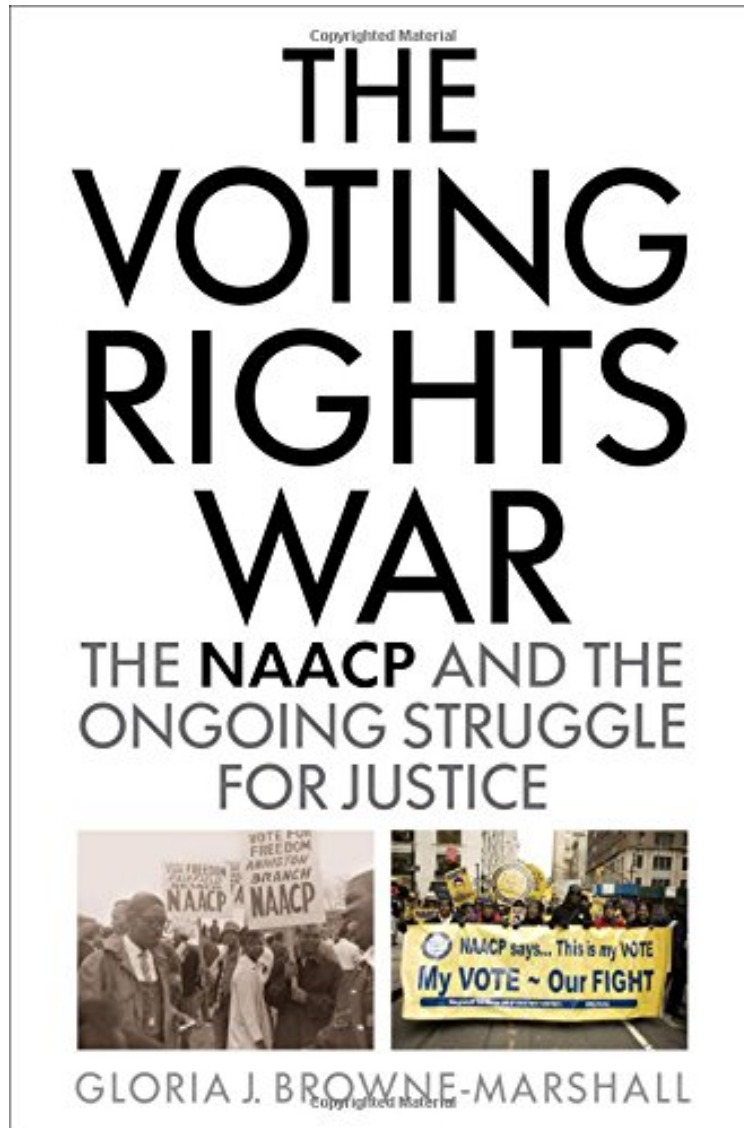


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The Voting Rights War: The NAACP and the Ongoing Struggle for Justice

Gloria J. Browne-Marshall

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The Voting Rights War tells the story of the courageous struggle to achieve voting equality through more than one hundred years of work by the NAACP at the Supreme Court. Readers take the journey for voting rights from slavery to the Plessy v. Ferguson case that legalized segregation in 1896 through today's conflicts around voter suppression. The NAACP brought important cases to the Supreme Court that challenged obstacles to voting: grandfather clauses, all-White primaries, literacy tests, gerrymandering, vote dilution, felony disenfranchisement, and photo identification laws. This book highlights the challenges facing American voters, especially African Americans, the brave work of NAACP members, and the often contentious relationship between the NAACP and the Supreme Court. This book shows the human price paid for the right to vote and the intellectual stamina needed for each legal battle. The Voting Rights War follows conflicts on the ground and in the courtroom, from post-slavery voting rights and the formation of the NAACP to its ongoing work to gain a basic right guaranteed to every citizen. Whether through litigation, lobbying, or protest, the NAACP continues to play an unprecedented role in the battle for voting equality in America, fighting against prison gerrymandering, racial redistricting, the gutting of the Voting Rights Act, and more. The Voting Rights War highlights the NAACP's powerful contribution and legacy.

Browne-Marshall, an associate constitutional law professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, delivers a passionate, comprehensive history of the NAACP and its crucial role in the still ongoing battle for voting rights. Founded in response to the Springfield (Ill.) Riot of 1908 and initially led by white liberals, the NAACP, as Browne-Marshall shows, focused on voter rights from the start. She highlights how the NAACP's involvement in nearly every voting rights case argued before the Supreme Court speaks to its effective tripartite strategy of 'litigation, legislation, and protest.' With considerable insight, Browne-Marshall guides readers through a century of pivotal legal struggles: 1896's Plessy v. Ferguson; poll taxes and literacy tests; whites-only primaries; the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965; and the present-day photo ID laws, voter dilution efforts, and gutting of certain voter protections in the 2013 Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder decision. She also shows the Supreme Court's changing makeup through the decades and resurrects the people—Moorfield Storey, Charles Hamilton Houston, Thurgood Marshall, Mary White Ovington—who struggled on the NAACP's behalf. With vivid descriptions of voter intimidation, murders, riots, and lynchings, this work emphasizes that 'freedom is not free.' (Publishers Weekly) Riveting, captivating, and awakening. The Voting Rights War depicts the arduous journey of the nation's oldest, largest, and most widely recognized grassroots-based civil rights organization and its masterful use of the legislative and judicial systems to eradicate barriers that impeded an individual's fundamental right to vote. This book is a must-read. Every chapter demonstrates the power of the vote and the importance of people of color exercising that power to achieve progress and justice. (Pamela Meanes, 76th President of the National Bar Association; Partner, Thompson Coburn LLP) The Voting Rights War is an accessible and penetrating history of the NAACP and the struggle for African American voting rights in the United States. The book takes the reader on a journey from the insurgence of White supremacist denials of basic African American rights, to the evolutionary development of the NAACP, and to its strategy to use the vote as the primary weapon to attack racism. While the study elucidates the past, it also opens a window for understanding contemporary racial politics. This book is essential reading for those interested in the subject and a great primer for further study. (James Conyers, Kean University) America's troubled relationship with voting rights is a long-standing and contentious one. Gloria Browne-Marshall's excellent new book presents a key part of our evolving battle on voting rights. She discusses, with considerable passion and insight, the role that the NAACP has played in its efforts to move the United States toward a system of full and effective voting rights. The many battle scars suffered, lives lost, and hopes dashed are important parts of the story. But so are the courage, hope, and beginnings of progress that Browne-Marshall's book chronicles. She makes our checkered history on voting rights come alive and honors the many heroes and heroines the NAACP brought to the struggle. (James R. Silkenat, President (2013-2014), American Bar Association) Gloria Browne-Marshall offers a thoroughly researched and insightful account of this nation's persistent struggle with race, politics, and equality. Browne-Marshall reminds us that there are many unsung heroes—Black and White—who risked their lives, and their families' lives, to fight for racial equality in this country. This book is a necessary read at a time when this country is once again embroiled in a racially charged debate about our future. (Cornelius 'Neil' Foote, Jr., University of North Texas, editor of PoliticsInColor.com) Gloria Browne-Marshall's The Voting Rights War speaks to the frontline contribution of America's oldest civil rights organization—the NAACP. Her book tells the story from historic grandfather clauses to contemporary voter suppression. The Voting Rights War is a crucial reminder of battles won and lost, and of the many NAACP members who paid the ultimate price for every citizen's right to vote. It is an important story told by a gifted writer. (Jerome L.

Reide, NAACP Regional Field Director)About the AuthorGloria J. Browne-Marshall is associate professor of constitutional law at John Jay College (CUNY) and a civil rights attorney. She is the author of *Race, Law, and American Society*. Browne-Marshall is an award-winning legal correspondent and a playwright. A member of the National Press Club, her weekly columns on the US Supreme Court are syndicated nationwide. She has provided commentary for BBC, CNN, CBS, NPR, C-SPAN, and more.Rev. Dr. C.T. Vivian is a renowned voting rights activist, minister, and community organizer. A recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, he was a friend to Martin Luther King, Jr., a Freedom Rider, and leader of numerous civil rights organizations.