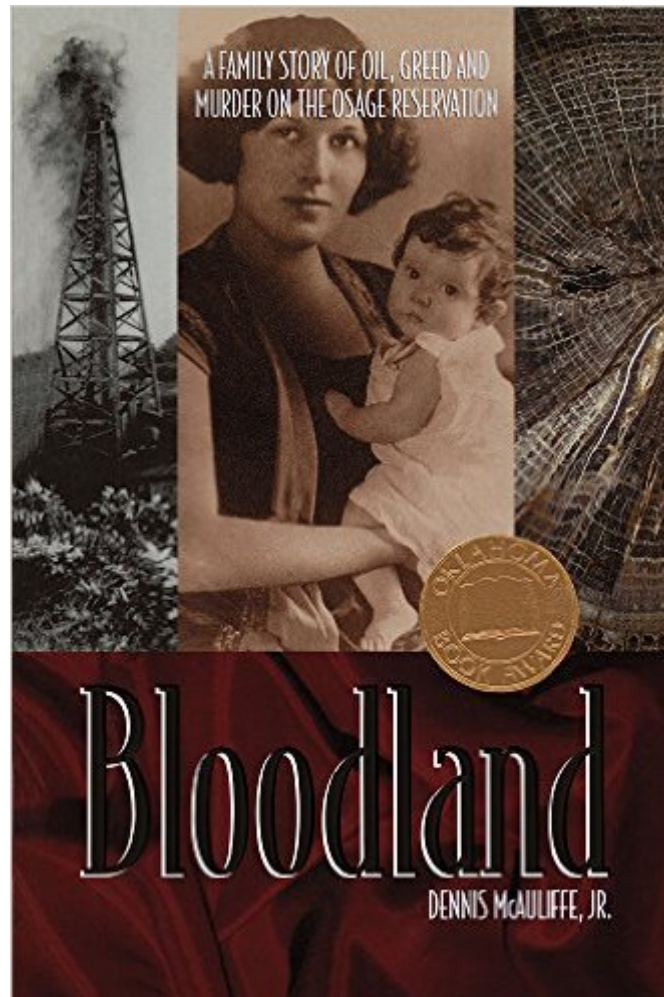


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Bloodland: A Family Story Of Oil, Greed And Murder On The Osage Reservation



Synopsis

Journalist Dennis McAuliffe, Jr. opens old family wounds and ultimately exposes a widespread murder conspiracy and shameful episode in American history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I originally bought this book because I thought it sounded like an interesting fiction. It quickly became obvious that it wasn't a fictional story at all, but rather another atrocity in American history that is only known through rumors and campfire stories. This book is a expert mix of personal obstacles for the author and unbiased historical documentation of an Osage tribe and its gift/curse of oil wealth. I doubt many people are strangers to the tales of Native abuses by whites, but I've asked many people if they've ever heard of the Osage murders at the turn of the century when oil was struck on their land. None had. This is a wonderfully wrought piece. I recommend it to anyone with a flare for history, the glorified as well as the darker chapters.

This was a very well-written book, very close to accounts of those times in Osage country that I've heard from other Osage families. Dennis starts off his book as a typical middle-class white American, just researching old family stories and geneology. He begins to see things as an Indian, and realizes that his grandmother was one of the thousands of Indian victims of greed here in Oklahoma. Her murder, like so many others, was virtually ignored by the world. On several levels, his family story is the story of Indian Oklahoma. I applaud Dennis for his courage to continue his

research, and to write the truth!

I read this book with my book club members which culminated with a "speakerphone chat" with the author. I must say that this was a wonderful and powerful novel that gets the reader thinking. I am not an Indian, and I am ashamed to say I had no idea about the Reign of Terror or the prejudices felt by Indians of any tribe. This book opened my eyes. I was on the edge of my seat waiting to see how this true murder mystery was going to turn out. In the meantime, I got an awesome history lesson that I will never forget.

Chronicling the Osage Reign of Terror through fiction, as Linda Hogan did exquisitely in *Mean Spirit*, or factually, as Lawrence Hogan attempted reasonably well in *The Osage Indian Murders*, is an entirely different effort from telling the true story of your own family, as Dennis McAuliffe succeeded in doing beautifully with *Bloodland*. Woven into the threads of the story of his Osage grandmother's brutal murder at the hands of her own white stepfather is his own experience of claiming his rightful place in the tribe and passing that proud legacy on to his own son. Contrary to what earlier reviewers have implied, it is completely possible to mourn the loss of a grandparent that you never knew, and that loss becomes even more poignant in its senselessness. Mr. McAuliffe's work tells a story within a story. It is first of all a well-researched documentary of a period in history for which this nation has much to answer. It is also the journal of a period in the author's own life during which he came to discover who he is and what of himself he will give to his child. As an adult who was adopted, I can relate to his occasional silliness as he tries to get a job using his minority "blood quantum" status as well as his more serious and reflective awareness of everything coming together and finally making sense. If you are interested in researching the history of the Osages, there are probably many books that will give you "just the facts." *Bloodland* will show you not only how those facts impacted on the people who lived them, but also how the events continue to resonate in the lives of those folks several generations removed.

This book impacted me deeply as a member of the Osage Nation. My grandmother was the last and youngest of the tribe to receive a headright in the Osage Allotment Act of 1906, of which I will inherit a portion when my father passes on one day. She was number 2229. I knew of the killings in the 1920's from sitting at her knee as a young child and listening to the stories and the history, but this book filled in a lot of blanks for me. Although I am not a full blood (not many of them left these days) my Osage heritage has become very important to me. I thank the author for this book. Excellent

research and a story well told.

Beware of helping hands - coming into new wealth because of oil discoveries on their land, the Osage were protected by Congress' passing a law for guardianship. This had the unintended consequence of putting them at the mercy of more whites, often with legal and political power, to add to the problems of men who tried to marry women owning headrights to gain control of wealth, and others who tried to kill off the Osage. A terrible account of outrageous exploitation in a frontier of greed and grasping.

I was delighted to find this book on the market. I lived in Osage County for 18 months in the late 1950's. I was in the oil business and supervised drilling wells and producing properties all over the the County(Reservation). I heard many oral reports of how the Osages were miss treated, especially in the teens and the 1920's. I visited the Osage Agency offices in Pawhuska from time to time. I now appreciate the beauty of the countryside and the intelligence of the Osage Tribe. I think Mr McAuliffe did an outstanding job in researching his grandmother's life and reviewing the history of the Osage Tribe in Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma. I made friends with the Osages I met and understand, by having known them, what it means to be an Osage. Mr. McAuliffe made it plain why this Tribe became wealthy through their negotiating skills with the The Great White Father's agents. I understand why Mr. McAuliff is proud to be an Osage.

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