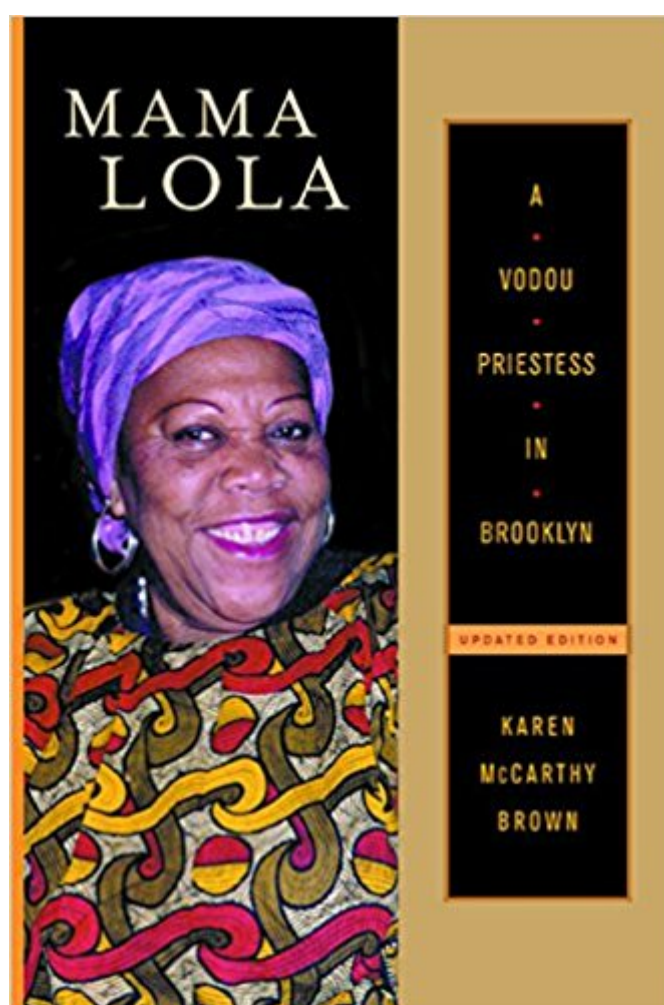


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# Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess In Brooklyn Updated And Expanded Edition (Comparative Studies In Religion And Society)



## Synopsis

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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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

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"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

I've enjoyed reading the book very much. I've found it very entertaining because the writing is so visually descriptive. I also very much like the way the author captured the colloquial speech of Lourdes and all the subjects in the book. It really helped me capture a sense of immersion in the culture, of being there, in the birthday suppers and other action in the book. I feel like this book has given me a much greater understanding of Voodoo and also ancestral worship. I understand how the spirits are often tied to the Catholic saints a lot better now, too. Most importantly, I can understand more of where the 'magick' comes from, what to look for when I see a Voodoo altar, or see glimpses of spirit possession in media. Before it was very foreign to me. I only knew it as a magical belief system, but the book describes magical thinking that's pervasive and very family oriented that I had not considered to be so very relevant before. There's something about the way the author writes that let me take off my moral judgements so that I could better connect with the stories and beliefs- It was always easy to see the people through the magickal trappings, sayings, and various rituals. It's a good read. I'd recommend it to anyone that is new to the subject, that wants to learn more about Voodoo as it is practiced by Haitian natives. It is a paperback, but it's a bit large; about the size of most hardbacks.

Not really a book on Haitian Vodou. Mama Lola is more a family history and a description of what serving the spirits means to them. Dr. Brown makes this amazing woman and her family come alive on the page. Alourdes is all at once a devout woman, devoted mother, petulant and powerful woman. Her family is at once inspiring and beverage out your nose funny. By the end of this edition, I found myself not only falling in love with Alourdes family, but with the spirits they so loyally serve. A terrific book if you want to understand what Vodou means to its followers, what life is like for immigrant women and the pride and strength that comes from growing up in the poorest country in the Western hemisphere.

A required book for an anthropology course. The subtitle says it all when it says it is an "Expanded Edition". This book is very thorough and detail-packed. It will take a long time to read, but it contained much information about the subject of vodou. It is an eye-opener for those who know nothing and have sad but true pre-conceived mistaken ideas about vodou. Highly recommended as

a teaching device for those biased against this blend of religion, spirituality, culture, and lifestyle.

Such a good book. I bought this book for an Anthropology class I was taking. I had no idea how much I would love it. It is a great story. Insightful, interesting, and educational. I enjoyed every minute of it. I highly recommend.

A truly excellent work of scholarship and content related to vodou. Its only drawback as well as its greatest gift is that its content on Vodou and its ritual and beliefs is entwined with a personal story. This makes getting the essence and structure of the religion more difficult than in some other works, but to its credit, it is oh so accurate and scholarly, and it gives some personal insights into the life of a mambo (female priest) and her faith as well. Bravo to Dr. Brown.

came in decent condition readable, just needed it for class in college

Amazing read! Wonderful book that showcased vodou in a new light- the human, societal light. The book itself was in amazing condition.

This book gives an amazing insight into the practice of Vodou. It is easy to understand and written in an enjoyable manner. This will allow you a greater understanding of what it means for someone to be a Vodou practitioner.

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