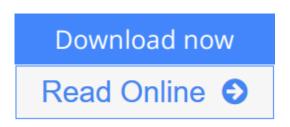


# The Rich And The Rest Of Us: A Poverty Manifesto

By Tavis Smiley, Cornel West



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Record unemployment and rampant corporate avarice, empty houses but homeless families, dwindling opportunities in an increasingly paralyzed nation—these are the realities of 21st-century America, land of the free and home of the new middle class poor. Award-winning broadcaster Tavis Smiley and Dr. Cornel West, one of the nation's leading democratic intellectuals, co-hosts of Public Radio's *Smiley & West*, now take on the "P" word—poverty.

*The Rich and the Rest of Us* is the next step in the journey that began with "The Poverty Tour: A Call to Conscience." Smiley and West's 18-city bus tour gave voice to the plight of impoverished Americans of all races, colors, and creeds. With 150 million Americans persistently poor or near poor, the highest numbers in over five decades, Smiley and West argue that now is the time to confront the underlying conditions of systemic poverty in America before it's too late.

By placing the eradication of poverty in the context of the nation's greatest moments of social transformation— such as the abolition of slavery, woman's suffrage, and the labor and civil rights movements—ending poverty is sure to emerge as America's 21st -century civil rights struggle.

As the middle class disappears and the safety net is shredded, Smiley and West, building on the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., ask us to confront our fear and complacency with 12 poverty changing ideas. They challenge us to re-examine our assumptions about poverty in America—what it really is and how to eliminate it now.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### About the Author

From his celebrated conversations with world figures to his work to inspire the next generation of leaders as a broadcaster, author, advocate, and philanthropist, Tavis Smiley continues to be an outstanding voice for change. Currently, Smiley hosts the late-night television talk show *Tavis Smiley* on PBS; *The Tavis Smiley Show*, distributed by Public Radio International (PRI); and is a co-host of Smiley & West (PRI). He is the first American to simultaneously host signature talk shows on both public television and public radio. In addition to his radio and television work, Smiley has authored 16 books, including his *New York Times* bestselling memoir *What I Know For Sure* and the book he edited, the #1 New York Times bestseller, *Covenant with Black America*. He is also the presenter and creative force behind America I AM: *The African American Imprint*—an unprecedented and award-winning traveling museum exhibition celebrating the extraordinary impact of African American contributions to our nation and to the world. In 2009, Tavis Smiley was named one of TIME's "100 Most Influential People in the World."

Educator and philosopher Cornel West is the Class of 1943 University Professor at Princeton University. Known as one of America's most gifted, provocative, and important democratic intellectuals, he is the author of the contemporary classic *Race Matters*, which changed the course of America's dialogue on race and justice; the *New York Times* bestseller *Democracy Matters*; and the memoir *Brother West: Living and Loving Out Loud*. He is the author of 17 other texts and the recipient of the American Book Award. West holds more than 20 honorary degrees, and will return this fall as Professor of Philosophy and Christian Practice at Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

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