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## BOOK REVIEW

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***Sorry I Don't Dance: Why Men Refuse to Move*, by Maxine Leeds Craig. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013, 240 pages, \$24.95 Paper. ISBN: 9780199845293.**

EMILY MORROW JONES  
*University of Kansas*

Maxine Leeds Craig's book *Sorry I Don't Dance: Why Men Refuse to Move* is a compelling exploration of class, race, gender, and sexuality in the context of embodied masculinity in men who dance and men who will not. As the title suggests, she explains that it is not that men *cannot* dance, but that they refuse to do so within the confinements of their masculine and heteronormative socialization. Craig takes an historical and sociological stance on understanding the phenomena of dance in men's lives. Using historical documents, her own personal anecdotes, and interview data with fifty men, she creates a strong and seamless narrative about how dance has been constructed around masculinities and femininities.

She begins her examination in the first part of the book by looking at both historical fiction and public media such as advertisements and newspaper articles to understand how dance has been constructed in the American male's life from the late 1800's onward. Through these historical records, she is able to weave a story of how masculinity is both fluid and fixed over time, particularly around men's embodiment and dance, and how these fluctuations in masculinity have been influenced by the social constructions of class, race, and sexuality combined.

The second part of the book begins exploring specifically how sex, sexuality, and dance create a specific interaction in men's lives

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Emily Jones is a Ph.D. student at the University of Kansas. Her research interests lie in gender, social inequality, and medical sociology. Her thesis work examined the experiences of senior women faculty at a large Midwestern medical school to determine how they managed their success in a male dominated environment. Direct contact to Emily at [evmjones@gmail.com](mailto:evmjones@gmail.com).

to encourage or discourage them from dancing. In this section, it is specifically helpful for the reader when she employs the theorization of the “male gaze” and how men must work to avoid the male gaze to ensure both their masculinity and heteronormativity. The male gaze is a specific cultural-political lens in patriarchal society in which women are viewed as first and foremost their bodies. What is more, this gaze ensures that the female body is objectified as spectacle for the more dominant viewer, which is typically male. However, Craig explains that even men must work to avoid this gaze in order not to appear sexy to other men, which would break the codes of heteronormativity. Examining how sex and dance are intertwined in the social fabric of American life, Craig explains how the codes of masculinity, race, and class dictate a man’s participation or non-participation in dance.

The range of sources that Craig draws on is impressive and cuts a wide swath through cultural and sociological artifacts and accounts of dance. This text would be useful for any gender and/or culture scholar that wishes examine the phenomena of dance and gender through an historical lens. Craig asserts in the beginning that “this is a book about masculinity and everyday dance,” (pg 4) and she does fulfill her task in that way. While not everything can be accomplished in one text, she seeks to explain how race is a factor in the intersection of gender, sexuality, and class identity around dance, yet her main explorations are in Black and White men’s lives. Only some accounts of other racial identities are presented.

There are other possible explanations for the non-dancing of men besides gender and sexuality. She does not attempt to understand comparatively the West/non-West culture of dancing and how gender and sexuality affect the participation of men in other societal traditions. Tied to this, the effect that religion may play in men’s (and women’s) non participation in dance should be noted. How has the American tradition of Puritanism (and the strict no-dancing many of the religious observe) affected the participation of men and women? While these questions were not the driving force of her sociological inquiry, these are other possibilities that may confound the issue of men and participation in dance.

This book is a well written, informative, and theoretically fresh addition to the literature on culture, gender, sexuality, and embodiment. The theorists that Craig draws from are both contemporary and poignant gender and culture theorists such as Bourdieu, Wacquant, Connell, Messerschmidt, and West and Zimmerman, among others. In line with other embodiment theorists, the book is also structured around the sociological tradition of thought regarding social interaction and its effects. Theories of embodiment seek to understand how the body is both a source and a location for society, and Craig explains in her text how gender norms constrict men's bodily movement, but also how men either dance or do not dance, which propels patterns of gendered engagement in the social world. Craig uses her sociological lens carefully and with exacting measure, but writes in a very accessible way so that scholars of other disciplines may enjoy the book. This text is sharp enough for graduate seminars but also compelling enough for an undergraduate course on culture, gender, and/or sexuality.