

Do you really know a  
leopard by his spots?  
essay sample



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Society sets personal and social boundaries that pressure and constrain people to abide by the “ normal” status quo. Should we strive our hardest to fit in and be “ normal”, or stray away from society to be ourselves? This question occurs at multiple points in our lives and ends up shaping how we present ourselves to others. People spend more time trying to look like and act like everybody else, but who sets the bar for “ normal”. People who deviate from normal are classified as weird, freaks, geeks, ect. or perhaps they could just be expressing themselves with confidence. Many body accessories like piercings and tattoos are seen everywhere in today’s pop culture. As tattoos and piercings evolved over time, they have become more popular, socially acceptable, and are known as an expression of character. All people have different opinions, but most people tend to think an excessive amount of anything, like tattoos or piercings, are out of the ordinary or not acceptable.

In the article “ The Sociology of Leopard Man”, the author Logan Feys says, “ He rejects society and all it has to offer in favor of a simple and solitary existence. He calls himself Tom Leppard. But he is more widely known as ‘ Leopard Man,’ owing to the fact that he is tattooed from head to toe with leopard spots. He is, according to society, a freak” ( 1 ). Leopard Man lives happily on his own and “ doesn’t live for other people’s reactions” ( 3 ). We can conclude that all of Leopard Man’s spots bring forth tons of negative responses. Leopard Man is surely an individual who rises above society and doesn’t let words like “ freak” conquer his self-esteem or define who he really is. Logan Feys expresses that, “ To be human is to be an individual human, with individual tastes, talents, values, and aspirations that are

distinct from those of others. Living in society, we are under constant pressure to surrender our individuality to the will of the majority, the school, the workplace, the family, etc.” ( 6 ). I agree with Logan Feys that people are constantly trying to fit in with everyone, even if that means we have to give up our uniqueness, hidden talents, our style, and our individuality.

Who knows what a hidden individual is capable of if they are being compelled into hiding their true selves from the judging wrath of society. I believe that the confinements of society can be broken when pop culture and the pressure to fit in recedes, that everybody can be who they want to be. When we conform to society it shows we are afraid to be ourselves, express ourselves, and live freely. Why should one give up them self to conform to society? It shouldn't matter what people think about us. We should be free to live happily in society on our own terms, like Leopard Man, who says, “ As far as I'm concerned, if there is a paradise one Earth, I'm in it. You're welcome to what you've got. I'll keep this” ( 7 ). Leopard man is prime example of conformity vs. reality. He allows us to realize that “ normal” guidelines don't have to be followed and that we can be confident being ourselves, even with the stress of society among us.