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Reflective Essay Since the beginning of time, mankind’s greatest thinkers have come across the idea of creating and maintaining the perfect society. What is the ideal society? A community built upon integrity, justice, and freedom that can come together to overcome all obstacles. However, it has taken mankind centuries to establish some form of this perfected society, and in the process we’ve given up quite a number of our individual freedoms. In Ayn Rand’s futuristic novel, Anthem, society existed as a single entity. Mankind embraced the concept of the word “ we” and banished all ties to individuality.

They believed the best way for humanity to grow and develop was to think, feel and act as one. Unfortunately, their attempts failed as society found itself backtracking from previous advancements of our current times. For example, they had no electricity, no form of technology or transportation, and no knowledge of medicine, metals, plastics or textiles. In short, their ideology contradicts their purpose, and individuality is crucial to the development of a proper society. Therefore, it is imperative to maintain and build a conscious ego to distinguish one ‘ s self from others.

Mankind would have never advanced as far as it has without the individual, the independent, or shall we say the “ lone wolf”. Many of the greatest inventions ever created were born from the minds of those who refused to conform to society’s expectations. A few of these great minds would be Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Edison and Albert Einstein. There are groups of people out there who would be happy to let others think for them, and are perfectly content with working alongside others to achieve means of benefiting the group as a whole.

A great majority of those people would fall under the categories of elderly, handicapped, dependent beings, and those who can’t or choose not to think for themselves, and depend on the social system to care for them. Growing up, I never considered myself an individual, I saw myself as a small and meek person that simply adds one more warm body to the classroom. Being quiet and shy the other, more out-going children had no problem stepping all over me to be the center of attention. I was very smart for my age, and on more than one occasion my intelligence had been taken advantage of during group work.

The worst part was when I never got my fair share of credit, seeing as it was me who had carried the heaviest part of the assignments. Around sixth grade I started to “ bloom” into a beautiful young woman, and a talented, funny, quirky individual. Coming into my own definitely opened up my eyes to how wonderful the world is, especially seen by of someone not afraid to stand out. All of my imperfections, like my obsession with boys’ card games or dancing at the dinner table, were differences that set me apart from everyone else. Being myself has led only to great things, and soon to greater challenges to overcome.

Once I had overcome my fear of thinking for myself, I found it hard to even think about reverting back to the shy child I used to be. My “ sense of self” became the forefront of my personality. Thinking over scenarios of how I could lose my “ self”, I pondered about how far I would go to protect my ego. Are there boundaries when it comes to defending one’s individuality? For example, in the movie Gattaca , Vincent’s only wish was to be an astronaut. He was willing to go above and beyond to achieve his goal, and went as far as illegally stealing someone’s identity to fool society into believing he was a genetically perfected citizen.

Although his intellect rivaled that of any other “ perfect human”, he was still seen as a degenerate and useless to society as anyone important. In becoming this new entity, Jerome, he had to sacrifice part of himself in order to bring his dream to life. Fortunately his scheme pulls through, although not without bumps in the road, and he beats the odds and is sent into space. In conclusion, it seems safe to say that there are no boundaries on how far someone should go to keep individuality from the clutches of those who seek to gain complete control over society.

Where myself is concerned, I would follow the footsteps of both Vincent and Equality to preserve my “ self”. For if society is left without the driving force of ego we would be left to slowly fall into destruction. Can we not come together and create a perfect society built on our imperfections? Mankind should work towards a future where individuality is the basis of society, instead of attempting to turn everyone into mindless robots who depend on a crooked government to care for them. In order to keep advancing and bettering the chances of survival, we must build, maintain and preserve the conscious ego.