

## Compte-rendu de *The Kidney Sellers: A Journey of Discovery in Iran* par Sigrid Fry-Revere – Response by the author

LETTRE À L'ÉDITEUR / LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sigrid Fry-Revere<sup>1,2</sup>

Reçu/Received: 31 Oct 2014

Publié/Published: 13 Nov 2014

Article discuté/Target article : [Légaliser la vente de reins : à quel prix... Compte-rendu de \*The Kidney Sellers: A Journey of Discovery in Iran\* par Sigrid Fry-Revere](#)

2014 S Fry-Revere, [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#)

### Résumé

En réponse au compte-rendu de Allard et Fortin, ce texte apporte quelques précisions au sujet de l'œuvre de l'auteur.

### Mots clés

éthique, Iran, approvisionnement en organes et tissus humain, transplantation

### Summary

In response to the review by Allard and Fortin, this paper offers a few clarifications regarding the author's book.

### Keywords

ethics, Iran, tissue and organ procurement, transplantation

### Affiliations des auteurs / Author Affiliations

<sup>1</sup> Center for Ethical Solutions, Lorettsville, United States of America

<sup>2</sup> Stop Organ Trafficking Now!, Washington D.C., United States of America

### Correspondance / Correspondence

Sigrid Fry-Revere, [sigrid@ethical-solutions.org](mailto:sigrid@ethical-solutions.org)

### Conflit d'intérêts

Aucun déclaré

### Conflicts of Interest

None declared

This is a response to a review of my book by Allard and Fortin [1].

The second paragraph of the preface to my book states “I could have written an academic monograph, but I was sure my material would interest more than just academics. I wanted readers to share in my journey of discovery and to experience the drama of the stories of the kidney sellers and their recipients I'd met. To that end, I decided to write a nonfiction adventure with only a few vestiges of the original academic book I'd planned.” [2] So any criticisms of my book as not containing enough data, analysis, or discussions of other ways to solve the organ shortage misses my stated intent: I did not set out to write an analysis of the issues, but to tell a story.

Am I pro-market? Definitely not! I start in the beginning of the book having some pro-market sympathies, but what I learn – my discovery as my journey progresses – is that every move Iran has made away from a market approach has been a move in the right direction. I also conclude that only two out of the six regions I visited have perhaps moved far enough away from Iran's original market direction to be considered ethical programs. Those two regions are Isfahan and Mashhad.

I hope it is clear from my observations that I feel Iran's biggest mistake was trying a free-market. I repeatedly show through the complaints I heard from donors and recipients what was wrong in those regions where there were still vestiges of a market approach. As early as p.89 I state “Haggling over kidney prices clearly had detrimental consequences. Donors felt deceived and forced to choose between standing their ground to get enough money to solve their own problems and saving someone's life.” I repeat this sentiment many times and even call one encounter in Kermanshah a “meat market.”

The conclusion of my book states that we should not ignore Iran's 30 year history of experimenting with living donor compensation policies, and that we might consider learning from the two regions in Iran that have moved farthest away from a market approach (Isfahan and Mashhad). Furthermore, my [TEDMED talk](#), my organization [Stop Organ Trafficking Now!](#) and the charity I just co-founded called the [American Living Organ Donor Fund](#) all advocate that society should do a better job of covering organ donors' expenses so they don't pay a financial penalty for their altruism. Nowhere, in any policy discussion since my return from Iran, have I advocated for any form of market or incentive approach – only for finding a way to do better at helping donors meet the financial burdens of donation. And, that we might want to consider studying incentives.

I hope you read my book and enjoy it for what it is – a brief glimpse into a country that is unknown to many, and that has, whether rightly or wrongly, managed to solve its kidney shortage.

## List of References

1. Allard, J. & Fortin, M.-C. [Légaliser la vente de reins : à quel prix... Compte-rendu de The Kidney Sellers: A Journey of Discovery in Iran par Sigrid Fry-Revere](#), *BioéthiqueOnline* 2014, 3/10.
2. Fry-Revere S. [The Kidney Sellers: A Journey of Discovery in Iran](#), North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press; 2014.