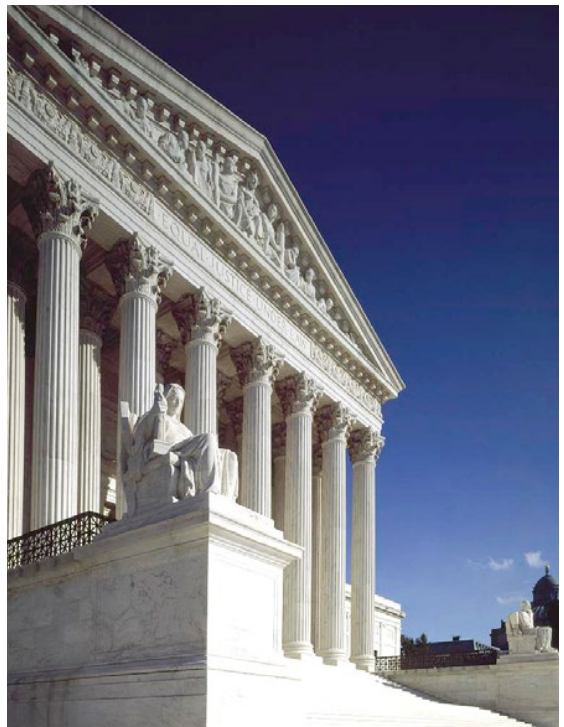
“Pardon me, but I’m going to pause for a minute because something really exciting just happened. My close friend from law school and the Deputy General Counsel of [the First Liberty Institute] has just been confirmed to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas.”

This news broke during Andrew Graham’s presentation at Acton University 2019 titled “A Cross, A Cake and A Crisis: Two Attacks on Religious and Economic Freedom.” Graham is the executive director of policy and education and a senior fellow at First Liberty, which represented the American Legion in the Bladensburg Cross Case, *The American Legion v. American Humanist Association*. During the course of events at Acton University, First Liberty secured two major victories in the Supreme Court and saw its Deputy General Counsel Matthew Kacsmaryk confirmed to a seat on the federal bench.

Graham gave this particular talk on Wednesday, June 19. The following day, the Supreme Court announced its decision on *The American Legion v. American Humanist Association*. The Court’s opinion resolved a long battle to safeguard a 94-year-old, 40-foot veterans memorial in the shape of a Latin cross. In a 7-2 ruling, the Court held that the Bladensburg Cross does not violate the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The cross will remain in place, dedicated to those who gave their lives for liberty in the First World War.

Justice Alito penned the majority opinion, arguing that the Bladensburg Cross respects the First Amendment and even helps preserve it: “The Religion Clauses of the Constitution aim to foster a society in which people of all beliefs can live together harmoniously, and the presence of the Bladensburg Cross on the land where it has stood for so many years is fully consistent with that aim.”

Alito’s statement reminds me of the eager audience at Graham’s talk, and of the Acton Institute more broadly, whose mission is to explore the intellectual foundations of a free and virtuous society. **N**





FEATURED STORY

Acton University experience: Interview with Garreth Bloor

Patrick Oetting

Acton University, with alumni from over 100 countries worldwide, inspires many to defend liberty and promote virtue throughout the world. Garreth Bloor, a leader in the Acton Institute's network and an AU alumnus, serves as an inspiration, as he has dedicated much of his life to defending freedom globally.

I interviewed Bloor about his current work as the president of the Canada-Africa Chamber of Business. I find his story to seek freedom and uphold human dignity an inspiring one and hope you do as well.

Bloor first attended Acton University in 2006 when he was living in South Africa and studying at the University of Cape Town, but his fight to defend liberty started at a much younger age.

Growing up in South Africa, when and how were you introduced to classical liberalism, and how did that inform your career path?

My introduction to classical liberalism was through the work of Temba Nolutshungu, an anti-apartheid leader who was deeply involved in the negotiations for South Africa's constitutional democracy, especially property rights for all.

Mr. Nolutshungu would later take me under his wings as a mentor, after we engaged

at a conference in Kenya on economic freedom in Sub-Saharan Africa when I was still teenager. He has played an important role in my life ever since, particularly when working on regulatory reform in local government. I was supported in leading the repeal of over 300 outdated pieces of legislation, almost all of which had been created under apartheid and based on the premise of excluding millions from an open-market economy under their variant of National Socialism, which has rightly been declared a crime against humanity.

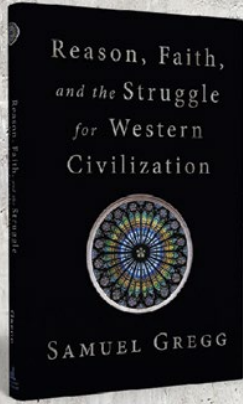
As an entrepreneur and someone who has spoken on entrepreneurship around the world, what would you say is the role of the entrepreneur in cultivating a free society?

The entrepreneur creates communities of free people through their businesses, which in turn constitute part of the fabric of the civic life that is vital to free societies.

The conditions required for real entrepreneurship that grows businesses in response to the needs of the market are conditions that are important for overall freedom for all people: open markets, rule of law and limits on the discretionary power of government, which all too often violates human rights and the ability to earn a living.

How has the Acton Institute impacted your career and the work you have done first in South Africa and now at the Canada-Africa Chamber of Business?

Acton brings together thinkers from across various faith and philosophical traditions to consider the moral and ethical dynamics in the key economic questions of the day. I know of no other organization that has brought together discussions on the nexus of the common good, human dignity and economic freedom as successfully as the Acton Institute. ■



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and the Struggle
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SAMUEL GREGG


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BRIEF

Giuseppe Franco wins 2019 Novak Award

In recognition of Professor Giuseppe Franco's outstanding research in the fields of philosophy, theology and economics, the Acton Institute will be awarding him the 2019 Novak Award.

Named after distinguished American theologian Michael Novak, this \$15,000 award rewards new outstanding scholarly research concerning the relationship between religion, economic freedom and the free and virtuous society. This award recognizes those scholars early in their academic careers who demonstrate outstanding intellectual merit in advancing the understanding of theology's connection to human dignity, limited government, religious liberty and freedom in economic life.

Franco, who is originally from Copertino, Italy, is a lecturer in theology and philosophy at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt in Germany, where he is currently a postdoctoral "Feodor Lynen" research fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. He received his doctorate in philosophy from the University of Salento in Lecce, Italy. He later earned a doctorate in theology from the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome and his university lecturer qualification in theology in Eichstätt.

His research papers were awarded the Alfons-Fleischmann-Prize and the Max Weber Award for Economics and Ethics by the Cologne Institute for Economic Research.

The Novak Award forms part of a range of academic grants and awards available from Acton Institute. Learn more about these scholarships and awards at acton.org/grants-awards. **N**

BRIEF

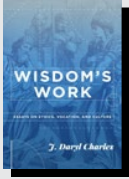
James Patterson on Fulton J. Sheen

On May 30, James Patterson, professor of politics at Ave Maria University, gave a talk at Acton Institute in Grand Rapids, Michigan, as part of Acton's lecture series events. During his talk, titled "Fulton J. Sheen: Anti-Communism and Catholic Patriotism," Patterson discussed the life of the influential Catholic priest Fulton J. Sheen.

Sheen was primarily known for his popular books, radio broadcasts and Emmy Award-winning television show *Life Is Worth Living*. However, Sheen was also a deft and serious thinker on efforts to bring Americans in closer alignment with the Christian tradition, especially that of the Catholic Church. Beneath his wide smile and radio personality, Sheen was one of the most accomplished Catholic intellectuals in American history whose work deserves closer study. Sheen provided a strict yet friendly criticism of American economic and political life, providing a Catholic perspective of the American founding.

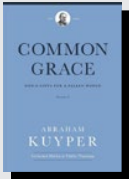
"Sheen's Catholic reinterpretation of the American founding was that Catholics benefit from religious liberty that's protected as part of the American founding," said Patterson. Patterson's new book, *Religion in the Public Square*, examines the lives of three political and religious leaders: Fulton J. Sheen, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and Rev. Jerry Falwell, whose influence in the public square, and especially in media, popularized theology. You can watch the full lecture at acton.org/multimedia and view Acton's full event calendar at acton.org/events. **N**

Acton Book Store - Top Sellers



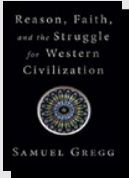
Wisdom's Work: Essays on Ethics, Vocation and Culture Sale \$14.95
By J. Daryl Charles

In this wide-ranging collection, J. Daryl Charles shares insights from nearly thirty years of reflecting on these and related questions. *Wisdom's Work* explores the earthiness of the Christian life through essays on vocation, work, ethics, education and the calling of believers to be salt and light in the world. **Softcover, 200 pages**



Common Grace: God's Gifts for a Fallen World: Volume 2 Sale \$54.99
By Abraham Kuyper

Common Grace is often considered Abraham Kuyper's crowning work, an exploration of how God expresses grace even to the unsaved. Kuyper firmly believed that though many people in the world will remain unconverted, God's grace is still shown to the world as a whole. **Hardcover, 864 pages**



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