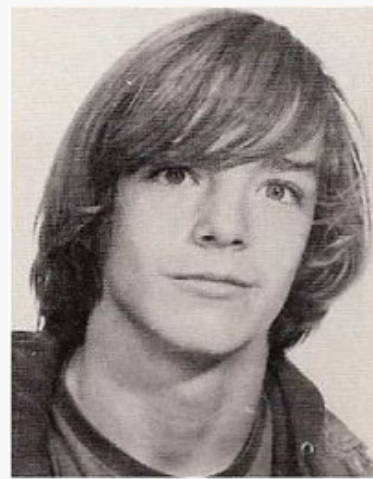


Gripping Family Memoir on Caring for a Sibling with Mental Illness Dying from Cancer

Shot in the Head A Sister's Memoir, A Brother's Struggle encompasses "the heartache and reward of loving a family member with severe mental illness".

BEDFORD, NY, USA, September 8, 2014

[/EINPresswire.com/](http://EINPresswire.com/) -- Called both "powerful and emotional", *Shot in the Head* is a bittersweet memoir about life and loss. When her mentally ill brother developed lung cancer, author Katherine Flannery Dering had to overcome her reluctance to deal with the troubled man and step up to help in his care. While maneuvering through the maze of our mental health system, she (and her eight siblings) got to know social workers and the employees of nursing homes on a first name basis, saw friends and family less often, missed work, and ate fewer meals at home and more fast food. Along the way, she changed in unforeseen ways, and her perception of her ill brother, Paul, changed as well.



I Was A Person

Paul Flannery before schizophrenia and just before his death

“

Both universal and personal, Katherine Dering's *Shot in the Head* is the story of a family just barely holding on. Dering unspools her story with urgent compassion and grace.”

Elizabeth Eslami, award winning author.

Award winning author, Elizabeth Eslami, called the book both "universal and personal", and said this story of a family just barely holding on is told with "urgent compassion and grace".

Of her ill brother, Paul, the author states that he was more than a "schizophrenic". He was a brother, a son, and above all a person that she and her eight siblings loved. "My family had lived with Paul's condition for years, and had grown used to his strange stories and sometimes frightening behavior. It wasn't until his care -- and his treatments for lung cancer -- started taking more and more of my attention that I realized his story demanded to be written."

Early reviews have been highly positive with an average of [4.7 out of 5 stars on Amazon](#) from 13 reviews and an average of [4.5 stars out of 5 from Goodreads](#) based on 16 ratings.

Just as important, Ms Dering feels that her book and Paul's story emphasize the poor treatment that those with serious mental illness get in our society. 25% to 40% of people with schizophrenia will require extensive support for most of their lives. Without adequate credentialed facilities and support

services, many end up homeless or in prison. By 10 years after their first diagnosis, 10% of people with schizophrenia have died, mostly by suicide. By year 30, 15% have succumbed. Katherine and Ilene hope that in the future, these will not be the statistics but in 2014, they are.

Paul Flannery, was one of these people. As the years went by, his social service agencies' focus shifted to moving everyone into independent living, regardless of recovery level. Paul's ability to handle and benefit from living in community was always in direct proportion to the degree to which he was supervised and supported. He blossomed with it, but suffered and regressed as it was withdrawn.

Their family was thankful that there were people willing to participate in that supervision when it was adequate and frustrated when he went without.

When Paul developed lung cancer, the family stepped in to help him navigate the medical labyrinth and cared for him till his untimely death at age 48. "We got as much from caring for him as he did from our care."

Ms Dering and her sister, Ilene Flannery Wells, believe that the world needs the return of a mental health reformer like Dorothea Dix. In the 1800's, Dix was a social advocate who fought to get people with mental illness out of prisons and into hospitals. Today, many with serious mental illness are homeless and in jail when they need to be in hospital or treated properly in the community.

They both attended the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) conference in Washington Sept 4 to promote Shot in the Head dressed as Dorothea Dix.

From that conference, Ms Dering will be in the San Francisco Bay area. On Sept 8, she will be speaking about her book to the NAMI Sacramento chapter in a free talk that is open to all. On September 11, she will be giving a presentation to students in Abnormal Psychology at Dominican University of California in San Rafael

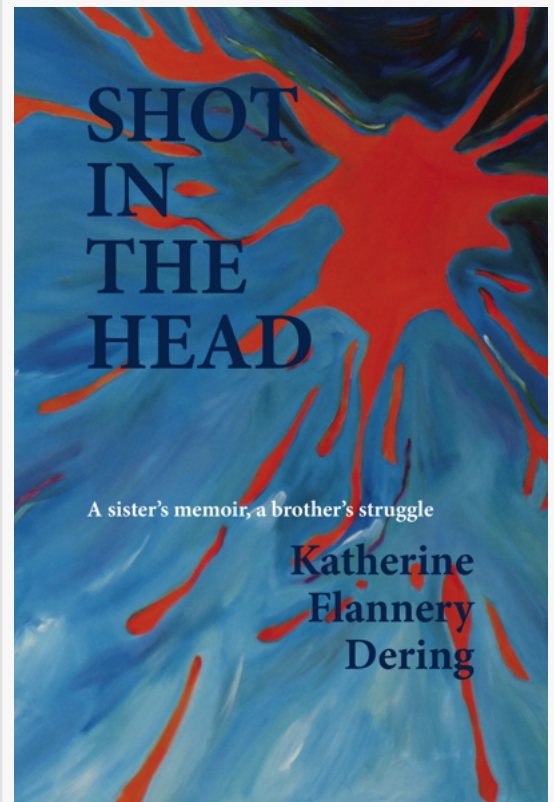
On Sept 15, she will be reading from her book to the Marin County NAMI Chapter and on Sept 17, she will be reading from her book and talking about Laura's Law at the Marin County Public Library in Novato at 7:00 PM.

Shot in the Head A Sister's Memoir, A Brother's Struggle is available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, other stores and on Kindle, Kobo, Nook, Google Books and Apple I-Store. (ISBN 978-1-927637-21-0, 227 pages, \$19.95)

For further information, visit [bridgeross](http://bridgeross.com)



Ilene and Katherine dressed as Dorothea Dix at NAMI



Shot in the Head A Sister's Memoir, A Brother's Struggle

Marvin Ross
Bridgeross Communications
289-260-0229
email us here

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