

# Journalism Milestones

—Arnold Cheyney

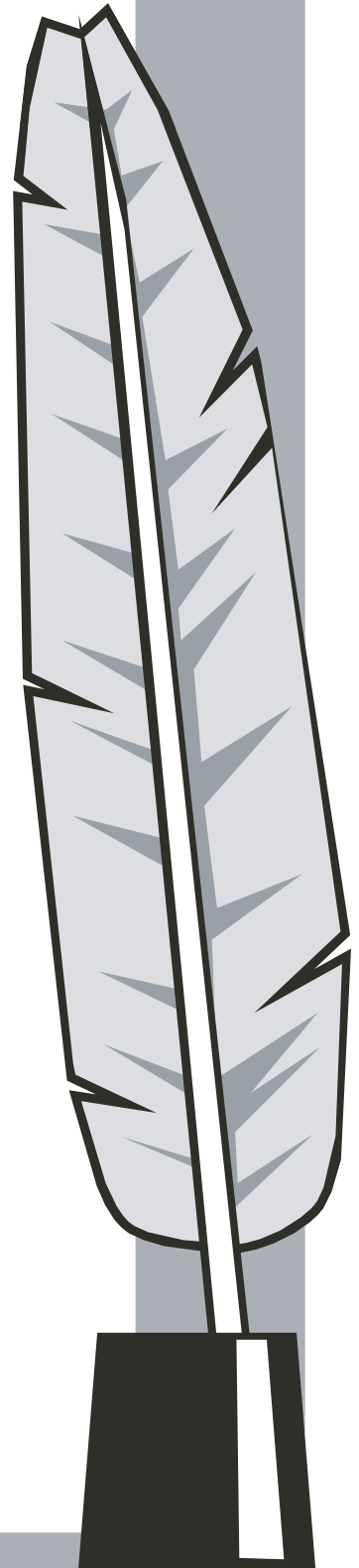
## Bob Schieffer

Bob Schieffer was born in Austin, Texas, on February 17, 1937. Bob's interest in journalism began in junior high when he became sports editor of the school newspaper. He served in the same position in high school and was also editor in chief of the high school yearbook. In the ninth grade, he won first place in the column division of the Fort Worth Press Association. Bob attended Texas Christian University and began a premed program. (His mother hoped he would become a medical doctor.) But journalism was his calling and he switched his major to his first interest. After his college graduation, he served in the U.S. Air Force as an information officer, attaining the rank of Captain.

The *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* hired Bob, now in his mid-twenties, as a reporter. He worked the 6 P.M. to 2:30 A.M. shift. This night shift brought him in touch with police officers, hospital emergency rooms, car wrecks, and various kinds of crime such as robberies and murders. He was ready for sleep when his shift ended. One morning his ten-year-old brother, Tom, shook him awake with the news that President John Kennedy had been shot in Dallas and that he should get to work at the newspaper. He was assigned to the newspaper's city desk answering phones and transcribing stories.

One call was from a woman who needed a ride to Dallas from Fort Worth. He told her his office was not a taxi service. She told him she was the mother of Lee Harvey Oswald, the man accused of killing the President of the United States, and that she heard that her son was under arrest. An hour later he and another reporter took her to Dallas. Bob's story appeared two days later in the *Star-Telegram*.

Bob covered the admittance of a young black man, James Meredith, to the all-white University of Mississippi campus in the fall of 1962. A large group of protestors, police, and state officials barred James's entrance to the school. Tempers were at a fever pitch. Two people were killed and property destroyed. At one point, Bob thought he had been shot at and he dropped quickly to the ground. Overnight 16,000 federal troops were brought to the campus to restore order and calm prevailed. A year later, James Meredith, who had previous educational experience at another school, graduated from the University of Mississippi.



One of his assignments, as a *Star-Telegram* reporter, was to go to Vietnam to write about local Texans serving in the military. He located 235 service men and women from Texas. Bob rode on Army helicopters and flew on dive-bombing missions with Air Force pilots. Bob arrived at one forward post and found a young Marine whose mother had written a letter to Bob asking him to look up her son. The Marine was so moved that he just cried.

On his return to the United States, Bob was offered a job at a television station and became one of the first print journalists to switch to television. He anchored the 6 P.M. news at Channel 5 in Fort Worth, Texas. Some months later he applied for a network position by sending his resume to CBS, NBC, and ABC. He was turned down by the networks but, more importantly, he met Pat who wrote a society column for the *Star-Telegram*. They married three weeks later. So as not to forget their date of marriage, they chose income tax day, April 15. They had two daughters, Susan and Sharon.

In 1969, Bob became a CBS broadcaster and served as anchor of the Saturday edition of CBS Evening News. He was also moderator of the Sunday public affairs show *Face the Nation*. At CBS his career focused on national politics. Bob Schieffer was named Broadcaster of the Year in 2002 by the National Press Foundation. And he insists that his real name is Bob, and not Robert.

### Language Arts

- Bob Schieffer wrote in his autobiography, *This Just In: What I couldn't Tell You on TV*: "The attack on September 11, 2001, was unlike anything that any of us at CBS news had ever experienced. Each of us would have a story to tell about that day." Talk with your parents, relatives, or neighbors about their feelings on that day. Compare your findings with those of your classmates and discuss those experiences. If you're old enough to remember that particular day, add your own recollections.

### Social Studies

- The White House, Pentagon, United States Department of State, and the United States Congress are four major assignment areas for journalists who gather the news in Washington D.C. Bob covered all four areas during his time as a broadcast journalist in the Capital. In online encyclopedias or other reference books, determine what you, as a journalist, would possibly look for in each area in order to report to the country on TV, in newspapers, or other print sources.



**Notes:**