Mill’s Argument:

In Chapter 4 of his *Utilitarianism*, Mill is faced with the task of producing proof that the principle of utility (happiness) is the first principle of morality, as well as the sole ultimate end of all human action. The argument constructed by Mill, essentially, proceeds as follows:

P1 A thing is desirable only if it is desired.

P2 All humans desire their own happiness.

P3 If individual happiness is desirable, and good for the individual, then the total happiness of the aggregate of all persons must also be desirable.

P4 All things instrumental in the achievement of this happiness are desirable only because of their causal relationship with it.

C Collective happiness is the sole end of human action.

The argument Mill makes can be objected to as, as he himself states, questions of ultimate ends and first principles do not really admit proof. All that can be said is that happiness is desired because it is desirable, and vice versa, but neither one of these claims ultimately provides justification for happiness being the first principle.