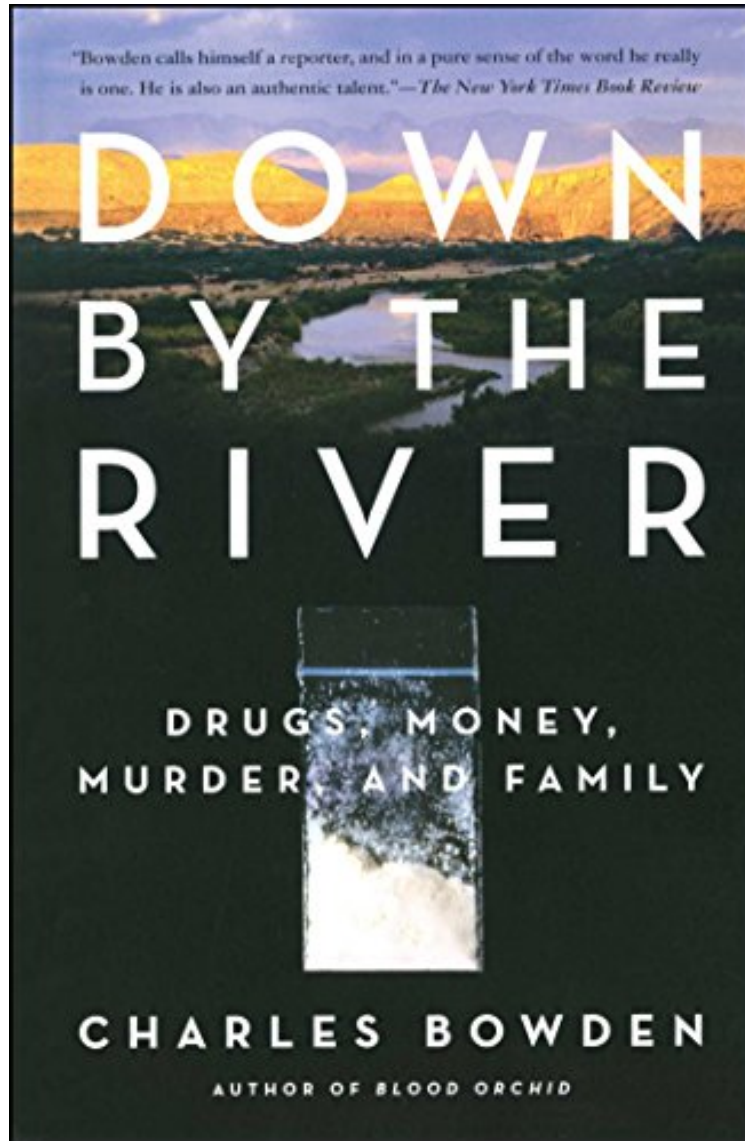


(Library ebook) Down by the River: Drugs, Money, Murder, and Family

## Down by the River: Drugs, Money, Murder, and Family

Charles Bowden

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#650291 in Books Charles Bowden 2004-01-08 2004-01-08 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.44 x 1.20 x 5.50l, .93 #File Name: 0743244575464 pages Down by the River Drugs Money Murder and Family | File size: 68.Mb

**Charles Bowden : Down by the River: Drugs, Money, Murder, and Family** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Down by the River: Drugs, Money, Murder, and Family:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Hits HomeBy sluggo Since it is a true story, I am very familiar with Phil Jordan who was my roommate in college and team mate on the varsity basketball team. I new his first wife and children from that marriage and also met his parents and younger brother. The youngest that was murdered was not

born yet when I met Phil and his parents back in 1964. In another fateful sequence of events in my life, I spent two years in Bolivia and made friends with the SAIC for the DEA down there. I have always had a keen interest in the state of drug trafficking in the world today especially in Latin America. I have traveled extensively throughout many of the countries in Latin America especially in Mexico all for pleasure. The book is excellent and certainly was hard for me to put down. Many names were mentioned throughout the book and George certainly made it easier to keep up with the quagmire of names and places. I took a personal interest in the constant "going back and forth" to people and places because I have visited many of the places mentioned in the book. I also know where Frutas street is and the location and ambience of Frutas Street certainly hit home with me because I was raised in a similar environment in Santa Fe, NM. I highly recommend this book and its highly insightful rendition of what goes on in the world of drug trafficking. Phil Jordan once tried to recruit me to work for the DEA when he was in Albuquerque. Thanks, Mike J. Lucero

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Down By The River Review by Edgardo By edgardo Review of "Down By The River Charles Bowden Pub 2002 By Edgardo [...]

No one much cares to confront the reality of the drug war. This reality gets very uncomfortable to most very quickly. Reactions in Mexico range from fatalistic acceptance and acquiescence to despair to "How can I make a buck off this thing?" Where are my pesos? To I had just better shut up and not think too hard about it, it's much safer that way. Explanations here in the United States start on the Left with. "Citizens need caring compassionate control from the government. We can't just let them run wild.", to the ravings of the right wing that has always been for repression of whatever sort at whatever time, for whatever reason. After 40 years of abject failure for the drug war the explanations and justifications grow increasingly more prosaic, tired, and ridiculous and I could go on. On the Right the authorities and the authoritarians insist that any war waged by an American Government can never be lost or abandoned. You have to keep drugs out of the hands, lungs, noses and brains of the people. Of course ignoring the fact that all the illegal drugs are widely available. And that prices keep going down. And ignoring the wars around the world that we are in the process of losing. Or have already essentially lost already. On the left if something isn't working we can fix it with some government program. Sometimes it does take a little tinkering and more billions and a new agency to get it right! So it goes on. Charles Bowden weaves a narrative of three strands through his book Down By The River. One is a very personal story of a family in El Paso that lost their son, the "good one, the golden boy". Bruno. The one in a large family that everyone loves. He was shot in El Paso, an innocent victim of trans-national border crime, a car-jacking...very rare at that time in the 1990's. Hundreds of cars were stolen and driven into Juarez. But car-jacking wasn't necessary. Alarm systems were primitive or non-existent. A late model car or truck could be hot wired in less than a minute. Or more likely something more sinister and pre-meditated occurred. The government of Mexico is famous for among other things it's almost total indifference to the plight of its citizens in legal trouble in foreign countries. The accused carjacker and killer was a penniless Mexican teenager. For whatever reason, this time Mexico leaps to the defense. The money pours in. While Bruno Jordan was unconnected to crime or narcotics there was a connection. His brother Phil. A high official in the DEA. He was involved in hundreds of cases. In the end the family's agony and search for justice comes to nothing.. This mirrors the experience of the people of Juarez and Mexico entire. A country where Justice is a joke and there is no hope of ever finding it. But revenge is another thing. Sometimes that can be found. Until the revenged come to take it back. The other thread is the story of the Mexicans: The narcos, the cops, the narco-cops. The Cartel Bosses, the underlings, the people, the undercover cops, their world. There are few heroes. Bowden himself might be one. He might dispute that. Perhaps some of the journalists and the people that survive along with some of their humanity are as close to heroes here as we will find. As Bowden says in the end the drug war destroys all. There are no winners. Thread number three is the documentary. Like bursts from an AR-15 he documents incident after incident of cases that only went so high. Of the complicity of every Mexican President in the narcotic business of Mexico and the U.S. Of case after case that was quashed by American Attorney Generals and Justice Department higher-ups when it became too politically sensitive. Then would come "new and incorruptible agencies and leaders" in Mexico to gain more American support and money. The whole dog and pony show was always political. Always about more laws and more prisons and more money. All built on a culture of snitches and betrayal and lies. Leading to torture, death, imprisonment, ruination of many lives, and now eight years later, the perhaps irrecoverable descent of Mexico into a failed Narco - Police State forever at war with itself. And the beat goes on and on. There of course is the now familiar tale of a DEA bust of a drug courier, the call from the CIA, and the release of said courier and his product, because it is a "national security situation". The DEA agents try not to reach obvious conclusions, but whatever you say about them, they aren't dumb. From Down By The River Bowden writes: "I'm drinking in my yard with a retired DEA agent, he spent years in Mexico, survived gun battles, then spent more years tracking the huge flows of money, night has fallen and he sits in the shadow sipping a Pacifico, the beer of Sinaloa. He likes to talk at these moments but he never wants these conversations to go on record, because he explains to me repeatedly, because "they" can not be beaten. And this "they" he refers to is the CIA". Bowden himself has said he held back on his conclusions out of respect to the Jordan family. The book is an eye-opener. Of course it's somewhat outdated because as horrible a situation as he paints only a decade ago, it is many times worse today. These kind of books can be rated on a train wreck system...It becomes impossible to look away despite and because of the carnage that goes on and on and on. I give it 6 locomotives and a thousand cars

careening off the track falling down the mountainside upon the not so innocent village people of two countries.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Too long, repetitious, and a must-readBy El Viejo TopoDespite the fact that the book is too long, that it is repetitious--poorly edited, sentimental and silly in places, this is a must-read. Especially if you live in Texas. While the book doesn't do much to underplay the sensationalist portrait of Mexican criminals as basically savages, it opens up two very important questions. The first is, well, it takes two to tango. How corrupt is the DEA? The US officials who police the frontiers? The "good guys" in other words. You really think all that stuff gets into the US by virtue of "corrupt" Mexicans? The second point is money-laundering in Texas, especially South Texas. It is an open secret, and the story that NO Texas newspaper seems willing to tackle. But if you look around a bit, the evidence is everywhere--especially in San Antonio, which is not exactly El Paso. So the whole book may be ill written and slightly over-the-top, but it is one of the few I've read that points to a connection between NAFTA and drug trafficking. IT follows that if you want to put an end to a business, then you have to take a business-like approach to doing it--not cowboys, Indians, and shoot 'em up. God knows how many innocent and not so-innocent people in Mexico have died because of the "war" on drugs. And, you never know, maybe coming to a US town near you.

Lionel Bruno Jordan was murdered on January 20, 1995, in an El Paso parking lot, but he keeps coming back as the key to a multibillion-dollar drug industry, two corrupt governments -- one called the United States and the other Mexico -- and a self-styled War on Drugs that is a fraud. Beneath all the policy statements and bluster of politicians is a real world of lies, pain, and big money. Down by the River is the true narrative of how a murder led one American family into this world and how it all but destroyed them. It is the story of how one Mexican drug leader outfought and outthought the U.S. government, of how major financial institutions were fattened on the drug industry, and how the governments of the U.S. and Mexico buried everything that happened. All this happens down by the river, where the public fictions finally end and the facts read like fiction. This is a remarkable American story about drugs, money, murder, and family.

From Publishers WeeklyIn January 1995, Lionel Bruno Jordan was shot dead in the parking lot of an El Paso, Tex., K-Mart. A police investigation concluded that it was a botched carjacking; a 13-year-old Mexican was charged and convicted. Bruno's brother Phil, a rising DEA official, suspected the murder had to do with his drug-busting work, but his attempts to get the agency to investigate were blocked at every turn. Exploring this mystery, prize-winning author Bowden weaves an intricate tale of treachery, deceit, corruption and death on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. The Mexican government was implicated in the drug trade all the way up to the office of then-president Carlos Salinas, and Bowden talks with former Mexican officials who fled to the U.S. to avoid being killed off. Phil Jordan was drawn into a life of casino gambling in a vain attempt to raise enough money to pay off Mexican officials and get them to talk. Bowden also tracks the exploits of Mexican drug lord Amado Carrillo, based right across the border from El Paso in Jurez, who more than likely ordered a hit on Bruno. Bowden maintains an intense noirish tension throughout, though some may find his use of interior monologue irritating at times (particularly when he puts the reader inside the mind of the dead man, Bruno). Still, that doesn't mar a dramatic detective story and a biting critique of the U.S. war on drugs. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Journalist Bowden uses a 1995 drug-related murder case (the reputed hit man was 13 years old) to explicate the drug war in this country and beyond. Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. From The New Yorker This brutal and brilliantly reported account of life in the drug trade on the Mexican-American border turns the story of one El Paso family into an excavation of the relationship between commerce and corruption. For Bowden, Mexico is a place where narcotics money can buy anything, including access to the highest reaches of government, and where the flow of drugs is one of the only things keeping the economy afloat, while America with its insatiable demand and its ready cash is the engine that keeps the system running. Bowden has never met a conspiracy theory he didn't like, and his overwrought prose has a paranoid air, substituting loosely connected assertions for coherent argument. But his characters including a D.E.A. agent who has gone off the rails and a drug lord who suddenly finds himself dispensable are remarkably vivid, and he captures the way greed, ethnicity, and an old-school emphasis on honor interact to create a world in which violence is the only constant. Copyright 2005 The New Yorker