## **English Country Dance and the Politics of the Folk in Modern America**

English country dance is a form of social dance that originated in England in the 16th century. It is characterized by its simple, repetitive steps and its emphasis on group participation. English country dance was brought to America by the early colonists, and it has been a popular form of dance in the United States ever since.

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in English country dance, as people seek out ways to connect with their heritage and to experience the joy of dancing in a community setting. This article explores the history of English country dance in America, and discusses its role in the politics of the folk in modern America.



City Folk: English Country Dance and the Politics of the Folk in Modern America (NYU Series in Social and Cultural Analysis Book 3) by Daniel J. Walkowitz

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The History of English Country Dance in America

The first English country dances were brought to America by the Pilgrims in the early 17th century. These dances were simple and easy to learn, and they quickly became popular among the colonists. English country dance was also a popular form of dance in the American South, where it was often performed at social gatherings and plantation balls.

In the 19th century, English country dance began to decline in popularity in America. This was due in part to the rise of new forms of dance, such as the waltz and the polka. However, English country dance continued to be popular in some rural areas, and it experienced a revival in the early 20th century.

Today, English country dance is enjoyed by people of all ages and backgrounds. There are English country dance groups in every major city in the United States, and there are also many festivals and workshops dedicated to the dance.

#### The Politics of the Folk in Modern America

The renewed interest in English country dance in America is part of a larger trend towards the revival of folk culture. This trend is driven by a number of factors, including the desire to connect with one's heritage, the search for authenticity in a rapidly changing world, and the rejection of mass culture.

The revival of folk culture is often seen as a political act. By embracing traditional forms of music, dance, and art, people are challenging the dominant culture and asserting their own identity. This is especially true in the case of English country dance, which has been historically associated with rural and working-class communities.

The revival of English country dance is also a way of preserving a valuable cultural遗产. English country dance is a living tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation. By participating in English country dance, people are helping to ensure that this tradition will continue to thrive in the future.

English country dance is a beautiful and vibrant form of dance that has been enjoyed by people in America for centuries. The renewed interest in English country dance is part of a larger trend towards the revival of folk culture. This trend is driven by a number of factors, including the desire to connect with one's heritage, the search for authenticity in a rapidly changing world, and the rejection of mass culture. English country dance is a living tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation. By participating in English country dance, people are helping to ensure that this tradition will continue to thrive in the future.



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