

## Mighty Justice: My Life in Civil Rights

**Dovey Johnson Roundtree**

**Katie McCabe**

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Dovey Johnson Roundtree's powerful memoir *Mighty Justice* covers her devotion to legal, racial, and gender equality.

Roundtree was born in 1914, and in her 104 years worked as both an attorney and a minister to fight for the rights of African Americans. Eloquent and captivating, her book weaves personal memories with history's scope. It covers the 1919 influenza pandemic, the Great Depression, World War II, and the racial backdrop of the United States, with a focus on the Jim Crow South before and after the civil rights movement. Roundtree's recollections of her indomitable grandmother, Rachel, form the core of the book, along with her relationship with Mae Neptune, a professor at Atlanta's Spelman College, who proved to be Roundtree's "miracle maker" in terms of financial, intellectual, and emotional support.

Following her graduation from Spelman, Roundtree joined a force of black women who integrated the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps during World War II. Postwar, she attended Howard University Law School and set up practice in Washington, DC. She was tireless in working to win pivotal cases that furthered equal rights and due process. Her call to the ministry came soon after, leading to her ordination within the African Methodist Episcopal Church and resulting in a spiritual dimension to her legal work.

Roundtree's tone is candid and engaging; she describes mapping out challenging legal cases on the quiet screen porch of her home, "where complex matters invariably reduced themselves to simplicity." Humble, reflective, and triumphant, the text details a life of determination, sacrifice, hope, and unending love of knowledge. *Mighty Justice* is an inspiring and intense memoir by an extraordinary woman and mentor who deserves a high profile in American history.

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