

Mateo Montoya

Brian Judge

13 April 2017

Two thinkers, Hayek and Friedman both formulate their rough theories of freedom as it is based off liberty and the free market that inherently creates it. Coming out of the Austrian and Chicago schools respectively, there are some key differences between the two formulations of freedom. Arguably, both thinkers formulate freedom as much more of a commodity. They describe a world in which the free market—kept open by legitimate government force—allows for individuals to free themselves. They suggest that the free market forces people to be free; people have no other option but to exercise their ‘vote’ and take responsibility for their lives.

Hayek, theorizing at the wane of a series of brutal fascist conflicts in Europe, views the free market as one of the only way to ensure freedom. He argues that free markets inherently decentralize power, ensuring that no one party will ever have agency over another and diffusing the possibilities of action to everyday people. He defines a fairly unique idea of spontaneity, asserting that free markets, with the ability of people to freely act, allow for the best possible environment for human advancement and experiment. Freedom is the advancement of humanity.

I argue that Friedman, having the hindsight of coming after Hayek historically, theorizes a form of economics that directly attempts to separate the government from the market. Though Hayek advocates for this as well, Friedman seems to focus more on separating the market from the government. Friedman asserts that, historically, the free market always converges with freedom and liberty. Friedman is a strong libertarian and supports all forms of liberty, seeing

them as interconnected in their production of freedom. Freedom is ensuring a free market by any means necessary.

For both of these thinkers, freedom is directly tied to the free market, which they see as eternally promising the prospect of liberty. Freedom for them is responsibility, taking choice into individual hands and decentralizing power.