

My Notes on "Quittin' Ain't Easy"

by Ann Bogle

I attended the first Minneapolis screening of *Bill W.* on a Thursday evening in July and had a complex reaction to it.

My date was born in Akron, not a friend of Bill W., had not even heard of him, but when I invited him, he said he wanted to go.

My A.A. friend, J., drove. His girlfriend from high school, K., the third of four of us, turned to us in the backseat. "Are you friends of Bill?" she asked. I was better friends with William Carlos Williams—Bill C. Bill—but I did not say that. I said, "I am not-not friends with Bill."

That sounded off to her. J. and I became lifelong friends after A.A. and I had parted. It had been a while since I had been near anyone as cult-oriented as K. She and I talked in the theater lobby as we waited with tickets in hand for the door. Inside, my date and I split off from J. and K. to find seats. I told my date that K. had inspected me for alcoholism at the border.

He and I sat near the front where there was a narrow stage, surrounded by friends of Bill, many with overhanging guts, as I noticed in my row, eating popcorn, drinking pop. Afterward, my date said he had noticed a familiar Akron building in the documentary. He mentioned it to his mother who had just flown in from Georgia. She told him that his grandfather had been the attorney who had represented Dr. Bob.

I am a programmed survivor, twenty years after a therapist had urged A.A. and other 12-Step groups (Al-Anon, CoD.A., S.A., and CoS.A.), repeatedly, a kind of conversational hypnosis.

Sorry, I think I was jotting and not writing. I see a dropped article that would clarify my interest. I purposely didn't describe my alcohol use. There, I just did.

David James b/c'd me to be sure his satire is sound. I said it is: What is a backstory? Do people like this term? to describe a further story that belongs not necessarily not exactly to the writer but to the reader?

I agree with John Riley. And satire is a powerful response. So is documentary.

The original A.A. literature is sound.

I hope it is okay that I find "Quittin' Ain't Easy" to be scary funny and not "not funny."

In countries where wine and beer and sweet liqueur are food. In countries where the Internet is an invention of freedom. In this country, treatment centers [programs] segregate by gender [genre]. My religious heritage doesn't segregate. Did it segregate? Did it invent co-education? The Scots.

To desire not to drink is different in feeling from having no desire to drink. I do not desire a drink. A drink might slow the keys. Ta-ta, good to see you, gotta run, as if learning to need avoidance.

