



Summer 8-30-2016

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Recommended Citation

University Communications, "Award-Winning Author to Speak at President's Convocation" (2016). *News and Events*. 2977.

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Award-Winning Author to Speak at President's Convocation

Aug. 30, 2016

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— Author and journalist Jenny Nordberg will speak Sept. 14 at the President's Convocation at Illinois Wesleyan University. Nordberg is the author of *The Underground Girls of Kabul*, which was selected for the University's Summer Reading Program.

Nordberg's book is based on her extensive research and reporting inside a war zone on the practice of "bacha posh" – how girls grow up disguised as boys in gender-segregated Afghanistan. In 2010, Nordberg broke the story to a global audience in her work published in *The New York Times* and *The International Herald Tribune*. The practice of "bacha posh," which had never been previously documented, offers new and previously unknown details about Afghanistan and the inner workings of the deeply conservative society. Nordberg's book raises new and profound questions about gender in children and teens, nature versus nurture, religion, sexuality, and what roles women play during war. The book has won numerous awards, including the J. Anthony Lukas Book Prize and a *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of 2014. Nordberg has also developed the website bachaposh.com as an online resource for girls who have grown up as boys due to segregation.

Nordberg is an award-winning journalist and foreign correspondent, columnist and television producer. Together with *The New York Times'* investigative unit, she worked on projects such as the examination of the American freight railroad system, a series that won the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting. Also with the *Times*, she worked on a project on U.S. efforts at exporting democracy to Haiti. She has produced and written several documentaries for American television, and she is also a member of the first investigative team at Swedish Broadcasting's national radio division, where she supervised projects on terrorism and politics. She has won awards from Investigative Reporters and Editors and the Robert F. Kennedy Center for Justice and Human Rights. Nordberg holds a B.A. in law and journalism from Stockholm University, and an M.A. from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism.

The President's Convocation, which begins at 11 a.m. in Presser Hall's Westbrook Auditorium (1210 N. Park St., Bloomington), traditionally opens the academic year at Illinois Wesleyan. Nordberg's address is free and open to the public. She will also sign copies of the book at 1 p.m. Sept. 14 in the Memorial Center Young Main Lounge.



Jenny Nordberg

