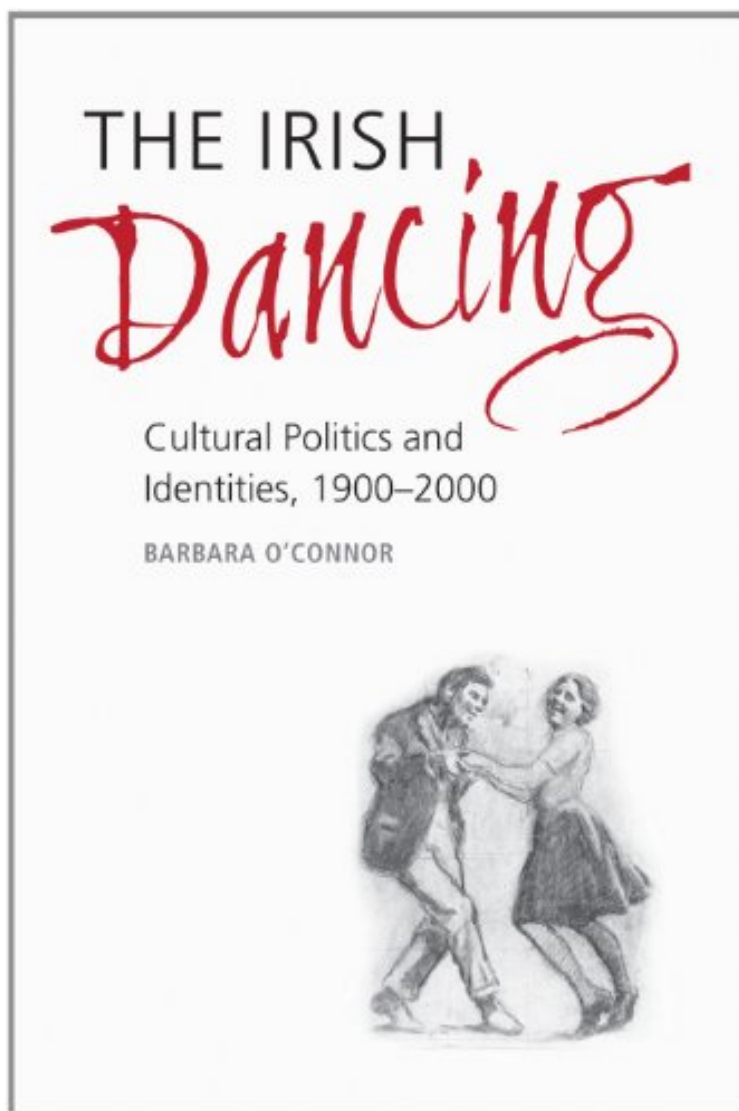


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The Irish Dancing: Cultural Politics and Identities, 1900-2000

Barbara O'Connor

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Barbara O'Connor : The Irish Dancing: Cultural Politics and Identities, 1900-2000 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Irish Dancing: Cultural Politics and Identities, 1900-2000:

This book engages with the role of dance in Irish culture and society over the course of the twentieth century, seeing dance as a prism through which to view key aspects of Irish society over the period under review. Partly thematic,

partly chronological, this account of dance in Ireland emerges out of a broader interest in the body in society as well as in the construction of national and gender identities. It comprises seven chapters each of which addresses a particular form of cultural identity. These include national, ethnic, gender, social class, postmodern and global identities. It is structured in such a way that many of the chapters are devoted to a specific identity formation while issues of gender and social class are interwoven into most chapters. Apart from the last chapter on stage/theatrical dance, the book's main focus is on social/recreational dance. Underpinning the discussion throughout is the assumption that dance both reflects and produces the social, cultural and political contexts within which it is performed and represented. This is so because bodily movement including dance reflects societal structures, norms and values as attested to by sociologists and dance scholars alike. Interwoven into the dance narrative, therefore, is the flow of Irish society over this time; a flow that incorporates social stability and social change, tradition and modernity, men and women, rural and urban, as well as the local, the national and the global.

"O'Connor deftly shows the transformative effect of Irish dance through discussions of dancehalls, the romanticism of ballroom dance, the community-oriented environment of set dancing, and the "Riverdance effect" as a global phenomenon of the late 20th century. Inclusion of multiple images and interviews with Irish dancers adds to the volume's allure. Recommended." (Choice) About the Author Barbara O'Connor previously worked as Senior Lecturer in the School of Communication, Dublin City University.