

Fahrenheit 451 and the Dark Side of Mass Culture and Consumerism Essay

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Fahrenheit 451, a novel written during the 20th century, highlighted the faults of advertising in American marketing. With the emersion of the television, advertising agencies drastically gained popularity and income. "J. Walter Thompson Co... saw its billings increase from \$78 million in 1945 to \$172 million in 1955 and \$250 million by 1960" ("[Advertising Age](#)"). Explain. Through the novel [Fahrenheit 451](#), Bradbury cautions that constant simplifications displayed through visual advertising only help to further mass conformity. This is shown through the visual advertising during the 1950s that promoted mass produced goods, and the suburban family ideal which pushed America to assimilation.

Bradbury predicts that cheap products produced in bulk and then sold to the masses as "must have" items helped lead to the conformity of the 1950s. The post WWII economic boom of Bradbury's era is evident through that, "household furnishings and appliance purchases climbed 240 percent... [and] the median family income rose 30 percent in purchasing power." (Nickles) The market for mass produced goods seemed to only increase during this time period because consumer purchases put off during the war years

were now bought in bulk. Due to the economic high time, advertisers were able to promote a product's 'unique selling proposition', bribing people to select one brand over the other (Super). The growing materialism shows how cultural values were being abandoned for a much easier, less complex lifestyle of consumerism which produced little disagreements or contrasting opinions. Bradbury demonstrates his precautions towards this through Mildred's overriding materialistic desires when she proclaims, "It's really fun. It'll be even more fun when we can af...

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...nst by Ray Bradbury. The frightening society that Bradbury witnessed, with its increasing suburban population and consumerism, is shown to the extreme in Fahrenheit 451, displaying to the public its harmful effects. What remains in question is if society has really changed from those dark times, or if today's world is closer to what Bradbury had imagined.

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