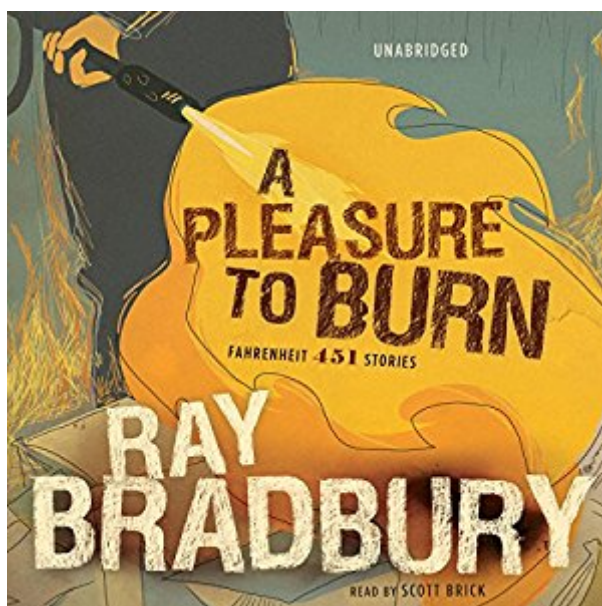


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# A Pleasure To Burn: Fahrenheit 451 Stories



## Synopsis

Ray Bradbury's novel Fahrenheit 451 is an enduring masterwork of 20th-century American literature - a chilling vision of a dystopian future built on the foundations of ignorance, censorship, and brutal repression. The origins and evolution of Bradbury's darkly magnificent tale are explored in *A Pleasure to Burn*, a collection of 16 selected shorter works that prefigure the grand master's landmark novel. With classic, thematically interrelated stories alongside many crucial lesser-known ones - including, at the collection's heart, the novellas "Long after Midnight" and "The Fireman" - *A Pleasure to Burn* is an indispensable companion to the most powerful work of America's preeminent storyteller and a wondrous confirmation of the inimitable Bradbury's brilliance, magic, and fire. Ray Bradbury, one of the most popular science fiction writers in the world, is the author of more than five hundred short stories, novels, plays, and poems. He has won many awards, including the National Book Award and the Grand Master Award from the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

For all that I love Ray Bradbury's works, I think its fair to say that he returned to a few themes in his work over and over again, with echoes and reflections of other work popping up in stories again and again. In part, this is what makes it all Bradbury. But this collection is a bit like peeking behind the magician's curtain. Even worse, although all the stories here relate to Fahrenheit 451 - or at least the concepts in it - they are not all stories that pre-date F451, but you would never know that without some detective work (such as reviewer Mark S has done). This book is a cut down version of

something else, and although it's a lot cheaper, it's also a lot less. Also, rather than echoes and reflections popping up from time to time, this is more like being beaten over the head with the same stuff time and again. The other thing you should be aware of, before you buy this book, is that "The Fireman" and "Long After Midnight" are pretty much the same tale, with minor textual differences, and the only ones that might be significant are at the end. And, of course, if you have read F451, then there is not a lot of need to read either novella, but presumably you know that already. I certainly did not mind reading the tale again once, in a shorter version, or even then reading it over again, but I was a little miffed at how a supposedly different version was really almost entirely the same. So, for all my complaining, it's still pretty good. Not a lot is new, or even rare, and Bradbury on the same theme without a break is not quite as good as a madcap anthology jumping around seemingly at random: but it's still Bradbury. Fahrenheit 451 is still a really powerful piece on self-censorship, and this collection certainly makes you think. But if I had my time over again, perhaps I'd just go and read F451 again instead.

I have read Fahrenheit 451 before this book of his. I think those were his amateur stories whilst beginning of the writing adventure. There were some very good ideas and seeing the development of F451 was like a privilege. After all it was fine.

All of these stories are culled from other collections, but oh it's great to have them all in one book.... These stories are classic as only Ray can make them stand out and touch your heart at the same time. If you like Bradbury, you will love this!

Short stories that led to the writing of Fahrenheit 451. A chance to see the master story-teller's mind at work on the road to creating a masterpiece.

If you've ever read Fahrenheit 451 then this book is a must!! This book expands upon Fahrenheit 451 by giving you short stories before Fahrenheit 451 and short stories after Fahrenheit 451.

Fantastic book, came in great condition.

for use in my classroom

When I was in high school, I became aware of a body of stories that seemed to be sources for Ray

Bradbury's novel, *Fahrenheit 451* (1953). First, there was a novella in *Galaxy* called "The Fireman" that was an early version of the novel. I had not yet read the story, because it was not then available in book form. But in 1963, there was a short story in *Fantasy and Science Fiction* called "Bright Phoenix" that was originally written in 1947 and was a source for the novel. It is a somewhat whimsical tale in which book-burning censors are frustrated by librarians who have memorized the books. I noticed that Bradbury's short story, "The Pedestrian" (*The Reporter*, 1951), shares a similar setting, imagery, and line of dialogue ("That's my house") with the novel-- similarities that almost surely made it another source to the novel. I suspected that there were other sources to *Fahrenheit 451*, though I didn't have the slightest idea what they were. *A Pleasure to Burn: Fahrenheit 451 Stories* (2011) is a collection of thirteen "source" stories to *Fahrenheit 451*, plus three bonus stories from a later chapbook. They are stories that reflect Bradbury's love of books and art, his hatred of censorship and book burning, and his antipathy towards conformist dystopias. Bradbury prefers the madman out of the House of Usher to the sane conformist who rigidly follows the rules. Let us start with the two stories most directly related to the novel, the two "Montag" novellas, "Long After Midnight" (*Eros*, 1963) and "The Fireman" (*Galaxy*, 1952). They are obvious "first drafts" of the novel and are clearly similar to one another. "The Fireman" was voted one of the best science fiction novellas of all time by the Science Fiction Writers of America. But it was the one novella that did not appear in the SFWA anthology of best science fiction novellas. I suspect that it is because Bradbury knew that the original story would suffer in comparison with his classic novel. Bradbury was probably right not to reprint either of these tales too often. They are of some historical value but limited literary value. The eleven other "source stories" may be divided into roughly two types: stories of fire and dystopian tales. Stories of fire are tales which use fire as a symbol of destruction, usually at the hand of censors and book burners. "Bright Phoenix" is a story of fire. Dystopian tales are stories of nightmare futures that do not necessarily involve fire. "The Pedestrian" is a dystopian tale. These stories influenced the novel in less direct ways-- its symbolism, its thematic content, and detail of setting.

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