

SENIOR CHURCH HISTORY PROJECT  
VIDEO CASSETTE INTERVIEW

SENIOR CHURCH HISTORY 373  
PROFESSOR JOHN M. BRENNER

KEVIN CORTEZ

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Project Theme: The Theological Perspective of Professor Armin  
William Schuetze

Part I. Early Life and Education: The Creation of a Great  
Theological Perspective

Part II. Discussion of the Missouri Break

The Account of the Interview

The research for this project began in November of 1993. My research consisted primarily of reading the theological material Prof. Schuetze produced as a servant of the Lord from sources which are listed in the following pages of this report. This was very important because it was from these theological writings that I was able to formulate my theme as well as give some direction to the questioning which was used at the interview.

My first contact with Prof. Schuetze was in November of 1993. The first contact was made by phone. Prof. Schuetze is currently living in Watertown, Wisconsin. He is retired but is still very active serving the Lord of the Church in many different ways. It was during this first phone conversation that I asked him to be the subject of my interview. Prof. Schuetze humbly accepted the task. After this initial contact, I began my actual research. The fruit of this research was a letter addressed to Prof. Schuetze, stating the purpose of my video taped interview as well as some possible topics for discussion. This letter also provided some direction for the interview as well. The first letter was sent to Prof. Schuetze on January 27, 1994. Please see Letter (1) for additional information.

Prof. Schuetze quickly responded by sending me a biographical sketch on February 5, 1994. This information greatly helped me in forming not only my theme, but also shaped the outline for the actual questionnaire which was used at the interview. This biographical sketch also includes a list of Prof. Schuetze's Northwestern Publishing House publications which he has written in the Lord's service. I hope this will provide a quick and easy reference for those who might be interested in pursuing topics which Prof. Schuetze has examined and published.

The fruit of this biographical sketch was another letter addressed to Prof. Schuetze, giving the theme and actual questionnaire which was to be used at the interview. This letter was sent to Prof. Schuetze on February 14, 1994. Please see letter (2) for additional information.

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1  
Menomonie, Wisconsin

## THE INTERVIEW

There were really two interviews. The first interview which occurred on February 16, 1994, covers Prof. Schuetze's early life and education. The line of questioning flowed from this basic outline:

- I. Parental History
- II. Early Life
- III. Grade School Experience
- IV. Secondary Education
- V. College Training
- VI. Seminary Education

The second interview occurred on February 21, 1994. This interview includes discussion on the Missouri break. And here I took a historical approach phrasing questions which brought the discussion of the interview back to the 1930s when the WELS issued a prompt protest to Missouri's attempt at finding doctrinal unity with the fledgling ALC. From this point on, each decade was carefully treated by asking Prof. Schuetze questions which dealt with the underlying causes that contributed to this awful separation of 1961. The goal of the second interview was threefold: to analyze the historical material of this issue as it is seen through the eyes of a confessional Lutheran theologian who lived through this experience; to examine the opinions, feelings, and views of a parish pastor and Seminary professor concerning this issue; and to carefully study this issue and apply it to our own lives in case such an issue should arise again.

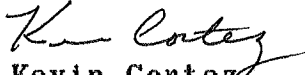
Unfortunately Missouri is still plagued with the same problems it had in the first half of the century. The issue which caused the termination of fellowship in 1961 remains. The issues of scouting and government chaplaincy remain. Despite the fact the Missouri dealt with Tiejten in 1974, an action which gave impetus to the Seminex affair, decisive doctrinal discipline does not seem to have followed to rid this Synod of its historical-critical approach to Scripture completely. Then there is an issue of church and ministry which has become more of an issue since 1961. And now the roles of man and woman have come under some questioning in the past decade by the Synod's liberal faction. Therefore, it is safe to say that there is a degree of doctrinal pluralism within this Synod. If the Synod officially holds the correct position on Scripture but tolerates false views by professors, pastors, and teachers, can such a church still be called orthodox? Today we give thanks to our God that he has blessed our Synod with fine Lutheran theologians, (like the subject of this interview), who knew and still know the importance of maintaining sound doctrine.

Both interviews were very enjoyable and it was truly a pleasure and honor to work with Prof. Schuetze on this project. The interview took place within the walls of Prof. Schuetze's study in Watertown, Wisconsin. For most of the interview the video camera was focused on Prof. Schuetze while I asked him

questions sitting in a chair roughly five feet away. I began the interview with some opening statements which summed up his ministry in the Lord's service. This was followed by a brief devotion from Prof. Schuetze based on 1 Corinthians 4:7. When this inspiring devotion was completed we eagerly jumped right into the interview. Though the content of the interview was of a serious nature, the interviewing process was not. The only person who was a little apprehensive during the interview was the interviewer. Prof. Schuetze even found some time to add a bit of humor during certain portions of the interview. I hope and pray that you are edified and strengthened by the material of this presentation. The estimated time of interview: 3.5 Hrs.

SANCTIFY THEM BY THE TRUTH, YOUR WORD IS TRUTH.

Cordially,

  
Kevin Cortez,  
Class of 1994

Kevin Cortez  
7217 S. 36th  
Franklin, WI  
53132  
(LETTER #1)

Prof. Armin Schuetze  
1206 Allermann Dr.  
Watertown, WI. 53094  
January 27, 1994

Greetings! "To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi,  
together with all overseers and deacons: Grace and  
peace to you from God the Father, and the Lord  
Jesus Christ."

Prof. Schuetze,

Let me once again express my deepest gratitude in giving me  
the opportunity and privilege to study, examine, and report on  
your life as well as your distinctly confessional Lutheran  
ministry. Currently I am reading various literary works of yours  
from such sources as WLQ, Northwestern Lutheran, Essays, and  
carefully selected books. My aim is not to read everything you  
have written in the Lord's service, but to examine those works  
which might reflect your perspective and goal in the ministry  
such as material on the Reformation, Church and Ministry, and the  
Confessions.

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The intended goal for my Church History project is to  
examine your life, ministry, and theological perspective. I  
will achieve this goal by carefully creating, constructing, and  
implementing well planned and thought out questions which will be  
addressed to you in a video taped interview in February. This  
video taped interview will be a valuable and deeply cherished  
asset, not only to our blessed Seminary but also to our Synod for  
many, many, years to come. My technical assistant will be Joel  
Gawrisch. Mr. Gawrisch is currently a Junior at Northwestern  
College, and is the son of Pastor Kenneth Gawrisch of St. Paul's,  
Franklin. St. Paul's, Franklin is my home congregation. This  
interview will give him some valuable experience as well.

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I will be sending you two letters of information, of which  
this is the first. The first letter, this letter, will alert you  
to the possible topics and issues which would be under discussion  
at the interview. We can approach this in two ways. One way would  
be to take your life decade by decade, focusing on your ministry,  
while at the same time discussing Synod milestones which occurred  
within the decade under discussion. All questions would be  
directed at your perspective on ministry as they pertain to  
Synodical issues. Or we can just ask random questions, in  
chronological order, under the heading of these three topics:  
Personal Ministry, Doctrine, and History (Synodical or  
Reformation). At this point in time I do not know which course to  
take. Again, these are possible topics for discussion. No  
answers or responses needed at this time.

I have provided you with a list of topics which will be used at the interview. I will not use them all, but simply provided them at this point to give some direction to our interview. If there is anything additional which you would like to add or have our blessed Synod know in the years to come please indicate in the space entitled ADDITIONAL COMMENTS. If there is anything which you would not like to discuss please indicate as well in the previously mentioned space. My second letter will include the actual line of thought as well as the format of questions which will be used at the interview. You will have two weeks to look over the actual questions which will be discussed at the interview.

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The due date for the Church History project is Feb.24th, 1994. When would it be a good time to conduct the interview? Weekday? Weekends? I can conduct the interview on any week day except for Tuesdays. I will call shortly after you have received this letter. We will discuss the time element then and any questions you may have as well.

Thank you so very much for this splendid opportunity!

In Christ's Service;

*Kevin Cortez*  
Kevin Cortez

POSSIBLE DISCUSSION TOPICS AS OF JANUARY 27TH, 1994

Categories

1. Birth to Seminary Graduation and Ministry
2. Doctrinal Questions on Selected Literary Works
3. Historical

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1. Birth to Seminary Graduation

- |  |                      |                 |
|--|----------------------|-----------------|
| a. home town                           | b. home congregation | c. catechetical |
| d. primary ed.                         | e. secondary ed.     | f. NWC          |
| g. NWC Profs.                          | h. WLS               | i. WLS Profs.   |
| j. perspective on ministry at this age |                      |                 |

Memorable Moments

- |                      |                |                  |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------|
| a. home congregation | b. primary ed. | c. secondary ed. |
| b. NWC               | e. WLS         |                  |

Influence for ministry: parents? pastors? teachers?

Family history and your ministry: Pastor, Professor,  
Theological Writer

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS?

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2. Doctrinal Questions on Selected Literary Works.

I will be asking questions on the following literary works. I will formulate my questions around these thoughts: Ministry Perspective; Personal Ministry Goals; Time Element; Motivation; Objective Goals; Synodical Position.

ESSAYS

1. "Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage"
2. "We Believe-Theology of Evangelism"
3. "The WELS and LCMS-Where Are We Today?"
4. "How Lutheran Was the English Reformation?"
5. "Election: Article 4 of the Common Confession"

BOOKS

1. The Shepherd Under Christ

WLQ

1. Major Emphasis of the Lutheran Confession Applied to Our Preaching and Teaching Ministry (77, 284-301)
2. Mission Not Merger (73, 71)
3. Muehlhaeuser, Founding Father of Synod (72, 194-210)
4. A Historical Convention (1983, v80:1, 74)
5. Significance of the Reformation for Our Ministry Today Lectures I, II (1986 v82:2) Lectures III, IV (v83:3)
6. Luther's Influence at Augsburg to June 25 (66, 243-255)
7. Opening Address at Sem Sept. 6th (1960) II Cor. 5:18-21
8. Our Reformation Heritage (64, 1-6)

9. The Satis Est in Article VII of the Augsburg Confession (1986 v83:31, 21)
10. Concordia Concord Colloquium (75, 220-21)
11. Forward, Polemics in a Ecumenical Age (67, 3-13)
12. Graduation Address: The Lord's Abiding Presense in Your Ministry (1985 v82:, 163)
13. ALC Discipline (75, 67-69)
14. Always Remember Your Mission (1984 v81:3, 166)
15. Augsburg Revised (77, 218-19)
16. Your Confession as Pastors of WELS Matthew 16:15-16 (77, 163-167)

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS**

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3. Historical  
-The Missouri Break

1206 Allermann Dr.  
Watertown, WI 53094  
February 5, 1994

Dear Kevin,

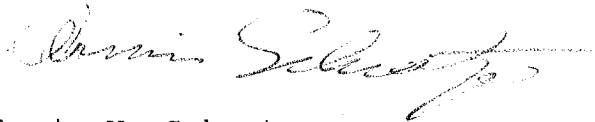
Enclosed is the biographical sketch I promised you. You can decide how much of this you also want to include in the taped discussion. Perhaps it will help you to decide what particular historical or doctrinal points to concentrate on.

I have the date for the taping down as Tuesday, February 15, beginning at 3:30 with Wednesday, February 16 as the alternate date. Am I correct that the taping will take place here at my house?

I look forward to receiving the list of questions or topics you wish to discuss.

The Lord's blessing on your work at the Seminary.

Cordially in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Armin Schuetze". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Armin W. Schuetze



## Biographical Sketch

Armin William Schuetze

April 25, 1917 - born at Litchfield, Minnesota, where my father was pastor at St. Peter's Ev. Lutheran Church in the country. The place was called Town Ellsworth. I was baptized and confirmed at this same church.

June 1929 - graduation from 8th grade. My mother homeschooled me until I was eight. This made it possible for me to complete 8th grade after attending the local public school for about 4 years. The congregation did not have a parochial school, but what was referred to as "German school." This was conducted by my father on Friday (we were excused from public school) and Saturday each week. This consisted of Bible history and Catechism instructions as well as learning to read and write German. Also in summer there were several weeks of summer school with the same curriculum. I attended "German school" since I can remember until eighth grade.

1929-1933 - attended Dr. Martin Luther College (Academy) at New Ulm, Minnesota. I took the pastor's course. This meant taking Latin and German all four years. It was self-evident that I attend DMLC since all five of my brothers and sisters had studied there.

1933-1937 - attended Northwestern College at Watertown, Wisconsin. This involved another four years of Latin and German, four years of classical Greek besides two of New Testament Greek, two years of Hebrew, as well as courses each year in English, History and Religion, and one year of science, math, and logic and psychology. Since few students went home during the week ends, classes were conducted also on Saturday mornings.

1937-1940 - attended Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, a new campus which had been completed in 1929 at Thiensville (later changed to Mequon), Wisconsin. Since there was no vicarship, we graduated after three years. Our primary congregational experience consisted in occasional opportunities to preach. The classes were small. Ours was somewhat larger, numbering 22. For nearly a decade, during the Great Depression, there were few calls and few new missions, so very few calls were available for the graduates. I was fortunate to be among the four or five in our class to receive calls, primarily as tutors at various synodical schools.

1940-1941 - tutor at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Michigan. Another classmate, George Frey, and I were in charge of the boys' dormitory, coached basketball (I coached the second team), and taught classes. As I recall, I taught Freshman and Sophomore Latin, Freshman music and art, and was in charge of the typing course. Weekends we sometimes had the opportunity to preach in neighboring churches.

1941-1943 - pastor in Timber Lake, Isabel, Trail City, and Athboy, South Dakota. Originally I was called to two congregations, but within a half year the other two were added to my field of service. I had planned to spend another year at MLS, but, before the assignment committee met, I received a call from these South Dakota congregations. Since I was looking forward to getting into the parish ministry, I accepted this call. I was installed on July 20, 1941. In September I returned to Milwaukee for a week-end, was married and brought a pastor's wife into the South Dakota parsonage. On Sundays I preached either three or four times, sometimes also in German.

The congregations covered an area about 65 miles from east to west and 20 miles north to south.

November 1943-January 1948 - pastor at Calvary, Thiensville, Wisconsin. This was quite a change. It seemed good to have only one congregation. And the children in confirmation class, who attended the congregation's Christian day school, knew so much more than the children in the Dakota congregations, who had only sketchy Sunday school instruction prior to confirmation class. Fortunately the seminary professors assured me that they and the students needed and appreciated the same kinds of sermons as the laity. They were always kind and supportive. I learned much during those years.

January 1948-July 1956 - professor at Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Mobridge, South Dakota. As I remember it, I taught classes in religion, German and English, history and problems of democracy (as it was called). I helped with piano teaching and typing. For a year I served as dean of students and several years as librarian. During these years a girls' dormitory was built and a classroom-administration-gymnasium building. The enrollment increased from around 45 to about 125.

July 1956-June 1958 - pastor in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. I was called to begin a new congregation in southwestern Milwaukee, around 76th and Oklahoma Ave. During the first months I canvassed the area while a chapel was being constructed. Several weeks before Christmas we were able to begin services and a congregation was organized early in 1957, Divine Peace Lutheran Church. This was a growing area and by the time I accepted the call to the seminary, the congregation had grown to around 100 communicants. The Sunday after my farewell service, Richard Balge, called through the assignment committee, was installed.

1958-1991 - professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. My primary teaching responsibilities at the seminary were pastoral theology, church history and symbolics. For several years I also helped with junior and middler homiletics and New Testament (Ephesians and 1 Timothy). In the early years I spent summers taking courses in history at Marquette University in a Master's Degree program. From 1978 to 1985 I served as seminary president. I retired officially in May 1990 but remained to teach part-time for the 1990-91 schoolyear.

Since 1991 - living in retirement in Watertown, Wisconsin. From December 1991 to July 1992 served Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church of Barre, Vermont as vacancy pastor. April 27-29, 1993 the CICR asked me to attend the constituting convention of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference at Overwesel, Germany. The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany invited me to present an essay at 40th anniversary of their Leipzig seminary and the dedication of its newly acquired and remodeled building.

Especially during the years I served as professor at NLA and at the Seminary I served a number of congregations as vacancy pastor. Congregations in Akaska, Tolstoy, Mobridge, Glenham, Timber Lake, Isabel, Faith, Dupree, SD, and Hazelton, ND come to mind. In Wisconsin I served vacancies at Jordan and Woodlawn in West Allis, St. John and Grace in downtown Milwaukee, Divinity in Whitefish Bay, St. John in Newburg, and Christ the Lord in Brookfield. I appreciated in this way keeping in contact with congregational work while

serving as professor.

Some other positions:

1957-1978 - author of "A Lantern to Our footsteps: Answers Based on Holy Writ," a question/answer column in the Northwestern Lutheran. Also for a number of those years on the NWL editorial board.

1966-1978 - managing editor of the Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly

As seminary professor member of the Union Committee of the synod, later member of the Advisory Committee on Doctrinal Matters.

1961 - member of subcommittee of ACDM that prepared "Fellowship Then and Now"

1967 - chairman of the subcommittee of the ACDM that prepared "This We Believe"

1978-1985 - member and later chairman of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations

Publications of NPH

1967 - Guidance from God's Word

1969 - Basic Doctrines of the Bible

1971 - Family Life under Christ

1974 - The Shepherd under Christ (I. Habeck, co-author)

1983 - Martin Luther: Reformer

1988 - The Counseling Shepherd (F. Matzke, co-author)

1991 - The People's Bible: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus

