

About the Author



Thomas John ("Tom") Brokaw (1940-)

Thomas John ("Tom") Brokaw was born in Webster, South Dakota, on February 6, 1940, the first of three sons of Anthony O. ("Red") Brokaw and Eugenia Conley ("Jean") Brokaw. His father's position as construction foreman in the Army Corps of Engineers took the family from Bristol to Igloo and Pickstown, finally landing them in Yankton in time for Tom's Sophomore year in high school. After graduating from the University of South Dakota with a B.A. in political science in 1962, Brokaw worked for KMTV, an NBC affiliate in Omaha, between 1963 and 1965. After a year's stint at WSB-TV in Atlanta, he joined KNBC-TV, Los Angeles, as reporter and news anchor. In the early 1970's he moved to Washington, assuming the job of NBC White House correspondent during the Watergate Era. He hosted the "Today" show from 1976 to 1982, when he took over as co-anchor with Roger Mudd of "NBC Nightly News." He was elevated to sole anchor the following year and remained in that position until 2004. During his tenure, in competition with Dan Rather at CBS and Peter Jennings at ABC, the news anchor position evolved into a more glamorous and powerful role. By the late 1990's, NBC had risen to top position in the ratings, and Brokaw personally captured a slew of awards, garnering respect for his smooth, low-key delivery on camera and for his intelligent reporting and interviewing. After leaving the "Nightly News," he continued to do special reports, covering presidential nominating conventions, and temporarily hosted "Meet the Press" after Tim Russert's untimely death in 2008.

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<http://library.sd.gov/PROG/sdbookbag/index.aspx>