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# A TRIBUTE TO JUDGE JOHN M. MANOS

ARTHUR I. HARRIS<sup>1</sup>

In establishing the Judge John M. Manos Writing Competition on Evidence, the Cleveland-Marshall Law School has chosen a most fitting way to honor a distinguished graduate. With over thirty years of exceptional service as a judge in state and federal court, Judge Manos is unsurpassed in his knowledge of trial practice, evidentiary matters, and the Federal Rules of Evidence. Judge Manos's reputation for hard work, dedication, and, above all, a sense of fairness for those appearing before him is well known. Attorneys and litigants appearing before Judge Manos always know that their matters will be promptly and fairly adjudicated.

Judge Manos received an engineering degree from Case Institute of Technology in 1944, and a law degree from Cleveland-Marshall Law School in 1950. He practiced law for thirteen years before being appointed to the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas in 1963. Judge Manos was reelected in 1966 and served on the Court of Common Pleas until he was appointed to the Ohio Court of Appeals, Eighth Appellate District, in 1969. Judge Manos served on the Ohio Court of Appeals until April 9, 1976, when President Gerald R. Ford appointed him to the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio, where he has served with distinction for nearly twenty years.

Anyone who has worked for Judge Manos or appeared before him knows that Judge Manos expects the same punctuality and thorough preparation that he himself employs in his own work. Judge Manos's devotion to his work is legendary. Few judges could remark as Judge Manos did one particularly nasty winter morning, "The roads were so bad, I didn't make it to the courthouse until almost 6:00." No matter how hard his law clerks work, they are no match for their boss, for whom six-day work weeks are the norm. Status conferences and hearings on Saturday mornings or on federal holidays are not unusual.

Judge Manos's ability to work settlements in even the most difficult cases is uncanny. Most experts agree that cases should settle when parties and attorneys evaluate their cases properly. By working hard to understand the strengths and weaknesses of cases even better than the parties and attorneys appearing before him, Judge Manos is able to use his powers of persuasion and reasoning to convince parties that settlement is in their best interests. Moreover, parties understand that, should a case not settle, a prompt trial will soon determine whether they have evaluated their cases correctly.

Judge Manos's skills are perhaps most evident in the courtroom. No one runs a courtroom more effectively and efficiently or has a better mastery of the Federal Rules of Evidence. Attorneys who are unprepared, or are unable to ask

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questions consistent with the Federal Rules of Evidence, know they are not going to get things past Judge Manos. On the other hand, during breaks, or after the jury has been excused, Judge Manos will patiently explain to the same attorneys the correct way to put on the evidence that they had struggled to put on earlier.

Judge Manos treats every trial and every hearing in his courtroom as a learning opportunity for the attorneys, law clerks, and externs. His courtroom is really a classroom for subjects like Evidence, Trial Practice, and Advocacy. In addition to the law clerks, Judge Manos's courtroom and chambers are always crowded with externs and other volunteers from law schools, colleges, and high schools, who are eager to learn from a master. There must be hundreds of such individuals who have spent a day, a week, or longer periods being exposed to the processes of his court.

Over the years, many attorneys, law clerks, and externs have heard Judge Manos extol the virtues of the "three Cs"—chronology, candor, and clarity— or recite from memory his list of twenty-two grounds for objecting to evidence.<sup>2</sup>

Despite his devotion to the bench, Judge Manos has found time to be active in numerous community activities, both inside and outside the legal community. Judge Manos is Chairman of the Board of Overseers for Cleveland-Marshall College of Law and regularly provides training and instruction through bar associations, such as the Federal Bar Association and the Inns of Court program. To list all of the honors that Judge Manos has received would probably fill a volume of this law review just by itself.

Judge Manos is also devoted to his family, be it his immediate family of four children and ten grandchildren, his family of former law clerks, or his family that encompasses the entire Greek community, through the fraternal Greek organization—AHEPA. Judge Manos is truly a patriarch of the Greek community, not just of Cleveland, but nationwide.

In short, the Judge John M. Manos Writing Competition on Evidence is a fitting tribute to an outstanding jurist.

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<sup>2</sup>Judge Manos's list of common evidentiary objections has been reproduced in the November 1992 issue of the *ABA Journal* at 90.