



BOOKS THAT SHAPED WORK IN AMERICA



Julianna Gulden Corporate Communications Consultant

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Book Recommendation

Milton Friedman and Rose Friedman, Free to Choose (1980). Hands up all those kids whose fathers made them watch the 10-part PBS series based on this book! The Friedmans' messages advocating free market principles so resonated with my Hungarian refugee father that my brother and I were firmly encouraged to watch the series from start to finish in addition to reading the book. At 17, little did I know that those weekly sessions with the Friedmans, coupled with the book, would form my views on economic policy well into adulthood. In best-selling Free to Choose, Milton Friedman, winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1976, and his wife—both passionate defenders of laissez-faire economics—argued that the free market is a catalyst for prosperity for all members of society. Overall, they viewed government intervention, regulatory over-reach and excessive taxation as attacks on Americans' personal liberty, which also led to general inefficiencies in government. The PBS series leveraged the success of the book by highlighting a number of "good" and "bad" examples of capitalism or lack thereof, underscoring the main messages of what constitutes free market success and failure.

Garrison Keillor (Introduction), Good Poems, American Places (2011). To me, no writer describes with such humor and sensitivity the heartaches and joys of the American everyman better than Garrison Keillor. As an avid reader of his prose and a fan of his radio shows, I couldn't pass up a chance to take a peek at what Keillor considers "good poetry." Good poems, Keillor writes, "...offer a truer account than what we're used to getting. They surprise us with clear pictures of the familiar." In this anthology, Keillor shares with us "poems in which the poet simply is carried away by a particular place in America," inviting us to consider works that offer "some grit, some spark, maybe an ode to the old hometown, to the marble majesty of Colburn-Hilliard Men's Clothing and the bounty of Benzin Furniture and Amidore's Appliances, the sweet solace of Shadick's Soda Fountain, and the old ladies trying on black slacks in Dedrick's Department Store, rather than a soliloquy on the brevity of life." In the chapter entitled "Good Work," Keillor's picks are about the people who embody the American work ethic: laborers, salesmen, caregivers, farmers and butchers. And, while these poems vary in style and substance, they do share the common thread of what happens when a poet "simply is carried away by a particular place in America."

Julianna Gulden served the Reagan-Bush and Bush-Quayle administrations from 1986-1991. A corporate communications consultant, she has lived and worked in Budapest, Hungary since 1991.

Books that Shaped Work in America

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- Aftershock, The Age of Innocence, An American Dilemma, Angels in America, Angle of Repose, Animal Farm

Notable Contributors

- Kathy M. Newman, John Y. Cole, Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Chris Parisi, M. Patricia Smith, Ray Marshall