

Is Mormonism a delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance?

Recovery

Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance?

Posted by: **koriwhore** () Date: August 16, 2016 12:30AM

Delusion: Persisting in an erroneous belief, despite superior evidence to the contrary.

Stupidity: behavior that shows a lack of good sense or judgment.

willful ignorance: A decision in bad faith to avoid becoming informed about something so as to avoid having to make undesirable decisions that such information might prompt.

As a former Mormon, one who suspended disbelief, in the hope that it was real, good, loving and true, I look back now that all that suspension has crashed to the ground and wonder how the hell did I subscribe to such an obviously evil fraud for so long? Now it just seems so stupid to subscribe to such a patently obvious fraud, that got away with a small fortune from me and 4 generations of Mormons before me.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance?

Posted by: **loveleigh** () Date: August 16, 2016 04:20AM

It's not stupidity, the Mormon church is very good at what they do to keep people believing and feeling too guilty and unworthy to leave.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: **surprenant** () Date: August 16, 2016 08:33AM

In the case of my TBM wife, I would say it is willful ignorance.

She started out with ignorance imposed on her by the willfully ignorant missionaries who converted her, and then by the church with its admonitions against anything critical of the church.

Since the church was her salvation in the sense that it brought order to her chaotic life, she became willfully ignorant.

After I unloaded a lot of information that the church has been telling her to avoid, she has been struggling to maintain her willful ignorance. It's almost bordering on delusion; though she's smart enough to know that what I'm telling her is "probably true", she can't quite bring herself to admit that what she credits for "saving her life" is a fraud. It's been almost three weeks, and it's just been in the past couple nights that she hasn't cried herself to sleep.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: **quatermass2** () Date: August 16, 2016 08:34AM

You use the word "hope". That pretty much sums it up; it is the triumph of emotion over logic/analysis.

An illustration of this can be found in Erich Von Daniken's work, Chariots of the Gods, in which he postulated we had been visited by 'ancient aliens'.

Mr Von Daniken subsequently admitted he had forged his 'evidence'. Incredibly, many said – even after his public admission – that they "still believed".

It would seem that there is still a part of the human brain that values emotion over logic.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: **Cold-Dodger** (0) Date: August 16, 2016 08:40AM

You're forgetting what it was like to be TBM. In the midst of a society like the one in the church, you never run into the information that prompts the three hypothetical scenarios you listed — or should I say you never run into them long enough without believing there's some kind of invisible gun pointed at your head for the information to really work its magical unmagic on your magical worldview. The moment there was exposure to the facts and time for them to sink in and the threats of Mormonism were at their most obvious at that time in your life, that was moment your shelf fracked. It didn't happen a moment before, and you weren't stupid enough to let it last a moment after. You weren't stupid. You were conned. There is such a difference, and it's why Mormons deserve better (usually) than to be treated like they're just stupid.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: [Amos90](#) () Date: August 16, 2016 10:28AM

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When my belief first collapsed, I reached out to a never-believing loved one. While she tried to be supportive (and be patient with me belaboring it), she slipped once or twice that she thought I had made a deliberate decision to believe in something stupid.

Since then, that's my small beef with Hitchens, Dawkins, and Harris. They never fell into the religion trap. That is, they learned it was a trap BEFORE they had a chance to get trapped. So sometimes they talk as if religious people should have been likewise wise, but walked into the trap anyway.

Religion IMO, and I go with Dennett on it, is a long-evolved system of organic complexity, practically irreducible. Not long ago in human history EVERYONE was religious. They knew no different. That's been the status quo since prehistoric ages.

As a teenager I claimed to be agnostic. I mocked the church. But I was just parroting trite shallow cliché objections to the church. Later the trick worked on me. I saw the "logic" of it. I "understood" it. I understood for example that it's necessary to believe, to walk by faith. The harder something is to believe, the more faith it takes, so the harder the better. That's when I started believing that believing in absurdities a test. God intentionally rigged the gospel to seem absurd to the casual observer, to make faith the key to it. Dennett calls it "Believing in belief".

So I did not go straight from disbelieving to oh never mind believing. I first went to believing in belief, THEN circling back to reconsider what I had thought was absurd.

This recruited a mental faculty I didn't know I had. I think there are latent instincts in everyone going back to the caveman, that might only be activated by particular means.

Dawkins for example was steeped in critical thought early and often in a double-whammy of the progressive secularist culture of GB and Oxford academia.

Well, I was raised in Utah. There was a classism to Mormonism in which, I admit, it SEEMED like the smart successful stable people were mostly LDS. And, it seemed like lapsed Mormons were worse off, including myself. Even as I criticized the church, I didn't have a stable platform. I was ignorant. True or false, Mormonism was above me in the social strata of Utah. Eventually I NEEDED to move

up, better my life. Mormonism wasn't a question it was an answer. I adopted it from the inside, not through a critical barrier from the outside.

So to just say I was "deluded, stupid, or willfully ignorant" is a false trichotomy because I don't think it necessarily requires any of these.

I compare it more to a virus. Some people know how to avoid it beforehand. Some people get lucky and dodge it without knowing. Some people get it despite taking precautions. Some people simply don't know about it or how to avoid it. Some viruses are subtle and you don't know you are infected, and don't know you are transmitting it. Some realize they are infected only after becoming very sick. Even then, some don't know a virus made them sick and they misdiagnose themselves with something else. Very few if any say heck I'm gonna get infected in purpose just to be spiteful.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: **Bamboozled** () Date: August 16, 2016 10:39AM

I like your virus analogy.

I think of Mormonism as a particularly virulent malware that in many ways seeks to reprogram the individual completely.

Those who have not been infected with it just don't get it and probably never will. It is so hard for many of us to reboot our systems. The RfM scrubber definitely helps!

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: **ificouldhietokolob** () Date: August 16, 2016 10:53AM

Depends on the mormon.

It could be one of those, it could be all of those.

It also could be none of those...

Indoctrination from a young age is hard to overcome. There are, no doubt, intelligent, curious, non-delusional folks among mormons, who have simply been thoroughly deceived.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: **Babyloncansuckit** () Date: August 16, 2016 10:59AM

Someone should develop a vaccine for MMV (Mormon Mind Virus) and make it mandatory. It's a horrible disease.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: **abby** () Date: August 16, 2016 11:06AM

You forgot fear. Fear of eternal abandonment. Fear of never experiencing eternal joy, because I certainly didn't experience happiness as a member of the church.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: **iris** () Date: August 16, 2016 12:35PM

Thank you Cold-Dodger and Amos90! Your posts were helpful. Generic sounding to say "helpful" -- but they do help put into focus the mind-warp that TBMs experience, particularly one born into a family of TBMs as I was.

Re: Is it delusion, stupidity or willful ignorance? [new](#)

Posted by: **Amyjo** () Date: August 16, 2016 03:58PM

Happiness is elusive. Chase after it you will never find it.

The church promises something it can't deliver in terms of happiness.

Now joy is something it can't give either. Nor can it deprive us of it. It was a pleasant surprise to discover after I left the cult that my joy was still my own. The church did not own the copyright or license to joy. What a grand illusion that was!