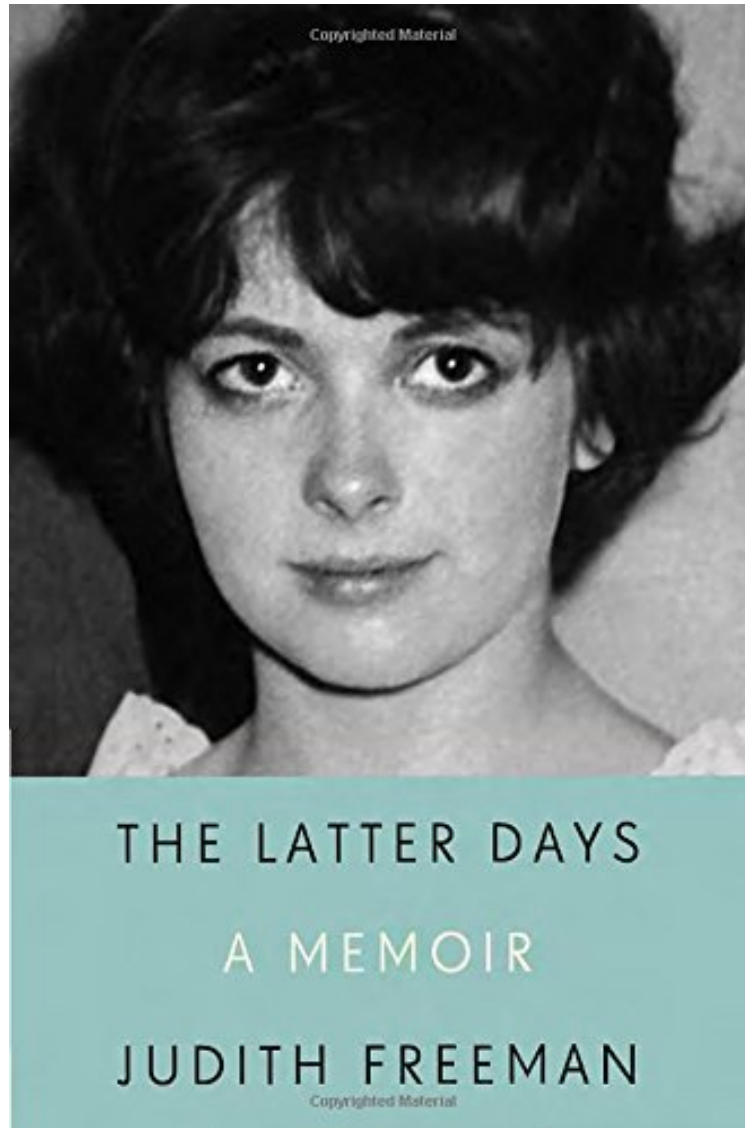


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## The Latter Days: A Memoir

*Judith Freeman*

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#1029562 in Books Judith Freeman 2016-06-07 2016-06-07 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.37 x 1.16 x 6.39l, 1.25 #File Name: 0307908615336 pages The Latter Days A Memoir | File size: 53.Mb

**Judith Freeman : The Latter Days: A Memoir** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Latter Days: A Memoir:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A poignant story told with honesty and brilliance. By Sunday CookI just finished this book and loved it. She eloquently takes the reader through her life beginning as a Mormon in Utah. Her memories, reinforced by her diaries, letters and other family members give a complete picture of life as a Mormon and a lively lovely beautiful girl pushing through that life to find fulfillment. A great read.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fascinating memoirBy Elaine Greensmith JordanAn excellent memoir. I wanted to read

another about her later life. The self-deprecating narrator is believable and entertaining. 1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Terrible writing. I could not get enthused about what ...By Mr Dill Terrible writing. I could not get enthused about what I was reading, nor was I moved by it in any way.

An arresting, lyrical memoir about the path the author took sometimes unwittingly out of her Mormon upbringing and through a thicket of profound difficulties to become a writer. At twenty-two, Judith Freeman was working in the Mormon church-owned department store in the Utah town where she grew up. In the process of divorcing the man she had married at seventeen, she was living in her parents' house with her four-year-old son, who had already endured two heart surgeries. She had abandoned Mormonism, the faith into which she had been born, and she was having an affair with her son's surgeon, a married man with three children of his own. It was at this fraught moment that she decided to become a writer. In this moving memoir, Freeman explores the circumstances and choices that informed her course, and those that allowed her to find a way forward. Writing with remarkable candor and insight, she gives us an illuminating, singular portrait of resilience and forgiveness, of memory and hindsight, and of the ways in which we come to identify our truest selves. (With black-and-white photographs throughout.)

The *Latter Days* is clean, strong and deep, a raging river of a story that its author carried until she couldn't hold it back. It is an arrow straight from Mormon country, from the Mountain West and from the heart. San Francisco Chronicle Evocative. The *Latter Days* candidly dramatizes Freeman's struggle to imagine other possibilities for herself beyond the ones Mormonism dictated to her. Maureen Corrigan, NPR.org, Best Books of 2016 The *Latter Days*, written with thoughtful, hard-won honesty, is the record of a girl growing up in a closed society rigidly governed by a male religious hierarchy a profoundly undemocratic system that claims to embody American values. Painfully but with no rancour, Judith Freeman makes vivid the security of belonging and the rewards of obedience, the costs of security and obedience, the rewards and costs of seeking freedom. A brave and valuable book. Ursula K. Le Guin, author of *The Left Hand of Darkness* This moving book came at me like a secret lost letter from a friend, offering in Judith Freeman's trademark frank and pellucid prose a rich and revealing personal history in the world she knows as well as anyone: Utah, in this case the patriarchal cloister of Utah in the 50s and 60s. Her story is one of family succor and sorrow; and the flickering origins of shame. This is an affecting and tender memoir as Ms. Freeman displays the dark wonder of the forces that shape our life choices. Ron Carlson, author of *Return to Oakpine* The *Latter Days* arrived at four P.M. and I read until midnight, unable to leave this memoir. Judith Freeman's book is elegant and precise, as is always true of her prose. In this memoir of her childhood and coming of age in a landscape of rigid belief and constraint, the undertone of wonder and the heartbreaking moments of trust that faltered, as it had to, Freeman sends rays of light straight into the reader's heart. Susan Straight, author of *Between Heaven and Here* I'm trying to put my finger on why the story of a young girl's coming of age in a Mormon household in Utah during the Fifties and Sixties a girl who just happens to have become one of our most prominent writers has so captivated me. Even more than the story itself, fascinating on its own merits, it was the elegant style of its storytelling, the cool, unexpectedly sophisticated tone. Unlike many a memoir of growing up in a constricting, sometimes dangerous environment, Freeman lets the evidence stand for itself. There's no hyperventilating did you see how bad this was? Do you see how nuts this is? Can you believe? Can you imagine?... I was impressed by her even-handedness in her memoir. We're given a picture of a time and a place, and of life within an all-encompassing faith in its positive aspects as well as its strangeness. A compelling story, compulsively readable, and its authorial voice calm, keen-eyed, gracious but only to a point still rings inside me. An unusually elegant memoir of a young girl's unique coming of age. Janet Fitch, Goodreads I don't know that there has been a more effective mapping of the subterranean emotional landscapes of day-to-day American religious life than *The Latter Days*. [Freeman's] searching frankness allows [her] both to talk honestly about choices [she's] made that others might judge, but it also entitles [her] to find beneath the surface piety of the Mormons around [her] during [her] childhood an astounding range of human motivation. This strikes me as enormously important given how Mormons have been caricatured I think of the *Book of Mormon* musical, for example as being extraordinarily flat. So often, especially when it comes to the lives of Mormon women, I feel that there is no one but us to witness ourselves and no one to hear us. [Freeman] hear us. Joanna Brooks, *Religion Dispatches*, interview Tender With photographs jogging her memories, Freeman immerses us in the rhythms of Mormon family life. It flows slowly, a gentle stream of recollections coalescing into eloquence. Chicago Tribune Judith Freeman takes readers on an insightful and frank journey that explores her upbringing and her relationships. The *Latter Days* is what every memoir should be: honest to its core and so well crafted that the reader can't put it down. *Writers Bone* Poignant. Freeman writes with the clear voice of a person who's (mostly) shed the trappings of the past. *Publishers Weekly* A novelist's account of her early life growing up Mormon in Utah and the family memories she kept hidden from herself... highly readable. A poignant, searching memoir of self-discovery. Kirkus s There's a uniquely contemplative quality to Judith Freeman's *The Latter Days*, which chronicles a life in a 1950s/1960s Utah Mormon family that is both typical and fascinatingly specific. The *Latter Days* is more than just a chronicle of growing up Mormon. It is instead a chronicle of growing away from being Mormon, requiring an understanding of how all-encompassing an identity that was before she

began to drift away from belief in that faith, both as a rebellious teen and through the crises in her marriage. As such, there's a mournful quality to the writing, even as Freeman works through the various separations in her life from the church, from Utah and eventually from her husband toward understanding the forces that shaped her. Salt Lake City Weekly The books detailed exploration of Utah Mormon culture might attract national readers, but just as intriguing is how Freeman's story functions as a cultural memoir of a young woman coming of age in the 1950s. As a narrator, Freeman's voice is direct and distanced, recounting the encompassing collective of her family and LDS neighbors, while examining the repressed sexuality of a patriarchal culture. She describes her younger self as a wild girl in love with horses, who is surprised by an early encounter with the significance of making art. The Salt Lake Tribune Searing. there is always great pleasure for the reader in Freeman's exacting, sensory descriptions. LA of Books Freeman's story of self-discovery and falling away from the Mormon Church will resonate strongly with many readers, particularly since in some ways not all that much has changed. In April 2016 the Salt Lake Tribune broke a story about victims of sexual assault at LDS church-run Brigham Young University who are routinely expelled for Honor Code violations due to a blame-the-victim mentality. Mormon women interviewed for the news story told of being overwhelmed by guilt and shame and said that they lacked a vocabulary to even talk about what had happened to them. Freeman would recognize the problem. Nonetheless, her memoir is not stridently anti-Mormon and in parts she recounts spiritual experiences connected to her childhood faith and pride in her family history. 15 Bytes "A bittersweet, luminous journey." Barnes Noble Fascinating. New York Journal of Books For those readers outside the Mormon tradition, The Latter Days offers some marvelous insights into the faith, as Freeman blends church history and doctrine into her childhood stories, giving readers a stronger sense of both the draw of this faith for Freeman and her family, and the difficulty she faces when she moves away and begins meeting colleagues and friends who are not Mormon or who are not religious at all. Freeman certainly has a fascinating life story. Cedar Rapids Gazette A remarkable memoir. beautifully written. insightful social and religious commentary. Dialogue Journal About the Author JUDITH FREEMAN is the author of four novels Red Water, The Chinchilla Farm, Set for Life, and A Desert of Pure Feeling and of Family Attractions, a collection of stories, and The Long Embrace, a biography of Raymond Chandler. She lives in California and Idaho. Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. When we were sick, the elders were sometimes called to perform a laying on of hands. My father always took part in this ritual, as the priesthood holder in our household. Usually three elders joined together to perform the blessing, one of whom was always my dad. ### Once, when I had a bad case of the flu, I remember the elders came to administer to me. This was after we had moved to the new subdivision high up on the mountainside, into a big house with six bedrooms. My sister and I shared a bedroom on the main floor with a window that looked out onto the street. My mother, an avid quilter, had made new matching quilts for our twin beds and when I first saw our new room, with the pretty lavender flowered quilts and the new white dresser trimmed in gold, I thought it was almost too beautiful to occupy. When I came down with the flu, I didn't really mind because I could stay home and lie in my new bed, in my new room, and look out the window at the view of the street and the mountains across the way. It was late winter when the elders came, summoned by my father to perform the laying on of hands. My parents had become worried when I began to run a fever. The house was located in the foothills of the Wasatch Mountains where heavier snows always fell, and for several days it had been snowing hard. As I grew sicker and the fever overtook me, I watched the snow falling outside, thick and mesmerizing flakes, a swirling world of whiteness that left me feeling wrapped in a woolly silence. The long feverish days passed this way, watching the snowstorm, with my mother coming into the room occasionally to check on me and bring me liquids. And then, as dusk fell one night, two elders arrived, called by my father to help him perform a healing. One was Brother Skanky, a small wiry bald man who taught art at a local school, and the other was Brother Wadman, who lived just up the street and whose son Ricky was one of my best friends. I heard the elders assembling in the hallway outside my room. I knew they had come to administer to me because my mother had told me earlier they'd been called. They came into the room with my father, bringing with them the scent of men and men's lives and of power, carrying in the cold of the outside world, the smell of the world I'd been cut off from by my illness. They stood by my bed, pressing close in their woolen jackets and winter coats. The sharp, metallic odor of winter clung to their heavy clothes. They were kind men, Brother Skanky and Brother Wadman. They both had a good sense of humor, especially Brother Skanky, and they talked playfully to me for a few minutes, asking me how I felt, if I thought I was going to live after all, patting my shoulder beneath the blankets and looking down tenderly at me. They said they had come to help me feel better, which they knew I would soon. They grew more serious and gathered around my head and stood over me, looming above me in their largeness. My father took the small bottle of olive oil that had been consecrated earlier and placed a drop on my forehead and I closed my eyes. The elders placed their fingertips lightly on my head, over the spot where the oil had been spread, and then they closed their eyes and my father began to offer up a prayer. He called upon the power of the priesthood that had been invested in him to make me well, as he uttered my full name, asking God to take away the sickness that had befallen me and restore me to health. He said other things, how grateful he was to belong to the one true church, restored here on earth in the latter days, and to hold the priesthood with all its powers, and he thanked God for giving me life, and asked that my body should be freed of any illness, and any suffering, and then he closed the blessing by saying he asked these things, on my behalf,

in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen. The prayer didnt last that long, and as soon as it ended the men lifted their fingertips from my brow and opened their eyes. When their hands were taken away, I too opened my eyes and looked up at them: it was as if a great dark weight had been lifted from me. I felt as if a spell had been cast over me a good but slightly disturbing spell. I felt as if I had just emerged from a deep, dark, quiet place, a realm where magic could be summoned if you knew the right words and if you had the right power. You could heal people with that magic. All I had to do was submit to the power and believe in it, and I knew I would be made well. Still, the experience left me slightly unsettled and just a bit frightened, as if I had to be very careful now not to do anything wrong that might disturb the blessing. I also understood that women could not have this power I had just experienced, that only men who held the priesthood could perform a laying on of hands. From a young age I realized that men would always have powers unavailable to me and thus I would always be beholden to them, required to obey their dictates as bearers of the holy priesthood, and thus I would forever exist in a somewhat lower realm. ### This was not the first time I had experienced the laying on of hands, nor would it be the last. Each time the feeling was more or less the same the drop of warm oil on my forehead, the weight of the elders hands, the descent into the dark and magical place with the large men looming over me. Each time I gave myself over to the elders and felt myself suspended in their priestly world where they could do with me as they wished, but somehow I remember this blessing on that winter night more vividly than others. Perhaps it was the fever, or the days enfolded by the storm, or the kindness of Brother Skanky and Brother Wadman. Or maybe it was simply that it all took place in that bedroom which did not yet feel mine. Later, in that same room, when months had passed since the elders visit, I sat on my bed one afternoon, alone, with the door closed and the light falling through the window onto my flowered quilt, and I felt the powerful nearness of God. He was so near it was as if I could reach up and take His hand, and this is what I did: I simply reached up and held the hand of God, just for one quick moment. And then I let go, and went back to what I was doing.