

# How technology destroys individualism essay sample

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Technology, such as e-mail and instant messaging, helps humans communicate more quickly and easier. However, by communicating through e-mail and instant messaging humans cannot always feel the emotions, or hear the tone of voice of an individual. Artists have concerns with the rapid advancements of technology which some think threatens individuality. This is a concern of Ray Bradbury in much of his writing, including “ The Pedestrian”. Throughout “ The Pedestrian,” Bradbury expresses how technology could destroy individualism in the future if left unmonitored. Bradbury expresses this through the events in the story and symbolism.

One way that Bradbury expresses how technology destroys individualism is the plot. Leonard Mead, the protagonist, is interrogated by a robotic cop car, the antagonist, for walking around the city at night. ‘ And you have a viewing screen in your house to see with?’ ‘ No.’ ‘ No?’ ‘ There was a crackling quiet that in itself was an accusation.’ ‘ Are you married, Mr. Mead?’ ‘ No.’ ‘ Not married,’ said the police voice behind the fiery beam. The moon was high and clear among the stars and the houses were gray and silent.’ (Bradbury 303) The cop car is asking Mr. Mead simple questions and it’s flabbergasted that Mr. Mead does not have a television or a wife, because everyone in the city has both. When the cop car tries to answer Mr. Meads’ questions, the “ crackling quite” suggests that the computer in the cop car has difficulties processing

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the response. (Mr. Volz) The computers could not process the answers because the answers were out of date and not of the norm. After the

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interrogation the cop car takes Mr. Mead to the Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies. The cop car took Mr. Mead to the center because he is different from the norm. Mr. Mead's "regressive tendencies," his non-conformist behaviors, are the tendencies of a past life before technology emerged so strongly. (Mr. Volz)

The houses in the city are an example of symbolism. While Mr. Mead is walking, the narrator describes how the houses look. "And on his way he would see the cottages and homes with their dark windows, and it was not unequal to walking through a graveyard, because only the faintest glimmers of firefly light appeared in flickers behind the windows." (Bradbury 301) Mr. Mead describes the houses in the city are dead, dark, cold, and tombs-like, and as such symbolize the minds of the people inside them. The minds of the citizens are dead because they are not doing an actively creative or artistic. They just watch television which does not involve any creative or artistic abilities. The citizens inside the house view life through the television rather than experience it first hand.

While being taken the cop cars passes Mr. Mead's house to the Psychiatric Center for Research on Regressive Tendencies. "They passed one house on one street a moment later, one house in an entire city of houses that were dark, but this one particular house had all of its electric lights brightly lit, every window a loud yellow illumination, square and warm in the cool darkness.' 'That's my house,' said Leonard Mead." (Bradbury 304)

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Mr. Mead's house is animated, bright, square and warm. Mr. Mead is not at the moment home watching television, but walking around the city viewing life from his own eyes.

Mr. Mead's mind is more alive; he is a writer, an artistic and creative profession which only a few people have. Again, the houses in the city symbolize the minds of the people inside them in that Mr. Mead is bright and active.

Mead is the only true individual in the society. Through the plot and symbolism, Bradbury expresses how technology destroys individualism. Technology makes it easier to communicate, but it makes the conversation between people less personal. If left unmonitored, the rapid advancements in technology will change our society into Mr. Mead's society.