

***Mammy Water. In Search of the Water Spirits in Nigeria testimonials.***

“Superb and fast-flowing. It’s nearly perfect.”

(Robert Farris Thompson, Yale University)

“The Association for the Study of Women and Mythology is an interdisciplinary organization dedicated to the development of scholars and the expansion of research into all areas of mythology. We featured Dr. Jell-Bahlsen's film *Mammy Water* at our 2010 conference, and she was a speaker at this year's East Coast Symposium. Her presentation on "The Water Goddess, OGBUIDE," was very highly evaluated by the participants, themselves a mix of professionals, academicians, and graduate students. One evaluation stated, "This was a wonderful introduction to a complex and vibrant cosmology.

Excerpts from the film were fascinating." Our members will undoubtedly benefit as well from the results of her research into the Igbo masquerade.”

(Sid Reger, Ed. D., President, ASWM)

“The most important ethnographic film on the Cross River region to date. It combines five case studies of Mammy water in a judicious balance of clarity and richness. I highly recommend it for courses in African anthropology and religion, art history, and women’s studies.”

(Sidney L. Kasfir, Emory University)

“This film is fascinating for its collaboration between a Western anthropologist and a Nigerian filmmaker. It nicely balances a record of ritual events with scenes of Igbo and Ibibio women talking directly about their own crises and their vocation. The film is definitely useful for African studies and women’s studies, especially in courses focusing on spirituality and healing.”

(Pamela Blakely, University of Pennsylvania)

“Dr. Jell-Bahlsen provides us with a very gratifying portrait of a mostly literate and dynamic leadership of priests and priestesses. The religion we see is vibrant, life-affirming and nurturing.”

(Eudora Chikwendu, State University College at New Paltz, N.Y.)

“Perhaps most striking is the air of light-hearted celebration that surrounds the worship of Mammy Water. This is not a religion of sin and redemption, of solemn ritual. It is a religion of life, of celebration of the mystery of life in song, dancing, drinking wine, laughing, painting one’s face in beautiful colors, wearing the white and red robes of Mammy Water, and in just lighthearted conversation between women, and between women and men, who are friends.” (Andrea Nye, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater)

“In the last of several ceremonies portrayed, ...two men are filmed dancing energetically and gracefully. While in rhythmic synchrony, each improvises his own dancing ‘statement,’ reflecting a familiar West African (and African Diasporic) integration of ordered community life with spontaneous individuality. ... In addition, an essential difference ... lies not in the *quantity* of information transmitted, but rather in the more flowing pace and textured rhythms of the Mammy Water film’s (re)presentation.”

(Daniel Halperin, *Anthropology of Consciousness*)

**Additional Reviews:**

Eudora Chikwendu. *African Profiles International*, May 1995: 48.

Sidney L. Kasfir. *African Arts*, January 1994: 80-82, 96.

Andrea Nye. *Feminist Collections* (15) 1, Fall 1993: 14-15.

Daniel Halperin. *Anthropology of Consciousness* (4), June 1993: 25-26.

Simon Ottenberg. *American Anthropologist* (93), 1991: 254-255.