

*“ The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, as long not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. Each is the proper guardian of his own health, whether bodily, or mental & spiritual (pg. 13).”*

The Problem of State Authority	The Harm Principle	Individuality, an element of well-being.	Limits to the Authority of Society over individual	Applications
<p>Civil Liberty is defined as the constraint on society's power over the individual.</p> <p>In the past liberty chiefly meant protection from tyranny. Over time, the meaning of liberty changed along with the role of rulers, who came to be seen as servants of the people rather than masters.</p> <p>The problem is the “tyranny of the majority” whereby a democratic majority rules over the minority; the majority becomes the tyranny, stifling individuality and even rebellion. In fact, democratic society does not automatically protect individual and minority liberty. Tyranny of the majority is worse than tyranny of govt. because it is not limited to political function (i.e., hard to protect oneself from popular opinion and sentiments). Prevailing opinions within society become the basis of all rules of conduct within society; there is no safeguard. Moreover, the majority opinion may not be the correct opinion.</p> <p>Liberty can be divided into three types of which each must be valued by any free society:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Liberty of thought and opinion;</li> <li>(2) Liberty of tastes and pursuits (freedom to direct our own lives);</li> <li>(3) Liberty to join others like-minded individuals for a common purpose that does not hurt anyone; each of these freedoms negates society's tendency to force compliance.</li> </ol>	<p>Truth can be illuminated and strengthened by exposure to criticism and debate; the minority views must be heard. Therefore, on every possible occasion, promoting discourse on alternative views genuinely benefits society holistically.</p> <p>Harm-to-Others Principle: The only legitimate grounds for social coercion is to prevent someone from doing harm to others.</p> <p><i>“That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.”</i></p> <p>Objection 1: How can any action be purely “self-regarding,” without significant actual or potential impact on the interests of persons other than the agent (and his or her voluntary associates?). All our actions may affect the interests of other persons.</p> <p>This objection challenges the principle on the ground that no clear and usable distinction between 2 classes of action has been drawn.</p> <p>Objection 2: Let us grant for the sake of argument that we can usefully distinguish between actions that risk harm only to their agents and those that may harm others. Society has an obligation in some instances to prevent people from harming themselves.</p> <p>We must not silence any opinion for censorship is morally wrong.</p> <p>Majority opinion is not necessarily correct thus we must allow freedom of opinion.</p> <p>Dissent may be defined as the freedom of the individual to articulate and embrace unpopular views.</p>	<p>The topic of this chapter is whether people who hold minority views be permitted to act upon them without being considered social outcasts or subject to legal penalty.</p> <p>Actions cannot be as free as ideas or perspectives, and so the law must limit all actions whose implementation would harm others or be an a blatant annoyance.</p> <p>Since people are not perfect, they should be allowed to experiment with different ways of living.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, personal liberty must always be expressed in order to achieve individual and personal progress.</p>	<p>The topic of this chapter is whether there are instances whereby a society can legitimately limit individual liberty.</p> <p>Mill rejects the concept of the social contract whereby people agree to be a part of society and recognize that society can offer certain forms of protection in exchange for certain forms of obligations.</p> <p>Mill does suggest that because society offers protection, people are obligated to behave in a specific way, with members of that society defending and protecting society and all its citizens from harm. In other words, the only and exclusive legitimate constraint upon its members is to curtail behavior that will inflict harm on others.</p> <p>The state has no business in attempting to suppress individuality or from harming themselves...though there are some exceptions (chapter 5).</p>	<p>The topic of this chapter is a summary o Mill's argument. First, people are not accountable to society for behavior and actions that impact them (i.e., the individuals) only. Second, a person is held accountable for any form of behavior or action that inflicts harm on others, and in such cases, it is the responsibility of society to punish and restrict harm on others.</p> <p>Notwithstanding, there are some types actions that certainly do harm others but bring about a larger benefit of society such as when one person succeeds in business more than his rival; free trade is preferable. In other words, there are several apparent exceptions such as economics that involve social interest may need to be subject to regulation and any speech or action that encourages some one to inflict harm...this includes family life where abuse takes place or even in realm of education. Moreover, indirect action by the state designed to encourage oat discourage (without obligatory regulations or constraints) individual conduct is permissible because it is simply sound utilitarian legislation.</p>