

# WORK & HAPPINESS: THE HUMAN COST OF WELFARE

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## ***Work & Happiness: The Human Cost of Welfare*** **Gives a Voice to Those on Welfare**

### **Airs on Public Television in July**

*New documentary from Free To Choose Media examines our country's welfare system and hears from those who are stuck in it.*

ERIE, PA -- Compassion fueled the creation of America's welfare system, a safety net that rescues some of the most vulnerable among us. Our current system spent more than \$1 trillion in social spending last year, which would be a worthwhile expenditure if it was breaking the cycle of poverty. But is it?

In ***Work & Happiness: The Human Cost of Welfare***, Free To Choose Media Executive Editor Johan Norberg examines America's welfare system through the eyes of those who are currently stuck in it to discover the struggles they are experiencing in the system that is supposed to help them ultimately get out of it.

"Ideally, the safety net should serve as a trampoline, where people hit it and then bounce back onto their feet, and into rich, fulfilling lives," said Executive Producer and Free To Choose Media CEO Bob Chitester. "But today, instead of bouncing back, too many Americans have become ensnared in the net. ***Work & Happiness*** takes a look at some of the struggles faced by those caught up in it."

The one-hour documentary, which releases to public television stations Nov. 11, 2017, is a companion to the best-selling book, *The Human Cost of Welfare*, by Lisa Conyers and Phil Harvey. Norberg explores the lives of four individuals whose dreams and aspirations are defined and confined by a well-meaning system. Their stories represent millions of others for whom the safety net has become a trap. Their challenges and the odds they face are daunting, often insurmountable:

- Chris is a divorced mother to four daughters, one of whom was born with cerebral palsy and requires constant care. She seeks the independence she once had through a career, but the system seems to work against her.

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- Monique was born into poverty. She recently married the father of her youngest child, but has discovered that marriage comes with a very real financial penalty when one is on welfare. Currently unemployed, she is determined to overcome and find work to support her family.
- Angel is a single father of two growing children. He's a third generation welfare recipient, suffered parental abuse and lived a life of crime as a young man. With all that behind him now, he still feels stuck in the system.
- Richard is resetting his life after 20 years in prison. Raised in poverty by drug-addicted family members, Richard's life was immersed in crime from an early age. He is now determined to turn his life around.

"All of these people search for work and for happiness," said Norberg. "All of them face obstacles built into the American welfare system."

Work & Happiness is the story of America's poor, how they view themselves and the system and proven measures that could change the course of history for millions of American stuck in a vicious cycle of poverty.

Executive Producers for ***Work & Happiness: The Human Cost of Welfare*** are Thomas Skinner and Bob Chitester at Free To Choose Media; Erin Mae Miller is producer.

Press kit, photography and trailer available at:  
[http://freetochoosemedia.org/broadcasts/work\\_and\\_happiness/press.php](http://freetochoosemedia.org/broadcasts/work_and_happiness/press.php). Join the conversation at #WorkandHappiness.

## **About Johan Norberg**

International commentator Johan Norberg is an author, presenter and editor whose focus is globalization, entrepreneurship, and individual liberty. He is the executive editor at Free To Choose Media and a senior fellow at the Cato Institute. He has authored several books exploring liberal themes, including his newest, [Progress: Ten Reasons to Look Forward to the Future](#) and [Financial Fiasco: How America's Infatuation with Homeownership and Easy Money Created the Economic Crisis](#). His book [In Defense of Global Capitalism](#), originally published in Swedish in 2001, has since been published in over twenty different countries. Norberg's articles and opinion pieces appear regularly in both Swedish and international newspapers, and he is a regular commentator and contributor on television and radio around the world discussing globalization and free trade.

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## **About Free To Choose Media**

Free To Choose Media produces thought-provoking public television programs and series, offering non-partisan, powerful stories that advocate for the well-being of every individual, as well as vibrant, fresh perspectives on a range of vital global and national issues. For more than 30 years, the Free To Choose production teams have traveled the world to explore topics such as the economic roots of the Arab Spring and the inspiring stories of entrepreneurs raising themselves and their communities out of poverty, and a look at how innovation and new technologies may be the answer to the world's growing energy needs. Headquartered in Erie, PA, FTC Media is a television production initiative of Free To Choose Network, a global media company. For more information, visit the website at [www.FreeToChooseMedia.org](http://www.FreeToChooseMedia.org).

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