



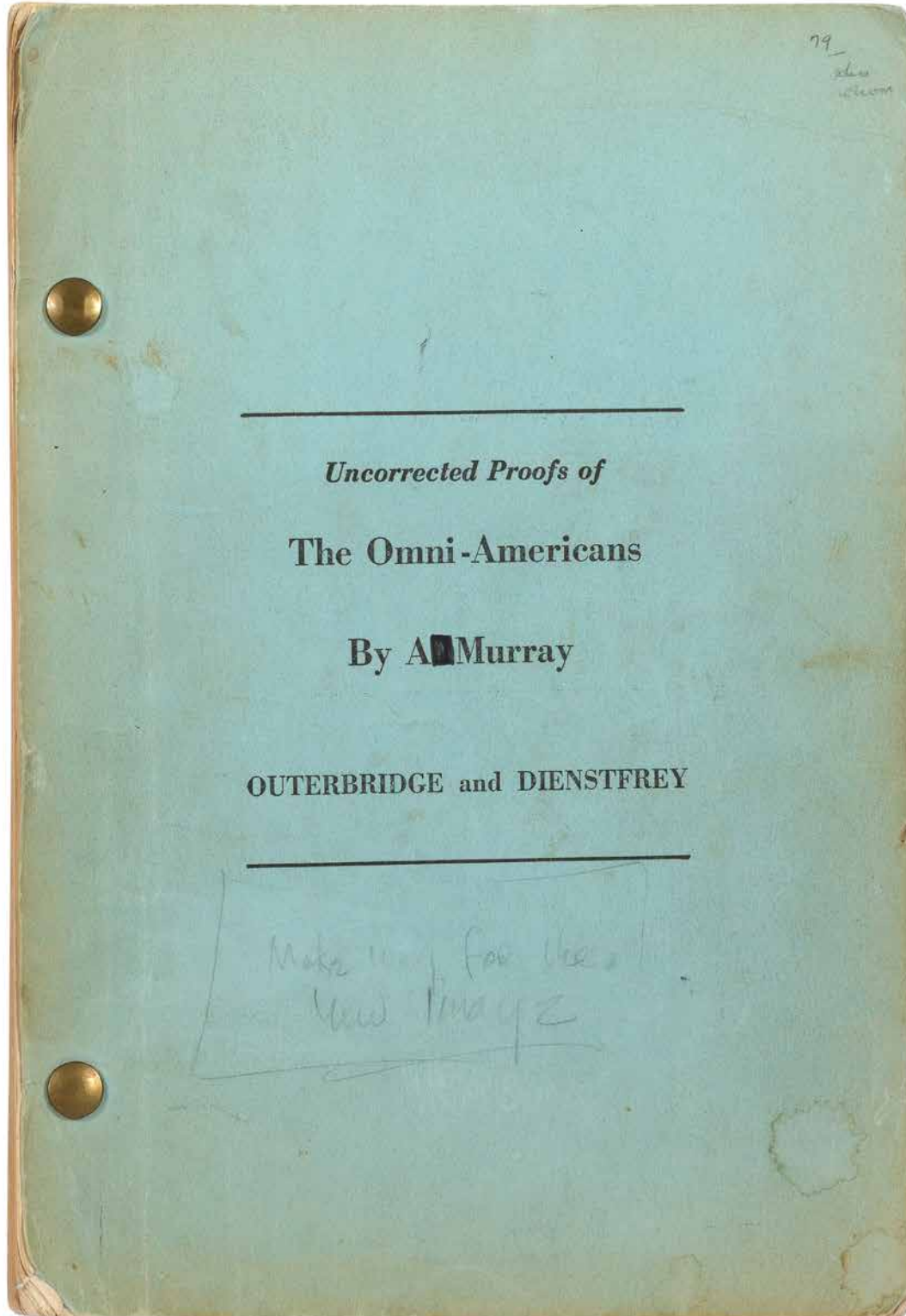
Murray's Own Set of Corrected Galley Proofs of his First Book

Albert Murray

The Omni-Americans: New Perspectives on Black Experience and American Culture

New York: Outerbridge & Dienstfrey [1970]

\$4500



Uncorrected proof in the form of long galley leaves printed rectos only, cut in half and brad bound in printed pale blue wrappers. A few faint spots on the front wrap, some evidence of use, else very good or better.

Getting it Together

~~FO KOME~~

✓ A Short History of U.S. Black Self-Conscious-
ness

✓ The ~~Relevance~~ ^{Role} of the Pre-American Black
Past

Black Pride in Mobile, Alabama

✓ Black Studies and the Aims of
Education

Epilogue: SITUATION NORMAL:
ALL FOULED UP

Murray's own set with several significant additions and deletions in the text, mostly in the preliminary matter and including Murray's handwritten dedication to his wife, as well as mostly modest corrections throughout the text. A comparison to the printed book reveals that most, but not all, of the hand-corrections were incorporated into the published text.

A unique copy of the author's first book, one of the most convincing expositions of black culture as an integrated and indispensable part of mainstream American culture and experience. [BTC#434916]

To

My wife

Margelle Muefee Murray
and for our daughter

Nichelle

2 stars to dance on and also
some shoulders to stand on.

Introduction

11.2.41

The Omni-Americans

*A natural History; 2 Pluribus UNUM
white NOBIS for Black Deviation
Paleface fables, Brownish facts
The Blues Idiom and the Mainstream*

Introduction

Oneupmanship in Colorful
America

Who That Say, What Dat, Every
Time Us Do That?

The Illusive Black Middle Class

Two Self-Portraits

Claude Brown's ~~Social Science Fiction~~ *South for white folks*
Gordon Parks Out of Focus

Three Fictional Sketches

*A CRITIQUE of SOCIAL SCIENCE
fiction fiction*

Star-Crossed Melodrama

Warren Miller and His Black Face Vaudeville

William Styron and his Troublesome Property

James Baldwin, *Protestant* and the Blues
Tradition

~~The Big Black Fake Out~~

Image and Unlikeness in
Harlem

Negroes been as inattentive to the worldly wit and wisdom of Uncle Remus as most of the current crop of civil rights spokesmen seem to have been.

The cultural deprivation from which Negroes in general suffer is not their own but rather the deprivation that makes for the incredible provincialism of those white social science technicians (and their Negro protegees), who when they report their observations and assessments of Negro life, invariably *celebrate* the very features of American life that the greatest artists and intellectuals have always found most highly questionable if not downright objectionable. But come to think of it, what usually seems to matter most in all findings and evaluations made by American social science survey technicians are indices of material affluence and power. In fact, sometimes it seems that even the most comprehensive social science assessments are predicated upon some indefinite but ruthlessly functional theology involving the worship of wealth and force. In any case, it almost always turns out that whoever has acquired money and power—by any means whatsoever—is assumed to be blessed with everything else, including the holiest moral disposition, the richest sense of humor, creative genius, and impeccable taste.

Of course the ^{mechanics} ~~mechanisms~~ of white supremacy permit white Americans in general to presume themselves the natural heirs and assignee to a median legacy of such qualities. But for the rest, so barbarous is the anthropological value system to which contemporary American social science seems to be geared that so far as the technicians who survey Negro communities are concerned people without affluence and power are only creature-like beings whose humanity is measured in terms of their potential to accumulate material goods and exercise force with arrogance.

Alas, not even the most fundamental human value that democratic societies are specifically designed to guarantee seems to count for very much once such technicians become involved with Negroes. On the contrary, far from revealing any significant pre-occupation with or even appreciation for personal freedom and self-realization in any intrinsic sense, the technicians now proceed in an alarming number of instances as if statistical measurements of central tendencies—for all that they may have been initiated in the interest of programing the greatest good for the greatest number—have become a means of justifying an ever increasing standardization, regimentation, and conformity. In so doing, they tend to condemn the very elements in U.S. Negro life style that other non-totalitarian cultures seek and

(as, for example, Stephen Vincent Benét did in his story "*Freedom's a Hard Bought Thing*"). A narrator who is properly tuned in on what underlies the spirituals would hardly allow the kind of vile language in the presence of a man of God like Nat Turner that a Harlem poolroom hoodlum would not tolerate in the presence of any known minister.

As for swinging the blues, the affirmative beat of which is always geared to the rugged facts of life, if you run Schillinger exercises instead of riffing down-home, you only *think* you're swinging. Which, of course, also applies to any Negro writer who assumes that "black consciousness" is only a matter of saying you're black while writing about black experience.

HARRY SWEETMAN HARRY SWEETMAN HARRY SWEETMAN

JAMES BALDWIN AND THE BLUES TRADITION

Not so very long ago, as these things are reckoned in the annals of human letters, James Baldwin, then a promising young Greenwich Village Intellectual from Harlem, wrote an article for *Partisan Review* (June 1949) about *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. It was called "Everybody's Protest Novel," and what made it especially significant was the fact that in it Baldwin, a Negro whose personal commitment to militant social and political action was unquestionable, seemed to be firmly and completely, if somewhat hastily, rejecting social protest in fiction as bad art, a mirror of confusion, dishonestly, and panic, as sentimental fantasy connecting nowhere with reality.

He stated that the avowed aim of such fiction was to bring greater freedom to the oppressed. But he was unenthusiastic about this lofty purpose in itself, nor did he share the then current optimism about the effectiveness of books produced by those committed to it. In fact, he was convinced that "novels of oppression written by Negroes . . . actually reinforce . . . the principles which activate the oppression they decry."

of initiative, self-help, and self-pride among Negroes. [Not even the withholding of anti-poverty funds is more likely to trigger a riot in New York City any more instantaneously than a white blacklasher presuming to reprimand a Harlem Negro in a European accent.]

Meanwhile the least that is required of those who would help Harlem achieve its aspirations (some of which may very well be higher than many of those held in the most self-satisfied and self-restricted white communities and which are, if anything, even better for the nation at large than for Negroes) is that they disentangle themselves from the folklore of condescension and approach the people of Harlem with the attitude that good photographers seem to take when they aim their cameras at the streets and the buildings, an attitude which, marvelous to relate, is precisely the same as the attitude that Southern Negro teachers have always brought to Negro school children: that they are infinitely more wonderful than they are problematical.

HARRY SWEETMAN

HARRY SWEETMAN

HARRY SWEETMAN

PART THREE [Black Dimensions for Contemporary Americans].....

Getting it Together

HARRY SWEETMAN

HARRY SWEETMAN

HARRY SWEETMAN

TITLE TO COME

A Short History of U.S. Black Self-Consciousness

The preoccupation with symbols and rituals of black consciousness currently so noticeable among so many civil rights activists and passivists alike is frequently misrepresented as an entirely new development. Not only have many white reporters