

MILL AND THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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Abstract: The twofold aims of this article can be described in a positive and negative way. On a positive level, the author endeavors to state John Stuart Mill's position regarding the status of women as a liberal feminist, who advocated equality among male and female members within human societies. He rejected the idea that male members are biologically and legally superior to females, therefore; females must be treated as their domestic and legal subordinates. Mill also negates that majority is always right in presenting norms and regulations. Mill summarizes that without implementation of the perfect equality principle, society cannot progress. On the other hand, the article highlights negative aspects such as inconsistencies and circular reasoning in his thought along with the evaluation of different criticisms by some thinkers on his views. The article gives a glimpse of the historical background for the development of Mill's liberal feminist thoughts, his political philosophy and utilitarian approach toward the welfare of humankind. Ultimately, I conclude that the consistencies and inconsistencies found in Mill's thought are evolved and germinated in his philosophy due to his socio-political environment.

Key Words: Utilitarianism, Liberty, Equality, Women Rights

Identity among species is determined by their bodily features, characteristics, and functions which are assigned by nature itself. The biological distinction of gender is a prerequisite for the process of reproduction among species. Unlike other living beings, human beings do not only strive for the satisfaction of their basic needs, but they also wish to achieve higher objectives to improve their quality of life. This peculiar attribute separates them from the rest of the species in the world.

Whether reinvigorating any religious or scientific approach regarding the origin of human life, it is an irrefutable reality that the beginning and evolution of human society depend upon the relationship between two sexes namely; man and woman. Although man and woman belong to the general category of human beings, biological taxonomy categorizes them into different classes. The question is which is particularly associated with only human beings; whether the aforementioned biological difference vindicates the superiority or inferiority of one sex from another? It is hard to provide a single satisfactory answer to this question which can be universally acceptable.

It is also true that following the same grounds, men are considered more powerful, active and efficient than women and it is also believed that men are designed to govern social, political and economic affairs by nature. However, women are considered best for the maintenance of domestic matters regarding the upbringing of children, taking care of other family members and other household tasks. These further classifications confirm male dominance to females. Such false notions are nourished due to gender prejudice, discrimination, and stereotypes.

John Stuart Mill, a nineteenth century's leading and profound English philosopher, with his utilitarian approach- strongly raises objections that biological differences, responsibilities, and duties are insufficient pieces of evidence to claim that women are inferior to men. He was a staunch advocate of the stance that superiority and inferiority are meaningless notions in the debate of gender classification. This so-called superior-inferior principle which provides grounds for legal subordination of one sex to another is wrong. He considers this principle as one of the chief obstacles and hindrances to the human improvement of his time, and he wants to replace it by the principle of perfect equality that does not allow any supremacy or honor on one side or disability on the other. Mill believes that this universally accepted-gender differentiation

principle is based on emotions, yet there is no logical basis which can be provided for the validity of such arguments.¹

One needs to look back at the Regency², the Georgian³ and the Victorian⁴ periods in Great Britain in order to understand Mill's opinion about the status of women in society. In the Regency and the Georgian eras, women were delighted in gossips, fashion, social gatherings, balls and dance parties. If a man wanted a wife, he had to do wooing and winning by following a strict code of conduct but women were not allowed to do so.

In Victorian era, four classes were surviving in the English society; the Nobility and Gentry, Middle Class, Upper Working Class, and Lower Working Class. People were restricted to follow the rules of their respective class to maintain their identity and to sustain their social status because any minor change from one class to another was a serious offence among English people.

Women in these classes were supposed to live an extremely restrictive life with their husbands and children. Each class may be marked by its own values and customs as in the class of nobility, women could enjoy the luxurious life by involving themselves in the activities of attending balls, tea parties, horseback riding, and knitting. Many attendants served them. The main job of these highly-educated ladies was to train the servants efficiently, and to coach younger girls of the same class of nobility to become elegant women. The women from middle class were lesser educated than the women from noble class. They were supposed to help their male family members in the family business and tried to get married to men from nobility. The women from the upper working class were having opportunities to become governesses, schoolmistresses or housekeepers, whereas the lower-working class women were supposed to sell their goods to others and serve the upper middle class as housekeepers. Lastly, women from the lower class were working as prostitutes or labourers. They never thought to live their lives within the family with husbands and children in a decent way.⁵

The socio-economic setting shaped up Mill's beliefs regarding women rights. Moreover, he was influenced by the feminist approach of William Thompson⁶, Charles Fourier⁷, and followers of the Comte de Saint Simon⁸. The radical and intellectual women whom he met in radical utilitarian circles exerted lasting impact on Mill's thoughts.

Before writing *The Subjection of Women*, Mill wrote *On Liberty* in 1859 and *Utilitarianism* in 1863. In his *On Liberty*, he attempted to answer a very important question of all ages; to what extent does a society have the right to control and impose limitations on the thoughts, opinions, beliefs and actions of individuals? As Mill keenly observed in his period that social, economic and political structures of societies were adopting newer forms with the passage of time, the question concerning the right of the state to govern and control individuals must be given supreme importance because it carries the status of a vital question of the future of human societies. He writes,

A question seldom stated, and hardly ever discussed, in general terms, but which profoundly influences the practical controversies of the age by its latent presence, and is likely soon to make itself recognized as the vital question of the future. It is so far from being new, that, in a certain sense, it has divided mankind, almost from the remotest ages; but in the stage of progress into which the more civilized portions of the species have now entered, it presents itself under new conditions, and requires a different and more fundamental treatment.⁹

Mill's consistent aim is to balance the conflicting demands of the individual and society with the minimum compromise to the nature and extent of the freedom possessed by individuals. Mill places high-value on individual liberty. He believes that liberty as a part of human nature and human existence has always been underrated.

Mill criticizes a social force which can destroy the goals, passions, and life of individuals. He acknowledged that every society is bound to adopt the beliefs and opinions of the majority, therefore; it is the majority which determines the right ways for individual and collective thinking or living. Mill argues that society is composed of individuals, and if a society becomes a tyrant, it can and does issues to its own mandates. If society issues improper or wrong mandates instead of right or any mandates at all in things with which it ought not to intrude, it practices a social tyranny more challenging than many types of political oppression. Mill claimed that coercing or restricting an individual's expressions or opinion by any government, society, group or any other individual is entirely illegitimate. Even if only one person held a particular opinion based on his own personal experience, mankind

would not be right in silencing him. Silencing these opinions can never be justified because it robs "the human race, posterity as well as the existing generation." In particular, it robs those who disagree with these silenced opinions. Society can also tyrannize individuals without using political resources. To him, the power of public opinion can be more stifling to individuality. Thus, he writes that there must also be safety for people against the dominant public opinions and the predisposition of society to impose its values on others.¹⁰

For Mill, freedom that qualifies each individual to search for and explore his or her own unique 'path of life' is the prerequisite for the rich and diverse development of humanity. By backing up *Utilitarianism*, he focuses on welfare, happiness, and progress as desirable consequences in a societal life. He wrote his *Utilitarianism* to prove that it is a justifiable moral theory and to counter misconceptions about it. For more, he projected his utilitarian stance by stating that, Utilitarianism as an ethical theory is based upon the principle that if an act brings or promotes happiness, that act will be considered as the right act, and if any act brings or generates unpleasant consequences then it should be considered as a wrong act.¹¹

Mill derives his utilitarian approach from his father, James Mill, and from Jeremy Bentham, the eighteenth-century initiator of the utilitarian tradition in moral philosophy. Mill revises Bentham's quantitative analysis of pleasures and pains by introducing a qualitative dimension of higher and lower pleasures to the analysis. The style of Mill's essay also differs from Bentham's writings. Bentham writes polemically to criticize the existing moral thinking that appealed to moral thoughts of his time, which he named *caprice*¹². He also puts away any other appeal to a moral sense but in this essay, he is out to show that utilitarianism is supportive of most commonsense morality.¹³

Mill's utilitarianism covers spheres of life beyond morality, and its structure cannot be understood without amplification of his much-maligned doctrine that some kinds of pleasurable feelings are qualitatively higher to others irrespective of quantity. This doctrine of superior pleasures establishes an order of preference among contradictory pleasures including moral as well as non-moral kinds. Particularly, he indicates in *Utilitarianism*, Chapter V, the higher kind of pleasure connected with the moral sentiment of justice that is to say, a feeling of 'security' for fundamental personal concerns that everyone

has and that ought to be accepted as equal rights, is qualitatively superior to opposing kinds of pleasures apart from quantity. Justice is conceived as a social system of rules and dispositions which have as its decisive ends the maximization of this satisfying feeling of safety for everyone. The outcome is the best possible social code that distributes and approves particular equal rights and correlative duties have absolute priority over competing considerations within his utilitarianism. This code will be helpful for individuals to differentiate between right and wrong acts. Mill's main objective is to prevent people from injuries and harm. Therefore, this code will seek to avoid conduct that, in the judgment of suitably competent majorities, can cause grave kinds of harm to other people by injuring their fundamental personal concerns. To maintain harmony in the society and to prevent people from being harmed, the code presents the concept of punishment for anyone who fails to fulfill his duties. Punishment is always expedient to condemn and deter wrongdoings. But it is properly a separate issue which particular ways of inflicting punishment are expedient in any particular situation. Given that feelings of guilt are a way of inflicting punishment, coercion is not necessary for punishment. Thus, Mill's claim that wrongdoing always deserves to be punished in some way does not imply that coercive legal sanctions and public stigma are always expedient for the enforcement of moral duties.¹⁴

Mill asserts that utilitarianist approach corresponds with these natural tendencies. To him, 'utilitarianism' can be adopted as a code of ethics because it can help people to internalize naturally the moral standards as their moral obligations. He reduces morality into happiness by saying that happiness is the single basis of morality, and people do not want to suffer from pain and harm. He acknowledges that all the objects of people's desire are either means to happiness, or included in the definition of happiness.

On Liberty and *Utilitarianism* are very important for formulating Mill's argument regarding the status of women in human society. As a Liberal Utilitarianist, he concludes that society or state should not restrict individual's liberty, and women are half in population, therefore they must be given equal chances to improve their quality of life as freely as men do.

Mill started writing *The Subjection of Woman* in 1861, but published it in 1869. He himself admitted that he wanted to keep this work among

unpublished papers because he was continuously working on its improvement.¹⁵ Mill was well aware that he was facing a non-receptive audience. As MP in the British House of Commons from 1865 to 1868, he started movement for suffrage to women¹⁶ who met the property necessities men expected to meet with a particular ultimate objective to have the right to vote. He was not happy with the attitude of his reformer Parliamentary friends on this issue. As he writes in his Autobiography, "On that bill I delivered one of my most careful speeches, in which I attempted to lay down some of the principles of the subject, in a manner calculated less to stimulate friends, than to conciliate and convince opponents"¹⁷.

Mill claims that gender classification is arisen from the fact that from the very beginning of human society, women are considered inferior to men and therefore they are supervised governed by men who are comparatively stronger in physical terms.

According to J.S. Mill, women subordination hinders human progress. The solution to this dilemma is *the principle of perfect equality*. He asserts in the first few pages of *The Subjection of Women* that there are three factors which hamper human progress, they are *power, religion, and government*. It is the fate of *power* that it has been abused by different things like *religion* and *government*. There is another abuse of *power* that is exploited at our homes, namely husband's abuse of power. He clearly writes,

Men do not want solely the obedience of women, they want their sentiments. All men, except the most brutish, desire to have, in the woman most nearly connected with them, not a forced slave but a willing one, not a slave merely, but a favourite. They have therefore put everything in practice to enslave their minds. The masters of all other slaves rely, for maintaining obedience, on fear; either fear of themselves, or religious fears.¹⁸

Mill says that religion has also suppressed and oppressed women for quite a long time. Many religions have made women to live in miserable states. Many women are killed, some are sacrificed, and others are forced to live in convents. Men can leave women under religious dictates.

Philosophy and religion, instead of keeping it in check, are generally suborned to defend it; and nothing controls it but that practical feeling of the equality of human beings, which is the theory of Christianity, but which Christianity will never practically teach, while it sanctions institutions grounded on an arbitrary preference of one human being over another.¹⁹

In Mill's opinion, religion becomes only a tool of oppression when it tries to snub and abuse women. He also considers governments abusers of power. Even religions and governments involve into tug of war for their greed for power. According to Mill, human beings can get rid of this war through equality of rights and power, and freedom of institutions.

Mill strongly criticizes those who support the power of superiority and force. Mill connects the case of women with Southern American slavery. The people who owned slaves believed that they were given to them heaven and the earth. They used to claim that slaves were not able for freedom. Therefore, it should not be granted to them. Mill says that the previous concept of slavery is now transformed itself in the institution of marriage.

The law of servitude in marriage is a monstrous contradiction to all the principles of the modern world, and to all the experience through which those principles have been slowly and painfully worked out. It is the sole case, now that negro slavery has been abolished, in which a human being in the plenitude of every faculty is delivered up to the tender mercies of another human being, in the hope forsooth that this other will use the power solely for the good of the person subjected to it. Marriage is the only actual bondage known to our law. There remain no legal slaves, except the mistress of every house.²⁰

The topic of men and religion has been discussed by Mill in the second chapter of Subjection of Women. Men and religion force women to marry men; otherwise they have only convent for the remaining years of their lives. Churches do almost nothing to stop forced marriages. The only word expected to be heard from brides is "yes". Obedience becomes the golden principle of a bride after marriage.²¹

Mill writes the relation of husband and wife is even worse than the slave and his master. The status of a slave is better than that of women in many ways. A slave is not supposed to remain completely with his master all the time. He can enjoy a life other than that of being a slave. He can come back to his home and have his own family. On the other hand, a woman is expected to remain with the husband all the time. She becomes only a source of entertainment for him. He even rapes her whenever he chooses. She cannot have her own property. If she possesses any property before marriage, all is given to her husband forcefully. In short, everything is the property of her husband master even her own self. Children also belong to her husband. She does not have any right over her children. The father is the supreme authority at home. His words about his children are considered the final laws. All children are given to the father by the dictates of religion and law in the case of separation. Even husbands commit criminal acts with their wives and religion and law protect them. Home is the only place for women to exist. It is not tolerated if they step out of it. Their only function is to look after their children, husband, and home. They are supposed to teach their children in particular ways. They have to teach feminine habits to their girls and masculine manners to their boys. If there is any disagreement between husband and wife only man's argument wins.²²

Mill suggests that marriage should be based on the principles of equality, respect and sincerity not on obedience. But men do not have toleration for the equality of women.

Even if every woman were a wife, and if every wife ought to be a slave, all the more would these slaves stand in need of legal protection: and we know what legal protection the slaves have, where the laws are made by their masters". But Mill mentions many historical examples of women who succeeded in patriarchal societies like the personality of Deborah, Joan of Arc, Queen Elizabeth 1, Queen Victoria.²³

To Mill, the state of women rights and freedom is in crisis due to the condition of male power over women. Governments make laws and enforce them on women for the legitimization of male power. In such a state, men become masters and women their slaves. Government laws are made in order to remain safe from any women resistance or rebellion.²⁴

Perfect equality should be the sole end and endeavor of women. Mill explains that men should not think that they know women because they have a love or a sexual relationship with their spouses. This is only an error in thinking. Men should not repeat this historical error of ignorance. If men want to understand women properly, they should be given complete equality and freedom in all fields of life.²⁵

Mill believes that freedom is not achieved at once, it always takes time. He is strongly against the manner of children training in which baby girls are taught to behave always against baby boys' actions. They are also sometime taught the male superiority from themselves.²⁶ Women standard of submission becomes the measure for their suitability for men. Women become more sexually attractive when they are submissive, meek and totally give their freedom to men.²⁷

Mill questions male privilege and asserts that boys are taught that they are better than girls. Their privileged lifestyle is based only upon sex.²⁸ Similarly, kings are considered kings because they are born kings. They consider themselves superior to their subjects because they have the privilege to be born in the family of kings. Mill clarifies that the principle of superiority is not based upon birth but upon hard work and personal achievement.

Men become displeased with women and their increasing literary skills because they think that their only job is to become a mother and wife. If a woman does not agree to marry, law and force compel them to do so. Governmental and religious institutions are usually headed by men. Women servitude is assured in such institutes.²⁹

Mill writes about these historical places in order to say that women have all the abilities which men possess. He rejects the myth that women are not made for politics after stating these examples. Mill also criticizes another myth that men are more intelligent than women because men have larger brains than women. It is merely nonsense to that man are larger than women, therefore, men possess more intelligence than men. Elephants must be more intelligent than men according to this logic. In this way, Mill proves the absurdity of the gender related myths. Against the all myths, women proved their intelligence in all the fields of life in the modern age.³⁰

Mill argues that women have left behind in many fields of life because they are not given opportunities and they are bound by the ties of family and marriage. Finally, Mill motivates men to work for the betterment of women.

Jenifer Ring criticizes Mill for having an inconsistent approach towards the status of women in society. She says that Mill falls back upon an unexplored use of feminine nature, in spite of his earlier denial of such a concept. As Mill stated that the attitudes and conducts adopted by women of his age were the results of their social conditioning, and the true nature of women can be explored if and only if they will be provided equality in society. Ring argues that women behavior is not an evidence for concluding that their true nature is not explored. Moreover, if observable facts can construct an argument, and Mill has concluded that women are living like slaves with unnoticed nature on the basis of his own experience, Mill is not in a position to state that women can perform more effectively in a society only if equality and liberty will be given to them as it is not an observable fact yet.³¹

Julia Annas describes Mill's conception of "The subjection of women" by calling this approach as radical as well as reformist which comprises of the grounds of utilitarianism. Utilitarian objectives can be traced easily when Mill summarizes his arguments over equality of sexes. Julia further argues that in spite of Mill's stance that shows radical and utilitarian aspects, Mill again is among the most profound advocates of women liberty and freedom. Mill quoted various current examples of women behavior in which he backed up his stance by stating that women nature can never be found until they are not free.³²

Elizabeth S. Smith defends Mill's epistemological and empirical approaches by stating that it cannot be denied that Mill points to examples of women behavior and temperament as a means to prove the utility of a society where women are treated as equals. He says that the existing attitude of women in subordinate state has shown that in a free society they can play more effectively. In fact Mill wants to say that in a liberal society, women will not show this behavior. She further writes that Mill was aware of this possible allegation of presenting an inconsistent argument, therefore, he repeatedly writes that his speculation is entirely hypothetical.³³

Mill was keen enough in presenting the suffrage issue in the Parliament. He started with a presentation of a petition of women suffrage with fifteen hundred and twenty one (1521) signatures. After this he initiated a movement for a count of the number of women who could meet the requirements of property for casting votes. On May 20, 1967 he proposed that unmarried women must be given the right to vote. Smith writes:

Mill exhibited caution and deliberateness in his attempts to win women suffrage rights. He was not opposed to manipulating the presentation of his views and positions in order to elicit the most support and favorable responses. He was willing to compromise his ideals by asking that only a specific class, unmarried women, be given political rights in hopes of at least some movement in the desired direction.³⁴

Mill is accused for his opinion that women must make themselves visible to the public, their very appearance being a nullification of the vulgar nonsense talked about “women rights women”. With this assertion he is not presenting women as decorative and accepted figure heads, Caine explains that this position in combination with other views of Mill can be understood as strategic maneuvers to have the maximum support from both sexes for women suffrage.³⁵ Smith agrees with Caine and presents the example of *Contagious Diseases Acts*³⁶. She says that he was unequivocally against connecting support for women suffrage with opposition to *CDA*. He thought doing as such may bring about a potential loss of support for women suffrage. Smith writes while discussing that Mill had not discussed the question of divorce in detail:

Mill omitted a prolonged discussion of divorce and emphasized that even if women were given freedom of opportunity they would remain in the home as means of “softening the blow” for those men in the Victorian period who might be willing to consider extending the rights of women and for those women whose support he needed to enlist the push for change. Mill did not forego his views on women rights that he had presented in his earlier works, he merely presented them in what he believed would be their most favorable light from the perspective of other nineteenth century parliamentarians and men and women who were not as progressive as Mill in their thinking but who held a power to change.³⁷

Conclusion

When one scholar presents one's notions over some societal, human or political discourse, he develops all under the social, political and economic impacts of the society in which he lives. Similarly, Mill's doctrine of equality does not come out of a vacuum. It is deeply rooted in the society and family structure of his age.

According to Mill, women should be treated equal footed. He opposes and swipes at all sorts of gender-based discrimination. He severely criticizes the concept the most profound argument of biological inferiority of women. He argues that there is no concept of biological superiority or inferiority in this universe. The idea of biological discrimination is only a myth and pseudo argument which is based on irrational premises. Furthermore, he states that governments have legally accepted male-dominance without questioning it and law protects man's superiority by considering women inferior to men.

Mill endeavored to utilize his intellectual potential for gender equality, gender-based discrimination, legalization of biological division and male dominant status in a society and he remained active and enthusiastic throughout his life for the aforementioned objectives. But he could not devise any method on sound footings which can provide the world new ways to deal with both sexes in equal and same manner as well as in legal and political spheres.

Mill's family and social background influence his personality and thought. Theoretical inconsistency can be traced easily in his thought when he prefers to see and deal women according to the natural status of woman as mother, wife and sister. Thus, he develops his approach regarding gender under the sway of his sociopolitical background.

In fact, Mill looks for equality perfection and this equality is hard to procure in the practical affairs of life. His rejection of the concept of biological male dominance also contradicts with existing realities of the world, not in the theoretical but in the practical world. In his thoughts, the problem of impracticality emerges which is a major dilemma that pushes the world to deviate from his thought.

Today, we live in a highly technologized and more diverse world than our ancestors. The cultural and ethical values are changing rapidly. Rapid change is the fundamental characteristic of this world. Therefore,

gender roles have also been changing. We cannot ascribe inside and outside pieces of work to any men and women. Mill was unable to see the socialization of gender due to his social and political background. Thus, it is easy to find an inconsistency and self-contradiction in Mill's own thought.

End Notes

¹ John Start Mill, *The Subjection of Women* 1869 (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University, 1999), 1

² The Regency in Great Britain was a period when King George III was deemed unfit to rule and his son ruled as his proxy as Prince Regent. On the death of George III in 1820, the Prince Regent became George IV.

³ The era covers the period from 1714 to 1830, with the sub-period of the Regency defined by the Regency of George IV as Prince of Wales during the illness of his father George III. The definition of the Georgian era is often extended to include the short reign of William IV, which ended with his death in 1837.

⁴ The Victorian period formally begins in 1837 (the year Victoria became Queen) and ends in 1901 (the year of her death). As a matter of expediency, these dates are sometimes modified slightly. 1830 is usually considered the end of the Romantic period in Britain, and thus makes a convenient starting date for Victorianism. Similarly, since Queen Victoria's death occurred so soon in the beginning of a new century, the end of the previous century provides a useful closing date for the period.

⁵ *Role of Women in Victorian Era*

<http://www.victorian-era.org> (April 6, 2017)

⁶ William Thompson is one of the great pioneers of the Social Sciences. Born in Cork, where he lived for his entire life, William Thompson emerged as one of the most influential thinkers of his age. <https://www.ucc.ie/en> (April 11, 2017)

⁷ François Marie Charles Fourier was a French philosopher and an influential early socialist thinker later associated with "utopian socialism". He coined the term "feminism". Fourier coined the word *féminisme* in 1837 and was a strong advocate for the rights of women. <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org>(April 11, 2017)

⁸ Claude Henri de Rouvroy, comte de Saint-Simon, often referred to as Henri de Saint-Simon (October 17, 1760 - May 19, 1825), was a French social theorist and the founder of French socialism. <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org>(April 11, 2017)

⁹ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1868).6.

¹⁰ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* 19-20

¹¹ Henry R. West., *An Introduction to Mill's Utilitarian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

¹² caprice: whim; think of it in terms of the cognate adjective,

¹³ Henry R. West., *An Introduction to Mill's Utilitarian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

¹⁴ Jonathan Riley, "Mill's extraordinary utilitarian moral theory." *Politics, Philosophy and Economics* (SAGE Publications) 9 (February 2010): 67-116.

¹⁵ John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume I -*

Autobiography and Literary Essays, ed. John M. Robson and Jack Stillinger, introduction by Lord Robbins (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981). [Online] available from <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/242>; accessed 4/23/2017; Internet.

¹⁶ Until the 1832 Great Reform Act specified 'male persons', a few women had been able to vote in parliamentary elections through property ownership, although this was rare. In local government elections, single women ratepayers received the right to vote in the Municipal Franchise Act 1869. This right was confirmed in the *Local Government Act 1894* and extended to include some married women. By 1900, more than 1 million single women were registered to vote in local government elections in England.

¹⁷ John Stuart Mill, *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume I - Autobiography and Literary Essays*. 241.

¹⁸ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 17

¹⁹ Mill, *On Liberty*, 48-49

²⁰ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 89

²¹ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 35

²² Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 7,8,9,12,14,37,38,39,40,52,89

²³ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 60

²⁴ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 60-61

²⁵ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 3

²⁶ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 51

²⁷ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 51

²⁸ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 89-90

²⁹ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 86

³⁰ Mill, *The Subjection of Women*. 71

³¹ Jenifer Ring, *Mill's The Subjection of Women: The Methodological Limits of Liberal Feminism*, "The Review of Politics 47(1985) :27-44

³² Julia Annas, "Mill and the Subjection of Women," *Philosophy* 52 (1977): 179-94

³³ Elizabeth S. Smith, "John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* :A Re-examination." *Polity* (The University of Chicago Press) 34, no. 2 (2001): 187.

³⁴ Smith, *John Stuart Mill's The Subjection of Women*. 194.

³⁵ Barbra Caine, "John Stuart Mill and the English Women's Movement," *Historical Studies* 18 (1978): 52-57

³⁶ The rights given to authorities to force any women thought to be a prostitute to get herself medically examined. If she was diagnosed with any disease, she was institutionalized forcefully.

³⁷ Smith, *John Stuart Mill's The Subjection of Women*. 195.

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