



# **All Minus One: John Stuart Mill's Ideas on Free Speech Illustrated**

*Richard V. Reeves , Jonathan Haidt , Dave Cicirelli (Illustrator)*

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John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty*--just the 2nd chapter--made accessible for the 21st century, with gorgeous illustrations. Reeves (a biographer of Mill) and Haidt (a social psychologist) summarize Mill's three timeless arguments for free speech and the value of viewpoint diversity. They then reduce the text to half its original length, allowing Mill's best arguments and metaphors to shine. Artist Dave Cicirelli illustrates those metaphors to amplify their intuitive power. Ideal for use in college courses, or in any organization in which people would benefit from productive disagreement.

## All Minus One: John Stuart Mill's Ideas on Free Speech Illustrated Details

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# **From Reader Review All Minus One: John Stuart Mill's Ideas on Free Speech Illustrated for online ebook**

## **Carolyn O'leary says**

Everyone in today's world should read this book...it's concepts are so IMPORTANT! An argument for free speech..." imagine a world in which just one person holds a view contrary to that held by the rest of humanity. What harm could be done by silencing this lone eccentric?" Read on and find out! Maybe we can skip going back to the dark ages by educating ourselves.

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## **J.B. says**

A small booklet that every student should read as they enter college.

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## **Todd Allen says**

### **There perfect antidote?**

A perfect antidote to today's fake news and alternative facts. Somewhat difficult to read but at the same time impactful once understood. It should be required reading for anyone who wants to understand the process of Truth. I learned about the book through podcast conversations featuring Jonathan Haidt.

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## **Eimantas Zemaitis says**

A beautiful primer on free speech, constructive discussions, how to argue and why you should always listen to your opponents.

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## **Logan McNiece says**

Illustrations are beautiful. A wonderfully styled primer on the need for free speech.

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## **Ian Williams says**

This is a timely book. At a time when free speech is under attack – de-platforming, hate speech laws, the descent of twitter mobs upon “heretical” views -, it is an idea to remind ourselves just how important free speech is. A good place to start is with the Victorian writer, J.S.Mill. All Minus One is an abridged version of On Liberty with illustrations by Dave Cicirelli and an introduction by Richard V. Reeves and Jonathan Haidt.



In *On Liberty*, Mill gives a vigorous defense of free speech, which consisted of three principles. Firstly, that in order to disagree with someone, you have to know what that person's view is and you can only do that by allowing him to speak. He may, after all, turn out to be right. Secondly, in order to have an opinion, you need to know the other side of the argument. "He who knows only his own side of the case, knows little of that", as Mill himself put it. Thirdly, opposing views, while being opposed to one another, contain areas when agreement concurs, and from that consensus can grow.

I won't pretend that Mill is an easy read. His arguments are clear while his prose is not. Each sentence seems to hover around the thirty words mark and can be exhausting after several pages of this, so an abridged version of this book is welcome. If you believe in free speech then this is for you. The illustrations are nice although I am not so sure that they add anything to the text.

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### **Clivemichael says**

Wisdom and some poignant art- along with an invitation

"...However true [your belief] may be, if it is not fully, frequently, and fearlessly discussed, it will be held as a dead dogma, not a living truth."

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### **Kirk Morris says**

#### **Must read...**

If Mill's book 'Liberty' is too long and too dense, this is a great read. Recommend highly. Thanks to Reeves, and Haida.

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### **Jeff Rudisel says**

Enlightenment.

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### **Mick Dods says**

Nicely done, an essential read and particularly relevant.

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### **Richard Blackmore says**

#### **Fresh Summary**

This is a fair and fresh summary of Chapter 2 of *On Liberty* by John Stuart Mill. It is illustrated with new



and original artwork that clarifies main points, as well as a brief introduction from the editors. Over all, a pleasant, if over simplified, examination of the original.

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### **Jonathan says**

Very nicely put together. Mill's ideas are more important now than ever. Well worth a read.

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### **Henrique Bejgel says**

Necessário nos dias de hoje.

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### **Erin McDonnell-Jones says**

I wish I could “everything from this text. It is incredibly relevant, especially in our current political society.

“ complete liberty of contradicting and disproving our opinion, is the very condition which justifies us in assuming it’s truth for purposes of action; and on no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right.”

“ he is capable of rectifying his mistakes, by discussion and experience. Not by experience alone.”

“ whatever people believe, on subjects on which it is of the first importance to believe rightly, they ought to be able to defend against at least the common objections.”

“Truth.... The reconciling and combining of opposites.”

“ The worst offense of this kind which can be committed by a polemic, is to stigmatize those who hold the contrary opinion as bad and immoral men.”

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### **Peter Derk says**

A really great text about speech.

What's interesting is Mill was writing in the 1800's, and he was writing about the problems with speech oppressed by societal norms as opposed to government suppression of speech. It's pretty relevant in modern times, which is sort of surprising. You'd think our gizmos would render something like this ancient and worthless, but there's a lot of applicable good in here.

He's got three very basic tenets:

1. Dissenting opinion is important because it may be correct. This is a tougher one that it sounds because we all like to believe that we're mostly right, and when we look back at history we like to think that we'd



somehow know things the people living in that time didn't know. We've all heard someone wax on about how they surely would have behaved during witch trials, civil rights struggles, wars, etc. But the truth of the matter is that most of us have been wrong most of the time, and this hasn't stopped being true. We are all wrong about something today, and 50 years from now we'll be seen as monsters. Count on it. Hey, if it turns out that in 2069 people are like, "Those 2019 folks had it all figured out!" I'll buy you a drink.

2. It's in arguing with a dissenting opinion that we reaffirm our understanding of the truth. When truths become accepted and are no longer challenged, we lose touch with their meaning and origin, and future challenges to the truth are more difficult to dismiss. To make a technology analogy, we all use lamps, but very few of us could wire one from scratch. Having received knowledge on an issue challenged forces us to understand the issue and our stance on it completely.

3. Both the correct and incorrect opinions contain portions of the whole of truth, and it's by those opinions combining that we get closer to truth. Without dissenting opinions, we only get the portion of the truth that serves our purposes.

All of this requires a lot of listening skills and patience, but there are some really thoughtful ideas in this piece, and it's only like a 30-minute read.

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