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## Title

The censorship and mass media themes in *Fahrenheit 451*  
novel

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

( قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا آتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي لِيَبْلُوَنِي أَأَشْكُرُ أَمْ أَكْفُرُ وَمَنْ شَكَرَ فَإِنَّمَا يَشْكُرُ لِنَفْسِهِ وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ رَبِّي غَنِيٌّ كَرِيمٌ.....) سورة النمل الآية (٤٠)

(Said one who had knowledge from the Scripture, "I will bring it to you before your glance returns to you." And when [Solomon] saw it placed before him, he said, "This is from the favor of my Lord to test me whether I will be grateful or ungrateful. And whoever is grateful - his gratitude is only for [the benefit of] himself. And whoever is ungrateful - then indeed, my Lord is Free of need and Generous.") Surah An-Naml verse (40)



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## Abstract

The present paper will discuss themes that include censorship by the mass media. As Bradbury shows, there is censorship in the media, so people are afraid of criticism, do not think alone, and fail to see what is real and what is fake, depending on technology more than themselves, and generally afraid of knowledge. They are so reliant on technology and the government that they follow whatever the government says thoughtlessly. This study has two chapters with three sections for chapter one and two for chapter two by clarifying the life of Ray Bradbury and his novel and the characters that represent the censorship. the paper will also show the thoughts that are sown in the minds of people to control them and the ways the government uses. this is what I will discuss in this study.

Keywords: Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*, mass media, censorship. Future of society.

## Introduction

According to this study, the government uses the mass media as another form of censorship in society. People have television or radio in their homes to replace reading, so TV programs are not informative. They never allow people to reflect on what they see. They are so dependent on the government that they unthinkingly follow whatever the government says, so they let the government think instead of them. The government burned all of the books found in people's houses. *In Fahrenheit 451*, Captain Beatty is speaking to Montag. He explains why all books have been banned. He said, "*Colored people don't like Little Black Sambo. Burn it. White people don't feel good about Uncle Tom's Cabin. Burn it*" (Bradbury 2012. p59). Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* novel highlights the forbidding of books from society, forcing people to rely on radios and televisions for pleasure. Without books, people lose their knowledge, making them careless and attached to their televisions. *As Guy Montag says, "Nobody listens anymore. I can't talk to the walls because they're yelling at me. I can't talk to my wife; she listens to the walls. I just want someone to hear what I have to say. And maybe if I talk long enough, it'll make sense. And I want you to teach me how to understand what I read."* (Bradbury 2012. p78). One of the most frequent topics in *Fahrenheit 451* is censorship. Censorship is imposed by the government but followed by the people. The government just doesn't want the people to become stronger than them, so they apply censorship to restrict them from reading books, and if they really do, the firefighters will burn down their house \*(16). They even burn people if they don't leave their homes and keep the books. Knowledge is considered the power of society, so if there is more knowledge, we will have more power. "*So now do you see why books are hated and feared? They show to pores in the face of life*" (Bradbury 2012. p 79) Faber reveals the hidden reality of books in society to the reader. Montag's character becomes happy as he reads the book, and he starts to retaliate against society and the government.

\*(16) [https://papersowl.com/examples/2019\\_Oct\\_0what-is-the-role-of-censorship-in-fahrenheit-451/\(14/5/2022\)](https://papersowl.com/examples/2019_Oct_0what-is-the-role-of-censorship-in-fahrenheit-451/(14/5/2022))

## Chapter one

### The study objectives

1. Clarify the life of Ray Bradbury and his works, especially his famous novel.
2. Explain *Fahrenheit 451*'s novel in a brief summary and clarify the important characters in the novel.
3. Explain the character who represents government censorship.
5. An illustration of how technology as mass media has affected society.
5. An explanation of how the novel *Fahrenheit 451* comes so close to the future in this study.

### Section one.

#### Ray Bradbury life and career

An American novelist, as he was a poet, playwright and short stories writer. He born in Waukegan, Illinois on August 22, 1920. His father worked in the electricity and telephone facilities, and his mother was a Swedish immigrant. Bradbury was greatly interested in magicians and science fiction, and some of his favorite writers were Jules Verne, Frank Baum and Edgar Rice Burroughs The short-story collection *The Illustrated Man* (1951) included one of his most famous stories, and “The Veldt,” in which a mother and father are afraid about the effect their house’s imitation of [lions](#) on the African [veldt](#) is having on their children. *Fahrenheit 451* (1953) which was widely considered Bradbury's masterpiece and his important books include *Dandelion Wine*, *Driving Blind*, *Dandelion Wine*, *Quicker Than the Eye*, *The October Country*, *A Medicine for Melancholy*, and *I Sing the Body Electric*. He married Maggie in Los Angeles in 1947 and has four daughters and 8 grandchildren, but his wife died in 2003. Bradbury is a famous

science fiction writer, but he was far from technology such as computers and the Internet, and this explains his writing in burning books and relying on technology in the novel *Fahrenheit 451* and he died in 2012.

## Section two

### Summary of the novel *Fahrenheit 451*

Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* is dystopian novel. A dystopia is a fictitious world where everything is bad. Clarisse Mc CLellan, Guy new fireman where goes after burning someone's home for holding prohibited books. Guy meets Clarisse on the street. Clarisse is a good neighbor, especially in this town; she makes Guy think rather than simply answering the question. In the end, Guy returns home and begins to reflect on their conversation, which reveals his discontent. In fact, he is the exact opposite. Every day, Guy returns home to find his wife sleeping or pretending to sleep with earphones in. Guy discovers his wife Mildred has overdosed on sleeping pills. Clarisse, Montag's neighbor, appears to be waiting for him outside. Clarisse asks Guy a simple question that causes him to rethink his entire life. So, he says yes without thinking, but when he gets home, he finds his wife has overdosed on sleeping pills. Guy must reconsider if he is not happy, and the answer is no. Mildred, Guy Montag's wife, is a stoic homebody who watches TV in a room full of TVs. Mildred appears unconcerned. Then one day, her husband finds her overdosing on sleeping pills, which are called "seashells" in this book. Asked why she would do something like that, she replies "I would never do that" or "why would you want to do anything like that?" Guy's new neighbor Clarisse A few days later, after Guy gets home from work, Clarisse approaches him with questions about his life and career. Her uncle said firefighters didn't always start fires. His response to her question of happiness is one of utter frustration. Guy wonders why she vanished one day, only to discover



she was dead. Captain Beatty is Guy Montag's boss and antagonist. a phoenix and a salamander, like all the other firefighters. a fireman always meant burning people's houses with books? Then one day, the station had to burn an old lady with all her books. Guy got sick and didn't go to work the next day, so Captain Beatty came to check on him and tell him the truth about firefighting. Montag didn't answer the door after Captain Beatty left because he knew what he wanted. His books were hidden in a ventilation grill at their house, Guy showed his wife. **I think** this book is very impressive and makes you think about yourself and society. It teaches you not to become numb to what is going on around you. This method teaches you not to become detached from your environment. In this book, there are three sections

### Section three

#### Guy Montag as fireman character

Guy Montag, the novel's protagonist, is a proud fireman. Montag, a third-generation fireman, has "black hair, black brows, a fiery face, and a blue-steel shaved but unshaved look." Montag is a model of twenty-fourth-century professionalism. He enjoys dressing up in his uniform, directing the brass nozzle toward illegal books, and smelling the kerosene that raises the temperature to 451 degrees Fahrenheit — the temperature at which book paper ignites. Montag even participated in the firemen's bestial sport of letting loose small animals and betting on which the Mechanical Hound would annihilate first. In his job as a fireman, he is marked by the phoenix symbol. Ironically, he can't rise like the mythical bird because he doesn't know how to turn his new knowledge into action. Montag, on the other hand, starts to change after he contacts Faber. This means that he has been reborn as the phoenix of a new generation. There is a mix of himself and Faber, the person he isn't. With the help of Faber, Montag is able

to get through the transformation and go back to work to face his enemy, Captain Beatty. Beatty thinks Montag's problem is that he has a lot of romanticism that comes to life when he meets Clarisse. Montag is pulled back and forth between Faber's words from the listening device in his ear and the cynical sneers and gibes of Beatty, who cites lines from so many works of literature that he dazzles his adversary. When an alarm goes off, Montag moves to the fire truck without a thought. Take the wheel: Beatty rarely drives, but he does now. The fire truck heads for Montag's house. Beatty is about to arrest Montag. He realizes that he can't keep his hatred for a cruel, escapist society inside. Momentarily, he thinks about the consequences of what he did. He starts Beatty on fire and watches him burn. **A wave of guilt** hits Montag as he runs away from the grisly scene, but soon he realizes that Beatty tricked him into taking part in the killing. Montag is resourceful and brave, but he almost gets run over by a car full of teenagers who want to kill each other. It helps him embrace his new ideas and hopes for a better life, one in which people disagree and talk about how to make the world better.

## Chapter two

### Section one

#### The Future of society in the novel

*Fahrenheit 451* is classified as science fiction because it depicts a future in which technology has deeply changed society. The future of technological innovation and its ability to affect humans in positive or negative ways is a common theme in science fiction stories. *Fahrenheit 451* is classified as science fiction because it analyzes the social and political implications of scientific innovation <sup>\*</sup>(7).

<sup>\*</sup>(7). from SparkNotes website: <https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/451/genre/> (28, 2021)

## The censorship

People in *Fahrenheit 451* don't read books. Burn them along with their owners' homes. So long as you know that self-censorship led to a book restriction. People didn't stop reading books because the government ordered them to. Because of this, they stopped reading books and instead focused on small thrills and instant gratification. So, it went. Entertainment replaced reflection and conversation in this type of culture, as books became shorter, magazine articles became easier to read, and TV became more common. *Fahrenheit 451* is a book about how society tried to restrict everything from TV shows to books. *Fahrenheit 451* can still help American society today by showing the world with censorship, without books, and how unaware people are. **(11)**

## Censorship procedures

### 1- Mass media

the means of communication that reach large numbers of people in a short time, such as television, newspapers, magazines, and radio **\*(2)**. The general public usually relies on the news media to get information about politics, social issues, entertainment, and news in pop culture, but it's not always true. Censorship implies a laser-like focus on a single subject. The Firemen want all books destroyed, regardless of their content. One could argue that they do not illustrate government censorship at all. They are, rather than, a symbolic representation of the population's cerebral void caused by mass media and the increase of television **\*(4)**.

**\*(11)**, [https://www.litcharts.com/lit/fahrenheit-451/themes/censorship\(5/2022\)](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/fahrenheit-451/themes/censorship(5/2022))

**\*(2)**. [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com) website: [mass--media](https://www.dictionary.com/browse/mass-media) meaning (5/2022)

**\*(4)**. *Fahrenheit 451* Censorship – [Bartleby.com](http://Bartleby.com). (4/2021).

In the book, the government manipulates the population by not allowing any TV shows that could cause people to argue or have questions. People who work as firefighters or fire starters start to question the government's decisions and their own role in making them happen. Every day, TV and the internet put millions of people under this kind of control, and they do it every day. This happened when people started to use social media. It made them less likely to be special, and it also made them more likely to be violent. *Fahrenheit 451*'s government made its people happy and mindless puppets. Even now, people become drones when they spend all their time staring at their phones and not paying attention to anyone else or the world around them. (3)

## 2-Television

In *Fahrenheit 451*, the parlor walls are big TV screens that cover the whole wall of a person's house. These TVs are interactive and show high-definition images. The programs that are on the walls of the parlor are shallow, absurd, and pointless. Mildred mentions to the characters in her favorite TV show her "family," and they talk over each other the whole time. The shows don't have a storyline and are just random clips that get people's attention. *"The converter attachment, which had cost them one hundred dollars, automatically supplied her name whenever the announcer addressed his anonymous audience, leaving a blank where the proper syllables could be filled in"*. (Bradbury 2012. p78) Montag sees his wife Mildred watching TV in the living room. This excerpt is from Montag's point of view. He hears an announcer say "Mrs. Montag" from time to time. It turns out, though, that the announcer isn't actually talking to her in real life. Their TV had an attachment that filled in the names of the people who lived there. These characters prefer to use technology that lets them think of an actor on the TV as a close friend rather than making real human connections with each other\*(15).

\***(15)** The Importance Of Television In Fahrenheit 451 By Ray... | Bartleby. (2017). Retrieved May 14, 2022, from Bartleby.com

\***(3)** Effects Of social media In Fahrenheit 451 - 1523 Words | Bartleby. (2021). Retrieved January 14, 2022, from Bartleby.com website

## Section two

### Modern society in *Fahrenheit 451* novel

By Ray Bradbury, he wrote the novel *Fahrenheit 451*. In many ways, the author's illustration of this society represents our own. The idea of a society where the government has total power over its citizens may seem absurd, but there are already indications that this is the case. *Fahrenheit 451* is a dystopian novel set in a society that is vastly different from the one we live in today. We can identify with the government's hypocrisy, people's gullibility, and the disappearance of books. In Ray Bradbury's book, Guy Montag, a man who was thought to be Montag was killed, but the real Montag escaped and got away. Today, there are a few times when the government has done the same thing. Osama bin Laden was a big threat to the U.S. after the September 11 attacks. The U.S. went looking for him after the attacks. Instead of finding their enemy, the government killed a lot of people in Afghanistan and Iraq to make it look like they were working very hard. In the book Montag, a "fireman," burned down the house of a woman who was still inside of it, even though the woman was still there **\*(5)**. During the time that Montag lived, Mildred was completely brainwashed and did everything the government told her to do without even thinking about how it might be bad for her. Another time when the government has shown its hypocrisy is when the American Government went to war with Iraq about five years ago. American Matt Mausek wrote that the plan was to enter. The war and capture Saddam Hussein so he couldn't use his weapons of mass destruction on any other country, but many people don't understand that. Another goal of the United States was to cut Hussein's ties to Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, too **(Daivd 2008)**.

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**\*(5)**.Fahrenheit 451 in Today's World Essay. Bartleby..com(14/1/2022)

As soon as possible, we had to get our troops home. However, five years into the war, it is clear that the government's first goal was to get oil from Iraq, but they used Saddam as an excuse to start a war (**Matusek2004**).

The government's actions are being looked at more and more closely by people today, just like Montag. They are also taking a strong stand against them. People like Beatty and Bush seem to think there is nothing wrong with burning books, but Montag and people who don't like the war seems to think the same way. Bradbury's main problem in *Fahrenheit 451* is that all books are being burned because they are full of nonsense. *Fahrenheit 451* makes it seem more and more likely that our world is going in the same direction as the world in the novel. This is mostly because new technology like TV and the Internet are making people rely too much on outside sources instead of reading about the real truth. Until we all realize our mistakes in a very rude and unexpected way, nothing will be done about this \*(5).

## Conclusion

In conclusion the characters in *Fahrenheit 451* spend most of their time in their tv room. In 2017, television is used to spread evil, sickness, and chaos. A lot of censorship on the TV is getting out of hand, as a whole, *Fahrenheit 451* wants to tell people about censorship and what it does to the world. *Fahrenheit 451* can be used today to show people what the world would look like if we had to be censored all the time. I think that social media has increased the risk of teens being bullied, either by strangers or by peers. With every positive effect of social media comes a million negative issues that endanger teen lives due to online abuse. Even though social media helps teens connect, it can also lead to attacks on teens for minor infractions that

cause them to grow apart. According to (Shenoy 2016), *Fahrenheit 451* is not about censorship but about technology, specifically the role of mindless television in society; the new opiate of the masses. Bradbury wanted to show people that mindless TV wasn't a substitute for literature and reading in his book. We can never please everyone, I agree, but I also believe that technology and enjoyment play a part in our society's mindlessness and desire to make us all feel equal. We live in a world of 7.7 billion people, and it's nearly impossible not to offend someone who reads a book and develops ideas that differ from others or elicit strong emotions.

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