

Recurring Symbolism in *Fahrenheit 451*

Excerpt from the Text	Why is this significant?	How does it develop the themes?
<p>Symbol: Fire</p> <p>“It was a pleasure to burn. It was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and <i>changed</i>.”(1)</p> <p>“So it was now, in his own parlor, with these women twisting in their chairs under his gaze, lighting cigarettes, blowing smoke, touching their sun-fired hair and examining their blazing fingernails as if they had caught fire from his look.”(92)</p> <p>“He burnt the bedroom walls and the cosmetic chest because he wanted to change everything, the chairs, the tables, and in the dining room the silverware and plastic dishes, everything that showed that he had lived here in this empty house with a strange woman who would forget him tomorrow”(110)</p> <p>“That small motion, the white and red color, a strange fire because it meant a different thing to him. It was not burning, it was <i>warming</i>.”(139)</p>		
<p>Symbol: Hands</p>		

“Montag had done nothing. His hand had done it all, his hand, with a brain of its own, with a conscience and a curiosity in each trembling finger, had turned thief.”(35)

“So it was the hand that started it all ... His hands had been infected, and soon it would be his arms ... His hands were ravenous.”(38)

“Montag felt the guilt of his hands. His fingers were like ferrets that had done some evil and now never rested, always stirred and picked and hid in pockets, moving from under Beatty’s alcohol-flame stare ... For these were the hands that had acted on their own, no part of him, here was where the conscience first manifested itself to snatch books, dar off with Job and Ruth and Willie Shakespeare, and now, in the firehouse, these hands seemed gloved in blood.”(101)

“He twitched the safety catch on the flame thrower. Beatty glanced instantly at Montag’s fingers and his eyes widened the faintest bit. Montag saw the surprise there and himself glanced to his hands to see what new thing they had done. Thinking back later he could never decide whether the hands or Beatty’s reaction to the hands gave him the final push toward murder.”(113)

“The other men helped, and Montag helped, and there, in the wilderness, the men all moved their hands, putting out this fire together.”(147)		
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