



Hoedowns, Reels, and Frolics: Roots and Branches of Southern Appalachian Dance (Music in American Life)

Phil Jamison

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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.

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.

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.

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