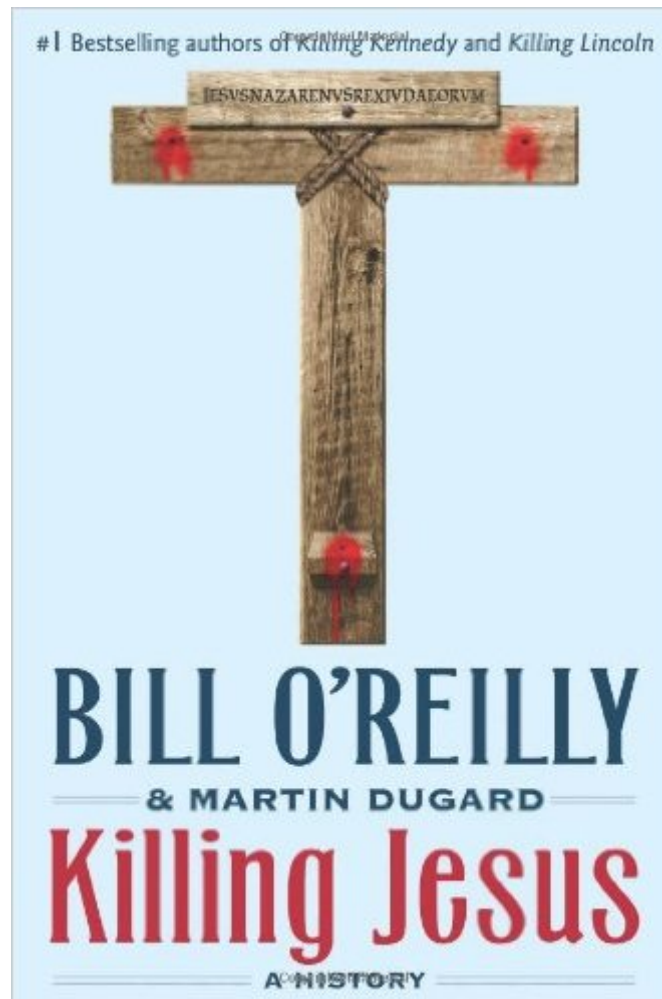


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Killing Jesus



Synopsis

Millions of readers have thrilled by bestselling authors Bill O'Reilly and historian Martin Dugard's *Killing Kennedy* and *Killing Lincoln*, page-turning works of nonfiction that have changed the way we read history. Now the anchor of *The O'Reilly Factor* details the events leading up to the murder of the most influential man in history: Jesus of Nazareth. Nearly two thousand years after this beloved and controversial young revolutionary was brutally killed by Roman soldiers, more than 2.2 billion human beings attempt to follow his teachings and believe he is God. *Killing Jesus* will take readers inside Jesus's life, recounting the seismic political and historical events that made his death inevitable and changed the world forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a very difficult book to review, as you can imagine whenever you read and try to write a review concerning a book about a religious figure. I know that the authors say that this is not a religious book, but instead one that focuses on the humanity of Jesus Christ. They have done a good job treading the fine line between straight biography and religious writing. Of course, the main, and possibly only, source for the life of the Nazarene (as the authors term him) are the four gospels with which most readers are familiar. Interspersed with these writings you will find chapters devoted to Julius Caesar, Cleopatra, Tiberius, and other historical characters. There is a brief, but concise, history of Rome, and short biographies of some of the figures, including Pontius Pilate and the several Herods. It appears that the authors accept the gospel account of the birth in Bethlehem and the visit of the Magi, which led to the slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem at the insistence of

Herod. There appears to be no historical record for these events except for the gospels, so the reader either takes it at face value or not, depending on his or her beliefs. Also, the sticky question concerning Jesus' siblings is handled somewhat offhandedly, with a note concerning the various theories about who these people were, depending on your particular religion. I do take exception to the mention of Herod's "castle", a term I don't believe existed at that time, but it's a minor quibble. All things (particularly religious beliefs) considered, the author have done a well thought out job.

This book is going to be big, a near-lock for the bestseller lists. First Bill O'Reilly and Martin Dugard teamed up to write a book about Killing Lincoln and it sold more than a million copies. They followed it up with Killing Kennedy and it sold briskly as well. And now they turn their attention to their greatest subject: Jesus of Nazareth. Killing Jesus: A History is a short biography of Jesus, focusing on the events leading to his death. From the outset, the authors make it clear that though they are Roman Catholics, they are not writing a religious book. Rather, they are writing a historical account of a historical figure "and are interested primarily in telling the truth about important people, not converting anyone to a spiritual cause." They necessarily rely on the four gospels for their source material and often tell their story by directly quoting the Bible. They begin, though, by setting Jesus firmly in his historical context and skillfully telling about the rise and fall of Julius Caesar and the subsequent ascension of Caesar Augustus. They introduce a cast characters who each make an appearance in the pages of the Bible: King Herod who would hear of a potential challenger to his throne and order the slaughter of innocent children, Herod Antipas who would behead John the Baptist and later refuse to deal fairly with Jesus, and Pontius Pilate, who would cave to pressure and order the execution of an innocent man. Each of these men becomes a living and breathing character in the narrative. As the authors begin to tell about the life of Jesus, they follow the biblical accounts quite closely. They tell his life skillfully and with all the narrative tension and interest they used to tell their compelling accounts of Lincoln and Kennedy.

Full disclosure: I read this book not because of any inclination to do so but at the request of my daughter-in-law. She wanted my thoughts. [I'm a long-time, well-studied Christian, with decades each in both Catholicism and Protestantism.] And my somewhat cynical thought prior to reading this book was "So we have a period of nearly two thousand years where thousands upon thousands (upon more thousands!) of men and women have devoted their ENTIRE lives to studying every aspect of Jesus and the Bible, and now, after a few months of research, our dear TV host is going to shine new light on truth. Really. Also full disclosure: I'm probably in agreement with

many/most of Oâ™Reillyâ™s political and life philosophies, but, after having watched his show for several years, finally got tired of the arrogance and self-aggrandizement (i.e., spin). I watch his show no more. Bottom line, my first impression was correct. So many problems with parsed scriptural interpretations that much of the narrative borders on the ridiculous (e.g., Oâ™Reilly doesnâ™t seem to understand the Bible clearly states Jesus came for the purpose of dying sacrificially for mankind). And his effort at exposing/uncovering the âˆmysteryâ™ of how Jesus met His demise simply denies/hides that premise. In the words of C.S. Lewis (whose words the book conveniently truncate), Jesus is âœeither a liar and a lunatic, or He is Lord.â• Thereâ™s no middle ground. Proclaiming yourself to be God is either a tragic psychosis or an awesome truth. Oâ™Reilly seems to want to find middle ground â“ and sell a tale with his personalized version of the truth. If one wants to learn about God â“ by definition the Author and Creator of all â“ does it really make sense to look to â | Bill Oâ™Reilly?

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