

Queen of the Road: The True Tale of 47 States, 22,000 Miles, 200 Shoes, 2 Cats, 1 Poodle, a Husband, and a Bus with a Will of Its Own

by Doreen Orion



About the Book

"A Charles Kuralt-Albert Brooks-style romp where they meet up with nudists, robbers and more. Required Reading." -- *New York Post*

"Beneath its fun and frothy exterior, you'll find in this wild ride across America's highways and byways a lovely portrait of a marriage that treats its ups and downs with humor and grace." -- *Elle Magazine*

"**Eat, Pray, Love** --- without the depression --- meets *Confessions of a Shopaholic* --- without the ditz." -- *Denver Magazine*

"A charming, insightful and - most important - hilarious book that evokes the best of Bill Bryson and David Sedaris, but spotlights the unique voice of a gifted memoirist." -- Jonathan Kellerman, *New York Times* Bestselling Novelist.

Doreen and Tim are married psychiatrists with a twist: She's a self-proclaimed Long Island princess, grouchy couch potato, and shoe addict. He's an affable, though driven, outdoorsman. When Tim suggests "chucking it all" to travel cross-country in a converted bus for a year, Doreen asks, "Why can't you be like a normal husband in a midlife crisis and have an affair or buy a Corvette?" But she soon shocks them both, agreeing to set forth with their sixty-pound dog, two querulous cats --- and no agenda --- in a 340-square-foot bus.

Queen of the Road is Doreen's offbeat and romantic tale about refusing to settle, about choosing the unconventional road with all the misadventures it brings (fire, flood, armed robbery and finding themselves in a nudist RV park, to name just a few). The marvelous places they visit and delightful people they encounter have a life-changing effect on all the travelers, as Doreen grows to appreciate the simple life, Tim mellows, and even the pets pull together. Best of all,

readers get to go along for the ride through forty-seven states in this often hilarious and always entertaining memoir, in which a boisterous marriage of polar opposites becomes stronger than ever.

Discussion Guide

1. What would you do if you could take a year off? How do you think it might change you? Is there a life lesson you'd like to learn? Is it hard to incorporate lessons learned while traveling or on vacation into your daily life? What could you do to improve that disconnect?
2. What would it be to spend 24/7 with your significant other for a year? Would a life on the road appeal to one of you more than the other? Why?
3. Doreen said she would "never, ever, EVER live on a bus." She said the same thing about going to a nudist RV park. Are there things you thought you'd never do in your life, but ending up doing, anyway? How did they work out? Are there things you're certain you'll never do now? Why?
4. Are there any "things" you feel you couldn't live without? Why? Did Doreen's changing relationship with material possessions make you feel any differently about your own?
5. Discuss how Tim's experiences growing up may have contributed to his "working himself to death" and thus became the catalyst for the whole "bus thing."
6. Doreen says she and Tim are "polar opposites." How does that affect their relationship for better or worse? What do you think each sees in the other?
7. How did Doreen and Tim change during their trip and how did you see that change progress throughout the journey? Do you feel their relationship changed as well? What do you envision their future life will be like and how is that different than if they'd never done the bus thing?
8. Who do you think is the most inspirational person Doreen and Tim met or learned about on their trip? Did he or she make you think about doing something differently in your own life?
9. Did the book make you want to visit any particular place in it? Why?
10. The bus seemed to have a "will of its own." How did Doreen and Tim's relationship with it change during their year-long adventure? What was the significance for each of them of the challenges it presented along the way?
11. Did your perception of psychiatrists change through reading this book? How did this memoir about married psychiatrists differ in its portrayal of the profession from that of pop culture movies and TV shows?
12. Why do you think Doreen included her martini recipes in the book? What did the recipes represent for her? What self-soothing traditions have you experienced in your own life?
13. Doreen writes of their dog, "Miles was all about simple pleasures: It was enough in life to have a bowl of food and a

small, quiet place to himself, surrounded by people who loved him. Why ask for anything more?? And, that he could ?teach me a lot.? What have you learned or what do you think you could learn from your pets?

14. The bus thing seems to have given the lives of all the travelers more balance. How do you think their future plans reflect this? Are you happy with the balance in your life and if not, what could you do differently?

15. Doreen ?self-coronates? on their return. Do you think she deserved the promotion from Princess to Queen? What experiences during their year especially contributed to her elevated royal status? What obstacles have you overcome that you are most proud of?

Author Bio

Doreen Orion is a psychiatrist and award-winning author. She has lectured throughout the United States and appeared in national media including "Larry King," "48 Hours," "GMA," and in *People* magazine among many others. Still, she considers her greatest accomplishment to be that her bus was the centerfold for *Bus Conversions* magazine, thus fulfilling a lifelong ambition of being a Miss September.

Doreen loves book groups. She?s been in a wonderful one herself for over a decade, and would love to visit yours by speakerphone. You can arrange a visit on her website, www.QueenOfTheRoadTheBook.com. If you're hesitant because you're afraid she'll be analyzing you the whole time, see the last question in the author interview.

Critical Praise

" Orion has every good travel writer's ability to make readers feel they are there, to capture the telling details of places, and to present the account in a witty, accessible way. Reading the book makes you want to hit the road and have some of your own grand adventures. This is a fun read that will make just about anyone start itching for a road trip."

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