

**A Sympathy with Sounds:  
Ray Bradbury and BBC Radio, 1951-1970**

By

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**Abstract:**

The American writer Ray Bradbury has a long association with BBC radio. His works have been dramatised many times, often by others, but occasionally by himself. Drawing on research in the BBC Written Archive, this paper gives an account of Bradbury's treatment by the BBC, focusing on the period 1951-1970, and shows how a key work (the little known *Leviathan '99*) unites much of Bradbury's canon.

**Suggested Keywords:**

Literature, drama, science fiction, adaptation, BBC, Ray Bradbury

Ray Bradbury (1920- ) is best known as a short story writer and novelist, and has seen many of his works adapted for film, television and radio. However, he is also a dramatist, and has made a substantial number of dramatisations of his own works for stage and screen, and has written several original works in dramatic form. Unusually for a contemporary American author, his work has long been popular in the United Kingdom, and he has seen continued interest in his work from the BBC, particularly on radio.

Although one may debate whether Bradbury can properly be considered a science fiction writer, Penny Fabb's research has revealed Bradbury to have had more works dramatised on British radio than any other science fiction writer apart from H.G.Wells (Fabb 2004). This suggests that his work in this medium is worthy of study.

This article draws upon research conducted in the BBC Written Archives and attempts to construct a chronology of Bradbury's connection with BBC radio, relating it to his British publishing history and particularly to his emerging success in the 1950s and 1960s. Criticism that has followed Bradbury's written work will be shown to have been re-enacted (and sometimes anticipated) behind the closed doors of the BBC. The scope of this article is restricted to the period 1951-1970, since this is the interval covered by records in the BBC file on Bradbury<sup>1</sup>.

I will draw particular attention to *Leviathan '99*, a work which Bradbury has developed and pursued in several media, but which first appeared as a radio play on the BBC. This work represents the high point of recognition of Bradbury's British radio work, and Bradbury's continual fascination with re-working it for theatre and opera gives it a unique,

but little known place in his canon. *Leviathan '99* also shows important points of continuity with Bradbury's work in literature and film, and merits further study.

Ray Bradbury has been a professional short story writer since 1941. His stories proved a popular basis for radio adaptations in the US from 1946 onwards (see Table 1). Bradbury's own radio play, "The Meadow", broadcast on ABC World Security Workshop in 1947, earned him an inclusion in *Best One-Act Plays 1947-48* (Mayorga 1948).

His first book, the short story collection *Dark Carnival*, was published on both sides of the Atlantic in 1947-48. It garnered 12 critical reviews in the UK (seven of them favourable) (Eller & Touponce, 2004:69). His first novel *The Martian Chronicles* (1950) was published in the UK by Hart-Davis as *The Silver Locusts* in 1951. The appearance of several of Bradbury's Martian short stories in the British magazine *Argosy* had already primed the market here (Eller & Touponce 2004:124).

*The Silver Locusts* was positively (and famously) reviewed on publication by Christopher Isherwood, and also by Angus Wilson and J.B. Priestley. Other positive reviews followed, although sales of *The Silver Locusts* were initially disappointing to Hart-Davis (2000 copies in four months) (Eller & Touponce 2004:124 n20)

Bradbury was evidently a familiar name in UK literary circles in the early 1950s. His books were often prominently named in advertisements in national newspapers (Hamish Hamilton advertised his British edition of *Dark Carnival* in 1948 (see, for example, *The Times* (London), 8 December 1948, p7); Hart-Davis gave *The Silver Locusts* top billing in his ads of September 1951 (*The Times* (London), 21 September 1951, p8). In rapid

succession, Bradbury's short story collection *The Illustrated Man* (1951), bolstered his reputation.

By 1953, Bradbury was in demand as a screenwriter, and was brought to Ireland by John Huston to develop a script for a film version of *Moby Dick*. Events surrounding the making of this film frequently made the British press (see, for example, *The Times* (London), 28 August 1954, p.12; 30 October 1954, p7; 31 May 1955, p.10; 5 July 1956, p11; 30 August 1956, p4; 19 October 1956, p3; 8 November 1956, p3; 19 November 1956, p9.), and Bradbury's involvement, coinciding with the UK launch of his novel *Fahrenheit 451* and short story collection *The Golden Apples of the Sun* increased his prominence. There were detractors, however, such as the reviewer who described *Fahrenheit 451* as "well meant and now and then ingenious, this is for the most part a rather naïve and over-explanatory vision of the obvious" (Anon 1954).

Bradbury's experiences on the *Moby Dick* project, a mere few months in 1953-54 (Weller 2005), would provide a lifetime of material: plays and short stories based on Irish characters he met, culminating in a novelised version of his experience in *Green Shadows, White Whale*<sup>2</sup>; and a long-in-development project spanning stage, screen and radio, entitled *Leviathan '99*, which is examined in detail below.

After *Moby Dick*, Bradbury was contracted by the Hecht-Hill-Lancaster film production company. His contract brought him across the Atlantic again in 1957, to write a projected Carol Reed film of his own short story *And the Rock Cried Out* (Weller 2005:246). This, and subsequent work adapting British critic Roger Manvell's *The Dreamers* for the screen<sup>3</sup>, helped keep him visible to the British press.

Bradbury's reception in the UK was always, however, somewhat mixed, as is revealed in the reviews published in the *Times Literary Supplement* between 1948 and 1975. A British reviewer of his first book, the collection of dark fantasy tales *Dark Carnival*, found Bradbury gifted, but added, "it is to be hoped he will widen his range" (Richardson 1948; original article published anonymously).

However, when Bradbury did indeed widen his range, the result was confusion, at least among critics who were unable to satisfactorily pigeonhole his writing. *The Silver Locusts* (not very scientific science fiction) was described as "absorbing" (Duggan 1951; original article published anonymously); *The Illustrated Man* (mostly science fiction) led Anthony Powell (1952 original article published anonymously) to suggest Bradbury was a surrealist. By the time of *The Golden Apples of The Sun* (a mixture of science fiction, fantasy, and contemporary fiction), Bradbury's range was arguably leading to a mismatch between what he was publishing and what his stories were "supposed to be" (Greene 1953; original article published anonymously).

Bradbury's first true novel, *Fahrenheit 451*, illuminates another difficulty he faced in the UK. This was a work that emerged from the American pulp science fiction tradition (it was first published in *Galaxy* magazine in 1951), and yet clearly had aspirations to a place in the mainstream science fiction tradition that followed a direct line from Wells through Huxley to Orwell<sup>4</sup>. Critics were divided between those who found the concept and its execution "naïve and over-explanatory" (Anon 1954) and those who found it "wholly credible" (Greene 1954; original article published anonymously). This difference of

opinion would persist when, in the coming years, the novel was repeatedly put forward for dramatisation on the BBC.

Two other major areas of disagreement would come to surround the reception of Bradbury's work in the UK. The first was over the nature and quality of Bradbury's use of language. Bradbury would come to be referred to as the "poet of science fiction". Brian Aldiss (1973:295) singles out "Rocket Summer", the opening chapter of *The Martian Chronicles* to illustrate this, characterising it thus: "How delicate and nice it is, and what an extraordinary poetical idea, that rocket exhausts could change climates." And yet, when Bradbury moved away from the science-fictional arena, he would be faced with charges of "over-writing".

The second area of disagreement surrounds Bradbury's small-town Americanism. Aldiss characterises this trait in Bradbury's stories superbly: "They are perfect in their way, and their way is that of *The Wind in the Willows*. They belong to an imaginary American past where every town had wooden sidewalks, every house a verandah with a rocking chair".

In the discussion that follows, each of these areas of disagreement will emerge in the behind-the-scenes discussions that surrounded many of the attempts to bring Bradbury to life on BBC radio.

As early as 1951, an adaptation of Bradbury's short story "The Fog Horn" had been considered by the BBC (the name of the adapter is not recorded in the BBC Written Archive). It was, however, rejected on the following grounds: "...dialogue improbable,

inconsequential, ambitious...characterisation nil." It isn't entirely clear whether the objections were to the adaptation or to the original story<sup>5</sup>.

It was the publication of *The Golden Apples of the Sun* that finally got Bradbury onto the British airwaves. In June 1954, memos began to be exchanged within the BBC, with suggestions that some of Bradbury's stories might be suitable for evening broadcast on the popular entertainment radio channel, the Light Programme. As it turned out, four stories ("The Flying Machine", "Golden Kite Silver Wind", "The Great Wide World Over There" and "The Meadow") were chosen to be read during the day on another channel, the Home Service. One memo from this time describes the stories as "poetic stories, part fantasy"<sup>6</sup>.

None of the chosen stories have a science fiction theme, which is ironic given that much of Bradbury's reputation at this time had been built on science fiction. Bradbury himself was actively trying to remove the science fiction label from his work at this time (literally - he was upset that Doubleday's editions of *The Martian Chronicles* bore the "science fiction" tag, and fought to have it removed from *The Illustrated Man* (Weller 2005:171-2)). The literary establishment has also had a long ambivalence towards science fiction. In 1958, *The Times* could claim that science fiction had always been respectable in the UK: ("distinguished men of letters like E.M.Forster and C.S.Lewis have tried their hand at it") while noting the developing influence of American science fiction through magazines such as *Astounding* and *Galaxy* (Anon 1958).

Another irony that would continue to surround Bradbury's work is its suitability or otherwise for younger readers and listeners. Bradbury's career began in the pulp magazines, and much of his early work was in the form of the "weird tale". And yet his

stories would frequently come to be taught in the classroom, and be adapted for children's television. In 1954, there was a slight concern that Bradbury might not be suitable for the daytime radio audience, but fortunately the four stories chosen for the Home Service production of *The Golden Apples of the Sun* contained "nothing unpleasantly cruel", and the broadcasts went ahead in September 1954<sup>7</sup>.

The rise in popularity of science fiction that *The Times* would document in 1958 was evidently affecting the BBC in the 1950s. According to Fabb's research, between 1927 and 1953 BBC radio had been averaging around three science fictional programme per year. In 1954, they had eleven, and in 1957 they had eight (Fabb 2004:244-254)<sup>8</sup>.

When more suggestions of Bradbury stories - this time including some science fiction - were put forward, even the highbrow channel the Third Programme<sup>9</sup> was interested, if only to a degree. "It would be an excellent idea to have some good science fiction on the Third" wrote one BBC manager in a memo, albeit one rejecting the idea of having a reading of the short stories "Kaleidoscope" and "Last Night of the World"<sup>10</sup>.

*Fahrenheit 451* also came up for discussion within the BBC in the 1950s, and views of it were consistent with the *Times* review mentioned above. The first consideration of the novel is only indirectly documented in the BBC Written Archives, and was in April 1954<sup>11</sup>, at the suggestion of dramatist Dan Ferguson<sup>12</sup>. At that time it was rejected "on the grounds that it was too visual and journalistic in style and content" and "the conception of the atomic age of the future under Communist [this word is underlined by hand and marked with a question mark] rule is dreadfully familiar"<sup>13</sup>.

However, by May 1957 it was being reconsidered, following a review by the writer/producer Michael Bakewell. He wrote, "Certainly the rather slick, cheap style in which some of this is put over is a deterrent and the ending I find unsatisfactory and something of an anticlimax, but the whole of the first half of the book seems to me so fascinating in terms of radio that I think we might consider it again." However, what may have changed in the three years since the novel's initial rejection is not so much attitudes to science fiction or to Bradbury's book, but attitudes to television, which was now providing substantial competition to radio. Bakewell continued, "The dreadful world of the television "Uncles", the non-stop stream of music, and the blaring advertisements, is a horror I think we could put over very well."<sup>14</sup> The only other Bradbury science fiction story to have made it onto the BBC at this point was "The Veldt" (1957), which can also be read as critical of television.

While the BBC were considering Bakewell's proposal, another producer, Bertram Parnaby, independently put forward another proposal for *Fahrenheit 451*. By 6 June 1957, however, both proposals were rejected<sup>15</sup>.

Bakewell nevertheless persisted with Bradbury material, and also put forward recommendations to adapt two more stories. He described "The Fog Horn" as "slightly whimsical", but it was rejected by the Script Editor as being "pretentious to the point of being comical", in much the way it had been dismissed six years earlier<sup>16</sup>.

Bakewell's suggestion of "A Sound of Thunder" fared slightly better, being judged "a possibility", although the change of history at the end of the story was considered "mirth provoking"<sup>17</sup>. Bradbury had faced similar scorn when this classic short story was first

offered for magazine publication (see the letter from the editors of *Fantasy and Science Fiction* magazine to Bradbury in Bradbury (2004:63). The BBC Script Editor instead recommended another Bradbury time travel story, "The Fox and the Forest", which was subsequently purchased for dramatisation in September 1957<sup>18</sup>.

In January 1959, *Fahrenheit 451* was suggested again, this time by Bruce Wightman. Again, there were objections: "...I doubt if any writer would be able to make much out of such a difficult book..."; "...I don't honestly think there's much future in this..." One further enquiry about *Fahrenheit 451* was recorded in 1964, but it was again dismissed.<sup>19</sup>

In 1962, the first of three BBC radio productions of "There Will Come Soft Rains" was negotiated. The Features department producer Nesta Pain envisaged a musical treatment of the story in a style which she compared to *Peter and the Wolf*: "There would be no dialogue and no words apart from the recorded voices mentioned in the text, and a commentator. I want to use music [...] to express action."<sup>20</sup> The composer Anthony Hopkins was suggested. This production went out on the Third Programme, the first of Bradbury's appearances on the channel. Nesta Pain's adaptation was re-used in a schools' radio production in 1971. A completely new adaptation from the BBC Radiophonic Workshop was broadcast in 1977.

*Leviathan '99* is best, if crudely, described as "*Moby Dick* in outer space"; this is Bradbury's own description. In this homage to Melville, an astronaut Ahab hunts a great white comet, with many of Melville's plot points held intact. We might speculate on Bradbury's intentions behind this work. Having immersed himself in Melville while writing the *Moby Dick* screenplay, is he unable to break free of him? Having suffered a

loss of control of the screenplay to John Huston (Kunert 1972), is he now attempting to forge the material into something distinctly his own? Is he perhaps just giving a literary hero a new lease of life, as he has done with numerous encounters-with-famous-author short stories? (See, for example, “The F.Scott/Tolstoy/Ahab Accumulator” in *One More for the Road*, “The Parrot Who Met Papa” in *Long After Midnight*, “Last Rites” in *Quicker Than The Eye*.)

*Leviathan '99* began life as an idea for a novel in 1962. Bradbury developed at least sixty pages of material in this form, apparently abandoning it at some point the early 1960s in favour of a dramatic treatment, although he has recently indicated his intent to return to the novel idea<sup>21</sup>. By 1966, Bradbury had turned it into a radio play for the American NBC network. For a while he hoped that Norman Corwin would direct the radio production<sup>22</sup>. Towards the end of 1966 the NBC deal was off, and Bradbury began courting the BBC. It isn't clear why the NBC plan failed to come to fruition, although it seems odd that NBC would even be considering long-form radio drama at this time. Bradbury had achieved much success in American radio (see table one), with dozens of his stories being dramatised on popular anthology-format series of the 1940s and 1950s, such as *Suspense* and *Dimension X*. He submitted many stories to the networks himself, even before they had seen print<sup>23</sup>. With the decline of US radio audiences and the rise of television, Bradbury made an easy transition into television, again through anthology series, such as *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*<sup>24</sup>. By the mid-1960s, the UK radio market appears to have become much more viable for Bradbury than the US market.

In December 1966, Bradbury's London agent forwarded Bradbury's play to Richard Imison, a script editor at the BBC. At around the same time, a radio producer named

D.G.Bridson received a copy direct from Bradbury. This two pronged attack, and the novelty of having an original dramatic work from Bradbury, seems to have guaranteed that this production would go ahead<sup>25</sup>. The actor Christopher Lee is said to have been instrumental in getting the script through, probably the Bridson copy<sup>26</sup>. Lee would himself be cast as the Ahab character (called only "The Captain" throughout the play).

In 1953-54, Bradbury had struggled with adapting Melville's whale of a novel for the screen, but awoke one morning with the conviction that he was Melville - and within hours had drafted the main part of the script<sup>27</sup>. His intense engagement with Melville clearly haunted him, and led to the development of *Leviathan '99*. As well as the BBC Radio production, a Dutch version would be broadcast (translated by H.B.Fortuin, the Dutch producer of the BBC version), as would a German version. Then in the 1970s, Bradbury staged a theatrical production with an expanded script, and subsequently a new, further expanded stage version was produced. And in the late 1990s, Bradbury began to realise his dream of turning it into an opera, with music by Jerry Goldsmith<sup>28</sup>.

*Leviathan '99* was recorded during February and March 1968<sup>29</sup>. The first work carried out, on 15 February, was the construction of a montage of historic radio recordings from the year 1938, representing a cloud of transmissions that the Captain's rocket ship would encounter on its way to meet the great white comet. This concept is one that Bradbury would revive in the stage play based on his short story "Kaleidoscope"<sup>30</sup>, which would itself later be adapted for the BBC.

On 26 February, the introduction to the play was recorded. This consists largely of a monologue from Ishmael, the protagonist and narrator, played by Denys Hawthorne. The

remainder of the play was recorded between 9 and 15 March, and various music and effects items were added on 15 March. Bradbury's London agent was present for a playback of the complete programme on 1 May<sup>31</sup>, and the play was broadcast twice on the Third Programme, on Friday 3 May and again on Saturday 18 May.

*Leviathan '99* is an odd play, with somewhat stilted dialogue, and might be charged with being "over-written". It does, however, have several scenes which contain echoes of other Bradbury works, both past and future, such as a robot museum with animatronic philosophers, a concept Bradbury would return to again in a narrative poem and an essay in the following decades<sup>32</sup>.

However, the production was strong, and featured an extensive electronic score and effects by the composer Tristram Cary. David Wade, writing in *The Times*, found the play admirable, but believed that it "never quite came to life as a work in its own right. Too firmly lashed to Melville, all the technology and futuristic reference smacked of accretion. It was as if someone were to write a play about racial prejudice by putting new yet Shakespearian words to the plot of *The Merchant of Venice* and presenting it in hipsters and mini-skirts." He also contended that, like much science fiction, it was "anthropomorphic and technological [...] the universe becomes an indefinite extension of Brighton Pier and those creatures out there are merely rather fancy forms of you and me" (Wade 1968).

An examination of the BBC Audience Research Report<sup>33</sup> shows that many listeners shared Wade's concerns. Although the audience "reaction index" was close to the average for the Third Programme at that time of year, there was a clear divide among the audience. While

some listeners are quoted as finding the *Moby Dick* connection to be "wittily done" and "fascinating", others found "the language of Melville seemed a little out of place at times". One listener commented "we were told these people did things but given no reason as to why". A significant minority found the whole play "incredibly difficult to follow", and offered comments such as "pretentious nonsense", "inflated dialogue" and "too far fetched". The overall view summarised in the Report, however, was that "for many listeners... [it] ...held a "strangely compelling quality" , and was well suited to its medium."

The Report also shows that the audience appreciated the quality of the acting, especially of the three leads, and found Cary's electronic sounds and music commendable.

One small mystery surrounds *Leviathan '99*: the matter of the Prix Italia. The BBC often submitted its productions for this prestigious European broadcasting prize, and *Leviathan's* producer H.B.Fortuin was sure that this piece of work was worthy of it. The BBC eventually agreed, but in July 1968 Bradbury's London agents let it be known that Bradbury was vetoing the nomination. It is possible that Bradbury was upset that Fortuin had reported a need to "cut the play down to 60 minutes<sup>34</sup>" (from the broadcast length of seventy-three minutes) to meet the requirements of the award's judges.

Following *Leviathan*, there seems to have been little contact between Bradbury and the BBC for over a year. Then, in November 1969, the BBC schools' radio department approached Bradbury directly with a proposition that he consider writing two twenty-minute pieces for a series. The first would be a story or essay that "uses the buildings and buses, the telephone wires and television aerials [...] as an older writer might have used a

forest, bustling with dragons and heroes". The second would be a dramatisation of Noah's flood. Producer Paddy Bechely also asked for permission to use Bradbury's *Switch on the Night* in her programme, which was aimed at seven- to nine-year-olds<sup>35</sup>. Bradbury's London agent granted permission for the latter, but reported that Bradbury was too busy with other work to write new material for the programme<sup>36</sup>.

One might expect that Bradbury's successes and popularity at the BBC would make it likely that anything he submitted would get produced. This was clearly not the case, however. In early 1970, his agents forwarded four stage plays for consideration: "The Anthem Sprinters", an Irish play; "Any Friend of Nicholas Nickleby's is Friend of Mine", a time travel story involving Dickens; "A Medicine for Melancholy" and "The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit"<sup>37</sup>. Various script readers were appointed to review the plays, but the response was not positive:

Anthem: "...a bit too long, this is very entertaining. Some of the jokes are a bit old: there's too much about alcohol [...] I think it could work."

Nickleby: "it's not as good for radio as Anthem Sprinters [...] it would need considerable adaptation and might lose its pace in the process."

Another reader was not so kind, parodying Bradbury's style: "Ah. Yes. Mmm. Lickety-split and holy cow! Is this rubbish or isn't it? I do believe it is!"

Melancholy: "a nice story with an important theme. But I don't think it's in the right form for radio"

Ice Cream suit: "I like it - but it all depends on the white suit, and you couldn't very well put that on the radio"<sup>38</sup>.

Richard Imison had to report the bad news of the rejection to Bradbury's agents, but did say that he would like to consult H.B.Fortuin for his opinion. Unfortunately, Fortuin's views were no more positive:

"mock Irish and would not work"

"a faint whimsy which would not stand up to Radio 4 core listeners"

"in view of negative reports I have not read"

"this has possibilities. But it needs so much adaptation that it would only be worth our while if Bradbury himself supplies an adaptation [...] in view of the agent's interest and our Bradbury connection it might be a good idea to say that we would be interested if Bradbury reworked the piece"<sup>39</sup>.

Alas, Bradbury was again too busy to adapt the play, but he was in any case convinced that his stage play would work as written. He was quoted by his agent as saying "If the BBC producers look closely at the script I gave you, they will find that a few minor changes and it will play as it is. I have listened to the tape I made of our stage play here in Los Angeles, and it is a "language" play"<sup>40</sup>. In May 1970 another adapter was interested in Bradbury, so Imison passed the play on for their consideration<sup>41</sup>. No BBC production ever materialised.

The materials in the BBC Written Archive end at May 1970, but Bradbury's work has continued to be adapted to this day. Notable productions include:

- the 1977 BBC Radiophonic Workshop version of *There Will Come Soft Rains*, an award-winning production by Malcolm Clarke (Brown 2006)
- Bradbury's early BBC success *The Golden Apples of the Sun* was revisited with an 8-part series of dramatisations in 1991 (this time including several science fiction tales)
- Hamish Wilson's 1991 production of Bradbury's play *Kaleidoscope* (the only Bradbury play apart from *Leviathan '99* to make it onto the BBC). This production was one of the first to make use of digital recording and post-production techniques, ushering in what Beck (2001) calls "filmic radio drama".
- Bradbury's own series *Tales of the Bizarre*. This presented twelve dramatisations of his classic stories between 1995 and 1997, each one introduced from his Los Angeles home by Bradbury himself, with the stories dramatised in Scotland by the finest BBC script writers and produced by Hamish Wilson

And *Fahrenheit 451*, much rejected in the 1950s, finally got to air in 1982 in a dramatisation by Gregory Evans which owed as much to Truffaut's film as it did to Bradbury; and again in 2003 in a version by David Calcutt.

Bradbury's work in radio is extensive, and encompasses the full range of writerly activity: story readings, stories adapted to plays, and plays written directly for the medium. His entry into the medium seems inevitable, given his interest in all media, but his involvement with the BBC is much more extensive than any comparable writer.

The BBC has generally presented Bradbury's work with great care, sympathy and attention to detail, often using cutting edge technologies and techniques to bring them to life.

However, some of his best regarded works have consistently and continually been rejected behind the scenes. The reasons for rejection very much reflect the criticisms that are more widely directed at Bradbury's work: problems of plausibility, arguably relating to the "is it science fiction?" question; problems of language and the "over-writing" claim; and sometimes problems of the American identity of the work, Aldiss's rocking-chair-and-verandah.

With *Leviathan '99*, it is clear that Bradbury scored a major hit with the BBC and, indeed, across Europe. It is ironic that this play should be a text which Bradbury continues to revise and adapt into different media, as if unhappy with it – or, perhaps, Ahab-obsessed with it. However, it is clear that the transfer of ideas between Bradbury's radio scripts and his literature is a two-way process, and certainly deserving of further study.

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## Table 1: Ray Bradbury on Radio

(Adaptations carried out by other writers, except where stated. BBC productions are shown in **bold** type. Titles shown in ALL CAPITALS are series; titles in Mixed Upper/Lower Case are one-off productions. A more detailed version of this table is available on my website: [www.bradburymedia.co.uk](http://www.bradburymedia.co.uk))

1946	MOLLE MYSTERY THEATRE
1947	WORLD SECURITY WORKSHOP "The Meadow" (scripted by Bradbury; the basis of his 1953 short story of the same name)
1947-48	STORIES BY OLMSTED
1947-60	SUSPENSE - CBS
1949	RADIO CITY PLAYHOUSE - NBC
1950-51	DIMENSION X - NBC
1950-53	ESCAPE - CBS
1951	LIGHTS OUT - NBC
1952	NBC SHORT STORY - NBC
1953	THINK/ABC RADIO WORKSHOP - ABC
<b>1954</b>	<b>THE GOLDEN APPLES OF THE SUN</b> - BBC Home Service The Flying Machine/Golden Kite, Silver Wind/The Great Wide World Over There/The Meadow
1955	X MINUS ONE - NBC
1956	CBS RADIO WORKSHOP - CBS Season of Disbelief/Hail and Farewell (includes introduction written and read by Bradbury; scripts by Anthony Ellis)
<b>1959</b>	<b>THIRTY MINUTE THEATRE</b> - BBC Light Programme The Veldt/The Fox and the Forest
<b>1962</b>	<b>There Will Come Soft Rains</b> - BBC Third Programme
1968	SF68 (South Africa)
<b>1968</b>	<b>Leviathan 99</b> - BBC Third Programme (script by Ray Bradbury)
197?	Summer Raptures of Ray Bradbury (Canada)
1971	STUDIO 71 (Canada)
<b>1971</b>	<b>There Will Come Soft Rains</b> - BBC Radio 4
<b>1973-75</b>	<b>THE UNKNOWN WORLD</b> - BBC World Service The Fox and the Forest/Here There Be Tygers
1973	EXPERIMENT IN DRAMA - NBC
1973	CBC PLAYHOUSE: Bradbury Times Five - CBC
c.1974	THE WORLD OF SCIENCE FICTION
1974	FUTURE TENSE
<b>1974</b>	<b>Marionettes Inc</b> - BBC Radio 4
1975-77	MIND WEBS - WHA Madison
1975	CHICAGO RADIO THEATER
1976	NORMAN CORWIN SPECIAL - NPR Forever And The Earth/ Great Conflagration Up At The Place (scripts by Bradbury)
1976	SPIDER'S WEB - NPR
<b>1977</b>	<b>August 2026: There Will Come Soft Rains</b> - BBC Radio 4
<b>1982</b>	<b>Fahrenheit 451</b> - BBC Radio 4
1984	BRADBURY 13 - NPR
1984	October Country - ABC
1984	VANISHING POINT
<b>1986</b>	<b>GHOST STORY</b> - BBC Radio 4 The Crowd
<b>1988</b>	<b>FUTURE IMPERFECT</b> - BBC World Service A Piece of Wood
1989	SCI-FI RADIO
c. 1990	Any Friend of Nicholas Nickelby's is a Friend of Mine - California Artists Radio Theater
<b>1991</b>	<b>THE GOLDEN APPLES OF THE SUN</b> - BBC Radio 5 The Golden Apples of the Sun/ Hail and Farewell/ The Flying Machine/ The Fruit at the Bottom of the Bowl/A Sound of Thunder/The Murderer/ The April Witch/The Fog Horn
<b>1991</b>	<b>Kaleidoscope</b> - BBC Radio 4
<b>1991</b>	<b>The Smile</b> - BBC Radio 4

- 1992**      **FEAR ON FOUR** - BBC Radio 4  
                     The Next in Line
- 1994**      **The Shoreline at Sunset** - BBC Radio 4
- 1995      A 75th Birthday Tribute to Ray Bradbury - California Artists Radio Theater
- 1995-97**   **TALES OF THE BIZARRE** - BBC Radio 4  
                     Night Call Collect/Have I Got A Chocolate Bar For You/The Jar/ The Fruit At The Bottom of the Bowl/I  
                     Sing The Body Electric!/Skeleton/ The Man Upstairs/Jack in the Box/The Scythe/The Wind/And So Died  
                     Riabouchinska/The Day it Rained Forever
- 2000      An 80th Birthday Tribute to Ray Bradbury - California Artists Radio Theater
- 2000      2000X - NPR
- 2003**      **Fahrenheit 451** - BBC Radio 4
- 2004**      **WALKING STORIES** - BBC Radio 4  
                     The Pedestrian

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## End Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham Park, Reading RG4 8TZ, United Kingdom.
- <sup>2</sup> Published in May 1992, *Green Shadows, White Whale* is a “fix-up” novel which artfully combines many of his previously published Irish stories, such as “The Great Collision of Monday Last”, “The Terrible Conflagration up at the Place” “The Beggar on O’Connell Bridge”, “Banshee”, “The Anthem Sprinters”.
- <sup>3</sup> Though sometimes listed in Bradbury’s credits, little has been published on the unfiled screenplay *The Dreamers*. The key source is the unpublished UCLA Oral History Program Transcript, Craig Cunningham (interviewer), 1961.
- <sup>4</sup> For more on the US and UK traditions of science fiction, see “History of SF” in Clute & Nicholls (1999, p556).
- <sup>5</sup> Ray Bradbury, Writer. File in BBC Written Archives, viewed 6 January 2005. (Hereafter BBC.) Attributed HW to DMcW (16 Oct 1951).
- <sup>6</sup> BBC, R.E.Keen to D.F.Boyd (8 June 1954); D.F.Boyd to C.H.S. (9 June 1954); Controller, Home Service to D.F.Boyd (15 June 1954).
- <sup>7</sup> BBC, D.F.Boyd to C.H.S. (9 June 1954).
- <sup>8</sup> Fabb, p244-254. Fabb’s tabulation reveals 6 science fiction productions in the between 1927 and 1929; 18 in the 1930s; 28 in the 1940s; 58 in the 1950s; 62 in the 1960s; 92 in the 1970s; 118 in the 1980s; 148 in the 1990s. Fabb gives no explicit definition of science fiction.
- <sup>9</sup> When the Third Programme opened in 1946, Sir William Haley, the BBC Director-General, said: “Its whole content will be directed to an audience that is not of one class but that is perceptive and intelligent”. The network broadcast classical music, drama and literature, and talks “by leading academics, philosophers and authors.” History of the BBC, 1940s, PDF file available from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/heritage/story/pdfs/1940s.pdf> (accessed 27 July 2005).
- <sup>10</sup> BBC, George MacBeth to Mr Newby (30 November 1956).
- <sup>11</sup> Referred to in BBC, Play Library to Script Editor Drama Sound (10 May 1957), as “P.W. to A.B. 30 April 1954”, although this latter memo is not preserved in the Bradbury file.
- <sup>12</sup> BBC, Play Library to P.Bryant (22 Dec 1964).
- <sup>13</sup> Referred to in BBC, Play Library to Script Editor Drama Sound (10 May 1957), as “P.W. to A.B. 30 April 1954”. *Fahrenheit 451* is set in a politically indeterminate future USA, and is considered to be inspired in part by the McCarthyist anti-communist witchhunt of the 1950s. The memo writer’s identification of the government of Bradbury’s novel as “communist” reveals an inattentive reading of the novel.
- <sup>14</sup> BBC, Michael Bakewell to Script Editor Drama Sound (9 May 1957).
- <sup>15</sup> BBC, RT to Barbara (21 May 1957); Barbara Bray to Bert Parnaby (6 June 1957).
- <sup>16</sup> BBC, Bakewell to Script Editor Drama Sound (9 May 1957); Play Library to Script Editor Drama Sound (10 May 1957).
- <sup>17</sup> BBC, Bakewell to Script Editor Drama Sound (9 May 1957).
- <sup>18</sup> BBC, Barbara Bray to Miss Dean (6 September 1957); Miss Dean to Barbara Bray (27 September 1957).
- <sup>19</sup> Referred to in BBC, Play Library to P.Bryant (22 December 1964); quotations attributed there as “F.B. to M.B. 20 January 1959” and “F.B. to Wightman 24 February 1959”.
- <sup>20</sup> BBC, Nesta Pain to A.H.F. (4 January 1962).
- <sup>21</sup> Jonathan Eller (private correspondence, July 2005). If it sounds unlikely that Bradbury would return to a 40-year-old novel outline, consider the publishing history of his as yet unpublished *Farewell Summer* (Eller & Touponce, p241-243.)
- <sup>22</sup> The NBC connection is confirmed by letter, Robert Wogan, Vice President Programs, NBC to Ray Bradbury, 14 April 1966; the Norman Corwin connection is confirmed by letter, Ray Bradbury to Norman Corwin, 18 May 1966; these letters in the Donn Albright Collection of Ray Bradbury papers, Westfield, New Jersey.
- <sup>23</sup> Examples include “Riabouchinska” and “The Whole Town’s Sleeping” (*Suspense*, CBS, 1947 and 1948 respectively).
- <sup>24</sup> For Bradbury’s work on the Hitchcock shows, Grams & Wikstrom (2001).
- <sup>25</sup> BBC, Anthony Jones, A.D.Peters & Co. to Richard Imison (13 December 1966); D.G.Bridson to Ch.H.S. (21 February 1967). The arrival in the BBC of two manuscripts of the same play caused some confusion; see BBC, Imison to Jones (23 February 1967).
- <sup>26</sup> See interview with Christopher Lee (Powell, 2006). Lee first met Bradbury in 1964; see Lee (1999, p195).

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<sup>27</sup> This event is documented in Weller, p229-230, and incorporated into Bradbury's fictionalised narrative in *Green Shadows, White Whale* (Bradbury, 1992, p257).

<sup>28</sup> For a review of the 1972 stage production, see Sullivan (1972). For a comparison of various script versions of *Leviathan '99* (all unpublished to date), see Carter (1995) and Carter (2003).

<sup>29</sup> Programmes As Broadcast, Third Programme 3 May 1968, BBC Written Archives.

<sup>30</sup> See "Kaleidoscope" (first published in 1975) in Bradbury (1991, p356-8). The electronic voice cloud is *not* present in Bradbury's original short story; see "Kaleidoscope" (first published in 1949) in Bradbury (1980, p143-149).

<sup>31</sup> BBC, A.Jones, A.D.Peters Ltd to H.B.Fortuin (5 April 1968).

<sup>32</sup> The poem is referred to in the essay: "Dusk in the Robot Museums: The Rebirth of Imagination" in Bradbury (1996, p99-108).

<sup>33</sup> An Audience Research Report: *Leviathan '99*, 7 June 1968, BBC Written Archives, ref R9/6/197.

<sup>34</sup> BBC, letter, H.B.Fortuin to Ray Bradbury (31 May 1968).

<sup>35</sup> BBC, Paddy Bechely to Ray Bradbury (19 November 1969).

<sup>36</sup> BBC, A.Jones, A.D.Peters Ltd to Paddy Bechely (2 December 1969).

<sup>37</sup> BBC, A.Jones, A.D.Peters Ltd to William Ashe (9 January 1970).

<sup>38</sup> BBC, Michael Heffernan to W.Ash (3 February 1970); Michael Heffernan to W.Ash (4 February 1970); C.Tucker to W.Ash (10 February 1970).

<sup>39</sup> BBC, H.B.Fortuin to SED(R) (23 March 1970).

<sup>40</sup> BBC, A.Jones, A.D.Peters Ltd to Richard Imison (10 April 1970).

<sup>41</sup> BBC, Richard Imison to A.Jones, A.D.Peters Ltd (18 May 1970).