

Glenn F. Chesnut – Résumé

Ancient history, historical theology, the history of ideas,
and (since 1993) research in modern alcoholism studies

June 2017

Fields of publication

Ancient history, late Roman Empire.

Early Christianity (second-sixth centuries) and its Greco-Roman background (including the history of Romano-Hellenistic philosophy and political theory, and Greek and Roman historiography and philosophy of history).

Early medieval historiography and philosophy of history, later medieval philosophical theology.

And more recently: the history, theory, and spirituality of alcoholism treatment and the Twelve Step program in the twentieth century.

Degrees

D.Phil.	1971	Oxford University
B.D.	1964	Southern Methodist University (Perkins School of Theology) <i>magna cum laude</i>
	1960-61	Iowa State University, doctoral program in chemistry and nuclear physics
B.S.	1960	University of Louisville, graduated second in my class, <i>summa cum laude</i>

Experience

Director of the Hindsfoot Foundation, founded in 1993 for publishing works on the history and theory of alcoholism treatment and the moral and spiritual dimensions of recovery

Professor, History Department, Indiana University South Bend, 1970-2003 (dept. chairman 1982-4)

Professor of History and Professor of Theology (Visiting), Boston University, 1984-5

Co-director of the American branch of the French scholarly press Éditions Beauchesne, 1977-80

Acting Assistant Professor, Department of Religion, University of Virginia, 1968-70

Preceptor in Greek and Philosophy, graduate theology program, Southern Methodist University, 1964-65

Ordained United Methodist minister, 1964-present

Awards

Herman Frederic Lieber Award for excellence in teaching (eight-campus IU system): 1988

Rome Prize (*Prix de Rome*) in Classics: 1978, Fellow of the American Academy in Rome 1978-9

American Society of Church History biennial Philip Schaff Prize competition for 1978-9: special award for the best book on church history written by a North American historian

Fulbright Fellowship to Oxford University: 1965-6, 1966-7

Dempster Fellowship to Oxford University: 1966-7

Rockefeller Doctoral Fellowship to Oxford University: 1967-8

Books

Glenn F. Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories: Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Evagrius* (Paris: Editions Beauchesne, 1977). The historiographical principles and historical theories of the great ecclesiastical historians of the period from Constantine to Justinian, together with the alternative theories of Augustine, which provided the foundations of medieval historiography for the next thousand years. The spirituality of divine grace, the powers of evil, and human decision-making.

Second edition, revised and enlarged (Macon GA: Mercer University Press, 1986). It has become one of the three classic works in its field (until a recent reprinting by Mercer, book dealers were selling the few still-available copies for \$150 to \$170; Mercer now keeps the reprinted version continuously in print, so it costs only \$43).

Glenn F. Chesnut, *Images of Christ: An Introduction to Christology* (San Francisco: Harper & Row/Seabury Press, 1984). Sections of it are still being used for anthologies for courses at universities in other parts of the country.

Glenn C., *The Factory Owner & the Convict* (South Bend, Indiana: Hindsfoot Foundation, 1996). A historical account of the beginnings of the A.A. movement in South Bend and Elkhart, Indiana, during the 1940's and 1950's, based on the autobiographical memoirs and speeches of the South Bend factory owner and author Kenneth Merrill, the ex-convict Nicholas Kowalski, and other early local leaders. Second printing 1997.

Glenn F. Chesnut, *The Higher Power of the Twelve-Step Program: For Believers & Non-Believers*, Hindsfoot Foundation Series on Spirituality and Theology (San Jose: Authors Choice/iUniverse, 2001).

Sgt. Bill S. with Glenn F. Chesnut, *On the Military Firing Line in the Alcoholism Treatment Program: The Air Force Sergeant Who Beat Alcoholism and Taught Others to Do the Same*, Hindsfoot Foundation Series on the History of Alcoholism Treatment (New York: iUniverse, 2003).

William E. Swegan was by my time the only surviving member of that important wing of early A.A. which stressed the psychological aspects of the A.A. program instead of the spiritual dimension (he was in fact a total atheist, even at the age of 90). During the early 1950's in San Antonio, Texas, he and prominent American psychiatrist Louis Jolyon "Jolly" West developed the Lackland Model of alcoholism treatment, which has been one of the three basic models used in modern American alcoholism treatment. The success story which he and West related in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* in 1956 was distributed all across the country by the National Council on Alcoholism.

Louis Jolyon West (1924-1999) eventually went to UCLA in Los Angeles, California, where he became Professor and Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences; Psychiatrist-in-Chief at the UCLA Hospital and Clinics; and Director of the Neuropsychiatric Institute at the UCLA Center for the Health Sciences. West gained additional fame as the psychiatrist who discovered the inner psychological mechanisms used in the Chinese brain-washing techniques employed on American prisoners of war in Korea. In the trial of Patty Hearst in 1976, he testified that she had been brain-washed by her captors, the urban guerrilla group called the Symbionese Liberation Army, and that she should not be held legally responsible for participating with them in bank robbery.

Glenn C., *The Factory Owner & the Convict*, Vol. 1 of *Lives and Teachings of the A.A. Old Timers*, 2nd ed., Hindsfoot Foundation Series on Alcoholics Anonymous History (New York: iUniverse, 2005).

Glenn C., *The St. Louis Gambler & the Railroad Man*, Vol. 2 of *Lives and Teachings of the A.A. Old Timers*, 2nd ed., Hindsfoot Foundation Series on Alcoholics Anonymous History (New York: iUniverse, 2005).

Glenn F. Chesnut, *Changed by Grace: V. C. Kitchen, the Oxford Group, and A.A.*, Hindsfoot Foundation Series on Spirituality and Theology (New York: iUniverse, 2006). On the nature of the Oxford Group and its formative influence on Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith, the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous.

On Bishop's list of the Top Fifty Books published over the last century which are recommended in order to understand the history of the Alcoholics Anonymous movement.

Glenn F. Chesnut, *God and Spirituality: Philosophical Essays*, Hindsfoot Foundation Series on Spirituality and Theology (New York: iUniverse, 2010).

William E. Swegan with Glenn F. Chesnut, Ph.D., *The Psychology of Alcoholism*, Hindsfoot Foundation Series on the History of Alcoholism Treatment (New York: iUniverse, 2011) — a second edition of the Sgt. Bill book which first appeared in 2003.

Glenn F. Chesnut, *Father Ed Dowling: Bill Wilson's Sponsor*, Hindsfoot Foundation (Bloomington, Indiana: iUniverse, 2015). The life and teaching of Father Ed Dowling, S.J., the Jesuit priest who served for twenty

years as sponsor and spiritual guide to Bill Wilson, the co-founder of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Glenn F. Chesnut, *Father Ralph Pfau and the Golden Books: The Path to Recovery from Alcoholism and Drug Addiction*, Hindsfoot Foundation (Bloomington, Indiana: iUniverse, 2017). This is the first major study of Father Ralph Pfau, one of AA's four most-published and most-formative authors during the new movement's earliest thirty years, during which it grew from only 100 members to almost 300,000. When he joined Alcoholics Anonymous in 1943 while serving as a priest in Indianapolis, he became the first Roman Catholic priest to get sober in the newly formed movement.

Edited

Nancy Olson, *With a Lot of Help from Our Friends: The Politics of Alcoholism*, ed. Glenn F. Chesnut, Hindsfoot Foundation Series on the History of Alcoholism Treatment (New York: Writers Club/iUniverse, 2003). On the passing and implementation of the Hughes Act (the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Act of 1970), one of the two most important and consequential pieces of U.S. government legislation on alcoholism of the twentieth century (the other being Prohibition, which unlike the Hughes Act, was a failure). Nancy Olson was the chief senatorial aide in charge of alcoholism legislation for Senator Harold Hughes.

Richard M. Dubiel, *The Road to Fellowship: The Role of the Emmanuel Movement and the Jacoby Club in the Development of Alcoholics Anonymous*, ed. Glenn F. Chesnut, Hindsfoot Foundation Series on the History of Alcoholism Treatment (New York: iUniverse, 2004).

Annette R. Smith, Ph.D., *The Social World of Alcoholics Anonymous: How It Works*, introd. by Linda Farris Kurtz, DPA (Professor at Eastern Michigan University School of Social Work, author of *Self-Help and Support Groups: A Handbook for Practitioners*), ed. Glenn F. Chesnut, Hindsfoot Foundation Series on Treatment and Recovery (New York: iUniverse, 2007).

As Director of the Hindsfoot Foundation, I also oversaw the publication of two books by the number one historian of Alcoholics Anonymous: Ernest Kurtz, *Shame & Guilt*, second edition, revised and updated, 2007; and Ernest Kurtz, *The Collected Ernie Kurtz*, 2008. Also a book by the number two historian of Alcoholics Anonymous: Mel Barger, *Three Recovery Classics*, 2004.

Editor of *The Northern Indiana Archival Bulletin* 1998-2001.

Fifty Books Tracing AA's History

Charles Bishop, Jr., the noted antiquarian book dealer and bibliographer who assembled the collection of 15,000 books, pamphlets, and other printed materials published by and about the A.A. movement, which became the nucleus of the world famous Chester H. Kirk Collection on Alcoholism and Alcoholics Anonymous at Brown University, prepared a list of what he believed to be the fifty best books to read for a good understanding of A.A. history, ranging from William James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) to the present.

Glenn F. Chesnut authored one of those books, co-authored a second book, and edited two others on Bishop's Top Fifty List, so that he is reckoned as having had a hand in producing four of the best fifty books written in this field during the past century.

Articles

Numerous articles published in *Church History*, *Anglican Theological Review*, *Vigiliae Christianae*, *Second Century: Journal of Early Christian Studies*, and *Religious Studies Review*; in encyclopedias such as the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* and the *Anchor Bible Dictionary*; and in volumes such as *Our Common History as Christians*, *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*, *A Century of Church History: The Legacy of Philip Schaff 1888-1988*, and *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism*.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, I spent my time working, not on book-length publications, but on shorter projects:

“A Century of Patristic Studies 1888–1988,” in Henry Warner Bowden (ed.), *A Century of Church History* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988), pp. 36–73, part of the centennial celebration of the founding of the American Society of Church History, an organization in which I have sat on major committees. This project required me to cover what was in part, for me, some new ground: the world of late nineteenth-century philosophical theology.

“Eusebius, Augustine, Orosius, and the Later Patristic and Medieval Christian Histories,” in Harold W. Attridge and Gohei Hata (eds.), *Eusebius, Christianity, and Judaism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1992), pp. 687–713. Published simultaneously in translation in Japanese. In this long article, I covered some new ground, and carried my work on early philosophy of history into the middle ages, dealing with Orosius, the Venerable Bede, Gregory of Tours' History of the Franks, Otto of Freising's Chronicle and History of the Two Cities, Joinville's Life of St. Louis, etc.

Three public lectures, under the aegis of the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, on the eighteenth-century theologian John Wesley (the Oxford University classics scholar and theologian who founded the Methodist movement) and his use of the philosophical and psychological theories of John Locke and Jonathan Edwards: “John Wesley's Aldersgate Experience: What Was He Converted From and To?” “Methodists and Obsessions: John Wesley's Use of John Locke's Theory of the Association of Ideas to Deal with the Problem of Obsessive Thoughts and Compulsive Behavior,” “The Origins of the Methodist Movement.”

In 2007 and 2008, I published two articles while working on my forthcoming book on *God and Spirituality: Philosophical Essays*:

Glenn Chesnut, “The Names of God,” *STEPS: A Magazine of Hope and Healing for Christians in Recovery* (pub. by The National Association of Christians in Recovery, Brea, California), Vol. 16, No. 4 (2007): 14-18.

28-page “Foreword” by Glenn F. Chesnut, September 27, 2008, to the new online edition of the Oxford

Group author Philip Leon's *The Philosophy of Courage* (originally published in 1939 by Oxford University Press), pages 2-29 at <http://stepstudy.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/philosophyofcourage.pdf>

From 2004 to the present, a number of articles have also been published on the Hindsfoot Foundation website:

“The God-Shaped Hole in the Human Soul,” January 21, 2006, a very popular article which is regularly read by over 4,000 people a year.

“The Names of God: how to find a God of our understanding,” September 10, 2006, a very popular article which is regularly read by at least 3,000 people a year.

“Richmond Walker and the Twenty-Four Hour Book,” April 15, 2004, the only lengthy account in print at that time of the life and work of the second most published A.A. author.

“Ralph Pfau (Father John Doe) and the Golden Books,” April 20, 2004, other than Father Pfau's own autobiography, the only lengthy account in print at that time of the life and work of the third most published A.A. author.

“Early Black A.A. along the Chicago-Gary-South Bend Axis: The Stories and Memories of Early Black Leaders Told in Their Own Words,” December 26, 2004. Chicago was the home of the second successful black A.A. group, and South Bend was the home of the early black A.A. group about which we have by far the most information. Based on Glenn F. Chesnut's interviews of the founders of the South Bend group and their early followers, and one of the earliest members of the Chicago group, who traveled over on weekends to help out the South Benders during the formative period.

“The A.A. Prison Group Founded in 1944 at the Indiana State Prison at Michigan City,” December 20, 2004, on one of the two best-known early A.A. prison groups.

Arthur S. (Arlington, Texas), Tom E. (Wappingers Falls, New York), and Glenn C. (South Bend, Indiana), “Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) Recovery Outcome Rates: Contemporary Myth and Misinterpretation,” January 1, 2008, demonstrates (from A.A.'s own triennial membership surveys) that 56% of those in their first year who had completed 90 days in the program were still attending meetings at the end of that year. The biggest drop-off occurs in those who attend two or three meetings and then quit without seriously trying to work the program. This article gives the figures that are now quoted in most of the responsible scholarly work in the field.

“Psychological vs. Spiritual Interpretations of A.A.,” May 28, 2004, on the split in early A.A. which emerged at the time of the writing of Alcoholics Anonymous (the A.A. “Big Book”) in 1938-39.

“Classical Protestant Liberalism and Early A.A.,” June 9, 2004.

“*The Upper Room* and Early A.A.,” July 27, 2004, on the influence on the development of early A.A. of the

liberal Protestant and Methodist ideas found in the popular Southern Methodist meditational pamphlet called *The Upper Room*.

“The Earliest Printings of Richmond Walker’s Twenty-Four Hours a Day,” August 22, 2004, with photos from the collection of Jack H. (Scottsdale, Arizona).

“J. D. Holmes and the First A.A. Group in Indiana: Evansville April-May 1940,” December 29, 2004.

“Doherty Sheerin and the Founding of A.A. in Indianapolis: October 28, 1940,” December 29, 2004.

Newly discovered photos of Father Ralph Pfau (the third most-published A.A. author) from the Archdiocesan Archives in Indianapolis, February 28, 2005.

Previously unpublished photos of Richmond Walker and his family, March 3, 2005, obtained from one of Walker’s two surviving children.

“The Virtues and the Vices,” March 21, 2005, on the various lists of virtues and vices found in early A.A. spiritual writings.

“In Memoriam: Nancy Moyer Olson” (September 18, 1929-March 25, 2005), written shortly after her death. She was the founder of the AAHistoryLovers, author of *With a Lot of Help from Our Friends: The Politics of Alcoholism*, and the U.S. Senate aide who was in charge of coordinating the passing of the Hughes Act, the most successful alcoholism legislation of the twentieth century.

“Twelve-Step Meditation in the A.A. Big Book and the 12 & 12,” November 26, 2006, including material on Transcendental Meditation and the use of mantras, the Oxford Group use of automatic writing to obtain guidance, the St. Francis Prayer, guided imagery, the psychologist Edmund Jacobson’s method of progressive relaxation, and Emmet Fox’s *The Golden Key*.

“Learning to See the Sacred Dimension of Reality: Rudolf Otto and the Idea of the Holy, Part 1,” May 14, 2009, the great early twentieth-century scholar of comparative religions.

“The Seven Faces of the Experience of the Divine Reality: Rudolf Otto and the Idea of the Holy, Part 2,” May 14, 2009.

“The Ground of Being: God and the Big Bang,” May 19, 2009, on the relationship between the existentialist concept of the ground of being (Martin Heidegger, Paul Tillich, etc.) and the modern physicists’ theory of the Big Bang.

Moderator of the AAHL

Chesnut served as the Moderator of the AAHL (AA History Lovers) online group at <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/AAHistoryLovers/>, which was the most important international

clearing house for new information on the history of Alcoholics Anonymous, from 2005–2016. It had almost 3,000 members and many more regular readers from all around the world (U.S., Canada, U.K., Ireland, Mexico, India, Denmark, Belgium, Finland, etc.). The majority of the best historians in the field were members and contributed to its postings.

The archival collection of the postings to this group forms one of the four or five most important archives for the study of the history of early Alcoholics Anonymous.

The group was started in 2000 by Nancy Moyer Olson, who served as moderator until her death in 2005, when Glenn F. Chesnut (who along with Ernest Kurtz, the leading A.A. historian, had been serving as an her advisor) replaced her as moderator. Olson had played an important role in the U.S. Senate in passing and implementing the Hughes Act during the 1970's, the most important piece of alcoholism legislation in the twentieth century after the Prohibition era.

Speeches and addresses

Invited speeches and addresses at numerous national and international conferences, and at universities such as the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and Southern Methodist University.

Some of the more recent include:

“The Higher Power of the Twelve-Step Program: For Believers & Non-Believers,” Northern Indiana Counselors Association, October 21, 1999, South Bend, Indiana.

“The Golden Books: A.A. author Ralph Pfau (Father John Doe),” 6th National Archives Workshop, Louisville, Kentucky, September 29, 2001. Father Pfau, from Indianapolis, was one of the four most-published early A.A. authors. He was the first Roman Catholic priest to get sober in A.A. His writings were mostly based on talks and conducted spiritual retreats which he gave all over the U.S. and Canada.

“Richmond Walker, Author of the Twenty-Four Hour Book,” 8th National Archives Workshop, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, September 27, 2003. Walker (from a wealthy and politically powerful family in Boston, Massachusetts) was one of the four most-published early A.A. authors. His principal book, which came out in 1948, and quickly became the most widely-read introduction to God and spirituality for early A.A., was partially reacting to his father Joseph Walker, who was one of the country's leading atheists, and a prominent signer of the first Humanist Manifesto.

Lecture on alcoholism to the medical students in the Family Practice Program at Indiana University's Memorial Hospital program in South Bend, September 24, 2003.

“Writing Local A.A. History: Stories as the Vessels of Wisdom and Grace,” at the Eastern Pennsylvania History & Archives Conference on June 24, 2006.

An hour long talk in Berkeley, California, on February 1, 2014 to introduce the first performance of the

historical play *Our Experience Has Taught Us*, written by San Francisco playwright Jackie Bendzinski to describe the formation of the Twelve Traditions, which supply the basic guiding principles of the A.A. group. The play was later performed at the A.A. International Convention in Atlanta, Georgia.

Two talks at the National A.A. History Symposium in Sedona, Arizona, on February 21-23, 2014: one on Father Ed Dowling, S.J., who served as chief spiritual guide for twenty years to A.A. co-founder Bill Wilson, and a second presentation on “Early AA Meetings in New York & Akron: A Snapshot from May of 1938.”

“Early Black A.A. Leaders,” at Serenity House in Gary, Indiana on July 26, 2014: on the first black A.A. groups in St. Louis, Chicago, and Washington D.C. (1945), on Jimmy Miller in South Bend, the First Lady of Black A.A. (1948), and on John Shaifer in Gary (1960).

“Sgt. Bill Swegan and the first officially government-sanctioned military alcoholism treatment groups” (which he established on Long Island in 1948 and at Lackland Air Force base in San Antonio in the early 1950’s), at the 18th National Archives Workshop in Philadelphia on October 9-12, 2014.

“Early Black A.A. Groups and Leaders” at the National A.A. History Symposium in Sedona, Arizona, on March 4-6, 2016. The Gary talk with the addition, this time around, of a section on Joe McQuany in Little Rock, Arkansas, who was by far the most famous black leader in early A.A. His work saved the lives of tens of thousands of alcoholics, both black and white, literally all over the world.

“Father Ed Dowling, S.J. — Bill Wilson’s Sponsor,” a talk given in June 2016 at Stepping Stones in Katonah, New York (just north of New York City), the home where A.A. founder Bill Wilson and his wife lived for many years. It is a national historic landmark and also the site of one of the four or five most important A.A. historical archives.

“Richmond Walker and the 24-Hour-a-Day Book,” National A.A. History Symposium in Sedona, Arizona, on April 28-30, 2017. Walker was the second most-published early A.A. author.

Current

Finishing a book on early black leaders in A.A. (doing the final proofreading here in June 2017). Getting ready to take my close-to-final draft of a book on how early A.A. meetings were conducted c. 1938-1940, and give it the finishing touches so I can send it to press. Getting ready to do a final proofreading of a book on the traditional proofs for the existence of God which I wrote in 1998; I never had a chance to give it a final polish when other publishing projects intervened (the *Higher Power* book and others).

Courses taught

Indiana University South Bend (1970-2003):

Western Culture 1: Ancient, Greek, and Roman

Western Culture 2: Italian Renaissance, Reformation, 18th-century Enlightenment
Ancient Civilization
Medieval Civilization
Religion of Ancient Israel
Introduction to the New Testament
Greek History
Roman History

Plus occasional seminars on a variety of topics, including God and Christ in Early Christianity, Greek and Roman Mythology, the Fall of the Roman Empire, and the Dark Ages

Also reading courses on first year Greek, advanced medieval Latin, the medieval Byzantine world, the philosophers Aristotle and Kant, and medieval art history

Boston University (1984-85):

Graduate course on Patristics (the Christian theology of the first six centuries A.D.)
Seminar on St. Augustine for doctoral students
A two-semester advanced undergraduate Roman history course
An advanced graduate reading course on Greek grammar and syntax in first-century texts

University of Virginia (1968-70):

History of Christian Thought: patristic, medieval, reformation, and modern (undergraduate and graduate)
St. Augustine
Introduction to modern theology and ethics
The twentieth-century debate over history and faith
The Rise of Western Atheism (Feuerbach, Marx, Dostoyevski, Camus, Sartre, Heidegger, ennui in Baudelaire, etc.)

Southern Methodist University (1964-65):

First year graduate Greek language
First year graduate history of philosophy

Photographs

At <http://unmeasureddistances.ftml.net/> — includes some personal photographs, but also many historical photographs.