

Women discrimination as depicted in john stuart mill essay the subjection of wome...

[Profession](#), [Philosophers](#)



On the Subjection of Women – Critical Analysis

The Subjection of Women was written in 1860-1861 by the author John Stuart Mill. It first appeared publicly in a pamphlet in the year 1869. Mill was a member of the British Parliament, there he noticed several inequalities faced by women. Which not only prompted this article, but also led to his involvement in presenting the petition for women's suffrage and he also sponsored the "Married Woman's Property Bill". Mill's was considered at the time to be a devout liberalist, feminist, and committed deeply to restoring women's equality within the society. Mill's was considered a radical at such time, because more men were in aggrivance that women had certain roles and should be unequal in some settings (enotes, 2018). Women, throughout history have been considered the weaker of the sexes, however, no testing was allowed during the time of Mill's, and he therefore new laws must be enacted that preaches equality for all.

On the Subjection of Women Mill's splits up his ideas into four individual chapters. On the first chapter, Mill's comprises the layouts of his ideas explicitly for audiences. His biggest theme throughout this chapter is to explain how historically it is unjustifiable to offer some rights to one group (men), while the other group (women) are not granted the same rights. This is based solely on one's biological composition. Such ideas are apparent to audiences quite early on in the article. When Mill's stated: " The principle that regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes—the legal subordination of one sex to the other—is wrong itself and is now one of the chief obstacles to human improvement; and it ought to be replaced by a

principle of perfect equality that doesn't allow any power or privilege on one side or disability on the other" (Mills, page 1103, 1861). We can see here, reason to believe that Mill's is unaccepting of the current practices of women's lowered statuses in society and that he certainly wants changes to be made as soon as possible.

A wonderful analogy is also represented in order to get his points across. He stated instances of African American slaves were highly relatable to the current treatment of women. Such points really made me understand how women were unequal in various aspects during these times. It was not only that they could not make decisions for their families, but they also could not vote or even own things. Nonetheless, Mill's backs up this analogy by stating how at first slaves were compelled to obey non-bindingly, however, after this was met, they then became legally bound to obey. If orders were not met, several legal courses of actions could take way over the enslaved individuals. Mill's explains in this argument, that slavery use to be governed solely by the master-to-slave relationship. If problems arose the master and slave would work it out, however, after legality came into play, governments would step into such situations and this is when more problems surfaced (Mill, 1861).

Such courses of action could certainly be drawn to women of this time as well, as Mill tries to explain in this analogy. And for what reason, just because one was born a female. Just as Mill's I believe it is highly unjustifiable to treat someone differently because a choice they were unable to make. African Americans did not choose to be black, and women did not

have any say as to which gender they would be born, therefore, neither groups deserve to have a lowered role in society at all. Mill's also makes the rational argument of slavery when he stated that no one really questioned the morality of such, which is exactly what he was doing at the time. He was amongst the first to see an issue with women's equality during this time, if not, these women could certainly be in similar situations as African Americans (Mill, 1861). However, in some ways, these women were very much like slaves already. Certainly, some different did conclude, however, these women weren't granted much freedom at all. What I mean by this is that they had little say in any family affairs and were expected to cook and clean for their husbands. Such thinking as this, almost creates a slavery type imagery in my head. Although the author is writing about times in the 1860's, such ideas were not conceptualized till near 60 years later. What I mean by this is that although the author tries to convince individuals that women are unequal to men in numerous facets, men did not find value in such ideas until several years following. If this does not show, even in the slightest degree enslavement, then I don't know what it will take to convince you. Enslavement doesn't necessarily mean that women were beaten and placed into cotton fields, however enslavement defines the traditional views of men had on women and their equality next to them.

It was not until 1920 that women would be granted the right to vote. This battle, which began with Mill's in my opinion was not settled until 60 years later. Such discrepancies reveal that men were not ready to allow women to make such choices for society. A type of thinking that reveals, that men did

not have faith in the feelings or choices that women had to offer to society. Although many individuals claim that women were considered equal after this right was given to them, sadly they are wrong. It was not until 1973, that women had equal rights to their own bodies, and had the decision to even terminate a pregnancy (Johnson, 2013).

Women, even in today's society are not treated equally, a right that Mill's tried effectively to change. Even in the year 2013, most women will not receive maternity leave or even be paid the same wages as men (Johnson, 2013). Mill's fought long and hard to showcase why such issues are present and how they are unjust, however, even in modern times we are facing such inequalities, just in different areas. It will take men finally realizing that women are their equal counterpart for such changes to subdue.