A new resource from Libertarianism.org

Video Guides to Libertarianism

"It's not easy to define freedom," Cato's executive vice president David Boaz writes in *The Libertarian Mind*. Some may find it equally difficult to define "libertarianism"—a rich philosophy that boasts thinkers from John Stuart Mill to Ayn Rand and Robert Nozick. Boaz's *The Libertarian Mind* and *The Libertarian Reader* both offer primers in libertarian thought—and now, from Libertarianism.org, comes one more way to encounter the basic ideas of liberty. The site's new online video courses are an invaluable resource for anyone interested in the history and principles of libertarian philosophy, economics, and public policy.

The guides feature short video lectures you can watch online, or download and listen to on the go. They also incorporate reading lists, essays, and other online materials to further your studies. The course can be taken at any pace, whether you are a student of political science or a novice to the ideas of liberty. And, while the lectures are designed as a sequential course, each individual lecture also stands on its own for those just interested in brushing up on a particular aspect of libertarian thought.

David Boaz presents the first guide, *Introduction to Libertarianism*. In a series of short lectures, he introduces the foundational ideas of libertarianism. He traces the history of libertarian ideas, from ancient Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu, to the Bible, to Thomas Jefferson and Milton Friedman. In just a few hours, the guide provides a substantive overview of all the essential concepts of libertarianism, including rights, individual liberty, and how markets work. "My colleagues at Libertarianism.org and I have tried to create the best available introduction to libertarianism here in 2015," he writes.

Upcoming guides will feature Howard Baetjer, the author of *Free Our Markets*, on the foundational concepts of economics; Jason Brennan of Georgetown University on an *Introduction to Political Philosophy*; and Jeff Miron of Harvard's Economics Department on libertarian public policy. ■

THE GUIDES ARE AVAILABLE AT WWW.LIBERTARIANISM.ORG/GUIDES.

Cato News Notes

REAPPORTIONING A PTERODACTYL

Maryland is notorious for boasting the most gerrymandered congressional districts in the country—a federal judge once described its 3rd district as "reminiscent of a broken-winged pterodactyl." Calling this "not a distinction of which we should be proud," Gov. Larry Hogan selected Cato senior fellow Walter Olson to co-chair a bipartisan commission to recommend reforms. In November Olson and his fellow commissioners sent a 68-page report to the governor proposing a reform process that would make Maryland the only state in the country in which neither the legislature nor the governor would have any say in choosing who would draw district lines. "What the reform panel is proposing is about as far removed from party bosses as feasible," wrote the *Baltimore Sun* editorial board. "At least one thing is clear, the commission is headed in the proper direction."

UPPING THE HEAT ON FEDERAL PAY

"After a three-year lull," the *Washington Post* recently proclaimed, "the war between fiscal conservatives and federal employees and their allies in Congress over whether civil servants are overpaid is heating up again, thanks to a new study from the Cato Institute." The study in question, from Cato's director of tax policy Chris Edwards, reports that in 2014 federal workers earned a stunning 78 percent more, on average, than private-sector workers. "The federal government has become an elite island of secure and high-paid employment, separated from the ocean of average Americans competing in the economy," Edwards wrote. The *Post* predicted that, due in part to Cato's work, the "compensation wars" will "continue to rage on."

POLITICAL SCIENCE AWARD

In September Cato Institute adjunct scholar Eugene Gholz received the American Political Science Association's annual Fiona McGillivray award for his paper "Assessing the 'Threat' of International Tension to the U.S. Economy." Gholz argued that American officials exaggerate the value of playing a "leadership" role in international affairs, which supposedly protects the U.S. and global economy. "The bottom line is that it is rarely, if ever, worth spending American resources to prevent foreign instability in the hope of protecting American prosperity, even assuming that such spending effectively tamps down tension," he wrote. Professor Lloyd Gruber from the London School of Economics and Political Science presented Gholz with the award, praising his "well-argued, punchy, and provocative" work.