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"We Interrupt This Broadcast . . . " IWU Senior Interns on New Book Profiling Radio-TV News Coverage Of Events Spanning Hindenburg Explosion to Princess Di's Death

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"We Interrupt This Broadcast . . . "

IWU Senior Interns on New Book

Profiling Radio-TV News Coverage

Of Events Spanning Hindenburg Explosion to Princess Di's Death

"When the events that change the world occur, we journalists must step up with all the instant thoughtfulness and knowledge we can muster in the face of triumph or tragedy."

--Walter Cronkite

Foreword, "We Interrupt This Broadcast"

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--Not many college students get the chance to edit legendary newsman Walter Cronkite, but Katie Funk did.

Funk, an Illinois Wesleyan University senior majoring in English, edited the veteran CBS News correspondent's copy while working as an intern on a book called, "We Interrupt This Broadcast."

The book, published by Sourcebooks of Naperville, Ill., chronicles how radio and television have covered some of the great news events of the last 60 years, including--the explosion of the Hindenburg airship, the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the opening of the Space Age with the Soviet launch of Sputnik, the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy and civil-rights leader the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., President Richard Nixon's resignation, the crumbling of the Berlin Wall, and Operation Desert Storm.

Cronkite, who covered many of these events, authored the book's Foreword.

Funk said she and others reviewed Cronkite's copy.

"I didn't do much structurally to it," Funk said, "but I did proofread it."

The official launching of "We Interrupt This Broadcast" was Oct. 23 in Chicago, a gala event Funk attended, along with many others, including Joe Garner, author of the book, and Bill Kurtis, the veteran CBS newsman and former longtime anchor of WBBM-TV news in Chicago, who narrates two audio CDs, which are part of the book. The CDs give readers the chance to hear the actual broadcasts of the landmark news events described in the book.

"The CDs," Funk said, "introduce realism and capture the excitement of the actual events."

"When you read something in a history book," she explained, "it's flat

--just facts. But when you hear it, you get goose bumps and these events seem more real.

Hearing these events [on the CDs] gives you more insight."

As narrator Kurtis points out on the CDs, in just a few short decades we've gone from newsboys on street corners shouting "Extra" to the four chilling words radio and television use to alert listeners and viewers to great events--triumphs and tragedies: "We interrupt this broadcast . . . "

Kurtis observes that the book-CD combination represents a "time capsule of famous and infamous events" that emotionally place listeners in 39 news stories that shaped the 20th century. Those stories, Kurtis said, were selected because they have "withstood the test of time."

Funk worked on the book as a summer intern last June through August. Internships are valuable, Funk said, because they give you actual work experience and help you decide what you want to do in terms of your career. Funk found out about the internship possibility through IWU's Career Center.

The internship, Funk said, "gave me confidence in myself and confidence in my ability to perform. I was very needed on the job and I got evaluations and feedback that were very

positive."

"I learned a lot," Funk said, referring to the internship "about how the publishing business works in general. Not only did I learn editing, but I got to sit in on graphic design meetings and see how layouts are done. I soaked up a lot of atmosphere."

Funk's duties included doing research and fact-checking copy to ensure historical accuracy. She sat in on all editorial meetings.

"I was part of the proofreading process," Funk said, "and I was one of the last to see the book before it went to press."

About 150,000 copies of the book were published on two press runs.

Funk said she was most moved by the news stories about President John F. Kennedy's 1963 assassination and the murder on live television of Lee Harvey Oswald, who was arrested as the president's assailant.

"I read a lot of extra stuff" about these assassinations, Funk said, "and got into some of the conspiracy theories."

After graduating from IWU next May, Funk wants to pursue a career in editing for a publishing company.

Funk, a graduate of Heyworth (Ill.) High School, lives in Funks Grove, Ill. She is the daughter of Mike and Debby Funk. Katie Funk has an older sister, Betsy, who graduated from IWU in 1997, and a 12-year-old brother, Jonathan.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls about 2,000 students in a College of Liberal Arts, and individual schools of Music, Theatre Arts, Art, and Nursing. Since 1994, these facilities have been added to the IWU campus: a \$15 million athletics and recreation center, a \$25 million science center, a \$6.8 million residence hall, and a \$5.1 million Center for Liberal Arts.

Editor's Note: "We Interrupt This Broadcast" (ISBN 1-57071-328-6) by Joe Garner is published by Sourcebooks, Inc., of Naperville, Ill. It costs \$45. For review copies or additional information, contact: Sourcebooks, 630/961-3900.

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