

RAND'S RATIONALE IN FAVOR OF ETHICAL EGOISM

By Grace Pisel

Consider the following...

- ❖ A man is about to eat his one loaf of bread.
Before he starts eating, he meets a homeless man who is completely devoid of food. He can either:
 - Split the bread half and half (interest of others).
 - Ignore the man and keep the bread for himself (Rand).

Ethical Egoism

- ❖ Ayn Rand's "In Defense of Ethical Egoism"
- ❖ Objectivism = My self-interests > Your self-interests
 - "Pursuit of happiness"- rational
 - Sacrificing for others- irrational

“Every man is an end in himself, he exists for his own sake, and the achievement of his own happiness is his highest moral purpose” (Rand).

Ayn Rand's Arguments

- ❖ Volitional choice- either-or
- ❖ Morality versus immorality
- ❖ Person's motives for service.
 - Love and guilt

Rand's Either-or:

- ❖ You can either serve your own self-interests or serve the interests of other people...
 - But is this a valid point?

My Counterargument

- ❖ Not an either-or decision!
- ❖ Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - “Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, What are you doing for others” (Martin Luther King, Jr.)?
- ❖ Elizabeth Cady Stanton
- ❖ Rand’s self-contradiction
 - Serving us

The Big Question...

How does it benefit Rand's interests to convince the audience to work to serve their own interests?

“You have two hands, one for helping yourself, the other for helping others.”

In conclusion...

- ❖ What should the man at the beginning have done with his loaf of bread? Does he serve his own interests or the interests of the homeless man?