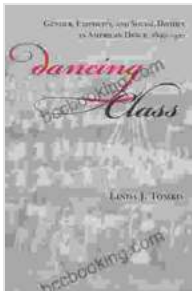


# Unnatural Acts: Uncovering the Hidden Stories of American Dance, 1890-1920

In the vibrant and ever-evolving world of American dance, there lies a hidden history, a tapestry woven with threads of gender, ethnicity, and social divides. "Unnatural Acts," a captivating book by renowned dance historian and critic Thomas F. DeFrantz, invites readers to embark on a journey through the transformative decades of 1890 to 1920, when dance became a powerful force for social change.



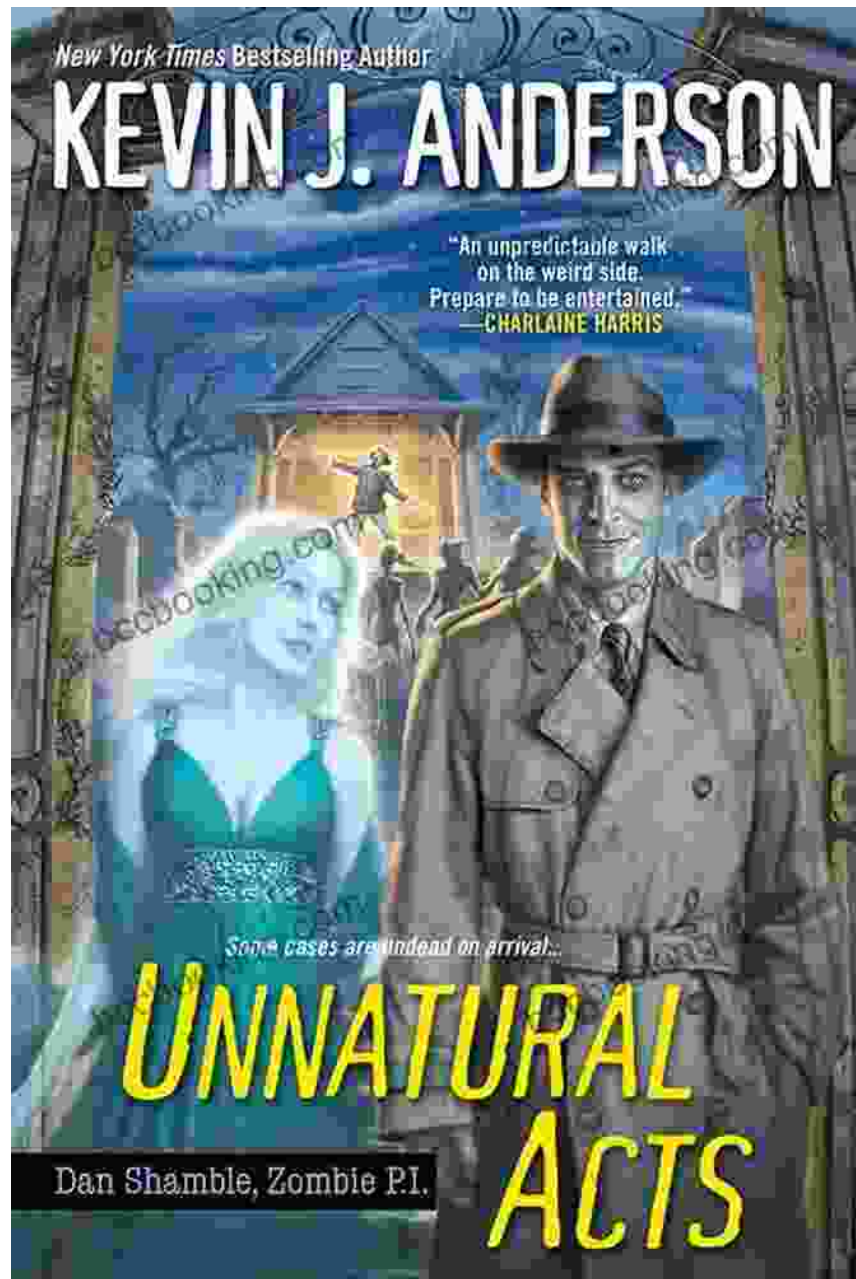
## Dancing Class: Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Divides in American Dance, 1890–1920 (Unnatural Acts)

by Linda J. Tomko

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 3799 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 426 pages  
Lending : Enabled





## Gender Bending and Breaking Boundaries

During this era, the traditional gender roles within dance began to blur. Women defied societal expectations by taking on athletic and commanding roles, while men explored the expressive and emotionally evocative qualities of movement. Trailblazing dancers such as Loie Fuller, Isadora

Duncan, and Ruth St. Denis shattered established norms, paving the way for a new era of artistic freedom.

### **Marginalized Voices in the Spotlight**

"Unnatural Acts" also sheds light on the experiences of marginalized dancers who faced discrimination based on their ethnicity and race. African American dancers like Bill "Bojangles" Robinson and Florence Mills brought their unique cultural traditions and rhythms to the forefront, challenging prevailing ideas of what constituted "proper" dance.

### **Dance as a Tool for Social Justice**

Beyond its aesthetic appeal, dance became a potent tool for social commentary and activism during this period. Choreographers and dancers used their performances to address issues of social inequality, labor rights, and the struggle for civil rights. Works such as Martha Graham's "Lamentation" and Anna Sokolow's "Anti-War" dance exposed the harsh realities of war and oppression, igniting awareness and inspiring change.

### **Interwoven Perspectives and Critical Analysis**

Through meticulous research and analysis, Thomas F. DeFrantz presents a nuanced and multifaceted exploration of this pivotal period in American dance history. He interweaves the stories of individual dancers with broader social and cultural contexts, offering a comprehensive understanding of the forces that shaped this transformative era.

"Unnatural Acts" is not merely a historical account but also a critical exploration of the complexities of identity, representation, and power dynamics within dance. DeFrantz challenges conventional narratives and

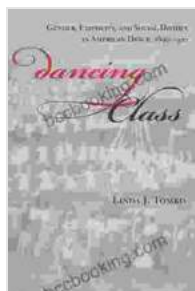
encourages readers to question the assumptions and biases that have often marginalized certain groups in the dance world.

## **A Vibrant Legacy of Resilience and Innovation**

The stories and insights contained within "Unnatural Acts" serve as a testament to the resilience and innovation of dancers throughout history. These artists not only challenged societal norms but also expanded the boundaries of dance, leaving an indelible mark on the art form. Their legacy continues to inspire and empower dancers and artists today, reminding us of the transformative power of creativity and self-expression.

If you are passionate about dance, history, or social justice, "Unnatural Acts" is a must-read. It is a captivating and illuminating account that will deepen your understanding of the complexities of American dance and its profound impact on society. Step into the world of "Unnatural Acts" and discover the hidden stories that have shaped the dance landscape we know today.

Free Download your copy of 'Unnatural Acts' today and embark on this fascinating journey through the history of dance!



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