

1999

John Skorupski, ed., "The Cambridge Companion to Mill."

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Original Publication Citation

Miller, D. (1999). John Skorupski, ed., The Cambridge Companion to Mill. *Philosophy in Review*, 19(6), 447-451. <https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/pir/article/view/7380>

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make the 'cognitive mistake' of underestimating their own abilities at the onset of a disability. Silvers' stance, therefore, is not a wholesale dismissal of different standpoints. Rather, she cautions us to be critically conscious of our fears whether we are communicating our actual or imagined standpoints.

Although Silvers, Wasserman and Mahowald employ ideas around different standpoints, the role of standpoint theory is not discussed. With the rise of disability culture and the growing number of voices of people with disabilities, it seems remiss of us to not evaluate the role of standpoint theory in the deliberation of justice for people with disabilities. For example, what constitutes a 'disability standpoint?' For people with cognitive disabilities, our definition of 'standpoint' and 'self-knowledge' must be re-examined for any potential biases. A multitude of standpoints can work to enrich our understanding of injustice and justice much like Lawrence C. Becker's call for reciprocity in the book's afterword (293-303). If mutuality and reciprocity are integral to social cohesion and issues of justice for people with disabilities, should not only actions but knowledge be reciprocated? Perhaps one day, people with disabilities will argue the 'problem' of non-disability and its accompanying 'cognitive mistake' about physical and mental acceleration. But perhaps that is the future book for which this book provides an opening.

Ritz Chow

(Women's Studies)

Simon Fraser University

John Skorupski, ed.

The Cambridge Companion to Mill.

New York: Cambridge University Press 1997.

Pp. xiii + 591.

US\$59.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-521-41987-5);

US\$18.95 (paper: ISBN 0-521-42211-6).

The Cambridge Companion to Mill is, to the best of my knowledge, the longest volume to be dedicated to a philosopher in this series; this is fitting, considering the major contributions Mill made in numerous areas of philosophy and the fact that the significance of many of these contributions has been rediscovered only relatively recently. Overall, the book is a great success. Admittedly, there is no clear answer to the question of who its intended audience is. Some articles will be easily accessible to readers who are new to philosophy, while others require more background. Some will be of considerable interest to Mill scholars, while the material discussed in others will already be familiar to the specialist (often from a book by the same author). But then one is never quite certain for whom the *Cambridge Companion's*

are meant. This overall lack of direction is not a fatal flaw so long as most of a volume's individual chapters prove valuable to some audience or other; happily, this is sure to be true of this installment in the series.

John Skorupski contributes both an editor's introduction and a chapter on 'Mill on Language and Logic' (plus an extensive bibliography of secondary literature on Mill). The introduction tracks Mill's philosophical fortunes, which have risen of late, due in part to a resurgence of philosophical naturalism (Mill's thoroughgoing naturalism is a theme which runs through a number of chapters). Skorupski places Mill in a tradition of naturalistic thought less familiar than Hume's, viz., that of Reid; both Mill and Reid affirm that skepticism need not be taken seriously, because certain primitive belief-forming dispositions do not stand in need of validation beyond a determination of their primitiveness (though Mill recognizes considerably fewer such dispositions than Reid). Skorupski concludes with a brief but insightful analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of Mill's utilitarianism, and a comparison of nineteenth- and twentieth-century liberalism; he finds the earlier classical liberalism more compelling, since it affirms the truth of a robust 'romantic-hellenic' ideal rather than resting on a pallid 'epistemological neutrality' about the summum bonum. In the succeeding chapter Skorupski provides an overview of Mill's theory of meaning and his empiricist philosophy of logic; he defends the latter against critics ranging from Kantians to Husserl.

That Wendy Donner's essay 'Mill's Utilitarianism' opens with a defense of Mill's 'qualitative hedonism' will come as no surprise to those who are familiar with her 1992 book *The Liberal Self*. The latter half of the article focuses on Mill's criteria for morally wrong actions and the role he assigns to moral rules, including rules of justice. In the first four chapters of *Utilitarianism*, Mill's criterion for judging actions is apparently the familiar act-utilitarian one, combined with an account of moral rules as valuable rules-of-thumb; in the concluding chapter on justice, however, he asserts that an action is wrong only if it ought to be punished by the agent's conscience, and perhaps other sanctions as well. Strictly speaking these criteria are not mutually inconsistent, but they do not cohere well with one another; given Mill's utilitarian theory of punishment, and the connection between punishment (by both conscience and courts) and violations of rules, the 'punishability' criterion seems to take him in the direction of rule-utilitarianism. There is thus a significant tension within Mill's account of the moral evaluation of actions. Donner seems to agree that Mill advances two incongruent criteria for morally evaluating actions, and she comments that 'puzzles ... arise' as a result; nevertheless, because she does little to highlight this tension, and evinces approval for Mill at almost every step, the non-specialist for whom she writes may not realize its severity.

Jonathan Riley's contribution deals with Mill as a political economist; philosophers who write on Mill but who have paid little attention to his *Principles of Political Economy* (and no doubt there are many) will profit greatly from this chapter (no pun intended). Riley rightly emphasizes the fact

that Mill believes improvement to economic institutions and practices must occur gradually, both because some kinds of improvements will only be feasible when the people themselves have improved, which can only happen slowly, and because rapid change would lead to legitimate expectations going unfulfilled, which would, in Mill's eyes, constitute an intolerable injustice.

Mary Lyndon Shanley contributes a synopsis of *The Subjection of Women*. She sticks fairly closely to this text, however, and does not devote much space to what Mill (or Harriet Taylor) has to say elsewhere about the status of women. Nor does she add any commentary on Mill's own marriage in the course of discussing his understanding of ideal marriages; Mill scholars are already familiar with this union, but Shanley writes for a general audience which might find some biographical material interesting and helpful. She mentions some of the criticisms which nineteenth-century conservatives and twentieth-century feminists have made of the *Subjection* and briefly defends Mill, but here too she might have said more. In short, the article is a bit too short, although it is nevertheless a well-executed overview which could appropriately be assigned to students reading *On Liberty* in order to give them a more comprehensive understanding of Mill's social-political philosophy.

C.L. Ten's 'Democracy, Socialism, and the Working Class' would also be a valuable supplement to readers of *On Liberty*. Ten's overall theme is that although Mill is critical of the working class as he finds it, his expectations for its 'probable futurity' are high. In the initial sections of this (relatively brief) chapter, Ten explores Mill's views on democratic government. He adroitly summarizes Mill's efforts to devise a system of democracy which gives every citizen a genuine say in how government intellectually and morally advanced few to be drowned out by those of the selfish, short-sighted, and poorly-educated many. Later in the chapter Ten discusses Mill's support for worker-ownership of firms and his views on socialism and communism. This material is treated in more than one chapter (including Riley's, obviously), but the different discussions are generally complementary; Ten's is helpful because of the attention he gives to the schemes of worker cooperation, socialism and communism upon which Mill looks with the greatest favor. One surprise: although Mill's opposition to 'revolutionary' centralized socialism is mentioned, references to 'Marx' or 'Marxism' are conspicuously absent.

Terry Irwin's fascinating article on 'Mill and the Classical World' will be of considerable interest to Mill scholars, for nothing like it exists elsewhere. Irwin concentrates on Mill's treatment of the Athenian democracy and his reception of Plato. He emphasizes the influence on Mill of George Grote (although he also calls attention to several of their disagreements). Grote challenges the anti-democratic lessons which Tories (and Thucydides!) drew from the Athenian experience, and Mill celebrates the Athenians' ability to combine individual liberty with public spirit. Mill holds Plato's elenctic method in the highest esteem but has only contempt for his substantive positions. Irwin is perhaps unnecessarily bothered by the fact that Mill

rejects Plato's view that rational argument can establish that virtue is a part of human happiness, but nevertheless maintains that a person with a proper upbringing will believe that virtue is a part of her happiness. Does this mean that, according to Mill, giving a child a proper upbringing involves instilling a belief for which there is no rational ground? No. Virtue is a part of happiness only for those individuals who have received a proper upbringing, one which led them to form a mental association between pleasure and virtue. No rational argument can establish that virtue is part of every person's happiness, since this is false. Nor, according to Mill, will rational argument make virtue into a part of someone's happiness if it is not one already; offering up syllogisms is not the way to form the requisite association. But if I have benefitted from a proper upbringing then virtue *will* be a part of my happiness, and my ability to recognize my own desires and pleasures will provide me with a rational ground for believing this to be so.

While there is little to criticize about its execution, Peter Nicholson's 'The Reception and Early Reputation of Mill's Political Thought' may contribute less value to the collection than any of the other articles simply in virtue of its subject-matter. While the reaction of nineteenth-century thinkers to *On Liberty* and *The Subjection of Women* is an interesting topic, the point of Nicholson's discussion is not really the enhancement of our understanding of Mill. Furthermore, John Rees has written on the initial reception of the first of these works, and nineteenth-century commentaries on both works are readily available thanks to collections of reviews published by the Thoemmes Press and Liberty Fund's publication of Stephen's *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity*. Still, the article is an interesting and worthwhile read. A particular highpoint is Nicholson's defense of *On Liberty* against early critics who maintained that nineteenth-century Britain was experiencing no shortage of individuality or eccentricity (Macaulay: 'He is really crying "Fire!" in Noah's flood'). As Nicholson observes, Mill seems to be both taking a longer view and operating with a more radical conception of individuality than his critics.

Alan Ryan's focus in 'Mill in a Liberal Landscape' is on 'the difficulties a late twentieth-century reader will have with Mill's liberalism' (497). The first section is a general overview of *On Liberty* and of Mill's (and, perhaps I should add, Taylor's) aims in composing the book. On the whole this discussion will prove valuable to readers who are new to Mill, although in places Ryan moves so quickly that it is difficult to follow him from idea to idea. In the final section of the article, Ryan compares and contrasts Mill's liberalism with those of Rawls, Dewey, the British Idealists and Berlin. Although personally I am satisfied to see Mill compared favorably with Rawls, I suspect that Ryan is not entirely fair to the latter; is it really accurate to say that 'Rawls writes as though the liberal project is to create a society of individuals whose primary commitments are to their own private well-being on the one hand and to their consciences on the other' (521)? Skorupski's comparison of these same two thinkers is the more illuminating.

It would take a philosopher of mathematics, and more space than remains here, to do justice to Philip Kitcher's lengthy 'Mill, Mathematics, and the

Naturalist Tradition'. Nevertheless, some mention must be made of this chapter, which may be the most important in the book. Kitcher's aim is that of rescuing Mill's naturalistic account of mathematics from the philosophical scrap-heap into which it has been placed by its transcendentalist critics, most notably Frege. While Mill's general approach undoubtedly stands in need of some emendation and development, its great advantage over its transcendentalist rivals, according to Kitcher, is its ability to explain the acquisition of mathematical knowledge, which it does in terms of interaction with the physical world. The chief problem it has to overcome is that of answering the question of what entities mathematical knowledge is knowledge about, and Kitcher argues that the Millian program has the resources for providing an answer.

While it is impossible to do more than list the remaining essays, there are grounds for praising each of them. They are: Geoffrey Scarre, 'Mill on Induction and the Scientific Method'; Andy Hamilton, 'Mill, Phenomenalism, and the Self'; Andy Millar, 'Mill on Religion'; Fred Wilson, 'Mill on Psychology and the Moral Sciences'; and John Robson, 'Civilization and Culture as Moral Sciences'.

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David West

An Introduction to Continental Philosophy.

Cambridge: Polity 1996. Pp. viii + 278.

US\$54.95 (cloth: ISBN 0-7456-1184-2);

US\$22.95 (paper: ISBN 0-7456-1185-0).

Giving a lucid, systematic introduction to continental philosophy, let alone doing so without imposing a homogenizing interpretive framework, particularly at a time when the very dichotomy between continental and analytic philosophy is being challenged, is no mean feat. Yet this is just what David West has accomplished in his accessible account that lays out the historical context and main concerns of the various strands of continental philosophy and identifies their points of intersection and divergence.

The structure of the book itself embodies West's characterization of continental philosophy as 'self-consciously historical' (1). Its first two chapters provide the historical intellectual background for the middle three, which in turn serve as background for the final two. Continental philosophy begins, essentially, with Hegel whom West presents as attempting a synthe-