

## Free to Choose by Milton & Rose Friedman



Review by: Victor Quiroz

In *Free to Choose*, Friedman explains the importance of economic, political, and personal freedom and argues against government policies that interfere with personal freedoms and interrupt the efficiency of the free market. Friedman does a great job of taking complex problems and explaining them in a simplified way. I found this especially helpful since I have little background in economics. Although this book was written more than 30 years ago, I thought it was interesting how much of it seems to echo our present.

In the earlier parts of the book Friedman warns against the consequences of government interference and overregulation of free markets. Since it was written in 1980, the total numbers of regulations and obstacles to free enterprise have increased dramatically (roughly about 7,000 [new pages of regulation](#) since 1980). He also delves into controversial government run programs such as public healthcare, education, and social security. I thought it was especially interesting how these haven't changed much over three decades.

This book really opened my mind to thinking about how many government run programs operate in the U.S. For example, in chapter 4, "Cradle to Grave", Friedman examines the development of the welfare state in the U.S. In the beginning, there were few who received the benefits from such programs; coupled with many taxpayers available to support them. However, as these programs grew, the numbers changed and now we have many who are receiving the benefits and fewer tax payers to support these programs. As a result, today we are confronting the issues of expanding government programs that are costing more and more each year. Friedman further explains by classifying spending priority into four categories. (This [video](#) clearly and quickly explains these four categories). He sums up his points in saying,

*"Nobody spends somebody else's money as carefully as he spends his own. Nobody uses somebody else's resources as carefully as he uses his own. So if you want efficiency and effectiveness, if you want knowledge to be properly utilized, you have to do it through the means of private property."*

Basically, Friedman argues that people can more effectively and efficiently spend their own money rather than to let the government do it for them. Overall, I really enjoyed this book. I thought it was really informative and that his arguments strongly reinforce the important role freedom plays in the market.