



The Wicked Waltz and Other Scandalous Dances: Outrage at Couple Dancing in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries

By Mark Knowles

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The waltz, perhaps the most beloved social dance of the 19th and early 20th centuries, once provoked outrage from religious leaders and other self-appointed arbiters of social morality. Decrying the corrupting influence of social dancing, they failed to suppress the popularity of the waltz or other dance crazes of the period, including the Charleston, the tango, and "animal dances" such as the Turkey Trot, Grizzly Bear, and Bunny Hug. This book investigates the development of these popular dances, considering in particular how their very existence as "taboo" cultural fads ultimately provided a catalyst for lasting social reform. In addition to examining the impact of the waltz and other scandalous dances on fashion, music, leisure, and social reform, the text describes the opposition to dance and the proliferation of literature on both sides.

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Review

"meticulously researched...scholarly yet entertaining...recommended" --Library Journal

"wonderful illustrations and photographs enhance the book...recommended" --Choice

About the Author

Mark Knowles, choreographer of more than 300 theatrical productions, is on the faculty of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in Los Angeles, California.

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