



Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn Updated and Expanded Edition (Comparative Studies in Religion and Society)

By Karen McCarthy Brown

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Karen McCarthy Brown's classic book shatters stereotypes of Vodou by offering an intimate portrait of African-based religion in everyday life. She explores the importance of women's religious practices along with related themes of family and of social change. Weaving several of her own voices--analytic, descriptive, and personal--with the voices of her subjects in alternate chapters of traditional ethnography and ethnographic fiction, Brown presents herself as a character in Mama Lola's world and allows the reader to evaluate her interactions there. Startlingly original, Brown's work endures as an important experiment in ethnography as a social art form rooted in human relationships. A new preface, epilogue, bibliography, and a collection of family photographs tell the story of the effect of the book's publication on Mama Lola's life.

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- Sales Rank: #536068 in Books
- Published on: 2001-11-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 1.11" h x 5.98" w x 8.98" l, .62 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 440 pages



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Brown befriends a Haitian vodou priestess who practices in her Brooklyn, N.Y., home. Photos.

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Review

"Brown offers a sympathetic and vivid portrait of the lives of a group of women." -- *Roland Littlewood, Political and Social Science*

"I know of no other work about Vodou that can teach the uninitiated so fully what it means to know." -- *Joan Dayan, Women's Review of Books*

"Mama Lola provides an engaging, detailed, and sympathetic account of the world of Haitian Vodou." -- *Eugene V. Gallagher, Journal of the American Academy of Religion*

"[Brown] has written a life story that is full of feeling." -- *Constance Casey, Los Angeles Times*

From the Inside Flap

"*Mama Lola* is about extraordinary people living ordinary lives. It is also about courage--that of the manbo and the scholar, both taking chances, both succeeding in the end. Karen McCarthy Brown offers a contemporary classic for those who seek Haiti. I am grateful."—Patrick Bellegarde-Smith, Ph.D., Haitian *houngan asogwe*

"Karen McCarthy Brown's book on a Vodou priestess and her family is the first to successfully restore the real meaning of the religion as lived by Haitians. For once, all of Vodou's language and metaphysics unfold before our eyes—decoded, analyzed, and explicated not solely from a scientific or objectivist perspective but from the standpoint of a real hermeneutics, allowing the reader to comprehend those values with deep universal import that are found in the Haitian religion."—Laennec Hurbon, Directeur de Recherches, Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris

"Karen McCarthy Brown's *Mama Lola* is a recognized masterpiece of fieldwork, feminism, and moral interpretation. It changed many lives. To read it is to want to twirl the author, head-to-head, curtsying together at the four cardinal points. This is a Vodou way of saluting a great mentor. She enriches us all with her beautiful history of a remarkable woman and the luminous spirits that she serves. *Liv sa, se pa betiz!*—'this book does not fool around!'—Robert Farris Thompson, Colonel John Trumbull Professor of the History of Art, Yale University

PRAISE FOR THE ORIGINAL EDITION

"I know of no other work about Vodou that can teach the uninitiated so fully what it means to know: how unassuming, contingent and matter-of-fact real konesans (understanding) must be."—*Joan Dayan, Women's Review of Books*

"This volume is superb: a poignant account of a Haitian migrant to New York and how she appropriates and

reworks her family knowledge of healing and ritual... Gently informed by her own life and by women's anthropology, Brown offers a sympathetic and vivid portrait of the lives of a group of women."—Roland Littlewood, *Political and Social Science*

"Novelistic chapters, beautifully written, are alternated with a narrative of the present, including descriptions of the members of the Vodou pantheon and how Alourdes serves them. . . . She has written a life story that is full of feeling."—Constance Casey, *Los Angeles Times*

"Brown's ethnographic short stories vividly capture the complicated personal history that is summed up in Mama Lola's full name and they also dramatize the larger social processes at work in Haiti's recent history... *Mama Lola* provides an engaging, detailed, and sympathetic account of the world of Haitian Vodou. Brown has used a variety of interesting, and even daring, techniques to make that world come alive."—Eugene V. Gallagher, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*

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"*Mama Lola* is an insightful venture into the heart of a misunderstood religious system in which women have great claim to moral authority. Mama Lola's and Karen McCarthy Brown's diverse perspectives and individual utterances fuse in a powerful articulation of feminist intervention, cultural understanding, and spiritual democracy. This spendid book successfully merges the oftentimes dissonant voices of Western and Diasporic feminism. This is scholarship at its best."—Claudine Michel, Editor, *Journal of Haitian Studies*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jimmy Hicks:

Here thing why this *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn Updated and Expanded Edition* (*Comparative Studies in Religion and Society*) are different and trusted to be yours. First of all reading a book is good but it really depends in the content from it which is the content is as tasty as food or not. *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn Updated and Expanded Edition* (*Comparative Studies in Religion and Society*) giving you information deeper as different ways, you can find any book out there but there is no reserve that similar with *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn Updated and Expanded Edition* (*Comparative Studies in Religion and Society*). It gives you thrill examining journey, its open up your personal eyes about the thing that happened in the world which is possibly can be happened around you. You can actually bring everywhere like in park your car, café, or even in your way home by train. Should you be having difficulties in bringing the paper book maybe the form of *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn Updated and Expanded Edition* (*Comparative Studies in Religion and Society*) in e-book can be your alternative.

Carlos Lauzon:

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Juana Rummel:

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Justin Mireles:

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