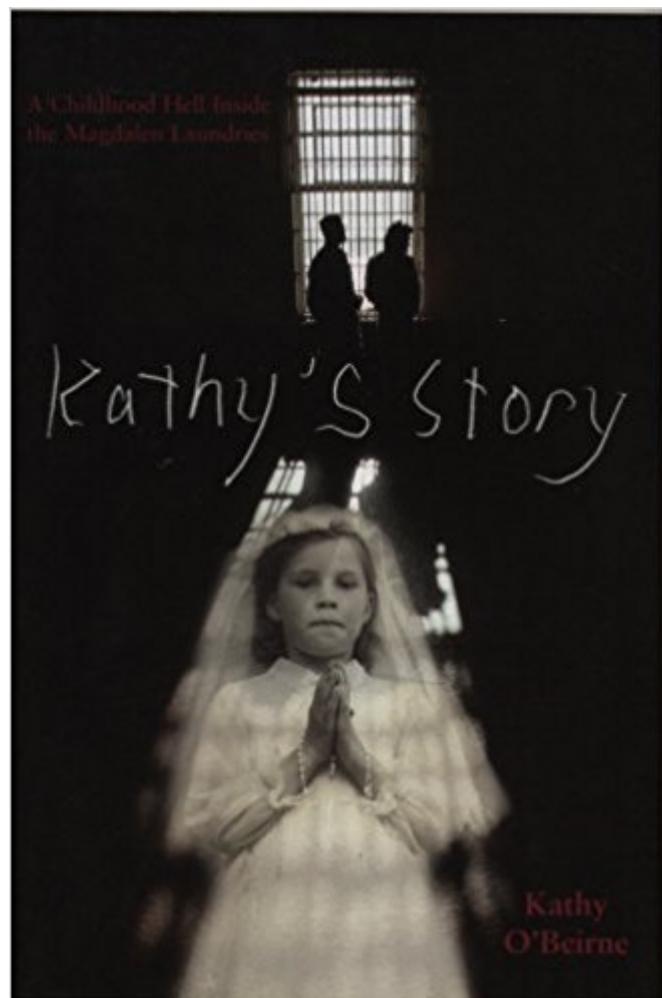


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# Kathy's Story: A Childhood Hell Inside The Magdalen Laundries



## Synopsis

Kathy O'Beirne's earliest memories are of being battered and sexually abused. Unable to confide in anyone about the beatings she regularly received from her father or about the boys who made her play dirty games, she became withdrawn and self-destructive, leading a psychiatrist to diagnose her as 'a child with a troublesome mind'. As a result, aged only eight, Kathy was removed from the family home and incarcerated in a series of institutions. In the first, a reformatory school run by a holy order on behalf of the Irish State, she was raped by a visiting priest. When she tried to get help, she was transferred to a psychiatric hospital, where the abuse continued, along with the administration of large amounts of drugs and electric shock treatment. At the age of twelve, Kathy was sent to a Magdalen laundry. These notorious workhouses operated in Ireland throughout the twentieth century and during that time thousands of young girls, some orphans, some pregnant and some considered 'at risk' in the community, were forced to slave in horrendous conditions. Locked away from their families and the outside world, many of the girls were cruelly punished and sexually abused by the staff or lay visitors. Kathy fell victim to one of these predators and gave birth to baby Annie just weeks before her fourteenth birthday. The little girl had a serious bowel condition but lived to the age of ten, providing the only light in Kathy's blighted life. After all that she has suffered, Kathy has now come forward to tell her harrowing story in the hope that more will be done to help survivors of institutional abuse. She recounts her tragic experiences in unflinching detail but what is most remarkable is the strength of character that shines through such a dark tale. It is this strength that has enabled her to survive and fired her continuing struggle for justice.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (12 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #110,219 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #30 in [Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Ethnic & National > Irish](#)

## Customer Reviews

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.

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