

"Break Dancing- New Ha!"

By JONATHAN PHILLIPS

It happens so often we're near 'bout used to it: The national media will get all fired up and excited over some activity that they think is new, when we all know that whatever it is has been going on for years, or that the new fad is just a version of something that's been around.

This time it's "break-dancing."

City folks from the South Bronx to South Plainfield, N.J., and from Philly to Fresno think that inner-city culture has spawned something new and exciting with break-dancing.

Network TV blabs about it, and break-dance contests are as commonplace as muggings in many northern cities. Sociologists and students of popular culture are fascinated by the "hip-hop" culture, and newspapermen write solemnly about the unique artistic combination of dance, athletics, karate, and Lord knows what all else.

A film was made about it, and they would have us believe that break-dancing is a brand-new (or was a year or two ago, anyway) cultural phenomenon and art form spawned from the black-white-hispanic-oriental cultural mix in the nation's inner cities.

Sorry to burst this cultural bubble, but we know better.

Though the music and the setting differ, the ground and floor-based dancing style was spawned not by the rich ethnic diversity of the northern cities, but by drunken middle class white boys down south.

The city folks may have arrived at it independently, but the facts are that this stuff was going on at Ole Miss frat houses and North Carolina Jaycee meetings long ago.

Now the denizens of Newark and Chicago did not hang around the Sigma Nu house or the Kinston Jaycee hall to get dancing pointers. But preppy men in LaCoste shirts were dancing on the floor back when Grandmaster Flash, the king of Rap, was still listening to the Supremes, and the staff of the village Voice were all wearing love beads and tie-dyed bellbottoms.

The middle-class white guys called it "gatoring" instead of break-dancing. The concept is the same, however: You get down on the floor or ground, wallow around, hop up and down, bounce around on any part of your body that can stand the pressure, and such.

In Brooklyn they do it to rap music and spread a pad on the sidewalk so as not to encounter hard pavement or broken glass. In Greenville they do it in a puddle of Budweiser to the strains of The Embers.

The difference is, they were gatoring in the frat houses in Chapel Hill and Columbia before they'd even finished tearing up New York or Detroit.

The difference is, the floors of beach music clubs from Virginia Beach to Myrtle Beach were being gatored on before any Japanese electronic firms had manufactured their first stereo ghetto blasters.

This is not to say that our great American cities are not producing unique and interesting cultural phenomena. Sure they are, just as the nation's cornfields and backcountry crossroads are.

But don't try to tell me that break-dancing is an invention of the inner city.

I saw gatoring going on in Virginia frat houses and eastern Carolina Moose lodges long ago, and was told the practice was old even then.

But there are people in the land committed to inventing fads and trends if none crop up naturally, so this sort of thing is bound to occur, and given that not much is new under the sun, much of this "new" stuff is likely to closely resemble old stuff.

So don't be surprised if a network newscast reports that the nation's elite are now paying five bucks a piece for moon pies, thinking it is a striking new delicacy.

And don't be shocked if you read in "Newsweek" that northern churches are "innovating" by holding revivals in the fall.

These things are going to happen.

YMCA News

The New Bern-Craven County Family YMCA is pleased to announce that Mrs. Carolyn Hunt, the wife of Governor Jim Hunt, will officially kick-off a two-week YMCA membership drive on Tuesday, May 1, 1984 at 3:00 p.m. at the YMCA. You are cordially invited to attend this May 1 event as well as our Open House festivities at the YMCA on Saturday, May 12, 1984, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

We also will be using this occasion to present our new Executive Director, Larry Toombs, to New Bern and Craven County. Larry comes to us from Petersburg, Virginia, with a strong professional YMCA background and will be vital to our success in achieving the continuing goals of the YMCA.

The YMCA continues to develop in both improved physical facilities and exciting new programs and activities for people of all ages. To achieve the high degree of excellence, as committed by the Directors of the YMCA, we have established a goal for our membership drive of \$13,300 which will represent 266 new family memberships.

Your continued commitment and active support for the YMCA is vital to our success in achieving our goals for providing a setting which encourages, supports and strengthens the family unit to continually improve the quality of life in Craven County.

We enthusiastically look forward to seeing you during our May 1st and 12th festivities at the YMCA.

Preventing Wood Rot In Homes

Warm, moist weather makes a lot of things grow faster. One that most people don't think about until it's too late is wood rot. Jim Holton, Craven County Agricultural Extension Agent says that most homeowners are quite familiar with termites and the damage they cause. However, wood rotting fungi are more likely to damage homes in Craven County than termites.

Fungi can occur in any part of the house that stays moist and especially in floors, door frames, porches, roof trim and decks.

To control, rot Holton says a person must get rid of the moisture and allow the wood to dry. Pressure treated wood should be used where moisture can't be eliminated, such as on a deck or fence. Spraying wood with preservative chemicals will not control rot when the wood stays moist.

Rot commonly occurs when the crawl space under the house is poorly drained and ventilated. A lot of people don't realize the importance of the small vents around the house at ground level.

They must be open from spring through fall, otherwise water can condense on the wood joists causing rot. In addition to good ventilation, a plastic sheet placed on the soil is a relatively cheap and effective way of keeping moisture in the soil and out of the house. Four mil polyethylene can be used to cover about 70 percent of the soil. Check the plastic after a heavy rain to make sure that water doesn't drain on top of the plastic. If

that happens, you may have to improve drainage around the house. With polyethylene on the soil, you should have at least one vent about every 15 feet around the house. Without the polyethylene, there should be a vent about every 8 feet. The exact spacing depends on the size of the house and the free air space through the vents. Many homeowners are installing automatic vents. According to NCSU specialists (or Mike Levi, a specialist on wood protection at NCSU), these are a convenience because you don't have to worry about opening and closing the vents. However, regular vents will do just as good a job providing they are opened.

Other suggestions from Holton are that you keep gutters and downspouts clear, and have the house inspected at least once a year for plumbing leaks, evidence of rot, as well as for termites and other insects.

In a well built and maintained home, rot will not be a problem. Unfortunately, there seem to be an increasing number of homes that have been either poorly built or poorly maintained. Lack of good building sites and the tightening up of houses for energy conservation are adding to the problem. It's relatively cheap and easy to avoid rot problems if you know what to look for. We have detailed information on how to prevent rot available at the County Office, and there are several teletips on wood rot and its control.

Senior Citizens Menu

May 4-10, 1984

Monday: Meat Loaf, Pre-portioned, 3 oz. meat, Creamed Potatoes, Spinach, White Roll, Margarine, Mixed Canned Fruit, Milk.

Monday: Ground Beef Patties, 2½ oz. 1 oz. cheese sliced, mustard, Baked Beans, Carrots and Cabbage Cole-slaw, Bun, Margarine, Canned Sliced Peaches, Milk.

Tuesday: Barbecued Chicken, Leg & Thigh, 3 oz. meat, Potato Salad, Vegetable Medley (Broccoli, Green Beans, Cauliflower & Red Pepper), White Roll, Margarine, Gingerbread, w/Lemon Sauce, Milk.

Wednesday: Country Style Steak, Au Jus 3 oz. meat, Country Style Tomatoes (Hot), Crowder Peas, White Roll, Margarine, Purple Plums (3), Milk.

Thursday: Beef & Vegetable Stew, Whole Stew Veg. (Potatoes, Carrots & Onions), Buttered Broccoli Cuts, Cornbread, Margarine, Frosted Yellow Cake w/Chocolate Icing, Milk.

THE HIGHLIGHTS

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