

My parents began homeschooling me in August of 1980, right before I turned 5 years old. Homeschooling was coincidentally legalized in Louisiana – the state we lived in – that very month, but my parents already intended to homeschool me and my 19 months older brother who had been in a private academy for 1 year.

Until my 10th grade year, my parents used a variety of conservative Christian curriculums to homeschool me. I didn't receive a challenging education: when I progressed in my studies faster than expected, my parents made me re-do full school-years worth of material.

In 10th grade, however, something happened. I noticed my textbooks had greatly decreased, and asked my parents where they were. I had intended to take trigonometry, geometry, chemistry, and more.

My father explained that Jesus does not want women knowing any more math and science than they need to be keepers at home and told me that I was exclusively going to concentrate on learning childcare, cooking, and cleaning.

So I cooked. I cleaned. I cared for my youngest brother. I ran myself ragged doing the laundry, the dishes, the meals. During this time, my parents faked the educational portfolio required by the state of Maine.

From 10th grade until my parents doctored a diploma, I received no education, beyond occasionally reading grammar textbooks or newspaper Weekly Reader supplements.

I "graduated" in 1993, at the age of 16, having gone through 11th grade only, with the last 2 being basically non-existent. My parents proudly handed me a diploma in front of the group gathered to watch the 7 members of the 'first ever homeschool graduating class in the state of Maine.'

Even if I could have gotten into university, my parents forbade it. I married at 20, and left my parent's home for the first time.

I am 48. I am completely self-educated, thanks to access to public libraries. And I am also angry – angered at my reduced education, and angered at the entire system that enabled my parents to neglect me in that fashion.

Signed,  
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