

## *Fahrenheit 451* book review by Devyn

A dystopian novel that criticizes censorship by the government, the suppression of ideas, and the overwhelming takeover of shallow entertainment, *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury is widely regarded as an essential piece of literature for a reason. The irony surrounding the book, being a victim of multiple bans and censorships throughout the world, is only a testament to its message. The novel is set in a future society where books are banned, and “firemen” burn them. Its message being a warning against the dangers of authoritarianism and the loss of intellectual freedom in the world.

Guy Montag, although with his faults just like any other protagonist, is a fireman who enjoys his job burning books until his character transformation is sparked by meeting Clarisse, a young girl who is a free thinker in a world of simple, controlled thought. Throughout his work days, Montag is altered, and discovers that his life holds little substance due to both his forced and somewhat voluntary conformity to the government and world around him.

The novel, despite being a work first published in 1953, holds true today. Bradbury’s depiction of the world is not only terrifying but making itself a prophecy in today’s day and age. The novel is an exciting, fun read that is easy to follow but has an underlying, pertinent message that can be explored. Its themes, language, and characterization are all composed extremely well. Upon finishing it, the novel will leave a feeling of realization, curiosity and questioning, and a desire for deeper sociological thought within the reader, making it not an ideal read if you’re seeking something simple and lighthearted. The major theme, the destruction of knowledge and diverse society through censorship, is expertly explored by Bradbury who gives a story of realistic scenarios and ramifications from living in a world where the government suppresses intellectual freedom by banning books. He also produces a hard-hitting critique on society, showing how they passively accept this oppression, disconnecting themselves from critical thinking, distracting themselves with mindless entertainment, and setting unrealistic expectations due to instant gratification.

The important messages in the novel are not the only reason for the novel being as extraordinary as it is, Bradbury uses exceptional writing to communicate his story. The diction and imagery is poetic and precise, and he creates a vivid scene that immerses the reader in the unsettling world he has crafted. Fire is used as a symbol throughout the book, representing destruction and rebirth, creating art in opposites. The fire scenes are written in a way that conveys intensity, making them feel alive and evoking emotion in the reader as the physical destruction of books is explored alongside the symbolic destruction of culture and freedom.

If the situations and themes in the novel sound familiar, it’s because they are. *Fahrenheit 451* is a novel that will continue to stand the test of time, but more importantly it grows more relevant as we continue into the future. An extremely important novel to read as the world hurdles closer and closer to the dystopian society that Bradbury foreshadowed in 1953.