

I was homeschooled in Illinois from age 5-7, Mississippi from ages 7-9, Missouri from ages 9-15. My parents belonged to non-denominational charismatic churches, which believe in a traditional patriarchal family structure, the literal interpretation of the Bible, the end-times rapture, and faith-healing as the primary source of help sought for medical ailments. They homeschooled me and my siblings for religious reasons.

In my case, because of their religious beliefs, my parents deprived me of receiving any education in science. They believed that geology, biology, and most science-related education – even subjects that didn't specifically relate to evolution – were inappropriate for me to learn. In addition, language arts, history, and reading was severely restricted, including having any access to current world news. Because their religion taught them to believe girls were fragile, female siblings were also deprived of PE and playing any kind of sports.

Additionally, as my family grew, my parents declined to provide an education to my younger siblings altogether. At a certain point, there were 6 siblings under the age of 11 in our household, ages ranging from 0-11. We endured neglect from being left alone at home unsupervised by any adult during the workweek and received zero instruction or training or education of any kind. The youngest children were never taught to read and were illiterate until someone outside our home intervened years later. The fact my siblings did not learn to read was ok with my parents because they believed that, as long as we all knew the Bible, that we would be fine: some seasons, in fact, the only book we were given was the Bible.

In addition to educationally neglecting us, my parents were physically and psychologically abusive, using emotional and psychological warfare to ensure our compliance to their spiritual beliefs. For example, we often were deprived of food and forced to fast to make ourselves more open to the spirit world. Our mother falsified the few school records that Missouri suggested, but did not require.

Signed,
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