Susan Dentzer

Susan Dentzer is the Editor-in-Chief of Health Affairs, the nation’s leading journal of health policy and an on-air analyst on health issues with The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer on the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS).

Dentzer assumed the job of Editor-in-Chief on May 1, 2008, after a decade as the on-air health correspondent for The NewsHour. Health Affairs, which has been called the nation’s health policy “Bible,” is a peer-reviewed journal that appears bimonthly in print with additional online entries published weekly at www.healthaffairs.org. The journal and website, based in Bethesda, MD, are published by Project HOPE, the health education and humanitarian assistance organization that operates programs in 36 countries around the world.

At The NewsHour, Dentzer led a unit dedicated to providing in-depth coverage of health care and health policy and Social Security. The unit, begun in 1998, was funded by grants from the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation and, beginning in 2005, from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Dentzer was the recipient of multiple awards. In 2007, she received the American Society on Aging National Media Award for a two-part series on our current understanding of the causes of Alzheimer’s disease, efforts under way to speed treatments to patients and the enormous burden faced by caregivers of Alzheimer’s patients. The unit's December 2005 and April 2005 pieces, "Wounded Soldier” and "Wounded Warrior," about a paralyzed and brain damaged soldier who was severely wounded in Iraq, won the 2005 Award for Excellence in Health Care Journalism from the Association of Health Care Journalists. The same pieces also earned both a CINE Golden Eagle and New York Festival award.


Prior to joining The NewsHour in 1998, Dentzer was chief economics correspondent and economics columnist for U.S. News & World Report, where she served from 1987 to 1997. In a series of columns and stories for U.S. News, she reported extensively on the debate over reforming and partially "privatizing" Social Security and over such health policy issues as regulation of managed care. Before joining U.S. News, Dentzer was at Newsweek, where she was a
senior writer covering business news until 1987. Dentzer's work in television has included appearances as a regular analyst or commentator on CNN and The McLaughlin Group.

Dentzer's writing also has earned her several fellowships. A Nieman Fellow at Harvard University for the 1986-87 academic year, she studied health economics and other disciplines. A U.S.-Japan Leadership Program Fellow in 1991, Dentzer conducted research on U.S.-Japan economic relations and the effects of the aging Japanese population.

Dentzer is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and is the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Global Health Council, the world’s largest membership organization of groups involved in global health. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the International Rescue Committee, the nonprofit organization that works in relief, rehabilitation, protection, post-conflict development and resettlement services for those uprooted or affected by violent conflict and oppression worldwide. At IRC, Dentzer heads the Board's Health Committee, which oversees the organization's health programs in 25 countries. In February 2008, she traveled to Syria and Jordan as part of an IRC delegation reviewing the situation of Iraqi refugees who have fled to these countries as a result of the ongoing war in Iraq.

Dentzer also is a member of the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured as well as the advisory board of the California Health Benefits Review Committee and is a member of the National Advisory Committee for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Investigator Awards in Health Policy Research. Dentzer also is on the board of directors of the Friends of the National Institute for Nursing Research.

A graduate of Dartmouth, Dentzer holds an honorary Master of Arts degree from Dartmouth and an honorary doctorate of humane letters from Muskingum College, New Concord, Ohio. She is a member of the Board of Overseers of Dartmouth Medical School. Previously, she served on the Dartmouth College Board of Trustees from 1993 to June 2004 and was the first woman ever to serve as Chair of Dartmouth's board from 2001 to 2004. She also is a former trustee of the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, having served in that capacity until 2004. In 2007, she received the Dartmouth Alumni Award, the highest honor given to Dartmouth alumni for service to the college.

Dentzer, her husband and their three children live in the Washington D.C. area.