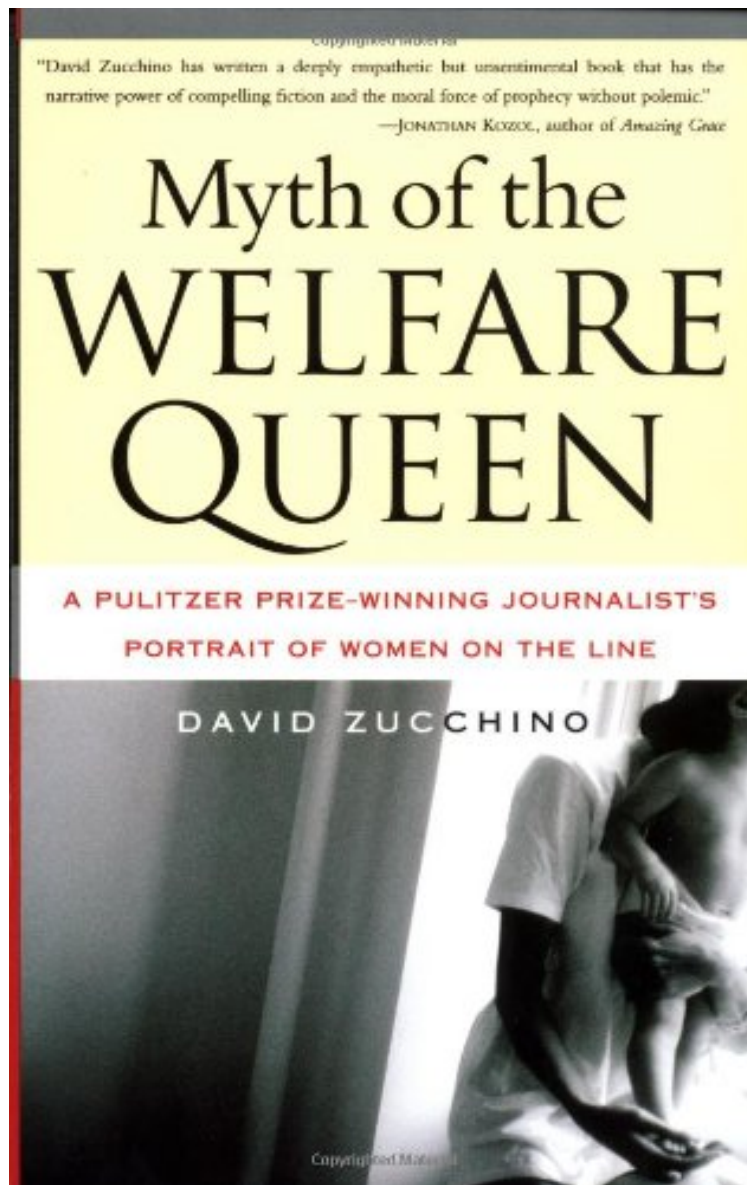


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Myth of the Welfare Queen: A Pulitzer Prize-Winning Journalist's Portrait of Women on the Line

David Zucchino

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David Zucchino : Myth of the Welfare Queen: A Pulitzer Prize-Winning Journalist's Portrait of Women on the Line before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Myth of the Welfare Queen: A Pulitzer Prize-Winning Journalist's Portrait of Women on the Line:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. RecommendBy Joyce H.This was a gift that got a lot of feed back. Thought provoking book.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Really enjoyed the extremely detailed personal decisions and motivations of the ...By Drew RogersReally enjoyed the extremely detailed personal decisions and motivations of the people profiled in Philadelphia's North Side. There are many different negative narratives slapped onto welfare recipients some of them true and others untrue. This book addresses both. It more importantly sheds light on the daily struggles of what it is really like living in the welfare state and how it can seem inescapable.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. a heartfelt, beautifully written story of 2 women caught in the storm of welfare changesBy brooklynAn awesome story. It is so gripping, so moving. You will love Odessa Williams. You will understand the dire straights and the challenges the women and families face who want to better themselves but have not had the opportunities to do so or have not made the best decisions for themselves. This book is a portrait of courage, of incredible tenacity to survive.Those who are too quick to judge would well benefit from reading about the lives told in this book and gaining a better understanding.

Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter David Zucchino spent a year sharing the lives of Odessa Williams and Cheri Honkala -- two "welfare mothers" in Philadelphia -- to gain an intimate look at their day-to-day existence. Odessa, supporting an extended family, exhibits almost superhuman strength and resolve. Cheri, a single mother, is a tireless advocate for the homeless. Zucchino beautifully portrays them as figures of profound courage and quiet perseverance, systematically shattering all misconceptions and stereotypes about these women and so many others like them.

.com Welfare moms are "the most hated women in America," says Cheri Honkala, a dynamic activist from Philadelphia who is profiled in the engrossing *Myth of the Welfare Queen*. As the American mood toward welfare turned mean in the mid-1990s and politicians worked to radically change who got benefits and for how long, Honkala used her considerable talents in guerrilla theater to fight bureaucrats on behalf of a rising tide of dispossessed women and children. She keeps the TV news spotlight on the homeless with a host of inspired acts: a long-term tent city for displaced families, the takeover of a church, a grungy encampment next to the Liberty Bell. Nonetheless, folks dispute how helpful such confrontations are. Odessa Williams, a resourceful, resilient woman who supports four grandchildren and then doubles that number when new troubles strike, is the other sympathetic subject in this tough, humanizing portrait of women on welfare by Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper editor David Zucchino.From Library JournalIn North Philadelphia, Odessa Williams, a great-grandmother, picks through trash to furnish her home and clothe her grandchildren. She also goes fishing to provide extra food and charges people for rides to and from the welfare office and supermarket to supplement her meager income. Cheri Honkala and others set up tent cities, take over an abandoned church, and occupy vacant HUD buildings to seek shelter and protest the lack of affordable housing. Against the backdrop of the welfare reform act, which revoked the federal guarantee of welfare to low-income families with dependent children, Zucchino, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist with the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, documents the lives of these women and others over a six-month period. The result, a harrowing description of daily subsistence living with very little chance of change, is a powerful expose of the welfare myth. Highly recommended for all libraries.-?Kate Kelly, Massachusetts General Hosp., BostonCopyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.From BooklistLooking behind the "welfare queen" stereotype, Philadelphia *Inquirer* foreign editor Zucchino attempts to educate readers about the realities that this calumny masks. "From Independence Day 1995 to New Year's Day 1996, [Zucchino] followed the lives of several unmarried welfare mothers living in the ghetto of North Philadelphia." His book "is the story of survival by single mothers during the dying days of the American welfare state." Central to its narrative are Odessa Williams, 56, raising grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as well as neighbor kids left in the lurch by troubled parents; Cheri Honkalas, activist for the homeless at Philly's Tent City; and Ivory Jennings, a determined teenager with as little tolerance for many of her fellow welfare recipients as conservative Republican politicians. Vivid, powerful portraits of the women behind the stereotype. Mary Carroll