About the Authors of The Human Cost of Welfare: How the System Hurts the People It’s Supposed to Help

Phil Harvey is the chief sponsor of the DKT Liberty Project, an advocacy group that raises awareness about liberty and freedom in the United States. In addition, he is the chairman and founder of the mail-order firm Adam & Eve, and chairman of the board of DKT International, which provides family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention programs in 20 nations.

His previous books include Let Every Child Be Wanted: How Social Marketing Is Revolutionizing Contraceptive Use Around the World, which drew praise from former President Jimmy Carter; Government Creep: What the Government is Doing That You Don’t Know About; and The Government Vs. Erotica: The Siege of Adam & Eve, which the American Library Association’s Intellectual Freedom Roundtable nominated as the best book on intellectual freedom when it came out.

Harvey writes for The Huffington Post, Forbes, the Los Angeles Times, and other publications, and his profiles have appeared in The Economist, The Chronicle of Philanthropy, and Mother Jones.

He lives with his wife, Harriet Lesser, in Cabin John, MD, outside Washington, DC.

Lisa Conyers is director of policy studies for the DKT Liberty Project, where she works on topics including welfare, inequality, and civil liberties. Also a consultant and ghostwriter who focuses on economics, sociology, and public policy issues, she has contributed to The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, and the The Huffington Post. She recently served on the Kemp Foundation’s Advisory Council for the Forum on Expanding Opportunity, and she is a contributing author for Self-Control vs. Government Control, an Atlas Network anthology on self-governance.

She divides her time between the East and West Coasts, living in Seattle, Washington, in Washington, DC, and aboard her sailboat in southern California.

Praise for The Human Cost of Welfare: How the System Hurts the People It’s Supposed to Help, by Phil Harvey and Lisa Conyers

“The Human Cost of Welfare is essential reading for anyone who cares about what is really happening in America. Useful, informative and sobering, it describes a dysfunctional welfare system. Welfare programs are helping to bring about a slow-motion destruction of the American dream.”

— James Bartholomew, author of The Welfare of Nations

“Highly readable and thoroughly researched, this book reveals the tragic secret of our welfare state and then provides practical suggestions for righting this wrong.”

— Peter Goettler, President, Cato Institute

“Phil Harvey and Lisa Conyers illuminate the whole welfare picture with reports from real people about what keeps them poor and dependent.”

— Nadine Strossen, Professor, New York Law School; Former President, American Civil Liberties Union

“When you deal regularly with welfare problems, as I did as governor of New Mexico, you see the harm that supposedly helpful government programs can do. The Human Cost of Welfare paints an alarming picture of our welfare system’s unintended consequences and provides valuable suggestions to make the system better.”

— Gary Johnson, 2016 candidate for President

“The Human Cost of Welfare exposes the downside of America’s welfare programs—they keep people underemployed and unemployed, preventing them from leading meaningful lives. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the disability systems for civilians and military veterans. I’ve studied this issue and lived it myself after losing a leg in Iraq, and I’m glad Phil Harvey and Lisa Conyers are shining a light on this huge hidden problem.”

— Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Gade

“I’d rather be going to work today, not dealing with welfare offices, and I’d rather my daughter saw me going to work today too. This book explains why that’s so hard to pull off.”

— “Karen,” Brooklyn, NY, welfare recipient
How Welfare Became a War on the Poor...

...and how to create a smarter system that will help people get off welfare and improve their lives through work

To Learn More About The Human Cost Of Welfare

✔ Arrange or attend presentations

Topics include:
- How Welfare Really Works
- What $700 Billion for Welfare Really Buys
- What’s Wrong with What We Call Poverty
- Why Women Hold the Keys to Ending Poverty
- The Role of Work in Welfare
- What Welfare Really Costs

For more information, phil@humancostofwelfare.com or lisa@humancostofwelfare.com

✔ View the videos at humancostofwelfare.com

✔ Watch for the TV special

Created by Free to Choose Media—the company headed by Bob Chitester, who produced the hugely successful Free to Choose series—a one-hour TV documentary on “Welfare and Happiness: The Human Cost of Welfare,” is based on the book.

✔ Get the book


“It’s weird that people become invisible once they’re in the welfare world because there are so many of us on all these programs,” “Betty” in Decatur, Georgia, says. “Instead of just giving us a little money and keeping us quiet, the rest of America should try reading this book.”

Labor Force Participation Rate

While welfare programs continue to keep people from working, our labor force continues to drop, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of Americans.