“Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth.”
— GEORGE WASHINGTON

Table of Contents

PAGE 3 Message from the President and Chairman
PAGE 4 Cato’s Reach: 2019 by the Numbers
PAGE 6 Freedom to Flourish
PAGE 14 Freedom to Thrive
PAGE 20 Freedom for All
PAGE 26 Building for Generations to Come
PAGE 28 The John Russell Pailaqua Intern Seminar Series
PAGE 30 Events
PAGE 34 Cato Books
PAGE 36 Cato Staff
PAGE 39 Fellows and Adjunct Scholars
PAGE 41 Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Results
PAGE 42 Institutional Support
PAGE 43 Cato Club 200
PAGE 44 Board of Directors
Freedom has many benefits. It leads to peace, prosperity, and innovation. The division between free societies and their unfree counterparts is so stark it can literally be seen from space, in satellite photos of the divided Korea. At the Cato Institute, much of our work is dedicated to cataloging, explaining, and promoting the many benefits of liberty.

But freedom isn’t just about better practical results. The world we seek to build isn’t just one of higher profitability and better returns on investment. The case for liberty is, at heart, a moral one.

Cato stands for the moral proposition that human flourishing is worth defending and that when the state imposes itself in ways that prevent that flourishing, it is immoral.

The case for the practical outcomes produced by freedom is a powerful one. High-quality research, the hallmark of Cato’s work, plays a crucial role in the battle of ideas. But this research must be grounded in the moral vision of a free and just society, and communicating this vision has always been a vital part of Cato’s work.

In this report, you’ll see some of this work and some of the ways we measure success. Ultimately, though, the measure of our success is the freedom people enjoy and the flourishing that comes from it. That is what Cato stands for, and we are profoundly grateful for your support.
# Cato’s Reach: 2019 by the Numbers

## Event Attendees

**360,000+**

Cato events and education programs are offered onsite and via livestream at www.cato.org/live. Each year, Cato events attract upward of 7,500 in-person attendees.

## Books

**10**

Cato books have been praised by Nobel laureates, newspapers, professional publications, and readers worldwide.

## Researched Policy Studies

**100+**

Meticulously researched studies are published every year on key public policy topics, as well as in the highly respected *Cato Journal* and *Regulation* magazine.

## Capitol Hill Briefings

**15**

Cato plays a vital role in helping shape national policy through its Capitol Hill Briefings, which offer congressional staffers timely information on the most pressing issues facing their offices.

## Events

**102**

Cato offers a variety of events each year, including lectures, debates, movie screenings, book forums, networking mixers, and more.

## Amicus Briefs Filed

**88**

Cato’s Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies runs one of the most influential amicus brief programs in the country, bringing libertarian ideas before the nation’s courts.

## Digital Engagement

**4.6 million+**

Cato offers several popular and expertly produced podcasts, including the *Cato Daily Podcast*, *Free Thoughts*, *Power Problems*, *The Pursuit*, *Liberty Chronicles*, and more.

## Capitol’s Digital Community

**1.5 million**

Individuals can follow Cato on social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

## Increase in Website Visits

**22%**

Visits to Cato’s websites annually increased by 22 percent in 2019. Social media engagement increased by 19 percent.

## Cato in the News

### Op-Eds Written Annually

**1,000+**

Cato scholars play a key role in educating leaders, decision-makers, and the public through sharply crafted and insightful op-eds.

### Interviews Annually

**1,800+**

The ongoing and increased media presence of Cato scholars underscores the value their independent and nonpartisan perspectives bring to policy issues and breaking news items.

### Visits to Cato’s Websites Annually

**15 million+**

By offering compelling and innovative content, Cato is able to continually connect ideas and perspectives with a rapidly growing audience.

## Launching the Next Generation

### Cato Interns

**105**

Over the course of three semesters each year, more than 100 students participate in the Cato Institute’s highly competitive internship program. With more than 1,600 students applying for the program each year, the acceptance rate is on par with the most selective universities in the United States.

### Student Visitors

**1,000+**

The Cato Institute hosts more than 1,000 student visitors for educational events and lectures at its headquarters in Washington, DC, each year.

### Student Scholarships

**25**

Each year, 25 students receive scholarships to attend Cato University, the Institute’s annual flagship education event.
Freedom to Flourish

REMOVING BARRIERS

Barriers to human flourishing are immoral. And today, thousands of regulations deprive people of the ability to improve their well-being—from burdensome regulations requiring an expensive license to become a barber or an interior designer to housing policies that protect the affluent and force the poor into homelessness. This problem arises both in laws passed by legislators at the behest of rent-seeking special interests and in the flurry of administrative impositions that the people’s representatives never voted on.

It wasn’t supposed to be this way. The sprawling bureaucracy of the modern regulatory state is nowhere mentioned in the Constitution. Although the Framers certainly envisioned an executive branch of government composed of departments tasked with carrying out the law, they expected defining those laws to be the role of our elected representatives in Congress. If Americans are going to be bound by regulations with the force of law, it’s not too much to expect that our elected lawmakers actually vote on them, instead of handing over the job to unaccountable bureaucrats.

Cato has taken the moral case for freedom from burdensome regulations to the courts, urging them to revive the Constitution’s limits on runaway regulation. We were pleased to welcome last year Cato’s newest legal analyst, William Yeatman, who has been working to lay the groundwork for overturning decades of excessive court deference to regulatory agencies. And now there are strong signs that the president’s power to impose “national security” tariffs must have some limits, and the brief proposed a new framework to set them. This case will also serve as a proof of concept for Yeatman’s newly proposed model for how courts can review executive branch regulatory actions, which Cato will be working to promote in legal and academic circles. As he puts it, this is “a new answer to an old problem” in administrative law.

The Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies has taken the lead in key regulatory cases over the past year, such as the fight over tariffs in American Institute for International Steel v. United States. In that case, both the government and U.S. Steel dedicated substantial parts of their briefs to responding to Cato’s arguments submitted in Yeatman’s amicus brief. Cato’s brief argued that the president’s power to impose “national security” tariffs must have some limits, and the brief proposed a new framework to set them. This case will also serve as a proof of concept for Yeatman’s newly proposed model for how courts can review executive branch regulatory actions, which Cato will be working to promote in legal and academic circles. As he puts it, this is “a new answer to an old problem” in administrative law.

The flagship project of Cato’s regulatory studies is the quarterly journal Regulation. In Regulation, many of the nation’s top economists, law professors, and other policy experts offer easy-to-understand guidance and insights on microeconomics and regulatory policy affecting every American’s life. For four decades, this quarterly journal has examined nearly every market, from agriculture to health and transportation, and nearly every government intervention, from interstate commerce to labor laws and price controls. Examples of Regulation’s fare in 2019 include “USDA Reform: Help Rural America by Freeing Scientific Innovation,” in which Amanda Maxham and Henry I. Miller criticize regulatory restrictions on agricultural innovation; “Redefining ‘Waters of the United States,’” in which Jonathan H. Adler examines the Trump administration’s wetlands proposals; and “Should Automakers Be Responsible for Accidents?,” in which Kyle D. Logue examines the state of manufacturer liability laws.
SURVEYING THE FIELD

Part of Cato’s mission is to inform public opinion. Ideas matter, and ultimately the ideas held by the public at large are what shape both politics and policy. To understand public attitudes and inform our arguments for the moral case for liberty, our director of polling, Emily Ekins, undertakes extensive public opinion surveys.

Among other projects, in 2019, Ekins conducted the Cato Welfare, Work, and Wealth National Survey. This survey polled 1,700 Americans about their attitudes toward the rich and the poor and examined Americans’ beliefs about work, welfare,

“Cato is the force that can stem the tide of awful politics and inject a bit of reason and thought into it all.”
—P. J. O’ROURKE

and social mobility. For advocates of free markets and limited government, this project is a crucial barometer. The survey not only captures broad trends in public opinion, it also can find key nuances.

Recent years have seen a worrying trend toward greater antipathy for capitalism, and increasing support for socialism, especially among younger Americans. But beyond that, younger Americans aren’t necessarily united on what that means. Although redistribution of wealth has general support, even younger Americans are skeptical of the government’s ability to solve issues like poverty or to manage the economy. This is an important finding. For advocates of free markets and limited government, arguments rooted in skepticism of government competence are likely more persuasive than defenses of the ultrarich.

Another key finding of Ekins’s work is that many pollsters overestimate public support for new government programs by failing to ask about any costs or downsides. When asked whether they want new goods and services with no mention of cost, it’s not surprising that most people say yes. As Executive Vice President David Boaz recently noted: “Advocates often present policymakers with polls that show popular support for some proposed government program—the Green New Deal, paid family leave, childcare, free college, etc. But those polls never seem to point out the costs of the free service. When a poll does note costs, support tends to drop by a lot.” One notable example was the drop in support for paid parental leave when the costs are mentioned, because they so often are not mentioned by the politicians pushing for the policy.

By better understanding public opinion, Cato scholars can make more persuasive arguments and understand what motivates support for bad policies.

CREATED EQUAL . . .

Income and wealth inequality are prominent topics in today’s political climate, and sorting the legitimate objections from the misguided complaints can sometimes be difficult. Those are the questions that Chris Edwards, director of tax policy studies, and Ryan Bourne, the R. Evan Scharf Chair for the Public Understanding of Economics, set out to answer in their policy analysis “Exploring Wealth Inequality.”

Edwards and Bourne examined six aspects of the wealth inequality debate and reviewed the evidence, finding that although many of the problems are real, the overall scale of the issue is often inflated beyond what the data support. Their policy analysis was listed as one of the best studies in the “2019 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report” published by the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program at the University of Pennsylvania.

TOP: A series of short videos produced by Cato’s Project on Poverty and Inequality in California highlights how government creates barriers to prosperity and offers practical solutions designed to help all Californians prosper. MIDDLE: Federal Housing Finance Agency Director Mark Calabria seen here addressing Cato Sponsors at a Cato Club 200 event in 2018, is no stranger to the Institute, where he formerly served as director of financial regulation studies. MIDDLE LEFT: Cato’s director of polling, Emily Ekins, moderates a panel discussion between a progressive, conservative, and libertarian to encourage more effective communication among political tribes. MIDDLE RIGHT: Federal Housing Finance Agency Director Mark Calabria seen here addressing Cato Sponsors at a Cato Club 200 event in 2018, is no stranger to the Institute, where he formerly served as director of financial regulation studies. LEFT: Brian Johnson, deputy director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, hailed Cato as a “vanguard of the liberty movement” during his speech at “Financial Inclusion: The Cato Summit on Financial Regulation.”
This topic is not new for Cato, with inequality being one of the most common criticisms of free-market capitalism and limited government. But the usual statistics invoked to support those claims are misleading. To rebut these mistakes, Cato published a study by John Early, former assistant commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, where he became an expert on these measurement issues. Early’s study, “Reassessing the Facts about Inequality, Poverty, and Redistribution,” was then promoted by a series of events, as well as a series of op-eds in the Wall Street Journal with former U.S. senator Phil Gramm examining the U.S. data on inequality. This is just one example of how Cato produces and distributes much-needed information in national public policy debates.

Inequality is often laid at the feet of capitalism. However, in reality many forms of inequality are the result of bad government policies. That is the insight of Cato senior fellow Michael Tanner, building on his 2018 book The Inclusive Economy: How to Bring Wealth to America’s Poor. In this field, Cato is on the leading edge of providing real-world policy solutions and getting them into the hands of policymakers.

To many Americans, California is the land of Silicon Valley, Hollywood, and Beverly Hills. But it is also the home of severe poverty and barriers to human flourishing. In 2019, Tanner launched a new project that critically evaluates the California state government’s efforts to address inequality and poverty.

Cato’s Project on Poverty and Inequality in California is analyzing the various laws, rules, and regulations currently in effect in the state to determine whether these policies are truly helping residents move up the economic ladder and out of poverty. The project is investigating the state’s policies in five critical areas: criminal justice, education, housing, savings, and regressive regulations such as occupational licensing, zoning, and environmental regulations. A thorough analysis of what works and what doesn’t in California will provide important information to California policymakers, as well as valuable insights to other states as they work to address similar problems. As part of the project, Tanner makes frequent visits to California, meeting with policymakers, community activists, entrepreneurs, interest groups, and individuals who are affected by current policy.

Although grounded in solid and detailed research, at its core this project addresses our deepest moral callings: to care for those less fortunate, to oppose injustices inflicted on the weak, and to build a better world for all.

STORE OF VALUE

Across the world, too many people suffer because they are excluded from needed financial services that would allow them to save, borrow, invest in their futures, and pay for everyday needs. In 2019, Cato’s Center for Monetary and Financial Alternatives (CMFA) launched its Initiative for Financial Inclusion under the leadership of senior fellow Todd Zywicki and policy analyst Diego Zuluaga, and bolstered by adjunct scholars Dan Quan, former head of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau’s Project Catalyst, and Thomas W. Miller Jr., the Jack R. Lee Chair in Financial and Consumer Finance at Mississippi State University. Using robust economic and legal analysis, the initiative aims to demonstrate how regressive regulations hamper innovation in financial services and often serve to block the poor and disadvantaged from the financial system, thereby trapping them in poverty. This framework provides Cato the opportunity to highlight compelling, tangible examples of how the current regulatory regime harms people—and how unleashing the power...
of free markets could change people’s lives for the better. That work in turn has also helped our scholars engage an increasingly broad audience and have productive conversations across the ideological spectrum about financial regulatory reform.

As part of the initiative, Cato scholars have been exploring the problems of the “unbanked,” the 8.4 million families and 20 million individuals in the United States with little access to banking, credit, and payments services. In June, Cato hosted “Financial Inclusion: The Cato Summit on Financial Regulation,” featuring Chairman Jelena McWilliams of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and Deputy Director Brian Johnson of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, both of whom praised Cato’s work in this field.

Corporation and Deputy Director Brian Johnson of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, both of whom praised Cato’s work in this field. “Cato has been recognized for decades as a vanguard of the liberty movement, and I am grateful that your scholars, especially Todd Zywicki and Diego Zuluaga, are focused on this vital issue. We at the Bureau have much to learn from you,” Johnson said.

Over the past year, as part of the CMFA’s Initiative for Financial Inclusion, Zuluaga has been extensively critiquing the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), which requires banks to demonstrate a record of lending in low-income communities. Zuluaga argues that when the CRA doesn’t increase risk, it’s because the loans it promotes are going to high-income people gentrifying low-income neighborhoods, rather than to the low-income residents the law is meant to help. In Washington, DC, for example, “gentrifier” loans account for 65–70 percent of all CRA-eligible lending. He published a study on the topic in July and wrote about the CRA’s gentrifying effects in Politico and the Washington Post.

In December, two of the three CRA regulators proposed changes that would no longer count loans to high-income residents toward banks’ performance reviews under the CRA. Comptroller of the Currency Joseph Otting began to publicly discuss this idea after Zuluaga’s Cato presentation on the CRA in June, which Otting’s deputy attended.

CMFA scholars also regularly provide expert testimony and public comments to regulatory agencies and congressional committees. In September, CMFA Director George Selgin testified before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs about his work on the Federal Reserve’s attempts to create a new and faster payment processing system, warning of the danger of the Fed’s getting into the business of directly competing with the private sector.

It’s not just policymakers listening to Cato scholars that makes a difference. Sometimes, Cato scholars become policymakers themselves. In April, former Cato scholar Mark Calabria was confirmed by the Senate to head the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), the regulator for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac. Lydia Mashburn, former managing director of the CFMA, also recently joined Calabria at the FHFA as deputy chief of staff, while former Cato scholar Thaya Brook Knight now serves as the FHFA’s senior counsel for policy and regulation. Zywicki, Cato senior fellow, was named to head a Consumer Financial Protection Bureau task force that will examine the existing legal and regulatory environment facing consumers and financial services providers.

The CMFA’s work places Cato firmly at the center of both public debate and policymaking in the field of monetary and financial policy. At Cato’s Annual Monetary Conference, featuring a keynote address from Sir Paul Tucker, deputy director of the Bank of England, the best minds in the field discussed the future of the dollar in a manner not only informative to longtime monetary policy experts but also accessible to the informed layperson. With so much at stake, this is an area in which advocates of sound currency need the public on our side and actively participating in the debate.

DO NO HARM

Under Michael Cannon, director for health policy studies, Cato has continued to promote the policy prescriptions needed for a more effective, efficient, and market-oriented health care system. Americans are understandably dissatisfied with many aspects of the current health care system. At Cato, we believe it is important to identify and work to correct the many ways in which the government has broken health care markets, rather than letting the markets themselves take the blame for bad laws and policies.

The health care system in America is both heavily subsidized and distorted by government policies. With nearly half of every dollar spent on health care coming from government coffers, runaway price inflation has become an endemic problem.

This problem is at the core of the vision outlined in the Cato-published book Overcharged: Why Americans Pay Too Much for Health Care by Charles Silver and David Hyman. Cannon continues to promote these proposals, including briefing both legislative and executive policymakers.

Additionally, he continues to be a leading voice on the need to expand health savings accounts, a policy pioneered by Cato and now used by 22 million Americans.

Cato’s health policy department has also been at the forefront of resisting counterproductive policies under the Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare. Cannon has been described as “ObamaCare’s single most relentless antagonist” (New Republic), “ObamaCare’s fiercest critic” (The Week), and “the intellectual father” of King v. Burwell (Modern Healthcare), the lawsuit that led to the Supreme Court’s striking down parts of the ACA while upholding other provisions. In partnership with Cato’s Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies, he is also working on and filing briefs in a key case fighting limitations on short-term health insurance plans, which provide a crucial way out of many of the ACA’s mandates. This case is currently pending in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit as Association for Community Affiliated Plans v. U.S. Department of Treasury.

“The quality of work that is being put out by Cato now is the highest it has ever been.”

—PHIL GRAMM
FORMER CHAIR, SENATE BANKING COMMITTEE

“Cato has been recognized for decades as a vanguard of the liberty movement . . . We at the Bureau have much to learn from you.”

—BRIAN JOHNSON
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, CONSUMER FINANCIAL PROTECTION BUREAU

The health and well-being of Americans is a critical area in which opponents of big government takeovers and a socialized system are often forced into defending the status quo in ways that are untenable. By critiquing the current system and providing positive alternatives, Cato is showing that a better way forward exists for a health care system that effectively serves all Americans.
Freedom to Thrive

BIG BROTHER’S WATCHFUL EYE

The 21st century has brought radical technological innovations with wide-ranging implications for culture and public policy. The rise of the internet and social media means that anybody can quickly reach a global audience. Although the value created has been enormous, this ability has also opened up new ways for the government to engage in mass surveillance and violation of civil liberties. In addition to concerns over privacy and the use of data, the more open expression of bigoted and reprehensible views has led to new demands for hate speech legislation.

Matthew Feeney directs Cato’s Project on Emerging Technologies, where he studies the intersection of new technologies and civil liberties. He has been at the forefront of resisting efforts to impose government censorship on Big Tech platforms, as well as promoting civil liberties reform to rein in mass surveillance.

One aspect of this fight is Cato’s Annual Surveillance Conference, under senior fellow Julian Sanchez. In addition to hosting a wide range of leading academics, the 2019 Surveillance Conference included policymakers from the Department of Justice and the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board.

Defending the right to privacy has been especially important in the post-9/11 era. Patrick Eddington, a Cato research fellow focusing on the intersection of civil liberties and national security, testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee in 2019 on the ongoing abuse of the Patriot Act’s notorious Section 215, which authorizes warrantless metadata collection. Eddington has also launched a new project using the Freedom of Information Act to seek answers on how extensively the FBI is surveilling domestic political groups, including potentially Cato itself.

On the free speech front, Vice President John Samples has become one of the leading commentators on how the laws and norms of free speech interact with social media giants like Facebook and Twitter, including the all-important Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act—the provision that stops civil liability from wrecking the internet as we know it. As his work has emphasized, it is important for these companies to strike the right balance in order to successfully resist demands for heavy-handed government regulation and censorship. With so much of this work being done in Silicon Valley, Samples moved to California and is now closer to the action, regularly meeting with major tech companies.

While panic about alleged “monopolies” is always in vogue, including calls to break up some of America’s most successful companies, Ryan Bourne, the R. Evan Scharf Chair for the Public Understanding of Economics at Cato, offered a helpful corrective with a policy analysis recounting the monopoly tech panics of the recent past. Although once-dominant names like Nokia, Myspace, and Microsoft’s Internet Explorer have fallen by the wayside, it’s worth remembering that they were once on the receiving end of unfounded demands for antitrust action.

GO DIRECTLY TO JAIL

After decades of tough-on-crime rhetoric, America has become the most incarcerated nation on the planet. In recent years, the fever has finally broken and criminal justice reform is on the agenda. Cato has been leading the charge with two important projects under Clark Neily, vice president for criminal justice.
The first has been Cato’s Project on Qualified Immunity. This judge-invented doctrine—with no basis in either statute law or the Constitution—has created a system of near-zero accountability for police misconduct. When it is effectively impossible to seek judicial remedies for misconduct, it’s no surprise that incidents of brutality and excessive use of force have dominated the headlines. Cato has worked to assemble a cross-ideological, cross-partisan coalition—including organizations ranging from the American Civil Liberties Union and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund to the Alliance Defending Freedom and the Second Amendment Foundation—demanding that the courts correct this mistake. By harnessing an emerging academic consensus and pursuing strategic litigation and amicus briefs, several observers, including Justice Neil Gorsuch, have signaled that qualified immunity’s days may well be numbered. With appellate court judges such as Judge Don Willett of the Fifth Circuit openly challenging the doctrine, Cato is nearing its goal of convincing the Supreme Court to finally overturn or at least restrict qualified immunity.

Neily is also tackling another major pathology in our broken criminal justice system: the evisceration of the right to trial by jury. The widespread use of coercive plea bargaining means that the vast majority of those charged with crimes will never see a jury. Under the threat of additional prison time and harsher sentences, almost all are forced to plead guilty. This practice makes a mockery of our Sixth Amendment rights and turns the court system into a rubber-stamp assembly line. Through studies, advocacy, and court briefs, Neily and the rest of Cato’s criminal justice team have been working to restore this fundamental protection against government abuse.

Fidelity to the Constitution is more than just a matter of policy outcomes. It, too, is a moral concern and was understood as such by the Framers. In the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, they spoke of sweeping guarantees of liberty in decidedly moral terms. That’s why all government officials begin their tenure by swearing a solemn oath to our nation’s charter.

Cato has distributed more than six million copies of its pocket edition of the Declaration and the Constitution. Politicians across the ideological spectrum have been known to keep one and display it when called for. But that’s just one small aspect of Cato’s work to promote and defend the values of limited government and the rule of law. The Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies, under director Ilya Shapiro, is one of the nation’s leading voices across public advocacy, academia, and the courts.

Cato is a prolific and influential filer of amicus curiae (“friend of the court”) briefs, both at the Supreme Court and throughout the judiciary. The court cited Cato’s amicus briefs more times than any other amicus filer, including the United States and several states, according to data compiled by the website Empirical SCOTUS. In data from 2000 to 2016, Cato was also found to be in first place, tied with the American Civil Liberties Union, for the most amicus victories in policy-shifting cases.

On issues ranging from regulatory policy to criminal justice and separation of powers, Cato provides respected analysis to judges seeking to understand the original public meaning of some of the Constitution’s most contested
In the 2018-2019 term, Cato filed 16 briefs with the Supreme Court, and was on the winning side in 12. Among the winners was *Knick v. Township of Scott*. In this case, the court ruled that challenges to state or local eminent domain actions could be brought in federal court, without claimants having to first exhaust their state court options. Ilya Shapiro explained that these decisions were “clear victories for liberty, and speak to the two newest justices’ commitment to our constitutional order.”

On top of its brief-filing work, Cato also publishes its renowned *Cato Supreme Court Review*. Under the direction of its new editor-in-chief Trevor Burrus, leading legal scholars analyze the most important cases of the Supreme Court’s most recent term. The *Review* is published annually on Constitution Day, in tandem with a major symposium. It is the first scholarly review to appear after the term’s end and the only one to critique the court from a Madisonian perspective. This year’s Constitution Day symposium featured Judge Thomas Hardiman of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, delivering the annual B. Kenneth Simon Lecture on the history of judicial independence.

Thanks to the work done by Cato, judicial engagement is now a serious and widespread viewpoint that is increasingly supplanting old ideas about “judicial restraint.” Rather than seeking to be restrained or blindly deferring to legislative majorities, this view of originalism sees an important and active role for the courts in upholding constitutional limits on government power and defending individual rights.

**YOUR GOVERNMENT ON DRUGS**

At its core, drug addiction is a health issue, not a criminal justice issue. It can’t be solved with more jails, police officers, and prosecutors. Instead, a truly moral approach to the issue would recognize that we are really dealing with people who have a problem and need help and compassion, not punishment and incarceration.

Jeffrey A. Singer is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, where he covers health care policy. He is also principal and founder of Valley Surgical Clinics Ltd., the largest and oldest private group surgical practice in Arizona, and has been in private practice as a general surgeon for more than 35 years.

As Singer recently explained, no correlation exists between opioid prescription volume and non-medical use or addiction. But policymakers and law enforcement continue to pressure health care practitioners into undertreating patients in pain. The costs of this practice are real and heartbreaking, with Singer noting that “at a recent international breast cancer conference, experts stated the underprescribing of opioids to breast cancer patients in the U.S. is now comparable to treatment in third world countries.”

So what does work? Harm reduction, or as Singer puts it, shifting from a “War on Drugs” to a “War on Drug-Related Deaths.” Harm reduction has a success record that prohibition cannot match, with strategies that include medication-assisted treatment, needle-exchange programs, safe injection sites, heroin-assisted treatment, deregulation of naloxone, and the decriminalization of marijuana.

Cato hosted several Capitol Hill briefings and policy forums on harm reduction over the past year, including a training session for congressional staffers on how to administer the emergency anti-overdose drug naloxone, as well as a policy forum featuring former surgeon general Joycelyn Elders and a daylong conference hosted by Singer. At the conference, former Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell expressed his willingness to go to jail if necessary to defend safe injection sites, and his remarks were featured on the front cover of the *Philadelphia Daily News*. 
Freedom for All

Concern for individual freedom and human well-being doesn’t stop at America’s borders. For all of our policy disagreements, Cato never loses sight of the fact that Americans are blessed with values like the rule of law, free and fair elections, and separation of powers, which are too often missing around the world. From Hong Kong to Venezuela, advocates of liberty abroad are at the forefront of the moral struggle for freedom.

Ian Vasquez is the director of Cato’s Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity, which applies Cato’s values to countries around the world, from Latin America to Asia.

One of the center’s key products is the Human Freedom Index (HFI), a comprehensive ranking of personal and economic freedom, and the only such ranking to combine both factors to produce a comprehensive look at the state of freedom in almost every nation, minus only a handful where insufficient data were available. As just one example of the publication’s reach, National Geographic featured a visualization based on data from the HFI in the 11th edition of its Atlas of the World, noting, “The Human Freedom Index’s analysis of 162 nations demonstrates a strong relationship among economic freedom, democracy, and higher per capita income in most countries.” In the 2019 HFI, the United States came in 15th, with New Zealand taking the top spot.

In addition to coauthoring the HFI, Vasquez is heavily involved in debates in Latin America as classical liberals fight back against both left-wing socialism and right-wing nationalist populism. In 2019, this included commentary on events from Mexico to Argentina and Peru, and of course the ongoing crisis in Venezuela. In addition to his commentary in American media, Vasquez authors regular columns in Peru’s El Comercio newspaper.

Cato senior fellow and New York Times columnist Mustafa Akyol addresses the role of liberty and liberal values in the Muslim world. When Akyol’s book Islam without Extremes: A Muslim Case for Liberty was banned in Malaysia by the religious police, Cato made the Malaysian translation available for free online, where it has been downloaded over 5,000 times. With the Muslim world at the center of so many global events, Akyol provides a much-needed voice for freedom, tolerance, liberalism, and human rights.

It’s important to remember that not all is gloom and doom. Humanity has made radical advances in the past few decades—reducing poverty, spreading liberal democracy, and improving health. Those facts and more are promoted by another of the center’s projects, HumanProgress.org, under managing editor Chelsea Follett and editor Marian L. Tupy. In 2019, HumanProgress.org’s facts and figures were widely cited in debates over global capitalism and prosperity, such as when Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) cited research from HumanProgress.org on Comedy Central’s The Daily Show with Trevor Noah. Also in 2019, Cato launched the Simon Abundance Index, building on the work of the late economist and Cato scholar Julian Simon and his observation of the underappreciated abundance provided by modern markets. This index seeks to quantify the availability of various goods, services, and other resources with regard to the amount of labor needed to purchase them. In December, HumanProgress.org also welcomed a new board member, Andrew McAfee of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

TRADE FREELY

It’s arguable that no policy in human history has done more to lift people out of poverty and produce human flourishing than international free
trade. Modern economics, after all, is often considered to have begun with Adam Smith’s bracing call for free trade in The Wealth of Nations. Defending and building on that progress are the role of Cato’s Herbert A. Stiefel Center for Trade Studies.

In 2019, Cato’s Daniel J. Ikenson and Simon Lester joined Member of the European Parliament Daniel Hannan to release a white paper outlining an ideal post-Brexit free trade agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom. The release of this paper reset the terms of the debate and was widely heralded—and in some quarters, denounced—in Great Britain.

“I am very grateful for the Cato Institute’s voice. The reality is that Cato has been one of the strongest voices for restraint and non-intervention over the past few decades.”

—Rep. Ro Khanna (D-CA)

Cato adjunct scholar James Bacchus—a former member of Congress and founding judge and former chair of the Appellate Body of the World Trade Organization (WTO)—has worked with Lester to advocate the efficacy and potential improvements to the WTO’s mechanism for settling trade disputes. Such international mediation is preferable to the destructive prospects of a trade war. With tariffs in the news throughout much of 2019, Cato scholars were also called on to evaluate the impact of these new barriers and to explain the self-defeating nature of protectionism, including in a question put to President Trump in a press conference by CNN, and Bier was invited to testify before Congress.

The fight for free and open trade doesn’t stop at goods. Free trade in international labor is also an important component, and one where the gains to human well-being are most appreciable. Immigration has been part of the American dream since the Founding. Thomas Paine famously called for making the United States “an asylum for mankind.” Free movement across national borders is one of the policies fundamental to human flourishing and produces some of the greatest benefits.

In recent years, the rise of nativist populism has put immigration policy on the front burner. Alex Nowrasteh, Cato’s director of immigration studies, has been a leading voice in this debate, along with Cato immigration policy analyst David Bier. Together, they have produced some of the most widely cited research into immigration, answering questions with hard data and debunking spurious myths. In one of their most cited studies, Nowrasteh demonstrates that illegal immigrants are in fact prone to lower rates of violent crime and incarceration than native-born Americans. Nowrasteh was cited on the front page of The New York Times and in a question put to President Trump in a press conference by CNN, and Bier was invited to testify before Congress. 

Cato also continues to invest in the Project on Jones Act Reform and is making substantial headway in changing both public and policymaker opinion on this outdated protectionist law, which effectively bans foreign ships and crews from domestic maritime trade in the United States. Policymakers from Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico have proved especially interested in taking up the cause of reforming, if not outright repeal, the Jones Act. As part of this effort, Cato purchased billboards along major congested highways near New York City, noting that the Jones Act worsens traffic by forcing cargo off the seas and onto the roads. In the November 3, 2019, edition of the Wall Street Journal, the editorial board took aim at the Jones Act, relying heavily on Cato’s research for its piece “America First? Kill the Jones Act.” Celebrity chef José Andrés also blasted the Jones Act in a public conversation with Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA) at the Senate Democratic Latino Summit.

TOP LEFT: Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) appears on The Daily Show with Trevor Noah in October 2019, armed with facts from Cato’s website HumanProgress.org to make the case for free markets and individual freedom. TOP RIGHT: Cato’s Chelsea Follett (center) moderates a debate between Veronique de Rugy (right), a senior fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, and Nicole Aschoff (left), a member of the Jacobin editorial board, on whether capitalism helps or harms women. LEFT: The New York Times highlighted Cato’s research on immigration in a front-page story published on January 15, 2019. The article, “What’s Really Happening at the Border?”, included graphics showing the results of research conducted by director of immigration studies Alex Nowrasteh. ABOVE (left to right): Cato’s Inu Manak, James Bacchus, and Daniel J. Ikenson (along with Huan Zhu and Simon Lester, who are outside the frame) held a standing-room-only panel discussion at the World Trade Organization’s annual public forum in October to discuss the significance of recent U.S. challenges to the world trading system for the WTO.
give a TED talk on how guest worker visas could solve the border crisis. Multiple pieces of legislation in 2019 incorporated ideas proposed by Bier, including Sen. Rand Paul’s BELIEVE Act, and an amendment from Rep. Dan Newhouse (R-WA) in the 2018 and 2019 House appropriations bills, which would expand the guest worker program to year-round agricultural programs.

Immigration is a key part of Cato’s vision of individual liberty, limited government, free markets, and peace. By bringing market sensibilities and a respect for hard data to the field, Cato fills a demand that would otherwise be unrepresented in this debate.

**PEACE AND PROSPERITY**

“War is the health of the state.” So remarked Randolph Bourne in the midst of World War I. But the price of war is not paid just in higher taxes and more intrusive regulation. The moral case for peace and restraint is at the heart of Cato’s defense and foreign policy work, under the direction of Christopher A. Preble.

Nearly two decades after the September 11 attacks, America’s wars in the Middle East continue with no end in sight. But important progress has been made in convincing policymakers that it’s time for American forces to come home.

For the first time, Congress has begun to reclaim its war powers prerogatives, passing resolutions aimed at terminating American involvement in the war in Yemen and preventing a war in Iran. Although these resolutions have succumbed to presidential vetoes, they mark an important step in reasserting legislative power over war and peace. Cato scholars have also been involved in the controversies over repealing and possibly replacing the authorizations to use military force that were passed in 2001 and 2002.

Cato’s recent research on arms sales, led by A. Trevor Thrall, was cited in the justification for the Enhancing Human Rights Protections in Arms Sales Act of 2019, cosponsored by a bipartisan group of senators, including Ben Cardin (D-MD), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Bob Casey (D-PA), and Rand Paul (R-KY). Also on Capitol Hill, Cato’s John Glaser testified before the House Oversight and Reform Committee on U.S. intervention in Syria that “there is no legal authority for U.S. military presence on the ground in Syria.”

Although terrorism continues to be at the forefront, questions of nuclear policy are also in flux as America’s dated nuclear arsenal faces the need for updates and ongoing maintenance. Conventional wisdom holds the nuclear “triad” of ballistic missiles, submarine-launched missiles, and bomber aircraft to be sacrosanct, but in America’s Nuclear Crossroads: A Forward-Looking Anthology, editors Caroline Dorminey and Eric Gomez question that consensus. Mustering experts from across the ideological spectrum, Nuclear Crossroads has been an important addition to the debate over paring down America’s nuclear arsenal by eliminating one of the expensive elements of the traditional triad.

The Trump administration has proved to be a mixed bag on this front. The president’s rhetoric often speaks to a desire to get out of never-ending wars; however, the policy has more often fallen far short of that goal, and in many cases moved in the opposite direction. In response, Preble, Glaser, and Thrall authored Fuel to the Fire: How Trump Made America’s Broken Foreign Policy Even Worse (and How We Can Recover).

“Restraint in U.S. foreign policy is ripe for a revival,” the authors of Fuel to the Fire make clear, but “what America needs is not Trump’s America First, nor a return to the status quo ante, but a radical revolution of its role in the world.”
Building for Generations to Come

The Cato Internship Program has long been one of its flagship projects, providing career-enhancing opportunities and building a new generation of leaders for liberty. Not only do more than 100 Cato interns work alongside policy scholars annually, they also attend an intensive series of seminars, the John Russell Paslaqua Intern Seminar Series. No intern leaves Cato without a robust and wide-ranging understanding of the theory, history, and practice of liberty. The value of a Cato internship is not lost on students either. With thousands of applicants, admission to a Cato internship is in fact more selective than admission to Harvard.

Cato reaches students not only in the United States, but also across the world. In November 2019, Cato celebrated the 10th anniversary of our Spanish-language Cato University at Francisco Marroquín University in Guatemala. Cato also engages thousands of young people through our website Libertarianism.org. With a robust historical archive and a series of guide books, along with several popular podcasts, Libertarianism.org aims to reach both curious newcomers and longtime libertarians with the values that drive Cato’s mission. In 2019, Libertarianism.org had over 2.1 million visits to its website, 83 percent of which were from new users. Additionally, between 2019 and 2020, 4,000 high school students received a copy of Libertarianism.org’s guide Understanding Statistics and viewed a lecture from the author, economist Antony Davies.

Education is also an important part of Cato’s policy work. The Center for Educational Freedom (CEF) is a leading voice in making sure that all children have the freedom to thrive and prosper in a school of their family’s choosing. One important aspect of that fight in 2019 was the case Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue. Together with Cato’s Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies, CEF’s director, Neal McCluskey, filed amicus briefs both for the Supreme Court to take up the case (which it did) and on the merits (now pending). Espinoza hinges on so-called baby Blaine Amendments, a vestige of anti-Catholic animus in the 19th century. Under these state constitutional provisions, religious schools are forbidden from participating in school choice and related voucher programs.

In July 2019, Cato hosted the inaugural Sphere Summit for educators, which provided full scholarships to 160 high school and middle school educators from across the country to attend a weeklong seminar at the Cato Institute. The seminar featured policy discussions with leading scholars from diverse viewpoints—including libertarian views—modeling civil debate on public policy issues, as well as lesson plan and curriculum development on key topics such as free speech and the Constitution. The summit received overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees, with many saying it was the best professional development event they had ever attended. One teacher wrote, “Rarely do I attend an education event where I can go home and immediately apply material.” Another wrote, “I find myself almost daily sharing or thinking about something that I learned.”

Unlike most politics or policy work, the values of liberty take the long view. Cato is concerned with human flourishing and well-being in the here and now but also for generations to come. The Cato Institute looks back to the long struggle for liberty over the centuries and looks forward to a future in which these principles can be more fully realized.

Cato’s Sponsors make all of this work possible. From everybody at the Cato Institute, we thank you for your support in 2019, and we look forward to continuing to build on this work far into the future.
Every year, more than 100 young people come to the Cato Institute headquarters in Washington, DC, for a transformative experience in public policy. In their first days at the Institute, Cato interns are introduced to John Russell Paslaqua, whose passion for big ideas and individual liberty lives on through the John Russell Paslaqua Intern Seminar Series.

John Russell Paslaqua was a 2014 graduate of Colgate University and produced exceptional work for Cato’s Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies as a member of the spring 2015 intern class. Tragically, John passed away suddenly in 2017. In the past year, the Paslaqua family generously established the John Russell Paslaqua Intern Seminar Series to honor the legacy of their son, who aspired to combine his love for libertarian ideas and passion for constitutional law with a future legal career.

“John was quite thoughtful and had a bright future ahead of him. He kept asking for more work and did it exceptionally.”
— Ilya Shapiro
Director, Robert A. Levy Center for Constitutional Studies

When considering how best to honor John’s legacy, the Paslaquas thought back to John’s time at Cato and how he embodied the character that Cato aims to instill through the internship program. We are honored by the partnership the Paslaquas are making with Cato to uphold John’s commitment to our shared values.

“I always looked up to my older brother, John. He helped build the foundation of my beliefs through his logical and sensible perspective on the world. He often shared his libertarian philosophies with me. He was a great believer in finding peaceful solutions to complex problems, and minimizing the reach of big government. I still look to John for guidance, as he continues to offer me clarity, strength, and hope for a brighter future.”
— Robert David Paslaqua, John’s brother

The John Russell Paslaqua Intern Seminar Series has become a core component of a Cato internship. The Cato Internship Program combines professional opportunities and skill development with a strong philosophical foundation in libertarianism. The John Russell Paslaqua Intern Seminar Series includes research tutorials and professional development workshops to deepen interns’ knowledge and hone their skills. The curriculum features 40 seminars delivered by Cato’s senior policy staff members on topics encompassing public policy, economics, history, and political philosophy.

“I believe John’s career path would have taken him in the direction of defending human rights and working on legal and constitutional reform . . . a path reinforced by his Cato experience.”
— Nancy Laird, John’s mother

Thanks to a generous contribution by the Paslaqua Charitable Foundation in John’s memory, Cato will continue to educate the next generation of leaders for a free, open, and civil society. Together, we will enhance the Cato internship experience that John enjoyed so much and through which he is fondly remembered.

“His memory can now live in part through the sponsorship of this intern seminar series program.”
— Kenneth Paslaqua, John’s father

Cato’s Legacy Society Sponsors have created planned gifts—from simple charitable gift annuities, bequests, and beneficiary designations for retirement assets, to complex trusts and endowed chairs—that are now more important than ever for growing Cato’s ability to pursue its mission for more free and prosperous societies. If you are interested in learning about similar giving opportunities at the Cato Institute, please contact Harrison Moar at hmoar@cato.org or 202-789-5259.
Growing Our Reach: Select Cato Events

Cato reaches vast audiences across the ideological spectrum with over 100 in-person and online events each year. Cato’s education programs and events bring more than 7,500 people to the Institute’s headquarters in Washington, DC, and attract over 360,000 virtual and in-person attendees.

Freedom: Art as the Messenger

April 11–June 14, 2019

In 2019, the Cato Institute hosted its first exhibition, free and open to the public. In these polarized times, Freedom: Art as the Messenger provided a unifying platform of civility and creativity. Artists from across the country offered their own takes on the meaning of freedom, and thousands of visitors came to Cato to view and discuss the artworks. The exhibit was curated by Harriet Lesser and June Linowitz (pictured top right on the following page).
A summer program for middle- and high-school educators, the Sphere Summit held its inaugural seminar in 2019, “Teaching Civic Culture Together.” With hundreds of teachers participating, this new initiative fosters civil discourse and encourages free and open debate. Teachers participated in a variety of workshops and panel discussions on how to model these skills, as well as in a dinner discussion on Capitol Hill with Rep. Justin Amash (L-MI) and Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA).
LIBERTY: UNDERSTANDING
well‐meaning Americans have sup-
most prominent cases in which
examines the
Gullible Superpower
organizations, and movements.
for highly questionable individuals,
ical endorsements to include finan-
that support goes far beyond rhetor-
the insurgent cause. Frequently,
and opinion leaders into supporting
manipulating U.S. policymakers
history of foreign insurgent groups
DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS
quality, and lower costs.
bring about innovation, improved
plied to higher education to
sectors of the economy can be ap-
from market competition in other
explains the need to
America’s nuclear
CROSSROADS: A FORWARD-
look at science in the 20th century
Science can be a force for good,
however, is not always the case.
the popular notion is that science
is a force for good and that knowl-
Science has long been the key to
historical American focus on trade
America’s expansive global military
role in the world but a return to the
historical American focus on trade and diplomacy.
SCIENTOCRACY: THE TANGLED WEB OF
PUBLIC SCIENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY
ED. BY PATRICK J. MICHAELS
AND TERENCE KEALEY
NOVEMBER 2019
Science has long been the key to
objective knowledge. Science also
informs governments that seek to
define risks and mitigate dangers.
The popular notion is that science
is a force for good and that knowl-
edge derived from theory and
experiment gives rise to tech-
nological advancement, thereby
improving everyone’s lives. This,
however, is not always the case.
Science can be a force for good,
and it has enhanced our lives in
countless ways. But even a cursory
look at science in the 20th century
shows that what passes for science
can be detrimental. Scientocracy
documents only some of the more
recent abuses of science that
informed members of the public
should be aware of.

Find the latest Cato books at
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Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Results

Cato’s unaudited financial information for fiscal year 2020 (April 1, 2019, to March 31, 2020) is presented below. Operating income was $31,695,000, and net assets total $81,391,000. Program expenses made up 81 percent of operating expenses. The Cato Institute accepts no government funding. Contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations make possible our ability to drive important policy debates toward limited government, free markets, individual liberty, and peace.

OPERATING REVENUE

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LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

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