

Reporting the War: World War II Reporting Stations

"We interpret the broadcast for an important new bulletin"



Stations #1 – Newseum – How was World War II Reported

To better understand how news was reported during World War II. Go to the Newseum website at <http://www.newseum.org/warstories>. Select *Media and Technology* and pick *World War II*. The information is divided between Coverage, Reporting, and Technology. Read each section and answer the questions below. To see the entire reading scroll down on the side bar. Keep clicking continue or the special captions to find out more information.

War Reporting and Technology – How has war reporting changed over time from the Civil War to modern day?

Coverage – How did the U.S. government treat censorship of the media during World War II?

What was the purpose of the Office of War Information (OWI)?

Why is overseas war reporting more efficient than during other wars?

Why was Robert Capa a controversial World War II reporter? Why has much of his work been lost?

Reporting - How did the job of the reporter change during War World II? Why was this more effective for the public audience than past war reporting? Explain

Ernie Pyles' reporting was praised by the public and even Mrs. Roosevelt. What about his style of reporting resonated with the public?

What type of relationship did Pyle form with the soldiers he served with? What evidence supports your answer? Provide a quote from the reading.

Technology - How did modern broadcast journalism start? Explain?

How did the radio impact war news reporting? Explain

Edward R. Murrow gained the respect of the print media. How was his reporting different? Why was he respected? Explain

From the **Reporting War Homepage** select **Video Interviews**.

Listen to as many interviews as possible. Answer the questions below by recording the name of the reporter(s) and how he responded?

What is it like covering war?

Did the military tell you what to cover?

Was there anything at the time the reporters missed?

Describe the control of the military?

What did you find interesting or surprising about the war reporters memories of reporting the war? How is there description of war different than a foot soldier?

Station #2 – We Interrupt This Program

Go to the University of Missouri Kansas City web site *Voices of World War II: Experiences From the Front and at Home*, <http://library.umkc.edu/spec-col/ww2/main.htm>. The website has collected radio newscasts from the World War II era. Listen to at least one radio newscast from the tabs Pearl Harbor, Europe and D-

Day, and the Pacific Theater. They are all good and vary in length. While listening analyze how information is reported to the public?

Suggestions: Under Pearl Harbor select Newscasts. I liked the 3rd and 6th selection.

Europe and D-Day – Listen to the Eyewitness account from June 8, 1944. It is in red by *Now Hear This*.

Pacific Theater- Listen to the Report from Pacific Fleet Headquarter. It is in red by *Now Hear This*.

After listening to the broadcasts analyze the type of information the American public received? Would this information reassure you, cause panic, or kick you into action? How does it compare to modern day reporting? Write a paragraph below explaining your analysis.

Station #3 Ernie Pyle and Edward R. Murrow

Ernie Pyle won the Pulitzer Prize for his reporting in World War II. He was an imbedded journalist whose columns touched the hearts of Americans. He was killed by a Japanese machine gunner months before the end of the war. As you read two of his columns analyze his writing style. Why do you think his columns were so popular on the home front?

For homework you read the two Ernie Pyle newspaper columns *The God-Damned Infantry* from May, 3, 1943 and *The Death of Captain Warkow* from Jan 10th 1944. The columns can also be found at <http://journalism.indiana.edu/resources/erniepile/wartime-columns/1/#WartimeColumns>.

Why do you think Ernie Pyle's' columns were so popular on the home front? Explain

"This...is London" – Edward R. Murrow is credited with being a forefather of broadcast news. He worked for CBS as a reporter in London before the outbreak of World War II. With the help of his colleagues known as the "Murrow Boys" CBS news brought live reports to the American public from the frontlines of the war in Europe and the Pacific.

Go to *Radio News* section of the *Radio Days* website at <http://www.otr.com/news.shtml>. Select Edward R. Murrow. Listen to Murrow's live reports from London. After each report describe, in your own words, the image that Murrow created for the listener.

London Rooftop During the Blitz –

From Trafalgar Square During an Air Raid –

Why do you think Murrow's reporting was engaging to the average American listening to CBS radio from their homes? Explain. Think about his description, voice, topic select...

Compare and Contrast the Reporting Styles of Pyle and Murrow			
Similarities		Differences	
Pyle	Murrow	Pyle	Murrow

Station #4 – Newsreels

Even during times of economic depression and war Americans still went to the movies. At the movies they could escape their everyday lives and watch newsreel updating them on what was happening in World War II. Watch the newsreel from the National Archives. As you watch make notes on how the video uses sound effects, camera angles, and propaganda. Also keep a list of how the enemy troops are referred to compared to the image of the American soldiers.

Listen to the newsreel from the National Archives titled *Allied Drive on in Italy – Planes Smash Foe In Air, 1944*. To find the video go to the National Archives at <http://www.archives.gov/research/arc/videos.html> select *60 World War II Newsreels*. Play the #7 video. Either play it in a Quicktime download or Youtube. (Streaming may be too slow)

Notes on Construction of the Video – sound effects, camera angle, images

Notes on Content of the Video – propaganda, references to the enemy, actions of the soldiers

Looking over your notes analyze what the American public was viewing about the war? How did this impact our viewpoint about the war, our troops, and our leaders?

Station #5 – Censorship of the Press – Who decides?

The American Studies Department at the University of Virginia created a project on the press and media in World War II and Vietnam. Read their research findings titled *Censorship and War Propaganda*, http://xroads.virginia.edu/~class/am485_98/lane/media/censor.htm.

After reading the article answer the following questions:

1. What form of media scared the U.S. government the most? Why?
2. For the most part how was the regular print media censored?
3. What was the purpose of the Office of War Information (OWI)?
4. The government was concerned about the press but they liked the use of images in war propaganda. Why was the propaganda media acceptable? Explain
5. What type of pictures were allowed in the American press? Why?
6. As we head to post World War II wars why type of media becomes a concern? Why?
7. How do we censor media today? Can the media be controlled?

Now read the three documents from the Franklin Roosevelt library containing the issue of censorship during war time. Go to <http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/cgi-bin/htsearch?words=censorship;page>. The readings will appear in a transcribed version on the page about censorship. At the bottom of the page you can switch the document to the original version which is more fun to read. Also you will need to go to the beginning of the document to put the censorship in context.

1. Select *Hopkins on Conference With Stalin 4/11/41*. Harry Hopkins is a close advisor to Pres. Franklin Roosevelt. He is visiting Moscow helping to organize supply shipments to the Soviet Union. What does Stalin say about the Soviet Union and censorship? How accurate do feel Stalin is about Soviet censorship? Explain.

2. Read FDR -> *Winston Churchill re: Leaks to Press About Anti-Submarine Methods 11/10/44*

What problem is Pres. Roosevelt addressing with Prime Minister Churchill? How are they using censorship to control the problem? Explain