



## Don't Ever Tell: Kathy's Story

*Kathy O'Beirne*

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## **Don't Ever Tell: Kathy's Story** Kathy O'Beirne

'I feel my story had to be told. So much evil was done there was a voice inside me shouting, "Justice".'

With no one to confide in, Kathy suffered in silence as she was battered by her father and molested by local boys.

At the age of eight, she was torn from her family and incarcerated in a series of Catholic homes. When she was sent to a psychiatric unit, she suffered terrifying electric- shock therapy and further cruelty at the hands of her supposed carers.

After ending up in a Magdalen laundry, she fell victim to sexual abuse and gave birth to baby Annie just weeks before her fourteenth birthday. *Don't Ever Tell* is Kathy's harrowing account of her ruined childhood and of her subsequent fight for justice.

## **Don't Ever Tell: Kathy's Story Details**

Date : Published May 18th 2006 by Mainstream Publishing (first published June 9th 2005)

ISBN : 9781845961466

Author : Kathy O'Beirne

Format : Paperback 304 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir, Biography, Psychology, Sociology, Abuse

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## From Reader Review Don't Ever Tell: Kathy's Story for online ebook

### Ellen Ilott says

When reading the blurb of this book I knew it would be a harrowing story but I thought it would be an informative read about an aspect of modern history I am less aware of. I also noticed that it claimed to be a biography which I thought was strange as it was clearly a book written about herself (maybe I was looking into that too much). After reading the first few chapters about the abuse Kathy suffered at the hands of her father at such a young age I was surprised that she survived childhood. I was curious about what O'Beirne does now over a decade after her book was published but after a Google search I found out that the book was a hoax. I have read several articles rather than just believe the first one I read but they seem to disprove her claims. I plan on reading Herman Kelly's 'Kathy's Real Story' to make a more decisive conclusion about O'Beirne's story.

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### Rebecca McNutt says

This book is unbelievably disturbing, but it's also a story of hope. Kathy, who was subjected to years of trauma and abuse, was able to overcome it all and publish this book despite horrible memories and belittling peers.

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### Jacquil says

What a load of crap. After reading about 70 pages, the story didn't ring true. While I understand that people do have horrendous lives and tales of abuse, this was so over the top. There did not seem to be a single person of influence that this young girl encountered who was kind to her. On the balance of probabilities, your going to come across a decent person somewhere along the way. Anyway, I did a search on the internet, and sure enough, the story was discovered to be a hoax. I'm familiar with the shameful history of the Catholic Church and the convent laundries but for this woman to make a buck of other's misery is shameful.

It put me in mind of the book "A Million Little Pieces" which also started to sound contrived about 50 pages into the story. The author was also found to be a liar but made millions from his supposedly true story of a his drug addiction and his recovery. I don't know why authors would think it would make the story more compelling to say that it's true. If they are going to go down that road, they should at least make it believable and do justice to those that actually lived it. Or better yet, the publishers of these books should get better fact checkers. I mean, it is the digital age after all. It can't be that difficult to get the facts straight. Sheesh. What a waste of time.

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### Love says

I tried and tried, just can not get into this one :( With so many more choices out there I will gladly move on to another story.

### **Zoey Cortese says**

Oh my goodness... it's hard to believe this happen in my lifetime and these places were still open & operating in 1996.

I have read similar stories within novels about these institutions but to read Kathy's story first hand...uughh...it makes me shiver just thinking about everything this poor young girl has to endure.

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### **Sabrina Rutter says**

After watching the movie "The Magdalen Sisters" I wanted to know more about the Magdalen laundries and it's victims.

While many believe that this is a fabricated story the author sticks to her claim that it's true and I believe her. I have done a lot of research on the internet and know that many women and girls suffered horribly in these laundries.

This is one of my favorite books.

This book is the same as "Don't Ever Tell: Kathy's Story: A True Tale of a Childhood Destroyed by Neglect and Fear" just thought I would let you all know so you don't buy this book twice.

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### **Mairead says**

Read this book and then discovered that it has been discounted as being untrue, which I found very disappointing. this really disturbed me as people who write these books only give leverage to those who want to believe that these things only happen rarely and that most are false accusations. It does a grave disservice to those who truly have suffered abuse and gives voice to those who insist that the majority of claims are false or have little impact. However that being said I wonder if there isn't some truth to the story in the same vane as A million little pieces, is now listed as semi-fictional.

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### **Mortimer says**

As has been well documented by now, "Kathy's Story/Don't Ever Tell" was an elaborate hoax. The whole unsavory case tells us a lot about the culture of lies, deceit and false accusations targeting the Catholic Church since 2002. The book became a best-seller in Ireland and Britain. Yes, incredibly, 400,000 people were conned. In reality, they are but a tiny fraction of the millions who have been duped over the last decade.

Kathy O'Beirne claims she spent years as a slave to sadistic nuns in the Magdalene laundries (institutions run by the Catholic church to house young women and unmarried mothers), how she was raped there by two priests, gave birth at the age of 13, and how she had her hand thrust into boiling fat by her alcoholic father.

It came as little surprise when family, friends, official records and respected journalist Hermann Kelly (author of "Kathy's Real Story") revealed that this deeply disturbed former psychiatric patient, who has a criminal record for dishonesty, made it all up.

The daughter she claims she bore at the age of 13 did not exist. And a priest who allegedly raped and beat her suffered from such severe arthritis he could not even shake hands. Moreover, she tried to bribe a friend (Margaret Power) to be a "witness" to that rape. According to official records and eyewitness statements, she was never even in a Magdalene laundry. Nonetheless, she has threatened to have those who challenge her account "dealt with."

A planned sequel to the book was unceremoniously dumped by publisher Hodder Headline in 2009.

Of course, lurid tales of child abuse and misery sell books and newspapers. False accusations can yield significant financial gain, and seldom receive or even require corroboration. In the last 3 years alone 173 false accusations have been lodged against Catholic priests in the US. In that time there have been approximately 21 accusations involving a current minor that were even deemed "credible." That is a far lower figure than is the case in other religions. The three companies that insure the majority of Protestant churches in America state that they typically receive upward of 260 reports each year of young people under 18 being sexually abused by clergy, church staff, volunteers or congregation members.

Yet those numbers are dwarfed by the abuse taking place in public schools in the US and other countries, and in society at large (stepfathers, uncles, scout leaders, coaches, teachers, and so on). The author of a 2004 report commissioned by the US Department of Education, Hofstra University's Charol Shakeshaft, said, "The physical sexual abuse of students in schools is likely more than 100 times the abuse by priests." Meanwhile, according to government numbers, in 2010 alone, there were some 63,527 reported cases of child sexual abuse in the United States.

So how was Kathy O'Beirne able to con so many people? Because, although child sexual abuse is a societal problem, as Professor Philip Jenkins has pointed out, our tendency as a society is to seek simplistic answers for complex social problems. Couple that with a media that today seeks to form public opinion rather than inform the public, and you can see why O'Beirne's fabrication would meet a receptive audience, all too ready to embrace yet another "victim" of a big, bad institution. None of which should diminish our concern for genuine victims of abuse, who are done a disservice by false accusations like O'Beirne's.

Although the Catholic Church has put its house in order (most of its abuse cases were from the mid 1960s to early 1980s), other institutions have not. Until they do, we are likely to see more "misery literature" – hopefully based on fact, not fiction.

PS I am happy to provide references for the above quotes and statistics, all of which are publicly available.

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## **Caroline Barker says**

Chilling is not the word for this book. It is horrific and appalling how these State institutions in Ireland were treating their youngsters and female occupants.

I have read articles that claim this book to be untrue, however untrue or not I personally believe that there must be certain aspects that are true and it is up to the individual reader what they believe. Nobody can deny though that some of the torture and abuse that is written in this book has taken place at one time or another somewhere and for those victims I believe that it is important for people to open their eyes at these terrible possibilities.

It is a gripping book and I read it within a few days. I feel that although we'll never know everything that is

happening at any one time people these days seem to be more open and there doesn't seem to be many 'family secrets' as years ago. People are more accepting today rather than have stigma's about, for example, unmarried couples and having children out of wedlock, and therefore there are less reasons for people to be 'hidden' or suppressed, hopefully making it less likely for victims of this to be abused!

I'm no fool and appreciate that there are evils out there but I'd like to think that abuse on the scale that this book is regarding, where the State do not intervene, are left in the past and hopefully people are more aware and outspoken of such things.

All in all, it is an eye opening book whether true or not, and I personally believe that Kathy O'Beirne is recalling the abuse that she received, maybe there are the odd exaggerations as our memories can alter slightly over time. On the other hand, there could be more that we haven't heard about. She does say that there were some things even now she finds too difficult to think about and I think that this is a brave attempt to come forward to encourage people to take an interest for all those that have suffered.

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### **Tomi says**

Yet another heartbreaking story of the evil in the world. Kathy O'Beirne writes of abuse by her father and her life condemned to Irish reform schools and the Magdalen laundries. There is some controversy over whether or not the things O'Beirne writes about actually happened to her. I don't know...but if only one thing happened, that was too many. It's hard to believe that all of this happened to one person; I have read enough and studied enough history to know, however, that all of this horrors did happen, even if O'Beirne did not suffer them all. Humans can be incredibly cruel. And many "great" institutions have a lot of blood on their hands.

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### **Elisa says**

I was sooooo disappointed when looking this book up on internet i found out it was all a lie. I lived in Ireland 5 years and I love it, and i feel a bit irish, I wanted to know more about the magdalene sisters, especially after watching the film and I thought this book was a brilliant testimony of what happened during those years, I mean there were even pictures of her best friend corroded stomach after swallowing batteries to get out of the laundries. This book made a mockery of all the readers that felt pity and sadness for this woman.

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### **Kennedy says**

I have no doubts that the Magdalene Laundries were horrific, but while reading this book I felt that it was the "everything plus the kitchen sink" approach in piling on the misery. It rang false, and then I looked online to find out that the book has been called into question. The amount of unreliable memoirs being revealed at the moment is astounding.

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### **Ruby Tuesday says**

This book was a complete hoax. I read it a few years ago and at the time felt that some of the detail didn't

ring true. I later found out that it was a hoax. There were many young girls that were mistreated by Nuns in Catholic Ireland, many have been scarred for life. To make up such a story is just disgusting and makes people doubt those that have genuine stories to tell.

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### **Tazzie Dee says**

As a young girl, Kathy was brought up in an abusive household where she was physically and mentally abused by her father. He then sent her off to a reformatory school, where she was then passed over to a psychiatric hospital and she was then carted off to one of the dreaded Magdalen Laundries. This is her harrowing account of her ruined childhood and of her fight for justice.

Kathy's story both shocked and saddened me. I was even more shocked to find out that it was a hoax. But regardless of that, it still feels like a story that needed to be told. True or not, you can just imagine what life was like for those who were actually put in those places. She did paint quite the picture and I am now interested in learning more about the Magdalen Laundries.

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### **Kai says**

I am more inclined to read popular or hyped books. When my classmate lent this book to me, I was intrigued when I found out that it is non-fiction (since I mostly read fiction). After reading the blurb, I became hesitant. The title itself screams dread and trauma. But I told myself that I have to start reading non-fictions and expand my understanding of heavy topics.

Before reading the book, my classmate told me that she was very frustrated all throughout the book because of the horrendous things that happened to Kathy.

Once I started reading the foreword up to the first few chapters, I felt pity towards her (Kathy) and rage towards the people that had done her wrong (abused, beat-up, raped). I had issues with the writing style because it didn't seem to flow smoothly. But I disregarded it and continued with the story.

I was already seeing plot/loopholes yet I rewired my mind to be heedless of these errors since it is "non-fiction." I felt like it would be amoral to judge non-fictions specifically with how things happened. People don't always have control with everything that's happening with their lives, especially her who was a child when the unforgivable things happened.

When I got around page 190 of this book, I went to my goodreads account and marked it as 'currently-reading.' To be honest, I did not drop this book because I wanted to know what would happen to her and how she would get her 'justice.' So when I scrolled through the reviews of this book and saw the ratings, I was indifferent. But when I actually started reading the reviews, I was aghast. According to multiple reviews, this book is a hoax. I did some further research and found out that this book is just based from a movie she watched and victims she had interviewed. It was like being sucker punched. I was dazed and furious for letting myself overlook at all the errors of this book.

After figuring out that this book is a hoax, I still finished this book to see more plothes and identify more errors, and honestly, to add to my 'read' pile of books.

PS

-If there's anything this book gave me, it's trust issues. Can you imagine? Publishers, editors and so many "professionals" involved had to scrutinize this book before actually publishing it. Yet, it was still published. I can't believe people would use someone's misery for their self-interest. Fucking bastards.

-From this experience, I learned to check the validity and credibility of a non-fiction book prior to actually reading it.

-Lastly, paper is flammable.

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