

Hope....

Last week I finished reading the novel by Siri Hustvedt : What I loved. She is writing about the wayward friend of a son, who is a lost soul. The narrator, his close family friend and someone there from birth, writes: "...I knew that his last words gave me hope. People imagine that hope has degrees, but I think not. There is hope and there is no hope".

My pondering of "hope" started last week. We went to the footy with my uncle Bob, Auntie Betty, cousin Gary, partner Zamir and friend Rina and friend Amanda. This is my football family, the mob I meet most weeks at home games. We lost by three points last week to Carlton. This week, by 30 points to the Hawks.

Last week I did a survey. I kept asking Blues and Saints supporters: did they have hope. I was surprised at how nervous the Blues supporters were, their lack of confidence matched the Sainters. This week, I didn't bother asking.

I went with my Mum to the G. My mum is an 80 year old Holocaust Survivor. At eight years old, her parents left her and her 15 year old sister in an orphanage in Germany and were smuggled across the border to France, arranged by a brother who lived in Paris. As luck would have it, a good neighbour made sure they got to the orphanage, and they were on the last Kindertransport out of Germany and survived the war in England. Unlike many of these stories, her parents, my grandparents, were tailors for the underground in France and moved around and survived, and they were re-united 8 years later. (She wrote a book several years ago: 'Elfie Rosenberg: Serry and Me – Kindertransport and Beyond").

The others were meeting us because of a family auction. They were coming separately, my partner Zamir, his son Yariv and his fiancée Anna. Yariv and Anna are Hawk supporters. I've turned Zamir from disinterested to being a mad St. Kilda supporter. Yariv was quite nervous too, and thought it might be a tight game. We wish.

We were very excited with the first quarter. The Saints looked back, in form. Reiwoldt kicked three straight. It was a beauty to behold. Zamir spoke too soon, thought we'd run away with it. I am much more circumspect. I proved to be right as we dribbled away another game and were losers once again.

So back to hope. What are we: without hope, do we have no hope? Are we hopeless? Are we still hoping? The Macquarie Essential Dictionary (2004) describes it thus:

1. Expectation of something desired; desire accompanied by expectations. (A win, a premiership)
2. A particular instance of such expectation or desire: a hope of success (the last two years)
3. Confidence in a future event; ground for expecting something; there is no hope of his recovery. (No confidence in 2011)
4. A person or thing that expectations are centred in: the hope of the family (Hope of a club).
5. To look forward to with desire and more or less confidence: I hope to meet you again. (We won one in 1966, one day we will win another.)
6. To trust the truth of the matter: I hope that you will be satisfied. (I hope that this year is over quickly.)
7. To be in a state of hope. (To be a St. Kilda supporter)
8. To trust and rely (To be any supporter).
9. Great white hope, a person from whom or a thing from which exceptionally great successes or benefits are expected (The Coach and team of the last two years.)
10. Hope against hope, to continue to hope, although there are no apparent grounds for such hope. (Life in our world of footy).
11. Hope for, to have an expectation of (something desired): to hope for forgiveness (to hope for some draft picks. If we are going to suck this much, at least we should get some more young guns.)
12. Some hope (an expression of pessimism, resignation or disbelief. (St. Kilda psychology.)

Hopeless has some interesting meanings:

1. Affording no hope, desperate
2. Without hope, despairing
3. Not possible to resolve or solve
4. Not able to learn, perform, act etc. Incompetence.

The Footy season continues. We play poor Melbourne next week. We'll probably do better but I won't put my money on it. It's sobering to be this end of the ladder. How different the world looks from here. I've also picked a third team to watch and support, Richmond, and though they were done like a dinner by the Bulldogs today, I like their spunk and I enjoy watching them, and other teams, playing a better brand of football than my own team is currently producing. So I transfer some of my hope onto enjoying the game of young younger, faster and more hopeful teams.

Yvette Wroby

15th May 2011