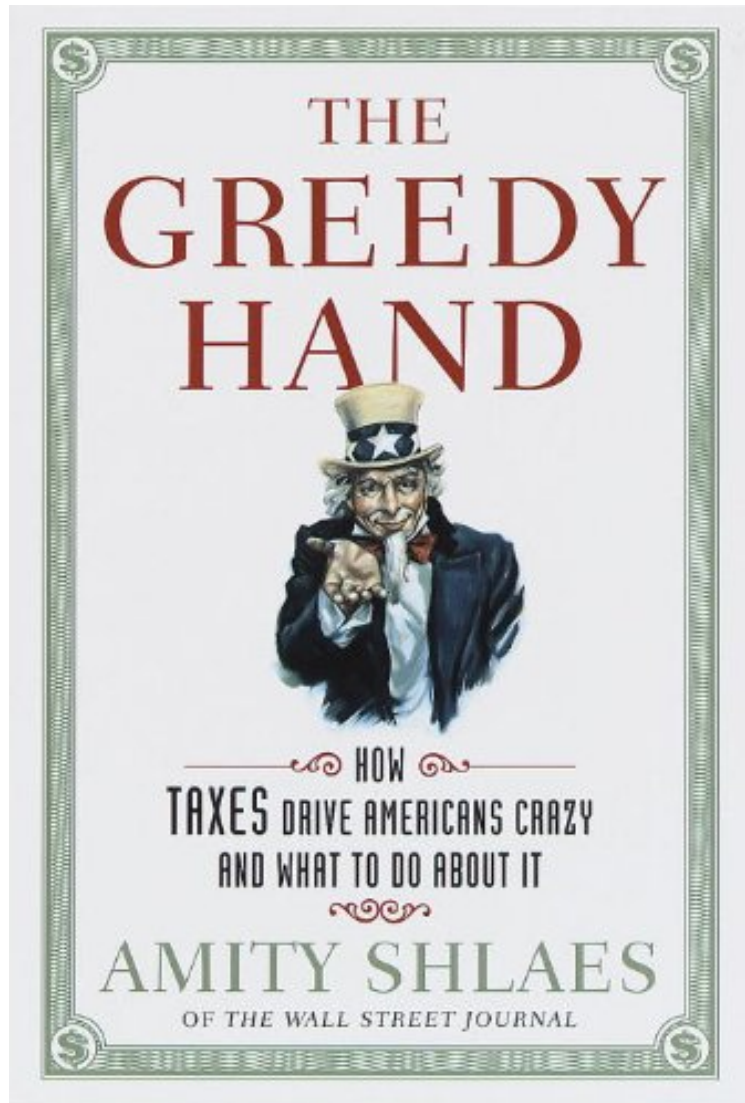


(Free pdf) The Greedy Hand: How Taxes Drive Americans Crazy and What to Do About It

# The Greedy Hand: How Taxes Drive Americans Crazy and What to Do About It

*Amity Shlaes*

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**Amity Shlaes : The Greedy Hand: How Taxes Drive Americans Crazy and What to Do About It** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Greedy Hand: How Taxes Drive Americans Crazy and What to Do About It:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Feds re the 1 percenters not business ownersBy John BeallAll Americans should read this eye opening account of Federal Governments insatiable appetite for imposing unnecessary tax burdens that seldom does not even solve the problem, but then hurts many to benefit a few. The tax code is riddled

with help for some people but usually creates behavioral changes that defeat its intended purposes. Most important to me is how much of our liberties and privacy is sacrificed while the government invades everything we do and own. A simple flat tax would be far more fair and does not require the invasion of our lives and property. All freedom loving Americans will be angry as they read this and demand changes! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Death taxes. By Charley L. Written showing how taxes effect your everyday life such as your clothes, work, marriage, house, etc. Gives some history as to how taxes have slowly grown to cover nearly every aspect of your life. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I did accounting for many, years and I still ... By C. A. heldt I did accounting for many, years and I still remember my old tax accounting professor telling me taxes are just to collect revenue they do NOT have to make sense - only collect revenue and encourage or discourage certain activities now, in america, we have a most people try to figure out what the confusing tax code means and try to pay what they owe while others simple try to avoid paying taxes either by fraud or just not reporting enough to reduce their tax bill.

The Greedy Hand is an illuminating examination of the culture of tax and a persuasive call for reform, written by one of the nation's leading policy makers, Amity Shlaes of The Wall Street Journal. The father of the modern American state was an obscure Macy's department store executive named Beardsley Rumel. During World War II, he devised the plan for withholding taxes from your paycheck, thereby laying in place a system that allows the hand of government to reach into your wallet and take what it wants. Today, taxes make up more than a third of our economy, the highest level in history outside war. We live in the nation revolutionary father Thomas Paine foresaw when he wrote of "the Greedy Hand of government thrusting itself into every corner of industry." This book is a cultural examination of the way taxes influence our behavior, how they force us into an arbitrary system that punishes families and individual enterprise. Amity Shlaes unveils the hidden perversities of our lifelong tax experience: how family tax breaks do little to help the family, and can even hurt it. She demonstrates how married women pay a special women's tax rate, higher than anybody else's. She shows how problems that engage and enrage us--Social Security problems, or the things we don't like about schools--are, at heart, tax problems. And she explains why the solutions Washington offers merely accelerate a vicious cycle. Finally, Amity Shlaes shows us a way out of this madness, endorsing a number of common-sense reforms that will give all Americans a fairer and simpler tax system. Written with eloquent compassion for working Americans and their families, The Greedy Hand makes the best case yet for rethinking our tax code. It is a book no tax-paying citizen can afford to ignore.

... Americans are being taxed to death--literally, says author Amity Shlaes in The Greedy Hand. At work or out shopping, upon marriage or even after death, we are paying more in taxes than ever before, according to Shlaes, a Wall Street Journal editorial writer. The average family with two wage-earners is now seeing almost 40 percent of its money go to local, state, and federal taxes. "The greedy hand of government"--first described by American revolutionary Thomas Paine--is greedier than ever, creating a situation ripe for tax reform, if not revolt, Shlaes writes. "We think of our forefathers who felt compelled to rebel against the Crown for 'imposing Taxes on us without our consent.' We know we live in a democracy, and so must have chosen this arrangement. Yet nowadays we find ourselves feeling that taxes are imposed on us 'without our consent'," she writes. Chapter by chapter, and in great detail, Shlaes analyzes the tremendous burdens imposed by a wide range of taxes. She assails the marriage penalty, for example, and exposes problems with Social Security and the estate tax. And she documents how Americans feel increasingly unhappy with what government does with their money and shows how people go to great lengths to avoid taxes--driving across state lines to escape a sales tax, for instance. Shlaes calls for political leaders to overhaul the nation's tax code and suggests starting with guiding principles like the following: "Taxes have to be simple;" "Taxes have to be lower;" and "It's time to privatize Social Security." The Greedy Hand warns that the tax system damages the economy and hurts working people, and is a good read for anyone who wants to rail intelligently about taxes. --Dan Ring From Publishers Weekly In a furious and furiously argued look at the effects of taxation on American life, Shlaes (Germany: The Empire Within), a Wall Street Journal editorial writer on tax policy, argues that a progressive tax structure merely acts as a brake on those who are moving up the ladder of success. She notes that American taxes--overt, hidden, intrusive, ubiquitous--once touched only a 12th of the average person's annual income but now bite into close to 40%. In place of today's byzantine tax code, Shlaes suggests either a flat tax or a simplified tax structure with lower rates and no home mortgage deduction (the latter change, she surmises, would very likely bring down interest rates for mortgages). She also calls for privatizing Social Security and favors abolition of the estate tax (arguing that the latter is a major killer of family businesses and that the rich find loopholes to avoid paying it anyway). Shlaes has nothing good to say about Medicare and, indeed, relates some awful horror stories about its shortcomings. In a chapter on school funding, she contends that the move by states to centralize school financing (as opposed to the old system whereby local property taxes funded local schools) has not brought equitable spending or

improved academic performance. Whether or not readers agree with Shlaes's reform proposals, her informal, colorful report elucidates the often subtle ways taxes affect citizens' lives, from child rearing to the decision to marry, women's careers, the quality of day care, consumers' shopping habits and retirement. Agent, David Chalfant at IMG Literary; Conservative Book Club main selection; author tour. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Shlaes, an editorialist on tax policy for the Wall Street Journal, has produced a short polemic against taxes. She devotes her chapters to ten types of taxation, including job, marriage, house, baby, and death taxes, and how they affect our lives. As a fiscal (though not social) conservative, she decries taxes as taking an ever-increasing percentage of our income, as an agent of social engineering (or wealth transfer), and as unpredictable?and she's surprised that there has not been a general tax revolt owing to these problems. Shlaes saves her short list of recommendations for her summary chapter, though her case against progressive tax rates is unconvincing. Like most good Journal reporting, this book is nonscholarly and understandable to the general reader, and Shlaes has liberally interspersed interesting examples and insights throughout. An optional purchase for public libraries.?Patrick J. Brunet, Western Wisconsin Technical Coll. Lib., La Crosse Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.