

ONE STEP MIXER

PAUL JONES

The One Step developed in New Orleans and the Barbary Coast and by 1913 was being danced throughout the United States. It was a "generic" folk dance spread by word of mouth and informal demonstration, rather than being taught by dance masters. The following excerpt from a letter written to Anne's grandmother by her brother in 1912 describes the dance: "It's simply what the name implies--one step at a time--but always in proper time to the music. The sense of rhythm is absolutely all. Just walk as many steps back or forward as you like, pivoting and reversing when you will--don't skip or hop, just walk with the time". When "ragtime" swept the country, the one step became the rage and a list of popular dances read like a circus menagerie with the Turkey Trot, Grissley Bear, Bunny Hug, Camel Walk, and Lame Duck (see reverse side). This dance form caused a furor and many people condemned it as "unsightly and immoral". One article in the Ladies Home Journal predicted that doing the one step would lead to "physical and moral decay by age 30". People were jailed for doing the dance. The conflict between the desire to dance and the prohibition against it was not new. In America the ingenious pioneers had evolved "party games" to evade the evil connotation of the word "dance". This version of the One Step, called the Paul Jones is an example of a party game dance. It allows one to do the risqué One Step in proper society by putting it into the context of a party game. We learned the dance from Richard and Melanie Powers at the Mendocino Folklore Camp in 1989.

Music: El Esquinazo, Tango project, Nonsuch, CD 79030-2 or any One Step music.

Formation: Couples in ballroom position, men facing counter-clockwise.

*Pattern:

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| ONE STEP--32 BEATS | Couples in ballroom position moving counter-clockwise around the floor doing the One Step and variations (see reverse). |
| CIRCLE RIGHT--8 BEATS | Man places lady on his right. Form one circle and walk to the right (counter-clockwise), 8 steps |
| CIRCLE LEFT--8 BEATS | Reverse and circle to the left (clockwise), 8 steps |
| GRAND RIGHT
AND LEFT--16 BEATS | Partners face each other and begin to move around the circle in opposite directions giving right hands to each other, then alternating left and right hands with each person in turn. |

*A whistle was blown to signal a change in pattern. We have arranged the dance so it can be done without the whistle.

Presented by Anne and Norm Tiber, Beginner's Festival, 1989.