

Critical Insights: Fahrenheit 451 explores Ray Bradbury's most famous and most influential work of literature in a variety of contexts and from a number of different critical perspectives and intellectual foci. It is a cliché of the worst sort, of course, to observe that Bradbury's evocative, swiftly moving little novel is *more important now than ever...*and yet Del Rey editors of the 1990s did not hesitate, emblazoning the phrase upon the very cover of the book, so perhaps the editor of this volume could indulge as well. The statement is true, after all.

Yes, in *Fahrenheit 451*, we may catch the unmistakable, bygone flavor of the 1950s: the growing popularity of television in sensible little suburban houses, where cheery middle-class housewives pop Miltowns while looking ahead to the evening's cocktail party, the threat of atomic war never forgotten and yet never truly evaluated, and the McCarthyite climate of fear underlying it all. Even in a future of jet cars and motorcycle-helicopters and roboticized gizmos that butter the morning toast, still we recognize the quaintness of our long-vanished past. Readers once could only imagine ear-bud radios and four-wall televisions, but now we can truly *feel* the utter interconnectedness of the internet and ubiquitous smartphones and social media updated—and checked—around the clock.

Certainly, in our present world of fact, books in general are not banned, nor do the hoses of fire crews spew kerosene rather than water. The true future thus apparently is far, far different from Bradbury's cautionary nightmare, is it not? Why, we are not enslaved to our technology-enabled pleasures, are we? No, and our political parties are not merely the Ins and Outs, nor are our national elections only half a notch elevated from mere beauty contests. And in twenty-first-century America, our reading habits are not scrutinized by vast bureaucracies, nor can the publicly smiling agents of a seemingly beneficent government kick down citizens' doors to ransack their possessions, their rights, their very thoughts. Or— Hmmm...

Clearly, then, *Fahrenheit 451* is a work still worthy not only of wide readership but also of the scholarly investigation we do here. This volume is divided into four main sections. In the introductory section, I will discuss Bradbury's influential novel in broad terms—rather more experiential than thematic, actually—while Garyn G. Roberts gives a biography of the man behind the literature. The book's concluding section contains helpful resources such as a brief chronology of Bradbury's life for quick reference, a list of his major works, a bibliography of critical essays and books for further study, and an index of key terms used within this text. Bracketed between the opening and closing apparatus is the “meat” of this project: one section of critical context to help inform and set up readers' understanding of *Fahrenheit 451* and one section of critical readings exploring many various facets of the novel.

Garyn G. Roberts begins our critical context by discussing the cultural and historical milieu of Bradbury's now-famous book. Using the influences of Bradbury's childhood in the 1920s—small-town Midwestern life, literature from L. Frank Baum and Edgar Rice Burroughs, *Buck Rogers*, and *Flash Gordon* comics to “classics” by Victor Hugo, Alexander Dumas, and Fyodor Dostoyesky, and even films such as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *King Kong*—Roberts discusses the role of Nazi book-burning, McCarthyism, the Cold War, and campaigns against comic books in shaping Bradbury's art. These personal, cultural, and historical elements affected the author and his work, and as new generations read the novel, this art in turn becomes part of our personal experience, our cultural inheritance, our historical milieu.

Robin Anne Reid then provides a nuanced overview of the way our fellow critics have responded to *Fahrenheit 451* in its first 60 years. First anchoring the novel as a work recognized not just as part of the genre of science fiction but also as a true literary classic, she surveys over 40 pieces of scholarship from the 1960s until almost the date of our own text's publication, grouping the works into six broad categories. In addition to providing full bibliographic information for this great range of criticism in English, Reid also identifies a number of recent resources in other languages as well.

After this, Joseph Michael Sommers gives a reading of the novel informed by the dialogic theories of M.M. Bakhtin. Despite the book's various didactic monologues—think, for example, of Fire Chief Beatty, Professor Faber, and book-memorizing Granger—Sommers notes as well the interplay of many voices (polyglossia), and even different kinds of voices (heteroglossia), that go into making the discourse of the novel. The writer, then, as Sommers puts it, is the funnel, who directs these various streams of voices to the reader, often with delicious and ironic inversion, creating paradoxes that further open up the conversation between author and readers.

I wrap up our context section by examining *Fahrenheit 451* in comparison to Bradbury's other book that ends in atomic fire and yet also the hope for rebirth, *The Martian Chronicles*. While Bradbury in *Fahrenheit 451* does step back from the notion of near-complete nuclear annihilation, the latter novel's treatment of humanity is much more pessimistic. In *The Martian Chronicles*, after all, despite occasional bad apples, people in general are presented more as being caught up in irresistible forces beyond their control, but in *Fahrenheit 451* it is the mass of the populace itself that is blamed for the decay of society.

Starting our section of critical readings is Jonathan R. Eller with a richly enlightening explanation of Bradbury's path from his various short-story starts to the novel itself. Most readers, presumably, are familiar with Bradbury's 1950 dime-per-hour marathon typing session in the basement of the UCLA library. This chapter, however, takes the tale back much farther, using both broad strokes and meticulous, telling detail to follow the fascinating false starts, revisions, side tracks, and tributaries to what became *Fahrenheit 451*.

Phil Nichols then approaches Bradbury's work from the perspective of adaptation studies, which takes into account, and even celebrates, the way adapting art from one medium to others entails responding to the source work in interesting, sometimes unexpected ways. Whereas some bibliophiles resist, say, the great differences between the novel and François Truffaut's 1966 film, Nichols reminds us that Bradbury himself was no stranger to adaptation, for

he adapted *Fahrenheit 451* into a play, and even reimagined certain aspects in light of Truffaut's reimagining. This chapter examines the reworking of Bradbury's classic novel as a radio play, film, and stage play: the differences, the challenges to the interpreting artists, and the enrichment for audiences.

Wolf Forrest, in a wide-ranging study, situates Bradbury in the utopian/dystopian tradition, ranging from Thomas More's 1516 *Utopia* to the works of nineteenth- and twentieth-century authors and filmmakers. Looking at the works of many different artists and time periods, Forrest thus traces the interrelation of psychological matters. This includes the notion of *doppelgängers*, religion and humanism, and the longing for a return to Eden; the brainwashing from the tortures of Orwell's Room 101, Huxley's hypnopaedia, and the constant television and radio jingles of *Fahrenheit 451*; and the threats of widespread drug use, censorship, and war.

Andrea Krafft notes that Bradbury's bleak future burns not only the houses of people possessing books but also the very concept of *home* itself. Technology in this consumer's paradise has undermined domesticity of all sorts, so has the mass-culture pursuit of pleasure, and so have the government schools that indoctrinate children at ever-younger ages. The firehouse, for example, is described in images of hardness and coldness, reflecting the disintegration of what once was a place of warmth and brotherhood, and just as the "firemen" are, essentially, grown juvenile delinquents reveling in burning, the average youngster now revels in violence and mayhem. And marriage, the source of those children, has grown loveless, anesthetized, and atomistic.

Timothy E. Kelley then focuses specifically on love and the women of *Fahrenheit 451*. While previous critics have discussed the novel's diametrically opposed female characters in terms of the ideologies they represent, or of the catalytic effect of Clarisse McClellan on the wavering Montag, Kelley examines the subtleties of the ill-defined love between the imaginative teenager and the book-burner. I happen to know from personal experience that certain students—reading too much into the text, obviously—sometimes mistakenly hypothesize an illicit sexual affair between the two. Yet,

Kelley is right to point out that, while Montag feels at times like a father to the girl and at times like a best friend, he also feels a very deep and heartfelt—and scarcely explored—connection that he no longer has even with his own wife.

Imola Bulgozdi investigates gender issues as well, namely Bradbury's treatment of masculinity, maturity, and knowledge in a society that has forgotten what humanity really is. Montag's identity comes from his respected male profession of fireman, but in a way, Montag and his colleagues are not really *men*—they are simply overgrown boys, unable to reach maturity without the guidance of caring senior mentors. In addition to following Montag's progress from brash, self-centered hero to true adult, Bulgozdi also points out in the novel other roles, such as the Hunter, the Manipulator, and the Magician, concluding that these archetypes can be the fundamental blueprints to being human.

In the view of Guido Laino, *Fahrenheit 451* is almost less a novel in the utopian/dystopian tradition than the dream or nightmare of a true bibliophile: sketchy in its description of the workings of this future, while always looking nostalgically to the past. The novel's hopeful nod to the future is vague, for as Laino observes, the struggle here is philosophical, even metaphysical, rather than merely political. In this conception, therefore, Montag is a postmodern Don Quixote who uses literature and memory to write his own reality against an intolerable world.

Although the society of *Fahrenheit 451* bans books because they can bring thought and unhappiness, Anna McHugh points out that books also are a type of memory, and memory is subtly forbidden as well. History as traditionally defined has been lost, of course, but so has the individual's history, whether remembrance of where one first met one's spouse or even of how many sleeping pills one took that night. Drawing on sources from Classical notions since the time of Cicero to modern theories of pedagogy and neuroscience, McHugh then further explores Bradbury's portrayal of the uses and misuses of memory in the development of a rational, moral human being.

Aaron Barlow very innovatively looks at issues of intellectual property that previously have lain unnoticed. Literature in this

novel is banned because of the ideas it contains, while comic books remain—of course, for *content* is more important than the physical artifact itself. Yet Barlow points out that this gets to the heart of issues of intellectual property that scarcely existed before the technology for truly widespread photo-mechanical—and finally electronic—reproduction of literary art. When Bradbury’s intellectuals memorize word-for-word the works of dead authors, this is laudable...but what does current copyright law say about reproducing them technologically? What is the difference between piracy and the cultural commons of a society? Barlow’s arguments are intriguing.

Ádám T. Bogár and Rebeka Sára Szigethy close our section of critical essays by looking from the world of *Fahrenheit 451*, where reading is forbidden, to our wide-open world of the present, and into the future as well. Networked reading among groups of people and near-infinite searchability linked out from electronic texts themselves offer interesting new possibilities for personal and social enrichment. Still, as Bogár and Szigethy note, in a world where every file looks like every other until opened, a stubborn few of us nevertheless will prefer physical books that “smell like nutmeg or some spice from a foreign land...”

“A man cannot possibly speak futures, unless he has a strong sense of the past.”

—Ray Bradbury

When his Muse spoke, Ray Bradbury could turn out a richly poetic and emotionally charged story draft within a single day, often within a few hours. But his ability to start longer works of fiction came much more slowly, sometimes stretching out into months or even years of rewriting and revising. He often told of the powerful nine-day burst of creativity that resulted in the main text of *Fahrenheit 451*, composed during long stints on the pay typewriters of UCLA’s Powell Library in 1953. But the opening pages of *Fahrenheit 451* shifted many times as he slowly developed his novel out of false starts and several drafts of his “Fireman” novella between 1946 and 1953. A closer look at these openings offers a great deal of insight into the way that Bradbury first crafted an enduring literary classic, and how he tried several very different ways to bring readers into the near future of *Fahrenheit 451*.

His own creative ignition point was sparked by his highly emotional identification with the great authors of all cultures, preserved in countless libraries, great and small, public and private. He never attended college, but he knew libraries and their magic from childhood, and from the very beginning of his reading life, he identified his favorite writers with the physical artifacts of their books; to burn the book was to burn the author, and in his mind, the great tragedies of history included the multiple burnings of the great classical library at Alexandria, Savonarola’s Bonfire of the Vanities in Renaissance Florence, and, in his own lifetime, the public book burnings of Fascist Germany during the 1930s (Bradbury interview).

Bradbury was most concerned about the future, however, and the complex behaviors that start civilizations down the path toward

obscuring and eventually destroying the literature that instills human values and makes an examined life possible. He read Huxley's *Brave New World* around 1940, which reinforced his own evolving appreciation of Juvenal's timeless rhetorical question: Who watches the Watchers? In 1949, he also read Orwell's *1984*, which presented the dual nightmare of history constantly re-written in a language purged of modifiers. But his 1944 reading of Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* fueled the emotional core of his creativity on this issue. He quickly realized that Koestler fully understood the behaviors that culminated in Stalin's purges and show trials of the late 1930s; his few unpublished speaking notes from the 1950s provide more than a hint of the emotions that Bradbury drew out of his reading: "...only a few perceived the intellectual holocaust and the revolution by burial that Stalin achieved... Only Koestler got the full range of desecration, execution, and forgetfulness on a mass and nameless graveyard scale" (Eller 89).

Bradbury also had a sense of how such cultural tragedies began. For these insights, he could draw more readily on his own experiences as a boy, crossing America during the darkest years of the Great Depression. His father's search for work led the family west from their hometown of Waukegan, Illinois, first to Tucson and back (1932–33) and finally, in the late spring of 1934, all the way out to Los Angeles. Each small town along the way offered the magic of a public library, but the young boy found that many of his beloved mysteries, fantasies, and science fiction books were not on the library shelves at all. He found that L. Frank Baum, Edgar Rice Burroughs, and sometimes even Edgar Allan Poe or Ambrose Bierce were not welcome in public or school libraries (Bradbury interview).

By the end of World War II, as his own story sales began to transition out of the genre pulps and into the mainstream magazine world, he saw a more pervasive and subtle discrimination against these genres opening out across America as the world began to polarize around the ideologies of two postwar superpowers. He was beginning to write cautionary tales about the death of the imagination, and by the summer of 1946, he had hit upon a forceful

inversion of cultural norms: what if firemen were trained to set fires, rather than to extinguish them? This conceit became his slow-burning match to flame.

But where to enter the time stream of this inverted world? A few precious opening pages from his first germ of the novel, later dated in Bradbury's hand as June 1946, were discovered by his close friend and bibliographer Donn Albright just a few years before Bradbury's death. These pages reveal that he initially chose to enter this nightmare world through the aperture of a futuristic fire station and its bizarre fire-producing apparatus. It was a natural progression from the world he actually lived in, for his father and brother worked in a similar world. His father, an experienced lineman, was what Bradbury would describe as a troubleshooter for the Venice Beach power and light company, and his older brother Skip was a lineman as well. Ray, nearly 26, and Skip still lived in their father's home, a utility company rental on the lot of a local power substation (Eller 53, 132–34). As he typed the opening words to "The Fire Men," Bradbury was writing at his small desk in the garage, gazing at the reflected lights of the power station just a few feet away. It was natural that these words would center on similar machineries that exposed the dark heart of the future fireman's trade:

The tools lay in the aluminum shed while the four men, facing each other, laid out their cards and talked lazily about their work. The tools gleamed with brass and copper, they glinted fiercely in the fluorescent light. Some of them were round and long and contained silent flame. Some of them were claws that held and made torches of whatever they touched. Some of them were chemicals that frosted and dissolved items like snails properly salted. (Bradbury, "The Fire Men" 1)

At this point, Bradbury was far more interested in the instruments of destruction than in the firehouse itself. The images and metaphors are unpolished, but nonetheless powerful and charged with Bradbury's emerging gift for suggesting rather than fully describing the dark terrors within. The firemen are playing cards in the station; we learn from their desultory conversation that

most books had been destroyed in something called “the first Big Fire,” and that there has not been an alarm sounded locally in the last three years. “I hear they got a Poe over in Cincinnati yesterday,” one fireman observes; “Lucky bastards,” says another (Bradbury, “The Fire Men” 1).

In this world, as Bradbury first imagined it, the dark fantasies of witchcraft, magic, and the traditional weird tale must be destroyed. The broader mainstream literatures are not in the picture at all. When an alarm suddenly sounds, the fire crew responds to an antiquated house where an old woman hides with her forbidden treasures: “Poe and Hawthorne and Bierce and Dunsany and Machen. Witches and vampires, warlocks and familiars, ghosts and goblins, trolls and elves. All the forbidden fruits of an ancient and superstitious world, all the rotten variety of sick minds that must be found and burned. This new clean world had no place in it for myth, legend, or superstition. Burn it!” (Bradbury, “The Fire Men” 3)

This “new clean world” seems to echo Huxley’s brave new one, yet it still lacks the scope of literary destruction found in the final pages of *Fahrenheit 451*. But Bradbury was already asking the more universal questions, and here, nearly four years before his spring 1950 first full draft of “The Fireman,” he imagines one fireman, Scoles, who stops and wonders: “What *were* the books? What was in them? What was it all about. He had never questioned himself or others. There must have been something in them. Millions had read them and been frightened by them. Frightened? How could a book frighten you? He had never been frightened by much of anything in his life, much less a book. What was it, then?” (Bradbury, “The Fire Men” 3)

Scoles is forerunner to Guy Montag, and like Montag he grasps at the forbidden fruit; his hand closes on a small volume by Edgar Allan Poe, and here, the 1946 fragment pages end.

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At this point, however, Bradbury put his firemen away and concentrated on the incredibly rich mixture of short story ideas

that constantly and unpredictably welled up from his subconscious mind. He published eighteen tales in 1946, another eighteen in 1947, twenty-one in 1948, and sixteen in 1949. In all, he published one hundred twenty professional stories during the 1940s, and he was not yet thirty years old. Many more remained unfinished in his files, along with an occasional title page or brief outline for a novel concept. None of these long fiction ideas ripened, and so his reputation continued to grow as a gifted writer in the short story form. Some of his detective pulp fictions contained a few chapter divisions and were billed as novellas; these few were, nonetheless, short stories, rarely exceeding eight thousand words in length (Eller and Touponce 439–503).

He would, like Mark Twain before him, have to feel his way along the path to longer fictions. By the end of the 1940s, he had managed to sustain and publish two novella-length tales that would eventually rank among his better-known works of this period, “The Creatures That Time Forgot” (1946, revised as “Frost and Fire”) and “Pillar of Fire” (1948). The latter presented his first sustained warning about the impending death of the imagination, offered through the lens of a future world that has never known the fear and wonderment of magic, superstition, or the great works of literature that had once sprung from these sources.

For the most part, classic tales of the grotesque and arabesque defined the subject range of his fictional probes into such themes. As Bradbury worked on through the late 1940s to craft stories about the growing climate of fear and its threat to creativity, he remained focused on the classics of mystery and horror fiction that were increasingly targeted by school districts and library boards. “Pillar of Fire,” “Carnival of Madness” (transformed into “Usher II” for *The Martian Chronicles*), and “The Mad Wizards of Mars” (collected in *The Illustrated Man* as “The Exiles”) all focus on the specific threat to genre forms in postwar America.

Ironically, it would be one of his failed novel concepts of this period that would release his imagination to investigate the consequences of a future world where all literature and art is condemned to flame. *Where Ignorant Armies Clash by Night* (1947–

48) portrays a post-apocalyptic world where entertainment centers on ritual assassinations and the ceremonial burning of cultural artifacts from the past—artifacts such as books and paintings, symbolizing the civilization that had created this ravaged world through nuclear war. The surviving fragments of this unfinished novel contain a climactic moment when the celebrated Assassin must burn a volume of Matthew Arnold’s poetry as prelude to the main event: the destruction of perhaps the last copy of the works of William Shakespeare (*Ignorant Armies* 318–30).

The Assassin is conflicted, however, and reads to the massed crowd from Arnold’s “Dover Beach,” then publically burns the volume of Arnold’s poetry before escaping with the precious volume of Shakespeare. There is no redemption in any of these half-finished fragments; the Assassin is killed against the backdrop of a hopeless world, where it is judged better to have never been born. This novel proved to be a nihilistic dead-end for Bradbury—he had to have hope, he had to find a life-affirming mythos for the times, if he was to develop sustained works of novel-length fiction. To simply “conform or die” did not represent a way to deal with Modernity; he was still looking for a third way, and a protagonist who could find that way out of the darkness. *Ignorant Armies* only survives in a few fragment episodes, but the Assassin’s crisis of conscience—and his reading from “Dover Beach”—shows Bradbury moving unmistakably toward some of the pivotal scenes he would reprise in a different future world for *Fahrenheit 451*.

Although the real postwar world seemed to be on the brink of a third world war where two superpowers now held the secret of the atom, he nevertheless was writing from the near side of this looming nightmare. With such thoughts in mind, he picked up his firemen once again in the late winter or early spring of 1950. They seemed to offer a more compelling symbol of cultural inversion than his Assassins had offered: everyone depends on the Fireman, but what if the New Normal requires the Fireman to set fires, rather than to put them out? This became his settled intention for a timely cautionary tale, one he felt he could sustain and project into the form of his third and longest novella.

In August 1950, Bradbury left Venice Beach and settled his young family into a new home off Westwood Boulevard in Los Angeles; from here, it was a short commute by bus to the UCLA library, where he soon settled into what he later described as nine days of uninterrupted creativity in the library's basement typing room. Occasional breaks browsing the vast library shelves provided inspiration, and he soon had a one hundred-page typescript titled *Long After Midnight*.¹ Initially, he experimented with a nightmare opening: his principal fireman, now named Montag, dreams he is an old man hidden away among a vast treasure of books in his small apartment. A young neighbor boy spies through the keyhole, sees the aged Montag handling his precious books, and raises the alarm:

A crowd rushed up the street. Health officials burst in, followed by police, fierce with silver badges. And then himself! Himself as a young man, in a Fire uniform, with a torch. The room swarmed as the old man pleaded with himself as a young man. Books crashed down. Books were stripped and torn. Windows crashed inward, drapes fell in sooty clouds.

Flame crackled. They were charring out the room, with controlled, scientific fire. A vast wind of flame devoured the walls. Books exploded in a million live kernels.

“For the love of God!”

The ancient lawn of the room sizzled.

The books became black ravens, fluttering.

Mr. Montag fell shrieking to the far end of the dream.

He opened his eyes.

“Blackjack,” said Mr. Leahy. (*A Pleasure* 174)

Montag's nightmare is really a deep reverie; the words of his fire captain jolt him back to reality, where he sits in a card game at the fire station. By this time, reveries were not an uncommon element of Bradbury's fiction, and the events of this dream may also reflect his recent reading of George Orwell's *1984*; it seems to echo the incident where Orwell's Winston Smith sees the boy in the next apartment turn in his own father for disloyalty to Big Brother.

During August 1950, Bradbury evolved this new dream-reverie to frame a variation on his original 1946 fire station opening. Within a month, however, he had discarded the dream, re-titled the novella “The Fireman,” and opened the narrative directly into the world of the fire station, just as he had done with the initial pages in 1946. This time, however, the focus was on the men rather than their machines:

The four men sat silently playing blackjack under a green drop-light in the dark morning. Only a voice whispered from the ceiling:

“One thirty-five a.m. Thursday morning, October 4th, 2052, A.D.
...” (“*The Fireman*” 4)

“The Fireman” would reach print, with relatively few structural variations from the earlier “Long After Midnight” draft, in the February 1951 issue of *Galaxy Science Fiction*. But the novella, now around 25,000 words in length, had also picked up a very significant counterpoint to the harsh realities of the late-night firehouse—the solitary midnight walker, Clarisse McClellan.

In a sense, Clarisse owed her fictional existence to the imaginative spark behind a Bradbury story titled “The Pedestrian”; in fact, this story stood closer to the origins of *Fahrenheit 451* than any of his other cautionary tales. “The Pedestrian” had emerged from a late-night walk along Wilshire Boulevard, where he was stopped and questioned by a police officer. The exchange was uneventful, but it rekindled Bradbury’s long-standing sense that the image of the solitary urban walker was quickly becoming a relic of the past. For Bradbury’s city-dwellers, locked away from the buckling sidewalks and abandoned plazas, reality is merely an illusion, simulated on large-screen televisions or narrated through tiny Seashell earphones. The pedestrian of the future would be both rare and dangerous—a threat to the new behavioral norm.

Although “The Pedestrian” was published in August 1951—six months after “The Fireman” reached print—Bradbury had actually finished and submitted the story to his New York agent, Don Congdon, in March 1950. As he turned to work on “The Fireman” narrative, the doomed pedestrian of his earlier short story, who is accosted and

swallowed up by an automated police car, began to transform into other possibilities. He soon envisioned his solitary fireman, walking late at night, encountering a young girl, a neighbor, who knows his name, and knows his occupation. She will ask the unanswerable question: “Why do you do what you *do*?” (“The Fireman” 14)

Clarisse is vital to Montag’s awakening, but in “The Fireman” her entry is buried under a series of opening events designed to establish the particulars of Montag’s world: the men play cards at the station, reflecting with casual humor on the house and books they had most recently burned; they respond to a call, an unusual one, where the homeowner—a solitary woman—beats Captain Leahy to the mark and strikes the match herself, so that she may die among her kerosene-soaked treasures; Montag, shaken, returns home late that night, realizing that he has never really known or loved his sleeping wife, a woman totally absorbed by the technological marvels and entertainments of the day.

Here, finally, Clarisse enters the narrative, but her arrival is late and limited to a single scene; her stay is far too short before she is “disappeared”—by a reckless driver perhaps, as Montag’s wife maintains, or by the authorities who watch her every move. Montag cannot be sure. She has shown him simple but long forgotten ways to apprehend the natural world, but neither Montag nor the reader can fully appreciate her significance. At this stage of narrative development, Bradbury had not given her the significant presence required to fully release Montag’s quest for answers in a world where all questions are suspect.

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By the end of 1952, Bradbury and his agent had secured a contract with Ballantine Books for a new story collection built around an expanded version of “The Fireman.” Cold War anxieties were growing ever stronger in American politics, and the resulting Climate of Fear periodically manifested in McCarthy-esque tirades against publishers and writers of anti-authoritarian or counterculture literature.

Chronology of Ray Bradbury's Life

1920	22 August, Ray Douglas Bradbury is born in Waukegan, Illinois.
1926-1933	Bradbury family moves back and forth between Waukegan and Tucson.
1931	Bradbury begins writing stories on rolls of butcher paper.
1934	Family moves to Los Angeles.
1936	18 August, first poem published: "In Memory to Will Rogers," in <i>Waukegan News-Sun</i> .
1938	January, first story published: "Hollerbochen's Dilemma," in Forrest Ackerman's fanzine <i>Imagination!</i>
1939-1940	Writes and publishes fanzine <i>Futura Fantasia</i> .
1941	August, first paid story: "Pendulum", with Henry Haase, in <i>Super Science Stories</i> .
1944	Writes second half of <i>Lorelei of the Red Mist</i> for Leigh Brackett.
1947	<i>Dark Carnival</i> published by Arkham House.
1947	Marries Marguerite McClure.
1947	Receives O. Henry Award, Best First-Published Story, for "Homecoming" in <i>Mademoiselle</i> .
1948	Receives O. Henry Award, Third prize, for "Powerhouse" in <i>Charm</i> .
1949	Susan, first of four daughters, is born.
1950	<i>The Martian Chronicles</i> is published by Doubleday.

Novels, including Fix-Up Novels

- The Martian Chronicles*, 1950
Fahrenheit 451, 1953
Dandelion Wine, 1957
Something Wicked This Way Comes, 1962
The Halloween Tree, 1972
Death is a Lonely Business, 1985
A Graveyard for Lunatics, 1990
Green Shadows, White Whale, 1992
From the Dust Returned, 2001
Let's All Kill Constance, 2002
Farewell Summer, 2006
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Story Collections

- Dark Carnival*, 1947
The Illustrated Man, 1951
The Golden Apples of the Sun, 1954
The October Country, 1955
A Medicine for Melancholy, 1959
R is for Rocket, 1961
The Machineries of Joy, 1964
S is for Space, 1966
Twice 22, 1966
I Sing the Body Electric!, 1969
Long After Midnight, 1976
The Stories of Ray Bradbury, 1980
The Toynbee Convector, 1988
Quicker than the Eye, 1996
Driving Blind, 1997
One More for the Road, 2002
Bradbury Stories, 2003

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