

afro-american fiction: errata and additions

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Professor Robert A. Corrigan provides us with the following corrections and additions to his check list of Afro-American fiction published in the fall, 1970 issue. For economy, we've limited him to major changes only: books added, titles excluded, substantive errors. He writes that he has lots more data now on prices and page numbers, courtesy of an energetic graduate student named Lynn Munro, and that he is willing to share all his information via a corrected checklist. Write him c/o American Civilization Program, 305 English-Philosophy, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa 52240.

1. The preface to the original checklist mentioned some uncertainty about the nationality of Nathan Barrett, Frank Hercules and R. R. Rivera Correa. It can now be reported that Barrett was born in New York and his novel written there; Hercules, who became a U.S. citizen in 1959, lives and writes in New York; and Rivera Correa is a life-long resident of Puerto Rico. Obviously, the first two authors should remain in the checklist, but there is some doubt about the last, particularly since Rivera Correa has published at least four titles in Spanish: **Memorias de un Estudiante**, **Tierra y Pan**, **Correo de Zaragoza** and **Sus Ojos se Cerraron**. In addition, Tomas Spence, Black co-author of **Martin Larwin**, with white American Eric Heath, was born and educated in Jamaica but now lives in Long Beach, California. Despite its subtitle, "Folk Tales of the Caribbean," **Black Gods, Green Islands** by Geoffrey Holder, a Black from Trinidad who now lives in America, and white free-lance writer Tom Harshman, appears to be more fiction than folklore. Other questions are raised by **The Dictionary Catalogue of the Arthur B. Spingarn Collection of Negro Authors**

(Boston, 1970) which lists Edmund Austin, Ira Ferguson and Christine Forster as from the West Indies; Rosa Guy and Carl Offord from Trinidad; E. M. Rasmussen and Joe Smith from the Virgin Islands; Alston Anderson from Panama; Dave Talbot from British Guiana; and Nii Vanderpuije from Liberia; but in each case they appear to be writers who have moved to America where they have produced their major work.

2. Of the additional problems cited in the introduction to the checklist, information has now been provided on Beaumont, Braithwaite, Cooper, Himes and Shackleford. The problem of pagination for Micheaux's **The Wind From Nowhere** is directly related to the several editions of the book, all of which I have not seen. I am still not certain about whether or not it is simply another version of **The Conquest** and **The Homesteader**, both of which have a strong autobiographical flavor. Aaron Eugene Aiken's **Exposure of Negro Society and Societies** was published in New York in 1915 by J. P. Wharton; 31 pages long, it sold for \$.25. Neither the Schomburg nor Spingarn collections list the volume, however. I should also point out that several careful

readers responded to my call for aid: Russell C. Brignano queried my inclusion of Robert Beck; Bruce Adams set me straight on Griggs' **Wisdom's Call**; William French questioned the race of Thomas Chastain; and Frank Deodene prompted me to re-think my position on juvenile material. Both French and Deodene have been extremely helpful in determining the race of recent novelists.

3. The most serious error discovered in the original checklist was the result of my careless correction of galley proof; thus Alvin Carlos Cooper was credited with four novels actually written by Clarence L. Cooper, Jr. Only one novel, **Stroke of Midnight**, was written by Alvin Cooper, whereas **The Scene, Weed, The Dark Messenger** and **Black!** should now be correctly cited as the work of Clarence Cooper who was correctly identified as the author of **The Farm** and who may also have published **The Syndicate**, for which accurate information is still not available. The Berkeley Press was incorrectly listed as the first publisher of two Chester Himes' novels, **The Crazy Kill** and **The Real Cool Killers**, which were actually Avon originals, and **The Big Gold Dream** by Himes was originally published in Paris in 1959 by Librairie as **Tout Pour Plaire** in a 250 page paper edition. I should also point out that **A Bear for the FBI** by William Van Peebles (Van Peebles, not Peebles) was first published in Paris in a French translation in 1964 by Burchet/Chastel with the title **Un Ours Pour Le F.B.I.** and was 190 pages. All four of Van Peebles' novels were first published in France. It should also be noted that Jessie Fauset's **Plum Bun** was first published in London in 1928.

4. Less serious but still annoying errors involved misspellings of author's names and book titles: Joseph A. Dauls should read Joseph A. Davis; "Mammy" rather than "Morning" is the correct reading for the Charlotte Hawkins Brown title; and the writer variously identified as Charles Ruthaven Offord and Carl Offord is actually Carl Ruthven Offord, the author of both **The White Face** and **The Naked Fear**. The correct title of S. W. Edward's book is **Go Now in Darkness** and the Joe Johnson volume was published by Vantage press. The correct spelling for the last name of the author of **Wasted Travail** is Rosebrough. It should also be noted that Lewis A. Caldwell seems to have used the pen name Abe Noel when he published **The Policy King** in 1945 and that the AMS Press has been somewhat behind in its announced reprint schedule so that eventually some titles listed as reprinted in 1970 will need to be changed in 1971. There are a number of additional slight errors in-

cluding misspellings of one kind or another and the misdating by a year of minor novels, but these will be corrected in subsequent publications of the entire checklist.

5. As most compilers of Afro-American checklists have discovered to their dismay, it is a most difficult task to secure accurate racial information on some authors and this checklist has been no exception. Ironically enough, although the problem used to be difficulty in identifying Black authors popular with White readers, like Frank Yerby and Willard Motley, the current popularity of books on all aspects of the Black scene has given rise to difficulty in ferreting out the names of White writers, like Warren Miller, Shane Stevens and Earl Conrad, who are generally taken to be Black. Even though Afro-American experts like Dorothy Porter and Darwin Turner are occasionally fooled, this compiler must still report with shame the erroneous inclusion of at least eight White writers on the original Black checklist: Charles Beaumont's **The Intruder**; Mary Beechwood's (not Breechwood) **Memphis Jackson's Son**; Thomas Chastain's **Judgement Day**; Earl Conrad's **The Premier, The DaVinci Machine**, and **Typoo**; Christopher Davis, **First Family**; Russell F. Davis, **Anything For A Friend**; James Roberts Gilmore's (pseud. Edmund Kirke) **Among the Pines**; and Harold Stern's **Blackland**. It is worth pointing out to the unwary reader that the Gilmore title is reprinted in the Mnemosyne Black series, now distributed by Books for Libraries, and that he was the author of at least four other novels which have yet to be reprinted. Moreover, Charles Beaumont is included on Darwin Turner's list as is Thomas Chastain, who also appears in the Dorothy Porter bibliography. Turner also lists Mary Breechwood, Christopher Davis, Russell Davis and Shane Stevens. Christopher Davis is the author of five additional novels and Russell Davis authored at least one other novel. Readers of this checklist should also note that two other writers often listed as Black, are White: William Goyen and Barbara Tinker.

6. The difficulty in obtaining copies of scarce Black titles also provided problems with the result that several titles listed as fiction were belatedly discovered to be history, essay, biography or autobiography. Three titles by Robert Beck (pseud. Iceberg Slim), **Trick Baby, Pimp** and **Mama Black Widow**, defy easy categorization but probably should be considered biographical and autobiographical even though they read like fiction. **The Seeking** by Will Thomas is definitely autobiography as is Otis M. Shackelford's

Seeking The Best, although it contains other sorts of material as well. **Wisdom's Call** by Sutton Griggs is more accurately described as essay and **Light Ahead for the Negro** by August Johnson should be catalogued as history. In addition, there seems to be no available evidence to prove that the great Black anthologizer, William Stanley Braithwaite, ever actually published his two manuscript novels, **The Canadien** and **Going Over Tindel**, and they also should be excluded. The problem of children's literature is troublesome. After a good deal of thought, I have decided reluctantly to remove the following titles from the list: Arna Bon-temps' **Sad-Faced Boy, Chariot in the Sky, and Lonesome Boy**; Countee Cullen and Christopher Cat's **My Lives and How I Lost Them**; Lorenz B. Graham's **South Town**, and Kristin Hunter's **The Soul Brothers and Sister Lou**. Each of these authors (except Hunter) happens to have written other books primarily for children which were not included on the original checklist; nor were the juvenile titles of Ann Petry listed. Mary Vroman's **Esther** is probably also aimed at an adolescent female audience as are the nurse novels of Rubie Saunders.

7. Two items from the checklist, John Stephens Durham's "Diana, Priestess of Haiti" and Pauline Hopkins' "Of One Blood," were published in magazines but never, insofar as can be discovered, reprinted in book form. Although they are being retained in the checklist, it does raise the question of what to do about other works, such as Jean Toomer's "York Beach" published only in **The American Caravan** (1929) or Richard Wright's "The Man who Lived Underground" which appeared in **Cross Section** in 1944. It seems more helpful at this time to raise the question openly rather than to offer an arbitrary solution which might not prove to be adequate in the long run. Eventually a full listing of all fiction published by Afro-Americans should settle the matter once and for all.

8. Since the fall of 1970 several paperbacks have appeared, or are about to appear, which should also be reported since they are reprints of books not available at the time of the checklist. There is, for example, a 1971 Paperback Library edition of John Oliver Killens' **And Then We Heard The Thunder**. Collier Books has publicized the forthcoming paper editions of two Nella Larsen titles, **Quicksand** and **Passing** which, up to now, have been available only in relatively expensive hardcover reprints. Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich reprinted Claude McKay's **Banjo** in paperback in 1970 and Bantam Books brought out Rose Robinson's **Eagle in the Air** in 1971. **Night Song** by John Alfred Williams, reprinted as **Sweet Love Bitter** by Dell in 1966, appeared with its original title in a 1970 Pocket Books edition. Ann Petry's long out-of-print **Country Place** will be issued in a \$7.50 hardbound edition by the Chatham Bookseller in May. As of this writing, only two entirely new works of fiction by Black writers have appeared in book form in 1971: Ernest J. Gaines' **The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman** (Dial, \$6.95) and John Oliver Killens' 256 page novel **The Cotillion; or, One Good Bull Is Half The Herd** (Trident, \$6.50); but a new novel by Clarence Major, **No**, is supposed to come out later this year.

9. The worst sort of bibliographical inaccuracy, however, is to leave out books which deserve to be included, and the original checklist was guilty of ignoring thirty-seven such works. Thus, the most important reason for providing this supplement at this time is to add those titles which will make the checklist truly definitive through December 31, 1970. The list of books which follows, then, is composed of works of fiction which although published by Black Americans between 1853 and the end of 1970 were not included in the checklist appearing in this journal in the fall of 1970.

BIBBS, ART LEROI
Cametude, Livre de recettes, 1969 (1970)
 (Diet Book for Junkies)
 Traduit de l'americain par Marie Beach
 Adapte par Claude Pelieu
 Paris, Christian Bourgeois Editeur, 94 p.
 Published as "Diet Book for Junkies" in supplement to **Umbra's Blackworks**, Summer, 1970
 8 p.; author's name given as Hart Le Roi Bibbs

BLACKWOOD, GRANBY
Un sang mal mele, 1966
 Traduit de l'americain par Jacqueline Bernard

Paris, Editions Denoel, 217 p., 15F

BROADUS, ROBERT DEAL
Spokes For The Wheel, 1961
 Muncie, Kingsman Press, 143 p., \$3.50

BROWN, FRANK LONDON
The Myth Maker, 1969
 Chicago, Path Press, 179 p., \$5.00

CAIN, GEORGE
Blueschild Baby, 1970
 New York, McGraw-Hill, 200 p., \$6.95

CARRERE, MENTIS
It's All South, 1966

- Los Angeles, John Henry and Mary Louisa
Dunn Foundation, 160 p., \$1.00 (paper)
(Four volumes, each 40 p.; 25 cents per
volume; numbered consecutively)
- CARSON, LULAR L.
The Priceless Gift, 1970
New York, Vantage Press, 62 p., \$2.50
- DELANY, SAMUEL R.
The Fall of the Towers, 1970
New York, Ace, 413 p., \$.95
Revision of a trilogy published earlier in
separate volumes as **Captives of the Flame**,
The Towers of Toron, and **City of a
Thousand Suns**.
- DUMAS, HENRY
Ark of Bones and Other Stories, 1970
Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press,
116 p., \$5.95
- FIORE, CARMEN ANTHONY
The Barrier, 1965
New York, Pageant Press, 155 p., \$4.00
- FLOYD, SILAS XAVIER
**Short Stories For Colored People, Both Old
and Young**, 1920
Washington, Austin Jenkins Co., 280 p., \$2.50

Charming Stories For Young and Old, 1925
Washington, Austin Jenkins Co., 317 p.
(Enlarged version of **Floyd's Flowers**)
- GREENE, JOE
House of Pleasure, 1968
New York, Paperback Library, 283 p., \$.75
(Paper)
- GREENE, JOE (pseud. B. B. Johnson)
Bad Day For A Black Brother, 1970
New York, Paperback Library, 158 p., \$.75
(Paper)
- GROVES, JOHN WESLEY
Shellbreak, 1970
New York, Paperback Library, \$.60 (Paper)
- JANSSEN, MILTON W.
Divided, 1963
New York, Pageant Press, 141 p., \$3.00
- JORDAN, ELSIE
Strange Sinner, 1954
New York, Pageant Press, 172 p., \$3.00
- JOSEPH, ARTHUR
Volcano in Our Midst, 1952
New York, Pageant Press, 210 p., \$3.00
- KELLEY, WILLIAM MELVIN
Dunfords Travels Everywhere, 1970
Garden City, Doubleday and Company, 201
p., \$5.95
- KIMBROUGH, JESS
Defender of the Angels, 1969
New York, Macmillan, 273 p., \$6.95
- McCLELLAN, GEORGE MARION
The Path of Dreams, 1916
Nashville, AME Sunday School Union, 206 p.
(Contains both short stories and poetry)
- MARTIN, CHESTER
He Was Born, He Died and He Lived, 1965
New York, Carlton Press, 68 p., \$2.50
- MORRISON, TONI
The Bluest Eye, 1970
New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 164
p., \$5.95
- ROBINSON, JOHN TERRY
The Double Circle People, 1970
New York, Suzunna, 145 p., \$4.95
- SCOTT-HERON, GIL
The Vulture, 1970
New York and Cleveland, World, 244 p.,
\$.65
- THORUP, LESTER W.
Came The Harvest, 1966
New York, Carlton Press, 39 p., \$2.00
- VAN PEEBLES, MELVIN
Un Americain En Enfer, 1965
Paris, Editions Denoel, 259 p.

The Big Heart, n.d.
Paris
- WALKER, CLAUDE, JR.
Sabih, 1966
New York, Carlton Press, 147 p., \$3.00
- WALKER, THOMAS HAMILTON BEB
Revelation, Trial and Exile of John in Epics,
1912
Gainsville, Pepper Publishing and Printing
Company
- WARD, THOMAS PLAYFAIR
The Truth That Makes Men Free, 1955
New York, Pageant, 154 p., \$2.50
- WATERMAN, CHARLES ELMER
The Promised Land and Other Tales, 1897
Mechanic Falls, Maine, Ledges Publishing
Company, 84 p.

**The White Fawn; A Tale of the Land of
Molechunkamunk**, 1931
Boston, Chapple Publishing Company, 87 p.,
\$1.00

WATSON, ROBERTA B.

Closed Doors, 1967

New York, Exposition Press, 95 p., \$3.50

WHITE, THOMAS J.

To Hell and Back at 16, 1970

New York, Carlton Press, 127 p., \$2.75

WILLIAMS, RICHARD L.

Parson Wiggin's Son, 1964

New York, Carlton Press, 117 p., \$2.95

YANCEY, A. H.

Interpositionulification [sic], **What The Negro**

May Expect, 1959

New York, Comet, 134 p., \$2.75