



Social Work and Religious Diversity

Suggested Readings on the Religious Diversity of New York City

Zain Abdullah, *Black Mecca: The African Muslims of Harlem*, Oxford University Press, 2010.

Explores the racial and religious identities of New York's fastest-growing, but too often overlooked, Muslim community.

Courtney Bender, *Heaven's Kitchen: Living Religion at God's Love We Deliver*, University Of Chicago Press, 2003.

Traces the everyday religious lives of volunteers and others at a non-profit organization preparing meals for people with AIDS.

Jonathan Boyarin, *Mornings at the Stanton Street Shul: A Summer on the Lower East Side*, Fordham University Press, 2011.

Explores the intimate life of the Stanton Street Shul, one of the last remaining Jewish congregations on New York's historic Lower East Side.

Howard Brotz, *The Black Jews of Harlem: Negro Nationalism and the Dilemmas of Negro Leadership*, Free Press, 1964.

Classic analysis of the Commandment Keepers, the leading Black Hebrew Israelite synagogue of the mid-twentieth century.

Karen McCarthy Brown, *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn*, University of California Press, 2001.

Intimate portrait of a Haitian-American Vodou priestess, her family, and community. Effectively debunks popular stereotypes of this Afro-Caribbean religious tradition.

Tony Carnes and Anna Karpathakis (eds.), *New York Glory: Religions in the City*, New York University Press, 2001.

Brief essays on a wide range of New York's religious communities, and some of the social issues confronting them.

Richard Cimino (ed.), *Ecologies of Faith in New York City: The Evolution of Religious Institutions*, Indiana University Press, 2012.

This collection of essays explores how New York City's many religious communities and their representative institutions interact with one another.

Jerrilynn Dodds and Edward Grazda, *New York Masjid: The Mosques of New York City*, PowerHouse Books, 2002.

Beautiful photographs and insightful text, exploring some of the many Muslim houses of worship in the city.

Ayala Fader, *Mitzvah Girls: Bringing Up the Next Generation of Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn*, Princeton University Press, 2009.

Discussion of the Hasidic communities of Boro Park, focusing on the social, religious, and moral lives of young girls.

Samuel Freedman, *Upon This Rock : The Miracles of a Black Church*, Harper Perennial, 1994.

Moving portrait of Saint Paul Community Baptist Church in the Brooklyn neighborhood of East New York, and the ministry of its then senior pastor, Rev. Johnny Ray Youngblood.

Alyshia Galvez, *Guadalupe in New York: Devotion and the Struggle for Citizenship Rights among Mexican Immigrants*, New York University Press, 2009.

Examines Mexican-American New Yorkers' devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe as a religious practice, means to create community, and way to engage in civic life.

Henry Goldschmidt, *Race and Religion among the Chosen Peoples of Crown Heights*, Rutgers University Press, 2006.

An analysis of Black-Jewish difference in the Brooklyn neighborhood of Crown Heights – looking past the August 1991 conflict between the Lubavitch Hasidim and their neighbors to explore everyday perceptions of racial and religious difference.

Terry Golway (ed.), *Catholics in New York: Society, Culture, and Politics, 1808-1946*, Fordham University Press and the Museum of the City of New York, 2008.

A wide range of essays on New York's diverse Catholic communities, covering the period of large-scale Catholic immigration in the mid- to late-nineteenth century.

Mark Gornik, *Word Made Global: Stories of African Christianity in New York City*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2011.

Drawing on ten years of field research into three very different African immigrant churches, sheds light on the social and spiritual dynamics of this transnational Christian movement

Steven Gregory, *Santeria in New York City: A Study in Cultural Resistance*, Garland Publishing, 1999.

An analysis of this widely misunderstood Afro-Caribbean religious tradition, focusing in part on the relationships between Cuban and African-American orisha devotees.

Kenneth Guest, *God in Chinatown: Religion and Survival in New York's Evolving Immigrant Community*, New York University Press, 2003.

A discussion of the religious life of recent Fuzhounese immigrants, focusing in large part on Fuzhounese Protestant churches.

Lis Harris, *Holy Days: The World of a Hasidic Family*, Simon and Schuster, 1995.

An intimate portrait of a Lubavitch Hasidic family in Crown Heights – deeply moving, though at times somewhat rose-colored or nostalgic.

Madhulika Khandelwal, *Becoming American, Being Indian: An Immigrant Community in New York City*, Cornell University Press, 2002.

An analysis of the internally diverse South Asian immigrant communities of Queens, with some discussion of Hinduism and other South Asian religious traditions.

Michael Lloyd, *Bull of Heaven: The Mythic Life of Eddie Buczynski and the Rise of the New York Pagan*, Asphodel Press, 2012.

By chronicling the life of a prominent New York Wiccan priest and gay rights activist, this book explores the contributions of LGBTQ men and women to the neo-pagan community.

Jerome Mintz, *Hasidic People: A Place in the New World*, Harvard University Press, 1998.

Overview of the diverse Hasidic communities thriving in Brooklyn, Rockland County, and elsewhere in the New York area.

Amminah Mohammad-Arif, *Salaam America: South Asian Muslims in New York*, Anthem Press, 2002.

Discussion of New York's large and growing Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi Muslim communities.

Deborah Dash Moore (series editor), *City of Promises: A History of the Jews of New York*, New York University Press, 2012.

A lavishly illustrated three volume history of the Jewish communities of New York City, with works by Howard Rock, Annie Polland & Daniel Soyer, and Jeffery Gurock.

Robert Orsi, *The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem*, Yale University Press, 1985.

Detailed and moving social history of Italian-American devotion to the Madonna of Mount Carmel, and the role of her shrine in defining the mid-twentieth century community of "cara Harlem."

Robert Orsi (ed.), *Gods of the City: Religion and the American Urban Landscape*, Indiana University Press, 1999.

A path-breaking collection of essays on urban religion, including discussions of Italian and Puerto Rican Catholics, practitioners of Haitian Vodou and Cuban Santeria, South Bronx Jews, and other New York communities.

Peter Paris, et al., *The History of the Riverside Church in the City of New York*, New York University Press, 2004.

A collection of essays exploring the history of one of New York's – and America's – preeminent liberal Protestant congregations.

Moses Rischin, *The Promised City: New York's Jews, 1870-1914*, Harvard University Press, 1977.

Classic analysis of the Jewish community on Manhattan's Lower East Side at the turn of the twentieth century – and a seminal text in social history and ethnic studies.

Bettina Schmidt, *Caribbean Diaspora in the USA: Diversity of Caribbean Religions in New York City*, Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008

Investigates New York City's diverse Afro-Caribbean religious communities in order to construct a dynamic theory of diasporic religion and culture.

Moshe Shokeid, *A Gay Synagogue in New York*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003.

Detailed ethnographic analysis of Congregation Beit Simchat Torah, the influential LGBT synagogue in the West Village.

Clarence Taylor, *The Black Churches of Brooklyn*, Columbia University Press, 1996.

Social history of Brooklyn's leading African-American and Afro-Caribbean churches, with a focus on their central role in community building and political life.

R. Stephen Warner and Judith Wittner (eds.), *Gatherings in Diaspora: Religious Communities and the New Immigration*, Temple University Press, 1998

A collection of essays on the religious lives of immigrant communities since the 1965 reform of American immigration law, including discussions of Haitian Catholics, Jamaican Rastafarians, Yemeni Muslims, and other New York communities.

Jill Watts, *God, Harlem, U.S.A.: The Father Divine Story*, University of California Press, 1995.

A fascinating history of Father Divine's innovative mid-twentieth century "Peace Mission" movement, and the broader landscape of new religious movements in Harlem and other African-American communities.

Please see:

<http://interfaithcenter.org/social-work-resources>

**for many more resources on religion, spirituality, and social work,
and information about the *Social Work and Religious Diversity*
continuing education program for mental health and social service
professionals.**