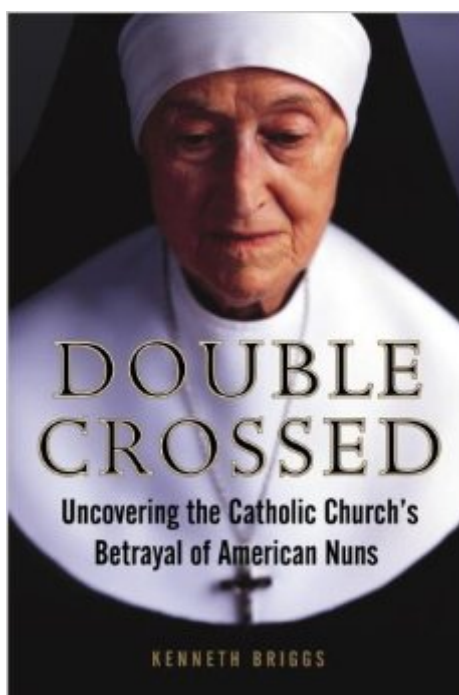


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Double Crossed: Uncovering The Catholic Church's Betrayal Of American Nuns



Synopsis

This groundbreaking exposé of the mistreatment of nuns by the Catholic Church reveals a history of unfulfilled promises, misuse of clerical power, and a devastating failure to recognize the singular contributions of these religious women. The Roman Catholic Church in America has lost nearly 100,000 religious sisters in the last forty years, a much greater loss than the priesthood. While the explanation is partly cultural—“contemporary women have more choices in work and life”—Kenneth Briggs contends that the rapid disappearance of convents can be traced directly to the Church’s betrayal of the promises of reform made by the Second Vatican Council. In *Double Crossed*, Briggs documents the pattern of marginalization and exploitation that has reduced nuns to second-, even third-class citizens within the Catholic Church. America’s religious sisters were remarkable, adventurous women. They educated children, managed health care of the sick, and reached out to the poor and homeless. They went to universities and into executive chairs. Their efforts and successes, however, brought little appreciation from the Church, which demeaned their roles, deprived them of power, and placed them under the absolute authority of the all-male clergy. Replete with quotations from nuns and former nuns, *Double Crossed* uncovers a dark secret at the heart of the Catholic Church. Their voices and Briggs’s research provide compelling insights into why the number of religious sisters has declined so precipitously in recent decades—and why, unless reforms are introduced, nuns may vanish forever in America.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I did personally feel that this book felt a bit academic at times, as opposed to giving us this fascinating information mainly through longer personal stories and remembrances, but writing style aside, it really gets the subject across. The fact that Mr. Briggs put 8 years into this book really shows, not only in the compelling material and telling personal stories, but also in his knowledge of Catholic history and theology in spite of not being Catholic himself. This book was interesting to me as a feminist, as one interested in Catholic history and nuns, and someone who, several times, thought semi-seriously about becoming a nun when younger (the religion I ended up choosing was not Catholicism, so the sisterhood was obviously ruled out for me). The history of nuns in America is a very long and fascinating one, and the numbers of American sisters steadily grew over time, till their ranks were swelling in the decades just before Vatican II. Even though some sisters might not have considered themselves such (for various reasons that Mr. Briggs explains throughout the book), nuns really were the original feminists. They were liberated women ages before the ordinary secular American women were.

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