
Subject: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Thu, 13 Jan 2011 17:51:00 GMT

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Share your stories. When and how did you become a Christian/atheist/agnostic/whatever you consider yourself to be? What made you think so?

I'll start. My story is quite similar to the Hitch's; he says that for him it wasn't a case of becoming an atheist so much as realising he is an atheist. That's how it was for me. Neither of my parents are religious and they let me and my brother and sister make our own minds up (this is mainly because my father's parents were fundamentalist Christians who imposed a strict religious upbringing upon him and my aunt, and they found it absolutely miserable and resolved to do better with us). As for school, I live in a Christian country where Christianity is taught to the kids as though it were fact; i.e. the dumb bible myths are taught with the same certainty as what we're told in geography and maths. And there was no point at which the teacher said "there's no evidence for any of this" or "there are other religions out there too" or, most importantly, "you can just live your life without any of this crap". Also, daily prayer was compulsory.

But I never believed any of this. For some reason it just didn't click, and in the daily prayer at school we just bowed our heads and waited for the headmaster to get it over with. But I never considered myself an atheist; I'd never even heard the word before, and it didn't occur to me to ask "what's the word for someone who doesn't believe in this religious stuff?"

Later on, I was watching comedy on TV. My fellow Englishmen will know Jasper Carrott. Anyone remember that series where he was on trial? I only remember one thing about it - I must've been 14 or 15 at the time - but the prosecutor says about Jasper, in an accusing tone of voice, that he's an 'atheist'. I'd never heard the word before. I was a bright kid and was good with language, but this word was new to me. I went and asked my dad what the word meant, he told me, and I wondered why I'd never been told about this before. How strange that my school had tried to pump one particular religion into me without telling me about the option of atheism, it seemed.

Of course, at the time only one religion had been shown to me. I knew nothing at all about, say, Islam. Since then, my opinion of Christianity has gone very far downhill, and no other religion I've yet come across has struck me as either true or desirable. Still, the concept of freedom of religion (or as I prefer to phrase it, freedom of thought) is extremely important to me, and I'll insist upon it for people of any religion so long as it's there for me too. That's why I'm a harsh critic of the concept of hell, for example.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Herr Surth](#) on Thu, 13 Jan 2011 17:56:38 GMT

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i told my teacher in 4th grade that "god is an asshole", end of story.

there's no point in debating with theists, stopped a few years ago

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Thu, 13 Jan 2011 19:21:23 GMT

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My History teacher asked a student what religion she followed and she said "agnostic."

I was like "why didn't I think of that?!"

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [reborn](#) on Fri, 14 Jan 2011 12:09:24 GMT

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I don't know what I am. I've read the old testament, the new testament, the Quran and had some teachings of Lamrim.

My Grandmother on my Mother's side was Christian and read the bible almost daily I think.

My Grandfather on my father's side was a spiritualist, and so was his brother. Their beliefs had a clear effect on my father's family as his 4 sisters and 3 brothers all to varying degrees believe in similar aspects of spiritualism, although some are more into trance mediumship/physical/clairvoyance/healing/absent healing etc etc.

My father is a Spiritualist and goes to Church (Spiritualist Church) Twice a week. He meditates daily for approx 45 minutes, and has done for all of my life. He has also participated in a circle for physical mediumship, as well as hosted events for trance mediumship (although the preferred term is altered state, not trance) and clairvoyance.

My mother was interested in spiritualism before she met my father and they never mentioned it to each other for some time, for fear of being thought badly of. She is nowhere near as hardcore as my Dad, but she is a loving woman and knows it makes him happy, so she forgives the time he dedicates to it.

I participated in a closed circle for 2 years, Once a week. When I was younger, I irregularly went to Church to see the demonstrations mid-week, this went on for about 5 years.

I have participated out of curiosity in some of the events my father hosted, as well as some we was both invited to. I have seen transfiguration mediums such as Dianne Elliott (no relation), trance mediums such as Mark Webb and many other people practicing different aspects of mediumship. I have been to Stansted house and had readings from tutors.

I've also been on several retreats where the aim is to develop your own clairvoyance, trance and physical mediumship.

Not so much anymore, as time is always my enemy, but I used to meditate a couple of times a week, using single pointed meditation techniques and also contemplative techniques.

Some of the things I have seen have made me cringe with awkwardness, and ashamed to be in the same room with them. The sort of thing you might watch on television like "most haunted" or Derek Acorah, really pitiful stuff.

However, I've also seen with my own eyes some things that I will always remember and believe to be genuine evidence of life after death.

However, the Church I used to go to and the One my Father still goes to reads from the Christian

Bible (Spiritualism is a form of Christianity, although Christians would heartily deny this and claim any spiritualist to be a devil worshipper).

I honestly do not know the true and exact principles and beliefs of Spiritualism, despite having so much involvement in it in years past. To me the bible is and was ridiculous, I was only ever interested in the demonstrations and personal development. The idea being that comfort could be given to people that have lost people close to them. They are not really gone, they are close to you and here is the proof.

I could not class myself as a Spiritualist, and despite the Bhuddist meditation and principles that I hold dear I could not claim to be a Bhuddist either. Somewhere in the middle might be appropriate.

However, it's been some years since I was involved in any of this stuff and have resolved myself to this:

I believe that life does exist after death. However, the pursuit of this evidence is a life time full of wasted time. The journey is full of fraudsters and too few genuine people. It's interesting, but I will likely not ever dedicate time to it again.

If the experiances that I have had and know to be real turn out to be tricks (either my own mind or someone else conjuring) then I will still die a happy man. I am happy to wait and find out for sure what, if anything is on the other side.

In the mean time, I am happy to try and be a good person (being a good person generally in turn makes me happy in some way or another). If I die and there turns out to be a heaven, another plane of existance or anything else, then I hope that being a good person is enough to get me on the guest list. If it isn't, then I have few regrets, and if there's someone that demands more than being a good person to get in, well, they can go fuck themselves.

I cannot put an exact date on this transition, probably around the age of 23 - Present, but it's likely the position I will hold till I die.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Dover](#) on Fri, 14 Jan 2011 13:20:16 GMT

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I never have believed that anybody alive could possibly answer life's great questions (The ones most religions attempt to answer) with any degree certainty. Later in my life, I found out they had a word for people like me.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Herr Surth](#) on Fri, 14 Jan 2011 13:21:36 GMT

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was the word daffodil?

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Starbuzz](#) on Sun, 16 Jan 2011 05:02:40 GMT

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I was born, raised, and lived the first 8 years of my life in a remote town in south India. These were the most precious untainted era of my childhood because it was a time before the religious lessons started. The family is extremely conservative super-disciplinarian Christians. And despite the rampant poverty surrounding me, I was purely fortunate to be born into such a very affordable family: very big house, colour TV, best food, best clothing, expensive imported toys.

So I should have been a spoiled brat...but I am happy today that it didn't work out that way cos I guess greed wasn't in my genes. I just loved the world around me too much. It was this curiosity factor, the "nature gene" that kept me going. The most expensive toy planes I had couldn't compare to watching a long line of black ants marching in the lawn carrying food particles. I was fascinated by life. I watched the birds and thought they too were like humans "that they fell in love and married, and that's why many of them are flying in pairs!"

There was a lot of children in the home; Indian families are huge and all live together. But while the rest of my cousins were usually busy doing something inside, I was most of the time outside in the terrace or in the lawn chasing cats, buring paper with a magnifying glass using the Sun light, watching the clouds (I would just stand there for literally hours watching the shapes change), watch the distant palm treelines shake in the wind, collecting smooth stones, trapping ants inside a few of my toy planes and giving them a "ride" (Imfao!), catching dragonflies looking at them and releasing them, and one of the most enjoyable: watching the stars at night while I lay on the cool terrace floor (it was pure bliss). But the really best part were the monsoon storms! Total darkness without light; the white sillhoutte of the house will stand out ghostly in the dark night with scary rains and floods all around. It would be a moment of pure terror...but I enjoyed the adrenaline rush a lot!

While most folks here grew without having exposure to other religions, I had plenty. Growing up in India, the main religion is Hinduism. I must admit that before I enjoyed watching insects, I loved killing them. All that changed when I was at the neighbour's house one day. He was Hindu and right in front of him, I crushed a tiny black butterfly. He became so upset (not angry) and he asked me, "why did you have to kill that? what did it do to you?!" I was shocked. I was never told by my Christian family not to kill insects (cos abraham's god obviously allowed humans to have dominion, pfft). But that was the lesson I learned from a Hindu person.

I quickly learned not to hurt anything that moved...but only that they must be admired and taken care for in need. So there was no need to kill at all. The seeds of compassion to life were sown in me by, not a Christian, but by a Hindu!

I only say all this because it is such a mental foundation as this that got the "atheist gene" planted in me that would manifest itself later.

So now here comes the really REALLY wicked part: so how exactly do we take a kid such as above with a brilliant intellectual curiosity (I claim nothing more of myself but that I was way too curious about nature than the rest of the kids in my house) and reduce him to a mere fearful slave? Someone who will be scared of a force allegedly watching him all the time, constantly monitoring, punishing, and judging? Why, religion of course. A religion that has crippled many

people on the intellectual level by brutally crushing promising young minds into life-long slavery. I still feel extremely resentful about the religion taking a huge chunk of my life wasting it away with dogma.

And so the usual indoctrination process began in church. I already said this before: bible readings, a "reenactment" movie of hell, verse memorizations, crayon colouring of bible scenes...indoctrination pure and simple in every shape and form. And so I "became" a Christian...or to be more accurate, I was "moulded" into a Christian thru religious education. That will be right term really considering I had no other powers of reason to resist; I was only a child. Religion's conquest of my young promising mind was complete.

And so as I grew as a Christian, everything I yearned to know about before religion was swept away and I lost interest. After all, "God" made the ants, dragonflies, clouds, trees, thunder, lighting and rain. Why should I care, right? "God" is more important and we have to see "Him" everywhere (a judge to be respected and loved). "God" is love...those who accept him will reach him, those who don't will go to hell. Those who are different (in other religious) are unlucky at birth and after being told the Gospel and if they still reject it, hell awaits them. As a child I saw no problem with this, nobody told me there was something as torture and this was totally unfair. Hell was just control thru fear. I got the same lessons that Christian children no matter where they were on the planet, got.

As usual, I brought my A-game. Finished reading the Bible cover to cover by 12 and at that age could even preach. I would stand alone in the living room couch and preach to an empty room pulling verses left and right from all parts of the Bible! By 15, I made it known I could go as a minister. My overjoyed parents told this to the church and the in front of all the congregation, I was called up and told "here is a young man for God" and given a book that was entirely about the principles of the Baptist denomination (it was a Baptist church). But by 18, I lost interest in preaching and organized church attendance was a routine chore I just had to do. It was around this time that I began to go lonewolf with religion; the spiral down to a radical intolerant hateful zealot didn't take too long after that.

But by the time I was in my late 20th year, I was getting sick of Big Brother. The first signs of rebellion showed up then. I TRULY mean it when I say it. I just wanted to wake up, enjoy the sunshine, and go about my day. I didn't want to wake and speak out some words to Big Brother above or feel guilty about not doing so. I was growing sick of him and my slavery to him. I asked myself: who is this being that I have to answer to? What has he done? Is he even listening? Is he is just in my head?

It is EXACTLY akin to growing up in a country where your people are under enemy occupation. When you are a child, it really didn't matter. You even played ball with the enemy soldiers! Since you were a child, you didn't realize these pricks were in your land using force and intimidation. But when you grow up and wisen up, when the sacred thoughts of sovereignty and identity develop, you realize your destiny to free your people! The power of reason awakens...you don't wanna play ball anymore with the enemy...you want to kick their asses.

This was EXACTLY what happened to me in relation to leaving religion for good. Except here, my OWN mind was the territory illegally occupied by Big Brother. As I said before, this didn't matter when I was a child. But it sure did when I grew up. So the war was on and the first rumblings of

battle over my OWN mind's sovereignty began.

And that was exactly when the blocks started to fall back into place. All my previous blissful Big-Brother-free childhood experiences came back to me. I didn't want to look at the sky and see a colossal prick to who I was permanently enslaved to, I wanted to look up at the sky and enjoy watching the clouds again. I want to watch the birds again and enjoy their collective little social structures...so remarkably similar to our own. I wanted to enjoy storms once again! I wanted to stand outside in the heavy pouring rain and feel like a kid again. I was sick of Big Brother and his lies and false promises and the extreme miserable false guilt and fear that came upon me whenever I "disobeyed" him. Show yourself!

It wasn't easy at all. As right in the middle of it all, I got fearful of hell and went back to being a radical zealot. I had every reasoning power to connect the dots but couldn't. I needed help. I am glad this setback happened though as that basically set me up with an awesome life-changing collision course with a person called Spoony. Slowly and systemically, he reasoned with me...I disliked him greatly but never hateful. Just frustrated that he was tearing me down while all the time, he was only helping me. After almost a year, I just connected the dots. If it weren't for him to help me out and if it weren't for my curious answer-seeking background (which kept me curiously challenging him), I would still have been stuck. After my mom and sister, there is Spoony. I feel extremely fortunate to know him; I love the humanity! And to make a long story short, I finally became atheist sometime in May 2009. I just woke up at around 3 AM and the thought just came to me; the dots were all connected and I said, "holy crap, hell is not real!" The entire religion came crashing down.

Since then, a horde of seminary educated evangelists were brought in by my family to "fix" me; they have all repeated the same rubbish over and over again. For example, to my questioning of how other religions originated, one of em replied in a serious tone "you do know that the fallen angels made the other religions, right?" I couldn't believe such feeble attempts to convince me back.

I won the battle over my mind and drove away the occupied enemy forces from it thanks to a timely intervention by a vastly superior allied force (Spoony!). My land (mind) was free and I realized true intellectual freedom. The enemy was driven away and Big Brother has disappeared like the morning mist as it meets the rising Sun. Amazing how another caring human being from a internet forum is able to touch another person's life in such a great way. The debates, no matter where they are, the important part is the exchange and discussion of ideas. I feel I owe so great a debt I can never repay to him.

Despite "problems" with family, I am a very very happy person now. I am in love with life and nature. I am the 8 year old Starbuzz once again. I am just happy to be alive and enjoying every moment. I see myself like this for good.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Muad Dib15](#) on Sun, 16 Jan 2011 05:35:28 GMT

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Dude half the problem is that you were a baptist. From what I have seen, Baptists are quite

possibly Hands down the MOST Zealous denomination of Christianity as a whole. I can totally see where you are coming from as someone like you was overpowered by Christianity almost as much as a "fundamentalist of Islam". I've had some of them try to convert me. They are extremely pushy about getting their points across and generally use rhetoric to get you. You never really had a chance. I have been "saved" because I'm a Catholic and therefore was going to hell until they "saved" me. Sure....

That being said, that is no reason to RAGE against every single Christian on here like they are the same way. I try not to push the fact that I'm a Catholic on anyone because then I would be intruding on their right to their own religion or lack of.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Sun, 16 Jan 2011 05:53:33 GMT

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if people only read one post on this entire forum, read starbuzzz's.

if there's such a thing as 'spirituality' (and the word is a little too vague for me to confidently say that there is, but as a musician some part of me wants to say hell yes there is and some other part of me thinks it's being irrational) then there's more of it in the first three paragraphs than in the bible and qur'an put together.

but i must be honest about something. you described me as "caring" in the context of the earlier religious debates; i can't pretend it ever occurred to me that you were a victim.

and the last line where you say you're happier than ever has lifted a certain feeling of guilt that's been nagging at me for a while. i've wondered if you'd be happier if you stayed with the mental oppression... maybe, but i'm glad you said otherwise.

i especially liked the line about the monsoon storms. that struck a nerve with me. my favourite spot where i sometimes like to go to just be alone and think is on top of a hill a few miles away. there's a church up there, which may strike people as odd - but it's a case of them building a church there because it's a beautiful spot rather than it being a nice spot because there's a church there. anyway, i don't know why, but it's at its most beautiful when it's raining.

Quote:I try not to push the fact that I'm a Catholic on anyone because then I would be intruding on their right to their own religion or lack of.

i may not be following your meaning of "pushing the fact i'm a catholic". if you just mean evangelising, then no you wouldn't be intruding on anyone else's rights unless it's to a child. if it's to an adult who's free to leave or not listen, it's an entirely different matter.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Starbuzzz](#) on Sun, 16 Jan 2011 05:56:12 GMT

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@ Muad:

I could have been any denomination and I would have still become atheist anyway. Did you read what I said!

torture threats, unfairness, injustice, a murderous intrusive god, Big Brother...the religion itself is flawed. It's the same deal with every denomination. Why not say this than to take a stab at rival denominations (who were only being God's zealous servants) you oppose!

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Starbuzz](#) on Sun, 16 Jan 2011 07:18:52 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Sat, 15 January 2011 23:53if there's such a thing as 'spirituality' (and the word is a little too vague for me to confidently say that there is, but as a musician some part of me wants to say hell yes there is and some other part of me thinks it's being irrational) then there's more of it in the first three paragraphs than in the bible and qur'an put together.

wow

I sure think that "spirituality" could be a good word to use only since it gives a good reason to be happy (atleast to me) when we are observing nature. I think early humans were like this as well; so inspired by the grandeur of nature they even worshipped the elements. They were more spiritual than the false sense of "spirituality" (worshipping the dictator non-stop with zealously) we see theists do all the time today.

So we maybe going back to that early true form of spirituality. I think more people would be "spiritual" this way. A state of being where all artifical joys from materialism vanishes but we are filled with pure joy upon seeing and reflecting upon the splendor of the world and the universe we live in.

Christians see this as "worshipping the creation rather than the creator." Then again, they say a lot of things!

Spoony wrote on Sat, 15 January 2011 23:53but i must be honest about something. you described me as "caring" in the context of the earlier religious debates; i can't pretend it ever occurred to me that you were a victim.

yes, in hindsight, it seems caring. You were defending your position and ended up uprooting my beliefs in the process!

Spoony wrote on Sat, 15 January 2011 23:53and the last line where you say you're happier than ever has lifted a certain feeling of guilt that's been nagging at me for a while. i've wondered if you'd be happier if you stayed with the mental oppression... maybe, but i'm glad you said otherwise.

glad I said it then. Honestly, it was very difficult at first due to the family's nasty response. Even

now, my family is the only thorn (as in the situation that made me create the human rights thread last month). But I have kinda learned to deal with it.

I am absolutely happy though; no regrets whatsoever. If we hadn't ever "met" I would still be stuck in a miserable state with all my questions and struggles regardless of what my family would think. So it was all for the good.

Spoony wrote on Sat, 15 January 2011 23:53i especially liked the line about the monsoon storms. that struck a nerve with me. my favourite spot where i sometimes like to go to just be alone and think is on top of a hill a few miles away. there's a church up there, which may strike people as odd - but it's a case of them building a church there because it's a beautiful spot rather than it being a nice spot because there's a church there. anyway, i don't know why, but it's at its most beautiful when it's raining.

thanks for sharing. wow. glad to know you too enjoy such scenery when it presents itself!

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?
Posted by [InternetThug](#) on Sun, 16 Jan 2011 07:34:47 GMT
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anyone else think its kinda weird reading all these posts about starbuzz and spoony suckin each other off all the time?

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?
Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Sun, 16 Jan 2011 17:25:28 GMT
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M0FiR3 wrote on Sun, 16 January 2011 02:34anyone else think its kinda weird reading all these posts about starbuzz and spoony suckin each other off all the time?
No. It's like gay porn. And, just like gay porn, you have the option to not read them. Queer.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?
Posted by [GEORGE ZIMMER](#) on Mon, 17 Jan 2011 00:09:00 GMT
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I woke up one morning and realized my dick was too massive for any god to have created and not be jealous of.

I don't really associate with any religion, I take lessons and bits from every single one rather than being spiteful and hateful.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Crimson](#) on Mon, 17 Jan 2011 05:32:47 GMT

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My dad was raised a Catholic and my mom was raised either Catholic or Christian (I'm not sure which, but she's a Christian now). However, for some reason we didn't attend church regularly and at some point when I was probably around 10-12 years old, I started to think that this whole "God" thing seemed not so dissimilar to "Santa Claus"... he knows if you've been bad or good and gives you presents or coal. Sounded all too familiar.

Then I came across a pamphlet of my dad's for some Atheist group. I think my dad only went through a several-year period of being an Atheist and is once again religious, but seeing that pamphlet made me realize I wasn't the only one who thought that way and that there was a name for what I was believing (or not believing). I believed in the Christian "God" while I was young because I didn't know there was any other option but as I got older, without the constant brainwashing of weekly church sessions, I was able to have an open mind and come up with my own thoughts.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Nukelt15](#) on Mon, 17 Jan 2011 08:40:35 GMT

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I consider my beliefs to be an ongoing process.

I grew up in a very relaxed household, but because most of my extended family and many of my friends were Christians, I thought that was what I should be too. Nobody ever pressured me into anything, but I wasn't actively encouraged to seek my own beliefs either. Somewhere during middle school I had a crisis of faith... though it would probably be more accurate to say that I realized a little at a time that I hadn't had any faith to begin with. The more I thought about it, the less the idea of God made sense. After all, if God made all of existence, then who made God? God could not have created himself, so if God existed then his existence must have been caused by something or someone else- and he was therefore not God. I started to find the very idea of worshiping a being who (if he existed at all) was not the ultimate source of anything, to be somewhat offensive.

At that point, the only label I knew of that described a person who doesn't believe in God was 'atheist,' so that's what I identified as for a long time. However, 'atheist' wasn't quite adequate- while technically true, people tend to make certain assumptions regarding one's other beliefs when the word 'atheist' is spoken. I don't believe in God, but I do believe that death is not absolute and that living things do have what some prefer to call a soul. I've stopped calling myself an atheist, because the label comes with too many misconceptions. I usually drop 'agnostic' in conversation now, at least when I'd rather not have to make lengthy explanations- although it's no more accurate a term, it is generally accepted as the "it's complicated" option and is thus useful for brushing off unwanted questions.

A while ago, I started privately calling myself an 'infinetist.' I believe that there was never an absolute beginning, that there never will be an absolute end, that the only constant in existence is change, that death is not the end of life but rather a changing of its form akin to the relationship

between matter and energy. I believe that conscious beings such as humans (though I would certainly not consider humans to be unique in this regard) do have what might be called a soul, which exists at least in part outside our present ability to perceive or detect its existence. I believe that good and evil are not absolute in the nature of things; good and evil are merely possible decisions that can be made. I believe that science will one day unlock the mystery of life and death, though I don't pretend to know what we'll find when that day comes. I believe that we and all that we know are not the result of a God's whim, but rather that we are just one of an infinite number of possibilities that came to pass, and that infinite others exist in the vastness of space and time.

I temper my beliefs with known science; if I find that something I believe contradicts known, observable facts, then I change what I believe. Truth is absolute; only our understanding of it changes. We should have faith in the unknown because it will someday be known, not because it is unknowable. We should have the courage as a species to admit when we do not know the answer, but we should also have the courage to say what we think the answer might be even if we don't have enough evidence to prove it.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [wubwub](#) on Mon, 17 Jan 2011 22:22:34 GMT

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EDIT: wrong topic.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Muad Dib15](#) on Tue, 18 Jan 2011 06:30:41 GMT

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Starbuzz wrote on Sat, 15 January 2011 23:56@ Muad:

I could have been any denomination and I would have still become atheist anyway. Did you read what I said!

torture threats, unfairness, injustice, a murderous intrusive god, Big Brother...the religion itself is flawed. It's the same deal with every denomination. Why not say this than to take a stab at rival denominations (who were only being God's zealous servants) you oppose!

Yeah I read it but I get the impression, and this is from my own experience with Baptists in the Meno falls baptist church and some of my parents baptists friends. If your parents are anything like them, then they were hard line "if you aren't saved you are going to hell, we must convert everyone with our zealousness of our righteousness." That alone turned me off completely from anything they said after that as it is an extremely hard line and unyielding take on that religion. That is the basis of Baptist beliefs and I think that part of you rebelled against that which made you question everything. It may not have been everything, but it might have been the pebble that helped start the avalanche.

I only act like that toward Baptists as they are the only ones that don't really seem to care about your religious beliefs and will preach at you until you are uncomfortable with them which was the deal in my case.

In my family, we are all catholics however since about 4th grade we've kinda taken a relaxed attitude toward the whole thing. It's like a mutual acknowledgment. Or at least it is for me. I try to be a good person not because of hell and torture but because it is the way to live without causing anyone grief, and I don't feel like he's Big Brother, it's more like a father figure that just kinda watches over you and helps you along if you want it (his help).

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Tue, 18 Jan 2011 10:08:18 GMT

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do you think hell is real, muad'dib?

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Starbuzzz](#) on Tue, 18 Jan 2011 12:56:24 GMT

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@ Muad:

You said I never had a chance. If "having a chance" means being born into a denomination that tells you a filtered down modernized version of Christianity (which you seem to be hinting at) then I agree with you.

Plus you generalize all Baptists as being rude. The folks at the Baptist church I went to were quiet nice. My parents, especially my dad, was the worse of them all. I know what you are gonna do now; shift the blame for me becoming a atheist on my dad! I already said that no matter what denomination I would have been born into, I would eventually have realized how unfair the entire religion is. I hear this same strawman argument in other forums where I have shared my story; Christians start to defend themselves saying "it was your environment! the religion is fine!" Seriously?

I simply could not be part of a religion that makes someone believe that if they die in the wrong religion, they will burn in hell for eternity. This is why I can never be a Christian again because I have to become a bigot first. Any religion that uses plain threats to keep its believers in check was bound to fail one day.

Also most importantly, no matter what denomination you were born into, every young indoctrinated Christian is NOT told about the murders and genocides in the Bible in the way it should be. Christians grow up thinking it is OK for their god to kill without mercy. The only destruction story they ever knew was Sodom and Gommorrah and the flood. Most of them don't even understand how it would have felt in those ancient times to be at the sword's end of an invading Israeli tribe acting on orders from their god to kill all the men and married women in your

town along with children while taking the unmarried women away as sex slaves.

You are never gonna understand all this, Muad. Your denomination (including mine!) told us a filtered down version of Christianity that ignored the rampant barbarism in the Bible under the pretenses of "The OT is voided by the NT."

Until you can tell me how a god that did all this can be worshipped (wow) plus how he uses a burning lake of fire for those who don't worship him, you are not going to be converting anyone anytime soon. This was the pebble that started the avalanche!

You said my former god (and yours now) is like a father figure that helps us and watches over us. You think I did not feel the same way too? Again, read my main post (especially the occupied country analogy) clearly. Till recently, I loved god and worshipped him. I felt the exact same way cos that is what I had been told. It is only when I found out the parts about him they never objectively told me about did I began to realize who he really was and what this religion was truly saying.

Sadly, most Christians don't realize this. It is how the church indoctrination works, the right term is called "selective morality." Picking and choosing the good parts while rejecting and hiding the bad ones that will give the religion a bad name; then they come and tell others who see thru this by saying, "you never really had a chance."

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Tue, 18 Jan 2011 21:05:53 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Tue, 18 January 2011 05:08do you think hell is real, muad'dib?
I DO! I even found hell's own official website!

Check it out:

<http://www.eternal-flames.org/>

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Tunaman](#) on Tue, 18 Jan 2011 23:39:18 GMT

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Starbuzzz wrote on Tue, 18 January 2011 07:56@ Muad:

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I'm fairly sure that he was not saying you becoming an atheist was a bad thing; your hostility towards his religion(that he does not seem to actually have faith in) is kind of skewing your interpretation of his post. When he says, "You never had a chance," he is referring to how someone doesn't ever have a chance to reason when they come up against someone that is as pushy as the baptists he has had experience with. If you put that sentence back into context, it makes more sense.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Starbuzz](#) on Wed, 19 Jan 2011 01:22:46 GMT

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Correct, I hear you and it makes perfect sense for his first post. It seems to mean a lot more than that considering his second follow-up post: he basically says that perhaps only because of the way the religion was presented by the pushy people around me, I rebelled against it and began asking questions! Meaning if the religion was not presented by pushy people, I would perhaps never have rebelled and would never have questioned it. Of course, so in my post above, I was merely responding to why exactly that wasn't the case.

Again, I am not being hostile, just being objective. My point is that regardless of how the religion is presented whether by pushy Baptists or some other nicely soft-spoken sugar-coating denominations, the rotting core of it is a extremely poor source of morals.

edit:

You only need to take the Bible stories itself as lessons to learn from. The more Pharoah was punished with with pointless plagues, the harder his heart became. The religion essentially threatens everyone with hell fire for non-compliance! How can anyone expect non-pushy soft-spoken people to be more successful in converting adults to buy in to it? Not going to happen. That's my whole point. Beneath all the modernist Christian cover story of the god being a "father figure" and how he is a "loving god" and an "awesome god," lies the dark reality that nice smiling non-pushy Christians will never tell you (if they even know in the first place, sadly).

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Tunaman](#) on Wed, 19 Jan 2011 07:48:47 GMT

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Yeah, I believe you there. It mostly isn't the people that were hurting you and causing you to rebel by being pushy(although they may have), it is more of the idea of religion that has also taken hold of these people's minds. This idea keeps your mind captive and fearful. That's one reason that causes many people to follow religions even after they have doubts.

I'm kind of unsure about how this awful idea developed, and I wonder if some day we will move past it.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [nikki6ixx](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 03:09:11 GMT

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I believe religion explains how we came to be, at its core. But then it has been twisted, and used to control, when in reality, I think it should liberate us, and instill a unifying commonality amongst humanity.

Many creation stories, ranging from aboriginal to Abrahamic share so many similarities, that I am inclined to think there is a supreme being or creator out there. Once interstellar is perfected, I'm

sure we'll find 'God,' or perhaps, 'God' is when humanity finally finds itself.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 03:59:45 GMT

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Religion was used to bring hope where there previously was none. That is what helped a lot of people get through tough times in the past. In the face of peril, they still had something to bring them hope.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [GEORGE ZIMMER](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 14:43:35 GMT

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R315r4z0r wrote on Wed, 19 January 2011 21:59 Religion was used to bring hope where there previously was none. That is what helped a lot of people get through tough times in the past. In the face of peril, they still had something to bring them hope. because animals are depressed not knowing where they came from, right?

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 17:28:02 GMT

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Not necessarily where they came from but rather where they go when they die.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 17:37:24 GMT

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animals don't really know they're going to die.

the idea of being judged by a god after death certainly doesn't seem a hopeful idea to me, especially given the absolutely monstrous depiction of that god in both the bible and the quran.

Quote:I believe religion explains how we came to be, at its core. But then it has been twisted, and used to control, when in reality, I think it should liberate us, and instill a unifying commonality amongst humanity.

What do you mean by "at its core"?

and may i suggest a simple thought experiment. whenever you find yourself making a statement like this, or reading one, swap the word "religion" for any of the following

Scientology
Wahhabi Islam
the Westboro Baptist Church
the worship of the Emperor Hirohito
the personality cult of Kim Jong-Il

and see if it still sounds the same

Quote:Many creation stories, ranging from aboriginal to Abrahamic share so many similarities, that I am inclined to think there is a supreme being or creator out there.
and the idea that the idiots who wrote those demented babblings actually discerned something supernatural makes more sense than that they - to throw another possibility out there - plagiarised?

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Omar007](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 17:46:59 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Thu, 20 January 2011 18:37animals don't really know they're going to die.

...

They do. IE; Cats tend to crawl away to a lonely spot to die.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 17:52:34 GMT

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only when they're dying. not when they're well, unthreatened and a long way away from the end of their natural lifespan.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Herr Surth](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 18:07:30 GMT

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<http://www.theonion.com/video/scientists-successfully-teach-gorilla-it-will-die, 17165/>

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 18:32:30 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Thu, 20 January 2011 12:37animals don't really know they're going to die.

the idea of being judged by a god after death certainly doesn't seem a hopeful idea to me, especially given the absolutely monstrous depiction of that god in both the bible and the quran. Well, humans are animals and they know all too well that they will one day eventually die.

But as I said, religion only really started as a way to bring people hope when there really wasn't anything.

Since then it has grown into this large grotesque book of rules and magic and violence.

It's long served it's purpose and continuing it is only damning humanity to itself.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [nikki6ixx](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 19:32:04 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Thu, 20 January 2011 18:37

Quotel believe religion explains how we came to be, at its core. But then it has been twisted, and used to control, when in reality, I think it should liberate us, and instill a unifying commonality amongst humanity.

What do you mean by "at its core"?

At its core, religion teaches us that all humans are children of one creator, be it the Abrahamic 'God' or the Haida's 'Raven.'

War, poverty, and all the evils of the world would likely not be the problems they are today if humans believed we were all the same.

Unfortunately, because the 'word of God' has been twisted by people who used it to serve their own selfish purposes, which has only lead to war, and greater poverty.

Spoony wrote on Thu, 20 January 2011 18:37

and may i suggest a simple thought experiment. whenever you find yourself making a statement like this, or reading one, swap the word "religion" for any of the following

Scientology

Wahhabi Islam

the Westboro Baptist Church

the worship of the Emperor Hirohito

the personality cult of Kim Jong-Il

and see if it still sounds the same

Which is why I said in my first post, and just above that the word of 'God' has been twisted to suit the purposes of individuals.

I'm only approaching the subject from a pragmatic point of view. People want to know where they came from; however, being humans, they simply cannot rationalize that they originated from a

single-celled bacteria in a scummy pond, because that explanation is not fantastical enough. Humans think they're totally 'hot shit.' Perhaps it's just self-fulfillment, although aboriginal religions do place equal weight on humans, and their surroundings.

My take on the creation story is that humans then, and still today are not mature enough to realize that our 'creator' was either through chance events, or some kind of extra-terrestrial being.

Hence why I'm slightly religious or spiritual. I think there was some sort of alien component, and seeing as our planetary backyard is only a microcosm of 'space,' I cannot rule out that possibility as that'd be foolish. Maybe I am a victim of that self-fulfillment prophecy too.

Quote:

Quote:Many creation stories, ranging from aboriginal to Abrahamic share so many similarities, that I am inclined to think there is a supreme being or creator out there. and the idea that the idiots who wrote those demented babblings actually discerned something supernatural makes more sense than that they - to throw another possibility out there - plagiarised?

It's entirely possible, and the likely answer.

But it's also amazing that such a story could weather tens of thousands of years of migrations out of Africa, and into Europe, Asia, and then the America's. This is why I'm fascinated with this aspect of religion because even if it was all made up, it has carried with us up until this day. That says something about humanity, for better or for worse.

Like I said previously, 'God' may very well be when 'humanity' finally matures and finds itself.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Thu, 20 Jan 2011 20:27:45 GMT

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nikki6ixx wrote on Thu, 20 January 2011 13:32At its core, religion teaches us that all humans are children of one creator, be it the Abrahamic 'God' or the Haida's 'Raven.'

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oh yeah? which religion? the bible and the quran contain a great deal of hate speech and warrants for violence. these aren't put there by the bin ladens of this world; they're right there in the holy books.

Quote:Spoony wrote on Thu, 20 January 2011 18:37

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Scientology
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Which is why I said in my first post, and just above that the word of 'God' has been twisted to suit the purposes of individuals.

oh dear. check the five examples i mentioned.

scientology - the original founder L. Ron Hubbard very obviously was a conman. it's plainly a racket and was originally meant to be.

wahhabi islam (the saudi arabian strain) - of all the islamic denominations, this one is pretty much the closest interpretation to the quran and hadith. if you wanted to make a list of all islamic sects in order of how much they've "twisted" the original "word of Allah", this one would probably be most innocent of the charge.

westboro baptist church - their beliefs, absolutely despicable as they are, are firmly rooted in the bible. read the old testament; god is very quick to slaughter innocent bystanders on a whim, often because someone nearby was "sinning" - and it certainly defines homosexuality as a sin.

cult of emperor hirohito - well, the emperor claimed to be a god, literally, so you can't really say this is twisting the word of god... similar deal for kim jong-il and kim il-sung. it's officially claimed that they're divine beings.

Quote:Quote:Many creation stories, ranging from aboriginal to Abrahamic share so many similarities, that I am inclined to think there is a supreme being or creator out there. and the idea that the idiots who wrote those demented babblings actually discerned something supernatural makes more sense than that they - to throw another possibility out there - plagiarised?

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if you remember the despicable way most religions propagate - by targeting the unformed minds of children and by threatening non-believers with extravagantly violent punishments - the mystery vanishes.

and we're not talking about a story surviving all this time; look how many times the major religions have schismed in the last few centuries.

Quote:Like I said previously, 'God' may very well be when 'humanity' finally matures and finds itself.

i'm not sure why you would call such a process 'god'.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Tunaman](#) on Fri, 21 Jan 2011 03:06:56 GMT

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I don't think that he's saying that they twisted that religion, just that they have twisted what he believes the true reason of these religions are(explaining where we come from).

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Fri, 21 Jan 2011 18:57:34 GMT

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and where we go after death.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [HaTe](#) on Sat, 22 Jan 2011 01:35:07 GMT

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If there truly is a god....I dare anyone to tell me why he's letting people quite obviously destroy the earth at a spiraling rate (compared to that of other animals and their timelines). Seriously though, I'm not religious at all, so don't give me any bullshit from the bible, just give it to me straight up in modern english....why is this?

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Sat, 22 Jan 2011 02:55:18 GMT

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Have you ever stopped to consider violence between tiny insects?

If there is a God, he isn't our friend. He just set us up and is enjoying watching us crawl around trying to survive and mature.

It's like gathering a bunch of bugs in a pile, pouring dirt on them and then watching to see if they can dig themselves out.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Dethdeath](#) on Sat, 22 Jan 2011 04:54:57 GMT

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HaTe wrote on Sat, 22 January 2011 02:35 If there truly is a god....I dare anyone to tell me why he's letting people quite obviously destroy the earth at a spiraling rate (compared to that of other animals and their timelines). Seriously though, I'm not religious at all, so don't give me any bullshit from the bible, just give it to me straight up in modern english....why is this?

Because god doesn't exist.

Evolution has all the answers anyone needs. The human race is here because out of all of the millions of animal species that inhabit our planet, the right circumstances and the right actions on the part of early human beings caused them to develop language. Those right circumstances include climate stabilization and the move to the top of the food chain because all of the more dominant species got wiped out.

After the circumstances allowed for it, human beings started living in increasingly larger groups and complex social interaction caused their brains to grow over the span of thousands of generations. Eventually their brains were large enough to permit a more complex language to be learned. The same part of the brain that handles language handles logic, which gave them the ability to try and make sense of everything they didn't understand. That's also the reason why throughout human evolution spirituality has always played a major role in human lives.

However, as technology improved, less and less spirituality was needed to make up for what humans did not understand yet.

So why does religion still exist to this day?

Ever since human beings developed the ability to think in logical terms, they have been trying to explain the world around themselves in a "story" that was supposed to make sense of their lives. Everything in this "story" had to make sense and as such the blanks were filled in with acts of god(s), until eventually only one god remained, the life and death god.

The purpose of this god is to give every life meaning. This meaning is so important that it cannot be taken away by death itself, which explains the need for an afterlife.

Religion is still here because many people do not find evolution to be a satisfying answer to the question of "why are we here" or "how did we come to be". The answer evolution gives to those questions is chance or randomness. Evolution being true means there is no special meaning to life and all of the memories you gather throughout your life are lost upon death. To a lot of people that is a very depressing thought, one they cannot relate to, because their life has to have a meaning.

Do I think religion will ever cease to exist?

Technology has enabled us to live good and meaningful lives without the need for a religion. Unfortunately religion is a stubborn beast and I suspect it will exist for many decades to come. Even if humanity finds out how the universe was created, there will still be plenty of people that need a supreme being in their lives to give it meaning.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [reborn](#) on Sun, 23 Jan 2011 21:52:16 GMT

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Quite a lot of people become religious through their school. Take a look at this:

Should she really be hoping that Jack gets into that school? I think possibly not...

File Attachments

1) [church.jpg](#), downloaded 1176 times



Didn't think anyone could sing worse than me until I sat next to jack at chuch, love you the world son but give the x factor a miss and stick to football love you millions jack man xxxxx

2 hours ago via iPhone · Like · Comment

4 people like this.



Chuch? do you go alot about an hour ago · Like



Have to go weekly to get jack into the secondary school he wants to go to x 50 minutes ago · Like



arrhhh that makes sense. how long have you gotta go for? xx 48 minutes ago · Like



Til after September when we have got to apply for the schools, fingers crossed he will get in x 42 minutes ago · Like

Write a comment...

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Sun, 23 Jan 2011 22:18:56 GMT

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it's alarming how much power religions have in this country. control over a school? wtf?

i've said all that before, of course.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [bmr_71](#) on Mon, 24 Jan 2011 00:29:04 GMT

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you should move to a real country then

oh and to answer the topic question, i became an atheist after 8th grade world history class (e.g. evolution, age of the planet, the thousands of religions that existed prior to christianity). i believed in god my entire life up until that point, where it just stopped making logical sense.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [bmr_71](#) on Mon, 24 Jan 2011 00:35:29 GMT

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oh as an FYI to anyone with a remote interest in the subject of religion... the oldest written text story known to man is the epic of Gilgamesh. the similarities between this story and the bible are gigantic. for those of you with any doubt or uncertainty in their religious standing, read the epic of Gilgamesh and learn that the bible is actually a modified fairy tale.

And I know that the existence of one story can't technically negate the truth value of the bible, but when something's staring at you in the face in this way you can't help but jump to the seemingly most logical conclusion.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [snpr1101](#) on Mon, 24 Jan 2011 02:41:40 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Sun, 23 January 2011 16:18it's alarming how much power religions have in this country. control over a school? wtf?

i've said all that before, of course.

Cool story bro inc: TL:DR I was almost kicked out of a Catholic High school for refusing to give money.

Yessir. I first started at public school, moved to a Christian school from years 1-7. I then did 8-12 at a Catholic school. This was all due to the fact that my mother is religious and the highschool had a good rep.

At this catholic high school, the head of religion was a complete nut. I felt like I was in church all over again with the continuous attempts to get money from the students.

Every wednesday we had "assembly" or "parade" (whatever you guys call it, the whole school sits in an area and listens to announcements etc)

Every time the head of Religion got up to speak, it was always about giving money to the school for one cause or another.

The school would have a spring fair once a year; and every single student was given 5 raffle

tickets they had to sell to anyone who could then use them to win prizes at the fair etc. The money was returned to the school to buy better equipment (so the story goes). Bear in mind that private high school fees are fucking ludicrous, not to mention the funding they also get from the government. They also sold artwork painted by students, with no money returned to them.

I was quite inclined to sell the tickets and be done with it; yet the way the school goes about the whole process annoyed me. Every assembly day, the head of religion would get up there and badger the students to death about selling the tickets. As if that wasn't enough, if you hadn't sold yours in the first week, you got called up to his office to explain why you hadn't sold them yet.

The conversation went something like this: (Condensed thoughts etc)

Teacher: So why haven't you sold your tickets yet?

Me: I don't like how I'm expected to automatically sell the tickets regardless of my choice in the matter.

Teacher: Do you have a problem with helping your fellow students?

Me: No I don't, but...

Teacher: Then why won't you sell the tickets?

Me: Because I don't have to sell them if I don't want to. I would sell them, but I don't like feeling forced to do so.

Teacher: Are you catholic?

Me: No, I'm not.

Teacher: Then why are you here? Why did you choose this school?

Me: Because it has good facilities etc etc.

It went on and on like this; he kept avoiding the fact that I did have a choice in the matter, and I did not have to sell the tickets if I did not want to. He began to question my "moral compass"; and eventually he concluded that I was a selfish person who cared not for others; and my enrollment at the school would be reviewed.

Relevance: This, among many other experiences have persuaded me to stay away from religion. Scientific fact and logic have played their part in the "Does God exist" debate.

If you choose to devote your life to a God or Religion, go your hardest. Just don't impose upon my life.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Mon, 24 Jan 2011 03:53:55 GMT

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You should have told him "not everyone is a master in the art of salesmanship"... just to see how he would react.

Or it would have been funny if you just gave the tickets away instead of selling them. Then you tell him that you gave them away and see what he would say. Cause he can't call you selfish for not demanding money from these people.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Starbuzz](#) on Sun, 30 Jan 2011 14:53:05 GMT

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bmr_71 wrote on Sun, 23 January 2011 17:35oh as an FYI to anyone with a remote interest in the subject of religion... the oldest written text story known to man is the epic of Gilgamesh. the similarities between this story and the bible are gigantic. for those of you with any doubt or uncertainty in their religious standing, read the epic of Gilgamesh and learn that the bible is actually a modified fairy tale.

And I know that the existence of one story can't technically negate the truth value of the bible, but when something's staring at you in the face in this way you can't help but jump to the seemingly most logical conclusion.

QFT

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [JohnDoe](#) on Mon, 28 Feb 2011 19:24:56 GMT

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I wasn't baptized as a child because my parents wanted their children to make their own choice once they were old enough. We occasionally went to the Lutheran mass and I attended Lutheran classes until the 9th grade. In elementary school it was mostly stories from the bible, later on the curriculum focused primarily on general morality and learning about other religions. I went through the "religion is for the weak-minded and causes all the problems in the world" phase during puberty, which some grown folks here and elsewhere seem to be pitifully stuck in. Consequently, I switched to the ethics class, where we continued to learn about religions and morality, but with a much larger focus on philosophy. Kant's work on morality impressed me as most of it coincided with how I already felt, but lacked the eloquence to express.

So basically, I was never pressured to join any religion and had positive experiences with religious institutions. I'm trying to live a moral life to the best of my abilities and would consider myself spiritual to a degree, but I've never felt the need to be part of a religious community. I might still join one, but the existing ones always contain some major/minor aspect I don't agree with and it feels disingenuous to make such a deep, personal commitment if I'd need to add an asterisk.

I guess that makes me agnostic, because I'm definitely no atheist talking about evolution and then claiming to already know enough about body and spirit in the year 2011 to give a definite answer on what we are or can be.

If there's one religion I really despise it's virtually every school of Islam for punishing apostasy with death...that's a tier worse than the "you're going to hell" Christlover crowd.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Mon, 28 Feb 2011 23:35:08 GMT

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yes, and islam says hell AS WELL AS death... it's axiomatically worse than just hell.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [JohnDoe](#) on Tue, 01 Mar 2011 08:20:07 GMT

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Only if you believe in the concept of hell, otherwise only one transgresses life and freedom - in the most severe way at that.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Speedy059](#) on Fri, 04 Mar 2011 05:46:44 GMT

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I'm mormon and have been mormon since I was born.

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [snpr1101](#) on Fri, 04 Mar 2011 06:18:28 GMT

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Speedy059 wrote on Thu, 03 March 2011 22:46 I'm mormon and have been mormon since I was born.

hi

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Mon, 07 May 2012 00:19:06 GMT

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bump

Spoony wrote on Thu, 13 January 2011 10:51 Share your stories. When and how did you become a Christian/atheist/agnostic/whatever you consider yourself to be? What made you think so?

I'll start. My story is quite similar to the Hitch's; he says that for him it wasn't a case of becoming an atheist so much as realising he is an atheist. That's how it was for me. Neither of my parents are religious and they let me and my brother and sister make our own minds up (this is mainly because my father's parents were fundamentalist Christians who imposed a strict religious upbringing upon him and my aunt, and they found it absolutely miserable and resolved to do better with us). As for school, I live in a Christian country where Christianity is taught to the kids as though it were fact; i.e. the dumb bible myths are taught with the same certainty as what we're told in geography and maths. And there was no point at which the teacher said "there's no evidence for any of this" or "there are other religions out there too" or, most importantly, "you can just live your life without any of this crap". Also, daily prayer was compulsory.

But I never believed any of this. For some reason it just didn't click, and in the daily prayer at school we just bowed our heads and waited for the headmaster to get it over with. But I never considered myself an atheist; I'd never even heard the word before, and it didn't occur to me to ask "what's the word for someone who doesn't believe in this religious stuff?"

Later on, I was watching comedy on TV. My fellow Englishmen will know Jasper Carrott. Anyone remember that series where he was on trial? I only remember one thing about it - I must've been 14 or 15 at the time - but the prosecutor says about Jasper, in an accusing tone of voice, that he's an 'atheist'. I'd never heard the word before. I was a bright kid and was good with language, but this word was new to me. I went and asked my dad what the word meant, he told me, and I wondered why I'd never been told about this before. How strange that my school had tried to pump one particular religion into me without telling me about the option of atheism, it seemed.

Of course, at the time only one religion had been shown to me. I knew nothing at all about, say, Islam. Since then, my opinion of Christianity has gone very far downhill, and no other religion I've yet come across has struck me as either true or desirable. Still, the concept of freedom of religion (or as I prefer to phrase it, freedom of thought) is extremely important to me, and I'll insist upon it for people of any religion so long as it's there for me too. That's why I'm a harsh critic of the concept of hell, for example.

at the time i posted this thread, i looked for the TV show and couldn't find it. it's on youtube now <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8AvDFeTstc>

bout 14 minutes in

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [fredcow9](#) on Wed, 09 May 2012 00:06:56 GMT

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Heres my story:

My imminent family are born again Christians. They came from poor families that really tended to discourage the christian lifestyle. My family is filled with a bunch of alcoholics and abusers of substances and things. My parents didnt really come to know Christ until a few years into my birth. My dad was almost killed on a motorcycle and long story short, a string of occurrences and

dreams led him to the Lord. So I was pretty much allowed to believe whatever I wished. I always grew up believing in God but not taking it seriously. It wasn't really until I was 14 that I actually started getting into the word and the things of God, fact checking and finding connections of God to man. It was at this point I had felt the touch of God through my prayers and research that I decided to get baptized and take the final step

At this point I knew basics, how one is to live ect but I have always wanted to know more and more about God so I made a commitment to constantly dig and research the things of scripture. It was around mid high school that I seriously began to doubt the traditional evolutionary beliefs and really came to the conclusion that the bible was telling the truth the whole time. A series of biology classes and human anatomy and comparative anatomy classes really broke the camels back. Life just seemed to complex, too real to be this simple story of strange ancestry.

A great book in particular darwins black box, was quite instrumental in my believing this way. Theres just too many problems with this "scientific" theory that its appalling its even taught at all. When I finished high school I sought to well round myself in other religious studies. I have studied elements of hinduism, buddism, mormonism, islam, satanism (particularly Alister Crowleys views) and new wave spiritual stuff. I find it all extremely interesting and its the studies of these many religions that really has reinforced the fact there must be a God somewhere responsible for all this.

Lately I have found myself more and more interested by the alien phenomena and its connection with spirituality. The vast majority of my close friends are indeed agnostic and believe in aliens, our debates are amusing but it was really when one of them claimed my whole religion is based off aliens and watching that ancient aliens show (quite the interesting and provoking show) visiting earth that I started that research.

It was primarily the connection between crowley, lam, hubbard and some of the writings of Jacques Vallee that really shows me that todays alien phenomena is no different than the fake religions of old describing their "gods" in the sky performing great works to them.

All in all Iv always had the freedom some havent in deciding their own path, I have been fortunate to be surrounded with a collage of people of different belief systems and their eagerness to discuss things like religion. I have learned quite a bit about life from these people and have found if you just hear someone out there's always a interesting and meaningful testimony behind them

Subject: Re: When did you become a Insert-Religion-Here?

Posted by [bunka](#) on Sat, 12 May 2012 20:14:18 GMT

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what does the christian call religions that came thousands of years before his?

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nice try
