

Savannah Gregory

Critical Response 2

Bradbury and Confusing Dialogue

In Ray Bradbury's interview with NEA, he discusses the importance of love in one's life specifically pertaining to books and writing. Bradbury is an accomplished writer himself whose name is no stranger to the writing community. As someone who has written and published over thirty books and countless other pieces of literature, his reputation as a writer is highly regarded. Because of his prominence in this writing community, I was surprised that he exuded a sense of disorganization in sharing his message. While remaining bubbly through the duration of the interview, Bradbury's stories and responses did not seem to follow any kind or proper order. While seemingly disorganized, I believe the chaotic aura displays his mantra clearly to the watchers.

Bradbury begins each story with "when I was" followed by the age he was when the event occurred, but he would often jump between periods of his life. For example, He told a story from when he first went to a library at age seven then proceeded to tell a story of when he first read *Grapes of Wrath* aged 19 then returning to his preteen years, age 12, to tell yet another story. This disables the viewer's concept of time. While all of the stories related back to his central theme of pursuing what you love in life, his expression of this thought made understanding the full story near impossible. I believe Bradbury firmly believes in "Shitty First Drafts," mentioned by Anne Lamott. Bradbury's comments in his interview seemed to me to hint that he believes writing, and other activities, are a progression. His Rome-wasn't-built-in-a-day-

mentality helps us, the viewers, understand how his experiences have shaped his writing. A polished and organized piece of writing requires every thought to be considered and Bradbury's attitude in his interview indicates his implicit support for this concept. Like Lamott mentions, Bradbury does not shy away from including ideas that may seem irrelevant. While his stories seemed excessive, a more tailored interview would have eliminated a lot of the personality he displayed.

Bradbury's confusing dialogue during the interview is reminiscent of a child's behavior. You can tell that he is passionate about books, libraries, and writing because of how he speaks. Everything he says is cut short by the next sentence he begins. Some of his statements are even contradictory like this one he says when referring to his future wife, "I found my love in a bookstore not a library; but a bookstore is a library." Many of his statements were similar to this one in that they do not explore an idea to its full extent.

Oddly enough though, Bradbury makes this kind of crazy work. His childlike attitude displays a sort of affection and all together excitement for his work. At the conclusion of his interview, all of his stories, as irrelevant as they seemed earlier, come full circle and ties in his philosophy of doing what you love and loving life as a whole.

Works Cited

“Fahrenheit 451.” *NEA*, 22 Oct. 2018, www.arts.gov/national-initiatives/nea-big-read/fahrenheit-451.

Lamott, Anne. "Shitty First Drafts." *Language Awareness: Readings for College Writers*. Ed. by Paul Eschholz, Alfred Rosa, and Virginia Clark. 9th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005: 93-96.