

2024-2025

WITTENBERG SERIES

Enlightening Campus and Community

**Allen J. Koppenhaver
Literary Lecture**

“The Stories We Tell About Pain”

Susan Burton

Author and Award-Winning Podcaster

Monday, October 28, 2024

7 p.m.

Weaver Chapel





Susan Burton

AUTHOR AND AWARD-WINNING
PODCASTER

Susan Burton is the host, writer, reporter, and co-producer of the Peabody Award-winning podcast series *The Retrievals*, which recounts the pain experienced by dozens of women undergoing fertility treatment at the Yale Fertility Center. Named the #1 podcast of 2023 by *Vulture* and *Time*, the series was selected for numerous “best podcasts of the year” lists, including those from *The Atlantic*, *The Guardian*, *The Economist*, *The Financial Times*, *Fresh Air*, and *Vogue*, and earned an award from the Association of Health Care Journalists.

Burton is also the author of the memoir *Empty* (Random House 2020), which tells the story of the eating disorders she kept secret for most of her life. The book was selected for *Booklist’s* Top 10 Memoirs of 2020, *Newsweek’s* 20 Must-Read Books of the Summer, and *Marie Claire’s* Best Memoirs 2020 list. An editor at *This American Life*, she has produced many episodes including “Secrets,” “Ten Sessions,” “Five Women,” “The Thing I’m Getting Over,” and “Tell Me I’m Fat.” Her writing has appeared in the *New York Times Magazine*, *Slate*, *The New Yorker*, and others, and she is a former editor of *Harper’s*.

The recipient of a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to do stories about teenagers, Burton has earned numerous awards for her radio documentaries, including an Overseas Press Club citation. The 2006 Christmas comedy *Unaccompanied Minors* is based on one of her personal essays. A 1995 Yale graduate, she lives in Brooklyn with her husband and their two sons (one of whom she wrote about in *Labor Day: True Birth Stories by America’s Best Women Writers*).

PROGRAM

WELCOME

Michael L. Frandsen, Ph.D.
President

INTRODUCTION OF THE SPEAKERS

Katie Warber, Ph.D.
Professor of Communication
& Digital Media

ADDRESS

“The Stories We Tell About Pain”
Susan Burton
Author and award-winning podcaster

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

A book signing will follow the Q & A session. Susan Burton’s book *Empty* will be available for purchase.

Earlier today, Susan Burton met with students in English and communication & digital media classes and also participated in a Lunch & Learn event.

THANKS

The Allen J. Koppenhaver Literary Lecture is presented with appreciation for the life and inspiration of Dr. Koppenhaver through the generous support of private donors.

PAST KOPPENHAVER SPEAKERS

2023-2024

Hanif Abdurraqib
Poet, essayist, and cultural critic

2019-2020

Charles Blow, *The New York Times*
Columnist and Author

2018-2019

Hillary Jordan, Novelist

2017-2018

Dunya Mikhail, Poet

2016-2017

Eavan Boland, Poet

About Dr. Allen J. Koppenhaver

A distinguished professor, musician, author, and critic, Allen J. Koppenhaver joined the Wittenberg family in 1961 as a member of the English department faculty. For more than three decades, Koppenhaver displayed consummate skill in the classroom, encouraging students to think outside the box as they discovered what is possible within the pages of a book.

Recipient of Wittenberg’s top faculty prize, the Alumni Association Award for Distinguished Teaching, and a Fulbright Scholar, Koppenhaver earned an international reputation as a librettist following numerous collaborations with composer Robert “Jim” Haskins, Wittenberg class of 1961.

Together the two partnered on such critically acclaimed musical and dramatic projects as *The Masque of the Red Death*, *A Piano Comes to Arkansas*, and *The Night Luther Died*.

An expert on the music of American composer Charles Ives and British poet T.S. Eliot, Koppenhaver also drew high praise for his play *Transparent Morning*, which premiered in 1975. He was eventually named an honorary alumnus of Wittenberg University, where he taught until his passing in 1993 at the age of 61.

Koppenhaver earned his Ph.D. from Duke University, his M.A. from Ohio University, and his B.A. from Lebanon Valley College. He and his wife, Jerry, had three children: daughter Kerin, son David, and son Stephen, now deceased.

2024-2025

WITTENBERG SERIES

Enlightening Campus and Community

Opening Convocation & Welcome

Amy Bok McGuffey, Ph.D. '95
2024 Alumni Association
Distinguished Teaching Award
Recipient
3 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 22, 2024
Pam Evans Smith Arena
Health, Wellness & Athletics
Complex

Allen J. Koppenhaver Literary Lecture

Susan Burton
Author and Award-Winning
Podcaster
7 p.m. Monday, Oct. 28, 2024
Weaver Chapel

Candlelight Service

Lessons and Carols for Advent &
Christmas
7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 6, 2024
Weaver Chapel
(Special music at 7 p.m.)

Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation

Nic Stone
Bestselling Author and Racial and
Social Justice Advocate
10:30 a.m. Monday, Jan. 20, 2025
Weaver Chapel

Fred R. Leventhal Family Lecture

7 p.m. Thursday, April 24, 2025
Weaver Chapel
Details coming soon

