



# The Power of Choice

*The Life and Ideas of Milton Friedman*

**PBS DOCUMENTARY SPECIAL  
'THE POWER OF CHOICE'  
EXAMINES THE IMPACT OF MILTON FRIEDMAN'S WORK  
ON AMERICAN LIFE AND  
ECONOMIES AROUND THE WORLD**

***"The Power of Choice: The Life and Ideas of Milton Friedman"*  
Premieres January 29, 2007 at 10:00 p.m. on PBS**

**Erie, PA – December 11, 2006** – Milton Friedman's influence on the life we live today - in America and in countries around the world - has been far-reaching; yet few realize just how influential this Nobel Prize-winning economist has been, and continues to be.

On Monday, January 29 at 10:00 p.m. (check local listings), PBS will premiere "The Power of Choice: The Life and Ideas of Milton Friedman", an exclusive documentary on the remarkable life and visionary ideas of Milton Friedman. The special, produced for PBS by Free to Choose Media, will give viewers a new understanding of the magnitude of this legendary economist's influence on our modern world.

This 90-minute documentary examines the life of this brilliantly intelligent man who dared to push forward his theories against almost universal opposition, and whose courage and determination changed the world in countless ways. Through interviews with leading economists and policy makers including Alan Greenspan, Nobel Laureates Paul Samuelson and Gary Becker, and the first freely elected Prime Minister of Estonia, Mart Laar, "The Power of Choice" shows how Friedman's championing of choice in business and economic practices has led to societies with both greater liberty and economic development for the vast majority of citizens. As Friedman said, "The society that puts equality before freedom will end up with neither. The society that puts freedom before equality will end up with a great measure of both."

This unique documentary illustrates how the ideas of this once outrageous, yet innovative thinker are now part of the fabric of everyday life. While his ideas are taken for granted today, Friedman introduced them to an outcry within the field of economics and in the world of public policy. As Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan once said of Dr. Friedman, "There are very few people over the generations who have ideas that are sufficiently original to materially alter the direction of civilization. Milton is one of those very few people."

"The story of Milton Friedman's life and influence can only be accurately told by exploring his science and showing the impact his ideas have had on the world stage," said Executive Producer Robert Chitester. "To bring life to Dr. Friedman's ideas, we have taken our cameras to Estonia, Chile, England, and throughout the United States. We have interviewed people whose lives and destinies have been changed – for the better – through the implementation of one man's ideas."

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**Alan Greenspan,**  
Former Chairman,  
Federal Reserve



“The Power of Choice” begins with an introduction of Milton Friedman and his wife and fellow economist, Rose. As this section of the special (gleaned from Milton and Rose Friedman’s 1998 memoir Two Lucky People) recounts, their relationship influenced the development of ideas that changed U.S. and world economies.

To see the realization of these ideas in action today, viewers will travel to Estonia, a newly independent country that found itself in economic ruin after the fall of the Soviet Union. Eager for a fresh start, Estonia elected the youngest prime minister in Europe’s history, 32-year-old Mart Laar. By his own admission, Laar knew little about economics, and the only book he read on the subject was Milton Friedman’s Free to Choose. In a leap of faith, he based the entire economic plan for his young nation on Friedman’s theories. Estonia’s subsequent growth – ahead of much of Western Europe’s – is perhaps the most dramatic example of Milton Friedman’s ideas in action today.

The social impact of Friedman’s work is illustrated by the application of his principles of free-market economics to the U.S. military’s recruiting practices. As viewers will see, Friedman’s consultation led directly – and swiftly – to the abolishment of compulsory military service and its replacement with an all-volunteer military that is highly motivated and more effective than drafted troops. Through this and other examples, the documentary demonstrates that Friedman’s impact is anything but theoretical: it affects the daily life of nearly every American and many more people throughout the world.

To find out more about “The Power of Choice: The Life and Ideas of Milton Friedman”, please visit [www.freetochoosedia.org](http://www.freetochoosedia.org) or call the media contacts below.

“The Power of Choice: The Life and Ideas of Milton Friedman” was produced by Free to Choose Media, a non-profit 501-c-3 public foundation whose mission is to use easily understood and entertaining popular media to reach inquisitive minds regarding the value and interrelationship of personal, economic and political freedom sustained by the rule of law. The challenge for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and beyond is to find ways to avoid the classic failure of the self governed to retain awareness of the necessary conditions for the survival of their freedom and prosperity.

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**Media Contacts:**

Olivia Dupuis  
Goodman Media International  
(212) 576-2700, ext. 250  
[odupuis@goodmanmedia.com](mailto:odupuis@goodmanmedia.com)

John Bianchi  
Goodman Media International  
(212) 576-2700, ext. 228  
[jbianchi@goodmanmedia.com](mailto:jbianchi@goodmanmedia.com)