

Actress Kathy Bates beat ovarian cancer, but doesn't 'want to define myself that way'

Says her celebrity helped her get an operating table quickly

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BY [NICOLE LYN PESCE](#) / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

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Kathy Bates, at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center's Survivorship Center.

Like her unsinkable Molly Brown in "Titanic," [Kathy Bates](#) doesn't go down without a fight.

"I haven't talked much about being an ovarian cancer survivor because I don't really want to define myself that way," said Bates, 63, who only recently revealed that she was diagnosed with the disease nine years ago.

"I want to be defined by my own essence."

Bates quietly underwent surgery and nine rounds of chemotherapy in 2003 while filming "Little Black Book" with the late Brittany Murphy.

"I caught it early. And because of my celebrity, I didn't have to wait even for an operating table. I got in really quickly," she said, snapping her fingers twice. "But a lot of people aren't so fortunate."

The Oscar-winning "Misery" star shared her personal struggle before 400 cancer survivors and their families at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center's Survivorship Center on Wednesday.

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"Although everybody's as supportive as they can be, basically it's your fight," she said. "It's only the other survivors that really understand."

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Bates, who has been in remission for almost nine years, is also raising awareness for the challenges that cancer survivors face.

"A lot of people go through the chemo and run out of gas. They come out the other end, and then become depressed," she said.

"You feel that you should be swinging from the chandeliers . . . but it takes a long time to get your strength back."

Bates recovered by spending quality time with friends and family, and pouring herself into her work.

She appeared on the big screen with roles in more than 20 movies, including "Midnight in Paris," and in TV series like "The Office" and "Harry's Law."

She was shocked when NBC canceled "Harry's Law" this year, reportedly because the audience skewed too old for advertisers.

"I'm very disappointed," Bates said. "And being an older person, it's a real sucker-punch saying that older viewers basically can't monetize."

She appreciates Daily News readers who wrote to the "Voice of the People" to lambaste NBC for dismissing the legal dramedy.

"It's gotten to the point where I read one guy said, 'What, does she own the Daily News?' " she laughed. "It's funny.

"I think they made a mistake," she added. "We had so many fans."

Bates has still got plenty on her plate, however, including Jean-Pierre Jeunet's new film "The Young and Prodigious Spivet," which she starts shooting in July.

"I have to pay the bills just like everybody else, but it also pays my soul to work," said Bates.

"I'm very lucky to be able to do what I love to do, and I hope I can keep doing it for a while."

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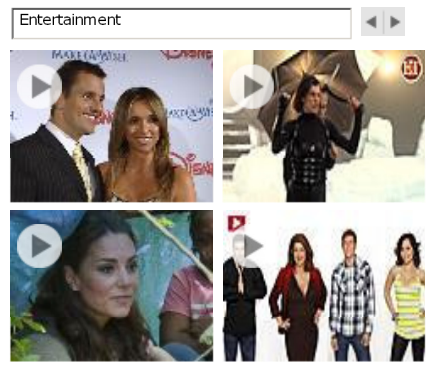


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