



# Free Lunch: How the Wealthiest Americans Enrich Themselves at Government Expense (and Stick You with the Bill)

*David Cay Johnston*

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**The bestselling author of *Perfectly Legal* returns with a powerful new exposé**

How does a strong and growing economy lend itself to job uncertainty, debt, bankruptcy, and economic fear for a vast number of Americans? *Free Lunch* provides answers to this great economic mystery of our time, revealing how today's government policies and spending reach deep into the wallets of the many for the benefit of the wealthy few.

Johnston cuts through the official version of events and shows how, under the guise of deregulation, a whole new set of regulations quietly went into effect? regulations that thwart competition, depress wages, and reward misconduct. From how George W. Bush got rich off a tax increase to a \$100 million taxpayer gift to Warren Buffett, Johnston puts a face on all of the dirty little tricks that business and government pull. A lot of people appear to be getting free lunches?but of course there's no such thing as a free lunch, and someone (you, the taxpayer) is picking up the bill.

Johnston's many revelations include:

- ? How we ended up with the most expensive yet inefficient health-care system in the world
- ? How homeowners' title insurance became a costly, deceitful, yet almost invisible oligopoly
- ? How our government gives hidden subsidies for posh golf courses
- ? How Paris Hilton's grandfather schemed to retake the family fortune from a charity for poor children
- ? How the Yankees and Mets owners will collect more than \$1.3 billion in public funds

In these instances and many more, *Free Lunch* shows how the lobbyists and lawyers representing the most powerful 0.1 percent of Americans manipulated our government at the expense of the other 99.9 percent.

With his extraordinary reporting, vivid stories, and sharp analysis, Johnston reveals the forces that shape our everyday economic lives?and shows us how we can finally make things better.

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