



## Behind Closed Doors

*Katherine X. , Sue Smethurst*

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**Behind Closed Doors** Katherine X. , Sue Smethurst

**Four children by her father. Thirty years of horrific sexual abuse.**

**Now updated with a new epilogue, detailing Katherine's brave stand at the Royal Commission**

In March 2009, Joseph Fritzl was sentenced to life in jail for the systematic imprisonment, torture and rape of his daughter Elisabeth over 24 years, fathering seven children. The case shocked the world.

But just a month before, the story of Australia's own house of horrors was emerging in a Victorian country town.

Under a blanket of suppression orders, a man in his late sixties was quietly arrested, charged – and later convicted – for the systematic rape, abuse and imprisonment of his only daughter, 'Katherine', which spanned decades. He fathered four of her children.

Until recently, this shocking story had been buried under a complex legal web and Katherine's insistence on silence so that she could rebuild her shattered life and protect her children. In *Behind Closed Doors*, Katherine speaks out and tells the story of how she survived – and how such degrading abuse went unnoticed for so long.

Now, a new epilogue reveals the evidence Katherine gave at the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, detailing the betrayal she felt at having been ignored for so long.

## Behind Closed Doors Details

Date : Published May 1st 2015 by Simon & Schuster Australia (first published January 1st 2015)

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Author : Katherine X. , Sue Smethurst

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## From Reader Review Behind Closed Doors for online ebook

### **Melissa says**

This book was really sad to read. What happened to her is horrific being so openly trapped. It made me think of what it is to be a prisoner in a different sense as she was so psychologically scared and wounded she was free but trapped at the same time. It made me think how many other people this could be happening to and know one would be the wiser.

The downfall for me in this book is how it's written. I found some things to be very repetitive to the point where I would think I had accidentally gone back few pages. It's structure could have been a tad better. The writing style was very easy to follow which I enjoyed as I could just flow through and got it read in a couple of days.

As a biography lover, I really enjoyed it and recommended it to others.

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### **Lisa Mcmaugh says**

This is not a book that I would usually read, I only read it as a colleague asked me too so she could talk about it. Very sad story. Not one I would recommend to someone only because of the extreme situation.

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### **Linda Joy says**

I can't give this a rating it's just so heartbreakingly sad! kX I hope you are well and finding some peace and happiness in love and life!

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### **Philippa says**

Everyone should read this book. It's written by an Australian woman who suffered sexual, emotional and physical abuse from her father over decades, including having his children. Certainly takes you out of your comfort zone! While horrifying and dreadfully sad, the psychology of the case is fascinating. It must have taken a lot of courage to write this.

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### **Sharryn says**

It is very difficult to rate this book due to the horrific circumstances of the story.  
For anyone that has suffered abuse at the hands of a parent this book is a must read.  
What Katherine has had to endure in her lifetime is overwhelmingly, incredibly sad.  
Her monster has woven an evil web in not only her life but that of her siblings and children. I wish you all nothing but peace and hope you find some solace and joy in your world now.

Thank you so much for sharing your story K you are a remarkable woman xx

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### **Luisa says**

A shocking, yet truly courageous account of decades of abuse by her father. I am not sure if I can say I enjoyed it but it truly made me think should I ever witness something like this I need to speak up

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### **Marianne says**

Okay this is the last true story I will be reading.

This book, I couldn't believe happened her in Australia.

Do you know why?, there was no media exposure. So I was reading her side of the story, not knowingly it all happened her.

So she needed to be heard.

Everything happened for a reason and for this journalist and write Sue Smethurst got in contact with Katherine X, to write her side of the story. Amazing and remarkable people who come out of this as survivors.

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### **Jodie Gale says**

It never ceases to amaze me the strength of the human spirit!

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### **Debbie Lamb says**

A distressing story and I commend Katherine for having the courage to speak out. What's particularly disturbing about the story is the catastrophic failure of the authorities to take action when suspicions were first raised - even when the victim told them what was happening. The tragedy is that this family were on the radar and still nothing happened - that's the shocking part. Also upsetting is when you realise that the victim and her children will suffer forever following the revelation that the children and their children's children will have genetic issues. No sentence imposed on the monster who subjected them to this will ever be enough to redress the balance, but at least he is no longer near them to continue inflicting his despicable behaviour.

My rating is not a reflection on the victim but on the way the story has been told. It's erratic and there are so many pieces that are repeated it became irritating.

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### **Kerrie Martell says**

This was a great book which I'm glad I read, because Katherine's story should be told.....BUT!.....This book was not well written, it was all over the place and we kept hearing the same story's over and over and some of them contradicted each other

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### **Amanda - Mrs B's Book Reviews says**

\*<https://mrsbbookreviews.wordpress.com>

‘If one person has shown faith in me, if one adult had really listened to me, my life would be very different, and my story may have had a fairy tale ending. My past has robbed my future, but I know I am not the only child who has ever suffered. Let this be a lesson to every adult. You never know what’s going on behind closed doors’.

Katherine X

Behind Closed Doors is a 2015 publication released by Simon & Schuster Australia, written by Katherine X and Sue Smethurst, a senior journalist from The Australian Women’s Weekly. In this biography and true crime memoir, Smethurst outlines the horrific life experiences of Katherine X, an Australian woman who suffered decades of abuse in every form, physically, emotionally and sexually, at the hands of her own father. She also shockingly gave birth to four of his children. To make matters worse, Katherine’s mother refused to take any action to help her, despite her clear knowledge of her husband’s abuse towards his daughter. Katherine’s voice is also included, via her first person point of view testimony. The case is utterly sickening and incredibly regrettable. Katherine tried numerous times to report the abuse to the authorities in Victoria to no avail. Sadly, this case was systematically swept under the carpet by authorities, including a hospital and a high volume of social workers. Although Katherine’s experiences are confronting, this is a must read. The case frustrated me and made me angry to no end! Thirty years after the abuse started, Katherine’s father was finally tried and sentenced to 22 years in prison. There is little information on Katherine’s story which I discovered through a media search. This is due to timing of the case (it coincided with the Black Saturday case), the legal issues surrounding it and the need to protect Katherine, as well as her children, from further scrutiny. Katherine X shows us the strength of the human spirit to endure in such horrific conditions. In bravely sharing her experiences, with the assistance of Sue Smethurst, Katherine hopes that, ‘If there’s one message I want to pass on it is that every child must be listened to. Children’s voices need to be heard, their stories acknowledged’.

Behind Closed Doors is book #152 of the Australian Women Writers Challenge

\*Book ‘X’ of the a-z author challenge 2018

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### **Michelle McCartney says**

Unbelievable the trauma that Katherine had to endure over her childhood and adult life. I am disgusted in the department system and the mother!!! I believe they also should have been punished for turning a blind eye.

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### **Faye says**

\*\*\*\*\*SPOILERS\*\*\*\*\*SPOILERS\*\*\*\*\*

What a tragic story, I am lost for words, but this was a great read. However, what father could do that to a child, he is where he deserves to be. How could a mother not know or stand by and allow this to happen (or were you so traumatised yourself)? Katherine is brave for telling this story, I know this can never completely heal her however, I hope she does find some peace. Please that you have your brother and children. However, your children and you both have times of turmoil ahead.

Katherine you are not to blame....best wishes..may you find peace in your life ahead. Brave to write this book.

Many tears were wept whilst reading this book.

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### **Jennifer says**

Incompressible. I feel bad giving this book a rating. It is not to be rated. How can it be? For entertainment value? For literary value?

There's so much I want to understand. So much I don't get. I'm not sure if I'm glad I read this, or wished things could be unknown.

All power to Katherine.

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### **Kim says**

This is a hard story to listen to, but worth the time. I feel so sorry for Katherine, and hope she can enjoy a much better life now. I hope this never happens to anyone else but I'm not naive enough to think this is true. How cruel we can be to our own family.

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