

# PREVIOUS HATFIELD LECTURES

DATE

The Grey Album	<b>KEVIN YOUNG</b>	poet & curator	2018
Reflections on "Sweat"	<b>LYNN NOTTAGE</b>	playwright	2017
The Open Courtyard	<b>LESLIE JAMISON</b>	author	2016
The Secret History of Wonder Woman	<b>JILL LEPORE</b>	Harvard University	2015
Afternoon with the US Poet Laureate	<b>NATASHA TRETWEY</b>	Emory University	2014
The Art of Historical Fiction	<b>GERALDINE BROOKS</b>	author & journalist	2013
Lost (and Found) in Translation	<b>DAVID HENRY HWANG</b>	playwright	2012
Sodom on the Hudson	<b>DONALD L. MILLER</b>	Lafayette College	2011
Reading Culture, Reading Race	<b>KARLA F. C. HOLLOWAY</b>	Duke University	2010
Lafayette's Historical Legacy	<b>LLOYD KRAMER</b>	University of North Carolina	2009
Abraham Lincoln's Leadership	<b>RICHARD CARWARDINE</b>	Oxford University	2008

DAVID BISHOP SKILLMAN LIBRARY



J580

The 2019 John L. Hatfield '67 Lecture

# Susan Orlean

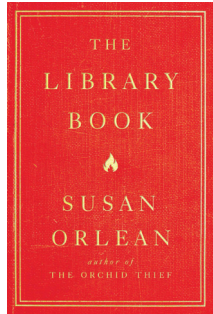
## SHELF AWARENESS:

### FINDING MYSELF IN THE LIBRARY

LAFAYETTE  
COLLEGE

76B635-4-59

"Destroying a culture's books is sentencing it to something worse than death: It is sentencing it to seem as if it never lived."



*New York Times* bestselling author Susan Orlean has been called “a national treasure” by the *Washington Post*. Her deeply moving explorations of American stories both familiar and obscure have earned her a reputation as one of America’s most distinctive journalistic voices. A staff writer for the *New Yorker* for over twenty years and a former contributing editor at *Rolling Stone* and *Vogue*, she has been praised as “an exceptional essayist” (*Publishers Weekly*) and a writer who “approaches her subjects with intense curiosity and fairness” (*Bookmarks*).

Orlean is fascinated by tales of every stripe. From the everyday to the outlandish, she has an eye for the moving, the hilarious, and the surprising. In *The Orchid Thief*—the national bestseller that inspired the Academy Award-winning film *Adaptation*—Orlean delved into the life of John Laroche, a charismatic schemer once convicted of trying to steal endangered orchids from a state preserve in southern Florida. In 2011’s *Rin Tin Tin*, Orlean examined how the iconic German shepherd captured the world’s imagination and, nearly a century later, remains a fixture in American culture.

Her latest work is the instant *New York Times* bestseller *The Library Book*, an exploration of the history, power, and future of these endangered institutions. *The Library Book* is told through the lens of Orlean’s quest to solve a notorious cold case: who set fire to the Los Angeles Public Library in 1986, ultimately destroying 400,000 books. *The Library Book* was named one of both the *New York Times*’ 100 Notable Books of 2018 and the *Washington Post*’s Best Books of 2018.

"After reading Susan Orlean's *The Library Book*, I'm quite sure I'll never look at libraries, or librarians, the same way again. This is classic Orlean—an exploration of a devastating fire becomes a journey through a world of infinite richness, populated with unexpected characters doing unexpected things, with unexpected passion."

Erik Larson, author of *The Devil in the White City* and *Dead Wake*



The 2019 John L. Hatfield '67 Lecture  
Presented by the Friends of Skillman Library

SUSAN ORLEAN

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21

4:30pm

**Williams Center for the Arts Auditorium**

*A reception and book signing will follow in the lobby*

Orlean discusses the art and craft of writing *The Library Book*, and how embracing ignorance can be a wise way of seeing the world.