

Announcement of Paul Meyerson Award

Sharon Roberts

(What Follows is a Transcript of the Presentation made by Sharon Roberts at the MIP Graduation, May 8, 2010.—Eds.)

I feel very fortunate to be able to introduce this year's recipient of the Paul Meyerson Award. It is always a very special moment when we announce the award, because the recipient usually does not know they are receiving it, and because it is an expression of deep gratitude from the MIP community for everything that person has contributed over the years. This year's recipient has been a member of MIP since the very earliest years. Though not a founder, he was a member of the original founding committee that worked to develop a governing and training structure for the institute. Among other things, he helped to organize and structure the first admission's committee. He was a member of the committee that developed the Post Graduate Fellowship Program and remained an active member on that committee for six years. He has co-chaired and been a member of numerous MIP committees over the years, always working responsibly and thoughtfully for our institute.

MIP's mission has been his mission since the early years. He has been one of those people who has contributed greatly in sustaining the vitality and livelihood of MIP. He has been on the faculty and a supervisor over many years. He is one of those faculty members and supervisors who exemplifies the comparative approach in his style and teaching, never privileging one perspective over another, believing that, in fact, history has a lot to offer our understanding of the present, and that the evolution of psychoanalytic thought requires a vital concentration and focus on the truths as well as the missteps in order to continue learning from experience. Having had the opportunity to teach with him over the years helped me to grow and to understand more about the essence of teaching.

Our recipient so personifies the MIP value of applying psychoanalytic principles and thinking to wider society outside of the consulting room. While pursuing analytic training and before full time private practice, he was clinical director of in-patient psychiatry at Carney Hospital for several years. He has been a consultant to the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, and in 2007 was asked by the Massachusetts Commissioner of Mental Health to consult to the Joint Committee on Mental Health and Substance Abuse regarding the high rate of suicide in our state's prisons, which was double the national average. His report and state testimony resulted in improved services and increased safety for mentally ill prisoners. He is a founding member of the Boston Group for Psychoanalytic Studies, part of the organizing committee for the highly successful *International Bion in Boston Conference*. He is a clinical instructor for Harvard Medical School at Cambridge Hospital.

He is a clear, careful and elegant thinker and writer. He is a person many at MIP think of when the task is important, complicated, sensitive--basically when the task involves walking through a mine field. And on the other hand, he has always been willing to help out in small ways, to participate without have to be the VIP. A graduate of MIP, his graduation paper "On trying something new: Effort and practice in psychoanalytic change" was published in the *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* in 2000.

The history of his MIP Board participation amounts to a daunting 15 years of service. He was an elected representative to the board for a total of 12 years. This began when he was elected as a candidate representative, and he currently holds an elected position. He has served as secretary to the board and is a past president. Although being a past president doesn't in itself recommend one for this award, when he walked into his presidency, from the very beginning he had to lead the Board through a very difficult time that went on for months. He gave MIP many hours and months of his energy dealing with the conflicts as well as doing the on-going work of being president of MIP. He was a dedicated, thoughtful and deft leader able to respectfully bear a great deal of negative emotion. He is a presence at MIP. He shows up. He goes to candidate and faculty activities and parties and makes a special effort to engage with candidates. He presents at conferences and is a funny, thoughtful and integrative moderator of panel discussions. Funny he is, sometimes his humor goes to the heart of the matter, sometimes it is purely joyful and affectionate. His warmth and compassion are palpable, and his integrity is undeniable. He is

willing to say what many of us think cannot be said, and he does it with a quiet expression of his own understanding.

Currently, I hear, he is writing a contemporary mystery novel involving present day life within a psychoanalytic institute, replete with murder and undiscovered facts regarding Freud and psychoanalytic history. Now, at the risk of going on too long with too many obvious clues and undiscovered facts, and since most of you solved the mystery some time ago, I'll end here. It is with pleasure and gratitude that I present this award on behalf of the MIP community to **David Power**.