

History of west coast swing

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West Coast Swing Dances evolve overtime to new forms that differ only a little from the original dances. On the other hand, a look at contemporary dancing styles will provide a rich history that associates the contemporary dance to dance styles that existed years back. Case in point, the swing provides a rich history for American dancing culture since it evolved from the jazz era. Consequently, this evolution provided two forms of swing that emerged from this single dance style. These two forms are the East Coast swing and the West Coast swing, which remains in style, in the contemporary society, despite the its historical original and new forms of dancing styles in the contemporary society.

Various authors trace the origin of the West Coast Swing from various places. Nonetheless, P. Wright and J. Wright identify the original roots of this dance from the Jazz era of the 1920s with the style first known as the jitterburg, which was inspired by the boogie-woogie (109). At the same time, a Latin American dance style, called the lindy, evolved with the dancing style interchanging into patterns that were similar to various steps of the jitterburg to involve “ a single step, a delayed step, or a step taken on each slow count” typical of a swing although called the lindy (P. Wright and J. Wright 109).

Following this development, bands that were performing the lindy became famous in the 1930s and 1940s, which consequently contributed to the renaming of the dance style as the swing dance. Importantly, the dance survived the rock ‘ n’ roll era of the 1950s and 1960s (P. Wright and J. Wright 109). From this singular form of the swing dance, two forms of swing emerged. The East Coast swing and the West Coast swing were the new dance styles with the West Coast swing being the most popular

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dance style then and in the contemporary society. The West Coast swing is characterized by slot dancing, which “ uses both six- and eight-count patterns done to either medium or slow tempos” (P. Wright and J. Wright 109).

Overtime, the West Coast swing dancing style has evolved to various forms. In its previous form, the dance was primarily a man’s dance with the follower following the steps in the presentation. Currently, both dancers have a responsibility over the movements involved in the presentation (Blair). On the other hand, the classic form of West Coast swing has evolved into a dance that is characterized by elongated slot, timed pulsing that is chilling, controlled timing of steps, and critical movements that result to a more sophisticated dance style than the original style (Blair).

From the foregoing, it is evident that the blend of a Latin American dance style and the jitterbug were instrumental in the development of the West Coast swing. In this case, these two styles developed steps that contributed to the swing dance style, which later evolved to two forms of dancing style known as the West Coast swing and the East Coast swing with the former remaining popular in the contemporary society despite the various forms of evolution it has undergone.

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