



Tracy Walder

Topics

Culture and Society, Global Affairs, Military and Defense, Outside the Box, TED Talks, Women's Interests

Travels From

Texas

Bio

From 2000 - 2004, Tracy worked as Staff Operations Officer (SOO) Intelligence Agency's Counterterrorism Center Weapons of Mass Destruction Group and a Special Agent at the FBI. During her time at the CIA, Tracy traveled to war zones and many other countries. She received many awards for her service from both the CIA and from foreign intelligence offices, to include the counterterrorism medal and multiple exceptional performance awards. After the CIA, Tracy became a Special Agent at the FBI's Los Angeles Field Office specializing in Chinese counterintelligence operations. Following her time at the CIA and FBI, Tracy enrolled in both a master's and a teaching credential program. She taught history and a self-created course on national security and foreign policy for over a decade. Tracy now works as an author, adjunct professor of Criminal Justice at Texas Christian University, and sits on the Board of Directors of Girl Security, a nonpartisan organization increasing the representation of women in national security by building a pipeline for girls and young women through learning, training,

and mentoring support. She has appeared on *Good Morning America* and Fox News and has written national security pieces for *Salon*, the *NY Post*, *HuffPo*, and other publications. Tracy Walder earned her degree in history from the University of Southern California and her Master's in education from Chapman University. Tracy is the author of *The Unexpected Spy: My Secret Life Chasing Down Some of the World's Most Notorious Terrorists* which was an audiobook best-seller. Additionally, ABC network and studio, in conjunction with Calamity Jane and Timberman/Beverly production companies, will create a TV series based on her book.

SPEECHES

Understanding the Role That Failed States Play in the Perpetuation of Terrorism Tracy takes the audience through a “walk” of failed states (Somalia, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, etc.) and shows them the new terrorist groups that emerged from each.

No One Cares What You Have to Say: Understanding the True Role of Electronic Surveillance in the 21st Century Tracy provides the audience with information as to how signals intelligence is really used and why the government cannot possibly listen to every conversation. She also discusses Chinese espionage (from her time at the FBI) and how they are particularly engaging in the theft of intellectual property rather than spying in the classical sense.

Armed, Pink, and Blonde: Why Society Has a Difficult Time Accepting the Dichotomy of Femininity and Special Ops Tracy discusses why, during her time both at the FBI academy and then as an agent, she was constantly told to act more masculine despite passing all her tests and being the only woman in her class not to fail out.

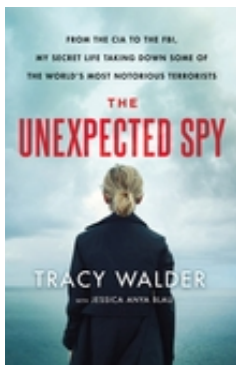
Why a Former FBI Agent and CIA Officer Does Not Think Teachers Should Be Armed Tracy helps the audience understand that arming teachers is far more than training them how to shoot a gun. That is the easy part. Situational awareness is the driving factor as to whether someone will use a gun in a violent situation. This training takes years, and most people cannot complete it.

The Real Roots of Al Qaida

Why Not? How a One-Word Question Can Hold Us Back From Achieving Our Full Potential

BOOKS

[The Unexpected Spy](#) From the CIA to the FBI, My Secret Life Taking Down Some of the World's Most Notorious Terrorists



St. Martin's Press

When Tracy Walder enrolled at the University of Southern California, she never thought that one day she would offer her pink beanbag chair in the Delta Gamma house to a CIA recruiter, or that she'd fly to the Middle East under an alias identity. *The Unexpected Spy* is the riveting story of Walder's tenure in the CIA and, later, the FBI.

HARDCOVER

REVIEWS: "Some of the standout speakers included Tracy Walder, a former CIA/FBI counter-terrorism agent turned high school history teacher. She used her unusual career path to illustrate the importance of living an authentic life and not being held back by 'why.'"

-KERA, PBS, NPR of North Texas from TEDx2012

"Girl Up is a global movement of empowered young women leaders who defend gender equality. Through leadership development training, Girl Up gives girls the resources and platform to start a movement for social change wherever they are. Tracy is an inspiration to girls across the globe. She is the living example of what girls and women can do when they don't take no for an answer."

-Katherine K., staff leader at North Texas Girl Up Summit 2019

Praise for North Texas High School International Career Day "I loved listening to the session led by Mrs. Tracy Walder! She was so informative and fun to listen to. It was very interesting to see the impact all the speakers have made in our DFW community."

"Mrs. Tracy Walder was my favorite speaker. Her topic intrigued me and her personality made her so much fun to listen to!"

"Tracy Walder was my favorite. I identified with her experiences as a woman in a male dominated field, and I appreciated her use of 'Day in the Life' descriptions to expand upon what her job entailed."

"I liked the CIA and FBI lady; her story was just very interesting and her personality is infectious."

"Before today, I didn't think that as a female, this was something that I could pursue as a career, and if you told me I could change someone's life I would not have believed you—but now, I can see how much I can actually do in the world with my passion of humanitarianism, as well as my creativity!"

Praise for the Unexpected Spy "Walder spins a thrilling tale in her debut memoir of her life in the CIA and FBI. [Her] fast-paced and intense narrative opens a window into life in two of America's major intelligence agencies."

-*Publishers Weekly*, STARRED REVIEW

"In this debut memoir, Walder brings a you-are-there intimacy to her accounts."

-*Kirkus Reviews*

"Walder's candid story will connect with readers curious about counterterrorism work and seeking an inspirational account of a woman seeking to change the balance of power in not only a male-dominated field but the world."

-*Library Journal*

"With coauthor [Jessica Anya] Blau, [Tracy] Walder has created a well-written, engaging memoir, a serious and candid inside view of two enigmatic and significant institutions from a woman's perspective, and a powerful tool for Walder's hoped-for 'revolution.'"

-*Booklist*

"Tracy Walder's *The Unexpected Spy* is an engaging and thoughtful story of service that will inspire generations of young women to come. Tracy's story is particularly moving because it provides a candid but often untold account of the challenges of serving one's nation amid tumultuous times. As a woman in national security, Tracy offers a glimpse into the rewards and risks of actualizing a dream in a male-dominated space."

—Lauren Bean Buitta, Founder, Girl Security

"Wow! I thoroughly enjoyed Tracy Walder's unique perspective; it will be inspiring to so many, especially young women with an interest in national security. I couldn't help but compare it to some of my own experiences in the CIA, particularly her exhaustion working counterterrorism, her sense of betrayal in war time, and her feelings of responsibility after a large-scale attack. I admire Walder's ability to channel those challenges into a positive force. A force for change."

—Sarah M. Carlson, Former CIA officer and author of *In The Dark Of War*

"*The Unexpected Spy* will get wide attention, and deserves it. It will give readers a different, more vivid, and more human idea of the actual work of spying, counter-intelligence, and dealing with terrorism. It will be especially important to young women who are considering this kind of career."

—James Fallows at *The Atlantic*, author of *Blind Into Baghdad*

"Tracy Walder has a unique combination of immense courage along with compassion and humanity... This book will be an inspiration to anyone who picks it up."

—Ellen Pompeo, actress, director, producer

"A compelling and well-written memoir that takes the reader on a journey from the CIA's 'Farm' and its 'black sites' to the FBI's training academy."

—Peter Bergen, author of *Manhunt: The Ten-Year Search for bin Laden from 9/11 to Abbottabad*

