

Killers of the Flower Moon Book Summary, by David Grann

by Allen Cheng

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Video Summaries of Killers of the Flower Moon

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxyYWCcGYIQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKjvrSS-UXU>

1-Page Summary of Killers of the Flower Moon

Overview

Grann, David. Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI. Doubleday, 2017

Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI by David Grann is a book about how dozens of members from an American Indian tribe were murdered in a conspiracy to gain control over their wealth. This happened because they had moved onto land above oil fields, which gave them significant amounts of money. Over many years, white people plotted these murders while trying to cover up their actions so that they could get more money. Eventually, the Federal Bureau of Investigation intervened and solved some murders and convicted several conspirators; however, others remain unsolved today.

The book begins with the story of Mollie Burkhart, a woman married to a white man named Ernest. The Osage Indian tribe owned oil rights and were being killed off one by one because of them. It was later discovered that many people in the community were involved in the scheme to kill them off for their headrights. Despite this evidence, local authorities couldn't stop it from happening because they didn't have enough professional law enforcement officers or resources at their disposal to investigate thoroughly enough. Therefore, J. Edgar Hoover sent agents from his Bureau of Investigation (BI) after hearing about

what was going on and wanting to improve his agency's reputation with the public by solving this case successfully. Tom White led the investigation and had several other experienced frontier lawmen working under him who knew how things worked out west and could operate undercover effectively. They eventually found proof that William Hale organized most of these murders, along with his nephews Bryan and Ernest Burkhart as well as others in order to get more money for themselves since they all lived lavishly despite having no legitimate source of income. Eventually, everyone involved was arrested except for Hale himself who tried everything he could think of including bribing witnesses but still ended up getting convicted anyway even though he only served part time before dying while incarcerated.

The final section of the book tells about Grann's research into the Osage tribe. He found that there were other murders besides those committed by Hale, suggesting that there was a conspiracy to kill off all of the Osage.

Chapter 1-3

The first chapter opens in 1921, when a young woman named Mollie Burkhart was worried about her sister Anna. The sisters were members of the Osage Nation, Native Americans who lived in Oklahoma. They had headrights that allowed them to claim royalties from oil fields below their territory and made them very rich. As Grann states, this wealth caused speculation about how they spent it. Ernest Burkhart was married to Mollie and cared for her when she had diabetes attacks; he also spoke the Osage language fluently. He helped his wife search for Anna after she disappeared with his brother Bryan on May 21st at a party hosted by Mollie's family. It turned out that Bryan left Anna alone later that night and went to see a movie with other relatives while Ernest searched for her at home but couldn't find her there either - making everyone more concerned than before because another Osage man named Charles Whitehorn had gone missing just days earlier (a week before). His body was discovered soon after by an oil worker on a hill outside Pawhuska, which led people like Grann to think something sinister might be going on here since two people from one tribe were disappearing so close together and bodies were being found near where other members of the tribe lived or worked (such as Fairfax where Anna's body was found soon after).

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