

I was homeschooled throughout my whole childhood in Florida and Georgia. My parents were able to identify loopholes and do as little work as possible in the way of educating and preparing myself and my siblings for adulthood, and instead favored convenience and used the isolating nature of homeschooling as a way to ensure that we would have no other option than to live in accordance with their christian fundamentalist ideology as adults. Adherence to strict ("biblical") gender roles meant that I was not allowed to be paid for my babysitting work as a teenager as my parents believed it was unbiblical for a woman to work (for money) outside the home. Further, they came to believe that it was ungodly for women to be educated beyond the 3R's (reading, writing, and arithmetic) as that would lead to a desire for greater freedoms that went against their religious beliefs. Science, history, and geography were secondary studies that I only had limited access to.

I am a studious person and have been self-taught since I was 10. My math was atrocious because I couldn't teach that to myself and as the eldest daughter in a quiverfull family, my ADHD and learning disabilities were never flagged. My inability to understand pre-algebra eventually got my mom to throw the book at my face in rage and switch my math curriculum to "consumer math" (AKA: how to balance a checkbook and scale a recipe) because that was more practical.

Over time, my parents made it clear that they believed women should not pursue education beyond what is necessary for running a household that mirrored theirs. Accordingly, my parents told me that I was done with my education when I was 15. I thought this was odd, because I had been doing the calculating myself and thought I was behind. I attended the GA Homeschool graduation ceremony the following year, despite the fact that I had not received instruction in algebra, specifically, which was a graduation requirement. When I asked why I was done so early, my parents offered the reasoning that because I was a girl, I did not need higher math in order to run a household. I was explicitly told that they considered a girl's education successful as long as they could balance a checkbook, read the (King James) bible, and write well enough to share their beliefs. Science, History, and Geography were provided in limited capacity just to meet record keeping requirements: watching a "historical" movie (like Schindler's List), finding a country on the globe when the news came on, or baking something new ("chemistry") all counted towards those subjects. With the responsibility of my education off of their shoulders once I "graduated," I was then "free" to fully dedicate my time to the raising, care, and education of my siblings and the maintenance of the house.

Because I was born with a uterus to a family that believed in strict gender roles and "traditional family values", my educational path was incredibly limited from the start. If my parents had been unable to write off the validity and necessity of subjects based on theology or gender, if it had been harder for my parents to circumvent the rules, if I had been required to have an evaluation done by a teacher unrelated to my family, I think I would have had a better chance at a decent

and well rounded education that prepared me for an open future instead of prohibiting me from becoming a self-sufficient adult

Signed,
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