

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful Study of Two Impressive Deities By Devi Spring I have always had trouble relating to Krishna, even though I read many books, commentaries and scriptures about Him, attended a Vaisnava temple for many months, and spent numerous hours chanting His mantras in an attempt to crack the mystery of why this Deity is so ravenously popular. I enjoyed the stories of His pastimes, and greatly appreciated the art and iconography that surrounded Him - but the deeper implications were simply lost for some reason. This book really brought home to me WHY Krishna so captured the people's hearts, as it showed a completely different perspective on the energies inherent to His worship. While the familiar themes, of course, remained the same, Kinsley throws a new light on the matter that was fresh and much needed. As a Shakta, though, I obviously also adored the latter studies of Kali as well. They also bring up aspects and interpretations of Her worship that are not too commonly presented in other texts. While this book is an academic text, it is easy and enjoyable to read, and not at all dry. I highly recommend this book to any student of Hindu religion and spirituality, anyone wondering "what's the deal with Krishna", or even "who is this Kali that everyone's talking about". Those who have a general interest in world religions and mythology will eat this one up, too. Spiritual seekers who wish to expand their perspectives on how divinity can and is experienced by hundreds of millions, and how the seemingly contradictory aspects of the divine can be embraced and adored will find this study an excellent read as well.

18 of 18 people found the following review helpful. A scholarly yet very readable study By A Customer This book truly brings these two highly interesting Hindu deities to life. Kinsley clearly illustrates the various truths each deity represents within the Hindu tradition. The reader is not only left well educated about Kali and Krishna but about the rich character of the Hindu religious tradition as a whole. Perhaps the most enjoyable book I've ever read concerning Hindu religion.

11 of 11 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful study of two Hindu deities By David Fowler Kinsley's book is perhaps the most enjoyable work on Hinduism that I've ever had the pleasure to read. In it the author both explains the history of each deity and how they crystallize certain overarching truths of the Hindu worldview. The effect is both a complex understanding of Kali and Krishna's importance within Hinduism as well as a greater appreciation of Hinduism in its totality.

Krsna and Kali are two of Hinduism's most popular deities, representing dramatically different truths about the nature of the sacred. The cruel and terrible Kali is thought to be born of wild, aboriginal roots. She is the goddess of thieves and often associated with human blood sacrifice. Krsna, in contrast, is the divine lover and inimitable prankster who plays a bewitching flute to draw all to him. But Kali and Krsna have much more in common than their contrasting personalities suggest. Kinsley shows that Krsna's flute can be interchangeable with Kali's sword, revealing important perceptions of the divine in the Hindu tradition.

"In glimpsing Kali's sword and hearing Krsna's flute, Kinsley has superbly presented these deities as human experience, and his book will likely be more useful to undergraduates in discerning the meaning of Hindu spirituality in the face of its polytheism than many more erudite treatments. . . . A very readable book backed by sound scholarship." --"Choice