

Going to Hell (without a hand basket)

While writing my latest book, Killing Jesus, I knew I would catch hell once it hit the marketplace. Your mom was right when she told you never to discuss politics and religion because emotions run so high in those arenas. Especially religion.

Even before Killing Jesus was released, the mail began pouring in. And some of it was very nasty.

Brent in Texas opined: "O'Reilly, you are not someone who has the right to write a book about Jesus."

Eric in South Carolina: "You are helping to deceive people with your ignorance about Jesus."

Al in Louisiana: "Bill, what do you know about Jesus? You are Catholic and they don't know anything about the Bible."

And Raleigh in California really let loose with some disturbing stuff: "Bill, please repent before it is too late. You seem to be angry at God because he put a black man in the White House."

Again, none of those folks had actually read Killing Jesus because it had not been released. The book is pure history; there is no religion in it. The people lashing out at me for daring to address their savior in any capacity are so intense in their beliefs that they have lost all sight of reality.

Now, a sad fact of life in America is that there are some very unstable folks running around and they have always been with us. But from my perch as a national TV commentator, I can tell you with certainty that the level of fanaticism is rising not only here, but all over the world.

The reason is the Internet. In the past, kooks were kind of isolated. But now, they can find other loons in cyberspace with whom to commiserate. That encourages bizarre behavior because disturbed people think their outlook is acceptable as others are saying the same thing on their machines.

The chief al Qaeda recruiting tool is the net. Neo-Nazis campaign heavily in cyberspace. NAMBLA, the child rape club, is a worldwide presence on the net.

There is little anyone can do with fanatics. Reasoning with them is a fool's errand. Avoiding them is mandatory. These people are dangerous; they spread poison and could not care less who they hurt. Thus, the Internet has become a hate-filled town square with no limits put on destructive verbal behavior.

And millions of children have access to all the vitriol.

Freedom has always had a downside. With technology allowing for instant communication, hate groups, perverts, and killers now have many more opportunities to cause harm than ever before. Again, there's little anyone can do about it.

But everyone should be aware of it.