

# Pentadic analysis of anthem by ayn rand

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



The Anthropological Pentad is a method of analysis that helps the reader achieve a deeper understanding of a piece of literature, film production, or subculture. The five major areas of the Pentad play a key role in the development of the novel Anthem by Ayn Rand. Rand, who was born in Russia during the early 1900's, witnessed the horrors of communism in action. Terrified, she escaped to America and wrote Anthem as a warning to the Western world about the terrors of collectivism.

In this novel, the features of the Anthropological Pentad can be used to help develop a more insightful analysis of Anthem. A key characteristic that governs the ideology of Anthem is Collectivism, a political and economic theory that states the worth of an individual is within the group, emphasizing that the individual himself carries no value.

The protagonist of the novel, Equality 7-2521, is regarded as a fragment of the group whose sole purpose is to serve his society. He must resist against all thoughts of individuality, and in the process, he loses the qualities that make him human, such as friendship and love. In the novel, the state enforces this ideology by permitting members from speaking, thinking, or using the first-person term " I". This term is completely obsolete in society and has coined itself as the Unspeakable Word, causing citizens, such as Equality 7-2521, to question whether there are aspects missing from their lives that they are unable to speak up about. As the novel progresses, Equality develops feelings for the Golden One, a girl who also recognizes the suppressive methods of their state.

The Golden One and Equality 7-251 embark on a journey to discover the Unspeakable Word, and in the process, also discover their individuality. The dystopian ideals formed in this society stems from the totalitarian-style dictatorship that has a Chain of Command. At the top of the chain is the highest governing body that rules the entire society — The World Council. The World Council contains the ultimate set of rulers who dictate policy. Underneath them, there is The World Council of Scholars — a society of thinkers and scientists who make up the world's greatest minds, but are just a group of unthinking traditionalists who exclude people like Equality 7-2621 for their expression of creativity through invention.

Following the World Council of Scholars, the remaining power is dispersed amongst the remaining sub-councils whose role is to govern over their specific matter. For example, the function of the Council of Vocations is to decide an individual's occupation, while The Council of Eugenics is the state agency that governs all sexual activity based on the best interest of the state. The policies of these councils and sub-councils determine and enforce public decisions amongst the population, causing only a few members of society to retain power and individuality while most of the population surrenders to the state. This governing system remains fixed since the citizens of the state do not resist against this regime, excluding certain individuals such as Equality 7-2521 and the Golden One who refuse to sacrifice to authority. The ideals of Collectivism play a crucial role in understanding the societal norms in the novel Anthem. Since all citizens are expected to contribute equally to the welfare of the state, all groups are supposed to have the same privileges. However, this is not always the case.

Within the general population, everyone is assigned a certain job by the Council of Vocations that they must commit to.

In the novel, due to Equality-7251's unique intelligence, the council assigns him to be Street Sweeper to conform his mind to the tedious task of sweeping the streets. If Equality had been assigned the role of a Scholar, as he had dreamed of his whole life, he would have lived a more prestigious lifestyle in comparison to that of a Street Sweeper. Although collectivism states all individuals of the state have equal status in relation to the group, the role of the scholar has more informal power than a Street Sweeper. The World Council places great emphasis on protocol within society. The rules that are set in place by the council must be followed by all; if they are broken, members can expect to face punishment such as torture or exile.

As Equality 7-2521 gains an understanding about the suppressive society he has grown up in, he retaliates against the councils by committing the transgression of Preference — the sin of choice — when he chooses to leave the theatre that he was forced to attend. As a result, Equality is exiled to the Palace of Corrective Detention where he is tortured. The Councils in the novel Anthem have complete control over the economic processes within society. The World Council determines which goods should be available to the public and gives the responsibility of production to the sub-councils. This method of producing goods ensures that all the citizens of the state receive the same commodities. Furthermore, all wants and needs are provided for by the government. Everything from housing, food, and toiletries is already supplied to them. Due to this, there is neither a form of currency nor a

market present within the novel. Because of the lack of currency in the novel, people cannot achieve status by the accumulation of wealth, reinforcing the notion that all individuals only serve the state.

Most of the citizens in this novel do not participate in recreational activities unless they are mandated by the council, such as the attendance of the City Theatre. However, Equality-7251's creates his own recreational activities by sneaking into a tunnel from the Unmentionable Times every night and secretly performing scientific experiments. The councils do not set any beauty standards for the citizens since it is considered a Transgression of Preference to find beauty in the opposite sex, along with the fact that the council has taught the citizens that it is an evil to have concern for their own physical appearance. One of the few appreciations for beauty in the novel is when Equality-7251 develops feelings for The Golden One after seeing her work in the fields. Long before Equality even spoke to her, he realized the virtues of inner beauty that she possesses. Moreover, the councils in Anthem do not place any emphasis on art. All forms of creativity are banned from this dystopian society since it would enable one to express their individuality, which contradicts the very system that The World Council has implemented in the novel.

Anthem is a good example of the ideals of collectivism and individualism. The plot and characters in the novel vividly illustrate the political, social, and economic aspects of the state. These very features of the Anthropological Pentad helps provide the readers with an understanding of the oppressive society that Equality-7021 lives in.