



## **Youspeak Radio Episode 1 – Keep Going – With Helen Zia**

### **Audio transcript**

Full audio: <https://www.onearchives.org/youspeak-radio-episode-1-keep-going-with-helen-zia/>

Automated Introduction (00:00):

This is Youspeak Radio. A project by ONE Archives Foundation with gender support from the California Humanities.

Cassidy All (00:15):

Hi, I'm Cassidy All. I spoke with Helen Zia, a prolific writer, journalist and activist about her experiences with funding, activism, and journalism, and her advice for aspiring writers. We also spoke about how much has changed since she began her career exemplified by the fact that our interview is conducted with me in Colorado and her in California.

Helen Zia (00:38):

"I would just say that keep going. That's all the more reason you have to be there and it's unpleasant as it can be to be there and to realize that you are paving the way for people behind you. And to know that you're not alone."

Cassidy All (00:59):

Helen's words are a must listen for aspiring writers or journalists, especially those from marginalized groups and those who are grappling with finding a career that pays the bills and incorporates activist work.

Cassidy All (01:20):

I'd like to ask, what is it like working in journalism? I've written some for local papers myself, what is it like to kind of be a professional journalist? And I was wondering if you had any stories or anything about that kind of exemplify that or about any challenges that you've faced?

Helen Zia (01:39):

Well, great. I want to hear about your life as a journalist. Seriously. So for me, I had no journalistic training when I was in college. There were probably only a few schools that even had journalism classes, where I went to, well, there was English literature, which I did not take. I majored in public affairs, public relations, not in the PR sense, but about international relations, politics, history, sociology, stuff like that. And not English, even though I loved writing. And so I didn't come to realize that I really wanted to tell the stories and chronicle what I was seeing.

Helen Zia (02:21):

And that was when I was in Detroit and there were so many layoffs and there was so much Anti-Asian hate going on in the time that Vincent Chin was killed. And I was there. I was laid off with millions of other workers, because I had worked in a factory, a car factory, and I knew had friends who were my co-workers and their lives and their suffering and mine weren't being reported anywhere.