

Slavery Could Not Last in an (Otherwise) Free Market

Editor's Pick. Written by Robert P. Murphy.

With all of the hubbub recently over slavery and its (alleged) ties to Austro-libertarianism, I thought it important to point out that the very nature of a market economy is incompatible with the institution of slavery. Note, I am NOT relying on a definitional tautology; I'm not arguing, "In a free market people own their bodies, so slavery can't exist on a free market." Rather, I am making the much stronger claim that in a society with strict property rights, market forces would lead to self-ownership even if (for some horrible reason) the society started out with some people being legally recognized as the owners of other human beings.

Read the full thing at Mises.ca »