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I did not enjoy my secondary education; in fact, I hated it.

It was a small, private, single sex school about half a mile from my home. From the start I resented being sent there, all my friends from primary school were going to the local comprehensive. And that's where (I thought) I would be happier.

So I went to this school at eleven, totally resentful and rebellious from the start. It seemed so archaic and old fashioned, the way it was run, the strong Catholic beliefs, the way they forced religion down your throat. That's why I think I am a total atheist now, and will not give religion a chance.

The nuns who taught us irritated me too. They were obviously narrow minded and lived in such a closed way. The whole school environment was like one small protective world, living in total seclusion to the real one.

I hated the discipline. It was my opinion, at this time, that they took it too far. It seemed to run on rules and principles devised for school in the earlier part of the century. Somehow it didn't seem to be of the 1970, 80's era. We had to file everywhere in lines, stand up when the teacher entered the room, etc. Everything had to be just so.

It's not that I think discipline is a totally bad thing. And having also been to a comprehensive I don't think a complete lapse of discipline and respect is a good thing. I just wish there could have been a happy medium, and there wasn't, at least not in my experience.

Some parts of the school were o.k. You were at least a person, with a name, and a personality, not just a number, like in larger schools. Some of the teachers were good too. They gave you individual attention and really pushed you to fuller achievement. The nuns also, in their strict, austere fashion, were caring and kind.

If I hadn't have been sent there I don't think I would have come out at 16 with 7 good 'O' levels. At that age I was more of a waster, and more inclined to be lazy and mess around. But I feel I have lost or missed out on some part of my youth.

I don't disagree with private education, although some people think it unfair that money can buy a 'better education'. And I can see their point. What I dislike is single sex schools. It leaves you totally unprepared to mix with people of the opposite sex. Either you go completely mad when eventually you are thrust into a male populated world, or you are so wary of men that it takes years to relate to them as ordinary people, like yourself.

There was good and bad in my school life, but I did not enjoy it and was quite unhappy. My attitude made it worse, and also the fact that I was persecuted to a certain extent by people from the comprehensive up the road. I think it has subdued me, too. When I went there I was brighter, happier and more 'free'. Now and ever since, I am too controlled, restricted and conscious of what I do. Whether my education is to blame, is open to debate.