

## Dance, but not that way . . .



*Dance and etiquette manuals in the 19th and early 20th centuries offered instruction on dance steps as well as advice on everything from grooming habits to acceptable dialogue during a dance. How would you have fared?*

1. According to an 1850 dance and etiquette manual, it was acceptable for a woman to raise her dress to the ankle:

- never
- in the company of other ladies
- when crossing over a mud puddle
- to avoid being late

2. "Leads balance 2 bars to the right and 2 bars to the left, heel and toe, and chasse; leads half right and left, while the side couples balance, 4 bars; sides right and left while leads waltz on station, 4 bars; leads repeat the same to places, sides repeat to places." Follow these instructions from the 1866 manual *The ball-room monitor* to find yourself dancing the:

- Serious Family Polka
- Sleigh Bell Polka
- Varsovianna Quadrilles
- Schottische Waltz

3. The manual, *American dancing master, and ball-room prompter* (1862), authored by Elias Howe and "several eminent professors of dancing," described which of the following as proper way for a gentleman to bow in the ballroom?

- Face the lady or ladies in question and stand with the right foot in front. Bend the right arm slightly in front of the body and hold the left arm easily and naturally at the side. Include the head and body a little and rise slowly, right foot remaining in front.
- Stand in the first position; slide the left foot to the side. Place the right arm in front of the body and bend at the waist with the left arm straight at the left side. Rise slowly, keeping your feet in the first position.
- Stand in the third position, left foot in front. Bend slowly in this position, letting all movements be characterized by elegance and grace. Avoid all appearance of that stiffness too often seen in the Ball-room.
- Stand in the third position, right foot in front; slide the right foot a little to the side. Draw the left foot in front of the third position. Incline the head and the body a little; let your arms fall easily and naturally. Rise in the third position, left foot in front.

4. According to *Clog-Dancing Made Easy* (1874), how long should one practice each day in order to master this skill?

- ½ hour
- 1 hour
- 2 hours
- 6 hours

5. In Albert W. Newman's *Dances of to-day* (1914), these dance positions, respectively, were called:



- Grizzly Bear; Tango Position
- Open Position; Yale Position
- Open Position; Closed Position
- Bunny Hug; Starting Position

6. Which of the following, according to *The Public Dance Halls of Chicago*, was **not** a critique by the Juvenile Protection Association of the Chicago public dance halls in 1917:

- "obscene language is permitted and even the girls among the habitués carry on indecent conversation, using much profanity, while the less sophisticated girls stand around listening, scandalized but fascinated."
- "practically all of the boys and many of the girls show signs of intoxication by twelve o'clock, possibly because it is almost impossible to get drinking water in these halls, in spite of the fact that a city ordinance provides that every dance hall shall be equipped with drinking water facilities."
- "The greatest dangers are to be found in connection with masquerade and fancy dress balls, where the costumes often permit the most indecent dressing, many girls attending in male attire, and where prizes are awarded for the best costumes."
- "policewomen detailed to public dance halls have been seen dancing and therefore not affording protection to young girls and serving somewhat in the capacity of municipal chaperones."

Sources:

Library of Congress, American Memory, An American Ballroom Companion: Dance Instruction Manuals, ca. 1490–1920, <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/dihtml/dihome.html>.

<http://teachinghistory.org/history-content/quiz>