

# **Who's Looking Out For You? Study Guide**

**Who's Looking Out For You? by Bill O'Reilly  
(commentator)**

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# Plot Summary

The purpose of this novel is for people to be able to evaluate their life objectively - to see if there are bad influences to be removed from their lives. People are capable of amazing things - including very deep thought, but this doesn't always happen in day-to-day life. There are positive and negative influences in everyone's environment and some need to be dealt with. Problem solving allows people to make their lives better.

Children born out of wedlock are much more prone to be poor all their lives or to turn to criminal activity than children from intact families. This affects everyone in society and sets these kids up for a tough life. Bad decisions usually lead to this situation and can be avoided. Society used to scorn this situation, but no longer. Regardless of what they think, parents do teach their kids by example - both good and bad behaviors. Parents need to have rules that are fair and protect their kids. Bill O'Reilly had a difficult childhood, but realized later that his father did the best he could - which is something that needs to be taken into account.

Many "adults" in the United States never grew in maturity beyond the selfish teenage years. They always feel sorry for themselves and worry only for themselves. This "me" generation has racked up credit card debt and has serious character flaws. In this vast pool of possibilities, it is sometimes difficult to find quality people to interact with. It is vitally important that a friend be someone of good character: someone to be trusted. Good people tend to attract good people and visa versa. For that reason, it is hard to "get out" of a situation where you only have bad friends. Finding quality friends and keeping them is work, but the payback is beyond measure.

The United States is hardly recognizable from its origins in the days of the Founding Fathers. What used to be a country based on self-reliance has degenerated into a situation where everyone looks to the government to help them with their problems. Government spending is out of control and there is no accountability to the taxpayers. Even functions that the government does well are done badly. Illegal immigration is also a huge issue that has become too politically unpopular to do anything about. Terrorism is finally being addressed seriously, but even after the 9/11 attacks, there were still awful policies still in effect. Presidents make speeches about it, but do little to help the "little guy."

O'Reilly feels that George W. Bush is a good person, but not one who is likely to change the government establishment in any meaningful way. Bill Clinton was a corrupt and shallow man who had the good fortune to govern during an Internet boom economy. Hillary Clinton is more of an ideologue than her husband. She has her eye on the presidency and if elected, would wreak much havoc on the United States through her socialist ideas.

The media is a very dangerous place for children and parents need to be vigilant. Television and pop culture shower impressionable kids with immoral garbage. The Internet is a doorway into the lowest corners of society that kids can easily access.



Mainstream media does its best to defend this and is quick to attack anyone passing judgment on the situation. Many pop icons are also bad influences. Bill O'Reilly had a run in with George Clooney over his refusal to be accountable over one of his pet causes. While some media outlets merely hold the status quo, others actively promote immorality. Many reporters have also lost their edge - it is very difficult for an elitist to care passionately about corruption. Perceived media bias has furthermore led to its loss in ratings, many have discarded the "big three" networks in favor of the more conservative Fox Network.

Although public sentiment was overwhelming in favor of the Iraq War when it started in 2003, media coverage was overwhelmingly negative. The anti-war bias of some major newspapers and television networks became apparent when the war went better than planned and they had to reverse course on their "option" pages. Some major media figures had gone on record as predicting disaster for any U.S. invasion, they were embarrassed when Iraq fell just weeks into the invasion. O'Reilly cites Fox news as being the only pro-war and therefore "pro-American" network.

The justice system is skewed heavily in favor of the "system." This means that the regular rules that apply to just about everyone in society don't apply to judges and lawyers. They are mostly above the law and twist it to their advantage. The concept of "fairness" went out the window sometime ago. Any regular citizen should avoid being entangled in the legal system in any way. The experience will be painful, both mentally and financially. A case in California is mentioned where unscrupulous defense lawyers aggressively questioned the parents of a murdered girl (insinuating they could have been at fault), even while knowing their client had committed the murder.

Racism does exist in the United States, but not to the vast scale that the media portrays it. There are "bad" neighborhoods across the country where the police have let drug dealers have the run of things and politicians look the other way. This is done not out of racism on the politicians' part, but pure expediency; poor people aren't a good investment if the wanted outcome is political favor. So called "minority advocates" are even worse, their power derives from their constituents' pain. Therefore, they have no reason to actually solve problems, just to complain about them. There are also racists, bigots, and downright stupid people in the world. O'Reilly's view is that minorities would be better served to simply ignore these fools and live their lives, instead of always setting themselves up as victims. This includes realizing that most cops are "good guys"; parents who raise their children to hate the police are doing them a great disservice.

The United States is truly a great place to live. There aren't many places in the world where one can rise from nothing to great fame by just working hard. Bill O'Reilly realizes this and explains the mistakes he made in his rise to media success. Self-confidence is a "must have" attribute that assists greatly in stressful situations. Workplace gossip is poison and should be avoided at all costs. O'Reilly experienced some tough times working at CBS and later, on "Inside Edition." Luckily, he learned just in time, how important it was to seek out and keep allies in the workplace. Hard work did pay off in the end.



The book ends with a recap of lessons learned. The people who are happiest in life are generally the ones who make the fewest mistakes. However, mistakes will be made and it is also important to learn to forgive oneself. People must be judged on their merit, there are some who lie and they will be encountered from time to time and avoided. Live life to the best of your ability, that's the best you can do.



# Chapter 1: Folk Music

## Chapter 1: Folk Music Summary

In the United States, there is a huge gap between legality and irresponsibility. It is perfectly legal for people to have kids out of wedlock - although this does a tremendous disservice to the kids. Fathers who abandon their families are rarely punished, nor are considered bad parents. The numbers are staggering. It is estimated that forty percent of American children are born out of wedlock. It is also estimated that "half of all the mothers who have kids in their teens will be poor the rest of their lives." Many social problems are started with a bad family life. Bill O'Reilly says that his own upbringing wasn't ideal by any stretch of the imagination. His father worked a job he hated his whole life and was disappointed with his situation. Bill marvels that his father's strictness taught him discipline, but feels sorrow that this inflexibility was also his downfall. His father was full of fear; he correctly analyzed situations, but was afraid to act. The household was run by his strict standards, with no deviant behavior of any kind allowed (drinking, drugs, swearing, etc.) Bill reminisces about actually hating his father at times, but knowing that he was loved.

Bill laments the case of a child falling through the cracks of the children's services department in Florida. Governor Jeb Bush did not get involved (despite O'Reilly's direct insistence) until election season. He was not looking out for a helpless child, but for himself. Lack of money alone does not cause children to suffer. Singer Julio Iglesias snubbed his own son to get media attention and has tried to compete with him in popularity. What kind of parent can be so off base?

Parents have issues, and they usually manifest themselves negatively on their kids. Many bad traits are passed down from generation to generation. Stopping a cycle of abuse takes effort and conviction. No parents are perfect, but hopefully they meet some basic guidelines: making time for their kids, having reasonable punishment (not overly harsh) while keeping control of their children, showing the value of education, and always being available. Other examples include; leading by example (honesty and kindness), maintaining fair rules, staying a part of their kid's lives, showing respect to their parents, and limiting media influences. This includes having the television and Internet access in a family area (not in the child's room). In reality, most parents don't meet these above guidelines - so the final evaluation also takes effort into account. Are parents trying to do the best they can for their kids? The hard part in looking back at bad parents is to learn to drop the anger and bitterness.

Bill explains his own experience of getting out from under his father's control. He was old enough to object and his father told him he was on his own. He went away to college, kept in touch, and gradually the bad feelings faded. Over time, he began to understand his father had done the best he could. Bill ends the chapter with a summary of parenting. "The primary duty of a parent is to give his or her children the tools to build a happy and successful life."



## Chapter 1: Folk Music Analysis

Bill O'Reilly goes out of his way to show that he is an independent, not a lock-step republican as his media foes portray him. He is conservative, and usually supports republican causes, but also isn't "bought and paid for" as he sees some other major media types. He holds his credentials by showing he has been attacked by both liberals and conservatives alike.

Bill paints a contrast between his tough childhood, and that of a modern day child born to a single parent home. Bill's father was difficult to deal with and unyielding; but there was still love in the family. Morals were important and Bill realized much later that even though he rebelled against authority many times, those moral boundaries were ingrained and helped him immensely. This is almost a "safety" mechanism for a teenager. They may stray over the right and wrong line from time to time - but they know when they've crossed it and they usually return quickly and feel remorse afterwards. Children with no moral background whatever can go bad with almost no restraint whatsoever. An almost psychopathic tendency can have them not feel shame or guilt at all.



# Chapter 2: It's My Party

## Chapter 2: It's My Party Summary

Many adults in the United States were never forced to grow up and face realities like their parents and grandparents did. They are commonly self-absorbed and superficial. The consumer driven media only helps to intensify and reinforce this behavior. It's all about "stuff." Credit card use and debt is rampant - the thought of saving up for something is seen as "old-fashioned." This has created a lot of selfish people. And selfish people generally don't make real friendships. They also have a tendency to turn off good, generous people.

It is vital to seek out and work to maintain good friendships. They always pay off in the long run. Bad friendships merely pull people in the wrong direction, and those "friends" can't be counted on. To attract and keep good friends, you have to be a good person. This requires effort - everyone makes mistakes, but they can't allow those mistakes to define them. Many people make excuses for allowing and keeping bad people in their lives. This self-delusion usually leads to disaster. A tip on impartially evaluating a friend is to watch how they treat other people in their lives. Another tip is not to try and "fix" damaged people who consistently demonstrate bad behavior. Move on and try again.

Bill explains that his father's main weakness was his inability to trust in anyone. He was tough and self-reliant, sure - but he cut himself off from everyone in his life. He worked hard for thirty-five years and no one at his job ever looked out for him because he was suspicious of everyone. You simply have to put yourself out there some time. Bill's grandfather was the same way. He stood on his own - and for that reason, he was truly alone.

Many people spend too much time feeling sorry for themselves. Self-pity is very damaging over time. Going out and finding good, solid friends takes effort. It takes even more effort to keep them. Bill explains that his core group of friends took most of a lifetime to assemble. They are priceless and he is lucky to have a large group of them. Some of his friendships go back forty years. There is a strong sense of loyalty between them. Bill admires his friends and appreciates their honesty. He knows he has people he can count on. Many people cannot say that.

People of privilege have a distinct advantage over regular people in finding and attracting friends. Having someone with political or financial power as a friend is not a bad thing - as long as that person is a true friend. Pretending to be someone you are not to get ahead usually backfires in the end. Bill also gives an example where someone he thought was a friend tried to take advantage of him. If people don't trust each other, there is no basis for friendship.

Bill summarized with the statement that, "you are whom you associate with." Likes attract; good people attract good people. It also works in reverse. Paying someone to be





on your side doesn't necessarily make it so. That includes counselors and therapists. Just stay aware and never delude yourself. Finding a real group of friends is the best thing in life.

## Chapter 2: It's My Party Analysis

A theme that keeps coming up in the story is that bad habits are passed from generation to generation and very hard to break. Bill O'Reilly gives the example of his grandfather not trusting in anyone; he wouldn't let friends and coworkers get close. He was tough and self-reliant, but also had no support network. People do need each other to get ahead at some point. Bill's father was the same way. The "be your own man - be an island" concept was carried on from father to son. This did not benefit Bill's father in the long run. He had many regrets in his life because he limited his potential by not seeking the help of others. Granted, letting bad people in your life is worse than no one, but the chance has to be taken sometime. "No risk; no gain," would be the relevant expression. Bill O'Reilly shows that it took effort for him to break that cycle of mistrust and learn from his predecessors' mistakes. The element of flashbacks was also used where moments in O'Reilly's youth were examined with the benefit of hindsight.



# Chapter 3: My Country 'Tis of Thee

## Chapter 3: My Country 'Tis of Thee Summary

The United States is a fantastic country, but it is hardly recognizable with the United States of a hundred years ago. The country used to be ran from the top down (at a presidential level) with the attitude that people were expected to be responsible and take care of themselves for the most part. The government, particularly the federal government was strictly "hands off" when it came to telling people how to live their lives. This changed with the Great Depression and the Great Society. Suddenly, the government was in everyone's business - and it's been there ever since. The amount of money the government spends (and wastes) is so staggering, it's almost impossible to comprehend. People just look out for themselves. Entitlement spending is the new spirit of selfishness.

There are those in the government that want people to think that they are being looked after; but in reality, its impossible. There are some responsibilities that individuals cannot avoid, no matter how much they try. The government takes a huge percentage of income and does near nothing to make sure it is spent sensibly. Boston's "Big Dig" highway construction project is a good example of this. Originally budgeted at \$2.6 billion, the project has cost over \$15 billion to date. Who is accountable for this? Whose money is this? Yours, if you pay taxes.

The government does do some things well, like fighting wars. But look at the things the government is lousy at: policing itself, running businesses (like Amtrak), and of course-- construction projects. The federal government is so wasteful and corrupt; it is no wonder that there was no effort to do something so basic as to secure the nation's borders. A major tool for fighting terrorism was lost in the mid-1990's when then Congressman Torricelli scandalized the CIA over a bad informant. The CIA was forced to stop using anyone even suspected with wrongdoing for intelligence gathering operations. This caused external intelligence to come to a halt, leaving the country deaf - and ripe for the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It seems intuitive that in order to infiltrate evil organizations, you would have to deal with evil people. President Bush only changed this after 9/11.

There was also a great deal of personal animosity between President Clinton and FBI Director, Louis Freeh during the time that terrorist operations against the United States were ramping up. Domestic intelligence simply was not being shared openly between the FBI and the President due to the mistrust between the two leaders. This pettiness further inhibited the countries ability to see the attack coming (even though there were many clues that something was happening). Even the Bush Administration did not act to stop illegal immigration across U.S. borders due to the "sensitivity" of the issue (and the possible loss of Hispanic votes). Another scandalous occurrence was the Malvo sniper case in 2002. The Border Patrol had apprehended Malvo (a Jamaican, not U.S. citizen) nearly a year before the sniper murders and had given him to the INS, recommending that he be deported. The INS balked and ended up releasing Malvo freely into the



country. Ten people died as a result during the sniper attacks. The INS tried to make the case that deportations are expensive and therefore frowned upon. The INS has since changed its position, but that's a little too late. During 9/11 hearings before congress, a high-level INS official could not even answer basic questions about the number of illegal aliens released by his organization.

Politics govern the situation where no one will take action to secure the U.S. border with Mexico. This has drastic repercussions on the national economy. Over ten percent of felons in California are illegal aliens. The INS estimates that there are over eight million illegal aliens in the country that it cannot account for. What can individuals do about this situation? Not much it seems. It is not advisable for an individual to go up against the government; they usually don't come out of it well.

President George W. Bush seems to be a good guy and effective president who doesn't micromanage, but he isn't one to radically change the system. Bush requested executive privilege for President Clinton - keeping presidential records secret for seventy-five years. The powerful do tend to protect each other. Bush is very patriotic, but is definitely part of the establishment and not about to change things.

President Clinton was a fairly inept, micromanaging leader - who had the good luck to preside over the upward years of the Internet "bubble" economy. His popularity was mainly due to the rocketing economy, not his domestic policy. Clinton was an insecure man who stood for nothing except staying high in the polls. He talked a lot about issues, but did little to actually do anything. To his credit, the Welfare Reform Act was passed under his watch. But Global Crossing also fleeced millions of stockholder dollars while the owner somehow came out unscathed.

Clinton's childhood was one of poverty and hardship. It seems that he would have grown to be someone who would really understand how to identify with everyday people. But he chose instead to gravitate to Hollywood celebrities and democrat powerbrokers. Bill O' Reilly did meet President Clinton once, and had a good (although short) conversation.

Bill Clinton's legacy is on unstable ground. He never took real action to stop Al Qaeda, even though his intelligence told him it was a threat. He also gave North Korea a pass on their nuclear treaty lies. The Internet bubble did collapse in the last months of his presidency, he handed off a recession to Bush (which Bush usually gets credit for). Still, none of this stops Bill Clinton from collecting over \$100 thousand per speech to travel around the country - talking to whoever will listen (and pay).

Al Gore's problem was that he never had confidence in himself to let the public see his real personality. He passed up many chances for speaking engagements in 2000, which cost him in the election. He also had the habit of not answering direct questions during the debates; Gore's tactic was often to change the subject. He also had trouble explaining how he had changed positions completely over his years in congress.



Hillary Clinton has spent vast amounts of taxpayer money as a freshman Senator. She did the same thing as first lady. She does want more power and has her eye on the big prize in 2008, the presidency. Hillary would promise massive government spending to get out to her constituency. Bill O'Reilly is worried about the damage a "Hillary" presidency would do to the country.

Other democrat contenders are also discussed, including Senators Joseph Lieberman, John Edwards, and John Kerry. O'Reilly touts the last great public servant who really stuck up for the people was Robert Kennedy. He was idealistic and worked outside the system with a passion.

### **Chapter 3: My Country 'Tis of Thee Analysis**

Bill O'Reilly forewarns of the disaster of a Hillary Clinton presidency, but doesn't go in to much detail in this book. He falls back on her healthcare debacle that is now fading in the public mindset, but shows her basic socialist tendencies. Hillary is pragmatic and resourceful. She also is unscrupulous in showing that she can "pretend" to be whatever the ignorant voters need to see in order to get her legislative victories. She truly believes the communist slogan, "the ends justify the means." She was power hungry in Arkansas and would be again in Washington. There were many scandals in the 1980's and 1990's that involved Mrs. Clinton and demonstrated that she would go to extremes to get her way politically.



# Chapter 4: Your Right to Know

## Chapter 4: Your Right to Know Summary

The media is not your friend if you are a parent. Television and radio are flooded with images and sounds of violence and greed. Many media "role models" are drug users or sexual deviants. Many lead promiscuous lives that no teenager should emulate. Yet, parents are seen as "judgmental" if they speak harshly of them. Selfishness and superficiality is everywhere.

Meanwhile at public schools, teachers are forbidden to teach "morality" because that is oppressive. If parents don't step up to guide their children (and a lot of them don't), then media garbage fills the void. Behavioral problems are becoming more prevalent in younger and younger children. There is a cultural battle for America being waged, and the media is on the wrong side.

Most of the major news outlets have their own editorial styles (foreign news, government policy, the environment). Fox News tends to have a patriotic slant. CNN's broad but shallow coverage has hurt it in the ratings. The *Wall Street Journal* writes stories from the conservative side: the *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, and *Los Angeles Times* from the liberal side. Conservatives also control talk radio, while liberals have PBS and NPR. Unfortunately, all major media is corporate owned. Controversy is frowned on.

Polls rank journalists pretty far down the food scale - near lawyers and car salesmen. Many media elites refuse to take a stand on moral issues. Bill O'Reilly considers himself a threat to the mainstream media. He thinks they feel threatened because they attack him constantly and personally. He is discarded as a conservative by most left-wing organizations, but also takes hits from the right.

Bill Moyers of PBS has a blotchy past when it comes to ethics. It was pointed out that he had a financial stake in one of his video ventures that was partially funded by taxpayer money. Moyers also runs the "Schumann Foundation," which gives substantial funding to a website ran by his son. Putting your own money at stake to promote an idea is one thing, but it should not be done with taxpayer funds.

O'Reilly also took some Hollywood stars to task for not following up with the United Way after a 9/11 fundraiser. One month after the event, which had raised millions, there was still no system set up to actually get the money to the families who needed it. O'Reilly asked the performers to put pressure on the United Way to speed up the process, and was vilified by many celebrities for it. The United Way finally admitted it had handled the situation badly. O'Reilly had a heated discussion with Matt Lauer on the "Today Show" about celebrity responsibilities. Lauer shot back that he was just promoting his new book.



Other media outlets take a more active role in promoting immorality. Music cable channel VH1 aired a series fronting felons in prison as rock stars. Victim's families protested about glorifying criminals. The show continued as a form of "artistic expression." Bill O'Reilly has also sparred with Charles Grodin and Phil Donahue over foreign policy. He took extreme issue with Donahue's notion that the Taliban should have been "sanctioned" by the UN, not attacked in force.

Many media moguls live in their own insulated world. They are elitists, although they wouldn't agree with that label. They don't mingle with the "little people." O'Reilly does promote some good journalists, like John Stossel, Peter Jennings, and Tim Russert. He also laments the demise of "60 Minutes" - they don't take on the big guys anymore. O'Reilly believes that journalists should be angry; they should care passionately about what they believe in. They should be irate about corruption and lies in government.

Media bias has led to the decline in the network news ratings. Where they used to be dominant (they were the only show in town), they are now even with cable news. Many people feel the news is biased and don't like being lied to. O'Reilly promotes his network, "Fox News" as being straight with the people.

## **Chapter 4: Your Right to Know Analysis**

It is ironic that many media elites preach tolerance and the virtues of public schooling when their own children are raised in private schools and protected in gated neighborhoods--away from the masses they preach to. It is one thing to live a life and preach the same lifestyle. It is very hypocritical to preach a lifestyle while doing the exact opposite for yourself. For example, many families (particularly urban) would be greatly served with school vouchers to allow them to take their kids out of bad (and dangerous) public schools. But many so-called liberals speak of the "damage" such policies would do to public education while doing the sensible thing and keeping their own kids safe. Liberals in the press and congress are allied with groups like teacher's unions that would never back proposals that would threaten their own jobs - even at the expense of generations of children.



# Chapter 5: God Help Us

## Chapter 5: God Help Us Summary

Bill O'Reilly personally believes in God and goes to church because he likes to believe in eternal life. Despite church scandals and anti-religious zealots, nature is amazing in itself to show that a higher power exists. Even the Big Bang theory points to a possible Creator. Research shows that people who pray on a regular basis are healthier and suffer from less stress than those who don't. O'Reilly feels that organized religion can be a good influence, so long as people don't use it to belittle other religions.

Americans enjoy full freedom of religion privately, but secularists have made it nearly impossible for public freedom of religion to exist. The intent of the framers of the Constitution was to have no government endorsed religion. Somehow, that objective has been subverted and twisted to mean no public religion whatsoever. Liberal Supreme Court Judges and the ACLU do not agree in the Founder's beliefs that Americans are a "God-fearing" people. The overall belief that good will be rewarded is a great incentive for a civilized society.

This anti-religiousness has gone so far that the California Circuit Court of Appeals has declared the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional due to its use of the word "God." The ACLU has had many traditional school ceremonies banned due to religious content. Christmas holiday has been replaced with a "winter" holiday. This was not the intent of the Founding Fathers. James Madison linked the ability to self govern with society following a moral path, like one given by the Ten Commandments. The U.S. Supreme Court split on the subject of school prayer. Even one of the justices warned that the court's tone seemed hostile to religion. Secularists will not acknowledge that the country was founded on a "Judeo-Christian philosophy." That is, laws based on a spiritually-based moral code. But the secularists have somehow made the idea of public spirituality seem offensive. Spirituality and morality are anathema to the current tone of personal responsibility and decadence. The rise in single parent families comes from this, as well as crime in general.

Student morality has also been documented to have fallen in recent years. Recent studies show that more high school students lie, cheat, and steal than ever before. Still - even with the anti-religious climate in this country, a large majority of Americans consider themselves Christians. Sixty percent are active churchgoers. O'Reilly indicts the ACLU as actually being the "AACLU," the Anti-American Civil Liberties Union. Those who dispute the ACLU are dismissed as being members of the fringe "Christian right." The ACLU is wrong to attack American traditions that have been with us for hundreds of years.

The Catholic Church has taken some hits because it has become too political. Leadership worked hard to cover up the sex abuse scandals instead of dealing with the problem. Victims were paid hush money and pedophile priests were "cured" and



released to hurt again. This destroyed the moral reputation of the Catholic Church. O'Reilly has some insight into the political "workings" of church. He was an altar boy as a child and quickly found the way to financial incentive. He contrasted his upbringing at Catholic School to the wild public school across the road. O'Reilly felt inadequate around girls compared to his public school friends, but he later saw the consequences as they became teenage fathers. He rebelled, but stayed within boundaries setup by his moral upbringing. He sees millions of modern day kids being betrayed by not having that moral grounding to keep them safe. More kids have emotional problems because there is no outlet for their stress. Secularism keeps them from turning to religion in their times of trouble.

The opposite side of the secular/P.C. coin is the overused concept of diversity. The University of North Carolina wanted to make it mandatory for all freshman students to read a book about the Koran. This real abuse under the separation of church and state failed to get the attention of the ACLU. Under scrutiny, the university dropped the requirement. O'Reilly does admit that there are religious zealots who are dangerous. But he realizes that religion in itself can help people get through life. It also allows people to make moral distinctions for themselves.

## **Chapter 5: God Help Us Analysis**

The true irony is that the ACLU and the "politically correct" crowd scream for diversity and tolerance when it comes to fighting the battle to protect non-Christians against Christians when it comes to prayer in the schools, talking about the Ten Commandments, and celebrating traditional Christmas. If it comes to an issue where a liberal faculty at a university wants to cram an "alternate" religion down the throats of freshman college students in the name of "diversity," it is fine. That is somehow viewed, and accepted as acceptable, by the ACLU. Again, hypocrisy is very apparent within some organizations.





# Chapter 6: The Holy War

## Chapter 6: The Holy War Summary

Bill O'Reilly analyzed network coverage of the Iraq war the day it started. He demonstrated media bias by showing that two of three networks had nearly five minutes of "war protest" coverage, with no contrasting "pro-war" coverage. This happened at a time when more than 2 of every 3 Americans supported the decision to go to war against Iraq. If the networks claimed to be "balanced," this was not a good example for them. O'Reilly sees the networks skewing to an internationalist bent, as opposed to an American point of view. This view strongly resisted the move by the United States to act without full UN backing.

Walter Cronkite summed up this position by heaping criticisms on the Bush Administration about the "pre-emptive" war. He sees the United States as a true internationalist - that is, a country no better than any other. This is dangerous because Americans should want a president who will look out for them, not European bureaucrats. O'Reilly shows Cronkite's hypocrisy, he was very slow to turn a critical eye to a much more controversial war - Vietnam. He also ignored it when President Bill Clinton bombed Belgrade without UN permission. Using a "world consensus" does not put American interests at heart.

Bill O'Reilly cites many reasons to support the United States' war on Iraq. These include the 1991 Kuwaiti invasion led by Saddam Hussein, Hussein's refusal to follow UN disarmament mandates, and the use of Iraq as a terrorist refuge from the west. After the 9/11 attacks, it was important not to leave a man like Saddam Hussein in power - especially with his alleged WMD arsenal. Saddam had thumbed his nose at a peace treaty that American troops had died to enforce in the first Iraq War in 1991. O'Reilly even believes that Al Gore would have attacked as well, if he had been elected president.

O'Reilly finds Pope John Paul II's objections to the Iraq War troubling. The Pope feels the war is "unjust." Evil must be called out for what it is. The Catholic Church doesn't seem willing to take that stand.

Fox News was much more optimistic about the war in Iraq than its competitors. FNC reporters were specifically told not to opine, although the overall tone of analysis was still decidedly pro-American. While competitors complained of FNC pandering to the Bush Administration, ratings went up compared to the other networks. O'Reilly's FNC show, "The Factor" did a comparison of newspaper headlines leading up to the war. Many leading national papers were estimating that the war would be a "disaster" for the United States. Television anchors were also skeptical. After the war had started, some in the military actually complained about the slanted, negative coverage the war was getting. The "New York Times" continued its overwhelmingly negative coverage for several days - even after it was apparent the war was going well.



The U.S. Military did conduct the war too cautiously in order to not anger too many Muslims. Still, the Hussein regime fell with the coalition forces taking less than 150 casualties. But soon after the "victory," it began to get political. When WMD's were not found in mass quantities, the media went after the Bush administration for lying to the public. This was hypocritical, since the Clinton administration had also believed the Iraqis had WMD's - as well as many on the intelligence committee. Saddam needed to be brought down; it was unfortunate that the WMD "scandal" tainted that success.

Some in the media did do a good job in reporting fairly about the war. Many did not. CNN's Peter Arnett and many Hollywood actors looked very foolish when their war disaster predictions proved false. Ideologues never can analyze a situation without bias. For this reason, everything they say must be considered as part of an agenda - not necessarily the truth. Facts always speak for themselves.

## Chapter 6: The Holy War Analysis

The mainstream can be characterized as "anti-Bush" and "pro-left" when looking at the slanted coverage of the Iraq War. Although at an individual level, this breaks down of course - because it is a stereotype. As a whole though, it does appear sometimes that many in mainstream media so appear to use "marching orders" or share a school of thought when it comes to news analysis. President Clinton was somehow overlooked when he started a "preemptive war" in former Yugoslavia in the late 1990's, even though he did not have United Nations permission when he launched a bombing campaign. Bush's "preemptive war" in Iraq does not get the same pass by the media. Again, there were U.N. resolutions that were ignored by Saddam Hussein - but the U.N. did not give George Bush express permission to go to war to enforce the resolutions. The Serbian "occupation" still goes on to some extent, but how often is it mentioned in the news - especially as a "quagmire"? Bush's decision to invade Iraq was almost uniformly derided by the press, even while it was supported by a majority of regular Americans. This begs the question -- does the press truly represent the American people? Do they let their political beliefs cloud their reporting and analysis?



# Chapter 7: You Have the Right to Remain Silent

## Chapter 7: You Have the Right to Remain Silent Summary

The "justice" system in America is a misnomer. It is simply a law "club" that is above the law in most regards. It includes lawyers, judges, and cops. Any normal citizen having to deal with any aspect of this system will pay dearly. Even when people "win" court cases - their lawyers usually get a majority of the money. And the legal system is growing at an alarming rate. Both criminal and civil cases are on the rise across the nation.

O'Reilly filed a complaint with the California Bar that a pair of defense lawyers had acted unethically. A girl had been brutally killed and a suspect put on trial. Circumstantial evidence was found at the suspect's home. The defense lawyers ruthlessly attacked the parents of the girl even after their client had offered to tell them where the body was. Knowing their client was guilty; they still went through the unethical procedure of offering reasonable doubt that the parents "could" have done it. The body was found anyway and the man sentenced to death. O'Reilly petitioned the Bar that these unscrupulous lawyers had intentionally misled the jury. After reviewing the court case, the State Bar of California concluded that the lawyers' conduct was, "within the scope of historical and ethical parameters of practice by a criminal defense attorney." They found no misconduct. Upon investigation, it was found that the prosecutor in the case had never even been contacted by the Bar in their so-called "investigation." It was a case of the "club" covering up for itself.

The corruption in the legal system is not going to be taken care of anytime soon. The status quo rules; the lawyer's lobby in the U.S. political system is also very powerful. The mere concept of a "fair" trial is in jeopardy when the system breaks down like it has in the United States today. The only recourse is to stay as far away from the court system if it can be done.

## Chapter 7: You Have the Right to Remain Silent Analysis

O'Reilly takes a strong stance by characterizing the entire justice system as unjust. As anyone who has ever worked in the system knows, it is a quagmire - full of pointless laws, statutes, and fees. It is skewed heavily against people with limited finances. To be properly represented in any legal situation, it is vital to have a good lawyer. Would one rather have the option of selecting the best available, or just being stuck with the guy who will work for "free" or is selected by a court? The defense lawyer and trial lawyer professions are particularly despised for good reason. These specific two professions

are responsible in part to many criminals being released into society (particularly on technicalities), the perceived lack of morality in the legal profession in general, and high insurance rates. Judges are particularly untouchable. It is nearly impossible for a regular citizen to oppose the will of a judge. They are mini-kings, like the ones that Americans tried so hard to escape



# Chapter 8: Minority Report

## Chapter 8: Minority Report Summary

Both politicians and the media overlook many inner city neighborhoods. Some areas - especially in poor neighborhoods - are written off and mostly ignored by law enforcement. Routine drug activity that would be tolerated in South Chicago or Compton would not be tolerated in an upscale neighborhood. It is more about class than race though. There is little incentive for powerful people to help the helpless - what's in it for them after all? It is true that there are many leadership problems with both black and white leadership in the United States. So-called "leaders" like Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton are mostly self-serving and do little to actually help their constituents. O'Reilly recommends that minorities shouldn't get hung up on dealing with stupid people or indefinite racist situations. He explains, "Don't sweat the small stuff."

O'Reilly's own grandfather worked as a beat cop in New York during the Great Depression. In those days, the police doled out a loose version of vigilante justice by having a no tolerance policy on drug addicts and other undesirables. This did lead to safe streets, but also corrupted the system to a large extent. Uncontrolled brutality usually gets out of control at some point.

Working with the police is difficult in some neighborhoods where there is tension between citizens and law enforcement. But it does citizens no good to hate the cops. Parents who teach this to their kids are doing them a disservice. There is always the option of using the church as a go between - to pass along confidential information to the police about local criminals. But many popular minority leaders don't want to solve crime problems in the cities - the hate gives them issues to rally about. They would rather exploit their constituents than truly assist them. O'Reilly recommends a "code of conduct" that inner city leaders would need to agree on. This includes: making illegitimacy a stigma, shunning drug dealers, starting a zero tolerance child abuse police, stationing police at problem schools, enforcing teenage curfews, and passing public nuisance laws.

Out-of-wedlock children are direct contributors to poverty and other social problems. Black leaders will not even mention that minority illegitimacy rates are near ninety percent for young black women in the United States. These children are at a huge disadvantage to other children with intact families. But in this politically correct world, many who would discuss these statistics are demonized as "racists." These "witch hunts" can take a comment out of context, smear it around the world on the Internet, and ruin someone's career overnight.

O'Reilly himself was attacked in the press for making a "racially insensitive remark" at a fundraiser. The columnist took the comments second-hand (he wasn't even present at the actual event) and ran a disparaging story - even though no one from the event would go on record that the comment was insensitive. The comment was then reprinted



out of context in a national magazine. O'Reilly admits that it is hard to be a minority. He recommends staying positive and being persistent to reach goals. There are stupid people out there, but many more good people who will help.

## **Chapter 8: Minority Report Analysis**

The theme of Political Correctness makes many politicians tremble. To be seen as "politically incorrect" in this modern sensitive political era can be poison to the career of a senator or media figure. This leads many to look the other way on some issues that are difficult (it is considered insensitive for whites to comment on "inner city" issues like crime or out of wedlock births). It is also very difficult for them to act on any of these issues for the same reason. Many black leaders are more interested in pointing out any possible incidences of "racism" rather than actually helping their constituents in their plight. In this atmosphere, it is much simpler and politically safer for politicians to leave inner cities alone. Some police departments also have their hands tied behind their backs; it is not in their best interests to be seen as being "tough" on crime. Therefore, many really bad neighborhoods are left to the mercy of the drug lords and gangs.



# Chapter 9: Errors in Judgment

## Chapter 9: Errors in Judgment Summary

The United States is a truly amazing place - unique in the world. It has its faults, but it is still the best country in the world. While fame and success are always hard to come by, the atmosphere here makes it possible for the "common man" to do it. Bill O'Reilly recounts that it took much work for him to rise to his level of success - it wasn't easy by any means. He learned to look out for himself, keep learning, stay disciplined, and not give up. He found his natural abilities while still young and exploited them. Even the act of appearing natural on TV had to be learned over the course of years. It is not magic that made many "stars" what they are today, just hard work.

O'Reilly spells out some of his biggest mistakes. He starts with an important credo: "chaos always creates more chaos." Basically, bad decisions lead to bad outcomes. Two wrongs don't make a right. The secret is to discipline one's life actions to make as few mistakes as possible. It takes constant work, but pays off. Self-control and patience are very important virtues in this respect. Emotionally unstable people should be avoided, as well as any type of crutch - like drinking or gambling. Insecurity can lead to making mistakes - especially in a high-pressure environment. Confiding in someone can usually lower stress, but it is critical that that person be someone of character.

Workplace gossip should be avoided at all costs. It is demeaning and is a sign of low quality. Self-control is very important in this respect. This does not mean that people shouldn't stick up for themselves, just that they shouldn't demean others without them present. Find high quality people to gravitate to and use them as your support group. Learn from them and lean on them when you have to.

O'Reilly also talks about making some big mistakes while at CBS in the early eighties. He tried to change the system and ended up making some big enemies. While covering the Falklands War, O'Reilly's stories were given to higher up reporters who read the stories as if they were theirs. While common in the news business, this is unfair and O'Reilly complained to management. He was put on the overnight shift at CBS and his reputation tarnished. Luckily a friend and former boss pulled him into an anchor position at a Boston station. He realized that he couldn't go it alone. He considers that a very important point in his career.

At ABC several years later, O'Reilly learned to make allies and did make a powerful one. He became friends with Peter Jennings, which helped him greatly. Jennings told him he was making a mistake when he jumped over to tabloid news years later for a pay hike. At "Inside Edition," O'Reilly worked hard as anchor to change the make up of the previously trashy show. With the producers, he changed from the sex/violence theme to righting wrongs. It was very stressful. The company management tried to replace O'Reilly with a "big name" anchor many times. He went out on a limb to tell management that he planned to leave after his fifth season. The management team



backstabbed him by asking him to keep quiet, then "firing" him publicly. O'Reilly's producer stuck up for him and told the real story to a reporter - which helped alleviate the damage.

O'Reilly stresses that it is important to "go with what you know, not with what you feel." This helps to evaluate relationships from a non-biased point of view. Infatuation is not the basis for a solid relationship. It is nearly impossible to "change" people. Damaging interactions must be avoided at all costs. One emotional spouse can cancel out all the good friends someone may have. If someone keeps causing pain, look at the overall situation. Look out for yourself, not selfishly - but in a self-preserving way.

## **Chapter 9: Errors in Judgment Analysis**

Bill O'Reilly had an inside view at the bias in the network news departments - especially twenty years ago, where there was no conservative "alternative" (no talk radio or internet). Cable T.V. (especially news) was in its infancy; the big three networks still had a lock on news reporting. O'Reilly considered this environment hostile - he had a difficult time with the unfair treatment of new reporters. At this time there was no perception of media bias - it was just the news. O'Reilly forewarns of a time when this would change and the "big three" would have to compete with not only the charge of bias, but also with cable news, talk radio, and the internet.

The situation with "bigfooting" has nothing to do with network bias; it is just unethical. High profile reporters take credit for "grunt" reporter's work. It isn't right, but it is considered acceptable in some places. O'Reilly, already in over his head, made it an issue and was castigated for it.





# Chapter 10: Here's to You

## Chapter 10: Here's to You Summary

Don't just assume because someone is talking that what they say is necessarily true. Many people simply aren't honest. Think and try and assess what is being said - does it make sense? Notice that people who are happiest usually are the ones who make the fewest mistakes. Then the other side of that coin is that when someone does make a mistake, they shouldn't beat themselves up about it. Learn from it and move on. Self-forgiveness leads to happiness. Work to make yourself better, not dwell on the past. Educate yourself - always strive to learn. Understand your own behaviors. Take care of yourself - it's a long road from being a teenager to the median life span of the seventies. Keep healthy and don't act stupidly.

Two other important topics are independence and tolerance. Learn to think and take care of yourself, but also don't shy away from asking for advice. Be responsible and build your self-confidence without becoming cocky. Tolerance comes with being secure with yourself. Most people are uneasy about people who are different. This has to be overcome. Most people, regardless of outside appearance, are similar in basic attitudes.

What it comes down to is that you do the best you can do. In the end, only what you do matters. Everyone else is out of your control. Not everyone will like who you are, but as long as you are honest with yourself - it's a good thing. Learn to lead a life with good people around you.

## Chapter 10: Here's to You Analysis

The simple characterization of Bill O'Reilly as a conservative, or a republican, breaks down at this fairly non-political chapter. Besides "tolerance," which most people would not assume would be a common word to come out of O'Reilly's mouth - the statement to just "do your best" is hard to argue with. Learning to like yourself as a person is also a phrase that would be difficult to define as political in any way. It probably also wouldn't be associated with the author per se. It is common sense, but hard to do in one's own life. Try not to mistakes, but if you do - forgive yourself and move on.



# Characters

## Bill O'Reilly

O' Reilly grew up in a family with strict rules and a very strong father. He rebelled against his father at several points in his youth, but looked back later in life to see that his upbringing gave him a moral center that helped him immensely in life. He also realized that it was very hard to break the pattern of total independence that had been inadvertently passed down to him from his father and grandfather. It took several years and several jobs for Bill O'Reilly to learn that it was necessary to trust others around him. It didn't always work out, he had several "friends" turn on him, but it did teach him to judge people much better. This process of evaluating people for their character became a very important skill that helped immensely in both his personal and business life.

Bill worked in television news in the late seventies and early eighties. He covered the Falkland Islands War for CBS, was a correspondent for ABC news from 1986 to 1988, and anchored "Inside Edition" from 1989 to 1995. O'Reilly began working at Fox News shortly after its startup. Anchored "The O'Reilly Report" which soon morphed into the current "O'Reilly Factor," a very popular show on the conservative news network-- currently one of the most watched cable TV news shows.

O'Reilly disputes being labeled as a conservative, instead preferring to be called an independent or populist (although he has been linked to many Republican events). Has also taken controversial stands on foreign leaders (attacking them) and rap music. He constantly works to show that a media bias does exist with such major publications as "The New York Times" and "The Boston Globe." He is a very strong opponent of the ACLU. O'Reilly encouraged a boycott of the French due to its government's anti-war position on Iraq and has been very outspoken against such media figures as Al Franken, Cindy Sheehan, and Bill Moyers.

## George W. Bush

Bush coined the term "war on terror" after the September 11, 2001 attacks on the Trade Towers and Pentagon. Very instrumental on directing the policy to stop terrorism, he directed the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq. The ongoing hostilities in Iraq have made it a very derisive issue for his Administration.

President Bush grew up in Texas and later served in the Texas Air National Guard. Bush worked in the energy business in the 1970's, assisting his father George H.W. Bush. He assembled a group of partners who purchased the Texas Rangers baseball franchise in 1989. George Bush was elected Governor of Texas in 1994. President Bush is married to Laura Welch Bush, a former teacher and librarian, and they have two daughters.



According to Bill O'Reilly, President Bush is a "good guy" who honestly wants to look out for the country, but he also is a full-fledged member of the Washington establishment, which makes it very unlikely that he would do anything to drastically change the way things are done in the government.

## Cardinal Law

Bernard Law was an Archbishop of Boston who oversaw the local Catholic Churches through the "pedophile priest" scandals of the late 1990's and beyond. His behavior in reassigning many priests accused of sexual misconduct was castigated by the media and many of his constituents. Law was active in covering up many instances of abuse. He was not forthcoming to the media or to victims of the priests in question. Many priests (even with multiple accusations) were merely moved to different areas of the country - while still being allowed to work with children. The local parishes were never told of their new priests' past. Cardinal Law claimed that he had sent many of the suspect priests to therapy before returning them to active parish duty. He also made many excuses for his behavior. As a direct result of his actions, many priests were allowed to abuse again and again over the years. Many priests signed a letter asking Law to step down from his position before he finally did resign in 2002. Law was later appointed to an administrative position by the Pope himself. Many victims' rights groups criticized this decision to reward Law for his actions.

## Hillary Rodham Clinton

She was involved in numerous scandals dating back to Arkansas such as the Whitewater development deal, conflict of interest involving cattle futures, the mysterious suicide of Vince Foster, and other close ties to people tied to criminal (usually financial) behavior. Hillary was the thrust behind the government move towards socialized health care, which was defeated by republicans, and considered the most activist first lady since Eleanor Roosevelt. She is a major Women's Rights advocate. Clinton stuck by her husband during the impeachment hearings, claiming that they were the victims of a "vast right-wing conspiracy." Hillary has supported the Bush war in Afghanistan while opposing Bush tax cuts. O'Reilly feels she still has ambitions towards the Presidency. He is worried about the damage her strong socialist views would cause the nation.

## Bill Clinton

Initially regarded as a "New Democrat," Clinton worked on several sweeping political issues during his tenure, including health care reform, gun control, welfare reform, and trade barrier reduction. Republicans took control of both houses of Congress during his administration.

Clinton became embroiled in several scandals, the main one involving sex with an intern during his second term. He was impeached for Perjury and Obstruction of Justice by the U.S. House of Representatives, but acquitted by the Senate. Incidents at Ruby Ridge,



Waco, and Somalia also took place during his administration. Although a very derisive figure (most people either liked or hated him), Clinton had the fortune to be in office during the Internet boom. For the most part, the economy performed very well and his popularity stayed high.

Clinton had previously served as Governor of Arkansas for five terms. He married Hillary Rodham Clinton, but rumored to have had many extra-marital affairs while in Arkansas and Washington, D.C. He currently travels the world as a professional speaker, making a considerable amount of money for each appearance.

## **Al Gore**

Gore ran against George W. Bush in 2000 as the democratic Presidential candidate. The race was too close to call until Florida. Gore became embroiled in the Florida recount and eventually was declared the loser after several disputed recounts and the Supreme Court becoming involved. Al Gore actually won the popular vote (although Bush won the electoral college). He pondered running for President in 2004, but let John Kerry take the lead instead. He is considered "stiff" and void of personality by many critics and fans alike. Bill O'Reilly mentioned that he saw the "real" Al Gore did have personality but he was afraid to open up publicly (similar to O'Reilly's situation with his father and grandfather). He was invited by O'Reilly to debate, but declined and has been castigated by some for his strong environmental stance on some issues.

## **William O'Reilly Sr.**

Bill O'Reilly's father was a very influential figure in his life. He was a very hard-working man who created a very strong work ethic in his son, but later realized he had not "lived up to his potential." William made his son realize that his shortcoming was that he had believed he had to "do it alone." He never confided in any of his work friends to the point where it could have greatly helped his career.

Having raised his family in Levittown, New York, William served in World War II as a naval officer. William O'Reilly worked as an accountant (a job he despised) for a majority of his life out of a sense of purpose. He was a stickler when it came to morality and was a rigid enforcer of rules. He was ruled by sense of fear partly due to living through the Depression.

## **John O'Reilly**

Bill O'Reilly's grandfather who worked as a policeman in the New York area. John was a tough man who didn't make many friends. He was in law enforcement during an era where "rights" and lawyers were pretty much nonexistent. He used some brutal methods to keep the peace - particularly when it came to illegal drugs. Cited by Bill O'Reilly as a very strong influence in his life, he was also a strong force to overcome - when it came to breaking the generational habit of non-trust.



## Walter Cronkite

Cronkite originally worked as a radio announcer and covered many battles in World War II. He joined the CBS television news division in 1950, and anchored the CBS Evening News from 1962 to 1981. Cronkite was seen as one of the most trustworthy figures in news throughout his show's dominance in the 1970's and early 1980's. He covered many historic stories like the John Kennedy assassination and Moon Landing.

Cronkite has become much more outspoken since his retirement. He befriended Bill Clinton during his impeachment trial and has vilified George W. Bush for the Iraq war. Cronkite has also allied himself with some liberal causes, which has created some issues with his legacy of being "unbiased." O'Reilly feels Cronkite is a hypocrite because he has lambasted Bush over Iraq, but was silent about Clinton in Bosnia and, for the most part, was pro-Vietnam during his 1960's coverage.

## Bill Moyers

Moyers, a liberal journalist and investigative reporter, worked at PBS from the mid 1980s. He has been a major donor of the organization, "Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting," a media watch association. He has been accused of being liberally biased and has conducted many investigations critical of the republicans. O'Reilly was very critical of Moyers acting unethically by using taxpayer funds to enrich himself. Moyers also runs a non-profit foundation that has been shown to assist his son.

## Phil Donahue

A pioneering television talk show host - Donahue hosted "The Phil Donahue Show" from 1967 to 1996. He also went on to host his own show on MSNBC starting in 2002. Donahue became avidly anti-war with the start of conflict in Iraq in 2003. His show peaked briefly in popularity as "Donahue" took no qualms about portraying itself as both "anti-war" and "anti-Bush." He debated Bill O'Reilly about the merits of the United States "unilaterally" invading Iraq. He wanted more diplomacy, which O'Reilly felt was ridiculous in the aftermath of 9-11.

# Objects/Places

## ACLU

The American Civil Liberties Union is an organization supposedly with the task of fighting for individual rights. Has been accused of only fighting in liberal causes. Very strong on first and fourth amendment cases, but basically ignores second amendment cases.

## Big Bang Theory

This is a secular/scientific theory on the origins of the universe where a single cosmic event created "everything" out of a single enormous explosion, which is backed by evidence showing that most objects in the universe are still moving away from each other. Competing theory with Creationism - that is, where God created the heavens and the earth.

## UN

The United Nations is a multi-governmental organization representing a "world government," which has been somewhat successful with sanctions against isolated countries, but fairly inept at stopping major atrocities worldwide.

## WMD

The Bush Administration cited Weapons of Mass Destruction as a reason to go to war with Iraq, which was later found to be mostly non-existent and earlier sources discredited.

## FNC

The Fox News Channel is a conservative news channel launched to counter left-leaning major networks and CNN.

## KIA

Killed in Action is a military term for a soldier killed in the line of duty.



## **Aspen**

Aspen is an upper class resort town in the Colorado Rockies that is known for world class skiing.

## **The No Spin Zone**

This is the term Bill O'Reilly likes to use to describe his no nonsense translation of media news. It is also the name of his radio talk show.

## **The O'Reilly Factor**

Bill O'Reilly's popular political television show on Fox is called The O'Reilly Factor.

## **GQ Magazine**

GQ is an upscale men's fashion magazine.

## **Amtrak**

Amtrak is the government run rail service in the United States. It generally operates at a loss every year, with taxpayers picking up the slack.

## **CIA**

The Central Intelligence Agency is the foreign intelligence-gathering arm of the United States Government.



# Themes

## Media Bias

A major theme of this novel is that the major media has a predisposition towards the left or liberal viewpoint on issues. Many demagogues exist at high places in media outlets such as TV stations and newspapers. At this point, they have the ability to shape news coverage to their own viewpoints. This can be purposeful or unconsciously done, but still puts a bias on the news. This bias, or spin as Bill O'Reilly calls it, must be taken into account when doing analysis or making serious decisions based on this news.

Many journalism schools are left-leaning and as such produce graduates of the same nature. This atmosphere has created a circle of graduates eventually learning to teach, yet more graduates, until fairly recently with the coming of talk radio. This world onto itself did not have much in common with "mainstream" America.

To some people, the right-wing control of the radio airwaves helped balance the overwhelming left-leaning network television and newsprint. To others (mostly on the left), the talk radio phenomenon is a threat to free society. Most appreciate having the choice, although it has become a "my news or your news" phenomenon. A news event can occur and two people get their take on it through "their" news. One person might listen to NPR, where the other listens to Rush Limbaugh. They come away with completely different opinions on the news event.

## Self Sufficiency

A common theme in the story is case for self-sufficiency. People need to learn to take care of themselves first. Later in life, after some maturity, they then can make necessary choices to select a good partner and good friends to lead a happy life. After starting a family, they then need to have the drive and ability to take care of that family. The message is to stay away from the trap of relying on others for fulfillment. Relying on the government is another trap to avoid.

The road to happiness and fulfillment is first in education. School must be taken seriously and pursued to the maximum of one's ability. Learning is a process that never ends and education is tantamount to that goal. The next important step is self-confidence. People need to learn (somewhat through education, somewhat by watching peers, and somewhat by trial and error) life skills that work for them. This self-confidence also leads to another trait that seems opposite to self-sufficiency, but is important to fulfillment - the ability to trust others. This trust must not be blind, but well placed. The ability to take care of one's self does not mean that one must live in a vacuum. Building a team and working closely with other high-quality people is important. The trick is getting enough experience to find those high-quality people.





## Personal Assets and Liabilities

The crux of the book is for people to be able to independently analyze their own lives to find out if they really have "good" friends, relatives, and partners. Personal assets in this regard would refer to a relation in someone's life that influences them for the good; someone reliable to turn to in times of trouble would be a good example. A smart person to go to for (good) advice would be another. Peers, spouses, and bosses who influence someone to be a better person by trying harder to succeed, is yet another example of a personal asset.

A personal liability, on the other hand, would be a "friend" who is always in need. That is, the person who gets help, but still keeps screwing up or doing the wrong thing. A spouse with personal problems or bad character is also a destructive force - and a very large personal liability. They actually have the ability to drive away positive influences in someone's life. Abusive parents or relatives who lie would be other strong liabilities. Unscrupulous coworkers are another group of people who should be avoided at all costs.

Removing negative influences in one's life makes one's life more positive by default. It sounds very simple when looking at someone else's life; but it is very hard to do when looking at one's own circumstances. Many people live a majority of their lives in denial about why their lives are miserable without ever seeing their choice in friends is the true culprit.



# Style

## Point of View

*Who's Looking Out for You?* is told in first person. The point of view is Bill O'Reilly's take on the American political system, the media, and who really cares about the "little guy." He looks at issues from an American point of view (as opposed to the media "internationalist" point of view). O'Reilly draws from his own life experiences. He speaks of the things he did wrong as he worked his way up the media career ladder, from reporter at CBS to anchor at "Inside Edition."

O'Reilly then looks at learning experiences in his personal life. He feels he was lucky to be single as long as he was. Many of his friends married too early, when they weren't really mature or understanding enough to know what they really wanted. These situations usually turned out badly: either divorce, or the friend sticking it out for his family and being miserable. When O'Reilly finally chose his wife, he knew the kind of person he wanted.

The point is to "look out for yourself," not necessarily in a selfish way, but in a common sense, analytical fashion. This helps the ability to make good decisions surrounded by friends with good character to assist if necessary. Another important point is to have trusted friends in which to confide.

## Setting

The setting of the story is in the political halls of the United States, from Washington, D.C. to the various state capitals. Bill O'Reilly's experience is on television and radio, speaking to people across the country on their varying opinions of the state of politics. The places discussed are also the mass media marketplaces; the major TV broadcasters and news centers across the country, which includes New York and Los Angeles. California is also the setting for much of the celebrity discussions (Hollywood). Inner city blight is examined - specifically in South Chicago.

Other worthy news venues are also included across the world. The war in Iraq is a major locale, as is Afghanistan. The Bernard Law/Catholic Church scandal starts in Boston and leads back to the Vatican. O'Reilly also lambastes the French for their non-support of the Iraq war.

## Language and Meaning

The language and meaning of the story pertains to Bill O'Reilly's concept that the world, which is full of many people who will lie, cheat, and otherwise deceive to further their own ends. These people turn up in all facets of life: television stars, politicians, "friends," workplace peers, even spouses. These are political persons, who converse in the



language of political doublespeak. What they say must be analyzed and sometimes confirmed for factuality. There is also the media who look at politics and broadcast their message to the masses through the bias of their own political viewpoints. This must also be taken into account.

The meaning of the story is that most people - especially working class - have to work hard to get ahead, but can eventually get to a good place. Hard work in America does usually pay off in the long run. A good part of this is to learn to see who your friends and enemies are. The meaning of life is to enjoy the time you have with good friends. Good friends are difficult to find and even more difficult to keep - but well worth the effort in the end.

## Structure

*Who's Looking Out for You?* is divided into ten chapters with an introduction. The introduction summarizes the scope of the book: to show people how to examine their own lives and hopefully improve themselves. Chapter one examines the dark side of illegitimacy. Good and bad parenting skills are discussed, as well as some episodes from Bill's own childhood. Chapter two explains how to find good friends and keep them. It also delves into why a life with quality friends can be so rewarding. The transformation of the United States, from individualist country to welfare state is delved into in chapter three. Political figures are examined, such as President Clinton, President Bush, Hillary Clinton, and Al Gore. Chapter four examines media bias and hypocrisy. It also looks at how the media actively promotes and defends immorality.

Chapter five discusses the affects of religion on culture and individuals. Religion is cited as being capable of having a positive influence on most people. It also digs into the Catholic Church scandals and the attempts of the media and secularists to remove all traces of religion from public life.

The media's anti-war slant is exposed in chapter six. O'Reilly cites examples in the Iraq War where major newspapers actively promoted stories that were negative about the war when public sentiment was overwhelming in favor. Chapter seven bashes the unfair justice system where lawyers and judges basically operate in their own world above the law. An example is cited where unscrupulous defense lawyers knowingly protect the guilty and attack the innocent. The touchy subject of racism is discussed in chapter eight. Communities are left at the mercy of drug dealers because politicians won't be bothered to work hard for poor constituents who aren't worth their effort.

Chapter nine delves into O'Reilly's personal difficulties and lessons learned in his rise to success. His character was tested and many issues solved the hard way at CBS, ABC, and later "Inside Edition." Finally, chapter ten summarizes the points of the book on leading a good, fulfilling life. It is important to make as few mistakes as possible to be happy, but also to forgive ones self for the mistakes that are made.



## Quotes

"Today having a baby is like swinging through McDonald's for a burger. One baby all the way, hold the mustard." Chapter 1, pg. 8

"I have known O'Reilly for twenty-nine years. Success hasn't changed him. He's as much a pain in the ass today as he was back then." Chapter 2, pg. 25

"...once the government takes your money, it will not watch where it is spent. Tax dollars are a major tool that politicians use to buy votes. But once the voting is done, they are not real interested in tracking expenditures." Chapter 3, pg. 35

"A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largess from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidate promising the most benefits from the public treasury with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy." Chapter 3, pg. 68

"Do you mean to tell me, Mr. Donahue, that our government does not have the right to attack a government that harbors the killers of three thousand Americans? Are you going to sit here and tell that to the families who lost loved ones to the terrorist attack? Are you going to tell them that we have to get Belgium's permission before we act militarily?" Chapter 4, pg. 102

"Reporters are in a position of expose corruption and deceit in high places. But in order to do that you have to be annoyed about corruption and deceit. If you're a journalist and you're not angry about social injustice, get out. Be a barber." Chapter 4, pg. 105

"God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the Liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God?" Chapter 5, pg. 114

"We have staked the whole future of American civilization, not upon the power of government, far from it. We have staked the future of all of our political institutions upon the capacity of mankind for self-government; upon the capacity of each and all of us to govern ourselves, to control ourselves, to sustain ourselves according to the Ten Commandments." Chapter 5, pg. 117

"The arrogance of our spokespeople, even the president himself, has been exceptional and it seems to me they [other countries] have taken great umbrage at that. We have told them what they must do. It is a pretty dark doctrine." Chapter 6, pg. 140

"The plan is going exactly as scripted; the news reports are full of shit. We have control of central Iraq and are casualties are light. Just today we destroyed two divisions, and six other Iraqi divisions have decided not to fight. The news never reports this." Chapter 6, pg. 151



"...sincere dissent should always be respected. But if you put yourself out there and you make a mistake, admit it. Don't do what the Dixie Chicks did. Don't speak provocatively about a subject you don't know much about and then claim, 'well, I have the freedom to say what I want.'" Chapter 6, pg. 156

"I don't think you understand what the duty of a defense lawyer is...Our job, regardless of what we know, regardless of what our client knows, is to put on a vigorous defense, which means cross-examining witnesses even we know are truthful, putting up scenarios that we know might not even be correct." Chapter 7, pg. 163

"As late as the 1970's, there was a certain stigma imposed by society on a woman who got pregnant outside of marriage. No longer. Now it's 'baby on board', and if no father is around to support it, hey, it's none of our business. The hell it isn't. The epidemic of out-of-wedlock kids is the primary source of poverty and social problems in this country. We all pay for that." Chapter 8, pg. 177

"The solution to toxic people is simple but difficult. You must divert yourself away from them. Once again it comes down to discipline. If the fruit tastes good but you bleed after eating it, you've got to dine elsewhere or be drained all the time." Chapter 9, pg. 202

"...self-awareness is a must for those of us who want to fulfill our potential. Honest self-examination should be a part of our daily routine. We all make mistakes, but as we've discussed, the folks who make the fewest errors usually wind up the happiest. And there's one important corollary to self-awareness: When you do make a mistake, don't beat yourself up." Chapter 10, pg. 205



## Topics for Discussion

Differentiate between Fox news and the "big three" networks.

Explain what is meant by the term "media bias." Cite an example used in the book.

What major mistakes did O'Reilly admit to making in the course of his career?

Did Bill O'Reilly have an easy childhood? Explain.

From the perspective presented in this book, is the United States government really looking out for you?

Why is Walter Cronkite portrayed as a hypocrite?

Does Bill O'Reilly consider the justice system fair in the United States? Elaborate.

What advise was given to Al Gore in the course of this book that might have won him the presidential election? Do you agree?

What groups do not believe the Pledge of Allegiance should be used publicly?

Did the Founding Fathers intend for the United States to be a religious nation? Explain.