



**NANCY:** I stand in awe of Isabel Wilkerson, for her research and masterpiece, chronicling an epic saga of American life which both exposes the evil of our racism and lifts up the heroic journeys of these African-Americans. She artfully weaves the lives and stories of Robert Joseph Pershing Foster, Ida Mae Brandon Gladney and George Swanson Starling together, while telling the larger story of six million+ migrants who escape the Jim Crow south, only to encounter more racism and limited opportunities in the north. What an amazing work that continues to educate and speak, and hopefully will lead us into positive change.



**PRISCILLA:** Oh my. I need to think about this one. I had no idea. After discovering I have African-American blood recently when we did our DNA testing, I've been thinking again about my attitudes. This book, wow. I have a lot to learn.



**SALLIE:** Yes, this book was shocking to me, too. What I thought about was how the blacks in the south had to try to teach their children what the white people expected. Like that Emmett Till who went down for the summer vacation and got lynched for saying something wrong to a white woman? How do you explain, justify or teach such a thing? How did this go on so long? How could they? It's just so evil. I think things are getting better, but I'm not sure.



**ABIGAIL:** Confronting racism is not an easy thing. I was struck by the Chicago research on racism which studied the problem and came up with solutions. But that report was never implemented. How do we change this? Why are people so determined to put other races down? Why can't we solve this problem?



**MOLLY:** Thank you, Isabel. She tells our story. I think anyone who reads this book has to wake up to the reality of racism in our country. Now, like many of the offspring of Robert Foster and Ida Mae Gladney, my family has triumphed and come out on the other side. Many middle class blacks, for sure. But many are still beaten down. And not a day goes by that we're not reminded that we are looked upon differently because of the color of our skin. Thank you.



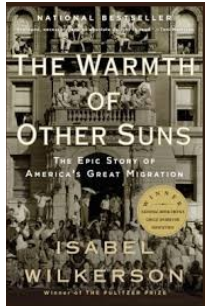
**KATHARINE:** Should be required reading in every high school and/or college. This is American History in living color. I've heard Isabel Wilkerson speak and she says what she has learned about change is it's one person at a time. I agree with Molly, reading this book changes you. Deserving of all the awards, for sure.



**JANE:** Life is not fair. I didn't realize how bad it was for African-Americans before I read this book. You know I'm a big believer in Zig Ziglar, pulling yourself up by your own bootstraps. But when the big man is stepping on you and slamming doors in your face? Whew. I never looked at it this way before. We got to make some changes in this country. We're not done yet, ladies.



# Discussion Guide



## About the Book

Book Title: The Warmth of Other Suns

Author: Isabel Wilkerson

Published: Random House, 2010

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## Questions for Discussion

1. What were your general impressions of this book?
2. What is the “Great Migration”? Did you learn about this in American History classes? Why or why not?
3. How did the author describe the American South, post slavery? Did this surprise you in any ways?
4. For what reasons did the characters in the book and others choose to leave the south? What were the circumstances that moved each of them?
5. How does the author describe life in California, New York, Milwaukee and Chicago for African-Americans? Did this surprise you? Were the migrants better off there? Why or why not?
6. What has been to solve America’s problem of racism and treating people of color as second-class citizens? What more can be done? What can you do?
6. Read over the MAMs comments on the book. Which of them do you most agree with and why?
7. In what ways, if any, will this change your life or perspective?

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TED TALK: [https://www.ted.com/talks/](https://www.ted.com/talks/isabel_wilkerson_the_great_migration_and_the_power_of_a_single_decision)

[isabel\\_wilkerson\\_the\\_great\\_migration\\_and\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_decision](https://www.ted.com/talks/isabel_wilkerson_the_great_migration_and_the_power_of_a_single_decision)

YouTube: Isabel Wilkerson: On Her Research for The Warmth of Other Suns,

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUH2U2FdGb4>)

Isabel Wilkerson with Krista Tippett: On Being: The Heart is the Last Frontier

<https://onbeing.org/programs/isabel-wilkerson-the-heart-is-the-last-frontier-jan2018/>