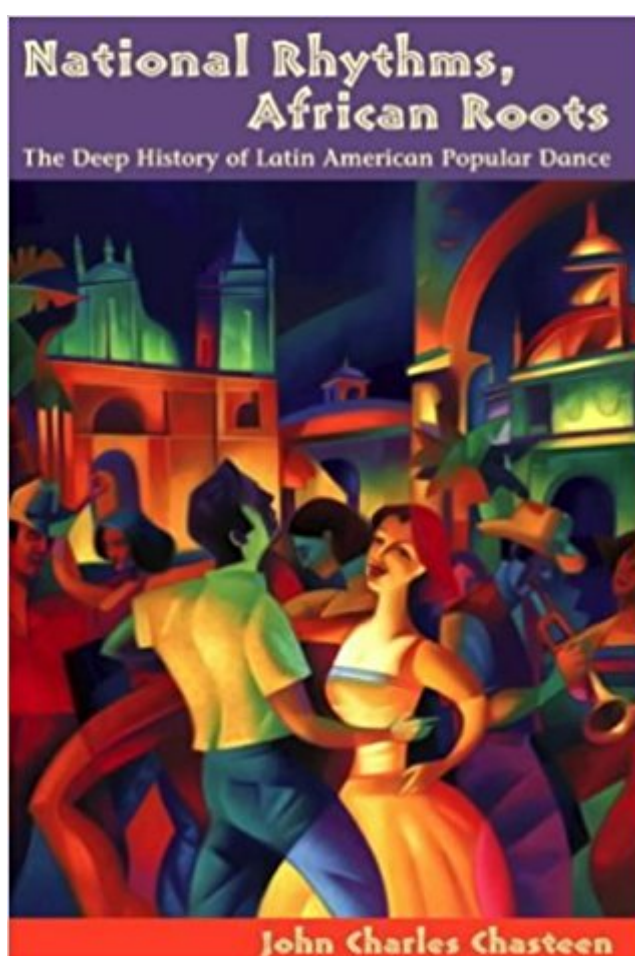


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# National Rhythms, African Roots: The Deep History Of Latin American Popular Dance (Dialogos) (Diálogos Series)



## Synopsis

When John Charles Chasteen learned that Simón Bolívar, the Liberator, danced on a banquet table to celebrate Latin American independence in 1824, he tried to visualize the scene. How, he wondered, did the Liberator dance? Did he bounce stiffly in his dress uniform? Or did he move his hips? In other words, how high had African dance influences reached in Latin American societies? A vast social gap separated Bolívar from people of African descent; however, Chasteen's research shows that popular culture could bridge the gap. Fast-paced and often funny, this book explores the history of Latin American popular dance before the twentieth century. Chasteen first focuses on Havana, Buenos Aires, and Rio de Janeiro, where dances featuring a "transgressive close embrace" (forerunners of today's salsa, tango, and samba) emerged by 1900. Then, digging deeper in time, Chasteen uncovers the historical experiences that molded Latin American popular dance, including carnival celebrations, the social lives of slaves, European fashions, and, oddly enough, religious processions. The relationship between Latin American dance and nationalism, it turns out, is very deep, indeed.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Chasteen makes a valuable contribution to the dearth of literature on dance and helps elevate the status of dance studies in academia by prioritizing its social and cultural significance." "Throughout "National Rhythms, African Roots" Chasteen not only offers historical description, he paints vivid

pictures of what the bar, social hall or underground room looked like. . . an engaging history book." "The author's lucid prose and the inherent attractions of the subject make this book ideal for use in undergraduate courses. The solid research and careful interpretation will engage a more advanced scholarly audience as well." Chasteen has found the genome of today's salsa, tango, samba, and rumba, and his Nobel for world dance research is sure to follow."

John Chasteen examines the history behind sexually suggestive dances (salsa, samba, and tango) that brought people of different social classes and races together in Latin America.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. It's clearly based on academic research, but is written in a very engaging manner. This author is an academic who can write!! If you're intrigued by Latin music and dancing, I can highly recommend this book.

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