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Nickel and Dimed Author to Speak at IWU President's Convocation

August 18, 2006

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Barbara Ehrenreich, the acclaimed author whose numerous books include the bestseller *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By In America*, will deliver an address titled “Nickel and Dimed in America: A Minimum Wage Existence” at Illinois Wesleyan University’s President’s Convocation on Wednesday, Sept. 6, at 11 a.m. in Westbrook Auditorium of Presser Hall (1210 Park St., Bloomington).

Also during her campus visit, Ehrenreich will participate in an informal classroom session at 9 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 6, in Beckman Auditorium, The Ames Library (1 Ames Plaza, Bloomington).

While *Nickel and Dimed* discusses Ehrenreich’s endeavor to live on low-wage jobs, her most recent book, *Bait and Switch: The (Futile) Pursuit of the American Dream*, delves into her attempt to find a middle-class, white-collar job. Ehrenreich earned her bachelor’s in physics from Reed College and her doctorate in biology from The Rockefeller University. Yet she chose to focus her career on what she calls “social change.” Her articles, reviews, essays and humor have appeared in a range of national publications, including the *New York Times Magazine*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *TIME Magazine*, and *Harper’s*.

Nickel and Dimed is the subject of this year’s [Summer Reading Program](#) at Illinois Wesleyan, which asks all first-year students to read the same text along with faculty and staff volunteers, who gather for small group discussions during Fall Festival orientation activities. The program “offers the entering class an example of what to expect in four years on campus in terms of critical thinking, effective communication, and the spirit of inquiry found both in and out of the classroom,” said Carolyn Nadeau, coordinator of the First Year Advising Committee and professor of Hispanic Studies.

Other events tied to the themes of *Nickel and Dimed* are planned during the academic year. These include a theatrical adaptation of *Nickel and Dimed* to be performed in the E. Melba Johnson Kirkpatrick Laboratory Theatre Feb. 27-March 3, and a discussion panel on living wages in Central Illinois scheduled Wednesday, Sept. 20, at 7 p.m. in Beckman Auditorium, The Ames Library. The panel, titled “The Benefits and Costs of a Living Wage in Central Illinois,” will include panelists Todd Kumler, a senior economics major; Jean Pretz, assistant professor of psychology; Steven Purcell, alderman for Bloomington’s Ward 7; and Steve Stockton, mayor of Bloomington.



Barbara Ehrenreich

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