

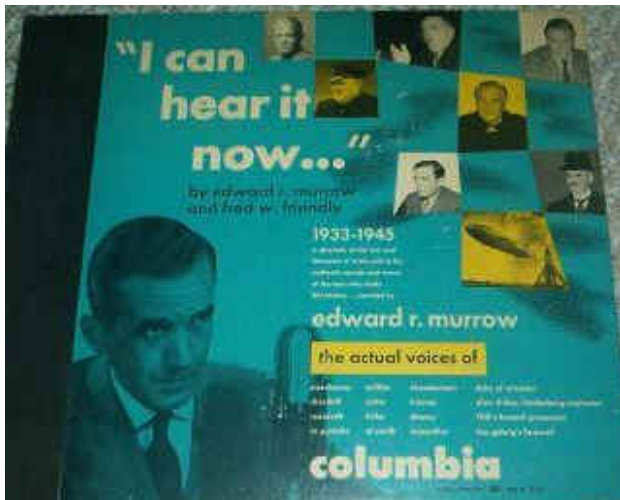
Edward R. Murrow – Hear It Now

The Broadcasts of
Edward R. Murrow:
An Appreciation of
The Man & His Words
A Resource for
Social Studies
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“HEAR IT NOW” (1950) 1950 – 40 million American homes owned radio sets (94% of all households), up from the 30 million in 1942 (84%) and the 20 million in 1934 (65%). ([Source](#))



Background: One of the best selling recordings (albums) in 1948 was

“I Can Hear It Now 1933-1945,” a collaboration between producer

[Fred Friendly](#) and Ed Murrow.

The I Can Hear It Now records, which interwove historical events and speeches with Murrow narration, became such a commercial

success

that the partnership developed a radio series for CBS that also creatively used taped actualities. The weekly Hear It Now was modeled on a magazine format, with a variety of “sounds” of current events, such as artillery fire from Korea and an atom smasher at work, illuminated by Murrow and other expert columnists. ([Source](#))

During the postwar economic boom of the early 1950s, it appeared that television could take over as the main source for news and entertainment.

When Murrow began his Hear It Now radio program, a weekly news program using “taped actualities,” the radio audience was still larger

than that of television, according to the Nielsen ratings system. By 1955,

the television audience outpaced radio by just over 50%. Although Murrow

was a reluctant participant, casting a wary eye on the new medium, he

began a television version of his radio program entitled See It Now in

November 1951. As it was Murrow’s perception that television lacked

real ideas, he teamed with news producer Fred Friendly and set about

creating weekly news broadcasts of “personal interviews, overseas

reports, biographical features, human interest stories, [and] documentary features.” They were a perfect combination;

Friendly supplied “class appeal” while Murrow was the perfect “cool host” for the new “cool medium,”

which was how media guru Marshall McLuhan would later describe television. ([Source](#))