# Individualism Vs Communalism: Comparative Analysis

I have spoken to a couple of different people about these two concepts and have found some pretty interesting schools of thought. Some people believe that these two concepts can coexist. To an extent, I agree. In my opinion, it seems that we can still be individuals while simultaneously engaging within a community setting. For Example, In 'Once Upon a Time,' an author is asked to write a children's story. She rejects this idea, but when a sound wakes her up one night, she starts telling herself a 'bedtime story' about a couple who scramble to protect themselves from people of color, only to inadvertently kill their son. She chose how her lifestyle and the people she had around her were different. Her country pretty much had a dictatorship the didn't care about their country/community. In the United States, they do care. Even in this sense, there seems to be underlying individualism going on because you vote on the way YOU think. Then based on the number of votes that is what the community does. We as a community are made up of individuals with different backgrounds, different thoughts and we all want what is best for our community for the most part but, to me, it seems odd to have these ideas as opposing views. Maybe I am misunderstanding the argument.

However, there does seem to be a connection between the two. I feel like you cannot have one without the other. In a way, individuality and community have to be perfectly balanced. When it comes to political thought throughout history there is a mixed tradition. I would even make the argument that Emerson had to have some sort of community concept to be able to be an individual. In the story Night, Calls at the beginning of the story, Marlene's father is cold towards her.

When she opens her arms, expecting an embrace from him, at the station, he offers her his hands instead. When she offers to "mimic bird and animal calls" for him—her favorite talent—he turns down her offer, saying that he'd rather listen to the "real thing" outside his own window. This does not take anything away from him being an individual. It just means that, as an individual, he subscribes to and share certain thoughts and things that other people do as well.

I found myself asking this question: If everyone was an individual and freely expressing themselves and staying true to who they are, would there be similarities? If so, would the bonding over these similarities blend into communities of people? My argument is that there would have to be. That is why American political thought has to be a mixed tradition because it seems impossible to have one or the other. When analyzing the things that we have read in class I can always find hints and notions of either community or individualism. There does not seem to be a line drawn in the sand. One concept always seems to exist when the other is present. When it comes to political thought, I believe that the only way to look at it is through a mixed perspective. It cannot be comprehended or defined as either Individualistic or Community.

When looking through a mixed lens, there are two different arguments: Socialism and Nativism. There is no difficulty today in getting assent to the proposition that something untoward has happened to individualism in America. It is a commonplace saying that conformity has been raised to the position of a prime virtue and that the individual is being sacrificed to the group. I find myself favoring the socialist side of the mixed lens but I can see that Nativism shares some

similarities. When you look closely at the two opposing sides (socialism and nativism) there is the similarity of class and racism. There are groups of people who are treated as second-class citizens and usually, the race has a lot to do with that. This is where I see the connection between the two. So in summary, I believe that these should not be two separate arguments, but rather one school of thought with minor differences.