



### Linda Ellerbee

Linda Ellerbee is an outspoken journalist, award-winning television producer, best-selling author, a breast cancer survivor, a mom, a grandmother and one of the most sought-after speakers in America.

Ellerbee began her career at CBS, and then moved to NBC News where, after years covering national politics, she pioneered the late-night news program NBC News Overnight, which she wrote and anchored. Overnight was cited by the duPont Columbia Awards as "the best written and most intelligent news program ever." In 1986, Ellerbee moved to ABC News to anchor and write *Our World*, a weekly primetime historical series. Her work on *Our World* won her an Emmy.

In 1987, Ellerbee and Rolfe Tessem, her partner, quit network news to start Lucky Duck Productions, first producing documentaries for PBS. In 1991, Lucky Duck began producing Nick News for Nickelodeon with Ellerbee writing and hosting. Seventeen years later, Nick News is watched by more children than watch all other television news shows put together—and has earned honors traditionally associated with adult programming. Known for the respectful and direct way it speaks to children about the important issues of our time, Nick News has collected three Peabody Awards (including one personal Peabody given to Ellerbee for her coverage of the Clinton investigation), a duPont Columbia Award and five Emmys.

These days, Ellerbee and her work can be seen all over the television universe. Lucky Duck has and continues to produce primetime specials for ABC, CBS, HBO, PBS, Lifetime, MTV, Logo, A&E, MSNBC, SOAPnet, Trio, Animal Planet and TV Land, among others. Ellerbee was honored with an Emmy for her series, *When I Was a Girl*, which aired on WE: Women's Entertainment network.

Ellerbee's first foray into books for kids, an eight-part fiction series entitled *Get Real*, published in 2000, won her raves among middle school readers. Both of Ellerbee's previous adult books—*And So It Goes*, a humorous look at television news, and *Move On*, stories about being a working single mother, a child of the '60s and a woman trying to find some balance in her life—have been national best sellers. Ellerbee's recent book, also a best seller, *Take Big Bites: Adventures Around the World and Across the Table*, is a humorous account of her love of travel, talking to (and eating with) strangers, and, according to Ellerbee, "oh, just making trouble in general."

As a breast cancer survivor, Ellerbee travels thousands of miles each year giving inspirational speeches to others. She is as direct with women as she is with kids; they understand that she understands their lives.

Although Ellerbee has won all of television's highest honors, she says it's her two children who've brought her the richest rewards. Ellerbee spends her personal time in New York City and Massachusetts with Rolfe, her partner in work and life and their dogs, Daisy and Dolly.

## Speech Topics

### **How To Be Successful and Hang Onto Your Values:**

How Ellerbee balanced having kids and building a career...or tried to. Ellerbee delivers her trademark wit and wisdom on everything from leaving the networks to starting her own company, from having a boss to being the boss.

### **Surviving Breast Cancer to Laugh Another Day:**

Ellerbee describes her experience with breast cancer – from the heartfelt yet amusing reactions of friends and colleagues, to the determination and spirit that make her a 16+-year survivor.

### **How to Survive a Changing World and How to Change Your World:**

Ellerbee gives her rules for surviving a changing world with the heart intact – from surviving breast cancer, to climbing mountains, from overcoming obstacles to making a noise. In her life and in her career, Ellerbee has learned that change is the norm.

### **How To Raise Media-Savvy Kids:**

In the future, our kids will either learn to use the media that surround them as tools, or they will be tools of that media. Television. The Internet? iPhones? What's next. And what is media literacy today, and how do we teach it? Ellerbee offers insight and perspective gained from speaking with (and listening to) kids for nearly 20 years on the critically-acclaimed children's television series, "Nick News"....and from raising two media-savvy kids of her own.

### **Kids, Television, and the News:**

Ellerbee talks about her journey to producing children's television – how she created Nick News, her long-running series on Nickelodeon and "what I've learned about children, television and the real world." NOTE: THIS SPEECH MAY BE TAILORED FOR EDUCATION GROUPS. Ellerbee talks about how teachers can use television as a teaching tool and turn television from the enemy into the teacher's friend.

### **Adventures in Journalism:**

From newspapers to networks, she's gone from covering fires and parades to presidential debates and international terrorism, and collected some of the most prestigious awards along the way. Ellerbee talks about her experience as a veteran journalist.