

Lecture 8 Reading Questions

“The Utility of Democracy”

Readings:

“That the Ideally Best Form of Government is Representative Government.”

“Of the Extensions of the Suffrage.”

Chapters 3 and 8 in “Considerations on Representative Government”
by John Stuart Mill.

(1) “It has long ... been a common saying, that if a good despot could be ensured, despotic monarchy would be the best form of government.” Why does Mill reject this view? Why is representative government generally superior?

(2) According to Mill, democracy has a “weak side,” in that it carries a “two-fold danger.” What is this two-fold danger?

(3) “The problem is, to find the means of preventing this abuse, without sacrificing the characteristic advantages of popular government.” How does Mill propose to do this? What do you think of his proposal?

Mill, John Stuart. *Considerations on Representative Government*. This work is in the public domain.

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