

FOREWORD

CHIEF JUDGE JANET DiFIORE

I am deeply honored that Luisa Kaye has invited me to pen a foreword to the collected memoirs, opinions, and articles of Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye, an extraordinary woman, jurist, and leader who had a striking impact on the law and the administration of justice in New York State and beyond.

Judith Kaye's scholarly, eloquent, and progressive opinions—spanning a quarter century of service on the New York State Court of Appeals, one of the most influential appellate courts in the nation—will surely stand the test of time. She has influenced the course of our constitutional and common law for generations to come in momentous decisions addressing a child's right to a basic education, the death penalty, marriage and adoption rights, the scope of the rights and protections afforded by our State constitution, and on and on. Her opinions are models of judicial craftsmanship, reflecting a keen intellect; a strong command of the law; a clear, elegant writing style; and a wise understanding of human affairs.

Judith's articles reveal a prolific and sophisticated scholar with insightful and interesting perspectives on a broad range of topics. Her bold insights on judicial leadership and court reform are especially valuable, coming from a chief judge who led one of the largest and busiest court systems in the world through a period of intense social and technological change. Her vision for how the New York courts could respond more effectively to the societal problems swelling the dockets led to a "problem-solving justice revolution" that helped transform the delivery of justice at the national level.

Judith's memoirs and personal writings are a joy to read, illuminating a unique and fascinating woman: wise, cultivated, and elegant, of course, but also witty, fun-loving, and even a little mischievous. As she reflects on the different phases of her life, from her humble upbringing to her cherished court years, we are the beneficiaries of her sparkling intellect and a love of learning, language, and literature that shines through. In these writings, we are presented with a passionate, humane, and gracious woman who surmounted great challenges, won many victories, and suffered her share of disappointments. She loved her life, her profession, her court, and above all, her family.

This collection is more than a simple record of a remarkable life. It is a treasure—not only for those of us who knew and admired Judith but for all who may seek to understand and appreciate the profound impact she had on the law, the legal profession, and the administration of justice.