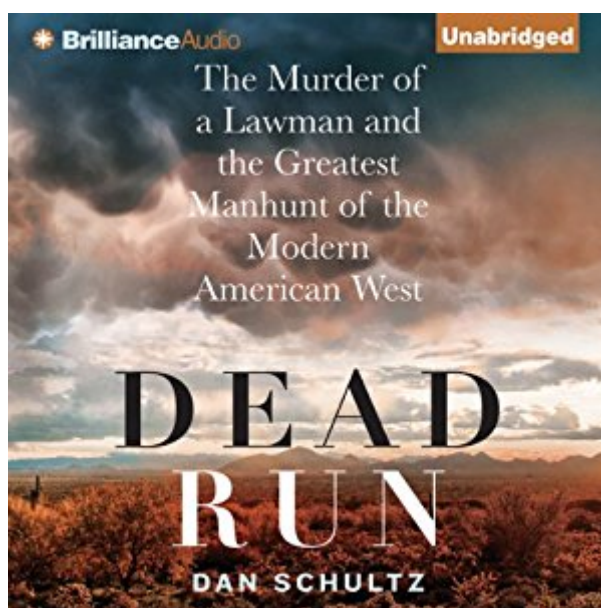


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Dead Run: The Murder Of A Lawman And The Greatest Manhunt Of The Modern American West



Synopsis

On a sunny May morning in 1998 in Cortez, Colorado, three desperados in a stolen truck opened fire on the town cop, shooting him 20 times; then they blasted their way past dozens of police cars and disappeared into 10,000 square miles of the harshest wilderness terrain on the North American continent. Self-trained survivalists, the outlaws eluded the most sophisticated law enforcement technology on the planet and a pursuit force that represented more than 75 local, state, and federal police agencies with dozens of SWAT teams, U.S. Army Special Forces, and more than 500 officers from across the country. This is the first in-depth account of this sensational case, replete with overbearing local sheriffs, Native American trackers, posses on horseback, suspicion of vigilante justice and police cover-ups, and the blunders of the nation's most exalted crime fighters pursuing outlaws into territory in which only they could survive.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A tragic story that was well researched and reported by Dan Schultz. This should required reading for every rural sheriff and all of his/her deputies. It took 11 years to "solve" this crime and we will never know all of what actually happened. All of those who murdered the local cop were found dead, so in effect none were captured. The case in some ways reminded me of the Atlanta Olympic bombing and the recent escape of murderers in up state New York. Determined resourceful men with nothing to lose can cost local taxpayers millions; pity those who get in their way. The same could be true for homegrown terrorists. I live in a small southern Colorado county of 4000 and I plan

to buy a copy of the book for our sheriff.

I've never heard this story before and I found it fascinating. The book is interesting, but I gave it 4 stars instead of 5 because I think there was just a bit too much speculation about things we don't know. Some of it makes sense given the evidence but there are many other possibilities. The greatest value in this book is putting forth the refutation of the official police position on the deaths of the fugitives, especially Bobby Mason. Here is a man who is shooting a policeman just before he is found "dead from suicide". This is ludicrous given the situation. A massive manhunt is in place after three men mow down policemen with more firepower than a normal person can probably even imagine. They are killing and attempting to kill cops. And yet we are to believe he commits suicide? Baloney. He would have gone out in a blaze of glory taking as many cops with him as he could. They would have had to fill his body with bullets to make him stop. Or else they would have had to surprise him and kill him. Since the former didn't happen, it was clearly the latter. The above is just obvious common sense for anyone who knows anything about these anti-government militia types. However, the book provides evidence from the forensic autopsy to support the fact that this wasn't a suicide. Clearly as well, Jason McVean lived long after the initial escape and the idea he would just kill himself right away is delusional. Why do the police have to make up crap to cover up their ineptitude and time wasting turf battles? The only early death that is likely to have been self-inflicted or assisted by the fugitives themselves is that of Monte Pilon. The author of this book clearly disbelieves the official story and he provides a clear and persuasively argued story to support his position. I suppose reading this book one is going to know as much as possible about what may have happened until someone who knows more and aided the fugitives comes forward with something more concrete. I definitely recommend this book to true crime fans.

Do you remember this event as it happened? It was not that long ago. A policeman is viciously murdered at a traffic-stop, the three young men responsible ride out of a small western town armed to the teeth -- shooting more police pursuers as they go. They disappear into the desert. A huge (and pathetically disorganized) manhunt ensues. Years pass and remains are finally located but many questions have now arisen. I am reminded of the Jon Krakauer book "Into the Wild" where the author points out, depending on your perspective, that the hero (anti-hero?) is motivated either by stupidity or by a higher philosophical calling. Like Krakauer, writer Dan Shultz raises similar questions. Certainly it's much more difficult, though, for anyone to admire the cop-killing "bad-guys" in this story, but even some police have expressed a grudging respect for their skill at survival,

avoiding capture, & even their shooting ability. Motivations are complicated. Greed, for example, seems fairly clear-cut and it's a motive that's easy to derisively explain. But it's not the motive here. We can't just dismiss this crime so easily. Another more philosophical force drove these men. That is why the crime and its aftermath are so fascinating! Extremists of all stripes have something in common that's hard to define. I thought the author did a nice job trying to present a balanced, accurate picture. For obvious reasons, he had to engage in a lot of speculation -- preparation, movements while on the run, ultimate intentions -- but, he gives reasons. And his reasons seem just as satisfying (if not more) than the "official" explanation.

The book was engaging, especially when one is familiar with the terrain of the four corners country. It is my observation that small town law enforcement is typically a "good ole boys" network and that federal law enforcement agencies, (FBI etc.), are arrogant "know it all" types who don't listen to anyone with street smarts. They should have let the Navajo Tribal Police take charge and provided support when requested but then the Feds would have had to justify their fat budgets and admit that they were not competent in this type of crime. It is fascinating that so many agencies needed to jump in on the free publicity to the detriment of capturing the perps. All of the authors speculations are plausible. Read Ed Abbey's "Monkey Wrench Gang" for a taste of the militant environmentalist mindset, sans the extreme human violence.

Very interesting story. I was unaware of the crime, the search for the murderers, or the plot twists involving environmentalism. Well written, well illustrated (maps), and interesting insight into the people involved. Highly recommended.

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