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Archives of the History of American Psychology
University Libraries, The University of Akron

Robert V. Guthrie Papers

COLLECTION DATES: 1913-2005

VOLUME: 4.0 linear feet

ACCESS: This collection is open for research use

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Biographical Note

Robert V. Guthrie was born in Chicago on February 14, 1932. He began attending Florida A&M University in 1948 but his education was interrupted in 1950 when he registered for the draft. He served at the Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi and later spent time in Korea. After the war ended in 1953, Guthrie returned to Florida A&M with support from the G.I. Bill. He acquired his BA in psychology there in 1955. The landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education* influenced the Supreme Court to abolish segregation in 1954 and Guthrie took advantage of this by applying to the Master's program at the University of Kentucky. He would go on to earn his Master's degree in 1960. Upon graduating, Guthrie took his first teaching position as an instructor in the Behavioral Sciences Department at San Diego City College. He remained in this position for one year, 1962-1963, before joining San Diego Mesa College as an instructor in the Behavioral Sciences department. He served as chair of the department from 1968-1970. Guthrie received his Ph.D. in psychology in 1970 from the U.S. International University in San Diego.

Upon earning his Ph.D. Guthrie took his first position as a professor of psychology in the psychology department at the University of Pittsburgh. He remained at Pittsburgh from 1970-1973, first as a professor and later as the director of the Urban Psychology Graduate Program (1971-1973). In 1975 Guthrie returned to San Diego as a supervisory research psychologist at the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center. In 1981 he went into private practice.

Guthrie returned to academics in 1991 when he became a Professor of Psychology at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. He also became Chair of the Psychology Department's Applied Experimental Program. He retained these positions until his retirement in 1998. In retirement Guthrie served as an adjunct professor of psychology at San Diego State University. Robert V. Guthrie died in his home on November 6, 2005.

Robert Guthrie played a significant role in the field of African-American Psychology. His book *Even the Rat was White: A Historical View of Psychology* (1976) was a landmark publication that brought to light the fact that many psychological theories and ideas regarding human behavior and personality were deeply rooted in racism. The book also documented the work of many important African-American psychologists that were all but forgotten within mainstream publications. *Even the Rat was White* proved to be Guthrie's most important work and one of the first books to focus on the history of African-Americans in the field of psychology.

On April 6, 2001 the Archives of the History of American Psychology (AHAP) held a one-day conference to pay tribute to Robert Guthrie's life and work. AHAP was honored to be chosen by Guthrie as the official depository of his papers; the first African American psychologist to do so. Robert Guthrie was further honored for his work in the history of the psychology of race and racism by being named an elder at the 2005 National Multicultural Conference and Summit.

Scope and Content

The collection of Robert V. Guthrie contains seven series. Series 1 contains limited biographical information. Series 2, the bulk of the collection, consists of various publications and drafts. This includes correspondence, research, and other information regarding his numerous publications. Series 3 is a collection of correspondence that is personal and/or unrelated to any of his printed works. Series 4 includes various presentations given by Guthrie and also includes the notes and rough drafts relating to these presentations. Series 5 contains various pamphlets and programs for events that Guthrie presumably attended and Series 6 consists of miscellaneous research and notes that do not seem to be related to any of the published works included within this collection. Series 7, still images and media, is a rich collection of photographs. Series 8 includes several artifact. The photographs included are mostly of African-American psychologists who appear in his book, *Even the Rat was White: A Historical View of Psychology*. These photographs are held in the Archives of the History of American Psychology's Still Images Collection.

This collection is rather small and primarily documents the work on Guthrie's book *Even the Rat was White: A Historical View of Psychology*. Although the collection consists of seven series, the majority of materials appear Series 1: Publications and Drafts. This is by far the largest series in the collection (folders 2-40) and houses rough drafts, notes, proofs, correspondence, and information from publishers regarding the book. Of particular interest is the biographical material of the psychologists featured in his book. Included within this subject is correspondence between Guthrie and the noted psychologists, copies of their vitae, and a list of graduates from Howard University who earned psychology degrees from 1927 to 1949.

The Robert V. Guthrie collection is rather incomplete and is noticeably lacking in many areas although it is quite complete in regards to *Even the Rat was White: A Historical View of Psychology*. These underrepresented areas include, most notably, his work in the military, his extensive teaching career, and his nine years in private practice.

Series Descriptions

Series 1: Biographical File, [1955-2005]

Contains various name plates belonging to Guthrie including those used at the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center, and several identification cards. Also included is a program from the Elder's Ceremony during the 2005 National Multicultural Conference and Summit where Guthrie was honored, an honorary letter to Guthrie from the Association of Black Psychologists and a 1994 questionnaire regarding his part in founding the Association of Black Psychologists. Of particular interest is the transcript of an oral history including Robert Guthrie, Thomas Parham, Joseph White, Michael Conner, and Nita Tewari conducted by Wade Pickren and Sheila Henderson in Irvine California at Thomas Parham's house.

Series 2: Writings Files, [1913-2001]

This series consists of two sub-series; the first dealing with Guthrie's book *Even the Rat Was White: A Historical View of Psychology* and the second regarding various other publications. Other publications include his book *Psychology in the World Today: An Interdisciplinary Approach* and entries concerning Francis C. Sumner and Kenneth B. Clark in *The Encyclopedia of Psychology*. Both sub-series contain all notes, drafts, and proofs pertaining to the named publication. Also included are book or publication related correspondence and any research materials including hand-written notes and various other undated materials.

Series 3: Correspondence, [1970-1999]

Correspondence included in this series is both general and personal and is arranged chronologically. Correspondents include, but are not limited to, the American Psychological Association, the Southern Regional Education Board, the Navy Personnel Research and Development Center, and the Association of Black Psychologists. Of interest are post cards sent from Leipzig, Germany; a letter of recommendation on behalf of Guthrie to San Diego State University regarding his interest in teaching in the African-American Studies Department; and a letter from the American Psychological Association requesting Guthrie's participation in the 1999 Master Lecture Series. Also included are letters from Mary Henle, former Chair of the Fellows Committee for Division 26 of the American Psychological Association.

Series 4: Presentations, [1975-1993]

Contains various presentations delivered by Guthrie and others as well as the drafts and notes pertaining to them. Items of particular importance are the hand-written notes and revisions that accompany the final drafts. Includes a synopsis of *Even the Rat was White: A Historical View of Psychology* that was presented at the 1976 Annual Meeting of the Association of Black Psychologists. Other items of interest include Guthrie's keynote address at the 1979 Knoxville College Conference for Black Social Scientists and Guthrie's 1981 Invited Address for the American Psychological Association titled *Psychology and Black Americans*. This series also contains a significant amount of handwritten material that is undated and incomplete.

Series 5: Organizations and Meetings Files, [1940-1995]

Series includes programs for various events including the Second Symposium on Black Psychology, the American Psychological Association Minority Fellowship Program, and several programs from various Association of Black Psychologists meetings. Also of interest is promotional material regarding Guthrie's Book, *Psychology in the World Today: An Interdisciplinary Approach* and a 1940 pamphlet from the Sumner Institute on Parent Education, Child Development, and Consumer Education held at Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Series 6: Research, [1999]

Series consists of various materials that are assumed to be unrelated to Guthrie's numerous publications that are included in Series 2.

Series 8: Artifacts

Series includes a baseball cap worn by Guthrie with the slogan, "Naval Health Research Center." Also included is a book about Leipzig, Germany that is inscribed to Guthrie.

Related Materials

Materials related to Robert V. Guthrie appear in the following AHAP collections: APA Division 12 Records, Cheiron Archives, Cook Papers, Crissey Papers, Journal of Marriage & Family, Krech Paper, Maslow Papers, SPSSI Records.

Inventory

Box 1: [M3533]

Folder - Contents

Series 1: Biographical File

1. Biographical Information, [1955- 2005]

Series 2: Publications

2. Book related correspondence regarding Black psychologists, [1972-2001]
3. Book reviews and promotional materials, [1975-1978]
4. Biographical research materials concerning psychologists featured in book, [nd]
5. Research materials concerning Francis C. Sumner, [1918-1974]
6. Research materials pertaining to Francis C. Sumner's military activity, [1918-1999]
7. Biographical research materials concerning Francis C. Sumner, [1916-1978]

Box 2: [M3534]

Folder - Contents

Series 2: Publications

1. Research materials concerning Francis C. Sumner (correspondence), [1914-1949]
2. Research materials concerning Francis C. Sumner (publications), [1922-1952]
3. Research materials pertaining to Alberta B. Turner, [1941-1988]
4. Research materials concerning Alberta B. Turner (clippings), [1951-1988]
5. Research materials regarding book (published works by others), [1900-1944]
6. Research materials regarding book (published works by others), [1946-1979]
7. Research materials regarding book (published works by others), [1982-1994]
8. Research materials for book, [1913-1917]
9. Research materials for book, [1927-1972]

Box 3: [M3535]

Folder - Contents

Series 2: Publications, [continued]

1. Research materials for book, [1973-1994]
2. Research materials for book, [1987]
3. Research materials regarding Ota Benga, [nd]
4. Research material for book, [nd]
5. Research material for book (works by various authors), [nd]
6. Research material for book (handwritten notes), [nd]
7. Research material for book (incomplete items), [nd]

Box 4: [M3536]

Folder - Contents

Series 2: Publications, [continued]

1. Early proofs [no date]
2. "A" set proofs for book, first edition, up to chapter five (incomplete), [no date]
3. "A" set proofs for book, first edition, chapter six – index (incomplete), [no date]
4. Proofs for book, first edition, chapter five – end (incomplete), [no date]

5. Proofs for book, first edition, chapter dealing with African American Psychologists,
6. Galley proofs of reproductions used in book, [no date]
7. Galley proofs of reproductions used in book, [no date]
8. Proofs for book, first edition, chapter one – four (incomplete), [no date]

Box 5: [M3537]

Folder - Contents

Series 2: Publications, [continued]

1. Author's proof for book, first edition, complete with handwritten corrections, [no date]
2. Disassembled copy of book, first edition, [no date]
3. Final proofs for book, second edition, preface – chapter two, [no date]
4. Final proofs for book, second edition, chapter three – five, [no date]
5. Final proofs for book, second edition, chapter six and seven, [no date]
6. Final proofs for book, second edition, chapter eight – index, [no date]

Box 6: [M3538]

Folder - Contents

Series 2: Publications, [continued]

1. Final checklist for book, second edition, [nd]
2. Author/publisher agreement, first edition, [1974]
3. Correspondence with Harper and Row, [1973-1987]
4. Royalty statements and check stubs from various publishers, [1976-2001]
5. Information pertaining to book, second edition, [1992-1997]
6. Correspondence with publishers, second edition, [1992-1997]
7. Permission requests for book, *Psychology in the World Today*, [1967-1971]

Box 7: [M3539]

Folder - Contents

Series 2: Publications, [continued]

1. Permission requests and material for, *Psychology in the World Today*, [1973]
2. Agreements with publishers for *Psychology in the World Today* and *Personality, Behavior, and Attitude: A Reader*, [1967-1968]
3. Royalty statements, [1969-1978]

4. Royalty statements, [1970-1981]
5. Publisher agreements for *Introduction to Psychology* and *Contemporary Social Issues: A Reader*, [1970]
6. Correspondence with various publishers regarding various publications, [1969-1992]
7. Various publications, final drafts, and instructor's manuals for book, [1971-1992]
8. Permission requests for *Psychology and Psychologists*, [1974]
9. Correspondence, working drafts, and final drafts of Kenneth Clark and Francis Sumner entries in *The Encyclopedia of Psychology*, [1997-1999]
10. Galley proofs of reproduction, [nd]

Series 3: Correspondence

11. Personal correspondence, [1970-1976]

Box 8: [M3540]

Folder - Contents

Series 3: Correspondence, [continued]

1. Personal correspondence, [1977-2002]
2. Personal correspondence with Mary Henle, [1982-2001]

Series 4: Presentations

3. Presentation, notes, and drafts, [1975-1977]
4. Presentation, notes, and drafts, [1975-1992]
5. Presentation, notes, and drafts, [nd]

Series 5: Organizations and Meetings Files

6. Pamphlets, programs, schedules of meetings, etc., [1940-1995]

Series 6: Research

7. Miscellaneous research materials

Box 9 [M3541]

Series 8: Artifacts

Guthrie's Naval cap

