

In my opinion, the best books are the ones that tell a captivating story. *Triangle: The Fire That Changed America* written by David Von Drehle tells the true but horrifying story of the 146 victims of the Triangle shirtwaist factory fire. The Triangle fire is an event which forever changed the lives of American workers, yet it is still an event that many people are unaware of. The Triangle fire was the largest workplace tragedy in New York City until 9/11. Similar to events like 9/11 and the Oklahoma City bombing of 1995, the Triangle fire was a tragic event that affected the lives of thousands of Americans but emphasized a need for change. Von Drehle brings to light the tragic events of the fire in a way which teaches the reader, but also creates a connection between the audience and the story of the Triangle fire and its employees.

While reading *Triangle*, I couldn't help but put myself in the place of the triangle workers. I imagined the excitement to leave the factory at the end of the day, the confusion when the shouts of "fire" began, and the fear as the employees tried to find a way to escape. To think of the harrowing thirty minutes during which the employees attempted to escape the building and to think of the men and women who died in the horrible workplace incident is appalling. Employees of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory were determined to find a way to survive, and it is their will to live that Von Drehle is clearly able to portray in his book. In *Triangle*, Von Drehle tells the story of the fire, from the years before that were filled with strikes and attempts to unionize the shirtwaist empire to the heart-wrenching moments of the fire to the backlash after the fire. I am far from being a historian, but although I know little about history, after reading *Triangle*, I feel more educated and connected to the topic, all thanks to outstanding writing of David Von Drehle.

For this reason, I believe Von Drehle should receive the Pulitzer Prize for his work *Triangle: The Fire that Changed America*. Von Drehle is able to teach even someone who knows little about history an extensive amount of information on the Triangle shirtwaist fire. He tells the story from different viewpoints, allowing the reader to truly understand and feel a connection to the book. By creating a connection between the audience and the story, Von Drehle engages the reader. Some people don't like to read nonfiction because they feel it's boring, however, *Triangle* is far from boring. While reading, you get to see the cowardness of the owners, Max Blanck and Isaac Harris, the franticness of the employees desperately trying to survive, and the terror from those on the street. A good example of Von Drehle's ability to connect the reader to the history of the tragedy can be found on only the second page of the book.

The entire blaze, from spark to embers, lasted half an hour. But the damage done in this brief, terrible span was plain on Misery Lane. Dominic Leone found Nicolina [his cousin] fairly quickly; her broken body was only slightly burned. The other two- cousin Annie and young Kate-were not so easy to identify. He stood over one narrow pine box for a long time, but no matter how long he stared, the contents did not really look human. The shape was familiar, propped up like a charred princess reclining on a pile of pillows.

She could, conceivably, have been either Annie or Kate-or neither one. Everything recognizable was burned away. The ferocity of the fire was hard to fathom.

This quote exemplifies what you can find over the course of the book. Von Drehle doesn't withhold any information from the reader, and he shows all the events of the fire. It is because of the ability Von Drehle has to portray the fire in a way that the average person can connect to and the amount of information he teaches the reader about the Triangle shirtwaist fire that I believe David Von Drehle should receive the Pulitzer Prize for his work *Triangle: The Fire that Changed America*.