

CHAPTER 12

FIRESIDE CHAT WITH THE HONORABLE HARRY T. EDWARDS

The Honorable Harry T. Edwards was honored in this year's Fireside Chat. He has had a long and distinguished career as a law professor, labor arbitrator, and jurist. He was questioned by friends and National Academy of Arbitrators colleagues, Carol Wittenberg and Richard Bloch.

Because Judge Edwards continues to hear cases as a Senior Circuit Judge, his verbatim remarks are not published in this volume. What follows instead is a brief biographical sketch of Judge Edward's career.

Harry T. Edwards was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit by President Carter in 1980. He served as Chief Judge from September 15, 1994 until July 16, 2001, and he took Senior status on November 3, 2005. Before joining the bench, Judge Edwards was a faculty member at the University of Michigan Law School (1970–1975 and 1977–1980) and at the Harvard Law School (1975–1977), earning tenure at both schools. He practiced law in Chicago with Seyfarth, Shaw, Fairweather & Geraldson from 1965 to 1970.

Judge Edwards received a B.S. degree from Cornell University in 1962 and a J.D. degree from the University of Michigan law School in 1965. He graduated from law school with distinction and was a member of the *Michigan Law Review* and the Order of the Coif; he also received American Jurisprudence Awards for outstanding scholarship in Labor Law and Administrative Law. He has been admitted to practice in Illinois, Michigan, and the District of Columbia.

He is the Co-Chair of the Committee on Identifying the Needs of the Forensic Science Community, established by the National Academy of Science (Committee on Science, Technology, and Law). He has served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of AMTRAK; the Board of Directors of the National Institute for Dispute Resolution; the Executive Committee of the Order of the Coif; a member of the Executive Committee of the Association of American Law Schools, and also as Chairman of the Minority Groups Section; a Visiting Professor of Law in the Program for

International Legal Cooperation at the University of Brussels; a member of the faculty at the Institute for Educational Management at Harvard; a member and Vice President of the National Academy of Arbitrators; a Public Member of the Administrative Conference of the United States; a member of the President's National Commission on International Women's Year; Chairman of the Ann Arbor, Michigan, Legal Services Center; and a member of Chicago Volunteer Legal Services.

Judge Edwards has been a recipient of the Groat Alumni Award from Cornell University; the Society of American Law Teachers Award (for "distinguished contributions to teaching and public service"); the Whitney North Seymour Medal presented by the American Arbitration Association for outstanding contributions to the use of arbitration; the 2001 "Judicial Honoree Award" presented by the Bar Association of the District of Columbia; "The Charles Evans Whittaker Award" presented by the Lawyers Association of Kansas City; the 2004 Robert J. Kutak Award, presented by the American Bar Association Section of Legal Education and Admission to the Bar "to a person who meets the highest standards of professional responsibility and demonstrates substantial achievement toward increased understanding between legal education and the active practice of law"; and numerous Honorary Doctor of Laws degrees.

He is a member of the American Law Institute; the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; the American Judicature Society; the American Bar Foundation; the American Bar Association; the Supreme Court Historical Society; and a director/mentor at the Unique Learning Center in Washington, DC, a volunteer program to assist disadvantaged inner-city youth.

Judge Edwards is the co-author of four books: *Labor Relations Law in the Public Sector*; *The Lawyer as a Negotiator*; *Collective Bargaining and Labor Arbitration*; and *Higher Education and the Law*. He has also published scores of articles and booklets, and presented countless papers and commentaries, dealing with labor law, equal employment opportunity, labor arbitration, higher education law, alternative dispute resolution, federalism, judicial process, comparative law, legal ethics, judicial administration, legal education, and professionalism. One of his most significant publications, *The Growing Disjunction Between Legal Education and the Legal Profession*, 91 MICH. L. REV. 401 (1992), has been the source of extensive comment, discussion, and debate among legal scholars and practitioners in the United States and abroad. Another, *The Effects of*

Collegiality on Judicial Decision Making, 151 PA. L. REV. 1639 (May 2003), is a major scholarly article that explains how appellate judges decide cases and refutes the claim that the personal ideologies and political leanings of the judges on the D.C. Circuit are crucial determinants in the court's decisionmaking process. And, in 2004, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*,¹ Judge Edwards authored *The Journey from Brown v. Board of Education to Grutter v. Bollinger: From Racial Assimilation to Diversity*, 102 MICH. L. REV. 944 (2004), in which he draws on his own personal and professional experiences to reflect on racial equality and inequality in America over the past 50 years and to ponder the consequences of the shift from racial assimilation to diversity as a means of achieving racial equality. He is presently co-authoring a book on Federal Courts—Standards of Review (Appellate Court Review of District Court & Administrative Agency Decisions).

During his nearly seven years as Chief Judge of the D.C. Circuit, Judge Edwards directed numerous automation initiatives at the Court of Appeals; oversaw a complete reorganization of the Clerk's Office and Legal Division; implemented case management programs that helped to cut the court's case backlog and reduce case disposition times; successfully pursued congressional support for the construction of an annex to E. Barrett Prettyman U.S. Courthouse; presided over the court's hearings in *United States v. Microsoft*²; established programs to enhance communications with the lawyers who practice before the court; and received high praise from members of the bench, bar, and press for fostering collegial relations among the members of the court.

Following his appointment to the U.S. Court of Appeals, Judge Edwards has continued to teach law on a part-time basis. He acknowledges that teaching continues to be his "first love" among his professional pursuits. Since 1980, he has taught at a number of law schools, including Duke, Georgetown, Harvard, Pennsylvania, Michigan, and NYU (where he has taught since 1990 and is now a Visiting Professor of Law).

Judge Edwards resides in Washington, DC, with his wife, Pamela Carrington-Edwards. He has two adult children: Michelle Howard, a resident of Washington, DC, and mother of the Judge's two grandchildren, Alexandra and Noah; and Professor Brent Hayes

¹349 U.S. 294 (1955).

²97 F. Supp. 2d 59 (D.C. Cir. 2000).

Edwards, who resides in New York City with his wife Nora Nicolini, and is the author of *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Harvard University Press, 2003), and co-author and co-editor of *Uptown Conversation: The New Jazz Studies* (Columbia University Press, 2004).