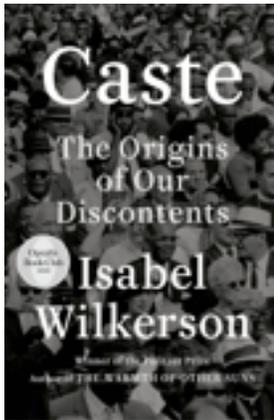


---

# Watch Party and Conversation

September 22, 2021 7:00 p.m.

---



## Featuring:

A National Book Festival 2021 video with Isabel Wilkerson, author of *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*

With live conversation to follow facilitated by Byron Rushing and Roopika Risam

Moderators: Krista McLeod, Director of Nevins Library and Molly Fogarty, Director of Springfield City Library

**Byron Rushing** served for 36 years, from 1983 to 2018, in the Massachusetts House of Representatives as a leader in the Boston delegation, rising to the position of Majority Whip. During his tenure, Representative Rushing advocated for and sponsored bills in the areas of health care, civil, human and gay rights, justice reform, drug addiction and gun safety, among other initiatives to promote social and economic justice in the commonwealth. He was a founding member of the Library Caucus in the Legislature, served as a Trustee of the Boston Public Library, and remained steadfast in his support of library services in Massachusetts.

During 1972 to 1985, he was President of the Museum of Afro-American History, when the Museum purchased and began the restoration of the African Meeting House, the oldest extant black church building in the United States. In 1979, Byron oversaw the lobbying effort in Congress to establish the Boston African American National Historic Site, a component of the National Park Service.

During the 1960's he was active in the civil rights movement — working for CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) and for the Northern Student Movement. He directed a group of organizers, Roxbury Associates, who helped to found the Lower Roxbury Community Corporation, one of the first CDCs in the nation.



**Roopika Risam** is Chair of Secondary and Higher Education and Associate Professor of Education and English at Salem State University.

Widely published, supported, and cited for her scholarship in postcolonial and African diaspora studies and humanities knowledge infrastructures, Professor Risam is developing “The Global Du Bois,” a data visualization project on W. E. B. Du Bois. She also serves as editor or officer of numerous organizations promoting social justice, feminism, digital humanities, ethnic studies, and change in higher education.

Her latest collection is *The Digital Black Atlantic*. She also co-hosts “Rocking the Academy,” a podcast featuring interviews which explore the future shape of higher education.

In 2018, the Massachusetts Library Association awarded its inaugural Civil Liberties Champion Award to Risam for her progress in promoting equity and justice in the digital cultural record.

---