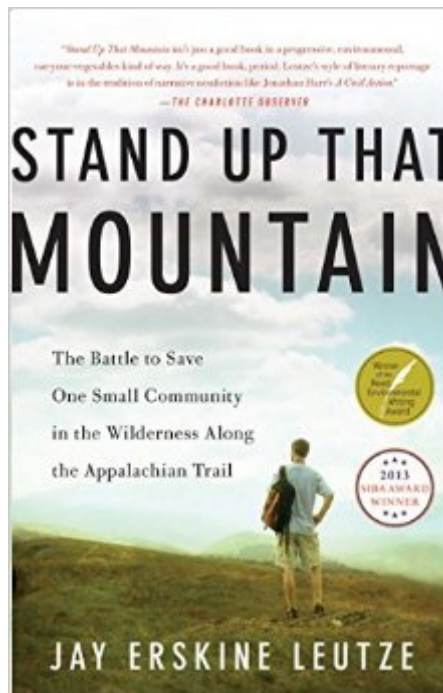


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# Stand Up That Mountain: The Battle To Save One Small Community In The Wilderness Along The Appalachian Trail



## Synopsis

In the tradition of *A Civil Action*—this true story of a North Carolina outdoorsman who teams up with his Appalachian neighbors to save treasured land from being destroyed will make you want to head for the mountains—(Raleigh News & Observer). LIVING ALONE IN HIS WOODED MOUNTAIN RETREAT, Jay Leutze gets a call from a whip-smart fourteen-year-old, Ashley Cook, and her aunt, Ollie Cox, who say a local mining company is intent on tearing down Belview Mountain, the towering peak above their house. Ashley and her family, who live in a little spot known locally as Dog Town, are mountain people, with a way of life and speech unique to their home high in the Appalachians. They suspect the mining company is violating North Carolina's mining law, and they want Jay, a nonpracticing attorney, to stop the destruction of the mountain. Jay, a devoted naturalist and fisherman, quickly decides to join their cause. So begins the epic quest of the Dog Town Bunch—a battle that involves fiery public hearings, clandestine surveillance of the mine operator's highly questionable activities, ferocious pressure on public officials, and high-stakes legal brinksmanship in the North Carolina court system. Jay helps assemble a talented group of environmental lawyers to contend with the well-funded attorneys protecting the mining company's plan to dynamite Belview Mountain, which happens to sit next to the famous Appalachian Trail, the 2,184-mile national park that stretches from Maine to Georgia. As the mining company continues to level the forest and erect the gigantic crushing plant on the site, Jay's group searches frantically for a way to stop an act of environmental desecration that will destroy a fragile wild place and mar the Appalachian Trail forever.

## Book Information

Paperback: 400 pages

Publisher: Scribner; Reprint edition (July 30, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1451682646

ISBN-13: 978-1451682649

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.1 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars— See all reviews— (73 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #631,003 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #77 in Books > Business & Money > Industries > Energy & Mining > Natural Resource Extraction #134 in Books > Engineering & Transportation > Engineering > Energy Production & Extraction > Mining #188 in Books > Law >

## Customer Reviews

This is an excellent poignant, heart rendering, funny, daring, scary story about how one individual with local citizens, conservationists and conservancies, and attorneys worked with governmental agencies and the legal system to save a mountain in western NC from being destroyed by the mining industry and thereby preserving for generations to come the Appalachian Trail, the Highlands of Roan and its potentially endangered flora, fauna, and indigenous wildlife. It is a wonderfully written "personal diary" that introduces the reader to a variety of people who played significant roles in the story- Ollie, Ashley, Freddie, Curly, Faye, Trip, Forrest and Jim, Heel Hound, Charles, Trackhoe Daddy, Wingfoot, and Dear Old Dad. The story is more than a story about the Putnam Mine, however. It reminds us that We The People must forever be vigilant in protecting our God given environmental gifts. I look forward in travelling to western NC this summer and hiking the Hump.

A history of local law, local people, including the author, and the incredibly beautiful locale--the bald highlands and forests of the Roan--has been spun into an unforgettable fight for beauty. You will not forget this mountain, nor its colorful cast of characters, Ollie, Ashley, Heel Hound and more; even court testimony takes on the metaphors of mountain life: "Charles let him run, like a trout on a reel with a hundred yards of backing, and the gravel haulers were emboldened by what they heard." This is a must read for everyone, hikers, conservationists, and, yes, dreamers of mineral extraction.

There's nothing better than having a book you can't wait to get back to and read one more chapter. Stand Up That Mountain tells a great tale and keeps you in suspense, even though you know the ending. It has a southern novel's wild band of characters who are portrayed so vividly you will miss them when the book ends. The mountain landscape is as important as any character. Leutze's reverence for place is inspiring and his descriptions lyrical. Somehow, a tense tale of crucial environmental consequences is also incredibly funny. It reminded me of A Civil Action and other accounts of environmental battles - but has a bigger heart and better writing. Sadly, few readers live in a place that is heartbreakingly beautiful. But most people either know of such a place or can imagine one. Stand Up That Mountain allows you to ride along and feel what it would be like to fight with everything you have to protect a treasured place. That is a great gift. All the laws and big organizations in the world could not do what a small cast of mountain neighbors - with love and

dogged tenacity and the knowledge of what was happening day to day - accomplished. If you read this book you will feel better about the world.

Who would believe that the story about the legal process of revoking a mining permit through the North Carolina state court system could make such entertaining and engaging reading? Jay Leutze's elegantly smooth writing allows us not only to be engaged with the legal wrangling, but to be intimately involved with the people whose lives are affected by the process: Ollie, Ashley, Paul, and all of the "nicknamed". With a warm appreciation and respect for mountain people, Mr. Leutze has preserved a five year narrative of an ever diminishing culture beset by the ever increasing pressure of development. And it's riveting! The way that Leutze presents the events makes the story read like a true Southern fiction and I can easily see this being interpreted in film...delightfully, humorously, and poignantly. The perfect human interest story moviegoers love. The overlapping interests of the mountain community, the legal community, the conservation community, the mining community, and the real estate development community provides pretty much everyone an angle that thoroughly engages them, and this is the beauty of Leutze's writing. His successful attempt to fully develop the players in the drama causes the reader to avoid the "us versus them" cliché and instead appreciate that there are various sides to any story. I recommend this book to anyone who has interest in the protection of our diverse cultures and our scenic wonders; and I recommend it to anyone who simply loves a great story. Thank you, Jay!

I love this book. Bought it for a friend of my sons at graduation because she is at Warren Wilson and would be in the area. We plan to vacation in the area next summer just so I can take the hike on the balds he and the community fought so hard to save from corporate greed. I will purchase another copy so all of my sons can read it before we go. One of my favorite books.

This may be the best, most humorous, and most inspiring non-fiction offering that I have ever read. Living in North Carolina, I can appreciate the beauty and significance of the landscape Mr. Leutze fights to protect. But what he does in this book that is remarkable is make all characters - "good" and "bad" - real and sympathetic. In an age where authenticity is scarce, Jay's depiction of every person in this book - including himself - is more than authentic. It is real; a quality lacking in today's literature. I have bought seven copies of this book for friends that I think will be similarly inspired and touched by this story. I would encourage anyone who actually reads a review of this book to scan a few pages themselves. I cannot imagine that there are any paragraphs in this offering that will not

make one want to read this book.

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