

Edward murrow and the birth of broadcast journalism summary assignment

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Bob Edwards' *Edward Murrow and the Birth of Broadcast Journalism* is a short biography about the man that established and revolutionized broadcast journalism. Bob Edwards has ample experience in broadcast journalism as a radio news and talk show host for over 30 years (Biography.com). It is no surprise that Edwards takes a particular interest in writing about Edward Murrow since he certainly influenced Edwards' career in radio news. While he conducted most of his research through secondary sources, he relied heavily on books by close co-workers of Murrow.

With that said, *Edward Murrow and the Birth of Broadcast Journalism* is a great streamlined tale of Murrow's journey from a logger, to an education advocate, to broadcast journalism. As a biography, the purpose is to inform and educate about the life and career of Murrow. Edwards does a good job at touching on the highlights of his career, but I do not think he did a good job at stressing his importance in developing broadcast journalism.

While the ties are there, I do not believe he accentuated his importance early on in the book of his development of the news roundup concept. The only reference to the development of this idea in the early chapters is the reference to Paley's self-crediting of the news roundup in his autobiography (Edwards, 37). It does explain the current widespread usage of the news roundup idea and that the CBS team came up with the idea, but he is not credited for this and the television split screen until later in the book (Edwards, 81).

Murrow's trailblazing of the news media was more of a side note than a major theme throughout the book. While he was involved in the innovation of

radio and TV news, it does not support the claim strongly even though we know that Murrow was a news icon and an idol for anybody looking to enter the news field. As such, it is extremely important for anybody who wants to understand modern news media to learn Murrow's contributions to the field. The book lacks strong opinionated arguments and sticks with strict factual details.

He did however describe Murrow as the " broadcast journalism's patron saint and first great star" (Edwards, 39). He is portrayed as just another broadcaster throughout the early coverage of European affairs and does not stand out as a star until his broadcasts from London. He did essentially shape the way news programs report and the simple inclusion of much of his early career proves this easily. The book is most likely geared towards history and media enthusiasts.

It is great for its intended audience, but lacks exposition of much else other than his education and media careers. Edwards says that because " With the focus strictly on Ed Murrow's innovations in radio and TV, large chunks of his life had to be omitted" (9). As such, there is a lot of information missing for somebody that is extremely interested in Murrow's life outside of work. This does help to maintain a concise summary of his life in the industry without diluting the book with trivial facts about his life.

For this reason, I think the appeal of this book is much more widespread than just history or media buffs since it is a quick but extremely informative read. His organization and style makes the book pretty easy to follow. The only issues with readability are in the chapters during and following the World

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War II coverage where he jumps from Murrow to a brief history of other “Murrow Boys” where he will fast forward in the personality’s life and then digress back to Murrow from chapter 3 to 6.

While the information is helpful in understanding Murrow’s correspondence team, it takes away from the focus and impact of Murrow himself. There is one major flaw in this book that could not possibly be overcome. In writing about Murrow’s accolades, it is necessary to transcribe some of his broadcasts. The problem is that when a person is reading what he had spoken, it loses some of its weight. Murrow’s use of pauses to increase the dramatic effect and offer a second to reflect is lost in the printed words.

For example, the humanity and emotion in his voice during the Buchenwald broadcast (pages 66 to 70) is lost in the printed word. When hearing his voice describe the horrible sights at the concentration camp, it is hard to deny your feelings toward the Nazi’s and the imprisoned. Overall, Bob Edwards’ *Edward Murrow and the Birth of Broadcast Journalism* was a great book. It is concise, informative, and hits the major highlights of Murrow’s career from falling backwards into broadcasting until the cancellation of *See It Now* and his work for the Kennedy Administration. Reading this book will peak your interest in Murrow’s projects and life and will prompt you to scour the internet or libraries for audio and/or video clips of Murrow’s broadcasts to be able to soak in his broadcasting professionalism and perfection. Edwards, B. (2003). *Edward murrow and the birth of broadcast journalism*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. ” Bob Edwards. ” 2011. Biography. com 28 Oct

2011, 11: 13. Retrieved from <http://www.biography.com/people/bob-edwards-224918>