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#3652174 in Books NYU Press 2013-07-22 2013-07-22 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.00 x .88 x 6.00, 1.10 #File Name: 1479890359352 pages | File size: 18.Mb

Daniel J. Walkowitz : City Folk: English Country Dance and the Politics of the Folk in Modern America (NYU Series in Social and Cultural Analysis) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised City Folk: English Country Dance and the Politics of the Folk in Modern America (NYU Series in Social and Cultural Analysis):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Book! By Erica Nielsen Daniel Walkowitz's "City Folk" is incredible! The book clearly describes the shared dance history of the United States and the United Kingdom. Walkowitz demonstrates superb command over written language, as he weaves together a very complex history in an easy-to-follow manner. As the author of Folk Dancing (The American Dance Floor), it would've taken me months, perhaps even years, to piece together such a comprehensive history from disparate sources. "City Folk" is an invaluable contribution to dance scholarship and deserves widespread recognition.

This is the story of English Country Dance, from its 18th century roots in the English cities and countryside, to its transatlantic leap to the U.S. in the 20th century, told by not only a renowned historian but also a folk dancer, who has both immersed himself in the rich history of the folk tradition and rehearsed its steps. In *City Folk*, Daniel J. Walkowitz argues that the history of country and folk dancing in America is deeply intermeshed with that of political liberalism and the old left. He situates folk dancing within surprisingly diverse contexts, from progressive era reform, and playground and school movements, to the changes in consumer culture, and the project of a modernizing, cosmopolitan middle class society. Tracing the spread of folk dancing, with particular emphases on English Country Dance, International Folk Dance, and Contra, Walkowitz connects the history of folk dance to social and international political influences in America. Through archival research, oral histories, and ethnography of dance communities, *City Folk* allows dancers and dancing bodies to speak. From the norms of the first half of the century, marked strongly by Anglo-Saxon traditions, to the Cold War nationalism of the post-war era, and finally on to the counterculture movements of the 1970s, *City Folk* injects the riveting history of folk dance in the middle of the story of modern America.

Richly informative, conceptually exciting, and strikingly original. Walkowitz narrates the stories of compelling characters in the history of English Country Dance, particularly Cecil Sharp and the various figures, mostly women, with whom he dances through the complexities of organizing a movement in two countries. Walkowitz follows this story up to the present, combining analytic, ethnographic, and autobiographical reflections on the recent and contemporary folk dance scene. His authorial stance permits him to engage major questions about modern society, the middle class, and the role culture and cultures play in how people negotiate structural change over time. *City Folk* will be of interest to a diverse readership that stretches from general readers interested in folk dance and dancers and modern cultural history more broadly, to academic readers in fields including folklore, anthropology, performance, cultural studies, social history, and transatlantic perspectives. -Michael Frisch, University at Buffalo, State University of New York
Walkowitz brings the joy of a dancer together with the analytical acuity of a scholar to create a fascinating picture of how English Country Dance reflected the shifting terrain of twentieth-century liberalism. *City Folk* is a model study of culture and politics. -Lizabeth Cohen, author of *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America*