

CULTURE, ALCOHOL, AND SOCIETY QUARTERLY

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A Newsletter for members of KirkWorks—students whose research interests may connect with the materials available in the Kirk Collection housed by Brown University.

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Alcohol and Addiction Studies—A Guide to Resources at Brown University

Tovah Reis announces that Brown now has a Web site with information about the various collections in alcoholism and addiction studies. Check it out at:
<http://www.brown.edu/library/libs/hay/collections/kirk/index.html>

The Web site includes background information about the collections, links to finding aids and research tools, as well as to several articles about the collections.

This is a work in progress. The Web site will be updated as we continue processing the collections and developing new finding aids. In addition, we hope to continue digitizing material from the collections, where there is no copyright problem. To see an example of what this could mean for researchers click on “Alcohol, Temperance and Prohibition” under Digitized Projects.

We hope you find this site useful. If you need additional information about the site or the collections, please contact me via e-mail at Tovah_Reis@Brown.edu.

Member News

Jared Lobdell informs that his book—*This Strange Illness: Alcoholism and Bill W.*—is still awaiting approval from the Berlin HQ of Walter De Gruyter & Sons for publication by Aldine De Gruyter here in this country and in England. A prospectus for Jared's book may be found below.

Maria Swora happily reports obtaining a position as a new assistant professor of sociology (even though I am an anthropologist!) at Benedictine College, in Atchison, Kansas. I will be teaching cultural anthropology, introduction to sociology, and society and aging. Sadly, in the week before her departure for Kansas, Maria suffered an automobile accident in which her new car was struck and grievously injured. Maria herself, fortunately, was uninjured, as were the occupants of the other vehicle.

Maria's news continues: I have finished reading Bill White's *Slaying the Dragon*, and found it a rich, wonderful, piece of scholarship. It is obviously a labor of love and of the heart. As part of my research on sponsorship and social capital, I have started reading a book entitled *A Cry Unheard*, which is about the deadliness of loneliness, written by a cardiologist. As soon as I get to Kansas, I will be reading an anthology on the anthropology of friendship. I also have been corresponding with a sociologist who is researching roadside memorials. I cannot articulate this right now, but there is a connection between roadside memorials and social memory in A.A. If anybody encounters a really juicy, interesting memorial and can get a picture, let me know. Finally, I will be going to Brown in the summer (2004) to take up my Kirk Fellowship work. If any wish to reach Maria, her e-mail address remains maria_swora@yahoo.com.

Jim Swan Tuite, our marvelously adept *fac totum* during the first KirkWorks meeting, has moved to Connecticut where he will continue work on his dissertation as his wife completes hers at a small school in New Haven that rhymes with "jail."

Jim has been researching in the United Kingdom this summer, from where he informs: I am presently researching for my dissertation in the area moral practices. Although we could not meet this summer, I am hoping that we can get together again soon and share recent research on alcoholism and addiction. My own work this year focused mainly around a course taught to undergraduates at Brown entitled, "Therapies of Desire." During this course I work on several chapter drafts of a project I am presently entitling, "Christian Social Sources of A.A. Morality." Naturally, there are several interesting features of this narrative that are interesting to members of the religious studies guild. However, I hope the way in which I have chosen to tell the story interests folks in other disciplines. In teaching my class, I had the very good fortune to have some graduate students and professors audit the class and give feedback on the topics. Best to all.

Etta Madden writes that her essay on Benjamin Rush A. . . is with a publisher under the new title "To Make a Figure: Benjamin Rush's Self Construction and Narratives of Healing." The WIPS group is credited in the first note for their helpful suggestions. Also, the collection of essays entitled, *Eating in Eden: Food in American Utopias*, which I am co-editing with Martha Finch, should be off to a publisher by the end of the summer (hooray!). Finally, I'll be giving a presentation, Places of Faith: Geographies of Contemporary Women's Spiritual Narratives, at the Southwest Conference on

Christianity and Literature in late September. This presentation draws upon theories of narratives of healing, including those we discussed last summer, so the work continues in a contemporary vein.

Etta was one of the two who had planned to visit Brown University for our aborted Research Week. I am most hopeful that financial circumstances next year will allow her and many others to be able to make it next summer. Relatedly, please note the article by Trysh Travis, below, on her work in and impressions of the needs to the Kirk Collection.

Other News

Maureen Mooney, David Lewis's talented and generously hard-working secretary, has moved on to a position in the human services. I will miss her talent and dedication, but I am happy to report that **Victoria Patterson**, who has put this issue into its final form, seems a worthy successor.



Work in the Kirk Collection - Trysh Travis, Southern Methodist University

For April and May of 2003, I worked in the Kirk Collection at Brown. I'm grateful for the generous funding I received from a Kirk Fellowship, a John Nicholas Brown Fellowship in American Civilization, and the Sam Taylor Fellowship for Methodist College Faculty in Texas. The trip was a good one, and productive, though not exactly in the way that I'd planned.

As many of you know, what interests me in the Kirk Collection is its printed A.A. ephemera: pamphlets, booklets, newsletters, and journals published not by the A.A. GSO in New York, nor by professional publishers, but by local or regional A.A. groups and individuals. My hunch was that these publications filled a need/desire for reading material that the GSO could not or would not meet, a desire that was later (post >80s) met by professional and for-profit publishers. I wanted to spend time in the Kirk with this material to understand the conditions of its production and circulation, as well as to see how it carried the message.

This literature exists in the Kirk Collection, but in wild disarray. I think I'm not overstating the case to say that the Brown library has not known quite what to do with Charlie Bishop's collection. The materials that are easy to understand—books, some periodicals, a few trade journals from the 1980s and >90s—have been disaggregated from the collection and interfiled into the regular Brown catalogue, where they can be searched according to title, author, or collection name. Much of the rest of the collection (all the weirdest and best stuff, in my opinion) remains unprocessed. Working backwards from Bishop's dealer's inventory, I located the kinds of materials I wanted to see; the key then was finding them somewhere in the library, and this proved very time-consuming. The upshot of all this is that a lot of my time at Brown was spent going through unopened packing cartons that contained Charlie Bishop's working files, putting the contents into usable (alphabetical, chronological, generic) order, and then re-folding and re-boxing them, and writing up container descriptions so that other people (including the Hay library staff) would know what they contained. The work was interesting, and I enjoyed the sense of discovery, as well as power: anyone in recovery should be able to relate to the thrill of control-freakishness that attends upon creating an official order that others will have to follow. However, the work also was very time-consuming, and did not lead directly to my own research goals. I guess my ideal of efficient archival research includes looking through a finding aid, requesting boxed material, then going through the box a folder at a time, taking notes on what is germane to my own project. This was not that—at least, not until I had found the boxes, created the folders, and written the finding aid. Then, after about five weeks, I sat down and took a lot of useful notes.

I gave a presentation on my work to the librarians who comprise the Humanities Group at Brown. I'm not exactly sure how this is the case, but it seemed like the first time many of them had heard a coherent description of the Kirk Collection, or discussed who its users might be and what parts of the Collection might see the most use. They were grateful for the explanation, and excited to hear about the materials—frankly, I was shocked at how little they knew about the stuff, but it is actually not so surprising. Much of the Kirk falls within the purview of the Hay Library of Rare Books and Manuscripts. But the materials of the Kirk don't easily fit those categories. A few of its books are rare, but most of them are more accurately described as obscure, and while indeed Charlie Bishop's manuscripts are present, they don't have, well, the same

gravitas as the manuscript materials of say, F. Scott Fitzgerald or Dean Acheson. To librarians, archivists, and curators trained to recognize and deal with more traditional materials, much of the Kirk looks like a bunch of weird effluvia; in a situation where libraries are pressed for time and funding, the last thing that will get the attention of the staff is a bunch of messy papers that don't fit a well-established category, particularly if those papers relate to some strange, half-understood secret society that has little presence in the academic world. If they were all really old, and had been dignified by the passing of time, they might seem more worthy (and indeed, the 19th century temperance materials seem to have been carefully catalogued and boxed up), but recent paper artifacts just don't *look* that important, and that only adds to the problem.

In any case, I suggested to the Humanities Group that they seek funding for a project archivist—a temporary worker who would focus solely on processing the Kirk Collection, developing a cataloguing system for its many different parts, and writing a finding aid that described the different materials within it and explained how to find them within the various depositories in the Brown system. Given the kind of researchers the Kirk is liable to draw, this—not developing further title records, nor digitizing odd pages of old temperance songs—seemed the most efficient thing that the library could do to make the collection usable. Developing a strong cataloguing protocol for the Kirk materials would, as well, help the library to process the materials in new collections as they are added in, which is important, because this issue of not knowing what to make of A.A. and addiction-related paper ephemera is not going to go away. I would argue that before David Lewis spends any more money on acquiring new library materials, money needs to be spent on a project archivist to process the substantial collection that has already been amassed. Funds should not just be directed to the Hay staff. From what I saw of the way the library works, that will not be an efficient allocation of resources. No one will be taken away from what they are currently doing to work in a focused manner on the Kirk. Instead, “process the Kirk Collection” will just be added to someone's “to do” list, and little, if anything, will happen. Indeed, the manuscripts curator, who introduced me to the many unopened boxes of Kirk material in the Hay basement, flat out told me, “I will never process these materials.” So, lacking institutional resources AND will, I strongly suggested that an outside person (preferably with some knowledge of and/or interest in A.A.) be brought in to make sense of this fascinating jumble of material. It is not so huge that it can't be accomplished in a reasonable amount of time, and when it is done, the Kirk will be a terrific resource.

In the meantime, I have written a fairly descriptive article about the print ephemera that I found in the collection, which includes as an appendix a list (by title) of all the newsletter and pamphlet publications I found in the Kirk Collection, along with their container numbers. Print Culture in the A.A. Fellowship is slated to appear in the Summer 2003 issue of *Social History of Alcohol Review*.

Progress Notes from Bill White

The request to summarize my 2003 publications for the readers of the *Culture, Alcohol and Society Quarterly* provided an opportunity to ponder what I have been trying to accomplish recently through my writing. The work published in the past six months falls into two categories: 1) articles summarizing various research studies related to addiction treatment (my vocation), and 2) articles that try to use history to illuminate contemporary treatment and recovery movements (my avocation). The purposes of the former articles are to report and translate scientific research to front line service practitioners. It is the latter category of articles that will be of greatest interest to CA&SQ readers.

I have continued my long-running history column in *Counselor*—the primary trade journal for addiction counselors in the United States. Columns in 2003 have focused on the history of post-treatment aftercare, the history and future of substance use in the United States, and the historical roots of the anti-medication bias in addiction treatment. My favorite article was entitled “The Road Not Taken: The Lost Roots of Addiction Counseling.” This article describes the brief co-existence of two models of intervention into alcohol problems in the 1960s and early 1970s: a community development model (exemplified within states like Iowa and in the OEO anti-poverty programs) and a biomedical model (exemplified in the newly funded NIAAA programs). While the field of addiction treatment became dominated by the latter model, the paper argues that there was much of value within the community development model that needs to be rediscovered. It calls for reconnecting addiction treatment to the larger and more enduring process of recovery, and it calls upon treatment programs to get re-involved in the grassroots communities out of which they were born. In a similar vein, the aftercare article calls for shifting the focus of addiction treatment from acute stabilization to a sustained process of recovery management, e.g., monitoring with feedback and support, stage-appropriate recovery education, active linkage to indigenous communities of recovery, recovery community resource development, and, when needed, early re-intervention. This series is part of my collection of “change the world papers”—a hopefully engaging blend of history and policy advocacy. It also reflects a style of journalistic activism that draws both praise and criticism.

The second cluster of articles is part of a photographic essay series I am writing for the journal, *Addiction*. The second and third of these essays address the history of medicinal specifics as addiction cures in the United States and the history of addiction recovery mutual aid societies as an international phenomenon. Each essay is accompanied by twelve photographs that visually help tell the story of the topic. When I was approached to do this photographic essay series, it sounded like a great idea. What I had grossly underestimated was the time, complex legal issues, and expense involved in locating and getting approval for the use of photographs. In spite of this miscalculation, there is something special about seeing the faces of the founding members of the Washingtonian society or to see the advertisements for the alcohol-, opium-, morphine- and cocaine-laced bottled addiction cures. I have come to appreciate that pictures can tell a story in a way that words cannot.

Tom McGovern and I edited a just-released book, *Alcohol Problems in the United States: Twenty Years of Treatment Perspective* (New York: Haworth Press), that includes several articles that I co-authored. One article, by Don Coyhis and myself (“Alcohol problems in Native America: Changing paradigms and clinical practices”), summarizes some of our research on the history of recovery among Native American tribes and

reviews the Indianization of A.A. and the larger Wellbriety Movement in Indian Country. Tom McGovern and I also risk making fools of ourselves by making 22 predictions in a concluding essay about the future of addiction treatment in the United States.

The final major project that was just completed was a paper with Bob Savage entitled "All in the Family: Addiction, Recovery, Advocacy." This paper traces the history of popular and professional attitudes toward the family members of alcoholic and addicts, notes the growing involvement of family members in the new recovery advocacy movement (see my papers on this movement at www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org), and then highlights the findings of six focus groups conducted with family members who are involved with local recovery advocacy organizations. The paper is posted at www.bhrm.org and will soon be posted at www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org and other recovery advocacy web sites.

Comparing this list with the publications of other CA&SQ readers underscores what a diverse group we have assembled around the Kirk Collection at Brown University. It has been a real gift to have such a pool of wide-ranging experience and expertise to draw upon.



Study of Community Participation by Members of A.A., N.A. and G.A. Linda Farris Kurtz

In 1999 through 2000, Michael Fisher and I conducted a small, qualitative study of the possible influence of 12-Step group membership on the community involvement of 33 individuals who were members. Michael Fisher is a full-time community organizer and social activist in Detroit. As such, he interacts with numerous 12-Steppers who are involved in various community organizations that seek to reduce drug use and increase the economic and social viability of the inner city. We were both interested in how 12-Step membership influenced these individuals' community work and whether they saw their recovery affected in some way by it. Our study began with jointly constructing an interview schedule and testing it on the first person in our sample. We went on to interview 10 Narcotics Anonymous members in summer of 1999. All of these people were African-American or Mexican-American inner-city residents. In summer of 2000, interviews branched out to include persons living in the Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti area and in Toledo, Ohio. These interviews included five additional N.A. members, 17 A.A. members, and 1 Gamblers Anonymous member. All of the individuals were active in civic associations, grass-roots community, professional, church and political activity.

After the conclusion of this study, I prepared two articles for publication—an early version of one was presented at the Works In Progress seminar in June 2002. This article has since been published as follows: Kurtz, L.F. & Fisher, M. (2003). Twelve-Step Recovery and Community Service. *Health and Social Work, 28* (2), 137-145. It summarizes the findings as a whole and is introduced with a summary of the various myths associated with 12-Step fellowships. I quote from its introduction:

...social workers and other professionals show hesitation about these groups because of popular myths...Many of these myths have been challenged by researchers. For example, the concerns that A.A. is not helpful to women...that A.A is not appropriate for African-Americans, and that A.A. is ineffective for people who are not religious.

This article focuses on another myth about 12-Step fellowships, one that has not yet been investigated—that participants in such groups immerse themselves in closed recovery systems that discourage reintegration with the wider community and form a barrier to personal and political empowerment (p. 137, citations omitted).

Because of the way we selected our sample, a controlled snowball only of people who were involved in the community, we cannot address whether or not our findings are true for most members. But we were able to get some idea of how the recovery process influenced the involvement of these individuals and how they saw their community involvement as affecting their recovery. We concluded this article as follows:

Most of our 12-Step participants who were involved in community activities believed that fellowship participation encouraged community involvement and did not discourage it, although there were some exceptions. These findings suggest further study of community involvement by people in recovery—especially interesting would be discussions with recovering people who are more representative of the general membership and not explicitly those chosen for their involvement. Also of interest would be study of the

nature and extent of 12-Step service activity within the fellowship, how prevalent this is, and how this work impacts recovery (p. 144).

The second report of this study is still under review by an international journal on drug problems. This article is more detailed, summarizing criticisms of 12-Step fellowships and contrasting experiences of community-involved members of A.A. with similar members of N.A. The N.A. sample differed from the A.A. sample as follows: N.A. activities included such things as participation in neighborhood associations, block clubs, park cleanup committees, and a Citizen's Band Radio patrol. A.A. respondents, on the other hand, were more often involved in more established civic groups like the Goodfellows, Rotary Club, and the Chamber of Commerce. N.A. members had less time in their fellowship and perceived their activity as relating to skills and encouragement they found in it. A.A. members were very long-term participants who saw their community work as one way of giving back what they had been given by their 12-Step recovery. A.A. subjects had participated for an average of 20.7 years in the fellowship; N.A. members had an average of 9.1 years of participation. It was interesting that the majority of organizational contexts mentioned by respondents in both fellowships were not primarily drug related, meaning that they were not agencies whose sole purpose was to address substance abuse problems in the community, but rather were generic community organizations that worked toward a variety of goals. We also found that the majority of our interviewees had not become involved in community service activity until *after* they began their recovery process. This lends support to their recollections that the 12-Step fellowship was the springboard for branching into other areas of civic participation.

The editor of the second journal has requested revisions and these were submitted in June 2003, so I am hopeful for its publication. I will keep you posted on its progress.



**Review Essay: Two New Books on Alcoholism Legislation and Treatment
Glenn Chesnut**

**Nancy Olson, *With a Lot of Help from Our Friends* (March 2003), and
Sgt. Bill S., *On the Military Firing Line in the Alcoholism Treatment Program*
(July 2003).**

I have been greatly privileged to be involved with the production of these two books, and I am grateful for the opportunity to write a few words explaining why I think they are important contributions to the field. There is in fact a third book that ought to be read in conjunction with these two works: Sally and David Brown's *A Biography of Mrs. Marty Mann* (2001). Taken together, they form a sort of triptych, giving us three different (but related) views into what I have termed the activist wing of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement.

Most of what has been written about the institutional role of A.A. in twentieth-century American history has focused on the groups themselves, their national organization, and the way in which the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts allowed a movement to spread and flourish in spite of a commitment to institutional poverty, non-involvement with other institutions, and the refusal to accept outside donations or to make public speeches or pronouncements in the name of the organization. Yet a study of the full impact of the movement on American society must also look at members of the group who formed what I have termed the activist wing. I do not mean to imply by this term that they became involved in direct attempts to affect anything except alcohol-related issues, although in this area they had a major impact on legislation, social policies, and the establishment of treatment and educational programs. I have found no evidence of efforts to produce a direct effect on any other American social or political issues, in areas such as racism, sexism, poverty, foreign wars, or any other of the great national political battlegrounds, unless these issues came up in their attempts to provide even-handed access to treatment for all alcoholics, in which cases they usually came out as far more liberal than the national norm, and usually recognized the need to help disadvantaged groups far earlier in the century than most American institutions.

It is important to recognize that the A.A. movement has not necessarily been so quietistic and completely inward-turning as we are sometimes led into believing. Its membership, spread anonymously and silently through all levels of American society, pervaded every aspect of the social fabric, and many members were more than willing to take organized, highly aggressive action when they felt that the cause was right.

* * *

Olson's book is a chronicle of what went on in the U.S. Congress between roughly 1970 and 1980, the most important decade in alcohol legislation since the Prohibition period, written by someone who was a participant in these events herself, but who also carried out many years of research in government documents filling out the story in enormous detail (460 endnotes and a fourteen-page bibliography). As a senior congressional aide, she was personal friends with Senator Hughes, Mrs. Marty Mann, and a number of other major A.A. figures from that period.

The way America attempted to deal with alcoholism changed drastically during this period, and although some of the noble efforts of those years have been undone, the

face of alcoholism education and treatment remains permanently altered. Mrs. Marty Mann and Senator Harold Hughes won their fundamental battle.

In the pages of Olson's book, we witness the struggle going on within the top levels of the U.S. government to see who could control and/or co-opt alcoholism programs, a continuous battle between a variety of powerful interest groups: diehard proponents of the old moralistic and punitive approach to alcoholism, the psychiatrists and mental health professionals (most of whom during that period had their own schemes for trying to deal with the problem and/or had other causes to which they wished to divert the attention and the funds), people who saw the problem of drug addiction as the more important and sexier public health issue, and the alcoholic beverage industry's powerful lobbyists (who could distribute enormous cash rewards to those who would argue for or carry out the kind of research and education that would not seriously affect the industry's revenues).

Then there were the A.A. members, whose quiet, anonymous presence was spread through an incredible range of different levels of government. These had come to realize that they were not violating the Twelve Traditions if they stood up and announced that they were themselves recovered alcoholics who were fighting for some piece of legislation, so long as they never mentioned their A.A. membership or attempted to appear as public spokesmen for that program. They also could bring in acknowledged A.A. members to help argue their case as long as they introduced them on first-name basis only and kept the television cameras away from their faces.

Olson describes how the recovered alcoholics in Washington began quietly meeting together and coordinating their efforts to turn the legislative process in directions that their experience suggested would provide far better help for still-suffering alcoholics. They were enormously successful in the short term, and even after Ronald Reagan was elected president—a political event that wiped out much of their carefully organized congressional infrastructure and produced a government far less interested in social causes of any sort—the basic approach to alcoholism education and treatment in the United States nevertheless still bears the marks of their reforms, over twenty years later.

Olson's book gives us a solid picture not just of the passing of the Hughes Act itself but of the battle to implement it effectively during the years that followed by keeping the funding going and fighting to get the legislative provisions actually applied in practice. Along the way, she also offers insights into the struggle for greater rights for Native Americans and women and describes the controlled drinking controversy aroused by the Rand Report as well as the fight to put warning labels on alcoholic beverages—an issue in which she and her group had never wanted to become involved and one that ended up nearly unraveling the carefully assembled group of A.A. supporters and that brought on powerful attacks against her own person.

Her book provides an excellent starting point and a number of fruitful ideas for many other research projects that might be carried out by historians, sociologists, political scientists, and others who are interested in alcoholism or self-help groups. I believe that this is one of the most valuable additional contributions of her work: to point the way for further research into fascinating areas that scholars may not have considered before.

[Ernie Kurtz wishes to add one comment to Glenn's report: It has been noted that two processes no one should ever be forced to witness in all their detail are the making

of sausages and of legislation. Nancy's book told me far more about the latter than I ever wished to know, but I found the story fascinating as well as enlightening.]

* * *

Sgt. Bill's book, as its title indicates, gives a first-hand look into the attempt to carry out many of these reforms within the U.S. military. A personal friend and protégé of Mrs. Marty Mann and Yev Gardner (her right-hand man), Bill also was close, at other periods of his life, to E. M. Jellinek and the other members of the Yale School of Alcohol Studies, and to Sister Ignatia at St. Thomas Hospital in Akron. A Pearl Harbor survivor, he ran through the flying shrapnel and strafing bullets watching men falling and dying all around him, but did not stop drinking until he found the Alcoholics Anonymous program after the war was over. A dedicated A.A. member, on the fifth of July 2003 he celebrated his fifty-fifth year of sobriety.

Bill is the father of modern military alcoholism treatment, the man who managed to get the Air Force to appoint him full time to setting up alcoholism treatment programs, first at Mitchell Air Force Base on Long Island in 1948, and during the early 1950's at the huge Lackland Air Force base in San Antonio, where he and a talented young psychiatrist were able to obtain a very well documented fifty-percent success rate. Their work was published as Louis Jolyon West, M.D., and William H. S_____, An Approach to Alcoholism in the Military Service, *American Journal of Psychiatry* 112, no. 12 (June 1956), which Marty Mann subsequently printed and distributed nationally under the imprint of the National Council on Alcoholism. Sgt. Bill was later able to set up excellent treatment programs for the Navy, which in 1983 honored him with the Meritorious Service Award, the Navy's highest award for a civilian. The kind of treatment center and treatment philosophy that he devised can still serve as an excellent model, not just for military installations, but for many other kinds of institutional environments. In fact, many of his observations should be taken seriously and applied in any kind of alcoholism and drug treatment program.

Jolly West, the young psychiatrist with whom Sgt. Bill teamed up at Lackland, later became Professor and Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry & Biobehavioral Sciences at the University of California, Los Angeles; Psychiatrist-in-Chief at the UCLA Hospital & Clinics; and Director of the Neuropsychiatric Institute at the UCLA Center for the Health Sciences. West continued his contact with Bill and described the old sergeant in later years as a genuine professional whose thoughtful observations and plain talk shine like a candle in the dark, a man who was a hero in the war against alcohol, the great destroyer.

In Sgt. Bill's book, one can see all the warring and hostile special interest groups that Olson's book describes, fighting it out on the firing line. These were not battles fought only within the halls of Congress. Reading his book along with hers gives a fuller perspective on the enormous political and social forces contesting in the United States from the close of the Second World War down to the end of the Vietnam War period.

But his book is much more than that. It is well known that one wing of the A.A. movement, from almost the very beginning, was wary of heavily religious language, fearing that the fellowship might be taken over by either the Oxford Group people and the conservative Protestant evangelicals, or by the Catholic wing of the movement (including the friends of Sister Ignatia and Father Ed Dowling, as well as the supporters

of Ralph Pfau, who wrote the Golden Books under the pseudonym of Father John Doe and spent years leading A.A.-oriented spiritual retreats all over the United States and Canada).

Sgt. Bill is the first articulate spokesman whom I have discovered for the non-religious wing of the early A.A. movement. His book enables one to see the power of their alternate approach, and his success rate in getting alcoholics to stop drinking and gain some real serenity of life makes it clearer why the early A.A.s were unwilling to exclude these people from the movement—why, in fact, they ended up respecting them profoundly. A number of good old-timers have read pre-publication manuscripts of the book, and have put their seal of approval on it with delight, as a very well stated explanation of how and why that kind of old-time A.A. worked so well.

Bill dismisses truculent atheists brusquely. In his view and experience, when someone is still fighting with God in that fashion, it is *prima facie* evidence that they have serious psychological problems about something else: one or both of their parents, other authority figures, control neuroses, attempts to bolster a badly-battered sense of self-worth, or something else of that sort. Good psychotherapy deals with the real source of the problem, not the patients' attempts to project their own personal fears and hostilities onto cosmic figures in mythical fashion.

Most alcoholics (though not all) are deeply affected, he argues, by subconscious conflicts that go back to their childhoods, which (along with physiological addiction and often genetic tendencies as well) helps drive them to drink. Alcohol depresses the level of inhibitions, and appears to give relief from the pressures that have built up below the conscious level. Part of the function of the fourth step is to raise these issues up to the conscious level so they can be dealt with more adequately. Although he speaks a good deal about guilt and the subconscious, his system is not at all an orthodox Freudian one. One can see the direct or indirect influence on his ideas for example, of the Neo-Freudians Erich Fromm, Karen Horney, and Erik Erikson, all of whom emphasized the importance of social and cultural influences on psychological development. Excessive feelings of isolation, these revisers suggested, can play a major role in psychological disorders. The Austrian physician Alfred Adler also stressed developing interest in others and participation in society as an important goal of therapy, along with learning better ways of interacting with other family members. Like many therapists in the United States, Bill S. utilized an eclectic approach, but he was especially sensitive to the way in which sociological pressures could create people who turned to alcohol for self-medication.

Running counter to recent fads, Bill S. insists that one does not need to come from a dysfunctional family in order to develop severe psychological problems. Being a minority, or different, or simply coming from a family that does not know how to prepare its offspring adequately for the American educational system: any of these can plunge children into serious psychological difficulties during their school years. His observations are especially illuminating with respect to groups for which he felt large sympathy—blacks, Hispanics, and women—but can be applied to many other types of children as well, including Native Americans, Asians, Jews, Muslims, and also (lest we forget) extremely talented and intelligent children, who can be attacked and ridiculed by their peers on an almost daily basis during a highly formative period of their lives.

Although he talks extensively about the need to trace one's inner conflicts back to childhood, Sgt. Bill is not a proponent of the cheap pop psychology attempts to recover

the Inner Child. Basic personality cannot be changed, but character formation (as in the sixth step's reference to character defects) can teach us to compensate for the traumatic holes in our psyches created by the traumas of the past, even though it cannot remove these holes and scars. Therapy needs to work at strengthening the person's ego defenses, and A.A. sponsors and groups need to perform a kind of re-parenting in which they teach new members how to deal at a more adult level with frustration, criticism, delayed gratification, the requirements of socially acceptable ways of speaking and acting, and the responsibilities of adult behavior both in the family and on the job.

Sgt. Bill (who now lives in Sonoma, just north of San Francisco Bay) also details what is actually meant by the well-known California A.A. phrase that speaks of alcoholism as a disease of perception. He lays out a cognitive theory of perception, showing how the cognitive framework that our minds have assembled to interpret events can cause two different people to see the same surface events in wildly dissimilar fashion. Part of the healing process in the A.A. program, he argues, comes from the initial insight (his interpretation of the first step), which causes the alcoholic's old cognitive framework to come crashing down, and the process by which the alcoholic develops fuller and richer awareness of the world (and also other people's different perspectives). This enables the alcoholic to function with greater awareness and less external conflict, by beginning to develop a more adequate cognitive framework for interpreting sense data and the world around us. We learn to make peace with our pasts, and remove the tyranny that continual guilt has held over our minds.

Bill notes nakedly that human beings want to feel good, which is an extremely healthy way to get at problems of guilt, remorse, continual anger, anxiety, and a host of other psychological ills. If we want to feel good, then we will need to change both the way we think *and also* the way we act. There are no cheap cures.

The earlier parts of Bill's book are heavily autobiographical. This is not just a nostalgic trip into small town Ohio life in early twentieth-century America. This is the place where you can see, in very concrete fashion, what Sgt. Bill is talking about when he speaks later on at the theoretical level about total alienation, refusal to cooperate in groups, hypersensitivity to anything which could be regarded as humiliation, guilt, self-sabotage, and a host of other issues.

It is also a fascinating illustration of the way in which a good A.A. lead can represent a re-scripting of one's life story. The psychiatrist Eric Berne helped to introduce the concept of the life script, and the way a negative life script formed during childhood can lead a patient inexorably to self-destruction—see for example, his book *What Do You Say After You Say Hello? The Psychology of Human Destiny* (Grove Press, 1972).

Bill refuses to get involved in the analytical aspects of Berne's work. What he does show, in the retelling of his own life story, is that *one can change the way the story will end*. He takes the story of a boy whose mother died when he was young, who ended up with a stepmother to whom he could not relate and an abusive older stepbrother, the story of a young man who later joined the Army Air Corps because he could not hold a job in the civilian world, who almost died at Pearl Harbor and later (of disease) from his subsequent military assignment to the jungles of New Guinea, whose life seemed doomed to destruction by continual acts of compulsive self-sabotage—but who learned how to alter his perceptions of the past and reshape his life by a totally different script, a new script that dealt with a desire to help other people. Trauma is transmuted into

compassion. The new symbol for Bill becomes the big silver dollar that he still always carries in his pocket, the one given him by Mary the WAF, one of the first people whose lives he saved by his newfound ability to *listen* with the ears of compassion. In a way that seems almost magical, a story of tragic doom is transformed into a story about one of life's real winners.

We human beings want to feel good—it is that simple—but part of that means learning to retell the story of our lives from the level of a new and higher perception of what all those events *mean*. This is the cognitive restructuring and a confrontation with the problem of meaning that the existentialist psychiatrist Victor Frankl discussed in *Man's Search for Meaning* (Washington Square Press, 1963), a translation of his *Ein Psycholog erlebt das Konzentrationslager* [*A Psychologist Experiences the Concentration Camp*], (Austria, 1946).

Just as with the Olson book, I believe this volume can serve as a source for some highly fruitful ideas for modern researchers to explore, dealing both with the psychological aspects of alcoholism treatment and with the theory of narrative and autobiography. From the philosophical and epistemological standpoint, Sgt. Bill's theory of alcoholism as a disease of perception fits well into a post-Kantian philosophical framework. For example, his demonstration of how a life can be re-scripted could be connected with the role of the project (*Entwurf*) in Heideggerian existentialism, and the way in which the ultimate for-the-sake-of-which (*Worumwillen*) that is adopted shapes not only *Dasein* (the human subject's Being as primordially here and now) but also the actual ontological structure of his or her World. If we choose a different project or underlying design for our lives, a new and different for-the-sake-of-which to shape our other strivings, the New Being emerges as the World in which we live is reconstituted at every level of thought and feeling.

I have learned a good deal from working on both of these books. It has been a rare privilege for me to have been allowed to be so closely associated with them, and with their authors. By reading these two books in conjunction with Sally and David Brown's biography of Marty Mann, I was introduced to a whole new world, a dimension of the early A.A. movement that I had never seen laid out in print before. I recommend them heartily to researchers on alcoholism and the impact of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement on American history.

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**Joyous Garde to Minnesota Model:
An Interim Report on Research on Mid-Atlantic A.A. History
Jared Lobdell**

In what did the Coming of Age of Alcoholics Anonymous, proclaimed at its twentieth anniversary convention held in St. Louis on 1955, consist? Four approaches to this question suggest themselves.

First, we might re-examine the historical data, focusing on a technical analysis of change and development in a social-systems context. This pretty remains to be done, though I have in hand a longer work that at least touches on it (*This Strange Illness: Alcoholism and Bill W.*¹).

Second, we might study the generation of the founders, A.A.'s Giants in the Earth, the legendary old timers of the Golden Time before and right after the publication of the A.A. Big Book, those who carried the message of A.A. in the time from the mid-1930s through the mid-1940s (if they lived that long). This has been called—perhaps sarcastically, perhaps not—The Age of the Apostles.

Third, we might examine the too often neglected third generation, some of whom may have gotten sober before the Big Book, but who likewise carried the message more than fifty years ago. Such studies will be more locally-oriented and will get us into comparative local studies. This might be called the Post-Apostolic Age.

Fourth and finally, we can look at the newcomers of the 1950s, those who, I would argue, began the re-creation of A.A., possibly along lines inherent in Bill W.'s vision, probably not in congruence with the differently-aimed vision of Dr. Bob S. (These are the only two I will identify here by the usual A.A. mode of first name and last initial: in what follows I will employ Jack Alexander's practice of using pseudonyms.)

* * *

This brief note is a Progress Report touching on the latter three items, focusing on the Middle Atlantic states, especially eastern Pennsylvania. It includes some new information on one of the founders, whom we will call Fitzhugh Malley, who was the first person Bill brought into permanent sobriety in New York and who came down from New York to help Jimmy Bridges establish A.A. in Philadelphia. My next progress report will include additional information on Fitz. For the present, here is what I have found, with a suggestion of the significance I attach to it. My informant is Fitz's nephew-by-marriage, a retired officer of the U. S. Navy, now 86 years old, who had been a pupil of Fitz's when Fitz was teaching at a prep school in Virginia, and who visited Fitz and his wife the summer before the nephew entered the Naval Academy in 1935. I draw also on my meeting with Fitz's sister Agnes, in a different context, in Washington DC in the 1970s, before I knew much about A.A. or anything at all about Fitzhugh Malley.

When William Carter Davie was a child, he lived with his Carter grandparents in Norfolk, Virginia, and attended Norfolk Academy, where Fitzhugh Malley, the

¹ To be published later this year by Aldine De Gruyter.

husband of his Aunt Libby (Elizabeth Davie Malley) was the history and math teacher. Davie told me how his grandfather would read aloud to him so late at night that his grandmother would intervene and tell him it was time for the boy to go to bed. Davie recalls that thus hearing *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Ivanhoe*, and *King Arthur*. When young William went from Norfolk Academy to Episcopal High School, he had an English teacher who continued his education in English literature, including *King Arthur*. This may have been the same teacher—it was certainly the same school—that opened Fitz’s mind to *King Arthur*, when he was a student there just before the First World War.

Although born in New Jersey, where his father had a church, Fitzhugh Malley was a southern gentleman in whom the idea of southern chivalry, and of the chivalry of *King Arthur* and the Knights of the Table Round (and the Company of Joyous Garde), was alive and well. It is easy to imagine the members of A.A. in the first years as the Knights of Joyous Garde, traveling the country to slay the dragon of alcoholism.

Fitz and his wife, Libby, had three children, two daughters and a son. Libby died in 1984: her death certificate bears the notation divorced. The family records, at the time I got in touch with Libby’s sister’s family, showed Fitz’s death in 1971. His gravestone shows it in 1943. When I had lunch with Fitz’s sister Agnes in the 1970s, we were joined by her old friend Eleanor Lansing Dulles (actual name), and the conversation included mention of Agnes’s brother, Fitz, in connection with Eleanor’s brother Allen, first of the O.S.S. and then of the C.I.A, where he was the long-time Director. It is known that Fitz had a government job in 1942-43. It is also known that the O.S.S. at the time recruited prep-school teachers and college professors. Some day a researcher may wish to investigate whether Fitz’s likely vision of the Knights of Joyous Garde and his early A.A. missionary work in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington may deserve more attention. If so, part of understanding of what Fitz was really like or what made him tick may include finding out what he did for the government, and when.

Another aspect of this missionary period worth investigating is the group of early members who were already sober through other means when the first members brought A.A. to their cities. We have records of at least three, one each in Philadelphia, Detroit, and Baltimore. There are likely others. In Philadelphia, James Payne Lawrence got sober under the treatment of Dr. Dudley Saul in 1938, before A.A. arrived in 1940 through those I call Jimmy Bridges and Fitz Malley. Detroit saw Mike Entenmann get sober through the Salvation Army, before A.A.’s arrival through the member I will call Arthur Strobridge. John Rising of Baltimore got sober through the Keswick Colony before A.A. came to Baltimore through those who brought it to Philadelphia. James Payne Lawrence was sober in Philadelphia long after Jimmy Bridges left in 1946, and Mike Entenmann was sober in Detroit long after Arthur Strobridge died in 1956. But John Rising died in 1946, and there was no long-time number “2” in Baltimore as there was in Philadelphia or Detroit, to take over when the number “1”—the local founder—died or moved.

* * *

On the matter of the third A.A. generation, I have some data to add to my previous report on *The Colonel, The Captain, and The Lieutenant* in *CA&SQ*, vol 1, no. 2. Researching other local founders, I discovered George Richards in Jenkintown, George Littleton in Reading, Dick Caton in Reading, George Lovcraft in Scranton, and Horace Holley in Williamsport. Also, John Bee of Bethlehem described for me the member I have called Colonel Robert S. A. Donnelley. The Colonel was well over six feet six and

weighed well over three hundred pounds. No wonder he was worried about being seen going to meetings in the early days in Bethlehem: it would have been difficult to miss seeing him!

According to Dick Caton's daughter, Sally, Alcoholics Anonymous was started in the Reading area by George Littleton in April 1943. The initial meeting was held in a private home in Lincoln Park, the T. T. Norcross house, for approximately one year, when the group rented a meeting room at 613 Penn St. In 1948 they moved adjacent to the railroad tracks (7th St) between Penn and Franklin Streets, above the Delta Hosiery Store. This may explain why George was remembered by old-timers Chet Hilton in Harrisburg and Eddie O'Brien in Allentown as the sock salesman. In about 1953, the group moved to 26 N. 6th Street.

In 1943, Sally told me, George was having family troubles because of his drinking. While traveling to Philadelphia on the train, he read a love-lorn column in the newspaper. A man had written to the columnist describing how he had family problems, but telling how after becoming a member of A.A., things worked out for the better. When George arrived in Philadelphia, he called A.A. George went to meetings in Philadelphia twice a week for approximately six months. He then became involved with another alcoholic in the Reading area [T. T. Norcross], and they started the meetings at his home. (Note the train ride in war-time. Horace Holley used to ride down to meetings in Harrisburg on the train before and during the early days of A.A. in Williamsport, founding date 1943.)

In about March of 1953, Dick Caton, along with Bob Prescott and subsequently Freddie Bickford, entered the area from the Midwest with Hazelden influence i.e., the stressing of the Steps and daily programs they learned at the rehabilitation center. Up to this time, meetings at Reading generally consisted of life story type meetings i.e., how much and where I drank, how I got into A.A., and how I am maintaining my sobriety (by 12th-stepping and attending meetings). On the other hand, Dick and the other so-called mid-westerners believed strongly in discussing the 12 Steps at meetings and using the squad system. The squad system is to divide an A.A. group into smaller groups for better discussion of the 12 Steps. Imposition of the squad system led to some dissension: the original 6th Street members objected to these new ideas. During 1957-58, in order to bridge the gap caused by the split between the 6th Street members and the Midwest group members, A.A. meetings were exchanged once a month between 6th Street and Franklin Street. This did not last, and in the Reading area, the mid-westerners emerged victorious. Dick Caton had already become Delegate from Eastern Pennsylvania in 1955-56, and though his two successors were Horace Holley and Eddie Hall, who had already been active in the A.A. service structure before he came on the scene, every subsequent Delegate until Dick's death in the early mid-1970s, and most of those thereafter, were in his mold and his tradition. Poor George Littleton lived on in Reading until the age of 94 in 2001, but he disappears from the record in 1981, sober then 38 years.

* * *

Moving on to the topic of the newcomers of the 1950s, I have found what I consider a key to a momentous change in the structure of Alcoholics Anonymous, at least on the local level of eastern Pennsylvania. This is a run of a little over four months (August 20–December 31, 1954) of a weekly mimeographed news-sheet, running to several pages each week, circulated by Dick Caton of Reading to his A.A. friends. Most copies were distributed in Eastern Pennsylvania, though some went to places he had lived

before coming to Reading. The very first of these details the General Service Representative Plan adopted by the 1954 General Service Conference, and urges Dick's readers: "Please have an election -- Write the Foundation with the name, address, and phone number of your General Service Representative -- DO IT NOW!"

The weekly issues include notes of places and people visited or visiting (first names and last initials only), names of correspondents (same form), a pep talk for Hazelden, where Dick Caton had recently gotten sober, occasional verses, one liners, notice of the Reading 10th Anniversary Banquet, and a second plea (October 29) for the election of a General Service Representative for each group, noting Elect your Representative for Sunday, November 21st, at Reading PA for the selection of the next Area Delegate to succeed Aaron B. (the Aaron Baldrige of our earlier article). Forty-one cities and towns are listed as having A.A. groups. On November 5, 1954, there is a notice for Intergroup Meetings, which are not what is now meant by an Intergroup, but a meeting of the group(s) from Lancaster with the group(s) from Gettysburg at Gettysburg, the group(s) from Berks (Reading) with the group(s) from Lebanon at Lebanon, and so on. These went on in this region into the 1990s.

The December 3, 1954, issue gives the results of the election at the special meeting at Reading on November 21, 1954, and we are not surprised to find that the newly-elected Delegate is Dick Caton. This represents a major change in the nature of the Delegate, from being someone appointed or at least chosen (for all practical purposes) by Bill W., as (I believe) Aaron Baldrige was chosen on Yev Granger's recommendation for 1953-54, or George Richards on James Payne Lawrence's for 1951-52, to being someone elected after what amounted to an election campaign. Whether that was true in other areas at the time, this seems the model, the fore-runner, the archetype of present A.A. structure.

In any case, it may be there is an instructive contrast between Fitz Malley's Joyous Garde, and Dick Caton's Minnesota Model study groups and folksy politicking by mimeograph. It connects with the establishment of a more formal approach. Alcoholics Anonymous, like any social system based on charismatic revelation, is necessarily subject to what Max Weber called the routinization of the charisma, and that is what we have here. From the charismatic Fitz Malley, romantic, southern friend, southern gentleman, Knight of Joyous Garde, to the well-organized Dick Caton, with his Hazelden sobriety, Minnesota Model, rehab and halfway house (but still a true believer in the Twelve Steps) seems a long time and a far cry. In the chronology of Eastern Pennsylvania, this took only the time from Bill W.'s and Dr. Bob S.'s 1935 meeting in Akron to A.A.'s 1955 Coming of Age convention.

Prospectus for *This Strange Illness: Alcoholism and Bill W.*
Jared Lobdell

Just under 70 years ago, an American salesman and stock analyst and drunk generally known as Bill W. came up with an analysis of alcoholism as a “disease of mind, body, and spirit” with a treatment based on “Twelve Steps” toward sobriety in a society or fellowship eventually named Alcoholics Anonymous. A few years later, he established a set of “Twelve Traditions” for the ordering and preservation of this society. Bill W. found a way of defining this illness of mind, body, and spirit, so that illness and treatment were congruent and reinforcing. Current best knowledge tells us his insights were right. This book sets out our current best knowledge on alcoholism and suggests a “scientific research program” for the nature and history of alcoholism and thus Bill W.’s achievement.

Chapter I looks at episodes in the history of alcoholism and in conversion and treatment for alcoholism, from early times to 1934–1935. Chapter II looks at the formation of Alcoholics Anonymous, in the “Golden Moment” lasting roughly from 1935 to 1940 and particularly at Bill W. and a few more of the first one hundred members. The purpose here is to put what happened in the Golden Moment in the context of the study and treatment of alcoholism up to 1935. This leads us to consider the possibility of different types of alcoholism, as well as processes of change in humans and in social systems. Chapter III considers possible types of alcoholism, beginning with those proposed by E. M. Jellinek. We suggest a modification of Jellinek’s types to provide a basis for examining genotypic variants of alcoholism. We come up with four principal variants as a basis for future study. And we note the recent theoretical advances on the process of change, backing up to the molecular level, then jumping forward to the human, noting that in all biospheres, we tell stories to understand the oriented actions of agents in their worlds. This process characterizes all living things, but happens with humans in a way it had never happened before, with mind and speech.

The news that alcoholism was both a mental and a bodily illness was apparently what freed early members of A.A. from their hopelessness. It is important, for our purposes, to establish that the good news was in fact true. Chapter IV looks at the illness of the mind and its cures or ameliorations, concentrating on the stages when the child develops the capacity for logical and realistic thinking, for sound appraisals of self and others and of relationships, through narrative. On the question of healing narrative, we note that psycho-dynamic narrative is a complex interwoven tale, along Freudian lines, intertwining themes from the patient’s past with themes from the treatment itself, the emphasis falling on the treatment. This links in Chapter V to the theory of neuronal group selection: through behavioral (or extended phenotypic) engagement with the external world, some synaptic connections are promoted through use and thus strengthened, others neglected and thus weakened. In other words, mind and genes both act to determine behavior. We review current knowledge on the way alcohol sends signals to the brain, and the way it alters the body. We look at the mechanics of heritable diseases, allergies, or predispositions, the development of pattern in the brain, and the biochemistry of memory, considering memory as a species of neuroadaptation.

Chapter VI looks at the theological underpinnings of our inquiry, setting sobriety as a temporal model for salvation. We consider what we may call the Disease Concept of Sin, which has certain obvious (but neglected) links with the Disease Concept of Alcoholism. We look at the Johannine Doctrine of the Incarnation, and at the Doctrine of Grace and the Sacrament of the Word. We do this not because the Oxford Groups (and thus early A.A.) did it, but as part of our research program, because this is the theology attached to the moment they wanted to re-create. Then Chapter VII looks at how A.A. appears to us to work, concentrating on the Twelve Steps. The Steps are spiritual exercises: they provide a spiritual answer to a physical and mental illness. Earlier ages would have called it a religious answer, and, of course, the ordinary course of the explorer who has found a new religious territory (or a new religious answer) is to found a Church. Unless, like Francis of Assisi (or Ignatius Loyola) he founds a society or a company. That is what Bill W. did, and that is what Chapter VIII is about. That is, Chapter VIII discusses Alcoholics Anonymous as a fellowship and reviews the threefold distinction of the human being acting in the three social systems: market-place, voting-place and fellowship. This threefold distinction, from political economy, has strong implications for cognitive psychology and rational decision-making.

Chapter IX shows the parameters of our scientific research program, from Chapters I–VIII, and what they suggest. We have sketched out a first attempt at understanding what goes on in the process of sobriety in congruent treatment of the threefold illness of mind, body, and spirit, as set out by Bill W. We suggest that alcoholism, defined as the precondition toward alcoholic drinking, goes back more than a thousand generations, with roots in the great advances in mind and speech that made possible the development of human beings; that with the origins of consciousness the need became less and less, until what was necessary is now an “illness” to be treated by mind and speech as it arose in conjunction with them. This treatment of mind, body, and spirit, through healing narrative, or neuronal selection by re-entrant signaling, or the Sacrament of the Word, depends on Bill W.’s formulation, which no one had put together before, and which is the gift of Alcoholics Anonymous as he set it up.

