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# Official Book Club Selection: A Memoir According to Kathy Griffin



*Par Kathy Griffin*  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurOfficial Book Club Selection is Kathy Griffin unplugged, uncensored, and unafraid to dish about what really happens on the road, away from the cameras, and at the star party after the show. (It's also her big chance to score that coveted book club endorsement she's always wanted. Are you there, Oprah? It's me, Kathy.)Kathy Griffin has won Emmys for her reality show Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List, been nominated for a Grammy, worked and walked every red carpet known to man, and rung in the New Year with Anderson Cooper. But the legions of fans who pack Kathy's sold-out comedy shows have heard

only part of her remarkable story. Writing with her trademark wit, the feisty comic settles a few old scores, celebrates the friends and mentors who helped her claw her way to the top, and shares insider gossip about celebrity behavior—the good, the bad, and the very ugly. She recounts the crazy ups and downs of her own career and introduces us to some of the supertalented people she encountered before they got famous (or, in some cases, after fame went to their heads). Word to the wise: If you've ever crossed Kathy Griffin at some point in your life, check the index for your name. Along the way, Kathy reveals intimate details about her life before and after she made the big time. She opens up about everything from growing up with a dysfunctional family in suburban Illinois to bombing as a young comedian in L.A., from her well-publicized plastic surgery disasters to her highly publicized divorce, and more. Only in this book will you learn how the dinner table is the best training ground for a career in stand-up, how speaking your mind can bite you on the ass and buy you a house, and which people in Kathy's life have taught her the most valuable lessons—both inside and outside the entertainment industry. And as if all that wasn't enough, there are also dozens of exclusive and somewhat embarrassing photos from Kathy's own collection featuring the diva of the D List herself, with her old nose as well as her new one, plus celebrity friends, foes, frenemies, and hangers-on for you to gawk at. Refreshingly candid, unflinchingly honest, and full of hilarious "Did she really say that?" moments, Official Book Club Selection will make you laugh until you cry, or just puke up a little bit.

Chapter One THE LITTLEST GOSSIP GIRL Have you ever looked at the online photos of Britney's peesh? I probably shouldn't start my book with that question, but I just I can't get enough of those photos. I find it nearly impossible to turn away from an online snapshot of any celebrity's peesh. All right, Kath. Focus. This is the story of your life. Wait! Have you seen that TV commercial with Wynonna Judd where she hawks diet pills? Look, I don't mean to be rude, but maybe a gal with a big voice and a bigger . . . um . . . talent, shouldn't be hawking diet pills. Come on, you know those pills are just tiny donuts. Teeny, tiny powdered donuts. All right, that wasn't very nice. In fact, it was inappropriate, and nothing short of cheap gossip. But let's face it, that's why you bought this book. That's right, I'm bringing it: gays, women, and the occasional DL (down-low) husband. The pages you are about to read have a lot of gossip, but guess what? Most of it's about me.

I'm going to try to make this book a recipe (shout out to Paula Deen!) of equal parts shit-talking about myself and others. Yeah, I go down pretty hard on myself in this book. Not as hard as Steve Martin does, or my drunken Irish Catholic relatives do, perhaps. But I've had some heartaches and bumpy passages on this road to notoriety. Basically, I take great pride in the fact that I'm a professional. You're in good hands. This is a job I've been training for my entire life. How did I get here, then? I'll start with a statement so shocking you might have to burn this book immediately: I was a kid who needed to talk. All the time. I mean, what's a beleaguered Mary Margaret Griffin to do when her mouthy little daughter won't shut the fuck up? Breathe a sigh of relief, for one thing, whenever I would bolt out the front door of our house on Home Avenue in suburban Oak Park, Illinois. But Mom was really of two minds about my exit. While part of her was thinking, Thank God, get her out of my earshot, the other part surely thought, Uh-oh. That's because I'd just go next door to the Bowens' house, where I first learned the power of juicy material. The Bowens were an older couple, and they lived with Mrs. Bowen's mother, Mrs. Tyres. The Bowens, Mrs. Tyres, and I had a mutual understanding. They would bribe me with Pepperidge Farm Milano cookies, and I'd freely spill our family secrets, all to my mom's horror, of course. She knew exactly what was going on because she could see it all through our kitchen window, which had a perfect view into the Bowens' formal dining room. Mom would be doing dishes, occasionally nursing a nice highballboxed wine innovations hadn't arrived yet then look up, see my mouth moving, and then see the Bowens shaking their heads. It was good stuff I was slinging, too. I'd reveal how one of my older siblings would have had a kegger the night before, and I'd run right over with the latest. "Yeah, Joyce had a party and one guy just fell asleep right on the lawn!" I'd excitedly report. "He was real drunk and everything! There was puke everywhere! My mom made me promise not to tell anybody! I don't think she meant you, Mrs. Tyres! Boy, these cookies sure are good!" From my perch at the Bowens' table, I could see my poor mom waving me over, mouthing "Get back here! Get back here!" If either Mrs. Bowen or Mrs. Tyres looked over, too, my mom could turn on her party face instantaneously and be all smiles: "Oh hell-o-o-o-o-o-o, Mrs. Bowen!" Everything was so prim and proper at the Bowens', with doilies on the table, and cookies neatly laid out on a plate. It was like high tea. At our packed house, it was a bag of cookies thrown out and all of us diving for them like animals, with no Kate Gosselin there to spank some sense into us. So naturally I thought it was my job to go next door to these fancy people and try to tell the most graphic, shocking, and horrible stories I could. I mean, haven't you sold your soul for a good slice of cake? (More on that later.) Mr. Bowen, of course, wanted nothing to do

with me. Typical straight-guy audience. He would come home in his suit, grab the newspaper, and sit in his Barcalounger, tolerating the freckly, red-headed, seven-year-old spinning top who came over and just talked constantly. Poor Mr. Bowen. The ladies, however, knew what was important, egging me on with widened eyes and a gently prodding "What?" "My dad swore FOUR TIMES last night!" "Joyce got kicked out of school again!" "Keith Norman let me watch him pee in his yard today!" "My brother had a party where everybody was drunk and my dad had this antique sword and it was stolen and my mom is FURIOUS!" (By the way, my family is still talking about that damn sword.) This arrangement with the Bowens went on for years. It started when we moved into that Home Avenue house and continued till I was in high school. If the Bowens had had Flip cam technology, they could probably sell it on eBay for tens of dollars. Today, the story of my trips next door is one of my mother's favorites, but I guarantee you it caused her no end of grief back then. "What are you airin' our GAHDDAMN dirty laundry for?" she'd always unload on me, her Chicago accent in full flight. "Mrs. Bowen and Mrs. Tyres, they don't want to hear your GAHDDAMN mouth, for CHR-EYE-SSAKE. JEEZ-us CHR-EYE-ST." Sorry, Mom. You and everyone else in the family might call it tattling. But to me, they were my first live shows. From the Bowens to Madison Square Garden, it's been quite a ride.

### Chapter Two Growing Up Griffin

With all the craziness this past year surrounding the Octomom and her fourteen kids I'm on suicide watch for her, by the way it's worth noting that my mother was herself the youngest of sixteen. Suck it, Octomom. Before fertility drugs let Nadya Suleman set some kind of land speed record in childbirth, there was good old-fashioned Irish Catholicism. Of course, I've told Jesus to suck it, too, which earned me a certain measure of notoriety, because you have to make fun of any religion that would let you have sixteen kids and say it's God's will. I mean, bless my grandparents. They seem like they were wonderful people. I didn't know them, really, because most of them had passed away before I was born. But that amount of children is clearly insane. They were big believers in the rhythm method, and you can see how well that worked out for them. I don't even know my grandmother's first name, because my mother only refers to her as "The Saint." For instance, I would say, "Mom, don't you think it might not have been the best choice to keep on having children, one a year, like she was punching a clock?" She'd reply, "NO, don't say that! The woman's a SAINT!" My mother's father was just called "The Governor," or "Himself." Which, if you have sixteen kids, probably isn't as crazy as it sounds. "Himself is comin' home!" Grandma would supposedly announce in her Old Country brogue. I had to clarify with my mom who exactly she was talking about when she'd use this term. I would say, "Mom, do you mean your dad?" And she'd say "Of course. Himself." Apparently, "Himself" liked to get into fistfights with his sons, well into their twenties. That's right. My mother would talk about this as if it were cute and adorable. Um, no. There isn't supposed to be any fisticuffs as a matter of everyday parenting. I know I'm making fun of my family mostly because I love teasing my mom but there was also real tragedy in that situation. For one thing, you can't keep track of that many kids, and the likelihood of something horrible happening because of that just increases. This is a true Irish Catholic story: One young child in my mom's family died when he pulled a pot of boiling water off the stove and was scalded to death. Her sister Angeline died of tuberculosis when she was twenty-one. This was a time when scurvy and polio were real dangers, when a family member would go into a veterans' hospital and never come back. My mother's family came over on a ship in steerage class from Ireland, but she and her four siblings nearest in age were born in America, so I'm second generation. They settled in the west side of Chicago, and life became all about the parish, or church community. Presentation was the name of the Catholic church they attended, and this is what I love about the Irish: My mother became known as the second prettiest girl at Presentation parish. "Why was that okay?" I once asked her. "Oh, because everybody knew Mary Griffin was the most beautiful girl at Presentation," she replied. My mom was happy to be on the D-list! Just like I'm not trying to be Brooke Shields, she wasn't trying to be Mary Griffin. Now, she did go and marry the prettiest girl's brother, my father, John Patrick Griffin. That probably helps you accept the mantle of second prettiest girl at Presentation. My dad's family, on the other hand, was something of an embarrassment at Presentation, because get ready my dad was the youngest of only five kids. You can imagine trying to be happy with only five children in the family. I'm sure you're dampening this page already with tears of pity. We don't know if Mr. Griffin the elder was shooting blanks, or somebody was partially barren, which is apparently the worst thing you could call a woman in those days, but it gets crazier. After my grandmother had five children six, really, since one baby sadly died after a week she said, "I don't want any more kids." To which Grandpa said, "Well, the only way to not have kids is to not have sex, because we're not going to use condoms or anything." "Yeah, that's the deal," my grandma agreed. "No more sex." "No sex? I'm out of here." I love that this was apparently a very religious man, too. What, a "bad"

Catholic uses birth control, but a "good" Catholic leaves his wife over it? So-o-o-o religious. Anyway, Mr. Griffin moved out and r...Revue de presse"With a foreword begging Oprah to be on her show and a chapter called "Brooke Shields, Don't Read This," Kathy Griffin's autobiography, Official Book Club Selection, is everything you'd expect. What makes it a terrific read, though, is all the stuff you wouldn't expect: binge eating (her own, not Paula Abdul's); her conviction that her late brother was a child molester; and her unflinching accounts of her plastic surgery and her divorce. Whether or not you're a fan, you'll respect her tenacity, work ethic, and loyalty to her parents. And if you are a fan of Griffin's celeb-tastic stand-up, skip to chapter 8, which should be called "Helen Hunt, Thomas Haden Church, and Ellen DeGeneres, Don't Read This." Everyone else, dive in. A"Entertainment Weekly" Funny, honest, and refreshingly unsentimental. Griffin embraces Michael Corleone's mantra with a vengeance: All business is personal." - NY POST "You feel as if Griffin is in the room with you, excitedly gesturing as she recounts a story [and] that's the beauty of Official Book Club Selection Griffin has been made a fool countless times in her career and her willingness to share those lumps, which, face it, you'll never read in some Oscar-winning A-lister's autobiography, endears her tremendously." Richmond Times Dispatch