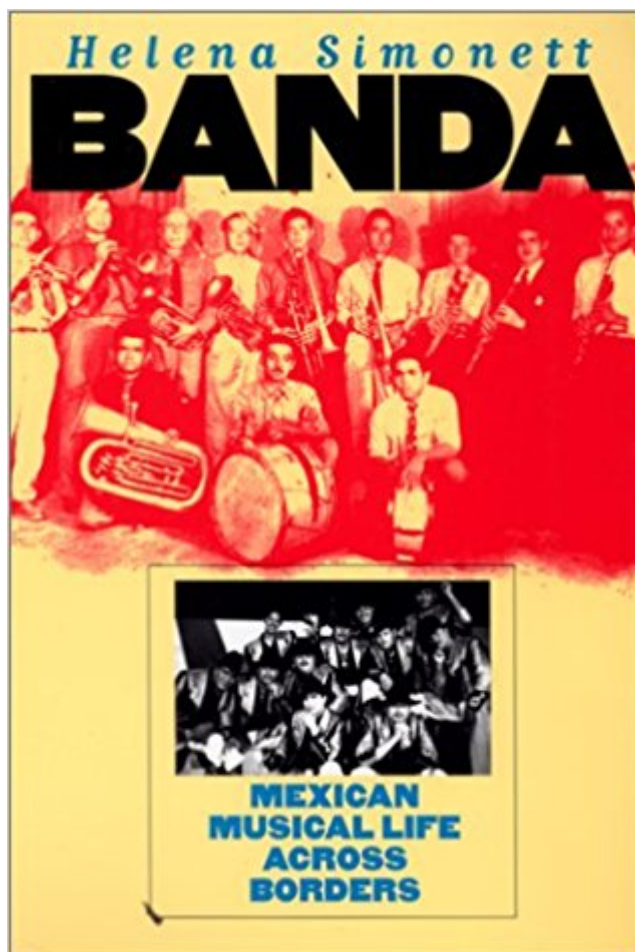


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# Banda: Mexican Musical Life Across Borders (Music/Culture)



## Synopsis

Finalist for the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) - US Chapter Book Award. (2002) Banda music has been performed by traditional brass bands in rural northwestern Mexico for more than a century, while technobanda, a newer style that has replaced the brass instruments with synthesizers and electric instruments, has become part of a lifestyle for tens of thousands of young people in the US, particularly in Los Angeles. The young people who flock to technobanda concerts also insist on the use of the Spanish language, a particular etiquette on the dance floor and above all, a specific style of dress: cowboy/cowgirl apparel and belt buckles emblazoned with the name of their home Mexican state. In this engaging and insightful ethnography, Helena Simonett brings us inside the music and its culture. Her discussions of narco-trafficking and narco-corridos ballads reveal the interconnected roles of musical, commercial and criminal networks, and illuminate how and why musical and social issues become so interconnected for banda artists and audiences. In this richly contextualized analysis of a singularly important contemporary musical style, Simonett sheds new light on how expressive culture both generates and reflects intersecting social identities.

## Book Information

Series: Music/Culture

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Wesleyan; 1st edition (January 30, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0819564303

ISBN-13: 978-0819564306

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #731,708 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #155 in [Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Musical Genres > Ethnic & International > Ethnic](#) #949 in [Books > History > Americas > Mexico](#) #1936 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Sheet Music & Scores > Forms & Genres > Popular](#)

## Customer Reviews

A genre of music featuring brass instruments and a heavy beat, banda was birthed by Mexican military bands in the 19th century. Today, it is alive and well in the form of electrobanda, which

features a vocalist, synthesizers, and modern production involving dance. In this extensive ethnomusicological overview, Simonett (music history and literature, Vanderbilt Univ.) aims to legitimize banda and its offshoots as bona fide expressions of identity for the multitudes of people who share cultural allegiance with Mexico and the United States. She starts with the electrobanda phenomenon of the 1990s, then looks back at its origins and forward to an evaluation of the lasting influence of the music. Because this was written in an academic setting, it has a somewhat scholarly tone and will probably not appeal to general fans. But for anyone who is interested in Mexican music and especially the lot of Mexican Americans at the end of the 20th century, it will prove to be very rewarding. There are virtually no books on this subject, so it stands as a pioneering effort.

Recommended for music libraries with a Latin American slant and large public libraries with a Mexican American clientele. Bill Walker, Stockton-San Joaquin Cty. P.L., CA Copyright 2001 Reed Business Information, Inc.

"This book, exploring the technobanda phenomenon, is not only timely but will also make a significant contribution. It describes an important new musical phenomenon that is fully transnational. The quality of Simonett's scholarship is outstanding." (Deborah Pacini Hernandez, Associate Professor of American Civilization and Urban Studies, Brown University)

Great book!

Everything was as advertised. Good service

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