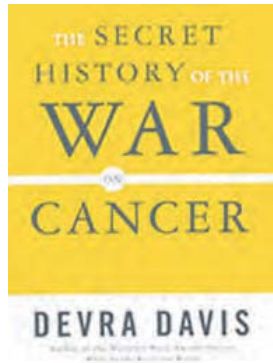


Devra Davis's book *The Secret History of the War on Cancer* is doing precisely what it should do—cause havoc and dissent. Dr. Davis' well-documented, well written and thought provoking book systematically details what has been secret. It's no wonder that so many whom she calls to ethical responsibility still deny the veracity of her clearly outlined and defined history of the "war." All wars have secret alliances whose identity's pop up when their flanks are threatened. At such times, they conveniently convene for unified onslaught. I'm almost finished reading this astonishing book. In this war, The Secret War on Cancer's significance is noted precisely because such passionately different sides are taken. (Barron Lerner, etc.) Since cancer impacts all of us, I have no doubt about whose side I am on. Bravo to Dr. Davis for revealing so much and risking all.

For much of its history, the cancer war has been fighting the wrong battles, with the wrong weapons, against the wrong enemies. *The Secret History of the War on Cancer* shows, decade by decade, how the campaign has targeted the disease and left off the table the things that cause it—tobacco, alcohol, the workplace, and other environmental hazards. Conceived in explicitly military terms, the effort has focused on defeating an enemy by detecting, treating, and curing disease. Overlooked and suppressed was any consideration of how the world in which we live and work affects whether

we get cancer. The result is appalling: over 10 million preventable cancer deaths over the past thirty years. This has been no accident.



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Among the Findings:

— As early as 1936, the world's leading cancer scientists understood that tobacco, diagnostic and solar radiation, benzene, and hormones caused cancer. The preparation and conduct of World War II with its focus on immediate survival effectively sidetracked these early findings of cancer hazards.

— Many more young people (those under 40 years of age) are getting cancer. One of the reasons may be the excessive use of x-rays in infants and children, and our

failures to reduce exposures to other cancer hazards like those in urban air or agents that can leach from some plastics. Earlier this year, the American College of Radiology advised against unnecessary and excessive use of CT and other forms of diagnostic radiation in children, warning that this will further add to the growing cancer burden in young people today.

— When first reports emerged that coke oven workers had higher rates of lung cancer in the 1970s, some suggested that this was because most of them were black. Not until similar findings showed up in white Mormon workers five years later, was the link between coke oven work and lung cancer established. While one in eight Americans today is black, one in three works in a blue collar job, and one in five lives within two miles of a hazardous waste site. This increased environmental burden has never been considered when trying to understand why rates of prostate, breast, and colo-rectal cancer are so much higher in blacks than whites.

— The life-saving test for cervix cancer, called the Pap smear, was not put into use for more than a decade after it was shown to save lives, because of fears that it would undermine the private practice of medicine. These delays led to the deaths or unnecessary surgery of millions of women, who succumbed to an illness that could have been avoided.

What People Are Saying About The Secret History of the War on Cancer:

"In 1900, infectious diseases were the leading cause of death in the United States; in our current age of pasteurized milk and purified water, this is no longer the case. The focus now has shifted to the chronic maladies of aging — cancer, heart disease and stroke. Tens of billions of dollars are being thrown into crusades against these killers, with the so-called 'war on cancer' capturing the lion's..." — Washington Post

An Interview with Devra Davis



Q: How did you become a pioneer Devra?

A: Self defense. You can't always trust people of authority to do the right thing. I have figured out that I need to do things myself instead of wait for others. I realized that you can't wait for Prince Charming, you have to rescue yourself.

Q: What are your beliefs on the environment and health?

A: Core belief: People are not born with cancer, cancer is "made." We have the ability to shape and affect our health. It is up to us to work toward that understanding.

Q: What are the most important things we can do to promote our health, in relation to the environment?

A: The obvious things, like don't smoke. The same things that are found in smoke are also found in

highly polluted urban environments. Public health efforts and reducing global warming. Understanding the connection between burning fossil fuels and health. Our planet and us. We are arrogant in assuming that we can send our garbage away — there is no "away" that we can send our garbage to without it affecting us.

Q: How do you live your life as far as being green?

A: Look under your kitchen sink. Read labels. I am infuriated that young parents don't know if they are putting a carcinogen on their baby's bottoms, you must be a

chemist to understand labels these days. Skin is our largest organ, and we should be discriminating about the products that we use. For cleaning, stick to basics like baking soda and vinegar. Simple things, like using red pepper to get rid of ants.

Q: Any tips on cosmetic products that are safe/healthy?

A: As a general rule, the fewer ingredients, the better. You should recognize the names of all the ingredients. And natural is not always safe! Asbestos and arsenic are natural products, but clearly they are not safe. Brands like Avalon and Aveda are generally safer. The reality is that we are reshaping the market as we speak, and women are demanding the right to purchase safe cosmetics and cleaning products. It's women who "girlcott." We will spend our money to buy healthy, clean products. Boycot-

ting means that consumers won't buy the products, a "girlcott" means that women are bringing their level of expectations to the forefront, and speaking out to manufacturers. This is why the healthy products that are emerging in the market are predominantly aimed at (and because of) women: cleaning products, cosmetics, home items, etc. The fastest growing organic markets are due to women.

Q: Does the environment affect pregnancy?

A: It takes two to tango. It's obvious that what happens to a woman early in her pregnancy is important. But Dads (before they become dads) and their behaviors and actions are important too - drinking, smoking, etc.

Q: Any other interesting points to make to our FiftyAndFurther-more audience Devra?

A: There is evidence that artificial sweeteners stimulate the appetite. With the pattern of obesity in our country, there is no evidence that artificial sweeteners are actually helping us to lose weight.

Q: Okay, so now what? What do we do?

A: The way we deal with this problem? Well, it's all very overwhelming. Deal with it one step at a time. Today - test your home for radon, it is odorless. Get others to take a step as well. Here is a source of inspiration: If you wanna go fast, go alone. If you wanna go far, go together.

Q: Thanks for sharing Devra.

A: Thank-you Skye.

~Skye MacBroom