

# **Salvation On Sand Mountain Publisher Da Capo Press Reissue Edition**

## **Salvation on Sand Mountain: Da Capo Press Reissue Edition – A Renewed Look at Appalachian Faith and Culture**

The recent reissue of Dennis Covington's *\*Salvation on Sand Mountain\** by Da Capo Press offers a timely opportunity to revisit this powerful and poignant exploration of Pentecostalism in the Alabama foothills. This compelling narrative, originally published in 1991, continues to resonate, offering invaluable insights into Appalachian culture, religious fervor, and the complexities of faith. This article delves into the book's enduring relevance, examining its literary style, key themes, and the significance of its reissue, focusing on aspects like **snake handling, Appalachian culture, Pentecostalism**, and the **literary merit** of Covington's work.

### **A Journey into the Heart of Appalachian Pentecostalism**

Covington's *\*Salvation on Sand Mountain\** isn't just a journalistic account; it's an immersive experience. He skillfully weaves a narrative that transcends simple observation, drawing the reader into the world of the Sand Mountain Holiness Church and its devoted followers. The book meticulously details the rituals, beliefs, and everyday lives of these communities, providing a nuanced and often surprising portrayal of their faith. The author's commitment to understanding, rather than judging, shines through in every page. This empathetic approach is what makes the book

so compelling and ensures its continued relevance decades after its initial publication. The **reissue by Da Capo Press** ensures a new generation can access this important work.

### ### The Power of Observation and Immersion

Covington doesn't simply report on the practices of snake handling; he immerses himself in the experience. He attends services, participates in rituals (within the ethical boundaries he sets for himself), and builds relationships with the community members. This approach allows him to present their beliefs not as exotic oddities, but as deeply held convictions rooted in a rich cultural and historical context. His immersion goes beyond simple observation, capturing the emotional intensity and spiritual passion central to their faith. The **snake handling** tradition, particularly, is explored with both respect and careful analysis.

## Exploring Key Themes: Faith, Culture, and Community

\*Salvation on Sand Mountain\* tackles a multitude of themes, interweaving them to create a rich tapestry of human experience. The most prominent themes include the unwavering faith of the Sand Mountain community, the deeply ingrained cultural practices of Appalachia, and the intricate interplay between faith and community.

### ### Faith and the Search for Meaning

The core of Covington's book is the unwavering faith of his subjects. He doesn't shy away from portraying the extremes of their beliefs, nor does he trivialize their convictions. Instead, he presents their faith as a source of strength, community, and meaning in the face of hardship and poverty. The book reveals the deeply personal and transformative power of their faith, highlighting how it shapes their lives and provides solace amidst difficult circumstances. This understanding of faith is a crucial element that contributes to the book's enduring appeal.

### ### Appalachian Culture and Its Resilience

The book subtly reveals the resilience and distinctiveness of Appalachian culture. It highlights how faith is intrinsically linked to their way of life, shaping their values, traditions, and social structures. Covington's respectful portrayal of this culture adds another layer of depth to the narrative, showing how faith acts as a unifying force within this often-marginalized community. The **Appalachian culture** portrayed helps readers understand the deep roots of the beliefs he documents.

### ### Pentecostalism and its Global Impact

The **Pentecostalism** explored in \*Salvation on Sand Mountain\* extends beyond the confines of Sand Mountain. Covington's work offers a window into a global religious movement, highlighting its adaptability and reach. The book shows how Pentecostalism takes root and adapts within specific cultural contexts, shaping and being shaped by the communities it embraces. This element adds a broader perspective to the narrative, transcending the specific geographical location and revealing the universal appeal of faith.

## The Literary Merit and Enduring Relevance of \*Salvation on Sand Mountain\*

Covington's prose is both descriptive and insightful. He masterfully employs literary techniques that enhance the reader's understanding and empathy. The book isn't just a factual account; it's a work of literary art. The **literary merit** of the work is undeniable, contributing significantly to its lasting impact. The Da Capo Press reissue ensures that this important piece of non-fiction remains readily accessible to a new generation of readers.

## Conclusion: A Must-Read for Our Times

\*Salvation on Sand Mountain\* remains a potent and relevant read in the 21st century. Its exploration of faith, culture, and community transcends geographical boundaries and continues to

resonate with readers interested in religious studies, anthropology, and American culture. The reissue by Da Capo Press is a valuable contribution, ensuring that Covington's insightful work continues to inform and inspire. It stands as a testament to the power of storytelling and the importance of understanding diverse perspectives, particularly within the context of faith and culture.

## **FAQ**

### **Q1: What makes the Da Capo Press reissue significant?**

A1: The reissue ensures the accessibility of this important work to a new generation of readers. It's a recognition of the book's enduring relevance and contribution to our understanding of Appalachian culture and Pentecostalism. Da Capo Press often reissues important works of non-fiction, and this choice reflects the book's continued importance.

### **Q2: Is the book suitable for readers unfamiliar with Pentecostalism?**

A2: Absolutely. Covington's writing style is accessible and clear, even for those unfamiliar with Pentecostal beliefs. He provides sufficient context to understand the practices and beliefs discussed without requiring prior knowledge.

### **Q3: How does the book handle the sensitive topic of snake handling?**

A3: Covington approaches the topic with respect and careful consideration. He avoids sensationalism, focusing instead on the spiritual and cultural significance of the practice within the community. He documents it accurately, but avoids exploiting it.

### **Q4: What are the key takeaways from reading \*Salvation on Sand Mountain\*?**

A4: Readers will gain a deeper understanding of Appalachian culture, the power of faith in shaping communities, and the complexities of religious belief. It prompts reflection on the diversity of

faith expressions and the importance of respectful engagement with different cultures.

**Q5: Is the book primarily academic or journalistic in its approach?**

A5: While rigorously researched and factual, the book possesses a strong narrative and literary element. It's a blend of immersive journalism and literary non-fiction, making it accessible and engaging for a broad audience.

**Q6: How does the book contribute to discussions of religious tolerance?**

A6: By presenting a respectful and empathetic portrayal of a sometimes-misunderstood religious community, the book fosters greater understanding and encourages tolerance for diverse belief systems. It shows the commonalities in the human experience regardless of faith.

**Q7: Where can I purchase the Da Capo Press reissue edition?**

A7: The reissue edition of \*Salvation on Sand Mountain\* is available at major online retailers like Amazon and Barnes & Noble, as well as many independent bookstores.

**Q8: What are some similar books that explore similar themes?**

A8: Readers interested in similar themes might explore works exploring Appalachian culture, Pentecostalism, or faith-based communities. Some suggestions include works by other writers focusing on similar Southern religious experiences, or ethnographic studies of Appalachian life.

## **A Renewed Look at the Appalachian Soul: Da Capo Press' Reissue of "Salvation on Sand Mountain"**

Da Capo Press's re-release of celebrated journalist and author Dennis B. Johnson's "Salvation on Sand Mountain" offers a timely opportunity to reassess a important work of United States spiritual history and sociocultural study. This freshly available volume isn't merely a historical account;

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it's a powerful tale that remains to resonate with readers today, presenting penetrating remarks on the complex interplay between faith and community in the United States South.

The book, originally published in 1994, immersively explores the lives of Pentecostal Christians in the remote corner of northern Alabama. Johnson, through careful journalism, portrays a vivid portrait of a society deeply grounded in its faith, displaying how Pentecostalism has shaped not only their religious lives but also their routine realities. He doesn't shy away from the contradictions and complexities inherent in this fervently religious setting.

Johnson's style is both compelling and impartial. He masterfully interweaves together private stories with broader cultural settings, highlighting the influence of Pentecostalism on personal options, family dynamics, and the overall fabric of the community. He records the happiness and ecstasy associated with Pentecostal service, but also the likely for abuse, coercion, and the sometimes difficult relationship between Pentecostalism and the outside world.

The Da Capo Press reissue is particularly important because it allows a new cohort of readers to interact with Johnson's book. The topics explored in "Salvation on Sand Mountain" – the seeking for meaning in life, the function of faith in shaping private identities, and the challenges faced by outlying communities – are as relevant today as they were when the book was initially published. In an era of increasing separation and doubt, the book's study of faith and community can offer invaluable teachings on constructing links and finding common foundation.

Moreover, the new edition provides an chance to consider on the development of Pentecostalism and its persistent impact on the U.S. scene. The book serves as a important aid for scholars, students, and anyone interested in grasping the interactions of religion, society, and governance in the United States. The Da Capo edition ideally will bring this crucial text to a wider audience.

In conclusion, Da Capo Press's republication of "Salvation on Sand Mountain" is a meaningful event for those concerned in U.S. spiritual history, social science, and the intricate relationship between faith and culture. Through its captivating narrative and thought-provoking comments, the

book persists to offer valuable teachings for readers today, reminding us of the power of faith and the value of grasping the different stories of our brother people.

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

1. **What makes this reissue of "Salvation on Sand Mountain" special?** This reissue offers a new generation access to a powerful work of religious and sociological reporting that remains highly relevant today. It provides a fresh opportunity to examine the intersection of faith and community in the American South.
2. **What is the primary focus of Dennis Johnson's book?** The book focuses on the lives and faith of Pentecostal Christians in a rural Alabama community, exploring the impact of Pentecostalism on their lives, culture, and society.
3. **Is the book suitable for academic study?** Absolutely. The book is widely used in academic settings, particularly in religious studies, sociology, and anthropology courses. Its rigorous research and insightful analysis make it a valuable resource for scholars and students.
4. **What is the overall tone of the book?** While exploring complex issues, Johnson maintains a largely objective and respectful tone. He avoids judgmental language and presents the community's experiences with sensitivity and empathy.

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