

PHIL 202: Ethics Core Course
Winter 2005; David O. Brink
Topic: Mill's Moral and Political Philosophy
Handout #7: Utilitarian Liberalism and Sexual Equality

Mill applies his liberal principles to issues of sexual equality in The Subjection of Women (1869). His discussion is interesting for several reasons. For one thing, it is the only extended defense, much less discussion, of issues of sexual equality by a major (male) figure in the western moral and political tradition. Secondly, it is one of Mill's latest and most mature works. Not only is it written after and with the benefit of The Principles of Political Economy (1848), On Liberty (1859), Utilitarianism (1861), and Considerations on Representative Government (1861), but also Mill tells us that this is a subject that has concerned him since he first started thinking about social and political issues (SW i 1).

Mill does not waste time; he denounces existing forms of sexual inequality in clear and unequivocal terms in his opening paragraph.

[T]he principle which regulates the existing social relations between the two sexes – the legal subordination of one sex to the other – is wrong in itself, and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and ... it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting no power or privilege on the one side, nor disability on the other [i 1].

To modern ears, Mill's defense of sexual equality may seem obvious, and, to some contemporary feminists, Mill's criticism of sexual inequality may not be deep or consistent enough. But -- viewed in historical context -- Mill's defense of sexual equality was radical, courageous, and even eloquent.

THE DEMANDS OF SEXUAL EQUALITY

Mill's condemnation of sexual inequality is quite general. His focus tends to be on matters of general principle, with only modest attention to particular reforms or policies. He rejects sexual inequality in both domestic and social contexts.

1. Domestic Equality (ch. ii, esp ii 15).
 - a. Equal rights over one's person (ii 1).
 - b. Equal rights over property (ii 1, 15-16).
 - c. Equal rights to control domestic decision-making (ii 6-9).
 - d. Equal rights over children (ii 1).
 - e. Equal rights to divorce/separation (ii 1).
2. Social Equality.
 - a. Equal rights to education (cf. iii 19-20).
 - b. Equal rights of professional opportunity (iii 1, 3).
 - c. Equal right to vote (iii 2).
 - d. Equal right to hold political office (iii 3).

Presumably, Mill endorses equal rights in personal contexts as well, such as freedom of expression, worship, and association. One assumes that he sees the main threats to specifically women's rights in such matters as occurring in the domestic realm and coming from husbands (and so perhaps falling under (1c)).

THE PRINCIPLES OF SEXUAL EQUALITY

Mill spends much of his time discussing particular inequalities that concern him and replying to potential objections to sexual equality or defenses of sexual inequality. His discussion of the principles requiring equality is fairly brief. There seem to be three main principles.

1. **Equal Opportunity for Welfare.** He contrasts systems of hereditary caste, such as feudalism and social systems based on slavery, with the distinctively modern and progressive commitment to equal opportunity for welfare.

For, what is the peculiar character of the modern world – the difference which chiefly distinguishes modern institutions, modern social ideas, modern life itself, from those of times long past? It is that human beings are no longer born into their place in life, and chained down by an inexorable bond to the place they are born to, but are free to employ their faculties, and such favorable chances as offer, to achieve the lot which may appear to them most desirable [i 13].

At several points, Mill likens the status of women inside and outside of marriage to slavery (ii 1). Mill is not much impressed by those who would dispute the analogy on the ground that women are treated much better than slaves. Gilded cages are still cages that restrict freedom and opportunity. Also, Mill insists that husbands can be and often are just as violent and abusive as masters (ii 1, 4). Indeed, with the demise of slavery in America, he views sexual inequality as the last vestige of slavery in the West.

The law of servitude in marriage is a monstrous contradiction to all the principles of the modern world, and to all the experience through which those principles have been slowly and painfully worked out. It is the sole case, now that negro slavery has been abolished, in which a human being in the plenitude of every faculty is delivered up to the tender mercies of another human being, in the hope forsooth that this other will use the power solely for the good of the person subjected to it. Marriage is the only actual bondage known to our law. There remain no legal slaves, except the mistress of every house [iv 2].

Mill often refers to the demand for equal opportunity for welfare as a demand of justice (iv 5).

2. **Social Utility.** Mill also condemns sexual inequalities of opportunity by appeal to the social utility lost.

The ... benefit to be expected from giving to women the free use of their faculties, by leaving them the free choice of their employments, and opening to them the same field of occupation and the same prizes and encouragements as to other human beings, would be that of doubling the mass of mental faculties available for the higher service of humanity [iv 6; cf. iv 7-8].

Often, he seems to focus on instrumental value lost. Here one imagines him defending sexual equality for increasing GNP and the like.

But Mill also focuses on the loss of intrinsic value associated with inequality and the intrinsic benefits that would come with sexual equality. For instance, Mill defends the value of marriage conceived as a form of friendship among equals, which is possible only when marriage is reformed so as to be a voluntary association among partners with equal legal rights to self-ownership, self-determination, property, and children (ii 12; iv 16-18). Interestingly, he focuses as much on the expected benefits of marriage reforms for men, as for women. He clearly thinks that men stand to benefit from these and other egalitarian reforms, such as equal educational and

professional opportunities, inasmuch as the fuller development of the higher faculties of one's spouse contributes to the fuller realization of one's own higher faculties (iv 6, 16, 18). Mill's defense of the value of friendships among equals can be strengthened by consideration of his perfectionist defense of liberties of thought and action in On Liberty. That argument appeals to the way in which intellectual exchange and discussion among diverse points of view contributes to the exercise of capacities for practical deliberation by expanding the menu of options available to interlocutors and better assessing the merits of options on the deliberative menu. Husbands whose wives are allowed and encouraged to develop their higher faculties have interlocutors that enable them to more fully realize their own deliberative capacities.

Because existing sexual inequalities, especially those within the family, are exceptions to the modern norm of equal opportunity at the heart of social justice, Mill thinks that these inequalities are bad insofar as they weaken the culture of social justice (ii 4, 12).

The example afforded, and the education given to the sentiments, by laying the foundation of domestic existence upon a relation contradictory to the first principles of social justice, must, from the very nature of man, have a perverting influence of such magnitude, that it is hardly possible [to conceive] so great a change for the better as would be made by its removal [iv 5; cf. ii 4].

Mill also invokes the pernicious effects of boys being socialized to expectations in which power and entitlements are not conditional on and proportional to effort or merit (iv 4).

3. **Basic Liberties.** This focus on the way in which others – men especially -- are harmed by sexual inequalities and stand to gain by egalitarian reforms is a little uncomfortable. It would be like defending the abolition of slavery by appealing to the real interests of the masters in abolition. One can see how such arguments might appeal to those who need argument most, namely, those not antecedently disposed to care about the status of slaves or women. But one does want to say that the most objectionable harms perpetrated by discrimination are those harms borne by the objects of discrimination. Fortunately, Mill does finally turn his attention to this concern about sexual inequality. Here he focuses on the harms that discrimination causes to women by appeal to the pre-eminent importance of individual liberties.

Thus far, the benefits which it has appeared that the world would gain by ceasing to make sex a disqualification for privileges and a badge of subjection, are social rather than individual; consisting in an increase of the general fund of thinking and acting power, and an improvement in the general conditions of the association of men and women. But it would be a grievous understatement of the case to omit the most direct benefit of all, the unspeakable gain in private happiness to the liberated half of the species; the difference to them between a life of subjection to the will of others, and a life of rational freedom. After the primary necessities of food and raiment, freedom is the first and strongest want to human nature [iv 19].

Mill goes on to claim that personal independence is an "element of happiness" (iv 20). An equal regard for the happiness of each explains why sexual discrimination is impermissible. Here, one might expect Mill to invoke his liberal principles more explicitly. Sexual discrimination restricts the liberties and opportunities of women, yet it apparently cannot be justified by appeal to the harm principle. Indeed, sexual discrimination clearly harms women, so the restriction on liberty embodied in its elimination is an application of the harm principle.

The restrictions contained in then current marriage law that give the husband complete control over the person and property of their wives and do not allow for unilateral divorce or separation make marriage a form of sexual slavery. Slavery is an impermissible restriction of the

liberty of another. Slavery would be impermissible even if the wife consents to marriage (cf. i 10). Mill might question whether the consent is meaningful given the social pressures to marry and to defer to their husbands, the limited options for those who do not marry, and the adverse consequences to women of expressing dissent within marriage (i 10). But the quality of consent should be in any case irrelevant, because we know that Mill thinks that it is impermissible to contract into slavery and that paternalistic laws that prevent such contracts are not only permissible but justified (OL v 11). Presumably, this is just the sort of case that Mill has in mind when he suggests that this exception to the usual prohibition on paternalism has “wider application” (v 11). Indeed, because Mill thinks that unreformed marriage is literally slavery (i 11), he must think, not just that consenting to marriage is relevantly like contracting into slavery, but that it is contracting into slavery.

APOLOGISTS FOR INEQUALITY

Mill considers and replies to various actual and possible defenses of sexual discrimination, whether domestic or social. In almost all cases, the apologist for sexual inequality alleges that women are significantly naturally inferior in relation to men along some dimension that is alleged to be relevant to the proper management of personal and public affairs. Either men possess some trait essential for normative competence that women lack – these might be represented as female deficits -- or women possess some trait that men lack that threatens normative competence – these might be represented as female disqualifiers. In either case, the apologist argues, it turns out that women are naturally inferior and so do not deserve equal treatment. Mill considers claims that women are differentially

1. more intuitive and practical, less principled and theoretical, than men (iii 8).
2. more focused on particulars, less capable of abstraction or generalization, than men (iii 9).
3. more nervous and excitable than men (iii 11).
4. less single-minded than men (iii 12).
5. less accomplished in philosophy, science, and art than men (iii 16-18).
6. less original than men (iii 18).
7. morally superior than men (iii 25).
8. more susceptible to personal bias than men (iii 26).
9. more pacific and less aggressive than men (iv 11).
10. more philanthropic than men (iv 11).
11. more self-sacrificing and self-abnegating than men (ii 10).

Sometimes, Mill questions whether the traits in question are unevenly distributed. But, for the most part, he seems to concede that the traits are unevenly distributed. However, he doesn't always agree that the female trait is a deficit or disqualifier. For instance, he thinks that with (1), (2), and (4) female attributes compensate for deficits in the way that men typically approach decision-making. Women are less likely to follow principle for its own sake and are more likely to test principles by their real world consequences. They are better able to multi-task and intellectually more open-minded. With (7) and (9) the female traits are unqualified goods. However, he seems to concede that (3), (5), and (6) are real deficits and tries to explain these deficits in ways that do not presuppose women's natural inferiority.

This discussion is somewhat puzzling, especially the parts in which Mill defends the value of the alleged feminine trait. If these are valuable traits, but they are the product of sexual discrimination, does that provide support for the discrimination?

Mill has a more fundamental response to the apologists. Even if the trait is unevenly distributed and functions as a deficit or disqualifier, Mill wants to insist that there is no evidence of natural inferiority. There is no evidence of natural inferiority, because we cannot be sure that the incapacity is the product of nature, rather than nurture. In particular, because the history of sexual relations has been discriminatory, we cannot rule out the possibility that female incapacity is the product of past discriminatory treatment (i 17, 18; iii 8, 15).

I consider it a presumption in any one to pretend to decide what women are or are not, can or cannot be, by natural constitution. They have always hitherto been kept, as far as regards spontaneous development, in so unnatural a state, that their nature cannot but have been greatly distorted and disguised; and no one can safely pronounce that if women's nature were left to choose its direction as freely as men's, and if no artificial bent were attempted to be given to it except that required by the conditions of human society, and given to both sexes alike there would be any material difference, or perhaps any difference at all, in the character and capacities that would unfold themselves [iii 8].

Of course, incapacity that is the product of discriminatory treatment cannot be appealed to justify that discrimination. That would be circular reasoning.

So, for example, we can explain differential accomplishments in philosophy, science, and the arts by appeal to social barriers women's participation in these fields (iii 16-22) and to competing domestic demands that are placed on their attention (iii 23). It's worth noting that Mill can concede not only differential accomplishments of the sexes but differential capacity, in at least one sense. For Mill can and should distinguish between actual capacity and potential capacity. Actual capacities are a function of potential capacities and suitable training, opportunities, and responsibilities. If I have not been given a proper education and training with suitable deliberative opportunities and responsibilities at various points in my development, my potential competence may not be actual. Even if everyone had equal potential capacities, we should expect unequal actual capacities in systems where education and deliberative opportunities and responsibilities are distributed unequally. This is how Mill's case for sexual equality can concede not only that men are more accomplished than women but also that they have greater (actual) capacity. For their greater actual capacity is no evidence that they possess greater potential capacity.

But this Appeal to Nurture applies to all the differences between the sexes. In particular, it applies to feminine traits that seem like assets as well as to those that seem like benefits. But then Mill cannot argue for women's rights on the ground that they bring distinctive natural talents to domestic or social contexts. Mill should claim that we just have very little evidence about what natural assets and liabilities women or men possess. Equal rights should prevail in the absence of any good evidence about the way in which natural assets and liabilities are distributed sexually.¹

¹ In "Mill and the Subjection of Women" Julia Annas vigorously defends a strong variant of this conclusion. She distinguishes between Mill's reformist claims (that accept a traditional sexual division of labor but try to make marriage more humane and give women the right to vote) and radical claims (that treat virtually all aspects of the sexual division of labor as the product of sexual discrimination and that demand wholesale egalitarian changes in women's personal, domestic, economic, political, and social roles). She sees Mill's ambivalent response to the normative significance of these alleged feminine traits as a reflection of his ambivalence between his reformist and

Indeed, Mill thinks that we do have some evidence that women possess equal (potential) capacity for managing their own affairs and those of the community well. The evidence comes from the good job women have done in those exceptional circumstances in which they have been given political rule and suitable training for that role (i 15; iii 4-7). Though this is a small sample, the percentage of women who have ruled well when given the opportunity is actually higher, Mill claims, than the percentage of men who have ruled well when given the opportunity.

TWO FEMININE VICIES

It's worth discussing two traits associated with women, often thought to be virtues, which Mill treats as vices or at least insists on criticizing. These are philanthropy (iv 11) and self-sacrifice (ii 10). Mill does not deny that women have these traits more than men, but he clearly thinks that this is the result of traditional divisions of social labor in which women are schooled to defer to their husbands and care for the family and in which women of means (whose husbands are wealthy) are encouraged to take up philanthropic causes. Moreover, he thinks that these artificial traits are morally problematic. Why?

In the case of philanthropy, we should distinguish between benevolence and charity. Mill has no problem with benevolent impulses to improve the lot of the poor. What he objects to are charitable schemes that provide food or money to the poor without making them self-reliant. Forms of beneficence that make the beneficiary dependent on the benefactor do the beneficiary no lasting good. This follows directly from Mill's perfectionist conception of happiness in which a chief ingredient of happiness is autonomous control of the shape and content of one's life. Rather, real beneficence, though it might include temporary relief and support, must take the form of providing educational and vocational opportunities that will make the poor more self-reliant. Mill would agree with the familiar adage "Give a man a fish; you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish; and you have fed him for a lifetime".

Mill thinks that it is no surprise that female philanthropists should make this mistake, inasmuch as they treat the poor just as they are treated by men. In both cases, the beneficiary is made to rely on the benefactor's largess for his or her own well-being, rather than becoming properly equipped to supply for him or herself.

Self-sacrifice is not bad in itself. Indeed, Mill thinks that it would be much better if men tended to be more self-effacing and self-abnegating. The problem is that women have an exaggerated sense of self-sacrifice. They have too little a concern for their own selves and too great a concern for and sense of responsibility for the welfare of others. Indeed, men's exaggerated sense of entitlement and inflated self-concern is just the corollary of women's exaggerated sense of self-sacrifice and diminished self-concern. It is the one set of attitudes that make the other possible. Both extremes are wrong and require correction, which, of course, requires changes in cultural norms and the way men and women are educated. Mill anticipates later feminist claims in insisting that, so far from praising women's selflessness, we should be encouraging them to have a greater regard for themselves.

LIMITATIONS IN MILL'S DEFENSE OF SEXUAL EQUALITY

We have seen that in rebutting real or potential defenses of sexual inequality by appeal to various alleged dimensions of natural inferiority, Mill insists that we cannot determine whether traits commonly found in women are the product of nature or nurture without suitable social experimentation, including, the social experiment of sexual equality. In particular, there is the

radical agenda.

very real possibility that the traits alleged to justify sexual discrimination are the product of past discriminatory practice. It is arguable that Mill does not carry his Appeal to Nurture far enough.

At several points, Mill expresses the conviction that most women with a full menu of opportunities will accept a traditional sexual division of labor in which they perform domestic functions while their husbands pursue professions in civil society, and he approves of this traditional division of labor.

When the support of the family depends, not on property, but on earning, the common arrangement, by which the man earns the income and the wife superintends the domestic expenditure, seems to me in general the most suitable division of labor between the two persons. ... In an otherwise just state of things, it is not, therefore, I think, a desirable custom, that the wife should contribute by her labour to the income of the family [ii 16].

Of course, Mill is right that the wife shouldn't also have to earn a living outside the home if she is working full time within the home. But Mill gives no reason for thinking that women should have families or that, if they do, they, rather than their husbands, should be responsible for matters domestic. Indeed, Mill's view seems to be that for women extra-domestic vocations should be reserved primarily for those without children or whose children are already grown (iv 21). He seems here to assume that the traditional sexual division of labor is natural. But in making this assumption Mill appears to be ignoring his own Appeal to Nurture.

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE FOR BACKWARD CLASSES

Recall that in On Liberty Mill limits the scope of his defense of basic liberties to those in the maturity of their faculties and leaves out of consideration backward states of society.

It is, perhaps, hardly necessary to say that this doctrine is meant to apply only to human beings in the maturity of their faculties. We are not speaking of children or of young persons below the age which the law may fix as that of manhood or womanhood. Those who are still in a state to require being taken care of by others must be protected against their own actions as well as against external injury. For the same reason we may leave out of consideration those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered in its nonage. ... Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then, there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or a Charlemagne if they are so fortunate as to find one. But as soon as mankind have attained the capacity of being guided to their own improvement by conviction or persuasion (a period long since reached in all nations with whom we need concern ourselves), compulsion, either in the direct form or in that of pains and penalties for noncompliance, is no longer admissible as a means to their own good, and justifiable only for the security of others [i 10].

Mill makes clear here that the argument for basic liberties applies only to those who meet some threshold level of normative competence. This is because, as we argued earlier, basic liberties are important as necessary conditions for exercising one's deliberative capacities, but have no value when other necessary conditions – such as basic normative competence – are not in place. Exactly where Mill sets this threshold is unclear. On the one hand, he clearly contemplates that some societies (actually “races”) might be too backward. On the other hand, he suggests that “all nations with whom we need concern ourselves” have met this threshold (though this could be a sorry comment on the limits of Mill's concerns).

We might notice two aspects of the issue that Mill is discussing to which he does not draw much attention. First, we might note that even though Mill seems to have in mind some threshold level of normative competence below which basic liberties are not important and above which they are important, the underlying phenomenon of normative competence is scalar and admits of degree. In principle, it seems, the argument for basic liberties in any particular case (with any particular agent) should track the degree of normative competence the agent possesses, whether above or below any particular threshold. If so, then selecting any one point on the scale of normative competence as setting a normative threshold above which basic liberties have full normative significance and below which they have none must be arbitrary and justified on pragmatic or administrative grounds.²

Second, Mill does not directly address here whether the backwardness in question is correctable. We can distinguish between those whose backwardness is correctible and those whose backwardness is not. Presumably, the backwardness of some is uncorrectable. This is currently true of those who are born with significant cognitive impairments. It is also true of those who were once competent but whose competence has now deteriorated as part of some irreversible degenerative process. But, for many, backwardness is a correctable condition. This is true of most children. They are incompetent, because they are immature; under normal circumstances, they will mature as they age and acquire more competence, eventually crossing the threshold of basic competence. Mill implies that the same is true of backward societies; with suitable changes in their economic, social, and political institutions, members of such societies can become competent. We might say that basic competence is a kind of actual capacity, but many people who lack this actual capacity have the potential capacity to acquire this actual capacity.

But in cases where backwardness is correctable, we are under special obligations to make the corrections. This raises questions about transitional justice. Even if we do not have the same obligations of justice toward the competent and the backward, we have obligations of justice toward those whose backwardness is correctable to help them acquire competence. Mill doesn't really deal with these questions of transitional justice in On Liberty, but he needs to. Consider the case of children. Presumably, transitional justice requires that we provide them with an education – in the broadest sense of the term – that develops their normative competence. To do so, we really need to recognize both their potential competence and the scalar character of competence. We should treat children or other potentially competent individuals the way we would treat the permanently childlike. We need to try to teach them skills and allow them to acquire varied experiences safely. But children need to play an active part in their own development and education; in particular, they need to be given various sorts of deliberative opportunities and responsibilities, including the freedom to make and learn from their own mistakes in certain circumscribed ways. As they get older and their competence grows, they need to be given more freedom, opportunities, and responsibilities. Only in this way will individuals develop the requisite competence.

² In "Paternalism, Utility, and Fairness" Arneson worries about the unequal impact of Millian principles, especially his anti-paternalism, on people above the threshold with different degrees of normative competence. Suppose that we set the threshold at a C-level competence. Ds are saved from themselves by paternalistic intervention. But, according to Mill, paternalism is equally impermissible for C+s and A+s. But the welfare prospects of C+s and A+s are quite different under Mill's non-scalar principles. One response would be to have a sliding scale of basic liberties that tracks degree of normative competence. Another would be to retain non-scalar principles but insist that C+s get a greater share of non-coercive help in promoting their well-being – for instance, in the form of special tutoring and remonstrations.

What bearing does this discussion of transitional justice have on Mill's claims about sexual equality? It raises the question whether the history of sexual discrimination has put women in a comparatively backward state that should be addressed by an account of transitional justice. One way to pursue this issue is by thinking about how Mill responds to what he regards as the backward condition of the working classes.

As an advocate of greater equality of income, equality of educational opportunity, the extension of the franchise, healthcare reform, and labor regulations that tended to improve the safety and quality of factory work, Mill saw himself, with good reason, as a friend of the working classes. Nonetheless this friendship was mixed with doubts about their present intellectual and moral abilities. This comparative incompetence was not a natural condition, and Mill hoped to improve their competence by better education, better working conditions, and greater scope for civic participation. This commitment to improving their lot, however, was tempered by concerns about letting them dominate civic life in their current backward state. This ambivalence is clearly expressed in Mill's conception of democracy in Considerations on Representative Government. He thought that the proper representation of workers' interests in political decision-making required that they be allowed to vote. He also thought that their political participation required them to be better educated and that their active participation in civic affairs would improve their competence. But he worried about Parliament being dominated by "a low grade of intelligence" (CW XIX: 448), and he endorsed a scheme (originally proposed by Thomas Hare) for weighted voting in which everyone voted but plural votes were given, not on the basis of wealth, but on the basis of education. Mill's proxy for education was employment (CW XIX: 475). Under this scheme, the working classes had single votes, while the professional and educated classes had two votes. Moreover, because he saw minimal normative competence as a necessary condition for political participation, Mill excluded from the franchise the illiterate, those who do not pay taxes, and those receiving charity (CW XIX: 471). In matters of political economy, Mill was generally supportive of workers cooperative associations, which introduced democratic principles into the governance of the workplace. Such associations, like their political counterparts, were to be welcomed insofar as they better protected workers' interests and extended the scope of the autonomy of workers. But, also like their political counterparts, they introduced the threat of bad and, in particular, inefficient economic management until such time as workers were better educated.

So, in the case of the working classes, Mill recognized their comparative backward condition as a temporary condition, but as one that affected the political and economic liberties they should be permitted, if not in the long run, at least during the transitional phase during which their competence needs to be raised.

Whatever one thinks of these qualifications to the political and economic liberties of the working classes, it is a striking fact that Mill does not appear to embrace similar qualifications to the domestic, social, and political liberties of women. This is striking, inasmuch as one might think that the same sort of social conditions that explain the comparative backwardness of the working classes and call for the application of a scheme of transitional justice for them would also explain the comparative backwardness of women and call for a scheme of transitional justice for them. As far as I can see, Mill wants to accord women the same rights as non-working class men and does not contemplate making the liberties they enjoy conditional on them developing their competence further. Of course, the educational and professional qualifications for plural voting are presumably the same for women as for men. But Mill does not suggest in any other areas that their enjoyment of the full set of liberties is conditional on their moral

improvement. Is Mill's position here consistent? If not, should he revise his views about the equality of the working classes or his views about the equality of women? Are the working classes entitled to full justice right away, or should he advocate the application of a gradualist scheme of transitional justice to the emancipation of women?