

"ego" in anthem



Does everyone have "ego"? In Anthem the citizens of the city grew up not knowing of this word, and in turn its power. They were taught to be a whole, rounded up like tagged mules, doing assigned work blatantly. In the song "Drones" by Rise Against, the lyrics, "The drones all slave away, they're working overtime. They serve a faceless queen, they never question why. Disciples of a God, that neither lives nor breathes (I won't come back!). But we have bills to pay; yeah we have mouths to feed! (I won't come back!)" is the perfect description of the society in Anthem. It is people doing what they have been told to do without putting in their opinion or even thinking of what they want. Although not everyone is indifferent, the beings Equality and Liberty have a lively spirit inside them which is called "ego." A Latin word which translated to English means "I." Ego is the enigma which drives one's actions and thoughts, and separates the person from everyone else. First off, ego is an enigma that drives one's actions and feelings. It is the eighth wonder of the world. No one knows where it ensues from, but it is the force behind everything man thinks. Equality shows this the forest when he states, "We were thinking that these were thoughts without sense" (Rand 78). The phrase "without sense" is referring to his spirit doing it because it can, not because it should, which is a conundrum to the people in Anthem. Also, ego is the spirit of man to do work, care for one's family and friends, and accomplish tasks, which affect everyone's lives. Equality is driven to go against laws and make great discoveries when he first envisages his spirit, even though he does not know what it is or where it comes from. Among these include his clandestine hole, which "It is forbidden" (Rand 31) to go down, and the light box he begets. One representation of ego is a person's name. The song "Drones" by Rise Against has a line that states, "Forget my

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name and I'll forget it too. " This is similar to the community in Anthem because they did not give the citizens individual names, so the people did not see themselves as individuals. Equality tells Liberty that, " There was a time when each man had a name of his own to distinguish him from all the other men. So let us choose our names" (Rand 98). This system of distinguishing people with names helped in displaying ego in more than just actions. Therefore, they named themselves Prometheus (Titan who took things from the Gods to benefit mankind) and Gaea (the Greek mother of Earth). The names extricated them from the great " WE" whom the government had created and encouraged. In conclusion, ego is the spirit of man. It is not men, but a single man. Prometheus mentions, " All man's spiritually distinctive attributes derive from this faculty" (Rand 5). In other words, without ego, people are just a group of monotonous bodies. Ego is what turns a " WE" into several " I"s.