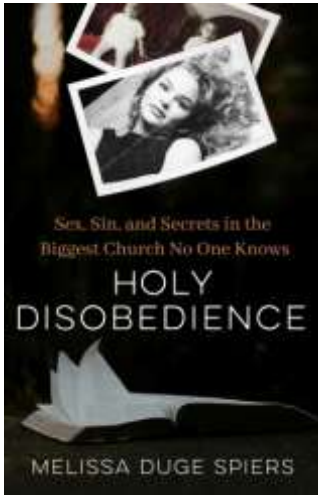


They told her to be pleasing, pretty, and silent—how one woman defied a lifetime of control to find herself.



Holy Disobedience is a gripping, unflinching memoir by Melissa Duge Spiers about growing up in the shadow of control, silence, and secrets inside the Seventh-Day Adventist Church—a strict and insular fundamentalist sect. When Melissa learns that her father, a respected pastor, was a serial child predator shielded by the church, her world implodes. But this revelation is only the beginning.

From being beaten for resisting a childhood home perm all the way to seducing a forbidden public school athlete in her parents' bed to reclaim her autonomy, Melissa's early years were shaped by repression, shame, and religious programming. Her escape from the SDA church launched her into a life of risk—Wall Street jobs, New York nightclubs, Hollywood hookups, and a series of abusive relationships. And yet, in these extremes, she was searching—desperately—for something that would help her feel alive.

What she finds instead is something even deeper: her voice, her power, and her ability to heal. Through self-reflection, an unexpected friendship with her father's first victim, and fierce self-reclamation, Melissa slowly reconstructs the self she was never allowed to know. *Holy Disobedience* is not just a survivor's tale. It's a story of fierce honesty, radical freedom, and the beautiful mess of becoming whole.

Holy Disobedience: Sex, Sin, and Secrets in the Biggest Church No One Knows

PAPERBACK | \$18.95 | 5.5 x 8.5 | 9781957687735 | Publication Date: March 31, 2026
EBOOK | \$9.99 | 9781957687742 | AUDIO | 9781957687759

Talking Points:

- How female beauty, silence, and sacrifice twist into spiritual values—and how women can unlearn them.
- What does religious trauma look like decades later, when you think you've escaped?
- What is happening in the Seventh-day Adventist Church with the recent class action lawsuit by its abuse survivors.



Melissa Duge Spiers is an award-winning essayist, screenwriter, and advocate for topics of religious abuse and resilience, utilizing her online platforms (TikTok and Instagram, known as "The Glory Whole") to raise awareness and help others find healing. Her memoir *Holy Disobedience* won the 2022 Book Pipeline Unpublished Nonfiction Manuscript prize, with excerpts featured in *The Huffington Post*. Melissa's writing appears in magazines nationwide, and she's a contributor to *Take the Fruit: An Anthology of Religious Trauma*. She lives in Silicon Valley and holds a B.A. from Barnard College. Follow on [TikTok](#) (24k) or [Instagram](#) (11.4k).

FOR ENDORSER LIST, EXCERPT, AND VIDEO INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR, VISIT
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