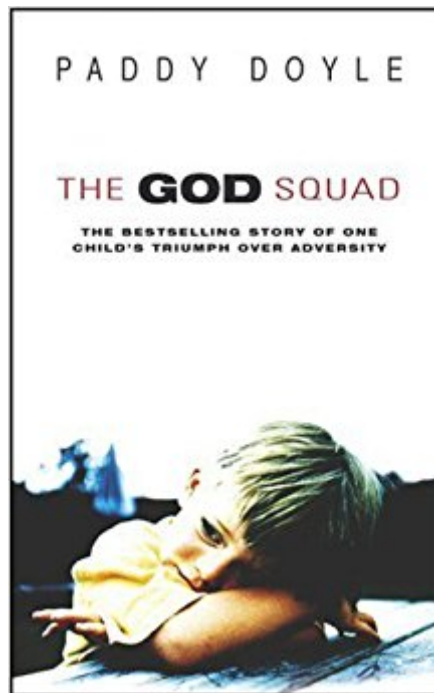




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# The God Squad: The Bestselling Story Of One Child's Triumph Over Adversity



## Synopsis

By the age of four, Paddy Doyle's mother had died of cancer, and father had committed suicide. He was detained in an industrial school for 11 years, where he was viciously assaulted and sexually abused by his religious custodians. After 3 years, he was taken to a hospital and left there, never to see his custodians again. So began his long round of hospitals, mainly in the company of old dying men, while doctors tried to diagnose his condition. This period of his life, culminating in brain surgery at the age of 10, left him permanently disabled. This title is the true story of a survivor, told with a lack of bitterness for one so shockingly and shamefully treated.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Paddy Doyle was born in Wexford in 1951 and now lives in Dublin. He is married with three grown up sons. He is recognised as a leading disability activist in Ireland and has been a member of the government-appointed Commission of the Status of People with Disabilities. A frequent contributor to television, radio and the print media on matters as diverse as the role of the church in caring for children to the legalisation of marijuana for medical use, he is currently Chief Executive of the National Representative Council - a body established to ensure that the rights of people with disabilities are upheld. He has also travelled extensively throughout Europe and the United States, speaking at conferences about disability and child sexual abuse. Paddy Doyle received the Christy Brown Award for Literature, in 1984, for a television play entitled *Why do I Bother*. Shortly after it was first published, *The God Squad* became a bestselling book in both Ireland and the United Kingdom.

It also won the Sunday Tribune Arts Award for Literature. In 1993 Paddy Doyle was awarded a Person of the Year Award for An Outstanding Contribution to Irish Society by the Rehab Group.

Written from the unique perspective of an adult describing the confusing events orchestrated by dismissive, cruel and indifferent adults, Paddy Doyle creates a sense of growing horror on each page. Although four when his mother died and his father committed suicide, his single recollection of his pre-institutional life was an image of a man hanging from a tree in recurring nightmares. Since he discovered his father's body, he was severely traumatized. He did not remember a younger sister or any other relatives. He was labeled a liar by the nuns and often caned for his nightmares. Possibly the worst abuse was the carte blanc given the medical profession to perform experimental brain surgery to correct a real or imagined limp which eventually left him wheel chair dependent. As a ward of the state, there was no one to protect him. Few adults were identified by names or pseudonyms. These were the very kind or the very cruel. Paddy avoided attachments, having been rejected by his family and abused by caretakers. In effect, "God Squad" is a narrative of four years in the life of a traumatized little boy with a will to survive in spite of having the odds stacked against him.. The title, "The God Sqad" is ironic. One thinks of activist religious of the '60's seeking to change the world. Paddy's "God Sqad," both lay and religious,served to maintain the cruel and inhumane status quo.

This is the fascinating true story of a little boy who through no fault of his own is incarcerated in one of the appalling Irish industrial schools in existence in Ireland until 1970. He suffered physical, emotional and sexual abuse and as if this were not enough, he was then taken by the nuns of the industrial school and left to spend years of his precious life in different hospitals where he appears to have been no more than a guinea pig and was left with a permanent disability. Up to this day, no-one within the system has accounted for the brain operations, his eventual disability or any reason why he was in the different hospitals.The book is very well written and although it describes the horrors inflicted on a small child, the sadistic treatment he received in the hands of the nuns, one can sense a healthy resignation which comes across every page thus making the unbearably sad story a little easier to read.I found the book an inspiration, an ode to life, for after the total deprivation of affection, protection, a simple toy even, and having had his life taken away from him and practicaly destroyed, he not only survives with sanity but he wins in a superhuman way as he tells with such dignity about the perverse system under which he and so many other children were detained.It must have been very difficult to relive the horrors whilst writing this very informative

book. And for such an effort, I am indebted.

Very interesting story about a small Irish boy in the mid-20th century who is traumatized by witnessing his father's suicide, abandoned by his extended family, and placed in a Catholic orphanage which is run by nuns who treated their young charges with as much kindness and mercy as the Japanese soldiers showed the American and other Allied POW's on the Burma Road in WWII. These "brides of Christ" we're obviously unfamiliar with Christ's teachings, or unwilling to implement them in the service of "the little children" or "the least of these". After seeing the movie "Philomena", I was interested in the subject of Catholic "mercy" organizations" during that time period from other points of view. I am very glad I got to read this book. I think it confirms my belief that if you know of someone in an institution, nursing home, etc. , you must go on unannounced visits to check on conditions, and ALWAYS WATCH THE WATCHERS/CAREGIVERS.

It breaks my heart when I read how society has failed and continues to fail our children. Paddy - who I have had the pleasure of meeting - took lemons and made lemonade as is clearly demonstrated in his writing. The writing style flows and make a difficult subject an easy read. His treatment at the hands of nuns is another example of how people who say that they are 'people of G-d' aren't. How could they be? On another note Paddy is a advocate for justice for children who have been abused - a loud one who gets heard by all :) Buy the book.

This book never told what was wrong with his legs. It never answered what happened to his parents. The book was interesting until it ended with no explanations. Not a way to end a story. And it never told what he ended up doing for a living. A disappointment .

Such a sad read but I had to finish this book and still to this day the little boy remains in my heart. I had to read to the end to see how his life turned out! Things were rough back then and medical field had no answers sometimes!!

Great story! it makes me keep deeply concerned about children in especially orphanages owned and operated by Catholic Churches. I wish he could tell more about how he eventually cope with the ghostly images of his father who hanged himself. .

Great book - thank you!

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