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# Charles Murray on happiness [1]

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Earlier, I said that the sources of deep satisfactions are the same for janitors as for CEOs, and I also said that people need to do important things with their lives. When the government takes the trouble out of being a spouse and parent, it doesn?t affect the sources of deep satisfaction for the CEO. Rather, it makes life difficult for the janitor. A man who is holding down a menial job and thereby supporting a wife and children is doing something authentically important with his life. He should take deep satisfaction from that, and be praised by his community for doing so. Think of all the phrases we used to have for it: ?He is a man who pulls his own weight." ?He?s a good provider." If that same man lives under a system that says that the children of the woman he sleeps with will be taken care of whether or not he contributes, then that status goes away. I am not describing some theoretical outcome. I am describing American neighborhoods where, once, working at a menial job to provide for his family made a man proud and gave him status in his community, and where now it doesn?t. I could give a half dozen other examples. Taking the trouble out of the stuff of life strips people?already has stripped people?of major ways in which human beings look back on their lives and say, ?I made a difference."

**Charles Murray 'The Europe Syndrome and the Challenge to American Exceptionalism[3]'.**

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