



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on January 19, 2023

Prosecutors to Charge Leftist Actor Alec Baldwin in Movie Set Killing

Eighteen months after he shot and killed a cinematographer on the set of a Western movie, leftist actor Alec Baldwin will be charged with involuntary manslaughter.

Prosecutors will also charge the movie's armorer, Hannah Gutierrez-Reed, the 24-year-old woman who handed Baldwin the revolver with which he accidentally shot Halyna Hutchins. The gun contained a live round.

Whether Baldwin was holding the firearm when it discharged is not in question. Whether he aimed it at Hutchins is not in question. The question is whether Baldwin committed a crime, and whether he pulled the trigger. Baldwin has claimed he didn't; an FBI test of the weapon concluded that he did.



AP Images
Alec Baldwin

Thus, the manslaughter charges.

The charges are something of a comeuppance for the hate-Trump actor, who played POTUS 45 as a dunce on *Saturday Night Live* for four years, 2016-2020. Baldwin didn't believe he would be charged.

Alec Baldwin will be charged with involuntary manslaughter for handling the gun that discharged on the set of "Rust" in 2021, killing its cinematographer, prosecutors in New Mexico announced. The movie's armorer, who loaded the gun, will also be charged.

<https://t.co/4oGKMDp4Mj> pic.twitter.com/k1RzrmHfhh

— The New York Times (@nytimes) [January 19, 2023](#)

The Shooting

Baldwin, 64, shot Hutchins, then 42, on October 21, 2021 during a rehearsal on the set of *Rust*, a Western in which Baldwin plays an aging outlaw who emerges from hiding to save his 13-year-old grandson from hanging or murder.

The actor claimed he pulled back the hammer on the single-action Colt .45 at Hutchins' direction. When he let it go, "the gun went off."

"I'm holding the gun where she told me to hold it, which ended up being aimed right below her armpit is what I was told," [Baldwin told](#) ABC's George Stephanopoulos:

I don't know. This was a completely incidental shot, an angle that may not have ended up in the film at all, but we kept doing this. So then I said to her, "Now in this scene, I'm going to



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the gun.” And I said, “Do you want to see that?” And she said, “Yes.” So I take the gun and I start to cock the gun. I’m not going to pull the trigger.

I said, “Do you see that?” She goes, “Well, just cheat it down and tilt it down a little bit like that.” And I cock the gun, I go, “Can you see that? Can you see that? Can you see that? And then I let go of the hammer of the gun and the gun goes off. I let go of the hammer of the gun, the gun goes off....

That was the moment the gun went off. Yeah. That was the moment the gun went off.

He famously claimed he didn’t pull the trigger.

“It wasn’t in the script for the trigger to be pulled?” Stephanopoulos asked.

To which Baldwin replied, “Well, the trigger wasn’t pulled, I didn’t pull the trigger.”

Stephanopoulos then asked, “So you never pulled the trigger?”

Baldwin expostulated:

No, no, no, no, no. I would never point a gun at anyone and pull a trigger at them, never. Never. That was the training that I had. You don’t point a gun at me and pull the trigger. On day one of my instruction in this business, people said to me, “Never take a gun and go click, click, click, click, click. Because even though it’s incremental, you damage the firing pin on the gun if you do that, don’t do that.”

FBI: He Pulled the Trigger

That’s not what the FBI said about the shooting. Bureau tests revealed that a revolver almost certainly cannot fire unless the trigger is pulled, or unless a strong blow to the hammer drives it into the cartridge.

ABC also divulged the meat of the FBI report on the firearm in August.

“Accidental discharge testing determined that the firearm used in the shooting — a .45 Colt (.45 Long Colt) caliber Flli Pietta single-action revolver — could not have fired without the trigger being pulled, the FBI report shows,” [ABC reported](#):

With the hammer in the quarter- and half-cock positions, the gun “could not be made to fire without a pull of the trigger,” the report stated.

With the hammer fully cocked, the gun “could not be made to fire without a pull of the trigger while the working internal components were intact and functional,” the report stated.

With the hammer de-cocked on a loaded chamber, the gun was able to detonate a primer “without a pull of the trigger when the hammer was struck directly,” which is normal for this type of revolver, the report stated.

Still, as late as June, Baldwin didn’t believe he would be charged. During a Twitter squabble with someone who cracked wise about the shooting after Baldwin falsely claimed that “Trump tried to choke a Secret Service agent,” [Baldwin threatened](#) the man in a now-deleted tweet.



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“Better than shooting you [sic] cinematographer,” Mike Williams wrote.

Replied Baldwin, “When I’m finally not charged with any crime, I’ll come find you so you can apologize. I’ll find you, Mike.”

Better than shooting you cinematographer

— Mike Williams (@mwreyes) [June 29, 2022](#)

The Charges

No one claims Baldwin shot Hutchins purposely. But he did shoot her, and prosecutors believe the shooting was a crime.

They will charge Baldwin “with two counts of involuntary manslaughter, saying that he had a duty to ensure the gun and the ammunition were properly checked and that he should never have pointed it at anyone,” [The New York Times reported](#). “You should not point a gun at someone that you’re not willing to shoot,” the district attorney for Santa Fe County, Mary Carmack-Altwies, told the *Times*. “That goes to basic safety standards.”

The second manslaughter charge, which includes firearms enhancement, carries a five-year prison sentence. The jury will decide between the two.

Baldwin claims that checking the gun wasn’t his responsibility. “Someone is responsible for what happened, and I can’t say who that is, but I know it’s not me,” he told Stephanopoulos.

As for Reed, the inexperienced armorer, other *Rust* employees didn’t trust her.

“There were previous concerns raised about the 24-year-old armorer who was hired on Alec Baldwin’s film *Rust*, with two production sources telling *The Daily Beast* that filming on the set of her last movie was briefly stopped after she allegedly gave a gun to an 11-year-old actress without checking it properly, the [Beast reported](#) two days after the shooting:

“She was a bit careless with the guns, waving it around every now and again,” said a source, who worked alongside armorer Hannah Gutierrez-Reed on the upcoming Nicolas Cage film, *The Old Way*. “There were a couple times she was loading the blanks and doing it in a fashion that we thought was unsafe.”

[The plot of *Rust*](#), which might never make it to the screen, is darkly coincidental to the shooting. The boy whom Baldwin’s character must rescue is to be hanged for an accidental shooting.

For the record, even if Trump is the loutish moron Baldwin portrayed him to be on *SNL*, he, Trump, never accidentally shot and killed anyone.



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