

Biography: Host Helen Caldicott, M.D.

Pediatrician Helen Caldicott, M.D. has devoted over 35 years to educating the public and policymakers about the medical hazards of nuclear weapons, nuclear energy, and ecological collapse, and the necessary remedy of citizen participation.

Born in Melbourne, Australia, Dr. Caldicott received her medical degree from the University of Adelaide Medical School. She founded the Cystic Fibrosis Clinic at the Adelaide Children's Hospital and subsequently was an instructor in pediatrics at Harvard Medical School and on the staff of the Children's Hospital Medical Center, Boston, Mass. In 1980, she resigned to work full time on the prevention of nuclear war.

In 1971, Dr Caldicott played a major role in Australia's opposition to French atmospheric nuclear testing in the Pacific. In 1975, she worked with the Australian trade unions to educate their members about the medical hazards of the nuclear fuel cycle, with particular reference to uranium mining.

Dr. Caldicott was president of Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) from 1978 through 1983. PSR was the co-winner of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize along with International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, a group formed through the work of PSR. PSR is now a nationwide group in the U.S. with 23,000 members and 33 active chapters, devoted to stopping nuclear weapons and halting environmental degradation. See www.psr.org.

In 1980, Dr. Caldicott founded Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament (WAND) (now Women's Action for New Directions) which focuses on the connection between militarism (including nuclear weapons funding) and unmet human needs. A WAND entity, the Women Legislators Lobby (WiLL), helps elect and educate women politicians. WAND has 12 chapters. See www.wand.org.

In 2002, Dr. Caldicott founded the Nuclear Policy Research Institute (NPRI), a Washington, D.C.-based think tank focused on the dangers of nuclear weapons and nuclear energy. Over a five-year period, NPRI's experts were featured in numerous print and electronic media. NPRI also hosted several large conferences (on issues such as depleted uranium, nuclear power and children's health, nuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert, and the U.S. government's new Full Spectrum Dominance policy), presented monthly journalist briefings, and published scientific reports. NPRI is now Beyond Nuclear, www.beyondnuclear.org.

In 1987, Dr Caldicott ran for Federal Parliament in Australia as an independent. Defeating Charles Blunt, leader of the National Party, through preferential voting she ultimately lost the election by 600 votes out of 70,000 cast.

In 1995 Dr. Caldicott was a lecturer at the New School for Social Research in New York, teaching Media, Global Politics And The Environment. Around this time, she became the Founding President of the STAR (Standing for Truth About Radiation) Foundation.

Dr. Caldicott has had a high profile in American radio since the late 1970's, with her speeches and interviews played often on national airwaves. From 1995 to 1997, she hosted a weekly radio talk show on WBAI in New York City. She hosted the 13-part series, "A Passion for Survival" (2002) and the six-part radio series based on her book, "The New Nuclear Danger" (2004) for Pacifica Radio.

Dr Caldicott has received many prizes and awards for her work, most recently The Lannan Foundation's 2003 Prize for Cultural Freedom, as well as the Gandhi Peace Prize. She holds 19 honorary doctoral degrees, and was personally nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize by Linus Pauling, himself a Nobel Laureate. The Smithsonian Institute named Dr Caldicott to their list of the most influential women of the 20th Century.

She has written for numerous publications including The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Christian Science Monitor, The Los Angeles Times, The San Francisco Chronicle, The Bulletin of the

Atomic Scientists, The Boston Globe, Baltimore Sun, Life Magazine, The Nation, Ladies Home Journal, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Australian, and The Age.

Dr. Caldicott has made numerous television and radio appearances in the U.S., including The Today Show, Tavis Smiley, Good Morning America, Fresh Air, ABC Nightline, Oprah, The Montel Williams Show, the Faith Williams Show, Studs Terkel, 60 Minutes, Crossfire, Larry King Live, Donahue, Democracy Now!, Wolf Blitzer Reports, CNN, C-SPAN Book-TV and Reagan: The American Experience (PBS). In Australia, she has been on a guest on The Midday Show, Life Matters, Good Morning, Australia, and Margaret Throsby.

Dr. Caldicott is the author of Nuclear Madness: What You Can Do (1979 / 1994), Missile Envy: The Arms Race and Nuclear War (1984), If You Love This Planet: A Plan to Heal the Earth (1992 / new edition 2009), The New Nuclear Danger: George W. Bush's Military-Industrial Complex (2001 / 2004), Nuclear Power is Not the Answer (2006), War in Heaven (with Craig Eisendrath) (2007), and A Desperate Passion: An Autobiography (1996).

She also has been the subject of three films: Eight Minutes to Midnight, nominated for an Academy Award for Best Documentary in 1981; If You Love This Planet, which won the Academy Award for Best Documentary in 1982; and Helen's War: Portrait Of A Dissident (2004), which won Best Direction (Documentary) at the 2004 Australian Film Institute Awards.

Dr. Caldicott has briefed governments (including that of Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, President Ronald Reagan personally, and the Spanish prime minister in 2008), editorial boards of major newspapers (including The Washington Post, The Boston Globe and The New York Times), colleges, corporate and military leaders, and community groups around the world about the perils of the Nuclear Age and the need for disarmament and safe energy, and the risks of environmental destruction.

In these crucial times for planetary survival the mainstream media, says Dr. Caldicott, "are determining the fate of the Earth". If the press does not give primacy to nuclear and environmental dangers, "people won't act to save their lives. This is a matter of life and death."

In a three-hour C-Span Book TV interview in 2005, Dr. Caldicott noted that, "The only effective way I have found to deal with peoples' fears is through a process of responsible education. That is why I wrote *The New Nuclear Danger*, and that is why I travel the world talking to large numbers of people. As a physician, I am obliged to practice global preventive medicine, and my experience has validated the admonition of Thomas Jefferson when he said 'An informed democracy will behave in a responsible fashion.'"

"Let's for God's sake talk about the real moral issues of our time . . . whether or not the whole of the world survives, life on the planet survives. There's not enough intelligent, critical discussion, debates over the dinner table. People are anesthetized by television. It is imperative that people be well informed if we are to survive. We will only be around another 10 to 20 years if things continue as they are now."

Few speakers can match Dr. Caldicott's ability to simultaneously educate, entertain and ignite an audience. Senator Edward Kennedy has called her "one of the most eloquent voices on earth" and actress Meryl Streep says "Helen Caldicott has been my inspiration to speak out".

Dr Caldicott divides her time between the United States and Australia.