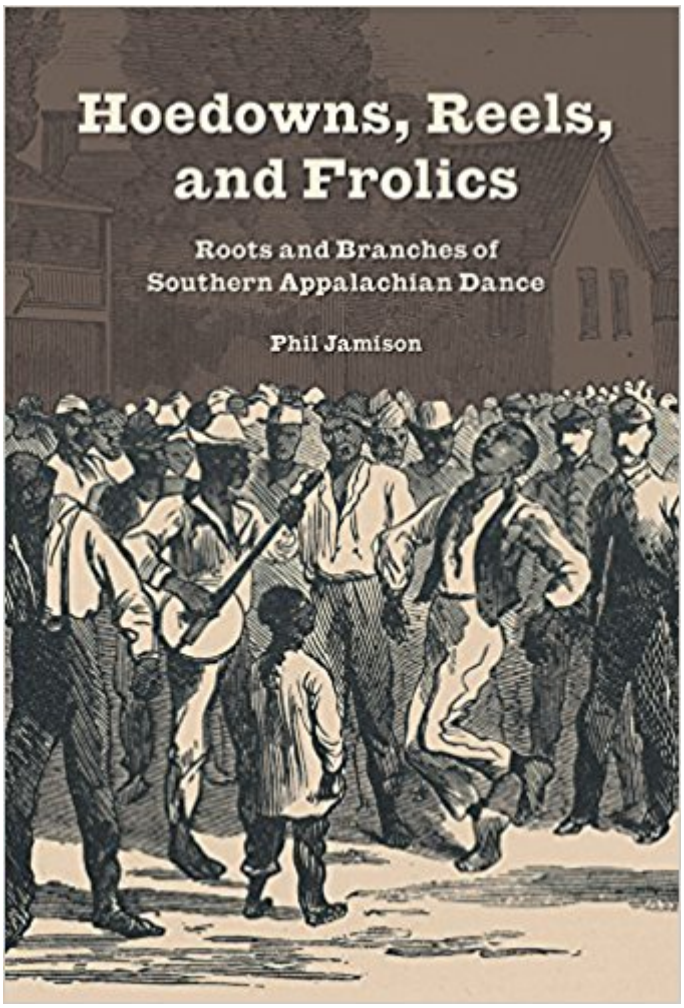
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Hoedowns, Reels, And Frolics: Roots And Branches Of Southern Appalachian Dance (Music In American Life)



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Synopsis

In Hoedowns, Reels, and Frolics, old-time musician and flatfoot dancer Philip Jamison journeys into the past and surveys the present to tell the story behind the square dances, step dances, reels, and other forms of dance practiced in southern Appalachia. Ã Â These distinctive folk dances, Jamison argues, are not the unaltered jigs and reels brought by early British settlers, but hybrids that developed over time by adopting and incorporating elements from other popular forms. He traces the forms from their European, African American, and Native American roots to the modern day. On the way he explores the powerful influence of black culture, showing how practices such as calling dances as well as specific kinds of steps combined with white European forms to create distinctly "American" dances. Ã Â From cakewalks to clogging, and from the Shoo-fly Swing to the Virginia Reel, Hoedowns, Reels, and Frolics reinterprets an essential aspect of Appalachian culture.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"A valuable contribution to our deeper understanding of the rich, intricate, and elaborate culture of the Appalachian mountain region of America."--Civil War Book Review "This book is meticulously researched, a thorough telling of the story of Appalachian dance, beginning with its European, African-American, and Native-American roots, continuing to modern times. Perhaps because heÃ¢â ¬â„¢s a dancer himself, Jamison writes in a very engaging, reader-friendly manner which scholars and hobbyists alike should appreciate. Highly recommended"--Bluegrass

Unlimited"Jamison demonstrates how the history of dance is the story of America: immigration, race, trade, culture, identity, fashion, social stratification, and innovation. The closer you look, the more fascinating it all becomes. . . . This book is about dance, true, but it also provides an analogue for so many other things, reminding us, once again, that few forms of art. . . are ever quite what they seem."--Sing Out! Ã Â "No praise is too high for this book. . . . Essential for anyone interested in American dance history or southern Appalachian culture."--Country Dance and Song Society News"An enjoyable read. Valuable for those interested in dance, music, African American studies, Native American studies, and US history in general. Recommended."--Choice "Phil Jamison has done an admirable jobÃ¢â ¬Â¦ Hoedowns, Reels, and Frolics is highly informative and entertaining; it would be a worthy addition to the library of any folk dance-- or folk music-- scholar or enthusiast."--Journal of Folklore Research Ã Â

From cakewalks to clogging, a new history of a vital American art form

This is a meticulously researched, thoughtfully argued, and beautifully written survey of southern Appalachian dance practices. From a vast body of primary source material -- including interviews and rare archival materials -- Jamison complicates the common perception of the region’s expressive practices as products of "poor mountain whites," carefully pointing out the moments and processes by which mountain dance developed from the hybridization of handed-down British traditions and influences from Native American, African/African-American, and Continental dance forms. Ultimately, "Hoedowns, Reels and Frolics" provides a rich picture of the vibrant diversity of Appalachian dance, situated within the social and industrial history of the region, and highlights not only its crooked history but also its potential for impact on current and future generations.I am especially impressed by the way Jamison has balanced his extensive and deep personal experience and passion for the subject with objective, thorough critique -- he’s not simply cheerleading for square-dancing or flatfooting -- and by the writing style, which is both unimpeachably erudite AND thoroughly approachable. I’d highly recommend this book to scholars, teachers, and enthusiasts of Appalachian and American history and culture, dance (of all types), music (ditto), and anyone interested in broadening their perspective on the ways and means by which folk traditions are defined and transmitted.

This is a wonderful book, although of interest mainly to people who are already interested in this subject. It’s not likely to ignite an explosion of popularity of a superb form of community recreation

that was, I think, killed off by Television, which destroyed community, replacing it with individuals staring at professionally produced garbage, instead of people having great fun with their neighbors.If you are involved in this movement (forgive the pun) or curious about it, Jamison's book is an important part of an ongoing revolution in understanding the history and variety of these dances. I am one of those who believe that understanding the history of things increases one's enjoyment of them. I doubt that Phil had me in mind when he wrote this book, but he might as well have!I would rather that he had included information about Northern Appalachian dances and dance music, but that would be a different book and take another 30 years to research. I'm happy with what he has done.

Mr. JamisonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s informative, well researched and insightful book is Southern history as it should be. Confronted with the minefield of myths, half truths, unsupported ramblings, persistent stereotypes and wishful thinking that make up much of the accepted history of the South, particularly that of the Appalachian region, Jamison demonstrates the ability to tip toe through the mines, dig deep and uncover facts that give us a new perspective and clearer understanding of the history of traditional Southern dance. What emerges will engage and often surprise readers, even those who thought they had a pretty good understanding of the subject. Of particular interest is JamisonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s focus on giving voice to the contributions of all Southerners be they European immigrants, Native Americans, slaves, wealthy land owners, frontiersmen, or visitors from ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“across the pond.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• The way in which the traditions and innovations of so many varied groups intertwine to form Southern Appalachian dance is an example of what makes our country so vibrant and unique.If youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢re already a fan of dance, youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll love this book. If you find pleasure in discovering a bit of real history, youÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll definitely love this book and appreciate JamisonÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s meticulous research and reasoned interpretation of source material.

Since Jamison has a unique perspective on the material (he's a musician, clogger and square dance caller in addition to his teaching career), I sensed a sincere effort by the author to carefully convey the history and significance of traditional American dance styles.This is as thorough a study on the topic as one could possibly hope to find.Highly recommended.

This book is the first of its kind. It is a detailed history of dance in the Appalachian region. Jamison has spent his adult life in the area, and has learned dance and banjo from local people who love to

tell family stories and show others the art of playing Old Time music and dancing to the hundreds of tunes that originated in the mountains. He explains to the reader the history of these dance forms in a conversational way that keeps the reader interested.

A well put together history on Appalachian dance styles. Very thorough and a pleasure to read.

Not at all what I expected

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