

Mill and the right to privacy

When Mill ran for a seat at Westminster, he put forward a very bold set of proposals. He was prepared to defend his candidature publicly, but he specified that he would not talk about his religious views. His reason was that each man had an inviolable right to privacy, and each man had to fight for this right in public, if needs be. In my paper, I present Mill's defence of the right of privacy as one of the most fundamental tenets of his thought. A proper understanding of Mill's conception of the right to privacy can illuminate our understanding of his conceptions of man and freedom. His conception of man is characterised by a complex set of conflicting ideas and convictions protected by the screen of privacy. His conception of freedom involves the capability for every individual of determining his own destiny, a capability that is deeply rooted in everyone's right to privacy. Not only Mill's defence of the right of privacy is central to his thought, but, I believe, it can also be used to ground our modern conceptions of individual rights.

Lorenzo **Zucca**