

ther than in my office, before I feel I have earned the right to contribute my own reflections” (p. 18). This is a wonderful quote. To me, it highlights the requirement of humility, the acknowledgment of not knowing, as well as how open-mindedness and curiosity are essential to reaching any understanding of organizations, leaders, followers, and their enemies and allies.

The breadth and scope of Howard Stein’s scholarship and contributions to the social and behavioral sciences as well as the humanities is vast. Stein’s work deserves to be read and re-read with an open heart and an open, critical mind.

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## Howard Stein’s Invaluable Gifts

**Michael Britton**—Int. Psychohistory Association

*Keywords: countertransference, hospital-care, humility, irrationality-in-business, listening, modesty, organizational-consulting, poetry, psychogeography*

What has Howard done for me? Let me count the ways. His books have enabled me to “see” with eyes of deep feeling into the often dysfunctional dynamics in business and health care organizations from the suppressed deep emotional reactions driving organizational irrationality to the emotional reactions to the working envi-

ronment, changes in an organization, and the narcissistic dynamics of leaders. He modeled how to say such things in ways people could be touched by and use. I have found his skill and intuition in that regard immensely helpful.

But Howard also makes clear the difficulties of being a container for others, the somewhat flawed and messy paths that lead to saying the helpful thing at the helpful moment, a reality any of us can expect to experience. He wants to share the reality, not leave an impression of unique, personal magic. I find that humility central to how he listens and speaks. That modesty and humility empower others. He cares about that.

He's a poet as well as an anthropologist and consultant. He's taught me (and many of us) that we can use poetry to express more than we knew we could, making it possible for "the rest of me" to speak where my rational self falters. When listening to someone, he takes in what that person is not conscious of feeling and helps give it a voice. In poetry, he attends to what a place or situation evokes but will not otherwise be noticed. In both listening and poetry, he connects us to our deeper selves. This is what matters to him. Such listening is an invaluable gift, he says, perhaps his central teaching.

To give an example of how I like to think I learned from him, I regarded modern hospital interiors as sterile until the day I was in for a lithotripsy. One reassuring nurse stayed with my wife and me from start to finish, offered to get my wife coffee (and did so), and was there by my side when I came out of the anesthesia. One person, one relationship throughout the day, made for a radically different affair from all other hospital experiences I'd had. And I noticed the same interior architecture now felt warm. I realized it's what we are to each other, how much we stand by each other, that makes a place, as much as the shape of its halls or the colors of its rooms. I had not previously felt my need for one caring staff person walking with me through such a day. I think this is a hallmark of a Howard moment: a situation with a previously unfelt feeling about it now conscious and owned. The most powerful of such moments came once when he and I were sitting together. From what he noticed and what he said, I had the experience of being seen more deeply than I'd experienced with anyone before, including myself.

I find Howard a rare and irreplaceable gift. Psychohistory,

psychoanalysis, psychoanalytic anthropology, psychogeography, and poetry: each of these fields and all of us are better because Howard has been walking with us through life.

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## You Can't Make Up Howard Stein

**Seth Allcorn**—University of Missouri

*Keywords: Age of Trump, collaboration, creativity, friendship, productivity, Whiteboardings, writing*

Allow me to begin by saying, you can't make this stuff up. I am sure Howard is smiling. His exceptional creativity and productivity are in the zone of not being able to make it up. Our over 30-year friendship and ever-evolving collaboration exploring leadership and organizational dynamics that you could not in fact make up have challenged him to make sense of the dynamics by drawing on his multidisciplinary knowledge. Most recently, our *Psychoanalytic Insights into Social, Political, and Organizational Dynamics: Understanding the Age of Trump* (2022) presented him as a worthy challenge after exploring how applied poetry informs understanding of lived experience in organizations. Now, a short book of collaborative poetry just accepted for publication, *Whiteboardings – Creating Collaborative Poetry in a Third Space*, is yet another “outside the box” boundary-breaking project.

Our friendship and collaboration led me to deeply appreciate his humanity as well as his thought archived in his list of publications. Howard has always embraced the possibilities of new ideas and he dares to develop new and different projects such as writing his play *Irv* incorporating many of his workplace poems.