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Lawrence University

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Lawrence University Convocation Features Cartoonist, Author Alison Bechdel

Posted on: October 11th, 2013 by Rick Peterson

Award-winning cartoonist and author Alison Bechdel discusses her life and career in the Lawrence University convocation “Drawing Lessons: The Comics of Everyday Life” Tuesday, Oct. 15 at 11:10 a.m. in the Lawrence Memorial Chapel. She also will conduct a question-and-answer session at 2:30 p.m. in the Warch Campus Center cinema. Both events are free and open to the public.



Alison Bechdel

Bechdel’s work includes the groundbreaking comic “Dykes to Watch Out For” and the graphic novel memoirs “Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic“(2006) and “Are You My Mother: A Comic Drama” (2012).

Featuring a cast of quirky fictional characters navigating life’s daily struggles, “Dykes to Watch Out For,” is drawn from

Bechdel's own experiences as a politically active lesbian. It has enjoyed nearly three decades of syndication in more than 50 alternative newspapers and magazines. Ms. Magazine deemed it "one of the preeminent oeuvres in the comics genre, period."

Bechdel's national profile rose with the release of "Fun Home," a book-length autobiographical work in which she explores her relationship with her closeted, bisexual father and his apparent suicide. It became the first graphic novel named Time magazine's Best Book of the Year. It also was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award, won the 2007 Eisner Award for Best Reality-Based Work and has been a required text for students in Lawrence's Freshman Studies course since 2011.

Her most recent work, "Are You My Mother," complements "Fun Home," with reflections on her fraught, complex relationship with her mother.

Beyond her self-syndicated comics and memoirs, Bechdel has drawn for Slate, McSweeney's, The New York Times Book Review and U.K. literary magazine Granta. She was awarded a 2012-13 Guggenheim Fellowship for Creative Arts and edited "Best American Comics 2011." Other honors include a seat on the Usage Panel of the American Heritage Dictionary in 2006, a fellowship at the University of Chicago and the Bill Whitehead Award for Lifetime Achievement, which honors LGBT writers.