



The Supreme Court of Kansas

Kansas Judicial Center
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1507



JUDICIAL ETHICS ADVISORY PANEL

Judicial Ethics Opinion JE-74

April 14, 1997

FACTUAL BACKGROUND:

- A. Some large law firms hold in-house CLE seminars which are attended only by lawyers of that firm.
- B. Some corporations, having large law departments, hold in-house CLE seminars which are attended only by lawyers of the corporation's law department.
- C. A law firm, which has as a regular client a corporation which has its own law department, has expressed interest in holding a joint CLE seminar on legal ethics at the law firm's office. This seminar will be co-sponsored by the law firm and the corporation, and will be attended only by lawyers of the firm and lawyers of the corporation's law department.

QUESTION: May a judge lecture or serve as a panelist, without compensation, at a seminar described in paragraphs A, B or C above?

DISCUSSION: Canon 4 B (1996 Kan. Ct. R. Annot. 419) provides in part:

"A judge may speak, write, lecture, teach, and participate in other extra-judicial activities concerning the law . . . subject to the requirements of this Code."

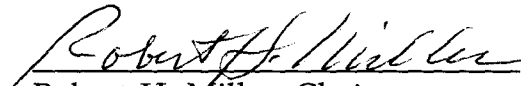
As the commentary to this Canon observes, " To the extent that time permits, a judge is encouraged to do so . . ." This panel agrees that judges should speak, write or lecture on legal topics when opportunity arises and time permits.

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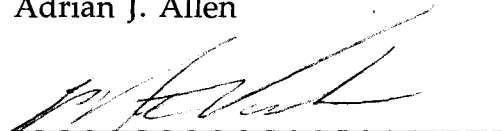
Canon 2 B (1996 Kan. Ct. R. Annot. 411) provides in part:

“. . . A judge shall not lend the prestige of judicial office to advance the private interests of the judge or others; nor shall a judge convey or permit others to convey the impression that they are in a special position to influence the judge . . .”

The presentations described above are to be made only to lawyers. The subject of the jointly sponsored seminar is that of legal ethics. We are told that there will be no firm marketing or promotional comments during the program. Under these circumstances, we perceive no violation of the Canons. The answer to the question is “yes.”


Robert H. Miller, Chairman


Adrian J. Allen


E. Newton Vickers