

Questions on Mill, *On Liberty*, ch. 2

1. Which of these arguments does Mill give against restricting freedom of speech and opinion?

- a. The opinion may possibly be true, and suppressing the truth is bad.
- b. Even if the opinion is known to be false, suppressing falsehoods is bad.
- c. Even if the opinion is known to be dangerous, suppressing dangerous opinions is even more dangerous.

2. “The real advantage which truth has, consists in this, that when an opinion is true, it may be extinguished once, twice, or many times, but in the course of ages there will generally be found persons to rediscover it, until some one of its reappearances falls on a time when from favourable circumstances it escapes persecution until it has made such head as to withstand all subsequent attempts to suppress it” (97-8). Why does truth have a “real advantage” over falsity? A falsehood may be extinguished once, twice, or many times, but in the course of ages there will generally be found persons to believe it, etc.

3. “He who knows only his own side of the case knows little of that....if he is unable...to refute the reasons on the opposite side...he has no ground for preferring either opinion” (104). By this criterion, do most people know that the Earth is (roughly) spherical?

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