LEVINE, IRVING R
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Irving R. Levine, 86



WASHINGTON, D.C. – Irving R. Levine, of Washington, D.C. and Boca Raton, Fla., died March 27. Born in Pawtucket, he was the son of immigrants from the Ukraine who owned a small general store.

After attending Samuel Slater Junior High School for one year, his family moved to Providence. He was a graduate of Nathan Bishop Junior High School, Hope High School and Brown University in 1944. His World War II Army service prevented him from attending his graduation from Brown. He began his career in journalism at *The Providence Journal* in 1940, working part-time and received a master's in journalism from Columbia University in New York.

In 1950, he went to Vienna and later Korea, and reported on events in each location. NBC later hired him to a full-time position and, between 1955 and 1970, he was the chief correspondent for three NBC foreign bureaus – London, Moscow and Rome. In 1971, he returned to the U.S. and was named the network's chief economic correspondent. He worked for NBC for nearly 50 years.

He served as dean of international studies at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Fla., and was the recipient of numerous honors, including, among others: Brown University's William Rogers Award for "outstanding professional achievement and extraordinary service to humanity," in 1988. In 1994, he returned to Brown for his 50th reunion to serve as the chief marshal of the commencement. In 1996, he received an honorary doctor of journalism degree from Rhode Island College and served as the keynote commencement speaker. URI, Roger Williams College (now University), Providence College and Bryant College (now University), have also honored him with honorary degrees and he is in the Rhode Island Hall of Fame. He was named a "Rhode Island Commodore" by the Junior Achievement in Rhode Island in 1986

Levine was well-known for his trademark bow tie. In a 1996 interview with John Martin, then *The Providence Journal-Bulletin's* television critic, Levine was quoted: "There has been a suggestion that it's a contrived affection. But I started wearing bow ties back when lots of people wore bow ties. People I admired wore them: Elmer Davis, the great journalist, wore them. Edward R. Murrow wore bow ties. Winston Churchill, Harry Truman."

He is survived by his wife, the former Nancy Jones, and their three children, Jeffrey, Daniel and Jennifer. He also leaves his sister, Eva Schaffer, in Walnut Creek, Calif.

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Irving R. Levine, NBC News Correspondent, Dies at 86

By BRUCE WEBER

Irving R. Levine, the longtime NBC News correspondent whose easily accessible explanations of monetary policy, fluctuations in the Dow Jones industrial average and the intricacies of the global market helped make the economy a staple of television news, died in Washington on Friday. He was 86 and lived in Washington and Boca Raton, Fla.

The cause was complications of prostate cancer, said his son Daniel Rome Levine.

In January 1971, Mr. Levine, a veteran foreign correspondent for NBC who had been posted in Moscow, London and Rome, was brought back to Washington and assigned to cover the economy, then a subject rarely considered by the networks. It was the first time any network had assigned a full-time reporter to economics news, and Mr. Levine soon became a familiar presence in American living rooms.

That August, with inflation on the rise, President Richard M. Nixon imposed wage and price controls and took the United States off the gold standard, and Mr. Levine was there to instruct the nation, in unadorned, understandable language, about what it all meant. As matters of money, trade and the budget grew in importance from then on, Mr. Levine, with his trademark bow tie, formal diction and decidedly unglamorous appearance, became the broadcast version of a favorite eccentric professor. Before he retired in 1995, he covered more than 20 international economic summit meetings with five American presidents.

Irving Raskin Levine was born in Pawtucket, R.I., on Aug. 26, 1922. His parents were immigrants from Ukraine who owned a small general store.

He was fixated on becoming a foreign correspondent from a young age, and after graduating from Brown University, working as an obituary writer for The Providence Journal and serving in the United States Army Signal Corps during and after World War II, he went to Columbia Journalism School.

In 1948 he went to work for the International News Service, which sent him first to Vienna, and in 1950 assigned him to cover the outbreak of war in Korea. There, after providing freelance reports for NBC News, he joined the network.

In 1955, Mr. Levine accompanied a group of American farming experts to the Soviet Union, a highly unusual event in the cold war, and he subsequently became the first American television reporter accredited there. He spent four years in Moscow, during which he covered the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia; his 1959 book, "Main Street, U.S.S.R.," depicting daily life in the post-Stalin Soviet Union, was named one of the 100 best books of the year by The New York Times.

When he left Moscow, he went to Europe, spending most of the next dozen years as NBC's bureau chief in Rome and covering, among other events, the erection of the Berlin Wall and the Vatican II Ecumenical Council.

It was while he was passing through the New York studio of NBC News on a trip home from Moscow that he met Nancy Cartmell Jones, who was working as an assistant to Dave Garroway, the host of the "Today" show. They married in 1957. In addition to his wife and their son Daniel, of Wilmette, Ill., he is survived by another son, Jeffrey C. B. Levine, of Chicago; a daughter, Jennifer J. Levine of Chevy Chase, Md.; a sister, Eva Schaffer of Walnut Creek, Calif.; and three grandchildren.

After Mr. Levine retired from NBC, he became dean of the College of International Communications at Lynn University in Boca Raton.

By then he had become such a familiar fixture on NBC that he could be publicly teased by presidents, late-night talk-show hosts and even fictional characters. The title character of the comedy series "Murphy Brown," a newswoman played by Candice Bergen, was once appalled to discover that a rival, played by Linda Ellerbee, had started a rumor the she, Murphy, "had the hots for Irving R. Levine."

Mr. Levine appeared on the show the following week.

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