

Professional Development Grant Report  
Grant date: February 2011

Donald M. Gooch  
Assistant Professor of Political Science  
Department of History & Political Science  
Arkansas Tech University

July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011

### Professional Enhancement Activity: Speaker Series

A professional development grant for the institution of and partial funding of the Guest Lecture Series on Economics & Liberty under the direction of Dr. Donald M. Gooch, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Arkansas Tech University for the spring 2011 academic semester was awarded in the amount of \$3,010. This conclusion of the 2010-11 Guest Lecture Series on Liberty, Freedom, and Political Economy included three distinguished and well-recognized speakers on economics and liberty. Under the original application, the speakers were to be the distinguished former senator from the state of Arkansas, Blanche Lincoln, Dr. James Endersby of the University of Missouri at Columbia, and Dr. John R. Petrocik also of the University of Missouri at Columbia. However, due to scheduling conflicts, Senator Lincoln and Dr. John Petrocik were unable to participate in the guest lecture series. An additional speaker was added to the series, but that speaker, Skip Rutherford, Dean of the Clinton School of Public Service, was unable to give his talk due to inclement weather. Both Dean Rutherford and Dr. Petrocik have agreed to do talks in the fall semester of 2011 at no further expense to the university. Replacement speakers for Senator Lincoln and Dr. Petrocik in the spring 2011 semester included Sheldon Richman, editor of *The Freeman*, and Dr. Scott Beaulier, Director of Troy University's Manuel H. Johnson Center for Political Economy, Adams-Bibby Chair of Free Enterprise and Associate Professor of Economics at Troy University. Dr. Endersby gave a talk entitled "Public Choice & the Nature of Political Preferences" on April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2011, Sheldon Richman gave a talk on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 entitled "A Primer on the Debt, Deficit & the Federal Budget Wars," and Dr. Beaulier gave a talk on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 entitled "The Foundations of Economic Freedom and Prosperity."

### Review of Professional Enhancement Activity: Speaker Series

The purpose of the guest lecture series was to foster debate, discussion, and intellectual enlightenment for the student body, the faculty, and the Russellville community. The focus of the

guest lecture series was to provide ATU faculty and students with exposure to nationally renowned scholars and public intellectuals who have expertise in the study of economics, politics, and philosophy and who have specialized in the areas of public choice theory, market economics, political economy and political liberty. The second half of the speaker series was implemented in the spring semester of 2011 and involved the invitation of two academics with strong scholarly publication records with a specific focus on formal modeling and econometrics to assess behavior and decisions with the political economy. Attendance at all three events was strong (estimated to be around 80 to 100 attending at each event) and the audience consisted of students currently enrolled in History and Political Science courses, majors in both disciplines, other students from across the broad spectrum of disciplines taught at ATU, faculty from the History & Political Science department, interested members of the public, and several academics from neighboring universities such as UCA and UALR. The speaking events were advertised using a number of different mediums: campus flyers, newspaper articles in the *Courier*, a feature article in the *ArkaTech*, the OneTech announcements, press releases to student organizations at universities and colleges across the state of Arkansas, word-of-mouth, and e-mail notices. Video recordings of the speaking events were made in order to preserve a record of the events as well as provide materials for teaching and learning in the classroom.

#### Summary of Outcomes and Experiences

The speakers in the spring of 2011 presented a “main talk” which covered a topic relevant to current debates on political economy as well as touching on issues related to free markets, enterprise, and the balance between government control and liberty. Dr. Endersby’s talk focused on one of the most important topics in public choice: how voters respond to a strategic environment where voting for their most favored alternative may be counter-productive. Using a unique data set consisting of voting on the location of the World’s Fair in 1893 with four different competing sites (Chicago, St. Louis, New York, and Washington, D.C.) and a number of successive votes, Dr. Endersby showed

how congressmen were able to vote strategically to ensure the best possible alternative was obtained. Sheldon Richman's talk focused on the debt and deficit, a very current and important topic given the national political implications that continue to reverberate even today. Mr. Richman provided a great deal of data and analysis on the structural aspects of the debt and how the growing percentage of the debt and deficit attributable to mandatory spending has reduced the capacity for "normal politics" to deal with these problems and he advocated for significant structural reform of federal government spending. Dr. Beaulier's talk focused on federal spending as well, however he took his talk down a different route – focusing on the moral arguments for and against entitlement spending and the economic implications for the moral dimension of economics.

Survey results for each of the talks indicated the audience approved of the talks and were satisfied with the speaker's presentation, substance of the talks, and the expertise of the speakers. For example, the average attendee rated Dr. Endersby's talk as "engaging" a 3.5 on a scale of 5 and a 3.86 on a 5-point scale rating whether the talk was "factual." Student comments posted in the wake of the talks concretely illustrate the results from the aggregate survey results. In regards to the Endersby talk, some representative student comments include:

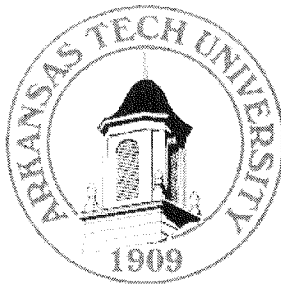
- "Very clear presentation and easy to understand."
- "The speaker broke some of the topics down and made them easier to understand."
- "Great speaking voice, comfortable, glad you used a power point."
- "The subject is a little over my head, which is the only reason why I would not want to learn more. The speech was good, though."
- "Good, clear speaker. Knew what he was talking about."
- "He was extremely knowledgeable but still made it clear enough for me to understand."

Student comments for Sheldon Richman were not available to be quoted, as the surveys for his talk were sent off to the Koch Foundation and the results had not as of yet been tabulated. However, a review of those comments by me after his talk indicated a generally positive reception to the talk and comments similar to those made regarding Dr. Endersby's presentation. The average attendee rated Dr. Beaulier a 3.96 out of 5 on a scale measuring the degree to which the attendee found him

“engaging” and a 4.15 out of 5 on “clarity” and whether his arguments were “factual.” And here are some representative student comments about the Beaulier talk:

- “I thought Dr. Beaulier did an excellent job with his lecture because he brought humor. Plus, the topic of our economy is something I need to know more about.”
- “Interesting information, great explanation!”
- “I really enjoyed this speaker and found him very engaging.”
- “I liked the visual – really brought out the effect of the subject you were talking on.”
- “Speaker was funny and made the lecture more interesting and easy to follow.”

In addition to their talks, the speakers held on-campus meetings where they were able to interact with faculty and students on a one-on-one basis. Interesting discussions of current politics, policy, and political issues were born out of each of those engagements, with a number of students expressing interest in further study and research in these topical areas. Faculty members in the department who attended the talks and/or the meet and greets also benefited from interactions with the speakers as evidenced by subsequent discussions of the issues raised and even potential platforms for scholarly research into these areas of politics and economics. Dr. Beaulier’s talk in particular attracted interest from the economics department here at ATU as well as economists at both UALR and UCA. I am hopeful that the interactions as consequence of these talks will bear fruit in terms of future collaborations. Attached are the campus flyers distributed for each of the events.



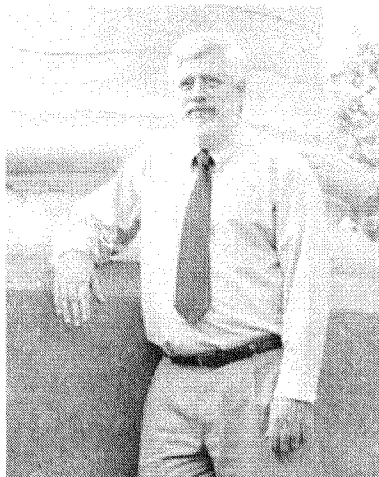
## **GUEST LECTURE**

**Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup> 2011**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Doc Bryan Lecture Hall  
Arkansas Tech University**

### **“Public Choice & the Nature of Political Preferences”**

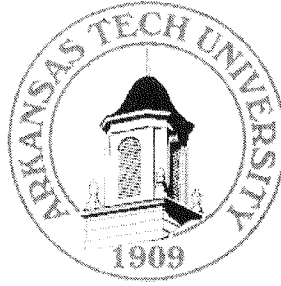


### **Dr. James Endersby**

**Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Missouri  
Director of Canadian Studies**

2010-2011 Guest Lecture Series on  
Liberty, Freedom, and Political Economy  
ATU History & Political Science Department  
Partially funded by a grant from the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation

Queries to: [dgooch@atu.edu](mailto:dgooch@atu.edu)



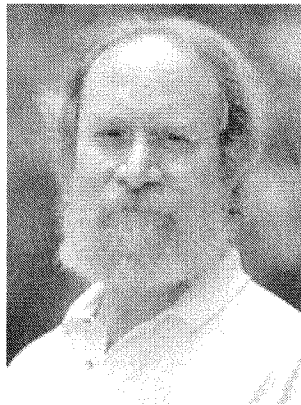
## **GUEST LECTURE**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2011**

**4:00 p.m.**

**Doc Bryan Lecture Hall  
Arkansas Tech University**

### **“A Primer on the Debt, Deficit & the Federal Budget Wars”**

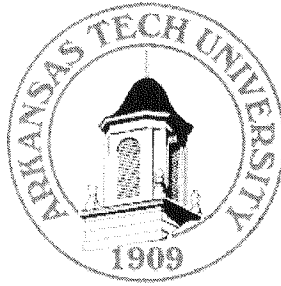


## **Sheldon Richman**

**Syndicated Columnist, Editor of *The Freeman*, Senior Fellow of the  
Future of Freedom Foundation, Research Fellow at The Independent  
Institute, blogger at the *Free Association* blog**

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## **GUEST LECTURE**

**Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup> 2011**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Doc Bryan Lecture Hall  
Arkansas Tech University**

### **“The Stories of Arkansas Politics”**



## **James “Skip” Rutherford**

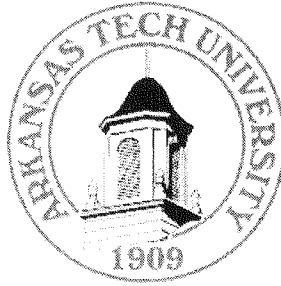
**William J. Clinton Professor and Dean of the Clinton School of Public Service, former Chairman of the Board of the William J. Clinton Foundation, and past president of the LR School Board**

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Funded through an ATU Professional Development Grant

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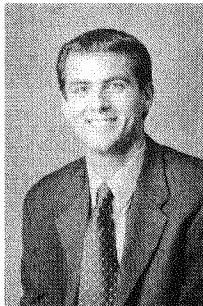
## **GUEST LECTURE**

**Monday May 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2011**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Rothwell Hall 138  
Arkansas Tech University**

# **“The Foundations of Economic Freedom and Prosperity”**



## **Dr. Scott Beaulier**

**Adams-Bibby Chair of Free Enterprise and Associate Professor of  
Economics at Troy University, Executive Director of Troy University's  
Manuel H. Johnson Center for Political Economy, Former Department  
Chair of Economics at Mercer University, and blogger at the  
“Economic Way of Thinking” blog**

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