

A Literary Ventures Fund Book

Monique and the Mango Rains

By Kris Holloway

Publication Date: July 20, 2006

\$17.95 | Paperback

240 pages, 6" x 9"

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Waveland Press

Book Synopsis: *Monique and the Mango Rains* is the compelling story of a rare friendship between a young Peace Corps volunteer and a midwife who became a legend...

Waveland Press specializes in personal ethnographies and anthropological monographs. For thirty years, they have offered quality books at reasonable prices.

Included in this Press Kit

- Press Release
- Praise for the Book
- Author Biography
- Additional Information
- Reading Guide
- Book Flyer



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Monique and the Mango Rains

By Kris Holloway

One of *Entertainment Weekly's* top 20 narrative travel books

A *Boston Globe* bestseller

The Literary Ventures Fund (LVF), the venture-based non profit foundation that invests in important works of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, has partnered with Waveland Press in the marketing and promotion of writer Kris Holloway's critically acclaimed memoir. *Monique and the Mango Rains* is the true story of the life and death of a remarkable West African midwife, seen through the eyes of a young Peace Corps Volunteer who worked side-by-side with her, birthing babies and caring for mothers, in a remote, impoverished village. It is a rare tale of friendship that reaches beyond borders to vividly and irrevocably unite another woman's world with our own.

Monique and the Mango Rains depicts the author's decade-long friendship with Monique Dembele, an accidental midwife who became a legend. Monique saved lives and dispensed hope every day in a place where childbirth is a life-and-death matter. This book tells of Monique's unquenchable passion for a better life in the face of poverty, an arranged marriage and endless backbreaking work, as well as her tragic and ironic death. In the course of this deeply personal narrative, as readers immerse themselves in the rhythms of village life, they come to know her as a friend, as a mother and as an inspired woman striving to find her place in a changing world.

From witnessing her first village birth to the night of Monique's own tragic death, the author draws on her first-person experiences in Mali, her graduate studies in maternal and child health, medical and clinic records, letters and journals, as well as conversations with Monique, her family, friends and colleagues, to give readers a unique view—and a friend in West Africa.

A percentage of this book's proceeds will be donated to Clinique Monique, a new rural women's health clinic begun in Mali to honor Monique and continue her work.

Kris Holloway served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Mali, West Africa from 1989-1991, where she met her husband John Bidwell. She holds a MPH from the University of Michigan and works for the Center for International Studies. She lives in Northampton, MA with John and their two children.

Monique and the Mango Rains: Two Years with a Midwife in Mali

By Kris Holloway

Publication Date: July 20, 2006

Cloth ISBN: 978-1577664352; Price: \$174.95

Features: 240 pages, 6" x 9"

For more information contact:

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Praise for *Monique and the Mango Rains*

Anita Diamant, author of international bestseller *The Red Tent*

“I was moved and inspired by *Monique and the Mango Rains*. The friendship between the author, a young Peace Corps volunteer, and the Malian midwife is one of the great gifts of the book and proof of the power of women’s relationships to recreate the world.”

Anne Fadiman, author of *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

“There have been many accounts of studying people from other cultures, but few of actually being friends with them. Anyone who is curious about what such a friendship feels like from the inside should read this respectful but intimate account.”

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

“*Monique and the Mango Rains* bypasses our calloused views and leads us to love and laugh with the amazing individuals who live and work in such dire circumstances.”

Minneapolis Star Tribune

“Despite Holloway’s anger over wrongs seemingly imbedded in the culture...she avoids the trap of cultural superiority. Instead, she simply seeks to help those she has come to love...”

Entertainment Weekly (EW Pick)

“...as compelling as any novel...”

***Boston Globe*, Editorial board’s favorite books of 2006**

“...a tenuous hold on life and health is made achingly real...”

***Kirkus*, Starred Review**

“A respectful, unsentimental portrait . . . a poignant and powerful book.”

Library Journal

“...the rhythm of life and death in Mali...shines through all the pages.”

Publishers Weekly

“Holloway’s moving account...will interest all those concerned about the realities of women’s lives outside the industrialized world.”

Author Biography



Kris Holloway

Kris Holloway served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Mali, West Africa from 1989-1991, where she met her husband, John Bidwell. She holds a MPH from the University of Michigan where she focused her research on maternal and child health. She has used her unique background in writing, public health, and development to further the mission of numerous non-profits and educational institutions including Planned Parenthood, the National Priorities Project, the University of Michigan, Springfield College, and the Greenbelt Movement International. She currently works with the Center for International Studies, a fabulous study/live/explore abroad organization. She is a confirmed Francophile, loves chocolate, and sits on a physio ball while at her computer. She lives in Northampton, MA with John and their two sons.



John Bidwell (Consulting Editor)

John is Principal of Bidwell ID, a strategic branding firm, located in Florence, Massachusetts. Their award-winning work involves development for nonprofits and schools, and marketing for businesses. Clients include Amherst College, Mount Holyoke College, Cooley Dickinson Hospital, Green Belt Movement, and Point Eight Power. John has taught design at Smith College, and has been a visiting lecturer at the University of Michigan and the University of Massachusetts.

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Additional Information

For an up-to-date listing of author appearances, visit the Events page on the book website at:
<http://www.moniquemangorains.com/?page=events>

You can view Waveland Press's titles by discipline at:
<http://www.waveland.com/disciplines.htm>

View all the Literary Ventures Fund titles at:
<http://www.literaryventuresfund.org/portfolio.php>

Book Web Page

Visit this book's Web page at:
<http://www.moniquemangorains.com>

Author Interviews

http://www.moniquemangorains.com/?page=press_room_interviews

Read or Hear an Excerpt

Read or hear an excerpt from *Monique and the Mango Rains* at:
<http://www.moniquemangorains.com/?page=excerpt>

Watch a Video

Watch a short mini-documentary on Monique's story at:
http://www.moniquemangorains.com/?page=press_room_videos

Online Reading Guide

http://www.moniquemangorains.com/?page=reading_guide

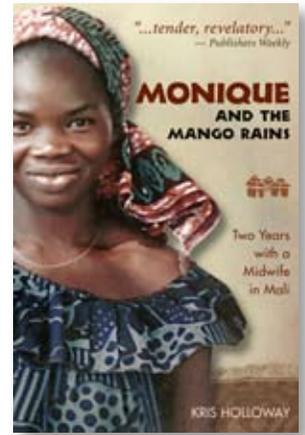
Media Inquiries/Events and Speaking Engagements

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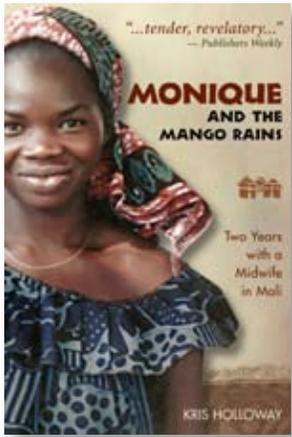
A Book Club Reading Guide

Monique and the Mango Rains

By Kris Holloway



1. Monique and Kris grew to be very close friends, yet they came from radically different background and faced many cultural barriers. What makes these rare connections possible?
2. Is Kris' experience as a Peace Corps volunteer what you thought it would be what would have been the hard parts to adapt to in village life? What do you think you would miss when you came back to the U.S.?
3. How does your culture affect how you think about childbirth? What do you think we could learn from working with Monique? Where would you rather give birth? Why?
4. How do you think Kris' presence in the village affected Monique? How was Kris' life changed by having known Monique? Have you ever known someone that well from another culture?
5. The title of the book is *Monique and the Mango Rains*. Why is weather so important in this book? What are the "mango rains" and how do they relate to Monique's life?
6. In many places in the text, there are references to the connections between the land and the people. People are described with adjectives / words pertaining to the earth and vice versa. For example, "the moon showed only a fingernail of light," "the earth had gone five months with out a drink," and "I longed for her to lie fallow.." What does this say about the culture? About how the society constructs our relationship with the earth?
7. "Every act of development necessarily involves an act of destruction." Do you agree or disagree? Explain. (Quote by George Appell, from *Cultural Anthropology*, Daniel G. Bates, Elliot M. Fratkin, 1999.) Do Americans and other foreigners have the right to intrude in another culture?
8. Do you feel that certain values are universal and that all peoples should be encouraged to adopt them? Name some of these values. What did both Monique and Kris share as values that they worked hard to implement? Are some human rights inalienable? If so, what are these rights? (See the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on www.un.org/rights)
9. How can North Americans to be involved in transforming the health care and poverty situations in places like West Africa? It's wonderful that Oprah has made a \$40 million gift to girls' education in South Africa, but most of us aren't in this league. Monique's story is an example of how large amounts of money are not always needed to make life better for people with few resources. How do you think we can best help the Moniques of the world?
10. The news is riddled with stories of war, disease, and famine in Africa. Yet Kris has said "I'm immensely hopeful when it come to Africa because I knew Monique." After reading the book, what is your perspective?



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What is it like to live and work in a remote corner of the world and befriend a courageous midwife who is breaking traditional roles? *Monique and the Mango Rains* is the compelling story of the author's decade-long friendship with Monique Dembele, an accidental midwife who became a legend. Monique saved lives and dispensed hope every day in a place where childbirth is a life-and-death matter. This book tells of Monique's unquenchable passion for a better life in the face of poverty, an arranged marriage and endless backbreaking work, as well as her tragic and ironic death. In the course of this deeply personal narrative, as readers immerse themselves in the rhythms of village life, they come to know her as a friend, as a mother and as an inspired woman striving to find her place in a changing world.

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Available at bookstores or

Order directly from Waveland Press: www.waveland.com/847.634.0081

Order from Baker & Taylor: www.btol.com/800.775.1800

Be sure to ask about special discounts for quantity orders!

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