

Music, race, and nation

[Art & Culture](#), [Music](#)



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Peter Wade's *Music, Race, and Nation* is a book that takes a long look at something that the author clearly has a passion for. Not only does Wade have a clear and honest passion for the cultures of South America, but it is clear through his writing that Wade has spent plenty of time researching the things that he writes about. In the book, Wade's primary goal is to shed a fun and interesting light on the cultural dances which are such a part of the culture in places like Colombia. After reading the work, it would seem foolish for anyone to argue that Wade did not achieve his stated objectives, as he clearly hits the mark with both his message and the overall presentation of that message to the reader.

The basic themes presented in this book are a bit heavier than one might expect when they pick it up, but after reading, one can clearly understand why they were included. In Colombia, the music is a huge part of the cultural fabric there. In a nation that has long been dominated by white people and their overbearing culture, a mostly African dance takes hold and becomes a staple of the country. In order to truly understand the social dynamic that exists in Colombia, one has to understand the interesting dynamic presented with the relationship between the music and the people who enjoy it.

Wade seems to understand the importance of this theme and because of his understanding; he does everything within his power to impart that knowledge to those who read the book. The presentation of this theme is somewhat different when compared to other works, but in the context of his objectives, the presentation certainly works.

Before Wade gets started with the deeper and more complicated themes in his book, he makes sure that the reader has a strong grasp on the history of the subject at hand. Because the majority of people reading his book do not have a firm understanding of the basic pretenses on which it was written, Wade had to give those readers a crash course, or else they would be lost. In this regard, he succeeds beautifully.

The organizational tactics used in this work give the reader a chance, while other books with similar themes might preclude those people who do not already have a basic understanding of Colombian culture. From that history, Wade does not just jump to his next theme. As any good author would, he builds upon the history that he has established in order to show how the music and dancing is interwoven into the country's history. This is a very interesting way to present a thesis to readers and in this case, it is an effective means to the stated end.

In this work, Peter Wade sticks to the point and never deviates from that. This is a fine line to walk when it comes to presenting a book with some history involved. Authors want to include enough information so that their readers can understand, but they do not want to include so much information that the readers feel like they are taking another history class.

Wade walks this fine line and never falls over into the dreaded scholastic feel with this work. He gives the reader exactly what he or she needs and he does not do it with much fluff. The styling of the writing is simplistic enough to stay on point, yet it flows with enough grace to be easily readable. In

short, Wade hit a home run with his diction and style. His writing is almost like the dance that it is describing.

When one considers this book's overall contribution to the topic that it addresses, it is easy to see why the book has been so successful. Though a few books have been written about South American music and South American culture, few have done it with this much passion. When the author cares about the subject matter contained in the book, that comes out through the writing.

After flipping only a few pages, readers can tell that they are reading a work by an author that has a deep, profound understanding of Colombian culture. In addition, this book speaks to the importance of the Colombian music in the development of the culture of that country. This is an important theme that absolutely must be captured if individuals want to fully grasp the culture of Colombia. In regards to impact, it sheds a positive light on something that people did not know very much about. It brings to the forefront a brand of music that helped create a nation and helped create a culture that is often misunderstood.

The work is a good one for a number of reasons. No book can be considered perfect, but this one is perfect in that it achieves its set objectives. When writers like Wade pour their heart and soul into the research of a subject, the resulting work bares that out. Music, Race, and Nation is one of those works.