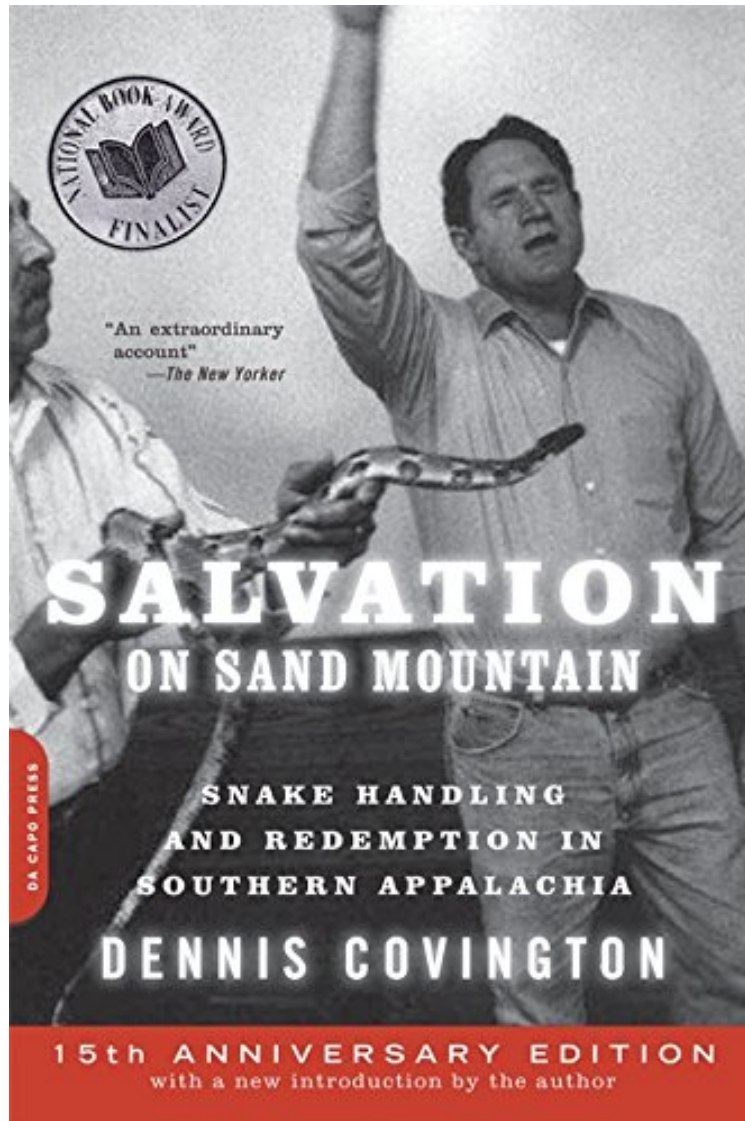


Salvation on Sand Mountain: Snake Handling and Redemption in Southern Appalachia

Dennis Covington

ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#90857 in Books Dennis Covington 2009-08-11 2009-08-11 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.25 x .75 x 5.50l, .66 #File Name: 0306818361288 pages Salvation on Sand Mountain Snake Handling and Redemption in Southern Appalachia | File size: 64.Mb

Dennis Covington : Salvation on Sand Mountain: Snake Handling and Redemption in Southern Appalachia before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Salvation on Sand Mountain: Snake Handling and Redemption in Southern Appalachia:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Amazing Testimonial By Mitch Garcia Mr. Covington presents a

unique insight to this religious subculture's lifestyle. Although the reader may think this is a story about snake handlers, it is Moreton journey of the writer's self-discovery. Through this literary approach the reader understands in greater depth the inner spirituality of these champions of their religious faith. At first I couldn't understand why the story turned inward toward authors own upbringing. But as the book continued, I was riveted as the author finds himself as one of them. I also enjoyed the author's writing style which made the book less a documentary and more of a story of a people committed to their cause.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very interesting expositionBy Kirk W. McculloughThis is a fascinating explanation of the social and religious aspects of snake handling. I still have trouble with the longer endings of Mark, but I have a bit more understanding now.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Peculiar in a good way.By TimaeusIt's a very peculiar reading for sure. The gist of it is that there are snake handlers who interpret the bible literally, and they drink poison and act basically like "war soldiers". Their language is rather funny, and their lack of depth is so sad! This journalist slowly tries to empathize with them, and even does some of the things they do. Does he become one of them? You'll have to read to find out! :)

For New York Times reporter Dennis Covington, what began as a journalistic assignment—covering the trial of an Alabama pastor convicted of attempting to murder his wife with poisonous snakes—would evolve into a headlong plunge into a bizarre, mysterious, and ultimately irresistible world of unshakable faith: the world of holiness snake handling.Set in the heart of Appalachia, *Salvation on Sand Mountain* is Covington's unsurpassed and chillingly captivating exploration of the nature, power, and extremity of faith—an exploration that gradually turns inward, until Covington finds himself taking up the snakes.

.com *Salvation on Sand Mountain* is a story of snake handling and strychnine drinking, of faith healing and speaking in tongues. It is also the story of one man's search for his roots--and, in the end, of his spiritual renewal. Writer Dennis Covington came to this ecstatic form of Christianity as a reporter covering a sensational murder case; Glen Summerford, pastor of the Church of Jesus with Signs Following, had been accused of attempting to kill his wife with rattlesnakes. There, in a courtroom filled with journalists and gawking spectators, Covington felt the pull of a spirituality that was to dominate his life for the next several years. Attending Summerford's church out of curiosity, he soon forged close friendships with some of the worshippers, began attending snake-handling services throughout the South, and eventually took up snakes himself. With subject matter this lurid, *Salvation on Sand Mountain* could have been a Southern-fried curiosity and little more. Covington goes far deeper. Tracing the snake handlers' roots in regional history, in the deep spiritual alienation of mountain people from the secular modern world they have so recently joined, Covington is more than just sympathetic to the snake handlers; in a profound way, he considers himself one of them. His reasoning is sometimes flawed--when he attempts to find snake handlers in his own family's past, for instance, the result is belabored and unconvincing--but there's no doubt that Covington's heart is in the right place. He's also not without his own brand of sly gallows humor, as in this conversation with the elderly Gracie McAllister: "She'd swore she'd never handle rattlesnakes in July again. She'd been bit the previous two Julys. 'I decided I'd just handle fire and drink strychnine that night,' she said. Good idea, I thought. It always pays to be on the safe side." Covington eventually breaks with the snake handlers, but comes away from the experience a changed man. "Knowing where you come from is one thing, but it's suicide to stay there," he writes. An American Book Award winner and finalist for the National Book Award, *Salvation on Sand Mountain* is a nuanced, compassionate portrait of an unforgettable spiritual journey. --Mary ParkFrom Publishers WeeklyAfter Covington, a writing instructor at the University of Alabama, novelist (Lizard) and freelance journalist, covered the trial of a preacher convicted of attempting to murder his wife with rattlesnakes, he was invited to attend a snake-handling service in Scottsville, Ala. He found the service exhilarating and unsettling; he felt a kinship with the people, for he was only two generations removed from the hill country of Appalachia. Of Scottish-Irish descent, the handlers are religious mystics who believe in demons, drink strychnine and drape rattlesnakes around their bodies. Covington attended other services with Brother Carl Porter; he eventually handled a huge rattlesnake, and recalls that at the time, he felt absolutely no fear. This is a captivating glimpse of an exotic religious sect. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Library JournalFascinated by the religious practice of snake handling, the author, a novelist and writing instructor at the University of Alabama, relates his association with the Church of Jesus with Signs Following in Scottsboro, Alabama. Working for the New York Times, Covington covered the trial of the church's preacher, who was convicted of attempting to murder his wife with rattlesnakes. Upon discovering this remnant of distinctive Southern culture, the author continues his journalist's involvement with the church, which develops into a personal spiritual journey. Awed by the faith and daring of the followers, he becomes a participant in their peculiar rituals. Although the author's observations and insights are interesting, this book is only marginally informative. For a more complete study, see Thomas Burton's *Serpent-Handling Believers* (LJ 3/15/93).Eloise R. Hitchcock, Tennessee Technological Univ. Lib., CookevilleCopyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.