

Ray Bradbury



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¹ "Portrait by John Sherffius", under "Audio & Video: Ray Bradbury", National Endowment for the Arts, <http://arts.endow.gov/av/video/bradbury/bradbury.html>

Biography



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Ray Douglas Bradbury was born on August 22, 1920, in Waukegan, Illinois. His father, Leonard Spaulding Bradbury, worked as a telephone lineman. His mother was Esther Marie Moberg Bradbury. Bradbury had older twin brothers, Leonard and Samuel, who were born in 1916, and a younger sister, Elizabeth, born in 1926.²

In 1934, the Bradbury family drove across the country to Los Angeles, with young Ray piling out of their jalopy at every stop to plunder the local library in search of L. Frank Baum's Oz books. In 1936, Bradbury joined a weekly Thursday-night conclave that would grow to attract such science-fiction legends as Robert A. Heinlein, Leigh Brackett, and future Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard.

In 1947, Ray Bradbury married Marguerite McClure. They had met the previous April in Fowler Brothers Bookstore, where she worked – and where at first she had him pegged for a shoplifter: “Once I figured out that he wasn't stealing books, that was it. I fell for him”.³

Ray Bradbury is best known for his highly imaginative science-fiction short stories and novels that blend social criticism with an awareness of the hazards of runaway technology. He published his first story in 1940 and was soon contributing widely to magazines. His first book of short stories, *Dark Carnival* (1947), was followed by *The Martian Chronicles* (1950), which is generally accounted a science-fiction classic in its depiction of materialistic Earthmen exploiting and corrupting an idyllic Martian civilization. Bradbury's other important short-story collections include *The Illustrated Man* (1951) and *The Golden Apples of the Sun* (1953).

Bradbury's novels include *Fahrenheit 451* (1953; filmed 1966) and *Dandelion Wine* (1957). He wrote stage plays, television scripts, and several screenplays. In the 1970s, Bradbury wrote several volumes of poetry, and in the 1970s and '80s he concentrated on writing children's stories and crime fiction.

Bradbury's short stories have been published in more than 700 anthologies. In 2007, the Pulitzer Prize Board awarded Bradbury a Special Citation for his distinguished career⁴.

¹ “Ray Bradbury”, **Florida Center for the Literary Arts**, www.flcenterlitarts.com/big_read/big_read_online_press/ray_bradbury_portrait.jpg

² Robin Anne Reid, **Ray Bradbury: A Critical Companion** (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 2000): 1, e-book, ebrary (Database).

³ “Fahrenheit 451: About the Author: Ray Bradbury (b. 1920)”, **National Endowment for the Arts, The Big Read**, www.neabigread.org/books/fahrenheit451/fahrenheit451_04.php

⁴ “Bradbury, Ray”, **Encyclopedia Britannica Online**, academic ed., www.search.eb.com/eb/article-9016104

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The Movie *Fahrenheit 451*

Audiovisual Materials

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