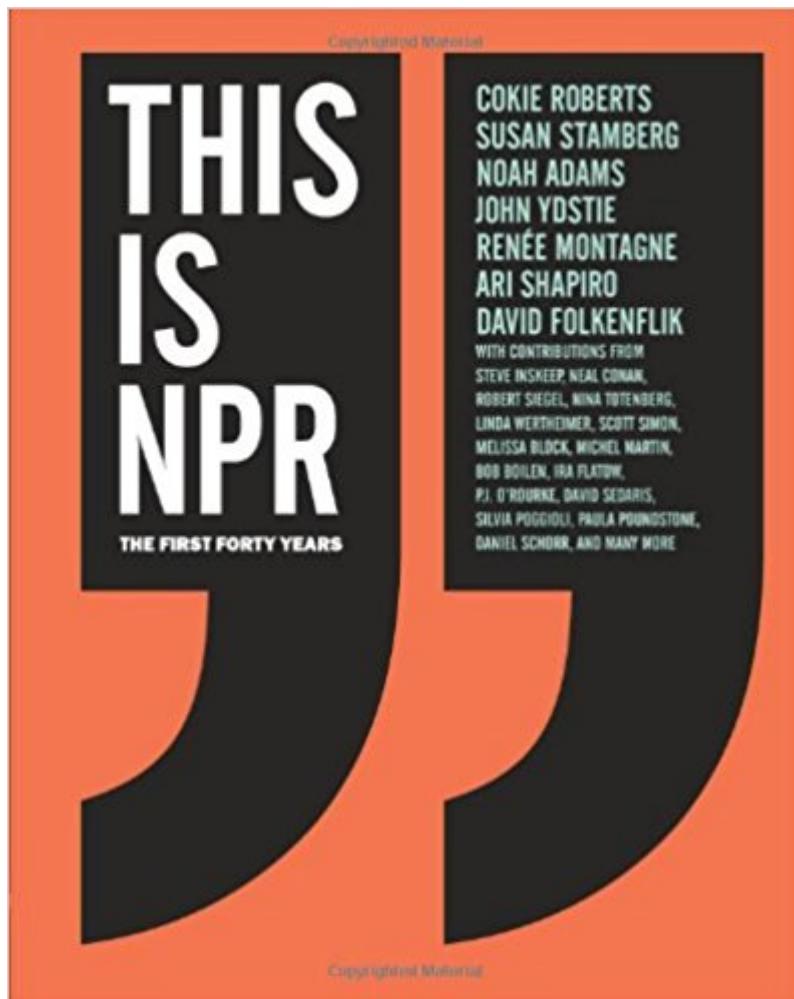


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# This Is NPR: The First Forty Years



## **Synopsis**

"Always put the listener first" has been NPR's mantra since its inception in 1970. Now celebrating its 40th anniversary, NPR's programming attracts over 27 million listeners every week. This beautifully designed volume chronicles NPR's storied history, featuring dozens of behind-the-scenes photos, essays and original reporting by a who's who of NPR staff and correspondents, transcripts of memorable interviews, and an audio CD of the most memorable programming throughout the decades. Beyond an entertaining and inspiring tribute to NPR's remarkable history, this book is an intimate look at the news and stories that have shaped our world, from the people who were on the ground and on the air. With contributions from Steve Inskeep, Neal Conan, Robert Siegel, Nina Totenberg, Linda Wertheimer, Scott Simon, Melissa Block, P.J. O'Rourke, David Sedaris, Sylvia Poggioli, Paula Poundstone, and many more, this is the perfect book for any NPR supporter, fan, or devotee.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This celebration of National Public Radio comes in a snappy magazine style, full of short histories from familiar names. NPR's shaky start was fortified by the devotion of the few staffers working out of a small office in D.C. The Public Broadcasting Act of 1967 only included radio because of a push from broadcast veterans at the University of Michigan, but the CPB set aside a paltry 10% of funds for Public Radio. Stories such as these remind us that NPR existed, and exists, as a way for everyday voices to explain the world, rather than the stentorian tones of broadcast news. Sylvia Poggioli, Nina Totenberg, Renee Montagne, Cokie Roberts (who suggested that NPR attracted so

many talented women because salaries were too low for men), and others were on the front lines of war coverage, reporting from Rwanda to Bosnia to Afghanistan; as a former NPR senior foreign editor put it, "You really never saw a reporting team made up mostly of women." It's fitting that the women, and the men, who built NPR should be the ones to present this retrospective illustrating just how much they have given us. (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.

"...a beautifully designed anthology of behind-the-scenes photos, essays and original reporting...we couldn't recommend it more." -Brain Pickings Selected as one of "Top 5 Books of 2010." - Cool Hunting "If you're a fan of NPR, you need to own this book!" - Portland Book Review

If I could, I'd split my rating: 4 stars for regular listeners and fans of NPR; 3 stars for those who don't listen to NPR or aren't otherwise familiar with them. The book chronicles the highlights of the first 40 years of NPR's existence up through 2009 or so. It centers on the greatest historical events of those years and NPR's role in bringing those stories to its listeners. At times the essays run to a modest tooting of NPR's own horn--how they were there first, told the story best, succeeded against all odds and survived personal dangers and horrors. Other essays have a "little engine that could" theme--especially the early years when no one knew what NPR was about, they ran on a shoestring budget, and somehow got the story first, or told it best, and did it with subpar equipment and facilities and an undermanned news department. That said, for NPR fans, this is a nice encapsulation of their growth and increasing role in the national and international news business. There are some nice reminiscences of NPR pioneers and "legends" like Susan Stamberg, Bob Edwards, Cokie Roberts, and Nina Totenberg. We hear the story behind the story in many cases of reporters risking their lives in places like Iraq and Afghanistan during the wars there. Note: I read the Kindle version and some of the photos require you to enlarge the font in order to see them clearly.

my dad and I live 4,000 miles apart. When I was growing up, we listened to a LOT of NPR in our house. (I'm happy to say my kid now has his favorite programs). I saw this when I was looking for another book by Cokie Roberts and thought it would be a neat Father's Day gift for my dad. He loves it! Everything about it. The pictures, the short stories about each show, the way it's arranged by decade, and even the typeface. There were some episodes from the '80s and '90s discussed in the book that we both remember listening to together. Dad even read me some excerpts over the phone from episodes in the '70s, and they were absolutely fascinating. This is really a perfect blend of nostalgia and deeper insights into your favorite shows and the people behind them. I have since

purchased another copy for myself. Also? I'm pretty sure I'm the favorite now. ;)

As a long-time NPR fan with a distant background in the news business, I looked forward to the arrival of THIS IS NPR on my Kindle. While I did learn some facts I didn't know before, the style of the book was too disconnected and disjointed. More than a few times, I had to back up to see who had written the chapter I was reading. The pictures weren't much help either in giving me the flavor of the NPR newsroom. All in all, it left me dissatisfied. I felt that I had been reading a bunch of promotional pieces written for use in the interminable weeks when they yammer on for donations. There was no central philosophy and flow to the book except that it was broken up into a timeline of decades. If NPR news magazine programs were like this book, the listener totals would be a fraction of what it is. How such talented journalists could produce this high school yearbook is beyond me.

As with anything NPR, this book provided an "armchair moment", an opportunity to find out about just what it took, and still takes, for NPR to deliver quality reporting on a wide variety of topics. From the effect of developing technology (from analog editing with razor blades, to precision digital user friendly interface), to the contributions of NPR staff whose passion for informing their listeners is matched only by their investigative skills, this work presents an interesting perspective of 40 years of history and service by NPR. Thanks, guys, for everything you've done and continue to do.

It's ok, but I thought it would be more interesting than it is. There is a certain sameness to the various essays, even though the writers are often revisiting significant events in history. As a longtime NPR listener, I was expecting more personality, more of a conversational tone. A good book to drop in on when you just have a few minutes to read one or two chapters.

I have my radio fixed on NPR - I listen everyday and love it. This is a terrific history - though at times a bit superficial - also love that they put photos of the people I hear everyday. I have an image when I hear them of what they look like and none of my images matches with the real thing. The CD is also a cool extra.

I've been listening to NPR from the beginning. Some of the references I recalled the reports! Those are some of the voices in my head!

Was a gift to my husband who ONLY listens to NPR and I think Cokie Roberts is a wonderful

reporter with a great voice, excellent delivery of material. I had to get it. Pretended its a gift. We have enjoyed reading it. Must get the print version. I do not think the e-reader version if available is the way to go.

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