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Some Links

Posted By [Don Boudreaux](#) On May 17, 2011 @ 6:33 am In [Budget Issues](#), [Hubris and humility](#), [Myths and Fallacies](#), [Other People's Money](#), [Seen and Unseen](#), [Social Security](#), [State of Macro](#), [The Future](#), [Video](#), [War](#) | [2 Comments](#)

[Emily Skarbek \(who, BTW, earned her Econ Ph.D. at GMU\) talks with Reason.tv's Nick Gillespie about the Independent Institute's Government Cost Calculator](#) ^[1]. It can handle big numbers.

Relatedly, in this video Duquesne University economist [Antony Davies discusses what Social Security means to a typical 22-year-old American](#) ^[2].

[James Warner explores a policy debate between Dostoevsky and Tolstoy on whether powerful governments should intervene in global trouble spots for humanitarian purposes](#) ^[3]. Plus ca change, plus c'est la meme chose. (HT Walter Grinder)

[In this paper, University of Michigan law professor Douglas Kahn and Washington & Lee law professor Jeffrey Kahn question the strength of the free-rider argument for justifying the "individual mandate" in Obamacare](#) ^[4]. Here's the abstract:

Section 1501 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act added section 5000A to the Internal Revenue Code to require most individuals in the United States to purchase a minimum level of medical insurance. This requirement, which is enforced by a penalty imposed on those who fail to comply, is sometimes referred to as the "individual mandate." A frequently stated defense of the individual mandate is that there are a vast number of persons who do not purchase medical insurance and then obtain free medical care when the need arises, and the individual mandate will require those persons (often referred to as "free-riders") to pay their share. It is the significance of this free-rider justification that we question. We conclude that the free-rider problem, if it existed at all, likely was of minor significance and can hardly be said to justify the adoption of the new health care program. The actual congressional reason for adopting the program seems to rest on an entirely different purpose, and the debate over the desirability of the program should focus on the merits of that other purpose.

[Cato's Dan Ikenson](#) ^[5] – and [The Atlantic's Megan McArdle](#) ^[6] – each, in his and her own way, explains that (in McArdle's words) "GM's profits are still a huge net loss for taxpayers."

[The Washington Post discusses Russ's and John Papola's remarkable rap videos](#) ^[7].

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URLs in this post:

[1] Emily Skarbek (who, BTW, earned her Econ Ph.D. at GMU) talks with Reason.tv's Nick Gillespie about the Independent Institute's Government Cost Calculator: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gri532LRSi0>

[2] Antony Davies discusses what Social Security means to a typical 22-year-old American: <http://www.youtube.com/user/LearnLiberty?feature=mhsn>

[3] James Warner explores a policy debate between Dostoevsky and Tolstoy on whether powerful governments should intervene in global trouble spots for humanitarian purposes: <http://www.opendemocracy.net/james-warner/all-frogs-croak-before-storm-dostoevsky-versus-tolstoy-on-humanitarian-interventions>

[4] In this paper, University of Michigan law professor Douglas Kahn and Washington & Lee law professor Jeffrey Kahn question the strength of the free-rider argument for justifying the "individual mandate" in Obamacare: <http://law.bepress.com/umichlwps/empirical/art32/>

[5] Cato's Dan Ikenson: http://www.cato.org/pub_display.php?pub_id=13104

[6] *The Atlantic*'s Megan McArdle: <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2011/05/gms-profits-are-still-a-huge-net-loss-for-taxpayers/238795/>

[7] The *Washington Post* discusses Russ's and John Papola's remarkable rap videos:
http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-state-of-nova/post/gmu-prof-helps-create-viral-rap-videos--about-economics/2011/05/11/AFruUquG_blog.html

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