

History of Broadcast Journalism

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(A concise, organized overview for study or quick reference)

1. Foundations (Early 20th Century)

Period	Milestones	Key Figures / Organizations
1900?	• First experimental radio transmissions (e.g., Marconi, 1901).	KDKA, Lee de Forest, Edward R. Murrow (later)
1920	• 1920: First regular news broadcast – KDKA (Pittsburgh) airs election results.	
1920?	• Rapid growth of commercial radio networks (NBC, CBS).	NBC (1926), CBS (1927)
1930	• News bulletins become a staple of programming.	
1930?	• Introduction of <i>live</i> field reporting via telephone and shortwave.	Edward R. Murrow (BBC), Lowell Thomas (U.S.)
1940	• Development of news scripts and “anchor” style.	

Why it matters: Radio turned news into an immediate, mass-medium experience, breaking the monopoly of print and setting the template for real-time reporting.

2. The Golden Age of Radio News (1930s-1940s)

- **World War II:** Radio became the primary source for battlefield updates; “War correspondents” like Murrow reported from London.
 - **Signature Programs:**
 - *The Mercury Theatre on the Air* (later *The Campbell Playhouse*) – blended drama with news commentary.
 - *CBS World News Roundup* (1938) – first network news roundup, still on air today.
 - **Technological Advances:**
 - Use of shortwave for overseas dispatches.
 - Introduction of the *microphone boom* for on-site sound.
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3. Transition to Television (Late 1940s-1960s)

Development	Impact on Journalism
1948 – First televised news program (NBC's <i>Camel Newsreel</i>).	Visual element adds credibility & emotional power.
1950s – Expansion of TV ownership (? 90% of U.S. households by 1960).	Audiences shift from radio to TV for nightly news.
1960 – <i>CBS Evening News</i> with Walter Cronkite becomes "the most trusted man in America."	Anchor becomes the face of the network; personal credibility matters.
1963 – <i>BBC Television News</i> launches a dedicated news department.	Institutionalization of TV news production.

Key Innovations

- **Live remote reporting** (e.g., 1963 "War of the Worlds" style live coverage of the JFK assassination).
 - **Electronic news gathering (ENG)** – portable cameras, videotape recorders (late 1960s).
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4. The Rise of 24-Hour News (1970s-1990s)

Year	Event	Significance
1970	Launch of CNN (Cable News Network).	First 24-hour news channel; created a continuous news cycle.
1980	MTV News and Fox News (1996) later – niche and partisan outlets emerge.	Diversification of audience targeting.
1990	Introduction of satellite news gathering (SNG) trucks.	Faster global coverage; live feeds from remote locations.
1995	Internet begins to host news sites (e.g., CNN.com).	Convergence of broadcast and