



TWITTER
@geelongaddy



FACEBOOK
facebook.com/
geelongadvertiser



EMAIL
yoursay@geelong
advertiser.com.au



MOBILE
0429 839 887



Self-interest can benefit everyone

EVE FISHER

“IT'S SIMPLE REALLY. LOOK AFTER YOURSELF FIRST. DO THAT SUCCESSFULLY WITH VIRTUE AND INTEGRITY, AND YOU'RE IN A POSITION TO HELP OTHERS IF YOU SO DESIRE

Yes, yes, yes.

If you happen to subscribe, as I do, to the notion that life is meaningless and it is our sole purpose to manifest meaning for ourselves — in the most glorious, exalted and significant way possible — then Rand's philosophy of selfishness is surely not such a bad thing.

It's simple really. Look after yourself first. Do that successfully with virtue and integrity, and you're in a position to help others if you so desire. Seek happiness through others and let them be the only ones to “fill your bucket”, and you're doomed to be a collectivist nobody forever.

So what's the issue?

Collectivism is the idea of the human unit thinking, living, and acting toward goals not for the individual, but some group. The group operates as a “super-organism” separate from individuals. Under collectivism, individuals could be compared to worker bees in a hive.

Utilitarianism decrees that

something is right if it achieves “the greatest good for the greatest number”. As long as most people are happy, fed, clothed, whatever, then society is moral and just. Allegedly.

I'm curious about the outliers though. What happens to those who aren't included in the “greatest number”? Who decides what the greatest good actually is, and who falls into that category?

This is where socialism falls on its arse.

In contrast, Edward G. Griffin posited that the easiest way to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number was for the greatest number of people to look after themselves. Easier said than done in a world such as this.

Rand was a Laissez-faire Capitalist. She believed in a free-market economy with no government intervention. That view was predicated by the expectation that people would always, without question, behave morally in all dealings. If people — and by extension, business — could be relied upon to act honestly and virtuously, capitalism could be relied upon to be the backbone of a just society.

Obviously that never happened. And it can't. It won't. But I like Rand's sentiment.

I can hear the Left screaming in agony that someone has dared to utter her name. I can hear the Right chuckle smugly, acutely aware her ideas were repurposed to suit the greed, dominance and

immorality of what passes for capitalism. But in truth it's simply cartelism or gangsterism.

It's why Rand's philosophy is dated in so many respects. Except when it comes to collectivism. Now more than ever, her warnings about “groupthink” and the “thought police” have come to pass.

Just look at what happened when the Victorian government stripped thousands of people of their basic human rights by locking down social housing towers in Melbourne, without warning.

A quick glance at the media coverage of the time will show people were left without food, nappies, medical supplies like asthma inhalers and insulin, not to mention access to social services.

Did anyone give a toss? Of course not. Collective thinking in action. The virus is seen as a danger to the group, so if it means denying basic human rights to a small section in order to protect the majority, then it's OK. Greatest good for the greatest number. It doesn't matter that those outliers in the towers were suffering.

The notion of individual freedom has been hijacked by the Right, who think people have the right to behave how they want, while the Left think the individual should have no rights whatsoever.

Somewhere in the middle are those who know that standing your own ground as a moral Self is the only option we've got, or ever had, in this crazy world.

Geelong Advertiser

NO PLACE FOR THREATS

POLITICIANS generally know that a fair whack of public scrutiny and often scorn comes with the job.

Putting your hand up to run for public office typically means you are putting yourself at the mercy of a discerning and no-nonsense Australian public, commentators, comedians and even political cartoonists. You need a thick skin and a pretty healthy sense of humour.

But what our MPs do not sign up for is anything that puts themselves or their families at risk. Threats and harassment are not part of the job description. Just because you disagree with any individual MP's politics does not give you the right to threaten their safety.

Animal Justice Party Upper House MP Andy Meddick is known for taking a pretty strong position on what some would deem controversial topics, and he is no stranger to hearing opposing viewpoints.

But he has been shocked by the acts of abuse he has endured recently, including being told there would be a “bullet in the back of your head” and having people trying to break in to his Torquay home.

He believes there has been an increase in the frequency and intensity of threats against MPs and is fearful that it is only a matter of time before someone follows through on their threats.

This is the same mindless thuggery that led to the disturbing scenes at the US Capitol last month and could threaten our own democratic process if it is allowed to continue to escalate here.

LETTERS & TEXTS

ON THE PATH TO A DANGEROUS OUTCOME

FURTHER to the GA (30/1/21) story of the dangerous, narrow and unprotected footpath on Telegraph Bridge, Geelong West, with users being exposed to danger from vehicular traffic, the story did not detail the frustration over many years of seeking a solution.

For the last five-plus years, emails — often unanswered — seeking immediate and urgent attention for footpath protection to VicRoads, state politicians, Brownbill ward councillors and the City of Greater Geelong have all resulted in no physical protective solution.

The only result has been in 2020 being painted gutter lines — now worn off, pedestrian awareness and speed restriction signs. But do white lines and signs offer any protection from the high volume of cars, trucks, buses, timber jinkers etc travelling at 50kmh within a metre of people on an unprotected, narrow footpath?

The question is, given the obvious danger and footpath use, why won't authorities provide a new protected footpath north of the existing footpath (like the new Moorabool Street footpath)?

Or do we need a tragedy before they'll act?

David and Helen White, Drumcondra

REMEMBERING STALWART OF REGIONAL PROGRESS

IT WAS a privilege, albeit it a sad one, to pay tribute to the Victorian parliament last week to one of the region's most determined,

successful and generous men — Mr Peter Dostis.

He was a man of great energy and enthusiasm with an enormous capacity to influence and enable change in the lives around him.

I met Peter at Runway in Geelong in late 2019 — the organisation of which he was co-founder and chief executive.

He impressed immediately with his brilliance and decency, and it was easy to see why he was inspirational to budding entrepreneurs and others around him.

Peter harnessed the values of

positivity and possibility, and made these realities for others who wanted to achieve more in their own lives.

These are the values we need today, perhaps more than ever.

It is to people such as Peter to whom we owe a huge debt of gratitude.

We honour him best not just by saying thank you but by adopting his energy and desire for a better world and a stronger community.

To those for whom he has made this so — his family, colleagues at Runway and the entrepreneurs he has inspired — I extend my sympathies.

Bev McArthur, Member for Western Victoria

TEXT TALK

WHY do we need WSL to organise Bells Beach at Easter? Lets create another competition this year, one for anyone who thinks they are good enough. I'm sure it will blow Newcastle out of the water!

Radical Dude

ADDY ONLINE POLL

Will you be watching the Australian Open?

YES 25% | NO 75%

Register your vote at geelongadvertiser.com.au

WRITE TO US

Make sure to include your name, address and phone number if verification is required. Only your name and suburb will be printed. Please note we reserve the right to edit letters for reasons such as clarity and length. **PRIVACY POLICY:** Our privacy policy at <https://preferences.news.com.au/privacy> includes important information about our collection, use and disclosure of your personal information (including to provide you with targeted advertising based on your online activities). It explains that if you do not provide us with information we have requested from you, we may not be able to provide you with the goods and services you require. It also explains how you can access or seek correction of your personal information, how you can complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles and how we will deal with a complaint of that nature.

ON THIS DAY

1567 The body of Henry Darnley, murdered consort of Mary Queen of Scots, is found.

1801 NSW governor Philip Gidley King introduces a ticket-of-leave system, enabling reformed convicts to work for wages and choose their masters.

1804 Britain's Queen Victoria marries her German-born cousin Albert, also aged 20, in St James's Palace, London.

1964 The aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne collides with the destroyer HMAS Voyager off Jervis Bay, cutting it in half and killing 82 of the Voyager's officers and crew.

1973 Australia's first legal casino opens at Wrest Point, Hobart. Formal attire is requested and gambling ceases at 3am.



1993 Pioneering eye surgeon Fred Hollows dies in Sydney at 63.

2010 Environment Minister Peter Garrett orders safety audits on about 40,000 homes after four workers die while installing foil insulation under a federal scheme.