

## Mill's *Utilitarianism*

### Reading list and essay questions

Tom Porter, LMH

This reading list is divided into four topics (see below). It is essential that you read the texts marked with an asterisk (\*) if you are to get a reasonable grasp of the relevant issues. Beyond that, the texts are listed in very rough order of importance.

An essay question is appended to each topic's readings. Your essay should be no longer than 2000 words.

#### Table of contents

1. Well-being
2. The 'proof' of utilitarianism
3. Forms of utilitarianism
4. Integrity and alienation

#### Primary texts

Mill, *Utilitarianism*

#### Introductory texts

Berger, *Happiness, Justice, and Freedom : the moral and political philosophy of John Stuart Mill*

Ryan, *The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill*, 2nd edition

Ryan, *J.S. Mill*

Skorupski, *John Stuart Mill*

Skorupski (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Mill*

Crisp, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism*

Mackie, *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong*, ch. 6

#### Introductory podcast

Roger Crisp on *Utilitarianism*: <http://cdn4.libsyn.com/philosophybites/Crisput.MP3>

## 1. Well-being

### Reading

\*Mill, *Utilitarianism*, chs. 1, 2 & 4

\*Crisp, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism*, ch. 3

\*Griffin, *Well-Being*, chs. I-II

\*Sen and Williams, "Introduction", in Sen and Williams (eds.), *Utilitarianism and Beyond*

\*Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*

Sumner, *Welfare, Happiness, and Ethics*, chs. 2-3, 5

Scanlon, "Value, Desire, and Quality of Life", in his *The Difficulty of Tolerance*

Raz, *The Morality of Freedom*, ch. 12-13

Moore, *Principia Ethica*, ch. 6

Sen, "Utilitarianism and Welfarism", *Journal of Philosophy* 76 (1979)

Brandt, *A Theory of the Good and the Right*, Part I

Schwartz, "Human Welfare: What it is Not", in Miller and Williams (eds.), *The Limits of Utilitarianism*

Taylor, "The Diversity of Goods", in Sen and Williams (eds.), *Utilitarianism and Beyond*

### Question

Would Mill have done better to say that we should aim at fulfilling people's desires rather than at making people happy?

## 2. The 'proof' of utilitarianism

### Reading

\*Mill, *Utilitarianism*, chs. 1 & 4

\*Crisp, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism*, ch. 4

\*Hall, "The 'Proof' of Utility in Bentham and Mill", *Ethics* 60 (1949). Reprinted in Schneewind (ed.), *Mill : A Collection of Critical Essays*

\*West, "Mill's 'Proof' of the Principle of Utility", in Miller and Williams (eds.), *The Limits of Utilitarianism*

\*Seth, "The alleged fallacies in Mill's Utilitarianism", *The Philosophical Review* 17 (1908)

\*Raphael, "Fallacies in and About Mill's *Utilitarianism*", *Philosophy* 30 (1955)

Moore, *Principia Ethica*, ch. 1, secs. 1-14; ch. 3, secs. 39-44 and 59-65

Prior, *Logic and the Basis of Ethics*, ch. 15

Berger, *Happiness, Justice, and Freedom*, chs. 1-2

Griffin, *Well-Being*, ch. 8

Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, Book IV, chs. 1-2

Brown, "What Is Mill's Principle of Utility?", *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 3 (1973)

Atkinson, "J S Mill's 'Proof' of the Principle of Utility", *Philosophy* 32 (1957)

Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, ch. 9

Dryer, "Essay on Mill's Utilitarianism", in *Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society*, Vol. 10 of Robson (ed.), *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*

### Question

How is Mill's "proof" supposed to work? Does it succeed?

### 3. Forms of utilitarianism

#### Reading

\*Mill, *Utilitarianism*

\*Mill, *System of Logic*, Book VI, ch. 12

\*Crisp, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism*, ch. 5

\*Lyons, "Mill's Theory of Morality", *Nous* 10 (1976)

\*Hare, *Moral Thinking*, chs. 2–3

\*Urmson, "The Interpretation of the Philosophy of J S Mill", *Philosophical Quarterly* 3 (1953)

Rawls, "Two Concepts of Rules", *Philosophical review* 64 (1965). Reprinted in his *Collected Papers*

Smart and Williams, *Utilitarianism : For and Against*, especially sec. 7 of Smart and sec. 6 of Williams

Lyons, *Forms and Limits of Utilitarianism*

Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, chs. 1–5 and Part 4

Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, Book IV, chs. 1, 3–5

Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*, ch. 5

Berger, *Happiness, Justice, and Freedom*, ch. 3

Copp, "The Iterated–Utilitarianism of J S Mill", *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 5 (1979)

Gray, *Mill on Liberty : A Defence*

Crisp, "Utilitarianism and the Life of Virtue", *The Philosophical Quarterly* 42 (1992)

Dryer, "Essay on Mill's Utilitarianism", in *Essays on Ethics, Religion and Society*, Vol. 10 of Robson (ed.), *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*

Brown, "Mill on Liberty and Morality", *Philosophical Review* 81 (1972)

Hooker, "Rule–Consequentialism", *Mind* 99 (1990)

Bales, "Act – Utilitarianism: Account of Right–Making Characteristics or Decision–Making Procedure?", *American Philosophical Quarterly* 8 (1971)

#### Question

"The only true form of utilitarianism is so-called Act Utilitarianism." Do you agree?

#### 4. Integrity and alienation

##### **Reading**

\*Mill, *Utilitarianism*, chs. 2, 3 & 5

\*Crisp, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism*, ch. 6

\*Smart and Williams, *Utilitarianism : For and Against*, sec. 3–5 of Williams's essay

\*Williams, "Persons, Character and Morality", in his *Moral Luck*

\*Scheffler, "Introduction", in Scheffler (ed.), *Consequentialism and its Critics*

\*Railton, "Alienation, Consequentialism, and the Demands of Morality", *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 13 (1984)

\*Nagel, *The View from Nowhere*, ch. 10

Williams, "Moral luck", in his *Moral Luck*

Scheffler, *The Rejection of Consequentialism*

Glover, *Causing Death and Saving Lives*, Introduction to Part 5

Davis, "Utilitarianism and responsibility", *Ratio* 1980

Conly, "Utilitarianism and Integrity", *Monist* 1983

Carr, "The Integrity of a Utilitarian", *Ethics* 86 (1976)

Harris, "Williams on Negative Responsibility and Integrity", *Philosophical Quarterly* 24 (1974)

Harris, "Integrity and Agent Centered Restrictions", *Nous* 23 (1989)

Herman, "Integrity and Impartiality", *Monist* 66 (1983)

##### **Question**

What is the integrity objection to utilitarianism? How telling is it?