



# Presidential Lecture Series *on Race*

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antiracist institution*

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A Lecture by Isabel  
Wilkerson

March 22, 2022

*Creighton University*

Creighton  
UNIVERSITY



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### SPEAKER

# Isabel Wilkerson



Isabel Wilkerson, winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Humanities Medal, is the author of *The New York Times* bestsellers *The Warmth of Other Suns* and *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*. A gifted storyteller, Wilkerson captivates audiences with the universal human story of migration and reinvention, as well as the unseen hierarchies that have divided us as a nation, in order to find a way to transcend them.

She has become an impassioned voice for demonstrating how history can help us understand ourselves, our country and our current era of upheaval. In her writing, Wilkerson brings the invisible and the marginalized into the light and into our hearts. In her lectures, she explores with authority the need to reconcile America's karmic racial inheritance—a notion she has expressed in her widely-shared op-ed essays in *The New York Times*.

Wilkerson enralls readers with the universal story of migration and the enduring search for the American dream, the origins of our shared commonality. She draws a direct link between the leaderless revolution known as the Great Migration and the protest movements for social justice today, both of them responses to unacknowledged and unaddressed history.

*The Warmth of Other Suns* tells the true story of three people among the six million who made the decision of their lives during the Great Migration, a watershed in American history. Wilkerson spent 15 years working on *Warmth*, interviewing more than 1,200 people to tell what she calls one of the greatest underreported stories of the 20th century. In addition to the National Book Critics Circle Award, the book won the Heartland Prize for Nonfiction, the Anisfield-Wolf Award for Nonfiction, the Lynton History Prize from Harvard and Columbia universities, and the Stephen Ambrose Oral History Prize and was shortlisted for both the Pen-Galbraith Literary Award and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize. *The Warmth of Other Suns* became a *New York Times* and national bestseller. It was named to more than 30 Best of the Year lists, including *The New York Times*' 10 Best Books of the Year, Amazon's 5 Best Books of the Year, and Best of the Year lists in *The New Yorker*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The Washington Post*, among others. It made national news when President Obama chose the book for his summer reading in 2011. In 2012, *The New York Times Magazine* named *The Warmth of Other Suns* to its list of the best nonfiction books of all time, and in 2019, *TIME Magazine* named it one of the "10 Best Non-Fiction Books" of the decade.

Isabel Wilkerson's latest book, *Caste: The Origins of our Discontents*, published in August 2020 to critical acclaim, with Dwight Garner of *The New York Times* calling it "an instant American classic" and Oprah choosing it for her monthly book club pick. Picked as a *Time*'s 2020 must-read book, the book examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped America and shows how a hierarchy of social divisions still defines our lives today. Wilkerson brings the past's complexities to vivid life through her passionate research and her profound gift for connecting with audiences of all backgrounds. *Caste* is being adapted into a Netflix film directed, written, and produced by Ava DuVernay.

Wilkerson won the Pulitzer Prize for her work as Chicago bureau chief of *The New York Times* in 1994, making her the first Black woman in the history of American journalism to win a Pulitzer Prize and the first African-American to win for individual reporting in the history of American journalism.

For more information on this speaker, please visit [prhspeakers.com/speaker/isabel-wilkerson](https://prhspeakers.com/speaker/isabel-wilkerson)

Learn more about the series and the speakers at [creighton.edu/presidential-lecture](https://creighton.edu/presidential-lecture)



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## Program

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### **EMCEE**

**Tracy Leavelle, PhD**

*Professor of History and Medical Humanities*

*Director, Kingfisher Institute for the Liberal Arts and Professions*

### **WELCOME**

**Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD**

*Creighton University President*

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

**Sarah Singletary Walker, PhD**

*Vice President, Division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion*

*Professor of Management*

### **LECTURE FOLLOWED BY Q&A**

**Isabel Wilkerson**

### **CLOSING REMARKS**

**Christopher Rodgers**

*Director of Community and Government Relations*