

Best-Selling Author Angie Thomas Gives Schaff Lecture

December 4, 2017

Angie Thomas, author of the *New York Times* best-seller *The Hate U Give*, delivered the Schaff Lecture on Ethics and Morals at Mercersburg December 4 in the Burgin Center for the Arts' Simon Theatre. The lecture was one of three events in Mercersburg's 2017-2018 Monday Evening Lecture Series.

The Hate U Give is Thomas' first novel, and has been a smash hit. The book was inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement and has spent 38 weeks on the *New York Times*' Young Adult Best-Seller list. (The book was also a summer reading selection in 2017 for Mercersburg students and faculty.) Filming for the movie adaptation is underway.

Thomas also spent time in classes with students before she departed campus December 5.

The *Times* called *The Hate U Give* "a stunning, brilliant, gut-wrenching novel that will be remembered as a classic of our time"; *Entertainment Weekly* described it as "the best—and most important—book you'll read this year."

In 2015, Thomas was the inaugural recipient of the Walter Dean Myers Grant, which is awarded by We Need Diverse Books. She grew up in Jackson, Miss., and graduated from Belhaven University with a degree in creative writing. Her bio describes her as "a former teen rapper... [with] an unofficial degree in hip-hop."

The Schaff Family Endowment was funded by and is in honor of Schaff brothers Phillip H. '38, Charles B. '41, and David S. '42. The endowment supports annual speakers "on topics related to fundamental human values—those principles which direct a person's decisions and actions because they clarify what is 'right' and 'wrong.'" Recent Schaff Lecturers have included investigative sports journalist Jeremy Schaap and author and musician James McBride.

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