FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Shakers of St. Vincent
Bradford Keeney, editor
Ringing Rocks Press
Unknown $39.95 (196pp)
978-0-918172-33-4
(October 2001)

Shakers mourn. The pointer covers mourners' heads with white bands and whispers passwords in their ears. With crosses and candles in hand, mourners prepare for ecstatic spiritual journeys. The pointer repeats the password to them so that they can experience a vision and lesson for spiritual healing. The deeper the mourner's journey, the brighter his or her experience of lights and the greater the fellowship and the communion with Christ. The mourner rises from the grave. The hurts of the previous life are erased. The mourner is reborn. Until the mourning begins again.

The Shakers of the Caribbean island of St. Vincent are a dynamic band of Spiritual Baptists who appropriate the name "shaker" to honor the Holy Spirit. In times of praise or mourning, the Holy Spirit descends upon them like an electric force, tightening their bellies and causing spontaneous jerks, shivering, and trembling. Shakers describe their worship as the perfect synchronicity between African spiritualism brought by slaves and Protestant Methodism which was introduced to islanders as early as 1787.

Bishop John, a Shaker leader, explains: "During the slavery, the only thing people could do was pray for relief. What they received was direct communication with God… Being a Spiritual Baptist, or what people used to call a Shaker, has a simple meaning-it means natural communication and prayer with God. It's a natural communication with the Holy Spirit… like having a telephone line that direct-dials to your God."

Healing through praise and mourning is not limited to inductees only: the Shakers' healing ministry has offered spiritual rebirth for persons of many faiths the world over.

This tome brilliantly captures the spiritual practices of this group. The three-part text describes the process of mourning, offers rich testimonies from many members of the faith, and closes with a vivid narrative of one Shaker's journey into the spirit world. Shakers of St. Vincent is the newest in the editor's Profiles of Healing series, which has featured such traditional healers as the Kalahari Bushmen, Native American Healers, and the Guarani

Shamans. The book, accompanied by an audio CD and bright, colorful photographs, draws the reader in through an audiovisual experience of the Shakers' spiritual healing process.

Lisa Archibald