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BACHELOR THESIS

Comparison of the film and
book *Fahrenheit 451* by
Ray Bradbury

Srovnání filmové a knižní
podoby titulu *451 stupňů
Fahrenheita* od Raye
Bradburyho

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Declaration:

I hereby declare that I have elaborated this bachelor thesis, titled Comparison of the film and book *Fahrenheit 451*, individually and that all the sources that were used are listed on the Works Cited page. No other sources were used.

Prague, July 20th 2015

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signature

Acknowledgement:

I would like to express my gratitude to Mgr. Jakub Ženíšek for his supervising and patience.

ANNOTATION

The aim of this bachelor thesis is comparison of the book *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury and its film adaptation directed by François Truffaut. The thesis works on the assumption that film adaptations tend to trim the plotline down, which might result in providing incomplete or ambiguous character motivation and character psychology in general. Another assumption that is further scrutinised is the premise that the film is frequently inclined to emphasise romantic appeal at the expense of social critique, satire, etc. This thesis is composed of four parts. The first part provides some theoretical information concerning novels and film adaptations. The second part introduces the author of the book, the director and it also mentions the co-author of the script, Jean-Louis Richard. The third part consists of a brief synopsis of *Fahrenheit 451* but it mainly concentrates on the comparison of the two media. The last part of the thesis is a conclusion.

KEY WORDS

Adaptation, film, novel, comparison, plotline

ANOTACE

Cílem této bakalářské práce je srovnání knihy *451 stupňů Fahrenheita* autora Raye Bradburyho a její filmové adaptace režírované Françoisem Truffautem. Práce vychází z předpokladu, že filmové adaptace obvykle zkracují dějovou linii, což může vyústit v poskytnutí neúplné či nejednoznačné motivace postav i k jejich neúplné psychologii obecně. Další dále zkoumanou premisou je ta, že film často tíhne ke zdůrazňování romantických prvků na úkor sociální kritiky nebo společenské satiry. Tato práce sestává ze čtyř částí. První část poskytuje teoretické informace o románech a filmových adaptacích. Druhá část představuje autora knihy, režiséra a také zmiňuje spoluautora scénáře, Jean-Louis Richarda. Třetí část obsahuje stručnou synopsi titulu *451 stupňů Fahrenheita*, ale zejména se zaměřuje na samotné srovnání obou médií. Poslední částí práce je závěr.

KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Adaptace, film, novela, srovnání, dějová linie

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1. Introduction

My reasons for choosing comparison of a film and book as a topic of my bachelor thesis were simple – I have always been an avid reader and movie-goer and I feel excited every time when I was given an opportunity to watch the film version of my favourite novel. Unfortunately for me, I usually ended up disappointed. Deep inside me, I knew that the cause of my disappointment was not a low quality of the film adaptation but my expectations which were never sufficiently matched. I became aware that what I wished to see was the exact content of novel perfectly converted into film. Then I finally realised the absurdity of my wish and I wanted to fight my prejudices against changes which are usually made during the process of adaptation – I decided to learn what does it takes make an adaptation.

1.1 Film and novel

Both film and novel have a very strong narrative potential, which is the reason why these two media are tightly bonded. Nearly everything that is narrated in a novel can be somehow adapted into film. The consequence of this is a vast popularity of making adaptations of already existing stories.

However, filmmakers who try to transform a novel into film have to deal with various problems concerning the differences between the two media. The basic difference is that the film works with a visual narration instead of a linguistic one. The film also operates in real time; therefore, its narration is more constrained and hence shorter. This limitation affects especially commercial films since their average script has about 125 pages whereas an average novel has about 300 or 400 pages so the reduction in case of films is apparent. Filmmakers are thus obliged to reduce the adapted material to its core, which may lead to omission of some detailed descriptions, internal monologues or characters from the book. But fortunately for them, the film offers almost endless pictorial possibilities (e.g. an action scene, costume design, background decoration, etc.) which can help them to create similar effects to those in the novel (Monaco, *How to Read a Film* 27).

Nevertheless, the role of the film author as a narrator is necessarily weakened since the audience has a freedom to choose or to concentrate on whatever image/detail/symbol/object it wants. It means that while watching the film,

observers can consciously participate in the experience which takes place in front of them. This active participation may become an even richer experience than that of reading a book since the book cannot provide such possibility. Every single thing presented in the novel is filtered through the eyes of its writer, which signifies that this medium has a considerable limitation too (Monaco, *How to Read a Film* 29).

All these limitations and specifics of both media immensely contribute to the fact that every novel needs to be adequately adjusted in order to meet requirements of the film format. The mutations of the source material, that an adapter has to make, eventually transform the content of the novel into its own paraphrase. The difference between original story and the resulting one could sometimes be so striking that the audience might be tempted to think that the adapter has never read the novel which he or she was adapting. As a result, no one can beforehand guarantee success of the newly created adaptation even if it is based on a best-selling novel (Bluestone 62).

Moreover, “in film criticism, it has always been easy to recognize how a poor film ‘destroys’ a superior novel. What has not been sufficiently recognized is that such destruction is inevitable” (Bluestone 62). By destruction Bluestone means the fact that the content of the source story is not only converted from one artistic form to another, but it is transformed into something else. Even the film author cannot be regarded as a simple translator for an established author but as a new author in his or her own right.

For better understanding, Balázs says that a conscious adapter works only with the essence of the existing material and reshapes it in the way that it corresponds to his own art form, i.e. the form-language of cinema. In this particular point of view, film and novel could be seen as two intersecting lines which meet at some point and thereafter diverge and lose any kind of resemblance, maintaining only features that are typical for their own medium (Bluestone 63). Bluestone concludes that “an art whose limits depend on a moving image, mass audience, and industrial production is bound to differ from an art whose limits depend on language, a limited audience and individual creation” (64). Basically, despite certain similarity with the novel on which it is based, the film becomes a different artistic entity.

The degree of fidelity of the adaptation in relation to the original novel is further scrutinized by Geoffrey Wagner. He comes up with his own classification of adaptation based on which he classifies films in three categories. The first one is called *transposition*. Adaptations that fall under this category try to convert the novel into the film as faithfully as possible, making only a few of apparent changes. The second category called *commentary* includes films which take the original material and either intentionally or accidentally modify it in some way (McFarlane 10). *Analogy*, the third and the last category, represents the films whose filmmakers significantly deviated from the original novel in order to create a new piece of work (McFarlane 11). Wagner adds that whenever a film critic evaluates an adaptation, he needs “to understand which kind of adaptation he is dealing with if his commentary on an individual film is to be valuable” (McFarlane 11).

Scholars Michael Klein and Gillian Parker offer another classification which more or less corresponds to the Wagner’s one. The first approach remains faithful to the original source to such an extent that it could be seen as its literal translation. The second approach preserves the core structure of the novel but considerably reinterprets its content. The third approach regards “the source merely as raw material, as simply the occasion for an original work” (Cardwell 53). The film theorist Dudley Andrew also supports this kind of classification, although he employs different names for each category – ‘fidelity of transformation, intersecting, borrowing’. Even though these classification schemes are not definite, they at least “represent some heartening challenges to the primacy of fidelity as a critical criterion. Further, they imply that, unless the kind of adaptation is identified, critical evaluation may well be wide of the mark” (McFarlane 11).

On the contrary, the postmodern theorist Linda Hutcheon claims that evaluation of an adaptation based on its fidelity to the source material is limited and insufficient since the aim of the adapter may not necessarily be reduplication of the adapted text but for example its critique, appreciation, etc. Faithfulness thus should not be used as a standard of judgement or the target of analysis (Hutcheon 7).

Yet, “the concern with the fidelity of the adapted film in letter and spirit to its literary source has unquestionably dominated the discourse on adaptation” (McFarlane 10).

2. Contextual background

Fahrenheit 451 originally started out as a novella called *The Fire Man*. It was written in the basement of the library at University of California at Los Angeles in 1950. Bradbury was poor and he could not afford his own office so he rented the university's typewriter for a dime per half an hour and got down to work. He finished the novella approximately in nine days and wrote about twenty-five thousand words which was roughly a half of the future novel (Bradbury 167-168). *The Fire Man* was published in *Galaxy* magazine in 1950. Bradbury added another twenty-five thousand words and in summer of 1953 he was offered to sell some of his works to *Playboy*. Bradbury sold *Fahrenheit 451* for four hundred dollars and the novel came out in four issues of the magazine (Witcover).

Its later film adaptation *Fahrenheit 451* by French director François Truffaut was supposed to be originally filmed in France with Jean-Paul Belmondo in a leading role. However, Truffaut was not able to find any financing there so he was forced to shoot the film in England (Samuels 44). The film preparations were exhausting – Truffaut “had been nurturing the project for four years, through four different versions of the script with four different screenwriters. At least a half dozen producers had shown interest in it, and about twenty actors had been considered” (Baecque and Toubiana 216). When Truffaut could finally start making the film, he was rather passive, indifferent and overall drained.

From January 1966 to mid-June 1966 Truffaut lived in London. He spent his time either in his hotel suite in Hilton or in Pinewood Studios, where he meticulously concentrated on finishing the film (Baecque and Toubiana 217). Since *Fahrenheit 451* was an English language film, Truffaut was not in complete control of the dialogue and he could not be ever sure whether a line was right. The fact that he lacked control over the language only lead to his frustration (Witcover). “. . .after seeing *Fahrenheit* over and over again, I realize I should give up the idea of making film in English until I really know the language” (Baecque and Toubiana 220). Another problem which made Truffaut's work more difficult was collaboration with Oskar Werner, who played the role of Montag. Werner deliberately sabotaged filming and was in constant conflict with Truffaut who had to deal with Werner's caprices all the time.

The film was finished in July 1996. Truffaut was pleased with some scenes but he did not like the film as a whole – “it works well enough in pieces, but it is boring when seen end to end” (Monaco 72). *Fahrenheit 451* was not a box-office success so “when all was said and done, Truffaut felt only relief at being rid of a project that had occupied him for six years“ (Baecque and Toubiana 221).

2.1 Ray Bradbury (1920 - 2012)

Bradbury was an American short story writer, novelist, essayist, poet, screenwriter, and playwright. He was born on August 22, 1920 in Waukegan, Illinois. Due to economic problems his family often moved so he spent his childhood alternately in Illinois and Arizona, but finally ended up in Los Angeles in 1934 (Reid 1). Bradbury was a talented child who learned to read at the age of three and madly fell in love with books. Approximately at the same time, he saw *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* with Lon Chaney and a motion picture became his second affection (Bridges, A Conversation with Ray Bradbury). During his high school years Bradbury attended drama club and took writing courses. He was tempted to choose acting as his future occupation, yet he eventually started publishing his first poems and short stories. Bradbury completed his formal education in 1938 and continued to live with his family (Reid 2). Since he went through financial difficulties, he was not able to go to college. He therefore educated himself in a public library and deepened his lifelong love for books (Bridges, A Conversation with Ray Bradbury).

His beginnings were humble. Bradbury wrote short stories, cartoons and columns for various fanzines while studying in the library and selling newspapers on street corners. In 1941 he wrote fifty-two stories but managed to sell only three of them. However, his situation gradually improved and in 1943 Bradbury decided to become a full-time writer. In 1946 he met his future wife Marguerite in a bookstore and married her one year later. She gave birth to four Bradbury’s daughters in nine years. Ray continued writing to provide his family with money. His stories started winning literary prizes and awards. The 1950s were marked by Bradbury’s best-known works (Reid 3). His career benefited from the Christopher Isherwood’s review of *The Martian Chronicles* (1950). Isherwood was generous with praise and helped Bradbury to win a good reputation. Another Bradbury’s success was a collection of short stories *The Illustrated Man* (1951). *Fahrenheit*

451, the second novel which came out in 1953, was very well received by prominent authors from all over the United States, who finally accepted Bradbury into the intellectual community (Bridges, *A Conversation with Ray Bradbury*). Other notable works of Bradbury include *The October Country* (1955), *Dandelion Wine* (1957), *A Medicine for Melancholy* (1959), or *Something Wicked This Way Comes* (1962).

Bradbury published more than thirty books, about six hundred short stories, numerous poems, essays, plays, and screenplays. He adapted over sixty of his stories for television series *Ray Bradbury Theatre*. His animated film *Icarus Montgolfier Wright* was nominated for the Academy Award, and his teleplay of *The Halloween Tree* won the Emmy Award. Among other Bradbury's prizes were for instance: "the Benjamin Franklin Award, the World Fantasy Award for Lifetime Achievement, the Grand Master Award from the Science Fiction Writers of America, the PEN Center USA West Lifetime Achievement Award" (About Ray Bradbury).

2.2 François Truffaut (1932 – 1984)

Truffaut was a French director, screenwriter and film critic who was born on February 6, 1932 in Paris, France. He went through a difficult childhood, since his biological father was unknown and his mother did not have a good relationship with him. Truffaut was therefore raised by his maternal grandparents. His life with his grandmother was happy and mainly consisted of reading, walks, school, and neighbourhood errands (Baecque and Toubiana 9). François was ten years old when his grandmother died and he went to live with his unloving mother (Baecque and Toubiana 10). As a way of escape from the painful reality and loveless home he became a devotee of films. Truffaut left school in 1946 and one year later he founded his own film club which captured attention of André Bazin, a prominent film critic. Bazin became Truffaut's protector who was supporting him over the years. When Truffaut entered the military service in 1950 and subsequently deserted, it was Bazin who helped him and afterwards offered him a job as a critic and essayist for his magazine *Cahiers du cinéma*.

In January 1954 Truffaut published his conspicuous essay *A Certain Tendency in the French Cinema* where he expressed his auteur theory saying that

the film which lacks personal cinematic vision and individual signatures of its director is not worth any serious consideration. To put his auteur theory into practice Truffaut left Bazin's company and made a short film called *Une Visite*. Three years later he made *Les Mistons* (1957) for which he won his first critical acclaim and married Madeleine Morgenstern, the daughter of an important film distributor (Erickson). Her father helped Truffaut with financing of his new film project *Les Quatre cents coups* (1959), which was based on Truffaut's childhood and adolescence. His film alter ego Antoine Doinel was portrayed by young Jean-Pierre L aud, who also played Doinel in the other four follow-ups called *Antoine et Colette* (1962), *Baisers vol s* (1968), *Domicile conjugal* (1970) and *L'Amour en fuite* (1979). All these films were partly autobiographical and presented a mixture of L aud's and Truffaut's life (Gonz lez A.).

Truffaut became the most successful filmmaker in France who officially belonged to the New Wave movement but differed from the others by avoidance of open political statements. In the course of time Truffaut developed his own style, which was influenced by his favourites such as Jean Renoir, Jean Vigo, Orson Welles, or Alfred Hitchcock, about whom he wrote a book (Erickson). Truffaut's best known films comprise of *Tirez sur le pianiste* (1960), *Jules et Jim* (1962), a film about a love triangle which is sometimes considered as his masterpiece, *La Peau douce* (1964), *Fahrenheit 451* (1965), *La Mari e  tait en noir* (1967), *La Sir ne du Mississippi* (1969), *L'Enfant sauvage* (1970), *La Nuit am ricaine* (1973) and *Le Dernier m tro* (1980).

Truffaut suffered from malignant tumour and had to go through some difficult moments in his life including hopelessness and pain. He died surrounded by family and friends in October 1984 at the age of fifty-two (Gonz lez A.).

2.3 Jean-Louis Richard (1927 – 2012)

Richard was a French scriptwriter, actor and director. He often collaborated with his compatriot Fran ois Truffaut with whom he wrote the screenplay for *Fahrenheit 451*. He graduated from Conservatoire de Paris and then joined the theatre group of Louis Jouvet.

Together with directors Fran ois Truffaut and Jean-Luc Godard, Richard is associated with the French New Wave movement. He appeared as an actor in some

of their films – *À bout de souffle* (1960), *Jules et Jim* (1962), or *La Peau Douce* (1964) for which he also wrote the screenplay.

Richard made his directorial debut in 1962 with *Bonne chance Charlie*. He became well-known for his short-lived marriage with a famous French actress Jeanne Moreau, whom he cast in two of his films *Mata Hari, agent H21* (1964) and *Le corps de Diane* (1969) (Sotinel).

3. Comparison of the storylines

The subsequent comparison follows the linearity of the film. Individual episodes from the film are juxtaposed with the corresponding scenes in the novel, which is used as a point of reference. Therefore, a brief synopsis of the book's plot should be introduced:

Fahrenheit 451 is a dystopian novel that depicts the society in which books are forbidden and replaced with technology, commercials, reality shows and tons of meaningless information that prevent people from thinking, which is perceived as undesirable. The main protagonist of the book is Guy Montag, who works as a fireman. His occupation consists of putting on fires and burning books for the Government. Montag lives a relatively happy life until he meets Clarisse McClallen, his new neighbour. The girl captivates Montag's attention and quickly becomes his friend. She awakens Montag's curiosity and makes him see the world in a different and less shallow way. As the story proceeds, Montag begins to question his life and the meaning of the rules that govern the society. He strives to gain some knowledge that would help him understand what is wrong with the people around him and more generally – what is wrong with the world in which he lives. For this reason, Montag secretly starts reading books, which eventually leads him into trouble.

The whole book is divided into three sections called *The Hearth and the Salamander*, *The Sieve and the Sand* and *Burning Bright*. Each section symbolises a certain stage in Montag's life and each section is different in length. The novel consists of 165 pages. The film, on the other hand, has no clear division and it has 112 minutes in total. If the general one page-per-minute rule was applied, the script would only comprise of 112 pages, which is considerably less than in the novel.

Consequently, it could be assumed that this diminution results in first two above-mentioned premises, i.e., 1) reduction of the plotline, 2) incomplete or ambiguous description of character motivation and character psychology in general. The following analysis will try to prove or disprove this assumption and at the same time, it will examine the third premise, i.e., whether this adaptation emphasises romantic appeal at the expense of social critique or not.

For better understanding of the structure of the comparison, it should be noted that the order in which the text will be presented is following: firstly goes scenes from the film, secondly scenes from the book and thirdly a short commentary concerning individual events.

3.1 Part One – The Hearth and the Salamander

The film opens with firemen sliding down the pole, loading the truck and going to a call. The scene switches to a man who is eating an apple at his home and who is suddenly disturbed by a phone call. Somebody on the phone warns him to leave the house in a hurry. The man is confused, but as he hears a fire siren he immediately runs away. Shortly after his escape, the fire truck arrives in front of his house. All firemen leave the vehicle, except for their captain. Firemen enter the house and make a search. They find books hidden across the place and start to confiscate them. Every book is taken out of the building and burnt in front of passers-by. After this demonstration of power, captain Beatty calls the main protagonist Montag and asks him a few personal questions to ascertain that he is loyal to the established system. Satisfied with Montag's answers, Beatty tells him that he might be soon promoted.

The beginning of the film differs from the book, since it incorporates an additional episode which serves as an introduction to the futuristic world in which the main character lives.



The book is not as explanatory as the film and it primarily deals with Montag's joyful feelings concerning his job. For Montag "it was a pleasure to burn. It was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and changed" (Bradbury 3).

It is apparent that Montag delights in his work and does not doubt it in any way. This piece of information is important for it significantly defines Montag's character and also demonstrates the extent to which Montag changes his opinions and beliefs later in the story. The book also indicates that the governmental regime is more rigid for it requires not only book burning and arresting of transgressors but also the complete destruction of their houses.



The film continues with an event that crucially influences Montag's life. On his way home, Montag is being watched by a young woman in the monorail. After a while she comes to him and engages him in conversation. She says that they are neighbours and that they make the same trip together almost every day. She asks Montag whether he minds her talking to him. He replies that he does not, but he warns her that he cannot promise her to think of anything to answer. The woman, Clarisse, is not upset by that, since she is uncommonly talkative herself. Montag is surprised that nobody told her that she should not speak to strangers. Clarisse replies that her uncle only her told her that whenever she is asked what her age is, she should say that she is twenty and crazy because these two always go together.

Clarisse tells Montag that he does not frighten her. Montag does not understand why anyone would be frightened of him. Clarisse says that there is no specific reason except for the uniform that he wears. She explains that the majority of people are frightened of firemen.

They both leave the monorail and continue the conversation. Clarisse says that even with her eyes closed, she could tell what Montag's job is for the smell of kerosene. Montag says that he likes it, but he admits that his wife does not. Clarisse is curious about Montag's wife. She asks him what his wife looks like. Montag says that they are similar in appearance except the length of their hair.

Clarisse asks Montag what the number that he is wearing on his uniform means. He says that it signifies Fahrenheit 451, the temperature at which book paper catches fire and starts burning. Clarisse is particularly interested in this topic and starts asking Montag whether it is true that a long time ago firemen used to put out fires and did not start them. Montag finds that question ridiculous and Clarisse crazy because he is confident that houses have always been fireproof. Clarisse says that her house is not fireproof, which leads Montag to the conclusion that her house should be destroyed and she ought to move elsewhere.

Clarisse wants to know why Montag burns books. He says that it is a work like any other and with a great variety. Clarisse assumes that he must disapprove of books if he burns them. He says that books are rubbish that needs to be burnt. Clarisse asks why people read and Montag replies that because it is forbidden. Then she asks him why it is forbidden. He responds that books make people unhappy. He

himself believes that books disturb people and make them antisocial. Clarisse wonders whether he perceives her as an antisocial person or not. Montag is confused and does not know why she asks him such question. She tells him that she is a teacher on probation and that she was called in by an analyst today. She is afraid that she did not say the right things. Montag reassures her that he was questioned too and that he did not do well either.

Approaching her house, Clarisse asks Montag whether he ever reads books that he burns. He says that there is no reason for it. He is not interested in them, he has better things to do, and moreover, reading is forbidden. Clarisse agrees and when leaving Montag, she shouts at him if he is happy. He replies that he certainly is and heads home.



Clarisse and Montag's encounter contains some important differences in the book and it is also described in greater detail.

Montag meets sixteen-year-old girl Clarisse McClellan when he is returning home from his shift. She is his new neighbour. The two engage in conversation which Montag finds somewhat uncomfortable. Clarisse's bizarreness fascinates him and irritates him at the same time – in her face “was a kind of gentle hunger that touched over everything with tireless curiosity. It was a look, almost, of pale surprise; the dark eyes were so fixed to the world that no move escaped them” (Bradbury 5).

Clarisse discomfits Montag by asking him innocuous questions concerning his job to which he frequently responds with nervous laughter. In contrast to the film, she does not ask Montag about his wife. She tells him that she likes “to smell things and look at things, and sometimes stay up all night, walking, and watch the sun rise” (Bradbury 7). She also loves to watch people and says that she thinks that jet car drivers can barely know what grass or flowers are, since they never see them slowly. She adds that her uncle was once jailed for driving only forty miles an hour and once for being a pedestrian. Clarisse reckons that it is both funny and sad. She mentions that they are a peculiar family because they also enjoy sitting around and talking to one another, which is even rarer occurrence than being a pedestrian.

In the course of their conversation, Clarisse starts opening Montag's eyes to the world around him by telling him about her observations regarding the beauties of life, the morning dew, the man in the moon and other things to which he was not attentive to. When she finally asks him whether he is happy, she plants a seed of doubt into his mind and leaves him in unusual unease.

The character of Clarisse is more developed in the book. Whereas in the film she is depicted only as friendly and talkative, the book portrays her also as uncommonly inquisitive, thoughtful, vivacious and sensitive to the natural world, since she seldom watches 'parlour walls' or goes to races or Fun Parks. In contrast to other people, Clarisse has no interest in technology and she is not dependent on it. Her unconventional personality and approach to life proves to have a significant impact upon Montag's view of the world. When she says that her family members are peculiar just because they enjoy simple activities like talking to each other, or walking on foot, she reveals the real state of society and its decline. The film fails to display that as well as it fails to describe Clarisse's character in its whole depth.



The film proceeds to the scene in which Montag arrives home. He finds his wife Linda watching wall-set television. He kisses her and informs her about his future promotion. She seems to be too distracted by the television to listen to him. After a while she says that it is marvellous and that if it means a salary increase she will desire second wall-set television rather than a larger house as he originally proposed, since it would be like having her Family grow around her.

Montag takes a bottle of pills and asks Linda how many pills she took today. She replies that only a few and changes the topic. She says that tonight is special for her because she has a part in a television show. It is a play written with one part missing. Whenever people from the television show look at her, she will start to speak to them. In the meantime, a television presenter announces how many books were burnt and how many enemies against public peace were detained that day. Then the play starts and the couple is watching it. After the show they both go to the bed. Linda takes some sleeping pills and Montag reads comic strip news containing only pictures.

This episode is mostly invented by Truffaut. The only thing that the film and book have in common is a comment on Linda's acting in the television show. Truffaut expands this event in order to demonstrate the shallowness of television entertainment and Linda's obsession with it. She perceives people from the television as her family. This feeling is intensified by television presenters who address their viewers as cousins. The sense of belonging to the television community is further attained by broadcasting shows with missing roles thus the viewers can actively participate in the action on the screen. However, there is no real action because all broadcasted television shows contain only empty dialogues with no substance. This emptiness not only dominates television screens but also mirrors people's lives. Truffaut in his film also indicates that the state officially does not publish any written text, since the news that Montag is reading does not comprise any; and that Linda is addicted to taking pills which subsequently develops into a problem.



In contrast to film, the book continues in a different tone. Montag comes home disturbed, contemplating his strange encounter. He had never experienced anything like that before, except a year ago when he met an old man in the park and talked to him. Clarisse was unique. Her face seemed to him like a mirror which reflects his own expression and his innermost thoughts. She helped him to discover that he is not happy. It is just pretence.

Montag enters the bedroom. His wife (called Mildred in the book) lies there on the bed, listening to the Seashells radio in her ears, indifferent to the world. Passing her bed, Montag stumbles over an empty bottle of sleeping pills. When he realise that Mildred overdosed, his house shakes under the sonic boom produced by jet bombers flying over. Montag calls an Emergency Hospital. Two impersonal operators come. They pump out Mildred's stomach and replace her blood for a fresh one. Montag cannot believe that they are not doctors. One of the operators says: "We get these cases nine or ten a night. Got so many, starting a few years ago, we had the special machines built. . . . You don't need an M.D., case like this; all you need is two handymen, clean up the problem in half an hour" (Bradbury 15). Then the operators leave for another case.

Montag is shaken. It was an hour ago when he met Clarisse and found his wife unconscious. It was “only an hour, but the world had melted down and sprung up in a new and colourless form” (Bradbury 17). Montag suddenly overhears a laughter coming from Clarisse’s house. He follows it without thinking. He wants to join the McClellans and listen to their conversation, but he stops in front of their house and decides to return. He thinks to himself that he does not know anything anymore and goes to sleep.



The comparison here becomes more difficult, since Truffaut includes a supplementary event in the film before he lets Linda overdose.

This event is taking place in the fire station. Montag is giving there a lecture to trainee firemen on books concealment when he is suddenly called to report to the captain's office. The captain tells Montag that he should strengthen group spirit, organise fun and keep his colleagues busy and happy because that is what matters. Beatty also discusses Montag's promotion and gives him questions about his family. At the end, he says that he appreciates that Montag is not a man of words and that he cannot detect any reason to prevent his promotion.

With regard to the book, this event is not particularly important, it does not move the plot forward; it only shows the effort of the state to keep people occupied with having fun so that they do not have time to think.

Following this extra episode, Truffaut’s Montag comes home and finds Linda unconscious and overdosed on pills. The next day, Montag asks her how she feels and what she remembers from yesterday. Linda says that she is starving and remembers nothing. At first, Montag does not want to tell her about the overdose, but he changes his mind and when he is about saying it, his wife seduces him hence she will not learn what happened.



The book touches the matter of the overdose more in depth. Montag is concerned about his wife and attempts to talk over the issue with her. He tells her that she took all the sleeping pills in her bottle, but she denies it, saying that she does not have any reason to do such silly things. Montag implies: “Maybe you took

two pills and forgot and took two more, and forgot again and took two more, and were so dopy you kept right on until you had thirty or forty of them in you” (Bradbury 19). She refuses this idea and irritated she returns her attention to the television play in which she has a part. She tells Montag that the play is fun, but she would enjoy it even more if they had another wall-set television installed in the house. Montag says that they bought third wall-set television two months ago, but Mildred cannot remember.

For comparison – the film Montag is not greatly affected by the event of the previous night. Earlier in the story he is worried about the amount of pills that Linda takes, but after the incident he does not even try to learn why she overdosed, whether she did it on purpose or by accident. This indifference may imply that Montag lost interest in Linda, but that would be inconsistent with the fact that he still maintains an intimate relationship with her.

On the other hand, the book Montag has the demeanour of caring husband. He at least endeavours to talk over the issue. The fact that he and Millie are not capable of discussing it properly together signals their estrangement, which is also evidenced by their separated beds. As a result of their conversation, Montag realises that her conduct was likely unconscious, and that she is engrossed in television and radio entertainment to such a degree that she is neither able to properly perceive the world around her nor to remember anything.



The next film scene is very short and shows Montag leaving for work with Clarisse. He does not talk to her. He only thinks about what she asked him earlier: “Do you ever read the books you burn” (Truffaut)?



The book, on the other hand, further elaborates this episode. Montag meets Clarisse walking in the rain. She spends her time catching raindrops in her mouth. Montag asks her what she is doing and she replies that she is still crazy and that she loves to walk in the rain. Then she rubs a dandelion under Montag’s chin and claims that if the pollen rubs off on him, it means that he is in love. Unfortunately, no pollen rubs off. Clarisse says that it is shameful that he is not in love with anyone.

He denies it, saying that he is very much in love. He tries “to conjure up a face to fit the words” (Bradbury 22), but there is no face.

Clarisse says that she is sorry if she made him upset and that she should leave anyway because she has an appointment with the psychiatrist to whom they force her to go. “They want to know what I do with all my time. I tell them that sometimes I just sit and think. But I won’t tell them what. I’ve got them running. And sometimes, I tell them, I like to put my head back, like this, and let the rain fall into my mouth” (Bradbury 23). Montag cannot believe that she is only sixteen. He finds it strange but she seems to him older than his wife at times.

Clarisse tells him that he is peculiar himself, since he is different from other firemen. He listens to her and does not threaten her. Montag starts to feel uneasy again. He tells her to go to her appointment and says goodbye.

This part of the book depicts Clarisse and Montag’s becoming more familiar with each other. Their future friendship is of great importance as it will immensely affect Montag’s life. Clarisse’s exceptional friendliness, perceptiveness, individuality and her strong connection with nature almost mysteriously attracts Montag’s interest. Although she is regarded as an outcast from the society which does not understand her, Montag befriends her. At first, she brings only more confusion into his life, but afterwards Montag realises that she awakens him from his ignorance and indifference, she awakens his self-awareness. Thanks to this, he discovers that his life is not satisfactory and that what he is missing is love and happiness.



From this point on, the film omits several events from the book and substitutes them with Truffaut’s invented episodes. The next scene focuses on portrayal of one of quotidian routines at firemen’s work.

Montag and his colleague run after a boy with long hair. That kind of haircut is illegal as it is shown in the television propaganda that Linda is incessantly watching. Men and boys having long hair are being captured, their hair is publicly cut off and they are laughed at.

The following sequence depicts Montag in the monorail. He observes other passengers who appear in part absent-minded and longing for touch, judging from the way that they are constantly touching themselves. The scene switches to Linda who does the same thing, but she is interrupted by Montag's arrival. He comes home and secretly hides a book there. At night, when Linda sleeps, Montag gets up and slowly starts reading it.

In comparison to the book, Montag's actions seem hasty. He spoke to Clarisse only once and her question whether he ever reads the books that he burns, inspires him to bring a book home and read it which is unthinkable for someone who serves as official censor of the state. Montag in the film believes that he is happy and he openly despises books. Thus his motivation for reading them is not properly explained. He can even give the impression that he is doing it on impulse or out of curiosity, which seems improbable considering his ten-year career without any flaw. Another peculiarity is the fact that Montag can easily read and understand books, even though Truffaut implies that the written word almost does not exist in this society.

The next short scene shows Montag and the rest of the force making random search on a playground, controlling even children in prams and confiscating books – other example of firemen's daily routine.

The story comes back again to Montag who having been reading all night, leaves for work as usual. He is followed and watched by Clarisse and some old woman who seems to be Clarisse's friend. Later on, it is only Clarisse who is following him in the streets. When she finally catches up with him, they start talking. Clarisse is troubled by something therefore Montag takes her to a café to hear her out. Clarisse confides that she was dismissed from her work and that she was right when she was worried about her answers given to the school analyst. Montag is surprised and asks her what the reason for her dismissal is. She replies that it was supposedly an official call. Montag advises her to go to school and demand the official reason. Clarisse is afraid to go there because she does not know what they told the children about her. The staff disapproved of her, since she did not stick to the timetable and her classes were fun. One teacher before Clarisse has been already dismissed for similar reasons. Montag concludes that it was not the analyst who wanted to dispose of her, but the staff due to her difference.

In the course of their conversation, Montag notices a man from the window and shows him to Clarisse. He tells her that he is an informant who is about to put a picture and number of the person owning books into an information box. They watch him carefully. The man is nervous hence he takes some stimulants to easily make up his mind and denounce somebody. After he is done, Montag says that it is time to leave for work and once again appeals to Clarisse to go to school and learn what happened. She wants him to accompany her thus she calls to the captain's office and says that Montag is ill.

When then they arrive to school, they meet a little boy in the corridor. Clarisse calls him by his first name, but he runs away from her. Clarisse is shocked. Montag comforts her by saying that the boy was afraid of his uniform. She tries to approach the boy again without Montag but the result is the same. Clarisse bursts into tears. Montag takes her away and tells her that he will be promoted soon and that he will talk to the school principal about her career in order to help her. Clarisse says that she does not understand why he became a fireman. It does not suit him, for he is different from the others – he even looks at her when she says something. The scene ends with Montag's telling her about his reading a book last night.

Truffaut's Clarisse is not a teenager, but twenty-year-old young woman who works as a teacher. The reason why he chose her to be an adult is not absolutely clear. Although, one possible explanation might spring to mind – it is likely that Truffaut wanted to imply a prospective relationship between the two main protagonists. "Truffaut envisioned the character of Clarisse as being older and more seductive, which irked Ray, who never intended any sexual tension between his characters Clarisse and Montag" (Weller 274). However, this claim contradicts the director's own words: "I have desexed Clarisse as to get neither her nor Montag mixed up in an adulterous situation which has no place in science fiction" (Monaco 69). Another explanation might be that Truffaut simply did not like the idea of Clarisse being this young, but it is questionable and open to interpretations. On the other hand, Truffaut's decision to make Clarisse a teacher is understandable. It enabled him to show that children in schools are also greatly influenced by the rigidity of the regime and that they are even prevented from having fun during their classes.

The film continues with a shot of the monorail and a rapid switch to Linda in the bed. She gets up in the middle of the night and follows her husband's voice which she overhears. Linda spots Montag reading. Unnoticed, she finds the place where Montag hides books that he stole. Linda wants them thrown away, but Montag hears the noise and discovers that his wife already knows about his secret. He prevents her from discarding the books saying that they are his family as well as people from the television are hers. He asks her when and where they met for the first time. Linda does not know. Montag states that it is sad and that what interests him in books is the fact that there is a man behind each of them. Then he sends Linda to the bed. When she objects him that she cannot sleep, he suggests her to take some pills and goes back to reading. This scene makes clear that Linda has no understanding for Montag's actions and Montag has no understanding for Linda. His saying that she should take some pills in order to get rid of her is at least insensitive with regard to her recent overdose.



After presenting Truffaut's additional episodes, it should be mentioned what happened in the book.

When Clarisse leaves for the psychiatrist, Montag goes to work where he observes Mechanical Hound – one of the greatest achievements of modern technology. It is an artificial creature resembling a dog. This device helps the Government to maintain its people in fear and under the control, since it is used for punishing citizens who breach the rules. The Hound “can remember and identify ten thousand odour-indexes on ten thousand men without re-setting” (Bradbury 133) and inject them with procaine or morphine to paralyse them, wound them or kill them. Montag tries to touch Hound's muzzle, but the creature starts growling at him. Montag backs away and tells his captain that the Hound does not like him. Beatty ignores it, saying: “It doesn't like or dislike. It just ‘functions.’ It's like a lesson in ballistics. It has a trajectory we decide for it. It follows through. It targets itself, homes itself, and cuts off. It's only copper wire, storage batteries, and electricity” (Bradbury 26). Montag is afraid that somebody set up the Hound to react towards him. Beatty says that it is improbable, but he promises Montag that he will let the animal be checked. When Montag wonders what the Hound thinks,

Beatty says that it does not think anything that they do not want it to think. Montag remarks that it is sad.

The Mechanical Hound not only represents a perfect weapon of the Government, but also serves as an allegorical symbol of the society in which people resemble unthinking mass that moves on the border of being alive and not being alive.

Montag in the book talks to Clarisse every day and their relationship grows. They know each other for a week, but Montag already feels like he knew Clarisse many years. She explains that it is because she likes him and does not want anything from him. He says that she makes him feel very old and very much like a father. She asks him why he does not have any children. Montag answers that he does not know. Then he adds that his wife never wanted any children. Clarisse apologises for her inquisitiveness, but Montag ascertains her that it was a good question.

He changes the topic and asks Clarisse why she is not at school. She replies that she does not go there anymore because nobody misses her. She is perceived as anti-social which she finds strange, since she likes talking to people. She says that she does not consider as social “to get a bunch of people together and then not let them talk” (Bradbury 29). Clarisse describes her school lessons as mindless routine containing television class, sport, painting, more sport and class of transcription history during which nobody ever asks any questions. Everybody only memorises the answers that run at them. Clarisse continues:

I haven't any friends. I'm afraid of children my own age. They kill each other. Six of my friends have been shot in the last year alone. Ten of them died in car wrecks. I'm afraid of them and they don't like me because I'm afraid. My uncle says his grandfather remembered when children didn't kill each other. But that was a long time ago when they had things different. They believed in responsibility, my uncle says (Bradbury 30).

Clarisse talks to Montag about people and their empty conversations for a while and then says goodbye and leaves.

Whereas the film Clarisse is a teacher and gives only a slight insight into happening in schools by saying that the staff disapproves of fun, the book Clarisse

gives a detailed description of the school routine and says the exact opposite. Her being a teenager is important for she can also provide an unbiased portrait of children of her age. She says that she is afraid of them. Something is missing in them. No one cares about anyone else. Children are isolated from adults and their influence. The society thus lost its children component – neither Montag nor his wife has any children and moreover they do not even consider having any. Mildred's only concern is her television Family which became her real family and her behaviour could be applied to most of her peers in general. This indicates how hopeless the situation in the society is.



The following part in the film more or less corresponds to the happening in the book. Another day at work, Montag is forgetful, uncomfortable and for some reason he cannot even use the pole at the fire station. Captain Beatty notices it with a surprise, but does not pay a great attention to it for the force has to hurry up and go to a call. When firemen arrive to the house whose owner has been accused of possessing books, they are welcomed by an old woman, a friend of Clarisse, who quotes an extract from some book. Montag is astonished that the police did not arrest her before their coming. Montag is said that the woman must have been out when her family was arrested and that he should stay with her to keep an eye on her. The rest of the firemen start collecting books in order to burn them. The search is wild and dozens of books fly through the air.

Beatty calls Montag in excitement to show him that they are not only going to burn a few books but the secret library. Beatty tells Montag that in each fireman's career there are moments of desire to discover what books are all about. However, there is nothing in them. For instance, all novels have nothing to say, since they are about people who never existed. Books only make people unhappy because they make them want to live in other ways that can never be. His speech is interrupted by another fireman who informs him that the whole house is condemned and that it will be burnt too. Beatty continues and talks about philosophy. In his eyes, it is even worse than novels for all philosophers and thinkers say exactly the same thing and that is their being right and others' being idiots. Beatty moves to the shelf with biographies and autobiographies saying that at first there was only the urge to write, but subsequently it became an effort to satisfy own vanity, to stand from the crowd

and disdain others. Montag secretly steals another book. Every book made somebody angry – the Negroes did not like Robinson Crusoe; the Jews did not like Nietzsche; the cigarette smokers did not like books about lung cancer etc. so it is better to burn them all. To be different in any way is not desirable. Only equality can make everyone happy.

Another fireman appears on the scene reporting that the old woman refuses to leave her house without her books. Beatty and Montag try to persuade her, but she insists on staying there. When everything is doused in kerosene, the woman is given ten seconds to leave but she only smiles. Montag wants to force her to go out of the building, but there is no time to do that for the woman strikes a match and put the place on fire herself. Everyone leaves the house except for Montag, who hesitates on the threshold.



As in the film the book depicts Montag at the fire station. He feels uncomfortable for it has been a few days since he last saw Clarisse. Meanwhile, “a radio hummed somewhere: ‘. . . war may be declared any hour. This country stands ready to defend its...’” (Bradbury 32). Captain Beatty asks Montag what is wrong with him. He says that he wonders about what happened to the man whose library they fixed the last week. Beatty answers that he was taken screaming off to the asylum. Montag says that he was not insane, but Beatty remarks: “Any man’s insane who thinks he can fool the Government and us” (Bradbury 33). Montag asks another question whether it is true that a long time ago firemen prevented fires, whereupon two of his colleagues start reciting from their rule book information concerning the establishment of the Firemen of America, stating that the first fireman was Benjamin Franklin who ordered burning of English-influenced books. They continue reading until they are interrupted by the bell ringing for an alarm. Everybody swiftly answers to it.

When firemen arrive to the house with hidden books, they find there a reciting woman. For Montag it is inconvenient, since he is used to come to an empty house where he cannot hurt anyone except the things which feel nothing, this way he avoids having a guilty conscience. This time it is different. Firemen are louder and wilder than usual and the woman watches them with silent reproach.

Montag steals one of the books that happen to be around. The heap of books considerably grows and the woman lovingly touches each of them saying that they cannot ever have her books. “‘You know the law,’ said Beatty. ‘Where’s your common sense? None of those books agree with each other. You’ve been locked up here for years with a regular damned Tower of Babel. Snap out of it! The people in those books never lived. Come on now’” (Bradbury 38)! Nevertheless, the woman ignores Beatty and refuses to leave her books. She burns herself up just like in the film.

When firemen head back to the fire station, they are all uncommonly quiet. Montag is thinking aloud and wonders what the woman was reciting when they came in the door. Beatty repeats the quote and says: “A man named Latimer said that to a man named Nicholas Ridley, as they were being burnt alive at Oxford, for heresy, on October 16, 1555” (Bradbury 40). Everyone looks at him in surprise. Beatty says that he is full of bits and pieces as most fire captains.

The film deals mainly with the fire in old woman’s house, but the book also emphasises the change that Montag is going through when he starts questioning his occupation for the first time in his life. However, the episode taking place at the old woman is the one of great importance. Truffaut excludes from his film the fact that not only Montag found the presence of the old woman unpleasant, but the rest of the firemen felt uncomfortable too, even though they tried to mask it by being uncommonly ferocious. The woman’s death shakes Montag’s world to the degree that it becomes a turning point for all his subsequent actions. Truffaut uses this episode to give more space to captain Beatty, who can express his negative opinions concerning the books and explain to viewers the reason why books are burnt.

In contrast to the film, the book does not give any explanations yet. Nonetheless, it reveals that captain Beatty is uncommonly erudite. He compares books to the biblical Tower of Babel and later acknowledges that he knows Hugh Latimer’s quote. He implies to the reader that he once liked books and that something must have happened to him to become a fire chief.

Another interesting thing mentioned is governmental practice of mixing facts with fiction to support its version of truth and to make it more credible. Although, it is true that in 1736 Franklin founded the Fire Companies in

Philadelphia which were the only fire-fighting organizations then known (Burt 142), these organisations did not burn books as the firemen's rule book provided by the Government claims.



The following events in the book do not appear in the film, but they are a direct continuation of what happened after the woman's suicide.

Montag comes home shaken. He hides stolen book under his pillow and thinks about his perpetually absent-minded wife, about their loveless marriage and about three wall-set televisions that prevent them from becoming close again. Montag feels that day after day his wife is more unfamiliar to him. He asks her when and where they met for the first time, but she cannot remember and neither can Montag. Mildred goes to the bathroom to swallow up some sleeping pills. She leaves Montag wondering whether she accidentally overdoses again. When she comes back, Montag asks her if she knows anything about Clarisse. She replies that her family moved away. She thinks that Clarisse was killed by speeding car four days ago, but she is not sure. Montag cannot believe that she forgot to tell him this terrible news.

The next day, Montag is not well. Everything connected to his job makes him sick. He even vomits when smelling kerosene which he once regarded as perfume. He tells Mildred about the woman that they burnt together with her books. He asks Millie whether she would mind his leaving the job. Mildred is horrified, but she does not pity the woman at all. "She's nothing to me; she shouldn't have had books. It was her responsibility, she should have thought of that. I hate her. She's got you going and next thing you know we'll be out, no house, no job, nothing" (Bradbury 51). Montag says that she did not see her and that there must be something in books that is worth to die for. He continues and tells her that there is a man behind each book who might spend a lifetime before he put down all his thoughts and observations. But Mildred refuses to listen to him. Their argument is interrupted by the arrival of captain Beatty.

He pays Montag a visit saying that he thought that Montag might feel sick. He asks him when he will come back to work. Montag does not know. Beatty says that this happens and that he needs to learn the history of their profession. Beatty

says that it all started with photography, radio, motion pictures and television. Things began to produce for the masses, thus they became simpler. “Once, books appealed to a few people, here, there, everywhere. They could afford to be different. The world was roomy. But then the world got full of eyes and elbows and mouths. . . . Films and radios, magazines, books levelled down to a sort of paste pudding norm” (Bradbury 54). From the twentieth century on, film, camera and life in general became faster. Everything condensed. Books shortened into few lines dictionary résumé. “Digest-digests, digest-digest-digests” (Bradbury 55). All redundant thoughts and phrases were cut in order not to waste people’s time. Build a group spirit, fun, let people do sports, therefore they do not have to think about anything.

Beatty says that Montag should also consider all the minorities in their civilization. “The bigger your market, Montag, the less you handle controversy, remember that! All the minor minor minorities with their navels to be kept clean. Authors, full of evil thoughts, lock up your typewriters. They did” (Bradbury 57). Only meaningless magazines, sex magazines and comic books survived. “There you have it, Montag. It didn't come from the Government down. There was no dictum, no declaration, no censorship, to start with, no! Technology, mass exploitation, and minority pressure carried the trick, thank God. Today, thanks to them, you can stay happy all the time. . .” (Bradbury 58). The word ‘intellectual’ became offensive for everyone is afraid of the unfamiliar. “We must all be alike. Not everyone born free and equal, as the Constitution says, but everyone made equal. Each man the image of every other; then all are happy. . .” (Bradbury 58). Beatty explains that when the need for books disappeared and houses became fireproof, the firemen became official censors of the state and defenders of the peace of minds.

Mildred does not pay attention to Beatty. While smoothing out bedclothes, she finds a book under Montag’s pillow and cries out. Montag silences her and listens to Beatty again. Beatty pretends that he did not notice anything. Montag asks him one last question – whether he knows Clarisse McClellan. Beatty replies that he has files about her family. He says that she was dangerous to the society and that she is better off dead. Then he says that the lecture is over and that he has to go. He shakes Montag’s hand and says that every fireman is at least once in a career overcome by curiosity and wants to learn what is in books, but he eventually

discovers that there is nothing to learn or to believe. Montag asks what would happen to a fireman who would accidentally get a book into his possession. Beatty answers that he would be given twenty-four hours to burn it himself without any further consequences. Then he expresses his wish for Montag to come to work as soon as possible and leaves.

The first part of the book finishes by Montag's confession to Mildred that he has approximately twenty books hidden in their house which he has been collecting for a year for unknown reasons. He wants Mildred to look at them with him to find answers in there. "We've got to start somewhere here, figuring out why we're in such a mess, you and the medicine at night, and the car, and me and my work. We're heading right for the cliff, Millie" (Bradbury 66). Mildred is reluctant, but Montag persuades her and they start to read.

By omission of these events the film is unsuccessful in depicting of some crucial facts. First of all, it is Montag's growing alienation from his wife, his despair stemming from guilty conscience and from losing of all his values that he once esteemed. Another thing that profoundly affected him and broke him was Clarisse's death about which he was only vaguely informed.

Secondly, the film does not provide complete psychology of Mildred's character. The book describes her as selfish and insensitive. She is not moved by anything. She does not even take the trouble to inform Montag about Clarisse's death when she learns about it. She has no feelings for the burnt woman. The only thing that evokes emotions in her is the fear of Montag's losing his job because it would mean the loss of their house and especially the loss of her television Family.

Thirdly, it omits probably the most important point in the book and that is the one that Beatty makes about book burning. Whereas Beatty in the film only states that books are good for nothing, since they contradict each other and always make somebody unhappy by offending minorities or by showing people more desirable ways of living, or by creating intellectual differences, Beatty in the book provides in depth context from which it is clear that the ban on books did not start with some groundless decision of the Government but with the minority pressure, mass exploitation and technology that undermines reading habits. This is essential for it is mainly technology and its negative influence against which Bradbury warns

the readers and not some evil government. Bradbury expresses this way a kind of social critique which the film fails to represent.

And finally, in contrast to the film, Montag does not cut off his wife from his life. He tries to engage her in it again and find a solution to their problems. His behaviour contributes to the completion of his character.

3.2 Part 2 – The Sieve and the Sand

The film continues with events taking place right after the incident with the burnt woman. Montag arrives back home where Linda and her three friends are watching the television and talking about the irresponsibility of having or not having children. Montag does not say a word to them and goes to hide his stolen book. Linda attempts to convince him to join them, but he is not in the mood. However, when he overhears a television announcer presenting ‘Those Who Threaten You’ news and mentioning the old woman, he angrily enters the living room and switches the television off. He decides to tell the surprised company about the woman himself. He says that the woman chose to be burnt with her books rather than being separated from them. Everybody thinks that Montag is joking, since that kind of things do not happen. He disagrees and says that even things like war or dying in it happen, although they all pretend that it is not true.

Montag accuses the company of being mere zombies who do not live but only kill time. Linda’s friends are offended and want to leave, but he stops them. He brings a book to read them a passage from David Copperfield. The extract depicts David’s marriage with Dora and her subsequent death caused by miscarriage from which she did not recover. When Montag finishes the reading, one of Linda’s friends bursts into tears under the weight of evoked emotions. She is ashamed that she cannot bear to know all those feelings that she had already forgotten. The other two friends decide to take her home while complaining about books and their idiotic words that only hurt people.

Linda knows that her friends will not come again. She blames Montag for her loneliness and complains that because of him she will not be offered to play in the Family anymore. Irrespective of her reproaches Montag tells her to leave him alone because he has to read much to catch up with the remembrance of the past.



In the book on the other hand, an important episode precedes the confrontation between Montag and friends of his wife. When Montag shows Millie his collection of books at the end of the first part, they try to read them, but they do not understand what they read. None of the books makes sense to them. However, Montag realises that Clarisse and her uniqueness were somehow connected to books and their content and wants them to further scrutinise. Mildred refuses to do it or to talk about dead Clarisse. She longs to return back to her television Family because her Family is more colourful and more real than any of the books that her husband has.

Meanwhile, the couple is disturbed from their dispute by a faint scratching noise outside the front door. They guess that it is some stray dog, but it could also be the Mechanical Hound. Mildred is scared and wants to burn all the books immediately for she does not see any benefits from reading. Unlike his wife, Montag hopes that books give him answers to his questions. He hopes that he could learn why the sky is full of bombers that cross over their houses every second of their lives, why the rest of the world hates them and why the war clouds are gathering. He determines not to remain inactive and find himself a teacher who would explain him the meaning of books and wake him up from his ignorance. Montag remembers again the strange encounter with Faber in the park a year ago. He calls him because he thinks that Faber could help him as a retired professor of English, but Faber does not want to talk to him. He is afraid of falling into a trap.

Therefore Montag decides to visit him in person and make a copy of the book that he stole from the old woman before he is due to hand it to Beatty. When Montag comes to Faber, he shows him possibly the last copy of the Bible. The professor is tempted to keep it, but he still fears Montag and the danger that he brings into his life. Montag says that he needs to learn about books and about his own unhappiness. Faber explains to him that he is not unhappy because he is lacking books but because he is lacking the quality inside them. It is the quality to tell the details and touch the life. This quality could be found in other media too but people lost interest in it. The Government took advantage of it and used firemen to protect the status quo, since ruling over the unthinking mass is easier than ruling over the people who can question its actions.

Montag asks Faber whether he will help him and he replies that he will listen to him only if his plan includes burning of the fireman structure itself. Montag suggests destroying the system by planting books into the firemen's houses and their subsequent denunciation. Faber is sceptical about any kind of plan. He does not see as a way out neither destruction of firemen, nor forming of classes of thinking and reading, nor the upcoming war which might turn off all television Families. Faber thinks that the society is rotten through and through. Montag does not capitulate and eventually persuades him into teaching him. Faber gives Montag a small two-way radio transmitter thanks to which they can communicate with each other all the time undetected. From this time on, Faber becomes Montag's mentor as well as the reading voice in his head.

Truffaut completely omits this section and does not introduce the character of Faber, although he is important in two aspects. Firstly, he is another influential person that enters into Montag's life. He clarifies what is the essential value of the books and why people need them. He becomes Montag's instructor and slowly leads him to the thinking on his own which contributes to Montag's development. And secondly, Faber represents a portrayal of an intellectual who has lost his hope in other people. He is disheartened, desperate, and cowardly and lives in fear. His character shows how oppressive actions taken by the Government changed the people and deprived them from the willingness to fight or at least to protest. Faber provides to readers accurate view of the intellectual part of the society that grew old and already resigned from every attempt to ameliorate current situation. Faber's absence in the film resulted not only into incomplete depiction of society and the sad fate of intellectuals, but also in inaccurate description of Montag's transformation which is in the book gradual, more elaborated and more believable.

The next scene describes the same event as the film one. It is focused on Mildred's friends. When Montag returns home from Faber, he is disturbed by the visit of Mrs Bowles and Mrs Phelps, two friends of his wife. They are avidly watching a television but Montag is annoyed by it and turns it off. The women get nervous and do not know what to do. Montag suggests them to have a conversation and asks them about their families. Neither Mrs Bowles nor Mrs Phelps has much to say in general but it is enough to shock Montag.. He is horrified by women's shallowness, sheer ignorance and by their way of life. He wants these monsters to

feel at least something and brings a book to frighten them. Even though Faber warns him via radio transmitter not to do it, Montag starts reading *Dover Beach* by Mathew Arnold. His reading makes Mrs Phelps cry. Everyone's is looking at her and is shaken. Mrs Bowles curses Montag and his poetry. Angered, he ejects both women from his house and recommends them to contemplate their awful lives. Mildred goes to take sleeping pills and her husband hides remaining books in the garden.

The comparison of both scenes reveals some minor differences concerning the number of Millie's friends, the topics discussed with them and Montag's motivation to engage into the conversation. The film Montag decides to talk to the company only to explain the death of the burnt woman, whereas the book Montag really tries to interact with Mrs Bowles and Mrs Phelps. The women discuss various subjects. Basically, they regard suicide as something ordinary and normal. The real family means almost nothing to them and the upcoming war in which their husbands will have to fight is ignored due to lack of their interest. The only thing that these women care about is looks. Their utter emptiness which is common for the rest of the society is less blatant in the film.

Another difference lies in the choice of the book read. In the film, Montag reads *David Copperfield*. This particular part depicting the loss of wife and child puts an emphasis on the family life and family relationships. Therefore it highlights more romantic features. On the other hand, *Dover Beach* makes an allusion to the Victorian era in which social system was changing, the new values were established, the religion was undermined and new problems brought by industrialization arose. It describes the world from which faith receded and in which love is the only certainty that people can lean on. This world is strikingly similar to the Montag's one. It mirrors the lost belief, the immense influence of technology upon people's life and it also shows the world that is a hair's breadth away from war. Unlike the film, the book does not stress only the value of family relationships but personal relationships in general.



The film proceeds with an event that the book does not encompass and that follows the argument with Linda's friends. At night Montag has wretched dreams in

which Clarisse burns herself up instead of old woman. Montag wakes up in fear. At the same time, Clarisse is lying in her bed too, but she is disturbed by the fire siren that she hears from the outside of the house. Clarisse's uncle comes to warn her and let her flee before firemen can enter the house and arrest her.

The morning after, Montag has an unhealthy appearance and Linda wants him to stay at home, but he opposes her saying that he must go to the fire station, since he does not know whether he will be able to go there tomorrow or any other day. Linda is concerned about his promotion, but he tells her to forget it. She does not understand him anymore. She asks him to choose between her and his books, but Montag cannot make the choice and leaves for work. He spots that Clarisse's house is empty and sealed off. He asks his neighbour, whether she knows what happened. She replies that firemen took the family away because they were different and to prove it, she points to the rooftop of Clarisse's house showing him that there is no television antenna.

At work Montag secretly slips into Beatty's office to find some information about Clarisse. In the meantime, the captain is handed a file of Clarisse's family and returns back to his office where he catches Montag red-handed. He asks him what he is doing there. Montag responds that he is searching for identification files from the previous day. Beatty is surprised, but he shows him the documents. Montag learns that Clarisse is still at large. Relieved he lets his superior think that he is interested in Clarisse only because of her house. Beatty assures him that he will obtain the house soon and asks him how he entered his office. Before Montag can answer, he faints in anxiety. Beatty sends him out to breathe some fresh air and does not inquire him anymore.

A brief shot of Montag's leaving the fire station is followed by the image of Linda, who goes to the information box to put in there her husband's photograph.

Camera switches to the monorail. Clarisse exits the train and meets Montag, who seems to be waiting for her. He wants to know what happened. She informs him about her situation while heading home. Montag implies that her house is the last place where she should be. Clarisse explains that she has to find there highly important papers containing names and addresses of the friends of her uncle. Montag decides to help her. As an experienced fireman, he finds the papers quickly

and immediately burns them. Clarisse confesses that their first meeting in the monorail was not an accident. She noticed him and followed him because she thought that he might be a help. He says that he knew it since the old woman's suicide when he realised that there was a connection between them. Clarisse says that the woman was afraid that she would talk and betray the others; hence she rather chose to kill herself. Montag tells Clarisse that he cannot be a fireman anymore.

Clarisse reminds him that they should leave the house. She knows a place to go to, a place where Book people live. Montag has no idea who they are and what she is talking about. Clarisse is surprised that he never heard of them and tells him that these people live up in the farm country, the hills and the woods. They live there in little groups and hide from the regime forbidding books. However, they do nothing illegal, as he might think. Montag does not understand why she calls them Book people if they do not do anything against the law. Clarisse specifies that they are books themselves. Men and women commit a book that they have chosen to memory and they become the book. They live extremely cautiously for the secret that they carry is the most precious secret in the world. All human knowledge would pass away without them. Nevertheless, now and then, someone is arrested.

Clarisse wants Montag to go there with her, but he refuses. It is too soon for him to leave the city. Moreover, he has a plan for destruction of the system: placing of books into the firemen's houses and denouncing them. Then he says that they should part and see each other later. Clarisse says that it is pointless to pretend that they will meet again. He agrees and they go their separate ways.

This film part does not follow the plot of the book. It is made up by Truffaut who not only added a redundant episode concerning Clarisse but also made some major changes in the story. First of all, Truffaut let Clarisse live. Her disappearance in the book caused Montag a huge shock which plunged him into uncertainty and also influenced his later behaviour. Secondly, Clarisse says that she primarily befriended Montag because she thought that he might help her. Her selfish reasons do not correspond to the character of Bradbury's Clarisse, since she has never intended to have any profit from her acquaintanceship with Montag.

Another difference relates to the turning point of Montag's life, to the burnt woman. The woman was a martyr who sacrificed her life for books and for the freedom. However, the film *Clarisse* claims that the woman was her friend and that she died lest betray the others. Although this information does not belittle her sacrifice, it changes its meaning. Bradbury stresses the importance and basic need for books, and Truffaut highlights the friendship. He also slightly changes the view on Montag by omission of Faber. Truffaut's Montag gives the impression that he is self-confident and that he knows what to do to finish the firemen and win the war against the system. Faber helps the reader understand that Montag is still naïve, immature and foolish when it comes to his ideas about fighting the firemen and bringing the books back.



The film continues with a brief shot of Linda who packs her suitcases after denunciation of her husband, and follows with the scene in the fire station. Montag arrives to the work during the fire alarm. Captain Beatty is pleased to see him and invites him to join the force, but Montag expresses his desire to resign. Beatty says that this is not how the things are done, especially on the eve of promotion. He adds that even if Montag will not come tomorrow, he is under his command today; therefore he should not let him down in front of the others. Montag joins the men only to find out that it is his house that was reported.



The book depicts events after Montag's clash with Mrs Phelps and Mrs Bowles. Montag feels lonely so he talks to Faber on his way to work. He has a guilty conscience and he is afraid that he pointlessly hurt Millie's friends. He doubts whether it is right to make them unhappy. He supposes that it might be better to not to face things and let them have fun. However, Faber opposes him saying that it is impossible, since there is no peace in the world and the war is coming. When Montag arrives to work, he hands the book that he stole to captain Beatty. He throws it away and invites Montag to join others in playing cards. During the game, Beatty bombards Montag with quotations from Shakespeare, Pope, Coleridge, etc. in order to confuse him and undermine his beliefs in books by emphasising their contradictions. His behaviour makes Montag nervous and angry, but Faber calms

him down via radio transmitter. The second part of the book finishes similarly to the film. The firemen are interrupted by a call which will eventually lead them to Montag's house.

The end of this part differs only a little from the film, nevertheless, it provides the reader with an insight into Montag's mind. It mainly describes his doubts concerning his actions, his fear from captain Beatty's eloquence which might break his determination, and finally it witnesses Montag's growing bond with Faber which enables him to act on his own. In addition, the film does not display the fight between Montag and Beatty which reveals Beatty as an authoritative and skilful manipulator who exploits his knowledge to control people and to make them obey. The film thus leaves out some significant information regarding Beatty's and Montag's character.

3.3 Part 3 – Burning Bright

The third part of the film starts with Montag's astonishment when the fire truck stops in front of his house. While everyone is entering the house, Montag meets Linda at the doorstep. She tells him that she could not bear it anymore and leaves. Beatty orders Montag to find all the books in the house and burn them. Unexpectedly, Montag starts burning everything except the books. Beatty asks him whether he went mad for there is no need to burn the house. Therefore Montag obediently directs the flamethrower at the heap of books. The fire captain is finally satisfied. He starts lecturing Montag on the uselessness of books and says that the books will not teach him anything since all their writings and recipes for happiness disagree. Only firemen work for man's happiness.

Beatty watches Montag's doing with contentment until he finds out that Montag still owns one. He angrily confiscates and says that Montag is under arrest. Montag pulls the book out of Beatty's hands, but Beatty takes a gun and aims at him. In self-defence Montag burns Beatty alive and commands other firemen to leave his house. Then he burns the whole place to the ground.

A chase for Montag is launched. All citizens are urged to stand at their front doors and watch for a man running through the streets, a fireman wanted for murder. Montag runs away from the city and manages to hide from eyes of people

and from aerial patrol. Reaching the outskirts, he sets out on a journey to Book people.



As well as in the film, the book depicts happenings concerning the fire of Montag's house and his subsequent escape to the Book people, but it also develops new topics and shows some events in a different view.

The book Montag experiences the same shock as the film one. "'Well,' said Beatty, 'now you did it. Old Montag wanted to fly near the sun and now that he's burnt his damn wings, he wonders why. Didn't I hint enough when I sent the Hound around your place'" (Bradbury 113)? Beatty tells Montag that he warned him and even later in the story when Montag asks him whether Mildred reported him, he answers that her friends reported him first, but he let it go.

This confession shows the character of the main antagonist in a more tolerable way. On the other hand, his effort to provoke Montag with literary allusions in one of his most difficult moments of his life makes Beatty's character even more twisted and dangerous.

Beatty makes inappropriate remarks about Clarisse and orders Montag to burn down his own house with a flamethrower. Montag surprisingly enjoys the burning like he did before but his almost dreamlike reality is soon ruined by Beatty who detects Faber's radio transmitter. Beatty discovers why Montag turned clever and says that he will trace his friend down. Montag panics and aims the flamethrower at Beatty who incessantly verbally attacks him. Montag kills his captain and stuns two remaining colleagues. However, the Mechanical Hound appears on the scene and attempts to immobilise him. The Hound manages to hit only Montag's leg before it is destroyed with the flamethrower. Montag struggles to his feet, takes the books that he hid in the garden and runs away. Paralysed by remorse, he falls to the ground and cries. "In the middle of the crying Montag knew it for the truth. Beatty had wanted to die. . . . How strange, strange, to want to die so much that you let a man walk around armed and then instead of shutting up and staying alive, you go on yelling at people and making fun of them until you get them mad, and then..." (Bradbury 122).

Bradbury's Montag feels sorry for Beatty. He regrets that he killed him, since he was once his friend. Truffaut omits any expression of similar feelings. The film leaves the impression that Montag is absolutely cold-hearted. Also Beatty's behaviour seems illogical because it is highly improbable that experienced captain of the fire brigade would be so careless and give potentially dangerous man a flamethrower and risk consequent problems. The film is missing a proper explanation for this sort of negligence which is in the book clarified by Beatty's motivation to die.

When Montag calms down, he washes himself in the near gas station to look less suspicious. There he learns via radio that a war was declared. He decides not to care about it until he is safe and sets on the journey again. When he tries to cross a big boulevard, he is nearly hit by kids in speeding car. Montag realises that the kids wanted to run over him and wonders whether these were the same kids that killed Clarisse. He pulls himself together, slips into the house of his colleague, leaves there books from his garden and reports him.

Montag subconsciously arrives to Faber's house where he tells the professor about his desperate situation and apologises for putting him at risk. But Faber finally feels alive because he knows that he is doing the right thing. Faber advises Montag to go to the country and to find there a hobo camp where old Harvard degrees might be in hiding. Then he turns on the television and learns that police helicopters with a new Mechanical Hound are approaching to his place. Montag quickly covers his tracks and arranges a future meeting with Faber who decides to leave the city. Montag's subsequent escape to the intellectuals is more or less corresponding to the one in the film.

Truffaut in his film does not mention the accident with kids in the speeding car. The accident brings Montag back to the thoughts of Clarisse who described speeding as a common amusement of her peers. This car episode even highlights the social problem of youngsters - they stick at nothing and do not hesitate to kill a man for fun. Their behaviour provides reader with an explanation of Clarisse's alienation and her fear from them. The film also excludes Montag's visit at Faber's during which he is advised to find intellectuals who later reveal to be the Book people. This information is conveyed by Clarisse in the film so the plotline's logic is preserved. However, Montag's visiting Faber also serves as a mean for depiction of

their new bond which was already hinted by Montag's fear for Faber when captain Beatty threatened that he will trace him down. This fear became together with Beatty's provocations the trigger for his murder.



The final moments of the film concerns Montag's arrival to the Book people's camp. He is welcomed by a man who invites him to witness his own capture. Montag is confused and does not know what to think. The man introduces himself as The Journal of Henry Brulard by Stendhal and shows him a live broadcasting that monitors the pursuit of putative Montag. Montag watches the man in the television who desperately runs from the helicopter which is shooting at him. Henry Brulard explains that the audience cannot be kept waiting much longer and that the show must go on whether the police find real Montag or not. Anyone is satisfactory to provide them with their climax. After a while the man from the broadcasting is killed and the crime against society is avenged. Now when Montag is officially dead, Henry gives him new civil clothes to shed his old skin.

The camera switches to people in the camp. Henry introduces Montag to some of them. There are Plato's Republic, Wuthering Heights, Alice in Wonderland, Pilgrim's Process, etc. Henry guides Montag through the camp and informs him that there are approximately fifty people, but many more are dispersed around, wandering the roads. He says that it was not planned. It just happened that way. Some people loved some books and rather than lose them, they learned them and came together. They are an undesirable minority in the wilderness, but when the time comes they will be called to recite what they learned so the books could be printed again. Montag shows Henry and Clarisse, who joined them, a book that he saved from Beatty. They tell him to learn it quickly, so that they can burn it. Montag is surprised that they are book-burners. Clarisse and Henry explain to him that they burn books in fear that they would be taken away from them, but at the same time, they keep the books in memory where nobody can find them.

Then, they show him an old man who is dying across the river. He is The Weir of Hermiston and recites himself to his nephew, for the boy could become the book. The old man dies and it starts to snow. The film ends with a portrayal of Book people who are walking in the snow and memorising books.



The book, on the other hand, finishes rather differently. Bradbury is more philosophical in tone and introduces another important character which was in Truffaut's film omitted.

Once Montag gets to the countryside, he reunites with the nature and rediscovers its magic. The city's negative influences and its technology are removed from him and Montag is freed to think clearly again. He thinks of Mildred and Clarisse and reflects on his life of burner – “The sun burned every day. It burned Time. . . . So if he burnt things with the firemen and the sun burnt Time, that meant that everything burned! One of them had to stop burning. The sun wouldn't, certainly” (Bradbury 141). After reflection upon this topic, Montag decides to become a preserver rather than destroyer, even though he is still unsure what he should do for it.

While wandering in the woods, Montag catches sight of firelight and a small group of five elderly men. He comes closer and one of them, Granger, invites him to sit by the fire with them. He gives Montag a special drink saying that it will change the chemical index of his perspiration so the Hound will not be able to identify him. The men show Montag a portable television with the police chase which ends with a death of an innocent person. When the horrible show is over, Granger introduces people from the group to Montag. It turns out that they are mostly former professors who are wanted by the Government for various types of activity. They live in hiding in which they became the walking books.

Granger is wondering whether Montag wants to join them and asks him if he has anything to offer. Montag replies that he has nothing. He says that he tried to memorise the Book of Ecclesiastes but he forgot it. Granger soothes him and says that they have a method which enables them to recall anything that has been once read. Yet Montag thinks that he does not belong with them, since he has been doing silly things. Granger assures him that all of them have made something foolish otherwise they would not live like hoboes out of society. He explains that there are thousands of them and that their organisation is very flexible, loose and fragmentary. Some members live even in cities or villages. They all wait for the beginning of a war and its quick end. Only when war is over they can be of some

use in the world. Montag doubts that people will listen to them, but Granger says that one day people will start wondering what happened and why the world blew up under them. Until then, the books will be spread by word-of-mouth. He continues:

. . . some day, some year, the books can be written again, the people will be called in, one by one, to recite what they know and we'll set it up in type until another Dark Age, when we might have to do the whole damn thing over again. But that's the wonderful thing about man; he never gets so discouraged or disgusted that he gives up doing it all over again, because he knows very well it is important and worth the doing (Bradbury 153).

Montag decides to join the professors and the whole group moves downstream. They want to avoid cities, since cities would be the first at hazard if the war begun. Montag realises that although his wife is somewhere in the city, he would not probably mourn for her even if she died. Such thought scares him. Granger decides to tell Montag a story about his grandfather. He says that when his grandfather died, he did not cry for him but for the things that he did and for his contribution to the world. Montag, interested in this idea, tries to remember something that would be somehow affected by Mildred's existence, but he cannot think of anything.

Out of blue, Montag is blinded by the light of an explosion. He falls to the ground hit by shockwave. The war started and ended almost at the same time. Once the bombs were dropped, it was over. Montag imagines that he hears Millie screaming

“. . .because in the millionth part of time left, she saw her own face reflected there, in a mirror instead of a crystal ball, and it was such a wildly empty face, all by itself in the room, touching nothing, starved and eating of itself, that at last she recognized it as her own and looked quickly up at the ceiling as it and the entire structure of the hotel blasted down upon her. . .” (Bradbury 160).

Montag finally remembers that he met his wife in Chicago and shortly afterwards, he even recalls the book of Ecclesiastes. The shock from the explosion fades away and Granger starts comparing humankind to the mythical bird Phoenix which every few centuries burns himself up and then rises from its ashes only to make the same mistake again. Nevertheless, people have an advantage over the

bird, since they are aware of all foolishness that they have done thus one day they will learn from their own history and they will stop destroying themselves. Granger says that from now on they will start meeting a great number of lonely people who might ask them what they are doing and their response will be that they are remembering. He adds:

And some day we'll remember so much that we'll build the biggest goddam steam-shovel in history and dig the biggest grave of all time and shove war in and cover it up. Come on now, we're going to go build a mirror-factory first and put out nothing but mirrors for the next year and take a long look in them (Bradbury 164).

The novel finishes when the men set off towards the city to help the survivors and to begin the city's rebirth.

The final part of the book features a very poetic language and puts a special emphasis to Montag's coming back to nature and his leaving the city. Once Montag enters the natural world of countryside, he starts recalling memories from his childhood and properly thinking about new purpose of his life. It is the place where he at last finds people who interact with each other and share their experience. Truffaut does not use the nature the same way as Bradbury does. For Truffaut the nature serves only as scenery and as a refuge from the Government. Bradbury suggests that it is mainly a refuge from technology where people are free to think without being constantly distracted by it. This environment allows Montag to express himself and let reader learn something more about his psychology.

Whereas Montag in the book is aware that he erred and he wants to change himself and become beneficial to the world, Montag in the film leaves the impression that his only desire is to save himself and the books. The greatest difference between those two Montags is following – Truffaut's Montag is fascinated by the books that he discovered. He knows that firemen make a mistake by burning them. However, he does not see the bigger picture. He does not fully understand why the books are needed since he has no Faber who would explain it to him.

Even the Book people do not seem to realise the essential value of books. Instead of being intellectual visionaries who might help people to get rid of their problems, they appear to be only ardent fans of books. The statement of one of the

Book people in the film indicates it – “it just so happened that a man here and a man there loved some book and rather than lose it, he learned it” (Truffaut). Their motivation to memorise books is their love for them. Moreover, their underground group of fifty people cannot be really considered as secret. The film *Clarisse* herself is surprised that Montag did not hear about it. The overall impression of Truffaut’s vision of Book people is eminently romantic and idyllic and it has not much in common with Bradbury’s conception.

Bradbury portrays Book people as a secret organization consisting of intellectuals. Not all of them live in woods, but those who do live in small groups to be inconspicuous. Their way of memorising books is more efficient and less romantic. Nonetheless, the most striking difference between Bradbury’s and Truffaut’s concept of Book people lies in their different motivation to memorise books. Bradbury says that Book people engage in preserving knowledge and stories from the past in hope that this knowledge will serve humankind in future. Their aim is to create a type of collective memory which would help people to learn from their mistakes and eventually provide them with freedom. These beliefs are communicated by Granger, the character which is not included in Truffaut’s adaptation. Granger is after Clarisse and Faber the last important person that influences Montag’s development. Becoming Montag’s teacher, he gives him a hope for better future, a new goal of his life and also explains to him one of the central ideas of the book – i.e. technology tends to remove human beings from meaningful connection with creation and with nature which they are part of. Consequently, people should try to contribute to the world and touch it with their lives so that the world knows that they have been alive.

The last pages of the book deal with the outbreak of war, which was already foreshadowed at the beginning of the book by jet bombers crossing over the sky. However, Truffaut completely leaves this topic out, since the political dimension of *Fahrenheit 451* does not interest him (Samuels 44). As a result, his film fails to represent social critique mirroring the time when the book was written. Problems in *Fahrenheit 451* reminds of political atmosphere of the 1950s in America. This era was affected by the ongoing Cold War and the Korean War. It was an age of anxiety and uncertainty during which the threat of atomic war became omnipresent. The freedom was restricted by censorship and governmental persecutions, which

were embodied by politician Joseph McCarthy. Although these issues were reflected and closely analysed in the book, Bradbury advised Truffaut to eliminate the concept of an atomic bomb from his film, since what he perceived as a real threat was an ignorance and lack of education (Bouzereau).

4. Conclusion

This bachelor thesis tried to prove or disprove the assumption that film adaptations 1) reduce the original plotline, 2) provide incomplete or ambiguous character motivation and character psychology in general and 3) frequently tend to emphasize romantic appeal at the expense of social critique.

The reduction of the plotline proved to be true in many parts of the film. For instance Truffaut omits description of Montag's evenings at the fire station, some of his conversations with Clarisse, reading of the books with his wife, meeting with professor Faber, dangerous clash with kids in the car, denunciation of his colleague, and mainly the war. Some of these scenes are important since they introduce new characters like Faber and Mechanical Hound – the Hound being a symbol of technological advancement, and at the same time, of the most effective weapon which is used by the oppressive Government for securing people's obedience and mind. Faber's role is, on the contrary, the positive one. As an intellectual, he possesses the knowledge of history, which enables him to participate in Montag's transformation and mental development. However, Truffaut partially compensates omission of these two characters. In a particular point of view, Clarisse might function as a mixed character and substitute for Faber's role. The Hound as a symbol of oppression is completely replaced with Truffaut's invented episodes which depict firemen's work routine including persecutions and bullying of everyone who is different. Although Truffaut leaves some events from the book out, he does not seem to be doing it because of lack of time but rather on purpose, otherwise he would not have incorporated more than five additional episodes of his own.

The second premise is probably the most striking one. Even though *Fahrenheit 451* is a story which primarily pays homage to books, it is also a story about Montag and the mental change that he undergoes while searching for the meaning of his life. However, the spectator may be under the impression that his change for the better was immediate and therefore unbelievable. Truffaut omits a large amount of information which defines Montag's character. He thus contributes to his improper perception – e.g. the episode concerning captain Beatty's death shows Montag as a seemingly cold-hearted killer despite the fact that in the book he feels sorry for Beatty because he used to be his friend. Another thing which also

contributes to Montag's bad image is his poorly depicted motivation to kill Beatty which looks somewhat hasty. Unfortunately, incomplete description of character psychology affected not only Montag but other characters too. As a consequence some of the major characters are perceived inaccurately. Nevertheless, this time it is difficult to assume that it was Truffaut's intention.

The third premise, which supposes that adaptations usually emphasize romantic features instead of the critical ones, does not correspond with the reality of this film. One possible case where romanticism is preferred to depressing reflection of the futuristic world is the scene in which Montag reads *David Copperfield* in place of *Dover Beach*, but it is questionable. For this reason, it can be concluded that regardless of the fact that Truffaut's film contains some highly romantic elements (e.g. his conception of Book people is almost idyllic), these elements are by no means presented at the expense of social critique. It is true that Truffaut eliminates some of the social problems which Bradbury does not (e.g. war, or juvenile delinquency), but his motivation for their reduction is his lacking interest in them.

In this particular case, the premises which were set at the beginning of the thesis and which were used for comparison of both media proved to have almost no value. The fact that Truffaut considerably changed the plotline, not only by omission of some scenes but mainly by addition of some extra ones, indicates that he did not intend to make an adaptation which would be as faithful as possible to its source material. He rather created a work which preserves the soul of the adapted story but reshapes it in its own original way, which is the reason why the above mentioned premises should not be applied to Truffaut's film – they are not suitable for this type of adaptation.

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