Morgan Cox

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Edward R. Murrow

Edward R. Murrow was an American broadcast journalist, born on April 25th, 1908 in North Carolina. Murrow’s career in broadcasting began in 1935 when he moved to New York City and joined the Columbia Broadcast System (CBS). Murrow stayed with the CBS network throughout his entire broadcasting career with which he aired his weekly show. Having a voice that is still recognized around the world, he was soon named one of the forefathers of broadcast journalism after having experience with not only television, but also radio broadcast.

At the start of Murrow’s career, CBS did not have a news staff. He was in charge of lining up guests to appear on the network to speak about current issues. In 1937, Murrow served as the director of CBS’s European operations in London. While this job didn’t require Murrow to be on-air, he still had an important job of convincing Europeans figures to broadcast over the CBS network instead of the rivalry, NBC. The year of 1938 was Murrow’s first “big” event that gave him a quick look at fame. It was the year of his first on-the-scene news report when he received word from William Shirer of the annexation of Austria by Adolf Hitler’s Germany. CBS ordered Murrow and Shirer to put together a broadcast reporting of the reaction to the annex. Murrow was stationed in London during World War II and reported on the happenings which led him to him to “broadcasting fame”. He later, in 1945, became the first reporters, along with Shirer, to report on the liberation of the Buchenwald extermination camp, which was held in Germany, where he gave full on-air detail and description of everything that took place the camp.

In the early 1950s, Murrow began his television career when he appeared in “tailpieces” on the evening news of CBS. Starting in 1951, Murrow became the host of the show *See It Now*, which was previously a radio show titled *Hear It Now*. In 1952, Murrow narrated a documentary called *Alliance for Peace*, and in 1953, launched a second weekly TV show entitled *Person to Person*. In 1958, he became the moderator and producer of *Small World*.

At the RTNDA Convention (Radio-Television News Directors Association) in Chicago, on October 15, 1958, Murrow gave a very important speech that he stated “just might do nobody good” but that he felt needed to be addressed. Murrow was concerned that with new media, false advertisement and “false news” would soon be all the radio and television would become. The speech was very harsh, yet truthful as he explained that in the network, entertainment was more important to the people than news. He mentioned that he feared what it might be and that we, as broadcasters, were responsible for what would happen in the future.

In my opinion, Edward R. Murrow is a talented and extremely brave broadcaster. When I say that he was brave, not only do I mean in a sense of not being fearful, but he was able to say what he wanted to without letting what others may think affect him. The type historical events Murrow covered is amazing, and being the first reporter to cover such a tragic experience in Germany is something that I believe deserves much recognition.

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