



Dear Friend of GBPSR,

The movie, “Oppenheimer,” makes the US detonation of nuclear weapons at Hiroshima and Nagasaki fresh in our minds. But despite the advanced pyrotechnics, the immense suffering and loss of life of civilian children, women, men and the elderly are not depicted at all.

Here is a description more immediate than any offered in the film, from Nobel Laureate and Hiroshima survivor, or “hibakusha,” Setsuko Thurlow. She describes that dark morning on August 6, 1945:

“Although it happened in the morning, it was dark, dark as twilight. And as our eyes got used to recognizing things [we saw] dark moving objects [that] happened to be human beings. It was like a procession of ghosts. I say “ghosts” because they simply did not look like human beings. They were covered with blood and dirt, and they were burned and blackened and swollen. Their skin and flesh were hanging, and parts of the bodies were missing. Some were carrying their own eyeballs. And they collapsed onto the ground... we learned how to step over the dead bodies, and escaped.”

Much like Setsuko, we are now — metaphorically — stepping over so many bodies: lives lost not just to nuclear development, but to climate change and environmental degradation, both here in Massachusetts and worldwide. These are preventable deaths.

For there are not one but two public health emergencies facing the planet: not just the existential threat of nuclear war depicted in the film, but also that of climate change. The devastation in Hawaii following the wildfires of the last week, one survivor commented, felt like a war; and like war, and like climate change everywhere, it was inescapable — everywhere one ran — there was fire.

This fall, GBPSR, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Medical Society, is hosting a [webinar series](#) to examine the overlapping effects of climate on nuclear weapons and on nuclear power; and we will hear from community voices affected by both—with ideas for solutions.

We hope to rectify the mistaken impression from “Oppenheimer” that the area where the nuclear bomb was tested was uninhabited. Indeed, the Navajo living in the Four Corners have suffered keenly from all aspects of nuclear development, from uranium mining to nuclear testing, and as a site of massive nuclear waste disposal—just as it is the indigenous communities of Maui who are suffering disproportionately now as a result of climate change driven wildfires.

At our webinar series, we will hear from the Native American community, Marshall Islanders and other “downwind” community members who can attest to the many serious health effects that follow in radiation’s wake. We will also hear from academic experts at MIT, at Rutgers and U. of Connecticut on the overlapping effects of climate and nuclear development.

Today we remember what was wrought by the bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and are reminded not just of the ability of humans to overcome horrific loss and prevail despite it — but of the global catastrophe that nuclear war would cause today. And that nuclear weapons — like climate change — are a threat to public health.

We would like to extend huge thanks to all of our members for all that you do to support these initiatives and our efforts.

If you would like to help fund GBPSR’s work, we welcome your donations [here](#).

As Setsuko Thurlow told us at our 2019 annual concert in her honor, your gift will inspire and strengthen us to continue on with our task of making our world free of nuclear weapons and one with a habitable climate for future generations.

Yours in the common pursuit,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brita E. Lundberg".

Brita E. Lundberg, M.D.  
Chair of the Board, GBPSR



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