

KEYNOTE SPEAKER OPPORTUNITY

Explore the roots of judicial wisdom and the power of dissent. Learn how personal values and experiences inspire leadership. Hear how a voice in the wilderness won the battle of history -- with best-selling and award-winning journalist Peter S. Canellos, author of “The Great Dissenter: The Story of John Marshall Harlan, America’s Judicial Hero”

"In the history of the Supreme Court, there is no parallel to Harlan's career. There have been other passionate dissenters and other famous dissents. But no one stood so consistently against his brethren, only to be vindicated in later times. . ."

— from *The Great Dissenter: The Story of John Marshall Harlan, America’s Judicial Hero*, named one of the top 20 Best Nonfiction Books of 2021 by Publishers Weekly

In “The Great Dissenter,” Peter S. Canellos tells the profound tale of how a former slave owner – with the help of a once-enslaved man who grew up alongside him and was believed to be his half-brother – changed American law.

A current editor at POLITICO, former editorial page editor of The Boston Globe, and editor of the New York Times bestseller “Last Lion: The Fall and Rise of Ted Kennedy,” Canellos has harbored an interest in Harlan since his days at Columbia Law School three decades ago. Published in 2021 to universally positive reviews, “The Great Dissenter” has been the subject of speeches and events including keynotes at the Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference in Louisville, the Ohio Judicial Conference in Columbus and a special private briefing for judges and magistrates of the Second Circuit in New York City.

Now, at this moment of looming crisis for the Supreme Court, there is no better model to explore than John Marshall Harlan, who was the lead dissenter – and usually the sole dissenter -- in the cases that took away Black rights and economic protections during the post-Civil War and Gilded Age.

Dissent. No one wielded this power more aggressively than Harlan. They say history is written by the victors, but that is not Harlan’s legacy: his views – not those of his fellow justices – ultimately ended segregation and helped give us our civil rights and our economic freedoms. Derided by many as a loner and loser, he ended up being acclaimed as the nation’s most courageous jurist, a man who saw the truth and justice that eluded his contemporaries.

“Our constitution is color blind and neither knows nor tolerates classes among citizens,” he wrote in his famous *Plessy v. Ferguson* dissent, one of many cases in which he lambasted his colleagues for denying the rights of African Americans and for favoring their own economic class.

The career of Harlan is an illustration of the importance of personal experience in the law. And his story is a testament to the vital necessity of dissent – and of how a flame lit in one era can light the world in another.

Mr. Canellos has spoken about Justice Harlan’s history across the country, including at:

JUDICIAL CONFERENCES

- U.S. Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference, 2022
- Ohio Judicial Conference, 2022
- International Society of Barristers, 2022
- U.S. 2nd Circuit, Private Briefing for Judges and Magistrates, 2022

UNIVERSITIES

- University of Kentucky Rosenberg College of Law
- University of Louisville Brandeis School of Law
- Centre College
- Waynesburg University

- King's College, New York

MISC. SPEAKING EVENTS

- U.S. National Archives
- National Constitution Center
- New York Public Library
- New York Historical Society
- Palm Beach County Constitution Day, 2022
- Boston Athenaeum
- Boston Public Library
- Filson Historical Society, Louisville
- Cincinnati Mercantile Library
- Frazier Museum, Louisville
- Kentucky Book Festival

If you are at all interested in exploring more information on the book, Mr. Canellos, or past events please visit us at <https://peterscanellos.com/>.