



Holy Madness: The Shock Tactics and Radical Teachings of Crazy-Wise Adepts, Holy Fools and Rascal Gurus

By Georg Feuerstein

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“A fascinating look at spiritual leaders, both past and present.”—*Booklist*

Crazy-wise adepts, cult leaders, and gurus challenge our common sense views of reality and norms of conduct. In their attempts to teach spiritual truths, they shock cognitive boundaries and jolt moral sensibilities with radical eccentricity, trickery, and excess.

Now for the first time, *Holy Madness* explores this universal dimension of spirituality in a readable and brilliant blend of history, philosophy, theology, and first-person accounts. Here are Fools for Christ, sitting naked on garbage heaps; eccentric Zen masters baffling their students with beatings and belly laughs; and enigmatic rascal gurus and spiritual clowns like Da-Ananda, Chögyam Trungpa, G. I. Gurdjieff, and Aleister Crowley.

How can you tell if the antics of a Holy Fool are legitimate teaching tools or simply the acts of a self-indulgent lunatic? This fascinating study tackles this question and many others, providing an unbiased exploration of the mechanics of spiritual life.

“It makes good, stiff reading for folks who hanker for travel of the mind and heart.”—*Boston Globe*

“A totally absorbing and fascinating piece of work by an author of considerable intellectual caliber . . . a superb study in the further reaches of human nature.”—Colin Wilson, author of *The Outsider*

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Russian spiritual teacher Georgei Gurdjieff force-fed vegetarians hefty meat dishes. Japanese Zen master Lin-chi thrashed his pupils. Indian guru Meher Baba remained silent for 43 years. All employed what Feuerstein, author of books on yoga and religion, calls "holy madness" or "crazy wisdom," using eccentric behavior or shock tactics to communicate an alternative vision. A former devotee of Da Free John (aka Da Love-Ananda, ne Franklin Jones), Feuerstein presents critical cameos of holy fools (Aleister Crowley, BhagwanRajneesh, etc.) as well as guidelines for choosing a wise, enlightened guru and avoiding the exploitative. Yet his gallery of spiritual eccentrics is so diverse--ranging from Christian mystics to Hindu holy men who live on garbage heaps--that it's hard to credit the author's generalizations about the value of holy folly as an authentic path to transcendence.

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From Library Journal

Music mogul Lissauer has compiled an alphabetical list of over 19,000 songs, covering standards and hits that include minstrel tunes, war songs, operetta pieces, jazz, instrumentals, blues, pop, rock, rhythm and blues, and country and western. Each entry includes writer and lyricist, date of popularity, and usually a sentence or two describing its context and the performer(s) who popularized it. A year-by-year listing follows, and the volume closes with an index of the writers (but not performers). This is a good tool for basic information, but those libraries already owning the 13-volume series *Popular Music*, edited by Bruce Pollock and Nat Shapiro (Gale, 1975-88), and not concerned with the gay Nineties will find Lissauer unnecessary.

- *Robert Aken, Univ. of Kentucky Libs., Lexington*

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From Kirkus Reviews

Here, Feuerstein (*The Encyclopedic Dictionary of Yoga*, 1990- -not reviewed) explores the arcane and dramatic world of "crazy wisdom"--the purposefully outrageous, convention-destroying behavior of spiritual adepts in every great tradition--peppering his fascinating historical survey of gurus and tricksters with insights from modern psychology and his own experience in an unnamed contemporary cult. "In their realization or experience, adepts may be above good and evil," Feuerstein writes. "In their actions, however, they are not." Tracing the shadowy tradition of crazy wisdom from the self-abnegating "Holy Fools" of early Christianity and Sufism (the "Way of Blame") to the greatly accomplished teaching adepts of India and Tibet (including the legendary Milarepa), Feuerstein paints a richly suggestive picture of "crazy wise" spiritual experience--as solitary and superb as a saint pretending to be mad. His portraits of modern adepts, however, reveal how difficult it is to balance mysticism with common morality. G.I. Gurdjieff, Chogyam Trungpa, Bhagwan Rajneesh, Da Love Ananda (a.k.a. Da Free John): Feuerstein alleges that each (to greater or lesser degree) indulged in outrageous behavior to flex his spiritual muscle in the face of dourly submissive disciples. Particularly surprising are accounts of the alcohol-drenched debauches of Trungpa and Da Love Ananda (Rajneesh's weaknesses are too well known to surprise). Feuerstein speculates that neurosis survives enlightenment, and he labels these singular men "relics from an archaic spirituality"--yet he apparently longs to infuse the personal-growth field with their wisdom. A provocative and personally charged attempt to reconcile an ancient spiritual form to the modern age. -- *Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Sharon Self:

Book is to be different for each and every grade. Book for children till adult are different content. As we know that book is very important for people. The book Holy Madness: The Shock Tactics and Radical Teachings of Crazy-Wise Adepts, Holy Fools and Rascal Gurus seemed to be making you to know about other understanding and of course you can take more information. It is extremely advantages for you. The book Holy Madness: The Shock Tactics and Radical Teachings of Crazy-Wise Adepts, Holy Fools and Rascal Gurus is not only giving you a lot more new information but also for being your friend when you feel bored. You can spend your own personal spend time to read your guide. Try to make relationship while using book Holy Madness: The Shock Tactics and Radical Teachings of Crazy-Wise Adepts, Holy Fools and Rascal Gurus. You never really feel lose out for everything in the event you read some books.

Roger Lindsey:

In this 21st one hundred year, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive now, people have do something to make these survives, being in the middle of the particular crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that often many people have underestimated this for a while is reading. Yep, by reading a publication your ability to survive boost then having chance to stay than other is high. For you who want to start reading a new book, we give you that Holy Madness: The Shock Tactics and Radical Teachings of Crazy-Wise Adepts, Holy Fools and Rascal Gurus book as basic and daily reading reserve. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

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Nowadays reading books become more and more than want or need but also be a life style. This reading routine give you lot of advantages. The benefits you got of course the knowledge the rest of the information inside the book in which improve your knowledge and information. The knowledge you get based on what kind of reserve you read, if you want attract knowledge just go with training books but if you want feel happy read one together with theme for entertaining for instance comic or novel. Typically the Holy Madness: The Shock Tactics and Radical Teachings of Crazy-Wise Adepts, Holy Fools and Rascal Gurus is kind of guide which is giving the reader unpredictable experience.

Alan Sarno:

The book untitled Holy Madness: The Shock Tactics and Radical Teachings of Crazy-Wise Adepts, Holy Fools and Rascal Gurus contain a lot of information on it. The writer explains the girl idea with easy means. The language is very straightforward all the people, so do not really worry, you can easy to read it. The book was published by famous author. The author will take you in the new period of literary works. It is possible to read this book because you can read more your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book throughout anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can wide open their official web-site as well as order it. Have a nice read.

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