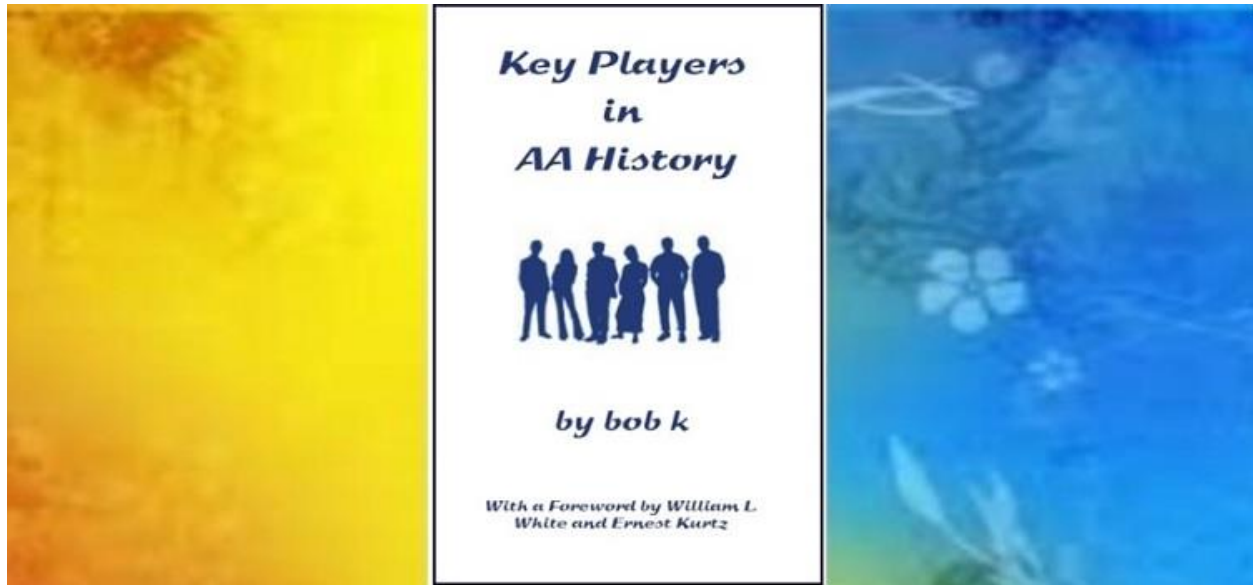


Key Players in AA History



***Fifty Chosen Articles:
Number Twenty-Three.
The third of seven consecutive book reviews.
Originally posted in February 2015.***

"The profiles crafted by bob k are... presented in an engaging manner accessible to all those interested in the history of AA."

Review by Roger C.

Our friend, bob k, has written an exceptional book.

But before we have a look at ***Key Players in AA History***, let's back up just a little bit.

Bob first starting writing on AA Agnostica a little over three years ago, in December, 2011. He quickly became something of an expert on we heathens in AA. Indeed, one of his stories, which is republished in [Don't Tell](#), recounts how he blustered his way into agnostic AA meetings in Toronto in order to find out what they were all about. Of course he was taking some risks in doing that. As he wrote:

Disregarding a tremendous amount of personal danger, I was able to infiltrate Toronto's two agnostic AA groups, starting with the second anniversary party of Beyond Belief... I must report

that, as a group, they were quite ordinary in appearance, albeit the “nerd quotient” was undeniably above the norm.

Of course, as you may already have guessed, the whole experience went bad and, well, he ended up being tortured and water-boarded. You can read the whole tragic tale right here: [Heathens, Spies, Websites, Water-boarding & Carrot Cake](#).

After he recovered, bob began to write stories about the early history of AA and about some of the people who had been a part of defining the early elements of our fellowship.

These stories were mightily well received and appreciated. Let us provide you with just one example. Back in March of last year, bob wrote [Dr. Bob, AA Co-founder – Part One](#). Here are just a few of the comments about that story:

I applaud you bob k for shedding so much needed light and insight on this important part of AA history. Another awesome piece of literature, a very powerful, clear and heart warming account of the part played by Dr. Bob Smith.

Very well written... I love pieces like this...Thank you bob k.

Excellent history of the “other” founder of AA. This article is a very interesting history of Dr. Bob’s early life and the times in which he lived... It is instructive and helpful to read AA history... Thanks so much for this article.

Excellent piece Bob. Very interesting. Thank you for putting the work in!

What a fantastic read... It’s so interesting to read about our founders and Dr. Bob’s story is one many of us can relate to. Thank you for all your insight bob k.

Okay, let’s stop there. I’m sure you get the picture. This has been the standard response to bob’s writing on AA Agnostica.

And these comments very much apply to bob’s writing in his wonderful book, ***Key Players in AA History***.

As you will see below, there are 32 chapters in the book. Even the most consistent and long-standing of AA Agnostica fans will be delighted to discover that there are 16 chapters in the book that have never before been published, here or elsewhere. Organized in six sections and 32 chapters, the book is a treasure. Each chapter is complete on its own. You can easily read a chapter in one sitting and move on to the next or jump to a completely new section.

Every chapter is well researched, much of it is fascinating, and all of it is written in an enjoyable and easily readable style.

What follows are three sections. The table of contents, a Foreword by Ernie Kurtz and Bill White, and information on how to get your own paperback or eBook copy of *Key Players in AA History*.

Explore. Enjoy.

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Foreword

Story and storytelling lie at the very heart of Alcoholics Anonymous. AA’s basic text and voices within AA meetings across the globe “disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now.” From the catalytic meeting between two desperate men in the mid-1930s to today’s growing varieties of AA experience, the history of AA is a story about stories and the healing power of mutual storytelling. Anyone wishing to truly understand AA must look first, not to ideas, techniques, or studies, but to stories.

As historians of AA and other recovery mutual aid societies, we have been particularly drawn to the stories of those who played critical roles in the birth and early history of AA, for it is in those stories that we find what distinguishes AA from recovery mutual aid societies that went before but failed to thrive and what distinguishes AA from newer groups that have followed in the wake of AA’s worldwide growth. Also of interest to us is why the stories of these early AA figures continue to hold such attraction among rank and file AA members. We suspect such fascination comes from a powerful sense of continued identification – that the stories of AA’s founding generation continue to be mirrored in the lives of contemporary AA members. Such interest surely also emanates from a powerful sense of gratitude for a fellowship that so many continue to find life-saving and live-transforming.

Interest is growing in the early history of AA, as evidenced by the growing number of recent biographies of those who played important roles within this history – from multiple biographies of AA co-founder Bill Wilson to biographies of early AA members (e.g., Marty Mann, Clarence

Snyder) and non-alcoholics who played critical roles in the early development of AA (e.g., Dr. William Silkworth, Sister Ignatia Gavin, Lois Wilson). We expect this insatiable fascination with AA history to continue unabated far into the future.

In spite of the growing body of literature on AA history, lacking to date has been a collection of brief profiles of these important figures within a single text. That void is now filled by **Key Players in AA History** by Bob K., which offers an engaging window into the lives and times of AA predecessors, AA founders, early AA members (including women pioneers within AA), and the professionals who stood with AA in its early years. Here again is the essence of AA conveyed, as it so often is, in story.

The profiles crafted by Bob K. are drawn from multiple sources and presented in an engaging manner accessible to all those interested in the history of AA. So let the stories begin.

*Ernest Kurtz, Author, **Not-God: A History of Alcoholics Anonymous**
William White, Author, **Slaying the Dragon: The History of Addiction Treatment and Recovery in America***

Key Players in AA History continues to be a popular book. With over 60 Amazon ratings, the average is 4.7 out of 5. That's remarkable, especially considering a few low ratings from God-squaddars upset by the atheist/agnostic bent.

Look for two new books in January. **The Road To AA: Pilgrims to Prohibition** looks at America's various efforts to deal with problem drinkers in the many decades preceding AA. **The Secret Diaries of Bill W.** is a work of historical/biographical fiction that promises to be quite controversial.

A paperback version of **Key Players in AA History** is available at [Amazon USA](#).

As well, you can get the paperback version at [Amazon Canada](#) and at [Amazon – UK](#).

It is also available at all of the standard online outlets in all eBook formats, including [Kindle](#), [Kobo](#) and [Nook](#), as well as an [iBook](#) for Macs and iPads.

