

Fahrenheit 451 by ray bradbury

Business



Of all Dystopian novels, one can argue Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury is the most important.

Not solely based upon plot, but more so for its more grandiose message. Bradbury recounts of book burnings and the ills inherent in modern censorship. With that, the main protagonist: Guy Montag struggles with the establishment mentality of the time. In Fahrenheit 451 Bradbury lends significance to the censorship mentality key to the Red Scare. In the novel, Montag's profession is of a noble firefighter.

Sadly a firefighter's job is not to stop fires; rather to create them to burn books. Books became tantamount to illicit contraband, in that one can be penalized for mere possession. With that, one can draw a clear allusion of books and dissenting opinions. At the time, Communist ideals were deemed Anti American, much like book were deemed anti establishment. During the duration of the novel, citizens are demonstrably idle. They rely on "parlor walls" as main means of entertainment.

Parlor walls are wall sized televisions casting rather vapid images to the viewer. Bradbury uses this to illustrate the dumbing of the populus because activities such as this cause an echo chamber. Parlor walls allow for viewing of things desired; as opposed to things ideologically diverse. Because of this lack of substance, many are blissfully ignorant to the looming war. Mrs.

Phillips' husband is called to arms and due to censorship, she believes he'll return in a week's time. This ultimately proves false as a nuclear bomb falls on the Joe Everyman-esque town, killing all within. Censorship is the most readily available theme in Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451. In the novel, book

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burnings were meant to protect civilization. They weren't burnt to protect people from the tangible; rather they were burnt to protect people from intangible ideas.

Books were readily burnt to appease minorities. With that, a collective victim complex surely ensued. Each group fell victim to another's ideas, creating fear of the different. When one group disagreed with another, they felt entitled to be offended. Once offended, the populus appeased, destroying the "offensive" ideal.

After a long enough time, a slippery slope created a singularly inoffensive and dull idea. Guy Montag appears to be the social messiah, expunging the censorship sins committed in Fahrenheit 451. Edward Snowden can be compared to Guy in that he campaigned for free information. Snowden went as far as releasing "classified" information, freeing America to new information. Much like Montag, Snowden was forced to flee. Yet, both continue to be seen as anti-heroic.

Neither are truly appreciated or thanked for their contributions; instead gaining pariah status. Whether warranted or not, neither are seen as truly favorable in their own worlds: literature and life. People as creatures covet confrontation to an extent. One typically demonstrates this through mostly militaristic feats. However, a collective cringe is brought upon when discussion is brought up. More so today than during the Red Scare.

If one dissents from the majority, they gain nothing more than lepper status. One can be seen as phobic to anything disagreed with. If continued, censorship will breed a united echo chamber. An echo chamber that'll cling
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to the establishment, and further more cling to those established. Any dissent is and will be met with further hostility.

Censorship has been shown to be demonstrably negative in a society bonded in large part by the Freedom of Speech. Ray Bradbury alludes to the phoenix in the late stages of Fahrenheit 451. The phoenix is seen as a cautionary tale, due to its literary significance. In regards to the endless cycle of the phoenix: it lives, dies spectacularly, and eventually is reborn. That rebirth comes with no prior knowledge to what caused the demise.

The phoenix is comparable to America in that America tends not to learn from its mistakes. Clearly shown by repeated media censorship, and the vilification of whistleblowers like Snowden. Our past provides the framework of the future; by not educating ourselves to the previous, we'll allow it to become our demise.