

L.G. 10:00

Comp. 1/ Paper 1

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A Logical Progression

“Maybe they just make you angry because you know they’re true,” she typed hopefully into the chat box after confirming I had read the Christian propaganda booklets. The only thing they had managed to evoke an awkward sense of anger from the hatred they propagated. Nothing could convince me that my whole life was a plan or a game for some malevolent being to test. I always found the classical interpretation of god somewhat immature; creating the universe, creating life with the soul purpose of worshipping him. In everyday life we tend to mock those people and think of them as misanthropic egotists.

Her phrase was obviously a final stretch in a losing attempt to convert me. Not even an atheist at the time, I had some strange idea of spiritualist philosophy. My debates were still feeble as I found little support in my own arguments. This last battle is significant in the timing. My “No” would have struck a much stronger strategic stance had it been two years later. The battle, however, was more significant as it was the Waterloo of “saving” my soul. Before then I had attended private schools, where the war waged for four years. Each attempt at saving me only drove me further and further from accepting any belief.

In my early years my parents had done little in the way of raising me in religion. I had a vague concept of heaven and hell, but I didn’t know the big to do of religion.

Holidays comprised the full extent of my theological knowledge. I remember distinctly becoming infuriated in the third grade when a girl attempted to convince me that humans were made of dirt. In the sheer audacity of the moment I went to the teacher expressing my deep concern for a girl who seriously believed that humans were literal, unedited manifestations of pure dirt and clay. It was then my first encounter with religion. My teacher then, a devout believer, showed me that some people, in fact, do believe the literal translation of spiritual scripts.

My parents attended a small Episcopalian church, which I joined eventually to follow my parents. Perhaps out of the strange alienation from culture, my parents had some hand in pushing me piety. The blind dogma is fueled on ignorance. I soon began attending Christ Lutheran School, a private school, and escape from public school's demise and home-school's worthlessness. Every year, a plastic kid-friendly workbook on the way of Jesus was distributed. The kind of workbook that taught the children what Jesus wanted them to be. My education of religion essentially began there, with the cartoon renditions of Daniel in the lion's den, or the good Samaritan, complete with fun activities to indoctrinate fun. I joined the school community in the fall of 2001. My arrival coincided with the attacks on September eleventh, and the whole fundamentalist community arose, blind and raging.

My two main disputes with the other school-goers were religion and politics. As I was still young, my arguments, as those of my peers, were regurgitations of my parents' comments and slogans. I always found that my peers' arguments always seemed much stronger and quick at face value. Looking back, their regurgitate nature could be found throughout the community, only rehearsed rebuttal made to spew at first recognizable

relevant syntax. With time angst grew with my hatred of Christianity. My emotions grew more panicked, and my arguments grew worse under constant assault. I left the school a broken spiritualist.

The final battle marked a strange year, I attempted to grow my spiritualism into something “real” that I believed in. I studied meditation, philosophy (yes even metaphysics), and general religion. In looking back, I was obsessed with religion. Like Dali’s crickets, I found obsession in my fears. This was sophomore year. Junior year I took a break from life. Things never became terrible, I just over relaxed. Marijuana became a regular hobby in stead of its previous stature as occasional novelty. With my increased intoxication came increased interest in more obscure spirituality and philosophy, enough to no longer find any real basis in any kind of logic. By the end of my junior year of high school I grew sick of my toxic habits and wanted to rinse things.

The next year a curious thing happened; my debates turned spectrum. Instead of the usual Christians I had to remind of open-mindedness I encountered a much stronger opponent, an atheist. We debated on the validity of actually believing in anything: on whether or not religion was the cause to the world’s problems; on how logical belief really was. This same year I tried being serious about life (as serious as one can be). I read; I studied; and, I developed an interest in science. I questioned everything I had ever believed, and soon found the only way I could really appreciate the world, to accept that nothing really mattered.

Around this time another friend introduced me to Carl Sagan. I began reading *Demon Haunted World*, a book about scientific skepticism and various pseudoscientific ideas and conspiracy theories. The book is aimed at debunking the unfortunate habit we

have of searching for excitement in the wrong places. Throughout the book Sagan maintains that no ghosts or “UFO’s” are needed to make our lives interesting or to seem scientific, that any interest in the many new developing regions of science should bring enough wonder. This is how I began to view things: I saw a scientific wonder of possibility, of being stranded on an oasis in an infinite gap of violent nothingness with nothing but our meager scientific knowledge to guide us about the shallows we have explored.

In this new day and age we see the exponential advancement of invention and discovery. Every day we unlock more secrets of the universe. Children will be born with electronic devices in their hands. The scientific impossibilities of only a decade ago will be taken for granted in future generations; a process that once took centuries to achieve. Our gain of knowledge is at its greatest and still we continue to increase that gain. All this is juxtaposed by a plethora of religious wars, equally incompetent and ignorant on all sides. Our politics are a mess; the economy dies; millions die of plague and genocide. The life on our planet faces complete altering if not total annihilation and we continue to rape the land. Now is not the time of a religious revolution, but of a theological upheaval. It is time we both embrace our culture and let it go. We must discard our immature prejudices in the name of the advancement of our species. There is nothing extraordinary about any group or nation, not even of humanity as a whole, and the thought should bring more comfort than despair.