Shadows of the Ravine: Mortality-Themed Discards from Bradbury’s Illinois Novels

Harley, Gabriel M.

Abstract:

This thesis offers a focused examination of thematically-related story-chapters that Ray Bradbury originally intended for his first novel concept—Summer Morning, Summer Night, a book set in the vivid memories of his own small-town Midwest childhood. The stories at the heart of this thesis were discarded from the project (often referred to by Bradbury as the “Illinois novel”) by the time that he published a portion of the original project as Dandelion Wine in 1957. As that novelized story cycle is perhaps the best-known of all Bradbury’s “Green Town” books, I intend to use it as a springboard for identifying and examining those stories that were discarded, left unfinished, or eventually published as stand-alone tales in other outlets. Since all of these stories were eliminated before Dandelion Wine emerged as the first published portion of the larger Illinois novel, I will further explore how their hypothetical presence or actual absence may have affected Dandelion Wine as a whole, from inception and development to publication and popular reception, as well as investigate what these tales may reveal about the evolution of Bradbury as a writer.

Description:

Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI)
apparent in his early fiction. Bradbury's correspondence documents his frustrating encounters with the major trade publishing houses and his earliest unpublished reflections on the nature of authorship. Harley, Gabriel M. “Shadows of the Ravine: Mortality-Themed Discards from Bradbury's Illinois Novels.” MA thesis, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, 2009. Barrett, Amanda Kay. Bradbury was one of the most celebrated 20th-century American writers. Many of Bradbury's works have been adapted into comic books, television shows and films. He graduated from a Los Angeles high school in 1938. Although his formal education ended there, he became a "student of life," selling newspapers on L.A. street corners from 1938 to 1942, spending his nights in the public library and his days at the typewriter.