



# America's Instrument: The Banjo in the Nineteenth Century

*Philip F. Gura, James F. Bollman*

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**America's Instrument: The Banjo in the Nineteenth Century** Philip F. Gura, James F. Bollman

This handsome illustrated history traces the transformation of the banjo from primitive folk instrument to sophisticated musical machine and, in the process, offers a unique view of the music business in nineteenth-century America.

Philip Gura and James Bollman chart the evolution of "America's instrument," the five-stringed banjo, from its origins in the gourd instruments of enslaved Africans brought to the New World in the seventeenth century through its rise to the very pinnacle of American popular culture at the turn of the twentieth century. Throughout, they look at how banjo craftsmen and manufacturers developed, built, and marketed their products to an American public immersed in the production and consumption of popular music.

With over 250 illustrations--including rare period photographs, minstrel broadsides, sheet music covers, and banjo tutors and tune books--*America's Instrument* brings to life a fascinating aspect of American cultural history.

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