

I grew up in the state of Wisconsin, and I was educationally neglected due to my parents' extreme religious beliefs. My parents pulled me out of private school and decided to homeschool me as I was about to enter 6th grade.

As I became older, my academics started to suffer, and I had large gaps in my education. Ultimately, my parents neglected to teach me in subjects they perceived as unnecessary for women. This choice coincided with my parents' views becoming more extreme; they were radicalized by Christianity-based fascist communities and teachings. Doug Phillips, Doug Wilson, Bill Gothard and Michael Farris were some of the religious leaders that greatly influenced my parents. I felt its impact. I was left to teach myself in high school. I stopped math and science around 9th grade. The focus of my education became to groom me into becoming a traditional wife and mother. My parents believed that because I was a girl, academics were less important for me and my purpose was to become a godly wife and raise the next generation for the kingdom.

As the oldest of eight kids, I was spending most of my time as a teenager helping with childcare and housework. I studied when I could but without the support and guidance of my parents, I received the equivalent of an eighth-grade education. I was never allowed to take any kind of formal testing and no one, outside of our insular religious community, were aware of the extent of the educational neglect.

Because of the lack of oversight and regulation of homeschooling in WI, my parents were able to educate me how they wished with no repercussions. To my knowledge, my mom submitted a form of intent to homeschool to the state once a year and that was the extent of any oversight by the government.

Lack of an education severely impacted opportunities and choices available to me as I moved into adulthood. My parents' beliefs surrounding female education only continued to strengthen as I got older and I was prohibited from pursuing college. Without outside support and accessible resources, my options were limited. My life was made harder in every way due to educational neglect. Decades later and I am still dealing with its impact.

Signed,  
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