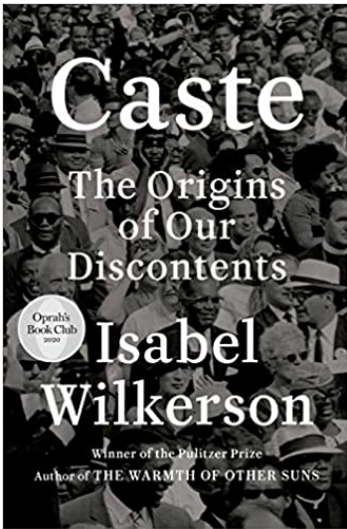


2020 Board Book for Discussion at the March Meeting



The Pulitzer Prize-winning, bestselling author of *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped America and shows how our lives today are still defined by a hierarchy of human divisions.

"This is a brilliant book, well timed in the face of a pandemic and police brutality that cleave along the lines of a caste system."

—Booklist

"Beautifully written, original, and revealing, Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents is an eye-opening story of people and history, and a reexamination of what lies under the surface of ordinary lives and of American life today."—Amazon

Amazon Overview

...Isabel Wilkerson gives us a masterful portrait of an unseen phenomenon in America as she explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings.

Beyond race, class, or other factors, there is a powerful caste system that influences people's lives and behavior and the nation's fate. Linking the caste systems of America, India, and Nazi Germany, Wilkerson explores eight pillars that underlie caste systems across civilizations, including divine will, bloodlines, stigma, and more. Using riveting stories about people—including Martin Luther King, Jr., baseball's Satchel Paige, a single father and his toddler son, Wilkerson herself, and many others—she shows the ways that the insidious undertow of caste is experienced every day. She documents how the Nazis studied the racial systems in America to plan their out-cast of the Jews; she discusses why the cruel logic of caste requires that there be a bottom rung for those in the middle to measure themselves against; she writes about the surprising health costs of caste, in depression and life expectancy, and the effects of this hierarchy on our culture and politics. Finally, she points forward to ways America can move beyond the artificial and destructive separations of human divisions, toward hope in our common humanity.

"This book has the reverberating and patriotic slap of the best American prose writing...Wilkerson has written a closely argued book that largely avoids the word 'racism,' yet stares it down with more humanity and rigor than nearly all but a few books in our literature...It's a book that changes the weather inside a reader."—Dwight Garner, *The New York Times*

"Ms. Wilkerson has also provided a renewed way of understanding America's longest, fiercest trouble in all its complexity. Her book leaves me both grateful and hopeful. I gulped it down."

—Tracy Kidder, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Mountains Beyond Mountains*

Discussion questions will be provided in January.

Please advise if you would like hardcover or audio book and we will deliver to you this month.

Extra Credit

To complement the understandings **Caste** will impart, read ***The Warmth of Other Suns*** as well!