

Healer

Kim O'Reilly taught at the University of Nevada, Reno for 17 years. She now lives in Reno and has just published her book *We Love You, But You're Going To Hell*. The title, she has said, is expressed sincerely by conservative Christians, and experienced painfully by gays and lesbians. O'Reilly will appear at Sundance Books on the day after this article hits print—March 8, at 6:30 p.m.

The title of the book was intended, I assume, to be provocative?

Not intended to be provocative. ... It is to reflect what so many gays and lesbians have heard from their Christian family members, as well as Christian friends—and also what I've heard. I am a lesbian and a Christian, a former professor at the University of Nevada, Reno. It's something that's so familiar to many gays and lesbians, and this book is written to build bridges between Christians and gays and lesbians. And it's written specifically to conservative Christians, to have them take a look at the impact that this does have on gays and lesbians. It was written respectfully and evenly, balanced.

Given the level of distrust, the depth of feeling, how optimistic are you that you can make a difference?



That's an excellent question, and I am fairly optimistic, not that I think I'm going to go and change the world. I don't have a savior complex, but part of my work I did at the university as a professor in the College of Education was to build bridges, bring people together, attract various cultures. And I'm looking at religion-versus-sexual orientation, and this is something that I have a lot of experience in and a lot of heart that I've put into this as well. And I believe that if people sit down across the table, across the room from each other, that they can talk about their differences. A lot of my training and the work I've done in my classrooms as well as workshops [applies], you know, whether it be race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion. ... My book is written to, again, be healing,

and it's not written to sensationalize. ... I think there is hope. Conservative Christians are already happy about it. Many of them have read this book and found it healing, especially if they have gay and lesbian children, and also gays and lesbians that have read the book. It's got a unique positioning in these times to bring together these disparate groups where, there's been a lot of hurt and a lot of pain.

Can you talk about your experiences and how you dealt with it?

I had an evangelical conservative father, a minister. And he has since passed. We were very close, but I didn't come out until I was in my late 20s into my early 30s. When I did come out to my family, it took a lot of, shall I say, grace on my part. It turns out they did accept, even though they still believed the scriptures that condemned gays and lesbians. We had to agree to disagree, which I was able to do when we had a loving relationship, but that's part of the reason I've written this book, is because it reflects what so many ... have grown up with or dealt with, with their conservative Christian family members. I was fortunate that I didn't take on that condemnation, because I didn't believe and have never interpreted the scriptures in that way, to condemn gays and lesbians. I was fortunate that I didn't take on that condemnation and have conflict within myself and that was my experience with coming out. □

NOTES FROM THE NEON BABYLON

BY BRUCE VAN DYKE

Military bloat is sinking us

Hey ReTrumpicans, you gotta minute? We need to talk.

One of the many things that get under my skin these days is this constant crap about how we need so very badly to rebuild our horribly depleted military and blah blah stand back projectile bullshit blah blah blah. I mean, wait a sec. Just hold the hell on. Our military budget in 2018 was 643 billion. I saw it right there on the Wikipedia.

We're giving the grunts, squids, flyboys, and jarheads \$643 billion dollars a year, and they're all tattered and deprived and broken and scraggly and going hungry in their little bunks? Well, gee, isn't that just the most gigantic boo fucking hoo?

Please, military industrial complex, kindly blow it out your ridiculous, bloated ass. Here's the predictable reminder (most of you know what's coming next—that

Uncle Sam gets more money for national Dee-fense than *the next 12 countries combined*. (That's also right there in the Wikipedia.) Our budget was 643 in '18; China's was about a quarter as much, at \$168. For '19, Trump 'n' Mitch bumped the D budget up to 700 bleepbleeping dollars. So holy cruise missile, *stow your bullshit about the poor military!* I'm sorry, but they're just gonna have to scrimp by on that \$700 billion and that's that.

And another thing, ReTrumpicans—where you goin'? Get back here. I ain't done with you yet! This Socialist Fog that you're all hot to whip up, I must remind you, it's not *socialism* to tax the livin' shit out of the ultra mega super fat cats of the one percent. No, it's *good business*. Why? Well, we need money to make this a nice country, you see, and the very very very very rich people seem to have enor-

mous piles of that green. So, yes, we shall come—a-callin' upon their door with a loud, Swedishy knock. Dig it.

Just one more thing, Trump-enabling lickspittles. We're having a delightful time watching you guys fall all over yourselves trying to slime AOC. You're coming off like a bunch of old feeble, lameass dipshits as you constantly try to ridicule a modern, energized, intelligent young, knockout of a representative. She's sharp, serious, capable and completely worthy of professional respect, and you greasy, dung-spattered razorbacks are totally incapable of figuring this out. She scares the fuck out of you old pirates, and we friggin' love it.

Highly recommended strategy for your peace of mind as the gaslighting of America continues—listen to one fave album a night. Just one. It really works! □



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