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MY PERSONAL NOTES ON HEINZ

As presented after dinner on December 7, at the Twelfth Annual New York State Office of Mental Health Research Conference, dedicated to Dr. Heinz E. Lehmann

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I would like to thank Dr. Oldham for dedicating this Conference to Dr. Lehmann and also for inviting me.

I met Dr. Lehmann on the first day of my psychiatric residency on July 1st, 1958. It was about a year after he had received the prestigious Albert Lasker Award for successfully communicating the practical significance of chlorpromazine, and just about the time he published the first report outside of Europe on the antidepressant effect of imipramine.

Our early interactions turned into a research collaboration which grew over the years into a very close friendship. I learned to know a man, who remained, even in his 80s (photo 1), full of youthful vitality and energy, and whose curiosity and probing extended to all the different aspects of life...., but who never owned a car or a house, or for that matter anything of material value. He felt that taking a taxi not only spared him from the aggravation and inconveniences of driving, but also allowed him to work in the back-seat.

Heinz was brought up and deeply affected by the Weimar Republic, a period of political freedom and cultural creativity in Germany between 1919 and 1933. In this photo (photo 2), you can see him as he was in his 20s; a handsome young man with blond hair and

twinklig blue eyes, sporting a pipe, who was moving from University to University to study with Emil Kretschmer and Wagner Jauregg, before getting his medical degree. He also branched off into many other areas of study, and when reminiscing about his student years, he remembered more the seminars on existentialism with Heidegger than any of his courses in medicine.

By the time he received his medical degree the Weimar Constitution had been wiped out by Hitler and the Nuremberg Law for the Protection of German Blood was in effect. Heinz, whose father was Jewish, now faced an uncertain future in Germany and, as you can see in the photo (photo 3), was ready to sail. But Germany did not want to let him out and the United States did not want to let him in. Fortunately, he managed to finagle an invitation for a three week ski vacation to Canada. He arrived to Halifax on New Year's Day 1937. All he had with him was a \$ 200.- camera and a suitcase which contained a complete magician's kit of tricks: rings, colored handkerchiefs and the like. A puzzled custom's officer asked: "Why the hell does a skier need all this?" Heinz, who then hardly spoke any English, calmly replied: "A man's got to have a hobby."

From Halifax he moved to Montreal and worked for three months as an intern (photo 4). Then, he joined the staff of the Verdun Protestant Hospital (VPH), a psychiatric inpatient facility on the outskirts of Montreal, with which he remained affiliated for the rest of his life.

Heinz had no formal training in psychiatry. Nevertheless, by

1950, when this next photo was taken, he was the clinical director of VPH; here he is (photo 5) with the medical superintendent, the late Dr. Reed. In 1959 he was the keynote speaker at the 115th Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association; here he is with the late Paul Hoch and the late Fritz Freyhan (photo 6). And by the late 1960s, Heinz ranked among the most prominent living psychiatrists in the world. Here he is (photo 7) at the World Health Organisation (WHO) with Thomas Lambo and the late Boris Lebedev.

In 1971, at age 60, Heinz accepted the chairmanship of the department of psychiatry at McGill, but told the dean that he needed the post as much as he needed a hole in the head. Still, this was the happy ending to a misunderstanding in the early 1940's. When McGill's department of psychiatry was created Heinz was told that Ewen Cameron would be chairman, but still a relative newcomer to English he understood that Ewen (you and), i.e., he, and Cameron would be.

In 1976, he turned 65 and, as required by law, he formally retired from his posts. But whenever anyone mentioned retirement to him he retorted: "Retirement is a bureaucratic arrangement, not a state of mind..." To prove his point, he extended his professional activities, and put up his personal fight with aging by complementing his favorite sports, like skiing (photo 8), with scuba diving, and refusing to wear glasses when reading.

It was also in the late 1970s that he started to work in the New York State Office of Mental Health for the nominal fee of \$ 1.-

a year, which he - I understand - never actually received. The ties between Heinz and New York State were extremely strong. Although a Canadian, Heinz was the last survivor of a core group of New York psychiatrists which included Paul Hoch, Henry Brill and Nate Kline. Because of the enormous business New York State represents in psychotropic drugs, the impact of this core group on the development of psychiatry goes far beyond scientific contributions alone. I don't think that Heinz (photo 9) ever realised the important role he played in this rather heterogenous group.

By December 1998, Heinz was very ill. But he still managed to attend this conference and present the annual Research Awards with his usual wit and humor. Following it, he also attended the annual meeting of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology in Puerto Rico, an organisation he was president of in the mid-1960s.

Although visibly weak, Heinz went to the sessions he was interested in and enjoyed discussing whatever he learned. As usual, he had his emerald in his hand while listening to the speakers, but unlike before, whenever he got bored and would have started fondling it, he just left the room.

Although he was unsteady on his feet and had some difficulty finding places in the hotel, the only thing he complained about was that he could not sleep. He told me that there is a real need for a hypnotic which could make people like him sleep. Walking around the poster session he carefully reviewed every poster which dealt with insomnia and / or sleep, and brought to the attention of the exhibitors the need for a different kind of hypnotic.

Heinz had lost a lot of weight since the last time I saw him at the end of October (photo 10), when he was inducted into the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame. He had no appetite, but was willing to share with me the main course. One day we went to the beach and it was good to see how much pleasure he got from swimming. For the first time since his arrival, he had a good sleep in the afternoon, and at night he seemed to enjoy his cocktail before dinner and his desert at the end, although we still had to share the main course.

Over the next three months we talked regularly on the phone and he always brought to my attention the need for a different kind of hypnotic. He also complained about hiccups, which he could control by soaking in the bath tub, and restlessness which could not be controlled. One night, just a couple of weeks before he was readmitted to the hospital for the last time, he sounded different when I called. He told me that finally he had a good sleep after taking a small dose of olanzapine, and that his restlessness was gone. Then in his usual way, as I heard it from him many times before, he added : one should look into this matter because surely there are many OTHER PEOPLE with similar problems who need help.

I did not look into the matter, but he did. After few days of taking olanzapine, he stopped taking it for a day to find out whether it was really the drug that worked. All his symptoms recurred, and promptly remitted with the resumption of olanzapine in a small dose.

Oh, I almost forgot to mention (photo 11), he was also an actor...