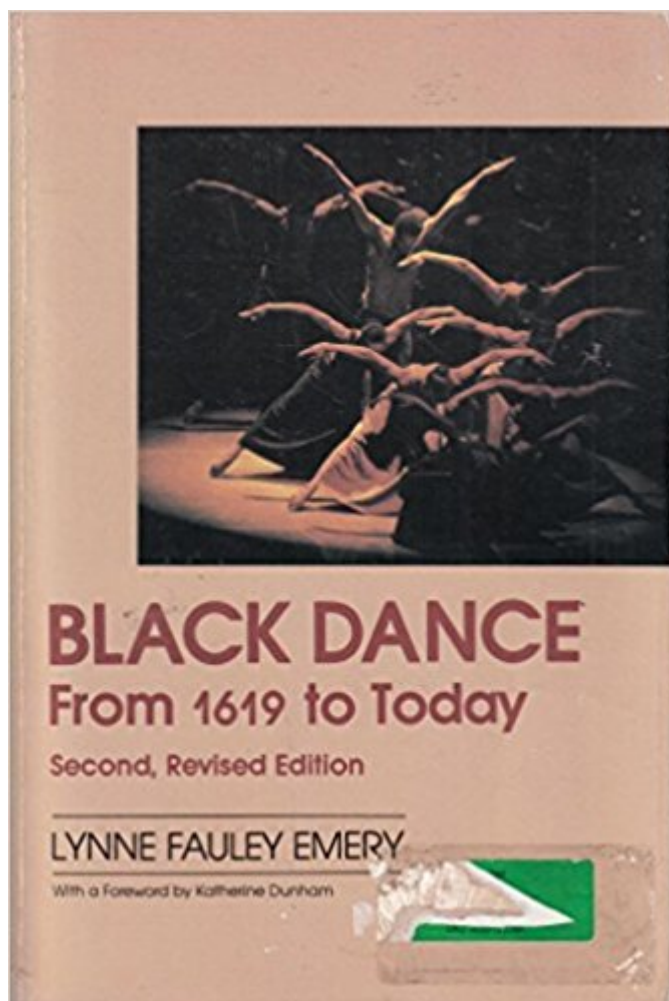




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# Black Dance: From 1619 To Today



## Synopsis

A complete history of black dance forms, this book explores folk, ballet, jazz, tap, Broadway/Hollywood, disco, and breakdancing. An ultimate research tool, it includes portraits of hundreds of important black dancers and choreographers. --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Great addition to any dance library or dance lovers' library. Even though the last print was probably in the 1980s, it is a great reference tool for the Black presence in American dance.

WHAT A GREAT BOOK! COVERS PERIODS FROM THE 1600'S 2 TODAY, I'VE ALWAYS LOVED BALLET-JAZZ AND TAP. YOU CAN READ ABOUT IT ALL HERE, LOVE IT.

I read this book chiefly as an aid to my study of Black traditional folk music, especially about the banjo and the fiddle. This book has outstanding information about fiddling and banjo playing by Africans in the Americas in the colonial periods. I've read specialized books and research papers on that topic, but I have never seen some of the reports that appear in the early part of Emery's book of banjo playing on slave ships, banjo playing in Cuba, and early Black dancing to these instruments. Emery's discussion of dance under slavery is quite interesting, particularly her account of how similar dances existed among Africans who were enslaved in the West Indies and Latin America as were danced by Africans in the United States. Some of the African dances shared across the

Americas, particularly La Bomba and the Kalinda, remain known by people familiar with Mexican and Mexican American music or Creole and Zydeco music from Louisiana. I was pleased to find a balanced account of dance in minstrelsy. She speculates that many of the dances that were done in minstrelsy by whites and the few African Americans involved were not reproductions of Black dances, but African-Americanized versions of white folk dancing. This offsets what I consider an overemphasis on minstrelsy's transmission of African American music and dance and a correct estimation of how much European-American content was involved. After minstrelsy, she turns her attention to dancing by African Americans in the public entertainment industry, and loses any focus on the Black Southern rural masses who were a majority of the Black population until the 1960s. Her discussion of Black show dancing and the onset of Black art dance in the 1920s and 1930s was interesting, but it seemed thinner than her earlier discussion. By the time she hits the 1940s or 1950s, she is going along very quickly and not providing as much analysis and information she does earlier. I enjoyed Emery's fighting antiracist approach. The oppression and discrimination Black folk have received since we arrived in this country are never absent from her discussion of Black Dance.

Historically incredible and expedient clarity on dance from an African perspective. Well researched and documented. A rather deep and emotional read for a Black dance woman and at once a MUST!

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