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In praise of a feminist bookshop [1]

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It will sound strange to some that a classical liberal like myself will praise a feminist bookshop's asking for donations so that it might stay open. Strange, however, only to those who don't quite understand what that classical liberalism is all about [3].

> We know it sounds crazy that a small bookstore in Portland could raise this much money in such a short time, however our community of locals, out-of-town family and friends, as well as feminists nationwide have responded in full force to our plea. They are making online donations, swarming through our doors to support the store by doing their shopping and attending events, and by getting the word out to their own communities that we need help. And its working. We've made nearly $7,000 in the five days since we announced our financial crisis. Clearly, In Other Words is an institution that our community will not let go under.

I've no particular thoughts about feminist book shops, small bookstores or Portland come to that. But I do have thoughts on what is the point of our economic and political system, the most important of which is that if you wish to spend your money in feminist bookshops, small bookstores or even Portland then it is entirely your right to do so.

Just as if you decide that you don't actually want to purchase a book from such a store but would like to send them some money anyway, please, feel free.

For what we're aiming for is not maximal profit, maximal production or maximal anything else but utility. That general ragbag of desires that human beings want to fulfil. And if your utility is maximised (or perhaps increased is better) by your paying more for a book than you would elsewhere, but at the benefit to you of supporting some other goal, say, the social benefits to you of knowing that there is indeed still a feminist bookshop in Portland, then I say good luck to you. So with making a donation but not claiming a book.

As long as you extend the same freedoms to me, that I may spend my money where and as I wish then we'll all get along together fabulously.

That's what being a liberal, classical or otherwise, actually means.

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