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## Photographic Essay Images from the Brown University Alcohol and Addiction Studies Collections

### William L. White and Tovah Reis

Over the past decade, Dr. David Lewis of Brown University's Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies, has led an effort to assemble one of the world's largest collections of alcoholism and temperance literature. In this brief essay, the authors will describe the alcohol-related collections at the Brown University Library and use images from these collections to convey their topical scope.

The core of the Brown University Alcohol and Addiction Studies Collections is the Chester H. Kirk Collection on Alcoholism and Alcoholics Anonymous. This collection came to the university in 1995 through a contribution by Chester H. Kirk that enabled Brown University to purchase more than 15,000 pieces of alcoholism and temperance literature. The Kirk Collection holdings were the fruits of two decades of acquisitions by Charles Bishop, an antiquarian book dealer and coauthor of a guide to the published literature on Alcoholics Anonymous. The Kirk Collection added great depth to an already significant body of alcohol and temperance literature within the Brown University Library.

The Kirk Collection holdings range chronologically from a 1493 depiction of a drunken Noah in the Nuremburg Chronicle

(Plate One) through the first American book on alcoholism (Anthony Benezet's 1774 *The Mighty Destroyer Displayed*) (Plate Two) to late twentieth century texts, journals and pamphlets on alcoholism. Topically, the collection focuses on alcohol and alcoholism, with the bulk of the collection made up of works on temperance and prohibition and the history of Alcoholics Anonymous. However, buried within these larger topical concentrations lies a large number of nineteenth century texts on inebriety and its treatment. The majority of the materials in the Kirk Collection are from the United States, but the collection also contains materials from Canada, England, Australia, and New Zealand as well as many texts that examine alcohol use and alcohol policies around the world.

The story of alcohol use, alcohol problems and efforts to prevent and treat alcohol problems is told within the Kirk Collection through a variety of media: books (Plate Three), journals (Plates Four and Five), newsletters and newspapers (Plate Six), pamphlets (Plates Seven and Eight), A.A. memorabilia (Plate Nine), sheet music (Plate Ten), photographs (Plates Eleven and Twelve), glass slides, posters,

video and audiotapes, and an exotic assortment of artifacts. Since its acquisition in 1995, other collections have been acquired that complement the Kirk Collection. These collections include the:

- Dr. Bob Archives—a collection of over 5,000 items (books, photographs, memorabilia, manuscripts, and personal letters) related to the early history of Alcoholics Anonymous that were purchased from the family of Dr. Robert Holbrook Smith (Plates Thirteen and Fourteen).
- Rutgers Anti-Saloon League Collection of Foreign Temperance and Addictions Studies Periodicals—a collection of more than 15,000 items from the Anti-Saloon League that was transferred from the Center of Alcohol Studies library at Rutgers University to Brown University in 1999.
- Marty Mann NCADD Collection—a collection of Board minutes, official correspondence, photographs, films and audiocassettes related to the history of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.
- Ernest Kurtz Collection on Alcoholism—a collection of source documents, notes and interviews (notes and recordings) used in the preparation of *Not-God: A History of Alcoholics Anonymous*.
- Clarence Snyder A.A. Collection—a collection of papers, correspondence and audiotapes detailing the early history of Alcoholics Anonymous group # 3 in Cleveland, Ohio.
- Rufus King Files—the books, papers and correspondence of the noted drug policy reformer donated to Brown shortly before his death in 1999.
- Papers of Dr. Dan Anderson and Dr. Jean Rossi—the published and unpublished articles, speeches and correspondence of two of the leading architects of the “Minnesota Model” of chemical dependency treatment.
- Papers from the “Just say No” campaign of Mrs. Nancy Reagan.

One of the major goals of assembling these collections is the transfer of historical materials from private hands to an

environment where they will be accessible for interdisciplinary research. Descriptions and inventories of these collections are being prepared as a critical step toward achieving that goal.

Seen as a whole, the Brown University collections constitute one of the largest repositories of primary documents and artifacts on the histories of American alcohol problems, the American temperance movement and Alcoholics Anonymous. To enhance utilization of these materials, Brown University hosts interdisciplinary conferences to study these collections, posts papers based on research of the collections, offers fellowships to support students wishing to study these collections, and is digitizing material that is no longer copyrighted, e.g., the pamphlets from the Anti-Saloon League collection. These digitized items are available online at <http://dl.lib.brown.edu/temperance/>, as well as a Brown student’s research paper on these pamphlets. Brown University also publishes the journal *Culture Alcohol and Society* (available online at [http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/University\\_Library/libs/hay/collections/kirk/index.html](http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/University_Library/libs/hay/collections/kirk/index.html)). Additional information about the collection, including links to lists of books, journals and audiocassettes in the collections is available from: <http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/Univesity/Library/libs/hay/collections/kirk/index.html>.

For information about the Brown University Alcohol and Addiction Studies Collections, e-mail Tovah Reis at [Tovah\\_Reis@brown.edu](mailto:Tovah_Reis@brown.edu) or call 401-863-3334.

## References

Bishop, Jr., Charlie and Bill Pittman, *The Alcoholics Anonymous World Bibliography 1935 -1994*. Wheeling, W.V., The Bishop Books, 1994.

Plate 1: Noah Intoxicated, Nuremburg Chronicle, 1493

Plate 2: Mighty Destroyer Displayed, 1774

Plate 3: Howard Haggard Text, 1929

Plate 4: American Temperance Magazine, 1833

Plate 5: Ladies Home Journal Beer Endorsement, 1904

Plate 6: American Prohibition Ends, 1933

Plate 7: Temperance Pamphlet: Alcoholic Dogs, 1913

Plate 8: Alcoholism is a Sickness Pamphlet, 1946

Plate 9: Early AA Secretary Handbook

Plate 10: Alcoholic Blues Sheet Music, 1919

Plate 11: Anti-Saloon League Convention Photo, 1919

Plate 12: Oklahoma AA Billboard, 1947

Plate 13: Dr. Robert Smith Photo

Plate 14: Dr. Robert Smith's Medicine Kit